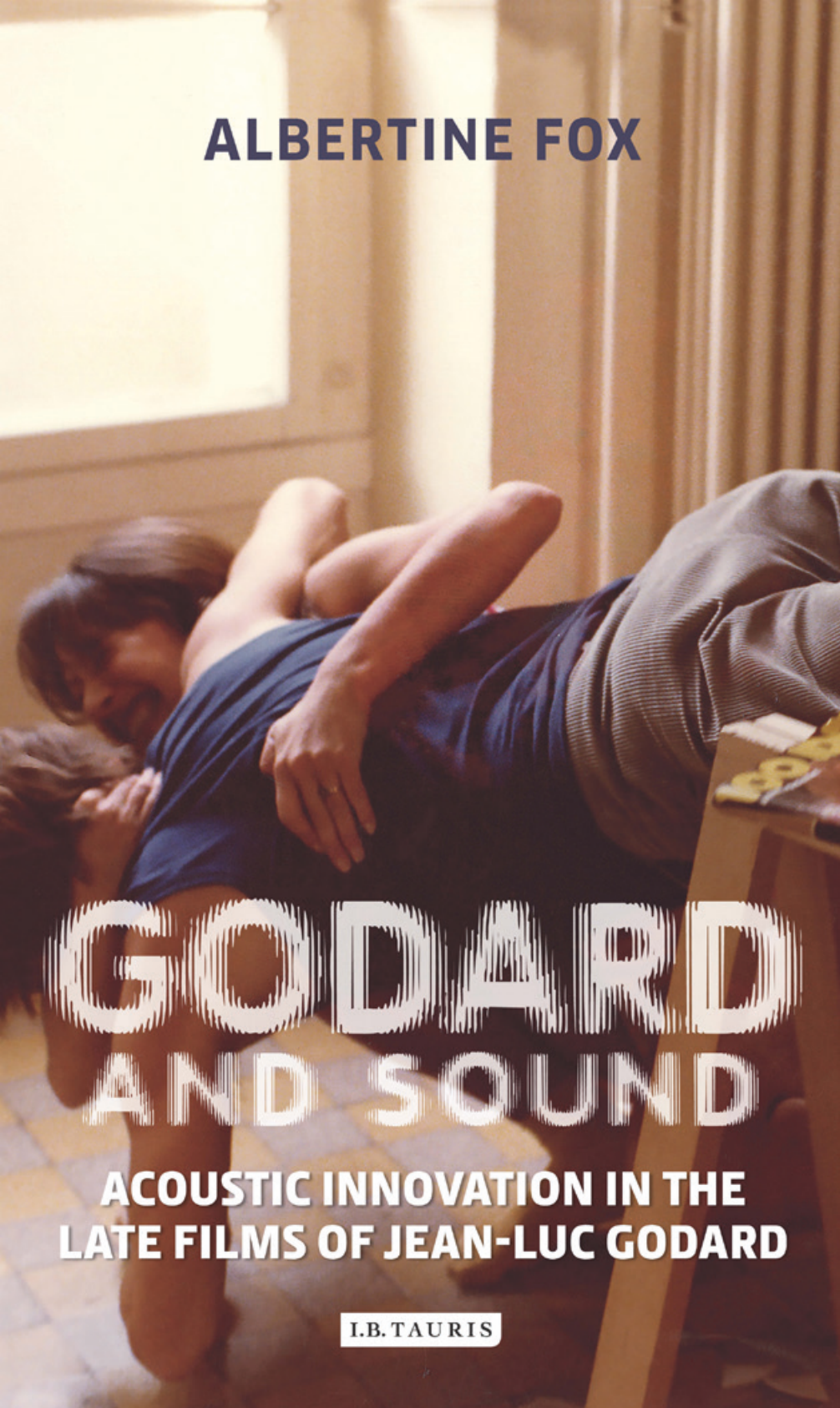
ALBERTINE FOX



GODARD AND SOUND

ACOUSTIC INNOVATION IN THE LATE FILMS OF JEAN-LUC GODARD

I.B. TAURIS

Albertine Fox is Lecturer in French Film at the University of Bristol. She has published on film sound, music and voice in relation to Jean-Luc Godard's cinema and video art. Her articles have appeared in *Studies in French Cinema, SEQUENCE*, and *Sight & Sound* online and her article 'Constructing Voices in Jean-Luc Godard's *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (1979)' was awarded the 2014 Susan Hayward Prize by the Association for Studies in French Cinema.

'Albertine Fox's attentive and impressively informed analysis sounds forth new meanings and previously unheard compositions in Jean-Luc Godard's late films. By expertly composing, in elegant prose, a legible score through which to apprehend Godard's most complicated works, she provides a double intervention in both film and sound studies.'

– Nora M. Alter, Professor of Film and Media Studies, Temple University, USA; author of *The Essay Film After Fact and Fiction*

'In this meticulously researched and fascinating study, Albertine Fox acknowledges the "aural" as much as the "visual" within Godard's post-1979 films. She shines new light on both domains, and sends us back to his films with our eyes and ears well and truly opened'.

– Ben McCann, Associate Professor in French Studies, University of Adelaide, Australia; author of *Julien Duvivier*

Godard and Sound

Acoustic Innovation in the Late Films of Jean-Luc Godard

ALBERTINE FOX

I.B. TAURIS
LONDON · NEW YORK

In loving memory of my mother, Angela

Published in 2018 by
I.B.Tauris & Co. Ltd
London • New York
www.ibtauris.com

References to websites were correct at the time of writing.

International Library of the Moving Image 42

ISBN: 978 1 78453 842 2
eISBN: 978 1 78672 274 4
ePDF: 978 1 78673 274 3

A full CIP record for this book is available from the British Library
A full CIP record is available from the Library of Congress

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: available

Contents

Figures

Acknowledgements

This book arose from my doctoral thesis written between 2010 and 2014 at Royal Holloway, University of London, and supported by a studentship from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. I would like to express my warm thanks to the lecturers and staff within the School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Royal Holloway for supporting and nourishing my research over many years. I am immensely grateful to my PhD supervisor, James Williams, for his longstanding support, mentorship and invaluable expertise. His illuminating remarks and critical insights have enriched my explorations of French cinema and enhanced my understanding of the subject in countless ways. I would also like to offer wholehearted thanks to Eric Robertson for the constructive feedback and brilliant guidance he has provided over the years. I wish also to thank Sarah Wright, Ruth Cruickshank, Julie Brown and the Music Department at Royal Holloway, Phil Powrie and the Editorial Board of *Studies in French Cinema*, Mary Noonan and the Society for French Studies, and the welcoming staff at Kingston University library.

I am extremely grateful to my PhD examiners, Michael Witt and Sarah Cooper, for their indispensable comments and suggestions, in addition to the support and opportunities they have provided. Further thanks are due to my anonymous readers for their helpful and detailed feedback on the manuscript. I owe additional gratitude to the Cinémathèque française, Musée Gaumont and Argos Films for their assistance with some of the images. I am also deeply appreciative of the generous support and great kindness offered to me by Andrew Webber, Emma Wilson, John David Rhodes and the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge and special thanks are due to Churchill College, whose award of a Junior Research Fellowship in 2016 allowed me to see the book through to publication and I have fond memories of my time there. Last but not least, I owe much gratitude to Susan

Harrow, Bradley Stephens and my new colleagues in the School of Modern Languages at the University of Bristol for their warm welcome.

I am indebted to many other friends and scholars for their valuable input and inspiring conversations. I am particularly grateful to Susan Williams, Natasha Shoory, Emilia Borowska, Sophia Mösch, Avril Tynan, Loreta Gandolfi, Rona Murray, Geoff Brown and Sohail Nazir. I would also like to extend my love and thanks to Amanda, Becky, Amelia, Kate, Lucia, Rudi and Sam, and to my parents, Gareth and Angela, and the rest of my family and close friends for their care and support. My copyeditor and indexer, Pat Fitzgerald, and production editor, David Campbell, deserve my grateful thanks for their expert work and careful instruction. Finally, I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to Philippa Brewster and Anna Coatman at I.B.Tauris for their belief in the project and most of all I would like to thank my editor, Madeleine Hamey-Thomas, for her unflagging enthusiasm and superb professional guidance.

Publication Credits

Chapter 2: an earlier version of this chapter was originally published as 'Constructing Voices in Jean-Luc Godard's *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (1979)', *Studies in French Cinema* 14/1 (2014), pp. 19–32. I would like to thank the Taylor & Francis Group (http://www.tandfonline.com) for granting me permission to reproduce material from this article in a revised form here.

Chapter 4: a longer version of my study of *Puissance de la parole* was first published as 'EXTREME STATES: Remixing Cinema, Visual Art and Music in Godard's *Puissance de la parole*', *SEQUENCE* 3/1 (2015) http://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/sequence3/archive/sequence-3-1/. This article was co-edited by Catherine Grant, with Ed Hughes and Cécile Chevalier. I am grateful to the editors for allowing me to republish this material in the present volume.

Chapter 5: material from my study of *Soigne ta droite: Une place sur la terre* was first published as 'Performing Through Space: Overflow, Displacement, and the Voice in *Keep Your Right Up: A Place on Earth* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1987)', in Tom Whittaker and Sarah Wright (eds), *Locating the Voice in Film: Critical Approaches and Global Practices* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 279–94. It has been reproduced in a revised form by kind permission of Oxford University Press, USA and the editors.

Introduction

Acoustic Spectatorship

Music driven by repetitive rhythmic patterns can create great textural complexity, unpredictability and metric ambiguity. This is especially true in the minimalist music of composers Steve Reich and Philip Glass. Keith Potter has written of 'the illusions conjured by the combination of fast repetition and high dynamic level' in Glass's music, while Paul Hillier touches on 'the illusion of an acoustic echo' produced in Reich's phasing pieces when two identical repeating patterns, played in unison, fall out of sync with each other, producing an array of 'resultant patterns' that emerge from the interlocking rhythms.[1] With reference to a performance of Reich's *Piano Phase* (1967), Roger Sutherland has evocatively likened the psychoacoustic impression generated from the resultant patterns to 'the after-images which appear on the surface of abstract paintings which deploy the overlapping of strong colours'.[2] In Reich's music, the musicians are free to give substance to these patterns by singing or playing them, causing them to rise like luminous shapes of sound to the surface of the musical texture.

What I heard in the musical processes of Reich's early compositions in particular, sparked impromptu ideas about the relationship between the soundtrack and the image-track in film. Experiencing Jean-Luc Godard's

Vivre sa vie (*My Life to Live*) (1962) left me with the distinct impression of having listened to two tape loops, the image-track and the soundtrack, moving in parallel motion, and this impression grew more complex with the spiralling motion of the theme music in Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville's later feature, *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (*Every Man For Himself* aka *Slow Motion*) (1979). The layers, colours and fragments of sound in Reich's music, along with his experiments with speed variation and his use of short melodic and rhythmic units that are woven into contrapuntal textures, served as a powerful springboard for my early thoughts on the interaction of sound and image in film.

When planning the research for this book, I was inspired initially by Andrew Bowie's notion of 'putting faith in music' in his thinking on music and philosophy.[3] Bowie explores the 'two-way relationship' between what philosophy might tell us about music *as well as* what music can tell us about philosophy, putting the emphasis on the latter process.[4] Considering music a valid means of analysing other disciplines and art forms has allowed me to develop an acoustical method of film analysis. Each chapter in this book lends a fresh aural perspective to the rich and sprawling multimedia work under discussion. Forever dissolving disciplinary boundaries, Godard's 'late' work, which for the purposes of this book will begin in 1979, followed an intense period of experimentation with video technology.[5] It seemed to me that the distinctive applications of sound, music, voice, silence and speed in Godard's later films and videos offered a fascinating and relatively untouched case study with which to engage.[6]

This book is experimental and freewheeling in its approach. By listening dynamically and imaginatively, one can begin to map out methods of engaging with film and other audio-visual media in ways that depart from expected and accepted lines of enquiry, and this is especially important in relation to the work of a multimedia artist. Of course, the polyphonic experiences generated by Godard's multimedia work of the post-1979 period cannot be examined solely in relation to conventional codes of narrative cinema and its soundtrack. How does one begin to think and write about film sound when it defies categorisation as 'film music', 'dialogue' or 'sound effects'? What kind of framework will support an analysis of sound in films of a more hybrid and experimental kind, where stable sonic categories seem to disintegrate or merge with

others before our very ears? Michael Witt positions Godard as 'less a conventional feature-film director than a multimedia poet, philosopher, critic, and essayist.'[7] This is a tremendously helpful assertion because the spectator of Godard's films is constantly presented with sounds and images that are deeply inflected by other media and that often form part of intricate and far-reaching thought processes. The inventive acoustic experiments with which the spectator is confronted demand a plural and fluid critical response that operates laterally to accommodate each of the multileveled audio-visual experiences that s/he undergoes.

In this book, I want to listen slowly and intensively to the rich palette of sounds in each of the works to be addressed. Challenging the ocularcentric discourses that have dominated previous theories of spectatorship and still frequently steer contemporary debates about film, this book sets in motion a critical engagement with the spectator's acoustic encounter with feature-length films, shorts, video shorts, 3D film and with Godard's innovative treatment of the cinematic soundtrack. Critics often fail to appreciate the abundance of unstable and changeable meanings that the acoustic phenomena in Godard's multimedia work give rise to. Yet the acoustic realm plays a vital role in Godard's artistic practice and the spectator is obliged to remain flexible and inquisitive as s/he undergoes each sonic, cinematic and videographic experience, becoming in the process a chameleon-like listener, thinker, viewer and player of each film, video and CD soundtrack.

The concept of acoustic spectatorship

Acoustic spectatorship is a theoretical concept I am using to guide this study of acoustic innovation in Godard's late work. Spectatorship signifies the quality or condition of being a spectator, that is, one who 'looks at' or 'views' a spectacle. The *acoustic* spectator is one who listens actively and reflectively as s/he looks, forever creating new, unanticipated relationships between things and imagining in order to see. The word 'acoustic' derives from the Greek *akoustikos*, from *akouein*, 'hear'. As an adjective, it designates 'sound or the sense of hearing', while the noun form denotes 'the properties or qualities of a room or building that determine how sound is transmitted in it', as well as 'the branch of physics concerned with the properties of sound.'[8] Like a

musician, the acoustic spectator is a responsive and involved subject who shapes and is shaped by the film's sounds, rhythms, images, textures, spaces and colours.

In the early stages of this project, my initial desire was to shake up theories of film spectatorship underpinned by a voyeuristic and vision-based framework. I wanted to focus on the acoustic experience of film, the various ways of listening to film, and the role of sound and hearing in the sense-making process. As I became more aware of different types of expanded cinematic experience, I questioned further the relevance and suitability of spectatorship as a concept, especially in view of the multi-medial nature of Godard's later work. Yet the persistent tendency among film scholars to pay only cursory attention to the aural domain, and its neglected status in studies of spectatorship, prompted me to rethink the concept from the starting point of sound, allowing for a sonic exploration of cinematic experience undertaken by an active listening subject. These factors were coupled with my appreciation of the important place in Godard's oeuvre of film projection and its history, and of his ceaseless questioning of the impact of television on cinema and the spectator, all the while embracing the possibilities offered by new audio-visual technology.

The solo percussionist Evelyn Glennie reiterates in her 'Hearing Essay' that auditory experience never concerns just one sense alone. She describes sound as 'vibrating air' and hearing as 'a specialized form of touch' while also recognising the important role played by the sense of sight; the brain constructs a 'sound picture' from the data it receives. Glennie, who is profoundly deaf, makes the crucial point that everyone's hearing is different. Writing about her own listening experience, she says: 'If I see a drum head or cymbal vibrate or even see the leaves of a tree moving in the wind then subconsciously my brain creates a corresponding sound.'[9] Glennie's comments serve as an important reminder that when watching a film, one person's response to a specific soundscape might differ drastically from another's. For example, you might respond emotionally or kinaesthetically to a sound that I find uninteresting. I might be awestruck by the slicing sound of a knife mixed with a cello melody, while for you the fusion of speech and the screeching of seagulls fires the imagination.

In his ambitious book *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, the French film sound theorist and electroacoustic composer Michel Chion refers to spectators as 'audio-spectators' who, through their encounter with audio-visual media, are placed in a perceptual mode of reception called 'audio-vision'.[10] Acoustic spectatorship operates along similar lines but it differs in that the term immediately draws attention to the importance of space; it foregrounds the spatial dimension of sound and auditory experience, an aspect that can greatly affect the spectator's understanding of a particular auditory scene, with or without the presence of visual stimulation. Acoustic spectatorship encourages an approach to film analysis that refuses to function in terms of sight versus sound, with one sense continually pitched against the other. It positions the spectator as a co-creative participant who engages in an active consideration of film as an audio-visual medium that produces multisensorial experiences, which are felt, heard and interpreted in a variety of unpredictable ways by different audiences. It also serves to remind us that an 'image' is not only a visual phenomenon; images can be generated or implied by sound and one might well experience sound synaesthetically as an image, a colour or a shape. Consequently, a detailed acoustical study of film must attend to the interpenetration of hearing, vision and spatiality, as well as the materiality of sound and its impact on the body. It must remain alert to the range of affective, cognitive and kinaesthetic responses that sound stimuli may produce.

A short history of spectatorship theory

In 'Psychoanalysis and Cinema: The Imaginary Discourse' (1977), Rick [Charles F.] Altman discusses three key visual metaphors for the screen that have played an influential role in film theory: the screen as window; the screen as frame (in classical film theory); and the screen as mirror (in 1970s poststructuralist film theory). The mirror metaphor articulates the spectator's 'imaginary' relationship with the world that s/he sees mirrored on the screen.[11] During the 1970s, the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's 'mirror stage' and his concept of the Imaginary became key reference points for film theorists as they interrogated ways in which subjects are ideologically constructed by the cinema. As Judith Mayne asserts, cinema came to

be understood as an 'institutional *apparatus*' that acculturates individuals to structures of Oedipal desire, fantasy and pleasure that conform to and reinforce mainstream ideology.[12] Referring to the legacy of May 1968, consumer culture and the Vietnam War, Mayne points out that many 1970s film scholars had experienced this period of protest and change 'from the literal vantage point of a spectator watching television'. The study of cinema offered 'a way of understanding a shared past of images, myths, and narratives, and the particular focus on the spectator foregrounded the importance of comprehending not just the cinema, but the cinema as it has shaped and defined the fantasies of generations of spectators'.[13]

Although 1970s film theorists were deeply concerned both with the constructedness of film and with the implicated 'viewing subject', the emphasis on sight and the visual image is striking. Spectators are credited as *viewing* subjects but rarely as *listening* subjects. Of course, the latter half of the decade marked a crucial period of change within the context of feminist film theory and practice, galvanised by Laura Mulvey's seminal 1975 feminist manifesto 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', which uses psychoanalysis as a political tool to examine pleasurable structures of looking in traditional narrative cinema. In accordance with the dominant patriarchal order, in the cinema, Mulvey asserts, the male gaze projects its fantasy onto the female figure, whose role as erotic object is to be 'looked at and displayed'.[14] It is crucial in scholarship today that debates around spectatorship continue to explore issues of gender and sexuality, and the intersections with class, race and ethnicity, both in terms of the types of identifications that are encouraged and the spectatorial positions that are permitted. Yet it is equally important to think carefully about the bearing that sound and hearing have on these issues, and to take seriously the alternative responses and interpretations that an acoustical perspective may produce.

In 1980, Altman edited a groundbreaking special issue of *Yale French Studies*, devoted entirely to film music and sound. In his introduction, Altman criticises the 'hegemony of the visual' and the 'resolutely image-bound' nature of film theory and criticism, calling for a greater concentration on the practices and possibilities of sound.[15] Whilst Altman is here critical of the visual bias of 1970s French film theory, Pascal Bonitzer's

influential essays in *Le Regard et la voix* (*The Look and the Voice*), published in 1976, should not be forgotten. In this collection Bonitzer highlights the sonic potential of off-screen space in cinema. This is a heterogeneous space, distinct from but bound to the image and dramatised through the presence of the voice-off. Off-screen space reveals not merely what the camera *cannot* show, Bonitzer reiterates, but it is also capable of constituting an animated acoustic space, replete with voices and various sound combinations.[16] In 1982, Chion's *La voix au cinéma* (*The Voice in Cinema*) appeared, presenting readers with key concepts such as 'vococentrism' (the privilege given to voice in classical cinema) and the *acousmêtre* ('the one who is not-yet-seen'), inspired by Pierre Schaeffer's concept of acousmatic sound.[17] This was followed in 1988 by Kaja Silverman's influential *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema*, offering the first extensive psychoanalytic approach to the female voice in film. Exposing the relationship between the soundtrack and the construction of sexual difference, Silverman demonstrates that, whilst in Hollywood cinema the female voice has been a continual source of fascination, the feminist critique of Hollywood film has given short shrift to cinema's sound regime.[18]

If Altman's call in 1980 for a new beginning in film criticism shifted attention to the soundtrack, in 1992 the phenomenological film theorist Vivian Sobchack renewed the call on a different basis. Sobchack's '"perverse" turn away from *accepted analysis*' involved a departure from both Marxist film theory and the disembodied spectatorship of early psychoanalytic film theory.[19] In her path-breaking book *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience*, Sobchack states: 'I want to mistrust what has become the certain ground, the *premises*, of contemporary film theory and to interrogate certain widely held assumptions about the nature of film and the intelligibility and significance of spectatorship and the film experience.'[20] Sobchack turns to the existential phenomenology of French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty to develop an embodied, dialogical model of spectatorship, pioneered through a study of the '*embodied* nature of vision'.[21]

Although her approach and the terminology she uses reflects a greater concern with visuality and visibility than with sonic perception and expression, Sobchack's intervention in the field has certainly influenced

the trajectory of film theory. Her thinking on embodied spectatorship has transformed the visual regime common to psychoanalytic models of viewing relations, inspiring a diverse body of original work that explores different sensory and intersubjective modes of perception. But if many of these more recent studies are careful to acknowledge the *audio*-visual nature of film experience, the relationship between the visual, touch and a tactile mode of seeing often takes precedence over the realm of sound.[22] One fascinating book that differs in this respect is Davina Quinlivan's *The Place of Breath in Cinema*, which develops a haptic exploration of the spectator's filmic encounter with a breathing body, drawing principally on the work of French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray, particularly her philosophy of breath. Throughout her analyses of films by Atom Egoyan, Lars von Trier and David Cronenberg, Quinlivan devotes much attention to sound, silence and conditions of visibility and invisibility, pinpointing instances of 'aural tactility' and considering music's capacity to evoke a 'breathing "space"' in film. Her study demonstrates most consistently that the auditory dimension of the 'viewing' experience is ripe for investigating *as part of* a phenomenological and embodied approach to film analysis.[23] By remaining receptive to a whole array of acoustic phenomena and the interrelationships between them, and doing so without shunning the language of visuality, a more holistic engagement with spectatorial experience can be set in motion that fully embraces sensory multiplicity. To conclude this introduction, I will now offer a brief outline of the organisation of the book.

Organisation and structure

Taking heed of Chion's recommendation to hone and enrich current typologies of film sound, I have turned to sources that are not directly concerned with the moving image. This is because films of an experimental kind that move about restlessly, flitting between categories of counter-cinema, criticism, poetry, philosophy and sonic art, are difficult to make sense of by way of conventional rubrics. In this book, therefore, I consider sound in its widest context through its subtle and varied interactions with other art forms, including literature, sculpture, visual art and music. The

concept of acoustic spectatorship is explored through sequence analyses, which are largely organised chronologically, and concrete juxtapositions are incorporated into each chapter by way of images and illustrations. The core corpus, beginning in 1979, encompasses Godard's celebrated commercial releases, lesser-known features and a selection of shorts, video shorts, video scenarios, one CD soundtrack and his recent ventures into 3D film.

My aim is not to provide one overarching narrative to account for Godard's use of sound from his New Wave cinema through to the present, because this sweeping linear approach would over-simplify such a vast and multilayered volume of audio-visual material. I have chosen not to confine my study to Godard's canonical films but to engage with a selective assortment of 'major' and 'minor' works, complemented by an eclectic mix of critical discourses that allow for a more attuned understanding of individual films. Additionally, in the book's early stages, and as I became familiar with Godard's 1980s films, I decided that before conducting a study of the treatment of sound in the momentous eight-part video series *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1988–98), adding to Michael Witt and Miriam Heywood's work in this area, it would first be necessary to consider how some of the sonic techniques deployed in this multiform film have been trialled and developed in the years prior to and contemporaneous with it.[24] My analyses thus shine new light on unexplored facets of the many intersections between episodes from this video series and other of Godard's films from the post-1979 period. By extension, in view of the detailed studies undertaken by James S. Williams and David Wills on the role of music in *Je vous salue, Marie* (*Hail Mary*) (1985), *Éloge de l'amour* (*In Praise of Love*) (2001) and *Notre musique* (*Our Music*) (2004), these works do not feature centrally in my corpus but, as with *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, references to some of these films are made throughout the book.[25]

Chapter 1 will summarise the theoretical work of Pierre Schaeffer, the French broadcast engineer, media theorist, composer and founder of *musique concrète*, including mention of his major publications as well as his lesser-known early articles. It will then outline some of the prominent sonic experiments that feature in Godard's New Wave cinema, alluding also to his involvement with Jean-Pierre Gorin and the Dziga Vertov

group (from 1969–73). Then I will trace Godard's collaborative filmmaking practice with Anne-Marie Miéville from 1973 to 1979, underlining their inventive work with the electronic medium of video. I will also suggest ways in which this transformative period of experimentation influenced Godard's later film and multimedia work, especially his montage practice. Following this, through reference to Schaeffer's writing on radio and cinema, Chapter 2 performs a new analysis of the soundtrack in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*. It concentrates on the organisation of music and the role of voice, probing the significance of the aural presence of the French writer-filmmaker Marguerite Duras and examining the interplay between Gabriel Yared's electronic theme music and an extract from an operatic aria. Godard's 1979 video scenario, *Scénario de Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (*Scenario for Sauve qui peut (la vie)*), will also enhance our understanding of some of the formal components that underlie the feature film it accompanies.

Chapter 3 begins by considering the musical metaphors that pervade another of Godard's video scenarios, *Scénario du film Passion* (*Scenario of the Film Passion*) (1982), leading to a discussion of Maurice Ravel's piano concertos in the lavish 1982 feature *Passion*. Here I examine two scenes of listening in an analysis shaped by Carolyn Abbate's theory of the musical 'unsung' voice in nineteenth-century opera and instrumental music. I show how two unobtrusive musical interludes separate themselves from the rest of the film, becoming imbued with a magnetic and emotive charge. These ideas are extended in my reading of *Prénom Carmen* (*First Name Carmen*) (1983), another celebrated feature. Here I draw on Sergei Eisenstein's thinking on audio-visual montage, and specifically his concept of a 'poetry of graphics' and a 'music for the eyes', to explore the pictorial associations during the 'Rodin' love scenes, between the film image, the entwining of sonic textures and the visual appearance of Beethoven's musical score.

The discussions offered in Chapter 4 draw on Deborah Mawer's penetrating studies of Ravel's ballet repertory. In the short film *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (*Letter to Freddy Buache*) (1981), the spectator sees Godard listening to Ravel's *Boléro*. He later performs a critical splice that short-circuits the music's metaphorical breakdown, taking us to the heart of his thinking on cinema's documentary function. Then, turning to the vibrant video

short *Puissance de la parole* (*The Power of Words*) (1988), I suggest that Godard constructs a disruptive and violent intermedial space where past and future meet. My analysis unravels the structural similarities between the recorded music and two paintings by Francis Bacon. Chapter 5 examines the peculiar dream sequence of the catwalk parade in another video, *On s'est tous défilé* (*We All Ran Away*) (1987), before considering Catherine Ringer's vocal performance in *Soigne ta droite: Une place sur la terre* (*Keep Your Right Up: A Place on Earth*) (1987). Here I focus on one entrancing acousmatic instance when Ringer's singing voice migrates from the body, extends beyond the site of the recording studio and is effectively projected into visual space. Drawing on Gaston Bachelard's work on the poetic imagination, and on Simon Emmerson's and Denis Smalley's theorising of acousmatic sound and space, I reveal how this fleeting musical act of montage is also inextricably bound up with Godard's historical thinking on the ethics of representation, which I examine in relation to Jacques Rivette's 1961 essay 'De l'Abjection' ('On Abjection'). Finally, giving prominence to the inimitable use of slow-motion sound, the third part of the chapter unveils the significance of Virginia Woolf's experimental novel *The Waves* (1931) in Godard's *King Lear* (1987), in conjunction with several drastically distorted passages from Beethoven's late string quartets.

Chapter 6 is split between a discussion of a scene from the film essay *JLG/JLG: Autoportrait de décembre* (*JLG/JLG: December Self-Portrait*) (1995) and a close analysis of the sound design in *Nouvelle vague* (*New Wave*) the CD soundtrack (1997). First, I draw on Ludwig Wittgenstein's aesthetics of music to offer a new analysis of the musical gesture of self-portraiture in *JLG/JLG*, before turning to Godard's tribute to Henri Langlois in episode 3B, *Une vague nouvelle* (*A New Wave*) of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Here I probe Godard's references to F.W. Murnau's silent film *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* (1927), before segueing into a commentary on *Nouvelle vague*, inspired by Claire Bartoli's fascinating concept of 'internal cinema'. The whole chapter is framed by Chion's and Altman's contrasting ways of theorising the soundtrack phenomenon, which I compare with Schaeffer's early three-part article on the subject.

Chapter 7 delves into the 2010 feature *Film socialisme* to discuss Godard's manipulation of what Brandon LaBelle terms the 'ethical

volumes' of silence and noise, while also reflecting critically on global politics, art and culture, inspired by Chantal Mouffe's thinking on agonistic public space. Then, drawing on a conversation between Godard and the Armenian filmmaker, film essayist and theorist Artavazd Pelechian, during which the filmmakers discuss the 'ancient language' of cinema, we finish with a commentary on the intrinsic musicality of Godard's 3D feature, *Adieu au langage* (*Goodbye to Language*) (2014). I highlight points of comparison between Godard's film and Jean Mitry's film essay *Images pour Debussy* (*Images for Debussy*) (1951), referring also to Germaine Dulac's 1929 silent film essay, *Étude cinégraphique sur une arabesque* (*Cinegraphic Study of an Arabesque*). Through reference to André Bazin's review of Mitry's film, I suggest ways in which *Adieu au langage* is made meaningful via its mode of thinking historically about French experimental and 3D filmmaking. Ultimately, I argue that Godard's 'adieu' to language sees language not destroyed but transformed into a uniquely cinematic form of rhythmic sensuous speech.

The book concludes with a Coda that touches on the productiveness and longevity of Godard's collaborative approach to sound design, which is founded on a process of sharing, searching, recording, listening, and listening again. My final example in the Codetta tackles Godard's 3D short *Les trois désastres* (*The Three Disasters*) (2013) that forms part of the portmanteau film *3X3D* (2013) comprising shorts by Peter Greenaway, Godard and Edgar Pêra. I suggest that it is through the acoustical thinking of an active ear that the spectator of Godard's post-1979 multimedia work is encouraged to participate in a form of ethical listening, attuned to the realities of the contemporary world. Whilst this book records just one exploratory auditory journey through the soundscapes of Godard's late work, as it progresses it confirms that the more one attends to sound in film, the more one realises that thinking film acoustically means thinking spectatorship differently.

1

The Evolution of a New Sound Cinema

Contemporary film music studies as a discipline has developed significantly since Claudia Gorbman's landmark book *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (1987),[1] which draws special attention to some of the central issues concerning the different ways that music signifies in narrative film. As Gorbman herself reiterates, however, her study does not engage with documentaries, experimental film or with the genre of the film musical. If music guides the spectator's perception of a narrative, as Gorbman proposes, what happens when the process of telling or indeed experiencing a story in the usual sense is not of prime importance? Despite the flourishing of scholarship on film sound that has gone from strength to strength since the 1990s, commentators are still reluctant to address sound's contribution to the spectator's sensory experience in non-traditional filmic forms and styles. By not flinching at the lack of straightforward dialogue or recoiling at the absence of a clear plot, and by embracing instances when one's usual sense-making processes are tipped off balance, we gain access to a plethora of expressive nuances that give form to a different picture.

Godard and Sound is largely underpinned by Pierre Schaeffer's phenomenological theory of the acousmatic condition. The reason for this

is that part of Schaeffer's work in this area greatly influenced the thought of Michel Chion, whose theories still serve today as the main reference point for many film sound scholars. However, often only a small portion of Schaeffer's wide-ranging writings is taken forward and applied across disciplines relating to audio-visual media. Furthermore, I discovered that despite Chion's major contribution to film sound scholarship, his treatment of Godard's post-1979 work is unnecessarily limited in scope. There is no mention of Godard's long-standing collaborations with the sound recordist and mixer François Musy, or with the German record producer Manfred Eicher.[2] The evolving theories that Godard develops on film history, projection and montage, including the crucial body of work produced through the 1970s with his foremost collaborator, Anne-Marie Miéville, are entirely discounted. These findings contributed to my desire to explore Schaeffer's own theoretical writings further, the better to understand the potential of his untapped ideas to expand the scope of film theory and criticism. Schaeffer's avant-garde compositions and writings in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s were inspired by phenomenological thought, initially via the ideas of Étienne Souriau and Paul Claudel, as well as by André Malraux.[3] The work of Claudel and Malraux also made its mark on Godard's 1960s filmmaking, informing his later discourse on montage. The techniques and theories that Schaeffer pioneered during the twentieth century shifted the study of sound and music into radically new territory, and for these reasons they deserve a closer look.

Acousmatic sound and Pierre Schaeffer

Before being adopted by Schaeffer, the term 'acousmatic' was first used in the 1950s by the French poet and writer Jérôme Peignot to capture the experience of listening to *musique concrète* or concrete music, a term established by Schaeffer to describe music created directly from recorded sound. The sound theorists and composers Simon Emmerson and Denis Smalley explain how '[i]n acousmatic music, which exists in recorded form and is designed for loudspeaker listening, the listener perceives the music without seeing the sources or causes of the sounds. Acousmatic music thus ruptures traditional notions of music reception'.[4] For Schaeffer, when the source of a

sound is hidden from view, listening habits are challenged because listeners are urged to concentrate on the sound content itself, rather than on its worldly cause.

Some of Schaeffer's most original ideas on concrete music are presented in his playful Proustian-inspired text, written in diary form between 1948 and 1952, titled *À la recherche d'une musique concrète* (*In Search of a Concrete Music*). In his first diary, Schaeffer explains his method of producing unique fragments of sound matter. When an object is struck, we hear the initial 'attack' along with the resulting resonance that enables us to identify the sound's source. Schaeffer's manner of *interfering with* recorded sound by severing it from its point of attack constitutes the 'generative act' of concrete music.[5] In these early writings, Schaeffer outlines the process involved in creating what he calls a 'sound object'. First, the operator uses a disc cutter to isolate a 'sound fragment' from a recording. This fragment 'has neither beginning nor end'; it is 'a sliver of sound isolated from any temporal context, a clean-edged time crystal, made of time that now belongs to no time',[6] a little like the impression of fluidity and framelessness produced by slow-motion video imagery. Separated from its source and repeated, Schaeffer's nascent sound fragment becomes a veritable sound object.

Schaeffer's method of composing with sound involved montage and cut-up techniques. He experimented with cassette tape, turntables, playing speed, repetition and techniques of reversal and recombination. In his diaries, Schaeffer also suggests that future technical research should exploit the possibility of 'transforming the gesture in music' via the brain of the concrete music composer, whose task is to perform a kind of intuitive 'intellectual gymnastics' through the cutting and pasting of different sound types, in lieu of the hard-working muscles of real-life human performers.[7] If in a traditional concert setting the musicians' physical gestures are on display as they perform, in an acousmatic performance the listener's 'visual access to gestures of sound-making' is denied.[8] Schaeffer goes on to proclaim: 'let composers of concrete music strive, as Denis de Rougemont advises, to "think with their hands"'.[9] Schaeffer's passing reference to the Swiss thinker Denis de Rougemont, and especially to his 1936 text *Penser avec les mains* (*Thinking with Your Hands*), strikes a chord with the frequent

aural and visual allusions to the same text by de Rougemont in Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma*.

From 1960 until 1974 Schaeffer directed the Service de la Recherche of the Radiodiffusion et Télévision Française (RTF).[10] The RTF's activities were split between research and production, including television programme development and musical research.[11] The years 1970 and 1972 saw the publication of Schaeffer's two-volume book *Machines à communiquer* that tackles the effect of mass media on contemporary society and audiovisual culture. During the 1960s, Schaeffer also devoted himself to advancing his theories of acousmatic sound and reduced listening (when we listen strictly to the essential morphological qualities of a sound apart from its source). His ambitious *Traité des objets musicaux: Essais interdisciplines* (*Treatise on Musical Objects: Essays Across Disciplines*) (1966), published, incidentally, when video technology was becoming more readily available, comprises a detailed account of how to understand music, sound and the role of the listener outside the accepted parameters of traditional music theory.[12]

The major discovery that Schaeffer discusses in the *Traité* is the sound object, which first caught his attention when the needle of a phonograph became stuck in a groove on a record. He noticed how a sound that is continually repeated starts to drift from its aural context to become an independent sound phenomenon, endowed with specific qualities. Interestingly, Schaeffer likens the exciting transformation that occurs when a sound is continually repeated to the visual effects of slow motion and magnification that a filmmaker can produce with a camera. As if to foresee Godard and Miéville's later experiments with speed variation, Schaeffer notes that faces, objects and movements, unnoticed or ill-perceived by the human eye, can be experienced anew through the eye of the camera, allowing something different to be seen.[13] In 1966, Schaeffer thus forges a prescient link between the work of the filmmaker and that of the concrete music composer, a link he had already made over a decade earlier in 1954.[14]

Brian Kane has explored the influence of phenomenology on Schaeffer's ideas, particularly those set out in the *Traité*. Contrary to other scholars, Kane argues that Schaeffer's self-defined method of 'doing phenomenology' is closer to the work of the German philosopher Edmund Husserl than to

that of French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[15] Husserl's theory of the *epoché*, to which Schaeffer refers in the *Traité*, is based on the bracketing of the immediate exterior world and the suspension of one's judgements about it, in order to observe and experience phenomena anew. Similarly, Schaeffer's practice of acousmatic reduction 'disorients and redirects listening by *reducing sounds to the field of hearing alone*'. The bracketing of a sound's visible source asks us to attend as objectively as possible to its 'essential characteristics'.[16] It is, however, vital to acknowledge Carlos Palombini's observation, unmentioned by Kane, that Schaeffer was not aware of Husserl's writings until 1960 and that, as I have indicated above, his early interest in phenomenology stemmed partly from the ideas of Souriau and Claudel. Palombini is careful to point out that the *Traité* is a sort of culmination of Schaeffer's prior writings, dating back to the early 1940s. In view of this, the ideas that Schaeffer articulates in the *Traité* should not be read in isolation from his other texts and essays, since they have a rich history that is rooted in an interdisciplinary context.

Despite this, Kane's critique of the stringency of what he considers Schaeffer's ahistorical theory of the acousmatic condition helps him to advance an approach to acousmatic sound that emphasises its creative potential by way of its enigmatic, poetic and unsettling qualities. To achieve this, Kane privileges what he terms 'sonic incongruousness' and a sound's 'acousmaticity', rather than focusing solely on either the pure sonic effect or on a sound's worldly cause.[17] By refusing to treat acousmatic experience in binary terms, Kane develops a versatile theoretical stance that takes advantage of the lingering in-between-ness of the acousmatic condition. The everyday experience of acousmatic listening, which, as Kane highlights, preceded the invention of recording technology as well as the term 'acousmatic' itself, is practised frequently by film spectators, whose attention is intermittently pulled towards the alluring spacing between hearing and vision. This is certainly the case when we encounter Godard's films, which slip and slide teasingly between the heard, the seen, the unseen, and the unknown.

Prior to the completion of *À la recherche d'une musique concrète* and the *Traité*, Schaeffer had already written formative articles on radio and cinema. His first articles on radio appeared in the *Revue musicale* in 1938 and

in 1941–2 he devoted himself to his unpublished and unfinished 'Essai sur la radio et le cinéma' ('Essay on the radio and the cinema'). As Palombini stresses, this is a complex text that contains the seeds of Schaeffer's later theory of the sound object. It is inspired by a variety of sources, including Malraux's 'Esquisse d'une psychologie du cinéma' ('Sketch for a Psychology of the Moving Pictures') (1940), an article that also informed Godard's thinking on cinema, montage and history. Palombini reveals that Schaeffer read widely on philosophy, literature, linguistics, radio and cinema. He also conversed with writers, poets, politicians and critics, including Roger Leenhardt, Jean Masson, Émile Vuillermoz, Leon-Gontran Damas and Malraux himself. He recorded these conversations in a diary, on which he drew as he drafted the essay.[18] Then, in 1946, the year after Merleau-Ponty delivered his first lecture on cinema, 'Le cinéma et la nouvelle psychologie' ('The Film and the New Psychology'), Schaeffer's three-part article on the soundtrack appeared in *La Revue du cinéma* under the title 'The Non-Visual Element of Cinema'.[19] The first part, 'Analysis of the "Soundtrack"', focuses on the different components of the soundtrack, while the second part tackles the music-image relation and the third concerns the perceptual processes of hearing and seeing.

Nicola Bizzaro suggests that what sets Schaeffer apart from other film sound scholars is his minimal interest in the narrative component of cinema and his enthusiasm for 'forms of composition that experimented with the audiovisual texture, partially freed from the obligations imposed by film narration'.[20] This sensitivity to texture and rhythm is apparent in Part 1 of his article on the soundtrack, where Schaeffer states that the spoken word should be treated as a raw sonic material and not as a cohesive text to be recited by an actor from a script. He also criticises the 'modern comfort' of film music, which he likens to air conditioning, bemoaning the overwhelmingly unimaginative nature of contemporary cinema.[21]

Schaeffer's reflections in this article on film sound offer a different perspective on Altman's later cogent critique, in 1980, of the marginalisation of the soundtrack. Altman contends that the repression of 'the scandal of theatrical language', with its emphasis on dialogue and representation, was carried out by early filmmakers and critics who stubbornly resisted the

coming of sound, especially sync sound. Determined to preserve 'the purity of their "poetic" medium', these filmmakers minimised the effect of intertitles and rejected the 'direct transcription of dialogue'.[22] Yet Schaeffer's terse comments on the harmful influence of theatre and the novel on cinema are accompanied by an enthusiasm for the suggestive *sound* of speech (for example, the power of intonation and the graininess of voice). Schaeffer's ideas on sound in cinema demonstrate that a disdain for language does not automatically imply a rejection of sound and a privileging of the visual image. Rather, what concerns him most is the overarching dominance of the semantic content and sequential medium of language, over and above the poetic potency of non-verbal forms of expression.

Godard's early sonic experiments

Before we consider the period directly preceding the release of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* it is important to reflect on Godard's groundbreaking sound editing practices in his New Wave cinema. In her study of Godard's 'intertextual' soundtrack in *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*) (1960), Ramona Fotiade pinpoints an array of innovative techniques deployed in the film, such as the radical use of sound-image disjunction that broke with conventions of narrative continuity. She also highlights the 'documentary' treatment of a 'fiction film soundtrack' through the levelling of dialogue and ambient sound that promoted a new type of 'aural "realism"'.[23] Fotiade observes that *À bout de souffle*, Godard's first feature, depended on post-synchronisation rather than direct sound recording and it was not until 1961 in *Une femme est une femme* that Godard first used synchronised sound.[24] She also makes the crucial point that the revolutionary experiments with sound undertaken by Godard and his New Wave comrades did not *result from* new developments in sound technology but their unprecedented shooting methods, such as the necessity of lightweight, portable sound cameras, actually hastened advances in filmmaking technology.[25]

In 1962, the year of *Vivre sa vie*, Jean Collet published a short article in *La Revue du son* applauding the 'extremely audacious experiment' of this film's soundtrack, which was recorded live and mixed during the shoot, on a single track. Collet singles out the intrusive background noise and

the recording of dialogue in busy locations. Godard was dedicated to the real, he notes, not to the realistic. Just as Raoul Coutard, Godard's cinematographer, had to abandon French cinema's hailed tradition of 'beautiful photography', the sound engineer, Guy Villette, had a similar task on his hands. During the cafe and street scenes where the ambient sound was markedly louder, Godard and Villette were limited in the equipment that was available to them. Villette had to rely on AKG–D.25 or Neumann-type microphones, which were less directional than those available in US studios at that time. One of Godard's dictums, Collet remarks, was 'apply to sound the same demands as for the picture. Capture life in what it offers to be seen – and to be heard – *directly*'.[26] Godard refused to stray from his own rules, treating the microphone as he treated the camera by allowing it to capture 'what it hears' and enabling instances of 'unexpected beauty' in the everyday to come to the fore.[27]

Collet's early study of *Vivre sa vie* was later extended by Royal S. Brown who examines the film's non-diegetic musical extract composed by Michel Legrand. Brown notes that Godard had initially asked Legrand to compose a theme and 11 variations to echo the construction of the film. However, the result differed from these early plans because Godard decided to whittle down Legrand's score to a mere 12-bar fragment, which operates, like the film itself, as a 'closed loop capable of indefinite repetition and manipulation'. It is the image-track, Brown suggests, that provides new angles from which to hear this musical object – the 'microstructure' within the 'macro-musical structure' of the film.[28] Other films to be noted for their distinctive treatment of sound include *Pierrot le fou* (1965), for its novel restructuring of Antoine Duhamel's score, and *Alphaville, une étrange aventure de Lemmy Caution* (1965).[29] In *Alphaville* I am thinking of the disembodied voice of the omnipotent computer Alpha 60. Godard achieved the strange quality of this voice not by using 'special effects' per se but by asking a man with a mechanical voice box, whose larynx had been damaged by cancer, to read Alpha 60's lines.[30]

For Jacques Aumont, music in Godard's New Wave cinema comes to life through its absence, that is, through a method of discontinuity and through the omnipresence of noise. When a musical passage is brutally cut, or drowned out mid-phrase by ambient sound, it is partially released

from its context to be transformed into something else.[31] A similar effect can be achieved with dialogue. For example, David Wills describes how at the start of *Week-end* (1967), Corinne's (Mireille Darc) voice becomes lost in the menacing music, composed of lengthy, static harmonies. During her distant and nervous opening monologue, her speech is intermittently replaced by rumbling music, which brings about an 'indistinctness' of voice and produces an effect of 'imprecision' as her words disappear in 'a generalized space of excess'. The resulting effect of such auditory excess immerses the spectator aurally in the eroticism of Georges Bataille's novel, *Histoire de l'oeil* (*Story of the Eye*) (1928), to which this episode alludes.[32] Aumont's observation also strikes a chord with Gorbman's assertion that in *Vivre sa vie*, Godard is forever drawing attention to the score by denying the musical statement of its closure. Similarly, she adds, in *Bande à part* (*Band of Outsiders*) (1964) Godard places emphasis on sound through a clever use of 'nondiegetic silence' (when the soundtrack is muted).[33] In one scene, the soundtrack cuts to silence for just over 30 seconds at the very moment when the characters decide to hold 'a minute of silence'. Whilst to an extent the spectator's listening experience in the hushed auditorium imitates that of the characters, the characters are, by contrast, seated in a noisy café and the spectator cannot hear the clamour that surrounds them. The acoustic environment in the film is replaced and re-imagined by the spectator's personal version of the 'silence' that the characters construct. Both parties are together forced to feel this sudden auditory shift physically, with their bodies, as the volume is turned up, so to speak, on the noisiness (or quietness) of the surrounding acoustic space.

Interestingly, just as Godard uses sound and silence to disrupt the narrative flow and to make the spectator conscious of the soundtrack, he also makes use of 'poetic inserts', described by Gorbman as the 'visual analogue of music's status as nondiegetic "interpreter" of diegetic events'.[34] A pertinent example of this occurs in *La Chinoise* (1967), a film whose soundtrack consists of a sparkling collage of eclectic musical styles and citations. Gorbman exemplifies the disruptive effect of the poetic insert through reference to Fritz Lang's 1936 film *Fury*: in one sequence, a close-up of clucking hens is inserted into a scene showing women gossiping, forming a 'grotesquely humorous comparison' between the gossiping women and

the 'cackling' birds.[35] In *La Chinoise*, Godard appears to make a passing reference to the same sequence by inserting a shot of chickens clucking in a farmyard, in a similarly derisive fashion, during Yvonne's (Juliet Berto) monologue about her life on the farm. The device of the poetic insert was used widely during the silent era by D.W. Griffith, Eisenstein and others, to comment on an aspect of the diegesis. It is perhaps Lang's use of this silent film device in the *sound* era that appealed to Godard, who, as we will see in the chapters that follow, frequently turns to the silent period as he attempts to construct a new kind of sound cinema.

As the decade neared its end, Godard ceased making commercial cinema and, following the upheavals of May 1968, he began to make films with the then young editor at *Le Monde* newspaper, Jean-Pierre Gorin, who became known for his collaborations with Godard under the newly formed Maoist film collective called the Dziga Vertov group, marking the start of a more militant and didactic phase in Godard's sound editing practice. It was during this period that Godard and Gorin first purchased video equipment and began to experiment with the technology. In his film essay *Le Gai Savoir* (*The Joy of Knowledge*) (1968), Godard had already started to explore the political relationship between sounds and images in a more direct fashion than he had previously done.[36] With reference to this film and those made by the Dziga Vertov group, Colin MacCabe points out that Godard's strategy of placing emphasis on the sound, foregrounding its difference and treating it as an equal, not as an enhancement to the image-track, was now a specifically political tactic employed to cut through, pull apart and reconfigure traditional cinema's 'fixed relation of dependence between sound-track and image'.[37]

The Sonimage years: Godard–Miéville's videographic thinking

In 1973, Godard and his partner, the photographer, writer and filmmaker Anne-Marie Miéville, founded their own production company, 'Sonimage'.[38] Miéville played a crucial role in this creative partnership, working as co-author, co-director and co-editor on almost all of the films produced by Sonimage. She went on to co-write and co-edit the pivotal feature, *Sauve*

qui peut (la vie), collaborate on *Scénario du film Passion*, co-write *Prénom Carmen* and work as Art Director on *Nouvelle vague* and *Notre musique*.[39] The period immediately preceding the release in 1979 of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* was important in shaping their approach to sound. The principal films produced by Sonimage were *Ici et ailleurs* (*Here and Elsewhere*) (1974, released in 1976), *Numéro deux* (*Number Two*) (1975), co-written by Miéville, *Comment ça va* (*How Is It Going?*) (1976) and the television series *Six fois deux (Sur et sous la communication)* (*Six Times Two (On and Under Communication)*) (1976), made for FR3, and *France tour détour deux enfants* (*France tour detour two children*) (1979), made for Antenne 2. Godard and Miéville set up a workshop of sounds and images where they could experiment with technical equipment acquired specifically for the Sonimage studios. Video was used as an instrument of thought and a critical tool of 'decomposition', capable of breaking down the editing and slowing down the filmmaking process, allowing for the comparison, deconstruction and analysis of sounds, images, structures and ideologies.

In Sonimage's first film, *Ici et ailleurs*, themes of power and communication are explored through metaphors of silence and noise. Godard–Miéville investigates the detrimental effects of television on cinema and on society more generally, suggesting that human subjects have been replaced by the 'noise' of the homogeneous images and sounds produced by the media and advertising.[40] The film is framed by the statement that we can no longer see or hear because the sound is too loud and it masks the reality. The concept of listening is politically and ethically loaded in *Ici et ailleurs* and it is interlinked with the need to slow down and attend to those voices masked by the cacophony of hegemonic belief systems. In his analysis of the critique of the press and television in the Sonimage films, Witt refers to the 'phatic circuits' of stasis or 'dead' communication that reproduce the stagnant chains of received ideas, clichés and accepted norms that inundate media societies. Sonimage doggedly fights against instances of 'blocked' communication and deploys strategies to counter it, including wordplay, hesitation and ellipsis, which come to the fore in *Numéro deux*, a film set on a housing estate that explores themes of sexuality, desire, the family unit, violence, and working-class oppression.

Throughout *Numéro deux*, music is associated with consumerism and politics, while dance is aligned with notions of revolution. Moments of tranquillity and respite occasionally break through the pervasive ambient backdrop. For example, in one scene we see Vanessa, her grandfather and her mother Sandrine listening to music through headphones. A single television monitor surrounded by blackness displays a video image of the family huddled together in the same shot. The grandfather holds some headphones to Vanessa's ear and they take it in turns to listen to Léo Ferré's forlorn 'Tu ne dis jamais rien', the music overflowing its private 'frame' as it penetrates the spectator's space.[41] As the scene terminates, the electronic screen-text morphs from 'MUSIC' into 'POLITICS'. If this episode presents us with traditional gender stereotypes (the grandfather occupies the centre of the frame, Vanessa brushes her doll's hair to the right and Sandrine files her nails to the left), it also constitutes one of the most poignant moments in the film. The music expresses sentiments of melancholy and hopelessness while generating feelings of relief from the stifling confinement evident in this 'picture-postcard' of family life. Music can act not only as a retreat but also as an alternative communal space, at a distance from the oppressive 'assembly line' ('USINE') operating within the family home.

Witt writes of the 'videographic intervention in television's planned flow' brought about by Godard and Miéville's use of altered motion in their later 12-part television series *France tour détour deux enfants*. Their use of altered motion, he contends, engenders 'a whole new vocabulary of gesture, movement, and corporal interaction', opening new approaches to dialogue, *mise-en-scène* and the recomposition of images and sounds, and reinvigorating their method of filmmaking in the following decade. Interestingly, Witt's description of the slow-motion sequences in this television series evokes Schaeffer's notion of the sound object – an isolated particle of pure sound. Witt writes:

> [s]tripped of sound and extracted from the material in which they are couched, the 19 altered motion sequences that puncture and complicate the smooth flow of *France/tour* constitute enormously potent self-contained, self-reflexive visual *essais* or

> *études* on the intertwined themes of human and audio-visual movement.[42]

Witt's analysis demonstrates how the effect of music, rhythm and silence in this series is closely allied with the surprise and beauty generated by the use of colour and the temporal manipulation of electronic imagery. If Schaeffer's sound object helps us to perceive sounds anew, then altered motion helps the spectator to perceive images anew.

An act of montage: the formation of a musical approach

Witt points out that from 1950 'Godard's career has unfolded in close parallel with developments in video technology' and his interest in using video as a tool for 'auto-critical political analysis' can be traced back to his plans for *La Chinoise*.[43] Godard's 1960s filmmaking also unfolded alongside significant developments in French music and sound theory, including the 1966 publication of Schaeffer's aforementioned *Traité*.[44] Moreover, contemporaneous with Godard's growing interest in the medium of video as a critical tool was Schaeffer's rendering of the tape recorder as a 'laboratory tool' for conducting research into the analysis of sound.[45] In 1966, Godard and Michel Delahaye conducted a lengthy interview with the French director Robert Bresson. During the interview, foreshadowing the insistence on listening in *Le Gai Savoir*, Godard alludes directly to the possibility of inverting the sound-image relationship: what would happen if the sounds were prioritised over the images? Bresson responds enthusiastically, stressing the inventive capacity of the ear compared to the eye.[46]

Also in 1966, the Armenian filmmaker Artavazd Pelechian made his second short film, *Zemlya Lyudey* (*Land of the People*). Pelechian later developed a sophisticated method of montage called 'distance montage' or 'contrapuntal montage'. In his major theoretical manifesto, 'Montage-at-a-Distance, or: A Theory of Distance' (1971–2), Pelechian explains how he envisages a film's musical structure from the very start of the creative process. Music constitutes 'the expression of an idea, which conveys, in its indissoluble unity with the visual, the meaning of the image'.[47] His films

are specifically musical in their design, assembled from a series of precise durations that affect the duration of the film as a whole. Like an architect, Pelechian is attentive to the proportions of a film as an audio-visual construct and to the preservation of its unique 'compositional time'.

Pelechian also expounds the differences between his concept of distance montage and the more linear classical montage principles in the films of Soviet directors Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov, with which his 1960s films are often compared. In contrast to the 'classical montage' of Eisenstein and Vertov, distance montage produces a spherical effect from a play of presence and absence achieved through repetition. Two associated shots are not juxtaposed but they are kept apart and are made to 'speak to each other across the whole chain of shots that links them'.[48] Daniel Fairfax observes: 'Given two montage elements which, due to what Pelechian calls their "imaged resonance (*obraznoe zvoutchanie*)", would have been brought together in Eisenstein's or Vertov's aesthetic systems, Pelechian seeks instead to "separate them by inserting between them a third, fifth or tenth element." '[49]

To better understand these differences, it is important to consider the relevance of counterpoint in Eisenstein's theory of audio-visual montage. As Robert Robertson points out, Eisenstein discovered music to be a useful analogy that would help him structure his montage method. The principles of counterpoint in music and the imitative texture of the fugue offered Eisenstein an ideal means of conceptualising the polyphonic combination of sound, music and film. Robertson notes that Eisenstein was especially attracted to the polyphonic simultaneity of the fugue, 'the vertical combinations of its multiple voices, both in terms of its actual meaning and its possibilities for structural analogies'.[50] These ideas informed his thinking on 'vertical montage' and the relation between visual and sonic progression and their interweaving. Whilst in his filmmaking practice, Pelechian is also concerned with the countrapuntal interaction between sound and image, the patterns of synthesis and tension established through their combination are dispersed across a far more expansive timescale.

The film critic François Niney has stressed that one of the main characteristics of Pelechian's montage technique is repetition: 'that magic by which the same becomes other'. Sounds and images become

interchangeable, teaching the spectator to listen and see in new and different ways. As Pelechian suggests, 'what you see, you must hear. And what you are supposed to hear, you must see.'[51] Interestingly, the relation between minimalist music and the unusual conjunction of music and image in Pelechian's films, has been noted by Gerald Matt, who points up the 'leitmotif-like ciphers that reappear in different places in his films but are separated by entire sequences and blocks of images'.[52] Pelechian says of distance montage: 'It's in continuous motion. If I find the system, if I construct it correctly, it will go, it evolves, and two processes will occur: you will go from the beginning of the film to the end *and* there will be a mirror effect; you will also go the other way.'[53] This description is redolent of repetitive music governed by gradual process, as well as compositional techniques of looping and reversibility in certain kinds of video art. The unpredictable rhythmic variations that repetitive music gives rise to, mirror the permutations and oscillations that Matt identifies in Pelechian's films, in which repetition never leads to 'the identical same but to a variational similarity'.[54]

The rhythms of early minimalist music have been linked by commentators to the uniform rhythms and teleology of post-1965 American network television.[55] Citing Richard Sennett's proposition that this type of music could figure as 'a transcendent redemption, a glimpse of "what television should be"', Robert Fink suggests that it does *not* simply reflect the repetitions of mass media. More so than television, minimalist music provides listeners with a 'meditative respite' from the rush of daily life but a respite that, crucially, 'the flow of television had prepared an entire culture to recognize'.[56] The repetitive patterns and compositional process of minimalist music, which was influenced by the work of contemporary visual artists, went on to inspire artists working in multimedia formats. We might think of Beryl Korot's pioneering 1970s video art and multiple-channel installations. Korot's experiments with non-linear, multiple temporalities and her interest in television as an alternative medium to US broadcast television production, resonate on a formal level with some of the aesthetic strategies deployed in Godard–Miéville's television work, especially in *France tour détour deux enfants* via the 12 musicalised 'movements' (not 'programmes') of this series.

Inspired by Merleau-Ponty's writing on cinema in *Sens et non-sens* (*Sense and Non-Sense*) and by Malraux's definition of art as 'the expression of significant relations between human beings, or between minds and things', Godard conceives of montage, as Witt has thoroughly demonstrated, as part of a more extensive method of 'making history' by way of 'the juxtaposition, or montage, of apparently unrelated situations and periods'. For Godard, he details, cinema is capable of recording and revealing 'the relations between disparate phenomena and between people and the world'.[57] As will become clear in Chapters 2 and 3 of this book, the montage theories of Vertov and Eisenstein reoccur as major reference points throughout Godard's later work. Yet the expansive temporality and the circular nature of Pelechian's distance montage also offers, like repetitive music, a different experience of rhythm, teleology and pleasure that sheds light on Godard's evolving approach to sound film, one indelibly marked by the formal experiments with video, television and speed alteration that he carried out with Miéville in the 1970s.

If the medium of video offered Godard a means of seeing and thinking cinema and its history anew, it simultaneously enabled the logic of montage to come to the fore as a guiding artistic and critical force, shot through with an important acoustical dimension that never ceases to engage the spectator's historical ear. Snippets of music, sound and speech are incorporated into Godard's post-1979 films, videos and soundtracks with more buoyancy, acuity and fluidity than in his New Wave cinema, presenting a more elastic temporality. Perceived as merely arbitrary, or intricately constructed, the arrangement of sounds and images boast a unique compositional style that showcases the infinite permutations of the organisation of cinematic material.

2

Constructing Voices

Sauve qui peut (la vie) (1979) and *Scénario de Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (1979)

> One breath disperses the boundaries of the hearth.[1]
>
> Arthur Rimbaud

'Sauve qui peut (la vie) copyright 1979 Sonimage' is written in black typeface over a lengthy pan of cloud and blue sky and is accompanied by the proliferating electronic theme music that was commissioned especially for the film, composed by Gabriel Yared. As stated in the credit titles, this film was not directed but it was *composed by* Godard ('a film composed by Jean-Luc Godard'). In both design and intent *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* constitutes an explicitly musicalised audio-visual form marked by its 18 instances of speed variation, which constitute the film's most breathtaking, invigorating and most brutal moments. At times, the impulsive altered-motion sequences work to isolate chaotic zones of bodily contact, eliciting from the spectator an intensely visceral reaction. At other times, they generate more moving and tender sensory experiences. By considering the activity of listening, the complex manipulation of voice and music and the mutations of speed, this chapter analyses the film's organisation of space and time, with a focus on its intriguing allusions to several key developments in the history of recorded sound: sound and, crucially, an elusive singing

voice, are literally made to travel. Indeed, the whole film springs from the implicit act of tuning the silent vibrations of the airwaves, moving from static or perhaps cosmic noise into sonorous form at a frequency within reach of the human ear.

At the heart of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* lies the desire to recover the off-beat rhythms and idiosyncrasies in basic human actions that have been smoothed over by the temporal regularities of television programming and commercial cinema. In an article published in 1980 on the film, Godard comments on the exciting potential of altered motion. He remarks:

> today with rhythm, everything stays the same, we give someone a kiss at the same pace as we climb into a car, or as we buy a loaf of bread. I think that there are infinite worlds to be discovered but the cinema doesn't allow us to explore them easily, given its commercial condition, not without the pretext of a grand theme.[2]

Godard notes that the spontaneous and irregular life of the body was expressed in the silent era through the rehearsed acts of silent film actors (he lists Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Harry Langdon as examples). Whilst to Godard's disappointment, the altered-motion sequences in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* had to be integrated into the film after shooting had been completed, they can nevertheless be construed as a striking aesthetic experiment that indicates the creative potential lurking within familiar bodily movements, and confirming that 'there is something different to be seen' – new speeds, rhythms and hidden connections between characters, scenes, gestures and sounds.

Anne-Marie Miéville co-edited *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* and co-wrote the screenplay. As Witt has meticulously shown, Miéville played a decisive part in the shift from the severe political framework witnessed in the films that Godard made with the Dziga Vertov group, to an emphasis on the politics of the everyday, on the decentralisation of production and distribution, aided by a move from Paris via Grenoble to Miéville's hometown of Rolle on the shores of Lake Geneva, and on the formation of a dedicated collaborative practice that united work, love and a way of life.[3] From 1973, when the Sonimage studios were established, until the production

company's official dissolution in 1981, an extensive array of material was produced that incorporated the findings of their formal and technological experiments with video, tape speed alteration and slow motion. Although *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* was co-produced by Sonimage and shares some of the political resonances that were previously brought to the fore, it is important to remember that this film operates at a distance from any set of determined political allegiances. The real zeal generated in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* derives from an insistence on emotion, immediacy and physical exchange, aspects that are initially prompted by and later questioned and deepened through music.

Video, Vertov and Schaeffer

Some of the film's most innovative formal aspects are explored in the self-contained *Scénario de Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, best described, as Dubois suggests, as a stand-alone sketch, made on video, that comments on key aspects of the film.[4] Godard and Miéville use video as a tool that enables them to think *in* images. In the video scenario, Godard demonstrates how continuity is created by plunging from one image into another, snubbing the conventional shot/reverse shot editing principle, thereby forcing dialogue to pass elsewhere and to emerge from what he terms 'the silence of speed'. This electrifying phrase describes the visual and temporal alterations that result from the video techniques of slow motion and superimposition, which transform the image into a pliable recording surface. Furthermore, the image of a musical score mixed with a shot of Godard operating his typewriter, which appears near the start of the video scenario, calls to mind an episode in Vertov's experimental documentary *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), in which a typewriter keyboard is associated with the keys on a piano. The cinematic devices showcased in Vertov's film, including stop-action, slow-motion, freeze-frames and superimpositions, resonate rhythmically with those deployed in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* and especially with those in the accompanying video scenario.

In another scene in *The Man with a Movie Camera*, we see Elizaveta Svilova (the film editor) at work in the cutting room. Under a low-hanging light, we see her studying frozen images from the film, consisting of

close-ups of the faces of women and children smiling and laughing. Svilova then cuts the strip of film as it moves across the black wheel of the editing table (we see her hand and a pair of scissors). This sequence reminds us of Godard–Miéville's collaborative activities in the Sonimage studio, where video technology was used to analyse and criticise images and sounds through the technique of decomposition.[5] Like Godard in the video scenario, Vertov manifests the filmmaking process by showing Svilova, his collaborator and partner, at work in the studio, effectively *making* the film in front of us as it unfolds.

At the end of the video scenario, the different trajectories of the three protagonists are linked, via a smooth panning shot, to the idea of music *passing into* the image. A televised sequence showing a full orchestra mid-performance playing Schumann's *Piano Concerto in A minor* (Op. 54) is faded in and out over shots of a field (*un champ*) of crops, recalling the Vertovian ideology of production, labour and the machine. This archetypal concert-hall performance leads into a reference to hell that closes the video and is haunted by memories of the voice of Arthur Rimbaud, whose acerbic poem 'Démocratie' ('Democracy') from *Illuminations* (1886), which charts the West's colonial quest of exploitation, corruption and recklessness under the pretence of 'democracy', was silently relayed through the electronic screen-text near the start. Like an echo of the Sonimage films, particularly *Numéro deux*, this contained televised spectacle of classical music that literally floods the 'field' of vision (*le champ visuel*), is connected to Godard–Miéville's prior ideas on the overwhelming domination of cinema by the homogenising rhythms of television.

In his writing on the scientific legacy of Godard–Miéville's work with video during the 1970s, Witt underlines the important influence of Étienne-Jules Marey's study of animal and bodily processes, his development of the photographic rifle and his pioneering work in chronophotography, a technique involving the decomposition of movement into a series of perceivable segments that could then be reproduced on a single photographic surface.[6] Witt also places emphasis on the influential montage methods of Vertov, stating that by the end of the 1970s, Godard was directly concerned with forging a new approach to sound cinema: 'Godard spoke explicitly at the end of the 1970s of having embarked on a conscious

journey through the silent period in a quest for a fresh mode of sound filmmaking.'[7] Vertov's political conception of montage was guided by the principles of kino-eye, which initially set out to deploy the camera as a superhuman 'high-speed' eye, and as a 'microscope and telescope of time'.[8] However, before kino-eye was conceived of in visual terms, Vertov, who was already editing gramophone recordings and had become interested in documentary sound, expressed a desire to 'photograph' everyday sounds in order to edit and organise them.

In a diary entry from 1942, Vertov concretised his definition of the sound film: 'An audiovisual film is not the mechanical combination of a radio-film and a silent film, but the uniting of both so that independent existence of image or sound line is eliminated.' In this definition, image and sound recording are inseparable, resulting in a synthetic 'third composition', which Vertov here terms a 'volumetric, crystalline form',[9] stating also that the film's content should exist simultaneously in the music. A year later, in Paris, Schaeffer established the Studio d'Essai of the Radiodiffusion Nationale to experiment with radio production. In his essay on radio and cinema (dated 1941–2), and inspired by the ideas of Walter Benjamin and Malraux among others, Schaeffer discusses the exciting aesthetic and scientific possibilities of the 'relay-arts' and compares and contrasts the unique properties that unite and divide the two art forms:

> they [the cinema and the radio] are not only capable of establishing the forms of an object or those of a noise, or of a voice, but they are capable of acting, as we have seen, upon the dimensions, the movement, the proportions of this object. If language dominates the abstract domain, the cinema and radio have real power over the concrete domain.[10]

These ideas stand as important forerunners to his subsequent research into noise, his pioneering tape compositions and the birth of *musique concrète* along with a detailed theory of listening.

An integral part of Schaeffer's theoretical writings is the concept of the acousmatic, whereby one hears a sound without seeing its originating worldly cause, forcing listeners to hear differently by focusing on the sonorous form itself: 'bracket out the instrument and the cultural

conditioning, and *let us be confronted with sound and its musical "possibility"*'.[11] What is evoked to great effect in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* through its puzzling flirtations with diegetic and non-diegetic sound is the powerful capacity of the acousmatic condition to reshape the spectator's sense of the familiar. However, as Kane is careful to point out, it is the *acousmaticity* of a sound and not merely the disintegration of habit, which produces its unsettling quality: it is the impossibility of sound's total autonomy – the 'nearly-*but-not-quite*-autonomous auditory effect' – that conjures feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, which can be put to creative use.[12]

Fittingly, the film is structured around a whole string of telephone calls, with one key location being the Radio Télévision Suisse studios where Denise Rimbaud (Nathalie Baye) and Paul Godard (Jacques Dutronc) work. Distance and transportation are stressed throughout, whether via the buzzing interruption of cyclists passing, the random interference of a train speeding through a station, or via radio, telephone calls or flights of the imagination. As we will see, the spaces traversed and elided in simple acts of transmission are accentuated as the film shifts from, following Douglas Kahn's outline, the relational space of vibration, through the comforting but fragile anchor of inscription, to high-speed wireless transmission.[13] The intermittent confusion that arises when characters nonchalantly question the source of the music they can hear ('What's that music?'), instantly binds with the spectator's own sense of befuddlement as to the music's location and identity, jarringly converting her/him from a passive to an active listener.

It must also be noted that in drawing attention to the theme music's ambiguous relationship with the narrative, Godard is explicitly weaving himself into a tradition in French cinema, aligning himself with the likes of Jean Vigo, René Clair, Jean Grémillon, Marcel Carné and Julien Duvivier among others, all of whom, as Gorbman has highlighted, purposefully exploit the diegetic/non-diegetic ambiguity in film music.[14] However, Godard is not simply creating this perspectival confusion as part of a conspicuous counter-narrative strategy. Rather, in destabilising the sound perspective and unsettling the spectator's sense of 'spatial integrity', thus termed by Gorbman, he crafts with Miéville a poetic conception of sound cinema based on a musical framework that necessarily causes a shift in the spectator's perception of audio-visual space.

The film's musical foundation

This film looks back to the problematic status of the human body and voice in early sound cinema, and to the anaesthetising reliance on audio to shore up the realist illusion and maintain the fantasy of a unified self. The human subject's struggle with time blights the ebb and flow of the protagonists' relationships with others, with society's norms and with the physical landscape in which they live and act. For Denise, it is a matter of getting out of time and searching for a more habitable terrain, while for Paul it is a question of falling out of sync with the world in a way that threatens to eradicate any potential point of contact and return. For Isabelle (Isabelle Huppert), though, it is a case of negotiating the dehumanising pulse of the capitalist machine. Jacques Maumont, the sound technician for *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, was perplexed by Godard's basic approach to the organisation of sound. For instead of conceiving of sound in terms of 'height' (*en hauteur*), creating a vertical stack of different tracks to be organised in the post-production phrase, in 1979, Godard was thinking 'lengthwise' (*en longueur*) with sound, working modestly with just two tracks.[15] A levelling of sound is therefore achieved in the manner of concrete music. The hierarchical privileging of dialogue over the other auditory elements is flattened out. Fragments of speech are replaced with fragments of music, and isolated noises, words and abrupt pauses are blended organically into the texture of the whole.

Although the film has received a lot of critical attention, with an important trio of articles published in a special issue of *Camera Obscura* (1982) that examine the presentation of violence, the pornographic and sexual difference, few readings have addressed the soundtrack, which has intrigued spectators and critics alike since its release. Kristin Thompson partially attributes the defective causal links in the film's narrative to the unusual audio arrangement. She asserts that the spectator's attention is often unexpectedly split between conflicting sounds, actions and locations: 'sound in general plays a tremendous role in rendering the film illegible – that is, difficult to grasp in the time allotted for perception.'[16] Arguing a little differently, I am suggesting that it is precisely the disjunction between the sound, the actions and locations that lends the film a distinctive aural coherence. Listening to the film as a piece of music unleashes a different, more tentative

meaning-making process and one that is not reducible to, or measured by, its adherence or resistance to a visually governed narrative.

In his discussion of the music in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, Richard Morris makes explicit the centrality of the operatic aria. Godard's refashioning of the vocal melody and orchestral accompaniment, he writes, 'serves forcibly to split the music open, so that the body of the film can be said to occupy an imaginary space *inside* the music'.[17] One of the most striking intertextual references in the film is Amilcare Ponchielli's dramatic opera *La Gioconda* (*The Ballad Singer*) (1876).[18] Yared composed 40 minutes of music for the film, consisting of a loose set of variations based on a four-bar phrase that was selected by Godard from the opera. This musical phrase features prominently in Gioconda's final-act aria, 'Suicide!' during which a striking descending arpeggio figure boldly prophesies death, accompanied by menacing accented minor chords (see Figure 2.1).

Yared worked on the score independently from Godard, who visited him from time to time to collect recordings of his work. Godard and Miéville then edited the film *to* these passages of music, lending the music a special structural significance.[19] Yared's music thus played a dynamic role from the outset, operating differently from the altered-motion sequences in the visuals that were integrated into the film after shooting had been completed. The theme music comes to function like a strange incantation that seeps into

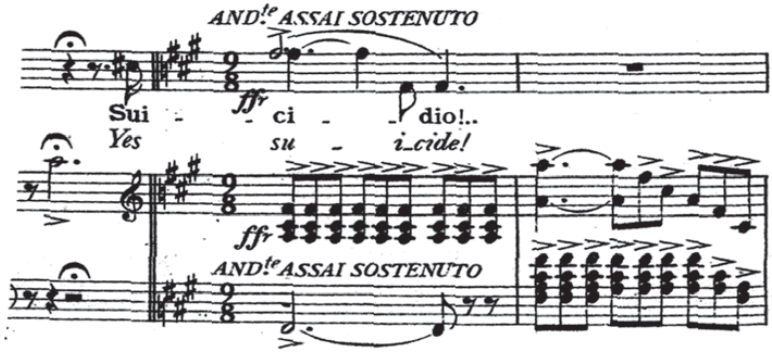


Figure 2.1 Aria from 'Act IV The Orfano Canal': Gioconda contemplates her death. This example shows the octave leap and the start of the descending accompanying figure.

the fiction and continually reinvents itself. For example, the electronic synth music associated with Denise parallels her free-wheeling, self-configured motion, full of nuanced inflections and jazzy flourishes, while for Isabelle it becomes a romantic piano waltz in a steady metre, reflecting her entrenchment in prostitution and the clogged-up structures of trade and commerce. The contrasting musical styles of each motif echo the links made in the video scenario between the three protagonists and their different trajectories: Denise moves *against* meaning, from the centre to the outskirts and towards 'the beyond'; Isabelle moves *with* meaning, from the margins to the centre; and Paul stays where he is. When they arise, the musical variations composed by Yared hover around the same tonal region (F# minor) as that of the first section of the final-act aria, which, as we shall see, is heard in part at both the beginning and end of the film.

In Ponchielli's opera, Gioconda is a ballad singer whose mother, La Cieca, to whom she is devoted, is blind. La Cieca is falsely accused of bewitchment and finally disappears, leading to her daughter's suicide, which is foreseen in the misery that pervades her grand aria, and it is this solo that is incorporated into the film, performed live by Monique Barscha. The lyricism and dark charm of this highly charged emotional passage, prised from its musical context, is filtered through the artificial audio-visual tracks of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*. Moreover, this particular cutting, that frames the majority of the film and is powerfully transfigured through the deliberate splitting apart of melody and accompaniment, comes to function much like an image itself. As the film closes it seems that the basic tenets of Eisenstein's concept of vertical montage, which he explains through comparison with a musical score, have been peculiarly appropriated.[20]

Filming the activity of listening

In a letter dated before the film's release, Godard comments on the nature of his project:

> direct sound, you ask, or its witness? And what if one were directly a witness. And what if while I was listening I recorded live

> the one listening, and not the one speaking. In order to film the one listening, does one need a Nagra or an Éclair?[21]

This tongue-in-cheek question gives prominence to the receptive body of the bystander. It also evokes the notion of 'an "active" receiver', thus characterised by Neil Verma to invoke the figure of the eavesdropper who listens in on conversations, unbeknown to the speaker.[22] Godard's remark echoes an observation made by Patricia (Juliet Berto) in *Le Gai Savoir*, who complains that 'in a film, we always see people talking, never listening', prefiguring the novel efforts made to capture this very process in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*.

Verma's work on eavesdropping is situated within the context of radio plays that were broadcast in the US between 1937 and 1955. He lists the eavesdropper, the ventriloquist and the signalman as three character archetypes who imitate the listener's 'synchronous overhearing' as the radio play unfolds. Verma notes that the presence of a third person in the listening situation means that 'messages are liable to go astray' as 'eavesdropping destabilizes the circuitry of the drama', with communication becoming 'an uncontrollable dispersion' that challenges the locus of the listener.[23] A little later, he asserts: 'While eavesdropping directs our attention at speech, that speech is the secondary business occurring in the scene. Eavesdropping is not dialogue, but action – the activity of listening.'[24] This statement is key because it positions the listener (and the spectator) as a co-creative participant in the drama, who is implicated specifically through the sense of hearing.

Chion has stressed that in commercial television, sound is a mandatory component. Yet if television is a kind of radio that prioritises sound, it privileges, above all, the spoken word: 'Television is fundamentally a kind of radio, "illustrated" by images. Television sound already has its established place, which is fundamental and mandatory (silent television is inconceivable, unlike cinema).'[25] In *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, the visible source of sound is constantly called into question, which weakens the fixed relation between sound and the frame that exists in cinema, hinting at the technical specificities that separate cinema from the electronic medium of video. At the same time, television's audio-visual conventions are contested

by Godard and Miéville through an emphasis not on the message of the speaker but on the activity of listening.

When Yared's non-diegetic music is first alluded to by Denise, who asks a waitress to identify it, she adds 'the music *there* we were listening to' and points through the window to the outside. In the second instance, an unnamed woman looks up and around to the space above, tuning in to the droplets of synthesised music, before asking the same question. In the third instance, the question is duly asked via voice-off while Isabelle turns the telephone dial. In his article on the early developments of electronic media, Erik Davis describes electricity as a force that straddles a material and otherworldly space. Alexander Graham Bell's invention of the telephone that was to translate 'the vibrating pressures of the human voice into an electrical signal that could pass along a wire', captivated the imagination of some, who believed they could pick up messages from the beyond.[26] In *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, the sparse musical phrases heard during two of the three fleeting moments when the question 'What's that music?' is posed, are versions of the electronic ascending figure that trickled through the artificial skies at the start. In this respect, the characters' bewilderment not merely mimics the spectator's state of disorientation and sensory confusion but suggests other means of rerouting habitual lines of communication via the activity of listening.

Trompe l'oeil and the *acousmêtre*

The opening of Rimbaud's cyclical poem 'Nocturne vulgaire' ('Tawdry Nocturne') resonates with the opening of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*: 'A single breath opens up operatic breaches in the walls, / blurs the swivelling movement of the eroded rooftops, – disperses / the boundaries of hearths, / eclipses the windows.'[27] After the opening credits, the lead-in sequence to the film forms a major part of its musical frame as we here experience the longest musical excerpt in the tampered form of a live *a capella* solo (stripped of its accompaniment) from Gioconda's desperate final-act aria, 'Suicide!' Once the camera has sketched its path over the cloudy blue sky of the first shot, it pulls us down, etching us into the suffocating narrow

Figure 2.2 Paul in his hotel suite in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1979)

interior of Paul's deluxe hotel suite, the quintessence of materialistic comfort and the chasm of the 'citta del diavolo!' (see Figure 2.2). This exclamation, uttered by the hotel porter, whose sexual advances Paul irately rejects, is heard twice off-frame and taints the accompanying shot of Denise who is surrounded by lush landscape.

As James S. Williams has suggested, the stray solo voices of both the soprano and porter that encroach on Paul's sonic territory testify to the ambivalent relationship between music and sexual disturbance demonstrated in other of Godard's films.[28] It is at first unclear whether the soprano voice is coming from the adjacent room, the radio or if it belongs to the non-diegetic realm, thus constituting what Chion describes as a speaking shadow, which he defines as an *acousmêtre*.[29] The powerful presence of Gioconda's death-laden voice is an acousmatic performance that traverses boundaries (the hotel walls), possesses its listener and continues its work in darkness. Moreover, since the singer is always at a distance from the camera, is obscured by shadow and is not explicitly remarked on by other characters, it is not difficult to overlook the visible spectacle of her act. The peculiar tragicomic mood of the sequence does not discount the possibility that the soprano singer is a mime actor or a ventriloquist's dummy.

Owing to the ambiguous originating source of the voice, the spectator's attention is drawn to what Verma calls the 'multiplicity of origination' that captivates listeners of radio plays and here enhances the singer's ambivalent identity, while in turn revealing the complexity intrinsic to any basic act of communication.[30]

Rimbaud's 'Nocturne vulgaire' begins with a metaphor for the birth of a vision, deploying the neologism 'opéradiques' to evoke an operatic spectacle. In both poem and film this creative gust opens a space of possibility that signals an oncoming storm. Rimbaud's derailing vision contains auditory patterns of alliteration and conjures moody images of intense colour. In Kahn's writing on inscription, he notes: 'While figures of vibration head for the heavens, figures of inscription pull sounds down to earth … One thing that attached inscripted sound to the earth's surface was its tie to technology.'[31] Kahn connects the figure of vibration to synaesthesia and highlights sound's lack of autonomy when caught up in the perpetual deflections of vibrational space. However, the fixed sonic object is vulnerable, and as exemplified visually through Roland Barthes's concept of the photographic spectre, it embodies death because the performer is no longer present.

Ponchielli's stabbing string chord accompaniment to Gioconda's aria is omitted and replaced by the sound of Paul's electric razor, which not only intrudes on the solo but anchors it to the whirring machinery of inscription. Verma's description of the pure 'sonorous object' of the classic radio play, subsequently copied, preserved and 'brought down to earth' using contemporary sound technology (cassette tapes, mp3 players, CDs), provides a fitting way to comprehend the swift metamorphosis of Gioconda's unaccompanied 'pure voice' into a disfigured 'sonorous thing'.[32] The displaced and hybridised soprano solo is soon fastened to the sound of Paul turning the telephone dial as the lyrics 'ultima voce' ring out from the beyond as he drolly asks for 'Denise Rimbaud' before banging on the wall aggressively to extinguish the foreign sounds.

A play of association quietly binds the opening disclosure of Godard's 'composer' status to Rimbaud's poetic voice. During this initial collision of music and poetry, Britten's song cycle *Les Illuminations* (1938–9), for high voice and string orchestra, which sets music to nine poems from

Figure 2.3 Paul passes the guest-singer on the escalator in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1979)

Rimbaud's collection of the same name, is also evoked. One might also think of Poulenc's fraught telephone opera, *La Voix humaine* (1948), written by Jean Cocteau and composed for the French soprano, Denise Duval. Yet if on first hearing Godard seems to treat his musical quotation as a mercurial image stripped of its history and able to morph through audio screens into other ephemeral forms, this is merely one aspect of the design. The emotive connotations carried by the aria, in addition to the pictorial significance of the score, are not simply bypassed but underlie the whole film in fundamental ways.

The climax of the aria, suitably fixated on the noun 'heaven', is reinforced in the image-track: when the high point of the aria is reached, Paul brushes past a guest on the escalator who is singing Gioconda's solo (see Figure 2.3). This moment comically stages Gioconda's death wish, enacting a cinematic word-painting of the melodic run that follows the dramatic peak of the phrase. The central 'on-stage' stairway, a crucial visual and structural device in opera, as well as the *trompe l'oeil* effect engendered by the guest singer's elusive visible presence, keeps the spectacle of opera, with its emphasis on costume, scenery and the visual *mise-en-scène*, at the forefront of the spectator's mind.[33]

A fascinating correspondence is established between this scene and the culminating sequence of the film, when the electronic theme music is paired with a static, iridescent staircase, now positioned off-centre and filmed from a distance. The staircase is immersed in bright light and is devoid of people, conjuring an ironic vision of cinema's paradisiac digital future (refer to Figure 2.4). By contrast, this earlier vision of opera, animated not only by the live human voice but also by the mechanical motion and serial segmentation of the double escalator, conjures a cursory memory of cinema's analogue past. The anonymous guest-singer, who we can posit not only as the pose of Gioconda but also as a figure of inscription, then navigates her way through the apparatus of the interior and sings herself out of the hotel doors into the exterior space of the film, never to be seen again. Her voice has been, from this moment on, erased or consumed by electronics, or, more optimistically, it has been freed from the rigour of its classical past and opened to a different futurity.[34] Only traces of the aria's string accompaniment are preserved and are ciphered through the artificial memory of Yared's electronic score. At the centre of this image then is both a simultaneous ascent and a Dantesque descent into the wretched regions of the film's underworld, recalling the pictorial layout of the musical score that shows the octave leap and descending quavers from the aria's opening (refer to Figure 2.1).

The aural presence of Marguerite Duras

The layers of meaning produced through the literal and figurative encounters of Ponchielli's aria with other media, come to flourish in a section of the film titled '2 FEAR'. It is here that we first hear the recorded voice of Marguerite Duras, in the form of a short passage taken from the soundtrack of her radical film *Le Camion* (1977). In *Le Camion*, we see shots of Gerard Depardieu and Duras sitting in the *chambre noire* reading through the script of a hypothetical film about an 'impossible' relationship between a militant Communist lorry driver and a woman called 'la dame du camion'. We see neither of these imagined figures, who remain enclosed together inside the vehicle's cabin, forever menaced by the possibility of visual exposure. Throughout the film, images of a 32-ton blue Saviem lorry tracing a

path along deserted roads in the suburbs of Paris are intercut with the *chambre noire* sequences and are often accompanied by Duras's own voiceover. The music on the soundtrack comprises Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations* but Duras reorders the music, playing Diabelli's waltz (the theme) after the 31st variation. Similarly, the novelty of the audio arrangement in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* is most evident in the positioning of Yared's music, which we hear *before* the orchestral theme on which it is based. Indeed, at the start and end of the film Yared's synthesised motif *precedes* the diegetic performance. In this way, the sequential order of theme and variation is disturbed, with Yared's composition distorting our hearing of Ponchielli's score.

Duras's aural appearances in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* are significant for several reasons. First, her soundtracks in *India Song* (1974) and S*on nom de Venise dans Calcutta désert* (1976) are teeming with unseen voices.[35] Duras's own versatile voice, which features so prominently in her later film *Le Navire Night* (1978) and in *Aurélia Steiner, dit Aurélia Melbourne* and *Aurélia Steiner, dit Aurélia Vancouver* (1979), is loaded with that sacrosanct power that belongs to the *acousmêtre*, as set out by Chion:

> when the acousmatic presence is a voice, and especially when this voice has not yet been visualized – that is, when we cannot yet connect it to a face – we get a special being, a kind of talking and acting shadow to which we attach the name *acousmêtre*.[36]

In Duras's novels motifs of sound, music and dance, and especially radio, play an important role in framing the encounters between the main characters. In *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, Duras's lilting disembodied voice functions in part as a perfect parody of the radio voice. Her voice is framed (visually) by the interior of Paul's car in a satirical echo of her own assertion: 'and we would have noticed that the music in the film was coming from the lorry's radio'.[37] Following this, we see a group of students watching a clip from *Le Camion* in a classroom as they await Duras's arrival. Although she is physically present, in the adjacent room, or so we are told, she refuses to appear in front of the camera.

In a short text titled *Solitude*, Duras calmly remarks: 'One notices when one speaks, when one listens, how easily words can crumble and turn to dust.'[38] In *Le Camion*, as in other of her films and interviews, the texture

and cadence of Duras's voice, its sober delivery of the text and the value and fragility it draws from the pure timbre of each word, are qualities that define her distinctive vocal performances. When Duras's voice is heard for a second time in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (this time an excerpt from an interview conducted by Godard for the film), Duras likens the act of writing to a sort of disappearing and her words are interlaced and briefly interrupted by Yared's sprightly piano motif, which fixes her to the fiction of the film. In the first stop-start sequence of the film the images of Denise were initially accompanied by the same musical motif, which now functions to bring the two women together through a shared desire to write, to mark out a new temporality and to determinedly resist containment; an active resistance embodied by Duras's slight, banal and always invisible hitchhiker.

In the video scenario, Godard counters the stifling supremacy of writing and the uniform flow of pre-set movements with the vertical eruptions of the stop-start images. Similarly, the off-beat rhythm and poignant movements of Denise (Rimbaud), who writes and moves *en contresens*, are linked to the poetic force of visual sensation. By contrast, at the heart of Duras's cinema is the desire to massacre the image, which, she believes, unlike the subjective force of writing, deadens the imagination. Whilst the sketch of Duras as a filmmaker in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* constitutes a strange mixture of admiration and derision, Godard and Miéville's respect for her life as a writer is self-evident, and functions paradoxically to unite Duras's need to merge the life of the text with cinema, so to write and speak into and over the image, with Godard–Miéville's desire to write and think in images. We shall now see how the mutations of speed performed visually through the use of altered motion are productively entangled with both the activity of listening and, finally, with a startling and prolonged instance of desynchronisation.

Hearing the silence of speed

The oscillating pattern of conflict and fusion between a body and its surroundings is particularly arresting in the opening stop-start images of Denise cycling. Here we witness the exhilarating freedom exerted by her body's awareness of its porous existence and its self-configured motion. As she cycles around a bend in the road the camera pauses at specific

points when her movements tremble slightly. These child-like, vulnerable instances are enhanced by the piano music, composed of short, suspended and repeated notes that coincide with the instances of frozen motion, creating a sensitive bond between sound and image. The speed variation forces the spectator to constantly reconsider the form and inflections of Denise's bodily movements. When normal speed resumes, it is only for a matter of seconds before the camera catches sight of her again and her figure merges harmoniously with the greenish background colours.

The graininess and spontaneity of these shots gently revitalise our visual experience in a manner that resonates with Laura U. Marks's thesis on touch, the senses and haptic visuality. Marks captures the feelings conjured by these stop-start images when she describes how haptic images 'can give the impression of *seeing for the first time*, gradually discovering what is in the image rather than coming to the image already knowing what it is.'[39] This visual experience can be translated aurally, as Marks goes on to recognise, in a short but exciting discussion of haptic sound. She defines 'haptic hearing' as the moment when sounds are heard as an undifferentiated whole, before our ears begin to listen out selectively for specific things. Haptic hearing can occur in quiet environments and in overpoweringly loud ones. Consequently, she writes, 'the aural boundaries between body and world may feel indistinct: the rustle of trees may mingle with the sound of my breathing, or conversely the booming music may inhabit my chest cavity and move my body from the inside.'[40] Marks equates the intricate relationship between aural textures and aural signs in sound cinema to the relationship between haptic and optical images.

If the altered motion episodes in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* pull the spectator to the surface of the image, inviting us to inspect its textures, tints and tones, the sporadic and violent slow-motion assaults push us back from the screen and away from the shifting visual detail. In the second part of his essay on radio and cinema, Schaeffer makes clear that, whilst radio is equipped with dynamic force, cinema can 'write with speed', resulting in astonishing tricks of rhythm.[41] A little later he indicates how cinema is able to make ordinary sights come alive through the manipulation of time. Schaeffer illustrates his idea by describing a film of a burning log fire. If the film tape is run backwards, he says, we see the logs re-forming after

the flames have gone. He continues: 'now these images begin to speak, and their language is very new and very surprising'.[42] For Schaeffer, cinema can distort and recompose the everyday order of things and in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* this is demonstrated strikingly through Godard's restructuring of Ponchielli's score and through Yared's kaleidoscopic theme.

The disconcerting incongruence of Yared's electronic motif paired with stop-start images of physical violence (Georgiana being beaten), and outbursts of frustration (Paul wrestling Denise to the floor), sets these episodes apart from the film's temporal flow. Wills, writing on prosthesis, refers to the return of phantom pain 'coming like some metallic specter to haunt the well-known surface of originary flesh', marking a site of radical loss.[43] Elsewhere, he connects prosthesis to the loss of space and the unanchored state and lack of bodily contact resulting from the mutations of speed and technology:

> speed always operates within the perspective of prosthesis to the extent that it is haunted by that sense of the monstrous and the mutant, never simply the threat of displacement to another place without also being the threat of displacement to another state – what can perhaps be called 'warped speed'.[44]

During a vicious spat between a woman, Georgiana, and two men, we see Georgiana flinching, tossing herself back and forth in response to the swipes and blows she receives. We hear the high-pitched alien moans of Yared's fast-paced descending motif, which is based, once again, on the accompaniment from Ponchielli's aria. The muffled sound of ghostly screams both complements and opposes the irregular slow-motion bursts of visual energy. The spectator, along with Denise, who witnesses the assault, is faced with the uneasy combination of an alarming transgressive display of brutality immersed in the impenetrable sounds of a familiar, ethereal remixed melody. The music is accompanied by loud rattling train noises, and in a later fight scene between Paul and Denise, the same motif emerges from the chaotic noise of smashed crockery.

In this instance, Yared's music is better construed as a metaphor for the violence of altered motion and the dissident 'silence of speed', an audio close-up and mutation of the regular musical time of the aria, displacing

the emphasis from the diegetic enclosures of musical performance to the pervasive sonorous 'silence' of ambient background 'noise'. The trace of death in the *opéradique* breath of Gioconda hums in time with the perfect electronic circuits of technology. The liminal state of the active receiver, embodied here by Denise, whose profile is filmed in close-up as she witnesses the attack, creates a caesura in the temporal flow. In the aftermath of the assault, Denise's disoriented state is conveyed by her visual reaction to the loud noise of a train speeding past. Like the pervasiveness of television's flow, Yared's synthesised score is explicitly bound to the horizontal, permeating the sonic environment, which, at the end of the sequence, is tuned to the same tonal region as the encoded motif: the aural sign of death and of Gioconda's aria. Let us now see how at the film's close the electronic music, which, having swallowed up the human voice, is *undone by* and *undoes* Ponchielli's score in a spectacular transformative concluding gesture.

The final act: MUSIC and the acousmatic screen

The final intertitle of the film reads '4 MUSIC' and the camera leads us into the shadowy prism of the 'Grottes', the semi-visible street name opposite the sinister Esso petrol station (*la station d'essence*) where the spectacle of music and the hellish red screen combine once Paul has been hit by a car. His fall to the ground is accentuated using slow motion, as he is perilously made to confront his static existence.[45] The final lateral tracking shot halts mid-way down an alley in front of an open doorway, as if the initial cluttered shot of Paul's hotel suite has now been blown open, the dark wooden panels replaced by weightless shadows (see Figure 2.4). We see a group of musicians, situated in front of (or behind) a small red rectangle, as if the remnants of a silent film theatre, pit orchestra included, have been washed up and scattered across a single plane. The dispersion of light that enters this ominous prism ('CRISTAUX' [crystals] is printed on the side of a shop that provides the backdrop to Paul's accident) is refracted to reveal the high frequency of violet and the low frequency of red, animated in hyperbolic fashion by the violet skirt worn by Paul's daughter, Cécile (Cécile Tanner), a high-speed wavelength that glides with ease through the doorway, and by the blank red rectangle (visible behind the staircase in Figure 2.4), which is stationary or, like Paul,

Figure 2.4 The final sequence: Cécile and her mother walk away from Paul and the orchestral ensemble in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1979)

unmoved. This optical prism is doubled by a musical prism. The electronic music, haunted by Gioconda's aria, modulates through the airwaves of this 'radio station', rising ever higher like a ray of light bending at a certain angle until it flickers like a luminous timbre or a pure sine wave.

During the closing tracking shot, then, the camera passes a live orchestral ensemble playing a few bars from the missing accompaniment to Gioconda's solo heard at the start. This diegetic passage of music echoes the melody of Yared's electronic music that was heard seconds earlier, and which returns as soon as the camera has passed the musicians, forming a horizontal line of succession. In conjunction with the soprano performance heard at the start of the film, we are now listening to a repetition of the same few bars from the final-act aria, albeit from a different auditory angle. Once she has passed the orchestral ensemble, a movement that serves as a virtual enactment of Gioconda's absent solo, Cécile and her mother stride through the open doorway into the sideways space of the unknown, as if to anticipate the fractioning of space in digital media. Yared's electronic theme music that leaps arbitrarily into the foreground

when characters acknowledge its presence proceeds to smudge the live diegetic frame of opera upon its return in this concluding shot. The synthesised sounds encase and echo the diegetic orchestral performance, mirroring the strangely contemporary multi-screen effect that can be witnessed in the visuals.

The spectator is drawn into an acousmatic scene of listening, emphasised by the 'Pythagorean veil' of the red rectangle and the wall on which it appears that falls between the musicians and the road outside. The diegetic music is 'projected' onto the 'membrane of the loudspeaker, onto the sound screen', as Schaeffer writes of the radio, mutating swiftly into an electronic afterlife.[46] A vision forms – the seer's inner aural vision 'composed' by the silent eavesdropper whose presence has been felt from the start. The dramatic uniform gestures of the musicians who, in automated fashion, perform the phantom music 'live' in this pseudo-void, recall Duras's recurring descriptions of the *danse macabre* in her skeletal text *L'Amour* (1971), where the haunting hymn of S. Thala softly plays out. The scene is also teasingly symbolic of the spectator's own terror, as s/he finally awakens from the nightmarish encounter with Ponchielli's spectral accompaniment to construct her/his own aural vision from this confluence of sound and light.

Yared's synthesised musical phrase is unmasked by the sudden 'live' presence of the musical ensemble, with the smack of diegetic sound sending shock waves through the spectator's body. The relationship between the theme music and the opera is finally illuminated, now swept up in the same audio-visual tracking shot. The morphological qualities of sound, heard throughout the film, are presented at the film's close as a positive force of poetic freedom in contrast to the stiffness embodied by the monosyllabic 'Paul', who refuses to *hear*, struck deaf to the imaginative potential of otherworldly space. At the end of the final shot, the light intensifies and traces of the electronic music resound more powerfully for the last time, producing a spurious entrancing effect. The red rectangle recalls the video monitors in the studio shots of *Numéro deux*, which sometimes display a blank red image, described by Witt as 'visual noise', tied to notions of political stagnancy.[47] Yet if the final sequence of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* maintains the association, made familiar by *Numéro deux*, between the swift flow of capital (Esso), the tainted flow of images, music as a commodity and the

inevitability of dead space, we are also confronted with the more optimistic notion of a noncompliant 'silence'. The boundless and mutable synthesised sounds, containing faint intimations of otherness, refuse to be contained by the film's more visible, anchoring diegetic frame, and instead carry forwards the reverberations of a dynamic and regenerative acoustic 'elsewhere'.

Conclusion

Part of what Godard and Miéville achieve in this film is a new angle from which to pursue their radical conception of sound cinema because they prioritise listening as an activity and a process to be filmed. Although Ponchielli's unaccompanied solo and then the voiceless accompaniment never coincide in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, the introductory bars of Gioconda's final-act aria *are* heard in full. If we were to splice the section of the live performance heard at the film's close, together with the octave leap of 'Suicide!' sung at the start, we would have reconstructed the first two bars of the composition. The dividing of melody and accompaniment produces not only a repetition of the same bar, heard from a different auditory perspective each time (upon first hearing: the solo voice; upon second hearing: the accompaniment), but this deliberate act of musical montage fashions a vast time delay. This stretching of time means that the majority of the film action unfolds hypothetically in a staggered present moment like a giant decomposed gesture, looking ahead to the complex temporalities of co-existence in electronic media.

The revolving nature of the film, generated from the arrangement of the music, evokes the crossover of sound and image that drives Pelechian's concept of distance montage. The sounds and images come to exchange places, they 'switch, change territories', as '[t]he sound enters the territory of the picture and the image enters the territory of the sound. You start to *see* the sound, and you *hear* the picture', calling to mind the importance, for Godard, of 'listening to the image' and 'looking at the sound'.[48] The alignment and criss-crossing of soundtrack and image-track resembles two irregular tape loops that mirror each other but are not quite in sync, forming prisms of movement in between. Godard's 'composition' of Yared's variations that disappear and reappear throughout involve the spectator in a feedback loop

that encourages an act of retransmission. The gradual proliferation of the jazzy and spontaneous, synthesised music, which precedes and takes over from the synchronised gestures of the musicians, actually works to derail the grim circuit of capitalist production, conveyed with force by the ghastly robotic sex machine in which Isabelle was earlier forced to take part.

Finally then, what I will call the 'musical relation' in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* serves as a force of resistance that plagues the image-track and reconfigures the spectator's manner of engaging with the film. As Barthes writes,

> every 'successful' relation – successful in that it manages to say the implicit without articulating it, to pass over articulation without falling into the censorship of desire or the sublimation of the unspeakable – such a relation can rightly be called *musical*.[49]

The final metallic ring of electronic music can, in one light, be described as the film's instrumental 'voice', filled with echoes of past sensations, and in another as a simple pulsation. In this film then, sound functions as part of the diegesis *and* as something non-explicit; an identity that reformulates itself in its different contextual environments, extending the possibilities for communication at borders that will continue to expand in the films and videos that follow.

3

Sound, Body and Audible Space

Scénario du film Passion (1982), *Passion* (1982) and *Prénom Carmen* (1983)

In the preface to her book *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century*, Carolyn Abbate affirms that her conception of music's 'voice' denotes not vocal performance per se but 'a sense of certain isolated and rare gestures in music, whether vocal or nonvocal, that may be perceived as modes of subjects' enunciations'.[1] For Abbate, music's narrativity does not concern the 'acting out' of events or a mere 'unscrolling' that mimes actions through sound.[2] Abbate draws on Barthes's notion of music as 'carnal stereophony' in his writing on musical signifying, to expose points of comparison between her theory of 'unsung voices' and Barthes's concept of 'grain'. She writes:

> Barthes' hearing is sensualized by his perception of what he elsewhere calls the 'grain of the voice', which he describes in one passage as 'the body in the singing voice, in the writing hand, in the performing limb', that is, something *extra* in music (the grain) conceived as a body vibrating with musical sound – a speaking source – that is not the body of some actual performer. In this he imagines the source of what I call 'unsung voices'.[3]

Music is not inherently narrative but it 'possesses moments of narration, moments that can be identified by their bizarre and disruptive effect'.

Music narrates rarely and when it does it sounds like 'voices from elsewhere, speaking (singing) in a fashion we recognize precisely because it is idiosyncratic'.[4] The narrating voice 'is marked by multiple disjunctions with the music surrounding it' and constitutes 'a rare and peculiar *act*, a unique moment of performing narration within a surrounding music'.[5]

Abbate argues that to understand musical narrative, 'we must see how it does *not* enact actions from a nonmusical world, but is instead non-congruent with that world in retelling it'.[6] It is precisely what Abbate calls the 'zone of noncongruence' in music that signals the presence of the musical *unsung* voice, and it is this notion that will underpin my study of *Passion* and *Prénom Carmen*. The latter film integrates shots of the Prat String Quartet rehearsing and discussing passages from Beethoven's late quartets, while in *Passion* masterpieces of art by Rembrandt, El Greco, Goya, Delacroix and Ingres are reconstructed in a film studio by actors and stand-ins. The decision to use Beethoven's music as primary material for the soundtrack of *Prénom Carmen* partially evolved from Godard's early plans for *Passion*, a film he had originally intended to base around the work of Beethoven and the Flemish Baroque painter Peter Paul Rubens. Then, after having toyed with the idea of making a film about Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9 in D minor*, Godard decided to concentrate on the intimate genre of the string quartet.[7] Both films invite the spectator to watch and listen in on a process of composition: that of filmmaking in *Passion* and music-making in *Prénom Carmen*. To begin, I will turn to the video scenario, *Scénario du film Passion*, to identify some of the interrelationships between sound, writing and visual space.

Scénario du film Passion: the two images of cinema

Scénario du film Passion, produced by Télévision Romande and JLG Films, was made after the release of the feature film and was later broadcast in the UK on Channel 4.[8] Sequences and stills from *Passion* are incorporated into this video scenario, sometimes mixed with other images (a painting, a television broadcast and documentary footage), and they are commented on by Godard as part of his poetic monologue on the filmmaking process. Throughout the video, Godard is frequently seen at work in his dark

studio, operating the control desk and looking up at the images on the white projection screen like a spectator in a cinema auditorium.

Early in *Scénario du film Passion*, Godard reminds us of the important principle of 'seeing a scenario'. He muses: 'seeing the invisible and seeing what there is if the invisible were visible, what could we see'.[9] Godard likens the white screen in the studio to a vast white surface. He also compares it with the Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé's notion of the white page (*la page blanche*), and with 'a beach' (*une plage*), a 'memory lapse' (*avoir un blanc*) and later with 'a wall' (*un mur*). The medium of video enables Godard to slow down and select sequences, movements and gestures to discuss, compare and analyse. In the first demonstration of his working method, Godard shows us a still image of Hanna (Hanna Schygulla) in *Passion* holding a bouquet of flowers. He fades the image in and out, slowly and then more rapidly. In his monologue, he flits between the first and second person and addresses the spectator as an active and involved subject. The spectator and the filmmaker are tasked with inventing 'waves', 'murmurs' and 'echoes', which are just 'vague ideas' or 'movements' that come and go like glimmers or shudders of possibility.

In the video scenario, there is an important aural dimension to Godard's working method and to the 'vague idea' (*une idée vague*) that he sets out to convey.[10] If the figure of the wave is conceived visually through the gentle flickering image, it can also be construed as a pattern of disturbance that transmits sound (a sound wave). The 'echo' of the flickering image, as Godard puts it, could denote a reflection of sound, while the murmur, to which he alludes, might signify a quiet voice or muffled noise. Moreover, the black silhouette of Godard's hands are frequently displayed in front of the small white screen as he gesticulates, pushing his body forwards, or tracing smoothly over the visual movements in the image space, which he molds and shapes with his upper torso. His hands are sometimes spaced apart, resembling the manoeuvres of a pianist, performing leaps and then withdrawing, or moving fluently up and down the keyboard.

During his first demonstration in front of the 'white page' of the screen, Godard equates the task ahead of him to that of a writer. This mysterious and playful space evokes the child's gadget cited in Freud's 1925 essay 'A Note upon the "Mystic Writing-Pad"', in which the 'Mystic Pad' becomes

a metaphor to explain the functioning of the perceptual apparatus of the mind, connected by Freud to the concept of time.[11] The writing tablet comprises a slab of dark brown wax or resin with a paper edging. Over this slab, a thin transparent sheet is placed, consisting of an upper layer (a transparent piece of celluloid) and a lower layer (a sheet of thin translucent waxed paper). A stylus is used to write on the celluloid and as the stylus scratches its surface the lower layer (the waxed paper) is pressed on to the slab beneath. Consequently, Freud explains, 'the grooves are visible as dark writing upon the otherwise smooth whitish-grey surface of the celluloid'.[12] To erase the writing, one detaches the double covering sheet from the waxed slab and it vanishes, although a permanent trace is retained on the wax in the form of a legible inscription.[13] In the video scenario, this idea of writing and inscription is associated with music. Godard forges a correspondence between the process of writing and the thrilling idea of installing music *inside* the image and rendering the poet's 'white page' a visual score. Indeed, in the final ten minutes of the video, Godard refers to himself in the third person: 'he says: I inscribe into memory, he says, I note … musical notes (makes a gesture of noting)', accompanied by a faint scribbling sound.[14]

At this juncture, we might think of Erik Satie's description of the '"exteriorization" of his musical thought' in print.[15] As Robert Orledge has highlighted, Satie was a talented calligrapher and artist whose understanding of music stemmed largely from his encounters with painters. He sought to model the printed appearance of his compositions on the literary publications he revered, removing bar lines, key signatures and time signatures, and interlacing the staves with texts and stories that would serve as 'historical background'.[16] Like Godard, Satie embraced and promoted the interrelationship between different artistic disciplines and, like Satie, Godard subverts the conventions of the musical score: he treats the screen as a page on which to record his 'musical thought' and sometimes, as we will see, the black-and-white score itself is treated graphically, as an image, composed of shapes, words, lines and curves.

In the video scenario, Godard also identifies a certain kinship between the camera movement and a musical melody. The affinity between visual movement and sound crystallises when a *mise-en-abîme* effect is produced

in the visuals as Godard refers to cinema's 'double image'. He proclaims: 'There is a type of double image there, the cinema has two images: there's the sound, there's the image, the two go together, are always together.'[17] This utterance coincides with the insertion of a sequence from *Passion* showing Jerzy (Jerzy Radziwilowicz) directing a crane shot. This illuminated vision of Jerzy and the cameraman is outlined by the smaller frame of the white screen, mixed with a close-up of Godard's face as he peers into the cinematic world of *Passion*. Sound and image are presented as the two autonomous but inseparable 'images' of cinema, echoing Bresson's famous dictum: 'Images and sounds like people who make acquaintance on a journey and afterwards cannot separate.'[18] As the video scenario closes, Godard's image has been trimmed down to its essentials, his shadowy profile resembling a moving cut-out constructed from a large piece of black fabric (see Figure 3.1). In this concluding episode of representational uncertainty, Godard no longer faces the screen. As he delivers a moving eulogy to cinema, accompanied by the hesitant musical language of the Adagio assai from Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G* (1929–31), he swivels his head restlessly: he looks over to the dazzling white screen and then tilts his head like a camera down to

Figure 3.1 Godard utters: 'here is the cinema, here is the cinema, here is the cinema' in *Scénario du film Passion* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1982)

the right to confide in the ear of the spectator, ushering us into the intimate space of music – an ambivalent acoustic region beyond sight, of which he is now a part.

Passion: musical figures and musicalised speech

Passion moves to and fro between a factory where Isabelle (Isabelle Huppert) works, a film set where the Polish director Jerzy is attempting to make a film, and a hotel where the crew is residing. The soundtrack is composed of excerpts of pre-existing music by Mozart, Dvořák, Fauré, Beethoven and Ravel, comprising choral music, four piano concertos and a sonata for violin and piano. The first sequence in *Passion* consists of a jerky, spontaneous shot (taken by Godard himself) of a plane's white exhaust fumes as it traces a path across the sky. On the soundtrack, we hear the faint rumblings of the double basses and the contrabassoon solo from the opening of Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand* (1929–30), a work composed for Paul Wittgenstein, who lost his right arm in World War I. Slowly, the orchestral build-up takes shape, producing an awe-inspiring crescendo. The music continues to play, accompanying the opening shots of Isabelle, who is pictured at work in the factory, bent over a machine and impressing some sort of nondescript object. The impressions made by the metal stamp of her machine are matched by the pensive tones of the piano chords as she operates the equipment like an adept pianist, pressing down the pedals and keys.

Early in *Passion*, Isabelle is filmed running alongside Jerzy's car. The sound of her harmonica blends with the wind chords in the concerto, before merging with traffic noise. Discussing this sequence, Kaja Silverman and Harun Farocki refer to the film's 'experiments with asynchronicity', which here concern the dialogue between Isabelle and Jerzy. Farocki compares the disjunction between a character's moving lips and the use of intertitles in silent film, to the dislocations established in *Passion* between audible speech and the filmed act of enunciation. Silverman speaks of the difficulty of classifying the voices of Jerzy and Isabelle during these scenes, because their voices elude the standard categories of 'voiceover' and 'voice-off' (the characters are alternately visible in the frame but the sound of their speech

is never in sync with their bodies). She proposes that Godard creates a new vocal category termed the 'voice between':

> he [Godard] suggests that voices do not speak 'from' or 'above' bodies, but in the interval which separates them. Although we are accustomed to thinking of speech as something highly individual and locatable, it is in fact intersubjective, traveling between a speaker and a listener.[19]

The separation of the voice from its visible source enables speech to function as a fluid sonorous texture, like a wrinkle in the film's fabric, helping the spectator to hear the voices, sounds and images with greater intimacy and lucidity.

Throughout *Passion*, Isabelle comes to evoke the magic and mechanisms at work in Ravel's music. As Vladimir Jankélévitch tells us, Ravel was fascinated by artifice, masks and machines: 'Ravel liked mechanisms that had gone wrong, and like Satie he must have had a particular liking for pianos out of tune and bleating gramophones.'[20] In Ravel's article 'Finding Tunes in Factories', published in the newspaper *New Britain* in 1933, the noisy workplace of the factory is described as a rich source of inspiration for composers. He exclaims: 'What a musical story there is in that factory!'[21] Near the start and end of *Passion* are two understated but arresting scenes that are shaped rhythmically by Ravel's Adagio assai (the second movement of his *Piano Concerto in G*). During these scenes, the everyday diegetic sounds find their force, knitted into the rhythm and texture of the music. The music is subtly embedded within the film's noisy soundscape, forming two soft musical interludes at each end of the film that recall Abbate's peculiar *act* of musical narration. In the build-up to the first scene, we hear a rumbling engine sound, footsteps, shouting, doors slamming and the boss's chronic cough. The loud beep of a car horn serves as a sonic node, approximating the pitch of the first note of the melody in the Adagio assai when it enters moments later, linking the raucous outside soundscape to the quieter musicalised interior. Then, a brief conversation commences between Magali and Isabelle, and the jagged peripheral sounds soon fall away, supplanted by a more proximate, delicate clinking sound like a spoon in a cup.

The first bars of the Adagio assai are faded in during a pause in the dialogue, serving to dissolve the discord between the two women. When Magali asks: 'Une fois que je l'aurai dit, qu'est-ce que ça fera?' ('Once I've told you, what difference will it make?'), the melody of her speech blends in an evanescent manner with Ravel's *espressivo* melody (the final syllable of 'fe-ra' fuses in pitch with the tied B of bar 4). We hear only the first nine bars of the second movement before the music is submerged once more in a livelier, more raucous soundscape. In the visuals, this cavernous musical interlude is composed of two close-ups: we see Magali resting against a wall, enveloped in shadow, and we see Isabelle positioned in front of a window with her back to the white light. As the Adagio assai begins, Magali's face is suddenly lit up, warmed by the light and the entrance of the concerto (see Figure 3.2). The music, which trickles into the dialogue and soothes each character's speech, seeps effortlessly into the entire audio-visual scene. The light on Magali's face, joined by the faint tinkling sounds and the shuffling waltz bass of the Adagio assai, heightens the emotion conveyed by her expression, while spotlighting her sudden, unsettled movements as well as the texture of her hair and the shadows and patterns of light on the wall behind her.

Figure 3.2 Magali and Ravel's Adagio assai in *Passion* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1982)

In their analysis of the Adagio assai, Daphne Leong and David Korevaar note that in music repeated figures lead to 'contrapuntal layering – the combination of different musical strands', and that this is particularly true in the work of Ravel.[22] They reveal how the Adagio assai 'presents the accumulation of layers derived originally from dance-like units, resulting in mechanical motion of surprising complexity', and that 'Ravel successively increases complexity through acceleration, modal clashes, metric dissonance and rhythmic transformations, and cumulative layering'. They give emphasis to the rhythmic tension generated from the interaction between the movement's two primary layers: a waltz bass in 3/8 metre (in the pianist's left hand) and a slower sarabande-like melody in 3/4 metre (in the pianist's right hand). Together, these layers form a hemiola effect between the two hands, which is felt as a shift between triple and duple metre, producing, as the movement progresses, 'a kind of infernal musical mechanism'.[23]

During this sequence, both Magali and Isabelle's speech is permanently out of sync with their moving lips. The asynchronicity between body and voice is doubled by the aforementioned disjunction between the two layers of the Adagio assai, pulling their words into the orbit of Ravel's musical mechanism. Enhanced by the quivering, tinkling and rustling off-frame diegetic sounds, the fluidity and plasticity of the music and speech dislodge and delimit this sonorous scene from and within the wider soundscape. An intensifying aural zoom is kindled from the atmosphere of magic and melancholy that builds in the music and allows the spectator to pause for a moment and notice the passing details, intimations and feelings otherwise lost in the ambient commotion.

Godard's treatment of the Adagio assai in *Passion* imitates Ravel's construction of the music. Rather than creating a contrast between one mood or tempo and another, this repeated and extended musical fragment, played near the start and end of the film, produces an 'accumulation of interludes', as Barthes writes of Schumann's music. Commenting on the imagistic quality of the Intermezzi in Schumann's *Kreisleriana* (Op. 16), Barthes affirms: 'it [the Schumannian body] does not construct itself, it keeps diverging according to an accumulation of interludes; it has only that *vague* idea (the vague can be a phenomenon of structure) of meaning which we call *signifying* [*signifiance*]'.[24] This remark recalls the pulsing echoes, murmurs, waves and 'vague ideas'

recorded on the 'white page' of the blank screen in the video scenario. Godard's arrangement of the Adagio assai in *Passion* produces an effect similar to that identified by Barthes in Schumann's composition. Barthes writes of

> a radiant writing, which is then recognizable much closer to painted space than to the spoken chain. Music, in short, at this level, is an image, not a language...[25]

The accumulation of layers that proliferate in the Adagio assai, propelled by the faint temporal conflict between one part and another, bleed into *Passion* and ripple through the entire film.

When the Adagio assai returns for the second time, we attend to the brief unraveling of a soft, elliptical lovers' discourse. Laszlo intrudes on an intimate exchange between Jerzy and Isabelle in the kitchen, disrupting their conversation by banging persistently on the window, to which the piano music responds by halting periodically. This sense of spacing, enhanced by the protracted melodic phrase, temporarily distorts the time of the film and gently isolates the scene from its surroundings, thus indicating the presence of Abbate's musical voice. The two scenes I am discussing here speak to each other from a distance, reminiscent of the two excerpts from Ponchielli's opera that frame *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*. They instill into the film a revolving, circular rhythm, invoking the poetic power conjured by Pelechian's distance montage. Each of these scenes in *Passion* gives form to what Abbate describes as 'an interlude of reflexivity', like a miniature film within a film. They seek not to communicate a 'report of real events', but through their discontinuity they quietly and subtly disrupt the narrative within which they are couched, forming two interlinked fugitive moments of musical narration.[26]

The second scene is twice framed by the doorway and windows of a room, producing a *mise-en-abîme* effect that heightens its theatrical appearance. Moreover, the stops and starts of the piano melody generate a concave, acoustic and meditative space that pulls the listener gradually closer to the quiet stammering of the dialogue. As Abbate makes clear, a narrating voice 'is defined not by *what* it narrates, but rather by its audible flight from

the continuum that embeds it'.[27] Another loud sonic intrusion comes in the form of Isabelle's harmonica, which she plays intermittently throughout the film. Here it serves as an obstacle, separating her body from the sentimental gestures and feelings that bind her to Jerzy. By contrast, Godard's musical brushwork shimmers as he paints with the seamless piano melody, allowing it to saturate the diegetic noises with its sobering shades, endowing the scene, Isabelle's voice and her precise physical features with the pleasure and lyricism of the *espressivo* melody.

Critics have rightly read Isabelle's stammer as a symbol of working-class oppression. Laura Mulvey has commented on Isabelle's vulnerability, her 'lack of mastery over language and the discourses of culture' and her 'struggle for articulate speech'.[28] However, Isabelle's capacity to resist the constraints imposed on her, as demonstrated in her fight for compensation, is also signalled aurally by the pairing of her voice with the slight desynchronisations between the melody and accompaniment in the Adagio assai. Her uneven, 'faulty' speech that breaks down language, takes flight and makes itself heard through its interweaving with the powerful sense of motion conjured in the music. When the body 'speaks' musically, Barthes tells us, it says nothing: 'for as soon as it is musical, speech – or its instrumental substitute – is no longer linguistic but corporeal; what it says is always and only this: *my body puts itself in a state of speech: quasi parlando*'.[29]

This episode is full of sudden but minor physical gestures, accompanied by minimal sonic impulses like the tinkling of Jerzy's fork on his plate, the grating flicker of his lighter, the tapping on the window, the chink of glass on the table, along with Isabelle's stuttering speech and Jerzy's intermittent asides in Polish. The Adagio assai constitutes the 'body in the singing voice' because it runs into the diegetic speech and glistens with these other discreet sounds that are beguilingly brought to life. In his discussion of the early Sonimage films, Dubois describes video as the meeting point between processes of decomposition and recomposition. The tool of the 'video-scalpel' with which Godard–Miéville analysed and critiqued images in the previous decade, is riveted to the birth of a new kind of writing, and to the creation of 'a new body of images', re-mixed from 'brand-new figures'.[30] Dubois explores the resistant kind of 'antitelevision' of the

later Sonimage television series, underscoring the silence and stammering that television dreads, which he defines as 'the language *of* video'.[31] Unlike Yared's waltzing piano figure that imprisoned Isabelle in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, in *Passion* the slow waltz bass from the Adagio assai merges with her stammering speech and together the music, dialogue and other audio elements join forces to infuse the cinematic image with a videographic and musical mode of thought.

The musical notes of Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G* in *Passion*, inscribed with Isabelle's utterances that shiver with encircling sonic vibrations, constitute a special nebulous grain that moves laterally, as they carve out a new unruly path that impedes the incessant and cacophonous demand for 'a story'.[32] We come to see how Isabelle's clamorous part in the factory protest and the irregularities of her imperfect speech give voice to a communicative musicalised fluency that temporarily disrupts and disorganises the oppressive systems in place. She is a figure constantly in motion, rewriting anew Ravel's 'musical story' of mechanical reproduction by becoming, with the piano music, the *unsung* voice of the film.

The absent portrait

In his article on self-portraiture in *Scénario du film Passion*, Jürgen E. Müller describes Godard as a 'theatrical painter' who plays with different media, noting that the shadow of his signifying body 'paints and writes itself into and between the images of his film'.[33] To conclude this section, I will now turn to a portrait that appears to haunt the film but is never explicitly reconstructed. Giovanni Battista Moroni's *The Tailor* (*Il Tagliapanni*) (1565–70) shows a tailor dressed in an off-white and red costume, preparing to cut a piece of black fabric that has been diligently marked with white chalk lines. The tailor looks earnestly out at the spectator, his head bathed in light that beams down behind him. On his little finger he wears a gold ring with a red stone at its centre, drawing attention to his skilled hands and glinting shears. This is not a portrait of one of Moroni's aristocratic sitters but a rare portrait of a manual worker.[34]

Moroni's style remains defiantly consistent, implementing the same conventions for his artisan subject as for his elite portraits. In *Passion*, Isabelle is

Figure 3.3 Isabelle as Giovanni Battista Moroni's *The Tailor* in *Passion* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1982)

dressed in a similar fashion. In the factory, she is filmed wearing a white patterned jumper over a red chequered dress, boasting the same elegant frills as the tailor's collar and sleeves. In the fifth shot of the film, we see her cycling next to Jerzy's car, wearing sunglasses, earrings and, like Moroni's tailor, she wears a gold ring with a red centre on her right hand. Later, during the workers' meeting when revolutionary slogans are quoted, a bright artificial light is positioned behind Isabelle's face. She plays a few notes on her harmonica before slowly turning her head to look directly at the camera. Soon afterwards, she skilfully executes the astute gaze of Moroni's artisan, with a shadow covering part of her face in accordance with the painting (see Figure 3.3). A new hybrid image crystallises, resonating with an image that appears near the end of the video scenario showing Godard's own wispy shadow falling over the same shot of Isabelle in *Passion*. The expert hands of Moroni's craftsman, ready to cut into the dark material laid out in front of him, foresee the animated hands of the video artist in *Scénario du film Passion*, who will later cut out the censorial black images of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* to produce the undulating rhythm of the film.

Prénom Carmen: a writing of sound

Bizet's *Carmen* (1878) came out of copyright in the 1980s and straight away a series of opera-based films were released, including Godard's *Prénom Carmen*, written by Miéville and awarded the Technical Prize for Sound and Cinematography at the 1983 Venice Film Festival. Audiences in Europe witnessed the release of Claes Fellbom's *Carmen* (1983) in Sweden, Carlos Saura's *Carmen* in Spain (1983) and Peter Brook's *La Tragédie de Carmen* (1983).[35] Each film borrows musical excerpts from Bizet's opera, which, as Ann Davies asserts, lends the mass medium of cinema a unique cultural prestige.[36] In Godard–Miéville's version, this elite status is hyperbolised to the extreme through the soundtrack, which is dominated by Beethoven's venerated late string quartets (Quartets 9, 10, 14, 15 and 16). The fractured presence of Beethoven's music in the film, which is spliced at one point with the gritty, sensual voice of Tom Waits, generates a hybrid cultural construct reminiscent of Bizet's own disgraced opera, which mixed cabaret song with refined classical scoring.[37]

At the start of *Prénom Carmen*, we hear a series of jerky clattering sounds, followed by images of Uncle Jean (played by Godard) tapping and banging metal, wood and glass objects, including his own chest and head. We see a close-up of his typewriter and hear the keys being struck, as the blurry words 'mal vu' ('ill seen') come into view. This is a reference to Samuel Beckett's short fiction, *Mal vu mal dit / Ill Seen Ill Said* (1981), written when the author was suffering from eye problems.[38] Beckett's text is strewn with symbols of sight and its vivid auditory world includes random creaks, the thud of stone, the female figure's fluttering steps and long periods of silence. This early sequence in *Prénom Carmen* takes place in a nursing home where Uncle Jean is residing. His room contains an array of interesting objects: a black woolly hat, a cigar, crumpled paper, a vase of flowers, a glass, a measuring stick, audio cassettes and a Sony ghetto blaster (his 'music-camera') to which he listens attentively. Turning away from the 'ill seen' (*mal vu*) visible world, he closes his eyes and lowers his head to focus on the sounds. As Ronald Bogue observes, the notion of a cliché-ridden dying world, drowned in dreary images and redundant words, is tied

to the urge to rewrite the common narratives of the everyday by returning to the barren origin of a nameless image, perhaps an image that can only be heard.[39]

As well as honouring the strong tradition of direct sound in French cinema, the opening of *Prénom Carmen* seems to trace over a vital period in the history of sound recording in France. In Édouard Léon Scott de Martinville's early writing on sound recording, he predicts that a new graphic art will emerge from his 1860 invention of the phonautograph, which was to replace stenography to perform a 'writing of sound'. Léon Scott, a Parisian printer, underlines the importance of authenticity, of creating a writing that moves as fast as speech, and he hints at the magical consequences that would prevail if the fugitive life of thought could be fixed as soon as it formed.[40] His device produced 'phonautograms' by recording sound waves with an apparatus modelled on the human ear. The design involved paper covering a hand-cranked cylinder, a thin membrane and a tuning fork or a chronometer to record time.[41] His subsequent sound recordings included a voice singing the first line of *Au Clair de la Lune*, an ascending scale (do re mi fa sol la ti do) and the sound of a tuning fork vibrating at 435Hz (the note A), the recommended pitch standard in France in 1859.

These early phonautograms are scattered through *Prénom Carmen*: an opening credit title reads 'Alain Sarde / présente / do ré mi fa sol' as an ascending piano scale plays; Uncle Jean's muffled tape recording emanating from his special ghetto-blaster/music-camera includes an out-of-tune piano rendition of *Au Clair de la Lune*; a grave tuning ceremony occurs at the end of the film that sees Uncle Jean conduct a hearing test by tapping the glasses and crockery in the hotel dining room. Interestingly, it is by charting this history of recorded sound that *Prénom Carmen* taps into the heart of what cinema's fundamental task *is* for Godard, that is, 'to record thought, under a certain form of the visible' and then to bring these thoughts into relation with each other according to an idea.[42] *Prénom Carmen* continues the work undertaken in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* and *Passion* in its efforts to re-conceptualise notions of the 'visible', and the process of 'making visible', through the organisation of sound and the activity of listening.

At the end of *Prénom Carmen*, the heroine's final moments are accompanied by an ominous drilling sound like a vast film projector. Carmen

(Maruschka Detmers) looks towards the metal balustrade of the hotel balcony, which is enveloped in darkness like an illuminated screen in a cinema auditorium. The camera cuts to two close-ups of a line of chandeliers traced over by the curvy black patterns of the ornate balustrade, resembling both a film reel and a giant musical clef. These shots are separated by the sound of a gunshot that marks the cut, as if the images have been definitively punctured by these dark hieroglyphs and the spectator has finally been sucked into the recording technology, brushed up against the thermal noise of the hear-stripe.[43] S/he has been pressed into the film's musical mechanism and into the noisy processes of cinema's production.

Points of contact: the birth of gesture

In music, gesture is most broadly defined by theorists as a movement or sound invested with human significance by a performer or interpreter.[44] Robert S. Hatten's definition of musical gesture is based on an understanding of human gesture as '*any energetic shaping through time that may be interpreted as significant*'.[45] Hatten's definition encompasses hand gestures and facial expressions (and their perception), as well as 'the "translation" of energetic shaping through time into humanly produced or interpreted sounds', including intonation patterns, song, instrumental music and 'the representation of sonic gesture in notation'. He affirms: 'Human gestures include characteristics that we can associate with a fundamental musicality shared by all: the capacity to perceive, and roughly reproduce, characteristic shapings of rhythm, timing, pitch contour and intensity.'[46] Non-verbal forms of communication permeate *Prénom Carmen* and include physical and imitative gestures and episodes of mutual listening, all of which are vital to successful musical communication, particularly in the intimate genre of the string quartet. Much like Godard–Miéville's approach to the video image, ensemble musicians often oscillate between playing and pausing, alternating discussion with demonstration, in order to determine how best to interpret a passage.

Throughout the film, the musicians' gestures, words and the emotion conveyed by their playing seem to drive the narrative action and shape the spectator's responses to the film. During the coastal scenes that precede

the love scenes at Trouville in Normandy (dubbed 'the Rodin scenes' by Godard and the actors), sea shots and images of Carmen and Joseph (Jacques Bonnaffé) are interspersed with shots of the quartet rehearsing a passage from the slow sixth movement of *String Quartet No. 14 in C# minor* (Op. 131), which includes a prominent four-note phrase that moves from part to part. In the sequence breakdown, following a description of Claire's rounded gestures, we read: 'Carmen's arm, positioned on Joseph's shoulders, also forms a beautiful rounded movement, to which the movement of the steering wheel that Joseph holds responds, just as the car follows the curve of a side road.'[47] Claire (Myriem Roussel) is filmed moving her bow in even circles, miming with her arm to mark the first beat of each bar.

In Rilke's *The Rodin-Book: First Part* (1903), the poet refers to Rodin's armless statues before listing the various kinds of hands fashioned by the sculptor. Prominent 'Rodin' poses in the film include an allusion to the erotic figure of the *Femme accroupie* during the love scenes at Trouville and the fleeting *Faunesse à genoux* as Carmen glides past the camera with her hands raised to her hair. As Phil Powrie points out, the Rodin intertext in *Prénom Carmen* warps the visual flow as we are suddenly attracted to the familiar poses enacted by the characters, which fleetingly catch our eye.[48] When Joseph and Carmen are filmed in a car by the sea at Trouville, Joseph's palm and curled fingers droop over the steering wheel in a pose that evokes the unfurled hand in Rodin's *Bourgeois de Calais* (see Figure 3.4). Rilke writes:

> A hand laid on the shoulder or limb of another body is no longer part of the body to which it properly belongs: something new has been formed from it and the object it touches or holds, something which was not there before, which is nameless and belongs to no one.[49]

Carmen rests her head on Joseph's shoulder and pauses, sustaining an undulating pose that drolly simulates the swollen shape of a self-contained Rodinesque figure, here accompanied by the sound of waves.

As Christopher Hasty affirms, rhythm denotes process and dynamic becoming, rather than product and static being. The word rhythm can be used to describe 'a fluid gesture of the hand, a still life, the course of a narrative, the "shape" of a musical phrase'. These applications are 'aesthetic', he

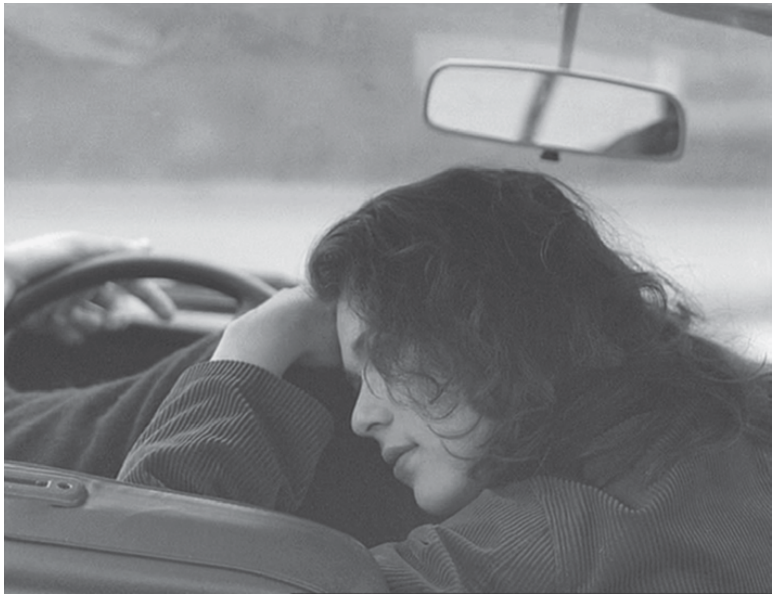


Figure 3.4 A sculptural pose: Carmen and Joseph in *Prénom Carmen* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1983)

comments, 'from *aisthanesthai*, to sense or feel, related to *aiō* – or Latin *audio* – "I hear" ' and are dependent on human sensory perception.[50] In Figure 3.4, the reflection of a thin black line in the rear-view mirror is reminiscent of a floating bar line from a musical score and it draws our eye to the top of Carmen's head. The visual contours in the image flow gracefully from right to left, culminating with Joseph's draped hand that rests on the curve of the steering wheel. In the score, the slight accenting of the four-note phrase that leads to this sculptural pose in the film is notated with a crescendo marking ('< >'). The melodic descent and the slur notated in the score indicate graphically the swell that we hear in the music, which is shaped by the musicians as they lean forward with their bodies into the string of the instrument to exert more physical force with the bow.

The above sequence is edited to accentuate the recurring four-note phrase, which, shaped like a sigh, is made to stand slightly apart from the musical fabric like a Schaeffarian sound object. The melody is cut

abruptly, immediately loading our gaze with the energy of its slow falling curve, injecting into the sequence a sense of new movement and a different rhythm, as Musy suggests.[51] The energy and emotive power of the musical phrase encourages the spectator to perceive the gestural pose enacted by Carmen and Joseph as a sculptural-musical figure. The musical form is flattened out by the sudden screeching car horn and by the loud wind and sea sounds that sporadically mask the music. The isolated bodily cluster that distracts from the visual flow is exaggerated further by the marginal location of the car (on a side road), and the sequence can be construed metaphorically as a self-reflexive swerve that hints at the latent presence of one of Carmen's self-aware performances in Bizet's opera.[52]

Seascapes: carving audible space

Musy has underlined the autonomy of the sound material in *Prénom Carmen*, likening parts of the soundtrack to a musical score. He mentions Godard's preference for working with raw sound materials, which are recorded, recomposed and reorganised in the manner of concrete music. The dialogue, sea sound and music were treated as 'instruments' with equal weighting and the melodic 'dialogue' of the gull cries derived from a recording that Musy had made two years prior to shooting. The sound montage, the visual montage and the mixing, he adds, were carried out at the same stage in the production process, an approach favoured by Godard because it enabled the sounds and images to be organised organically, rhythmically and as Musy suggests, harmonically.[53]

Not surprisingly, Godard has likened his method of working with sound in *Prénom Carmen* to that of a sculptor. He talks of 'sculpting in sound' and of 'tapping a block to extract volumes, shapes'.[54] During the love scenes, the rhythmic refrains of the fragments of music are juxtaposed with shots of the sea, shots of Carmen and Joseph and shots of the musicians rehearsing. The love scenes, he says, were purposefully made to resemble some of Rodin's sculptures, which influenced his manner of editing and mixing the soundtrack. Speaking of the musicians in the film, Godard points out that '[t]he sculptor works with two hands against a surface, he carves space, and

since musicians are always speaking of audible space I think that the thing I'd like to lead them to do is to carve this audible space'.[55]

In *Prénom Carmen*, the few musical quotations from Bizet's opera are quickly silenced by the stops and starts of the musicians' actions as they rehearse Beethoven's late quartets, reminding us of the splintered and complex nature of this music. In Adorno's essay on Beethoven's late style, he refers to the 'bareness' of the music, its 'withering of harmony' and '*fractured* quality', as if the composer had destroyed all trace of its production, leaving behind something lifeless that resembles 'an image of *autonomous motion*'.[56] Adorno associates Beethoven's late style with an expression of 'unadornedness' and a proximity to death, while its human quality, Adorno suggests, is its gaze. Whilst Beethoven suffered from drastic hearing loss during the composition of the late quartets, his music possesses 'the gift of sight'.[57]

In her discussion of deafness as metaphor in Mahler's instrumental writing, Abbate cites the feared chimera of meaninglessness, the 'object congealed out of false metonymic juxtapositions' that signals the deaf subject's inability to *hear* music's rhythm, which Mahler comes to associate with the inability to find meaning '*within music*'. She writes: 'Deafness is an inability to interpret the sounds that thrash the air, or the black notes that wind across the pages of score. The text – Mahler's (interpretation of) deafness – becomes a bleak vision of incomprehension.'[58] In non-vocal music, the schism or disjunction that marks for Abbate the onset of musical narration can be marked by 'musical *blankness*' and 'a sense of substance that is leached away'.[59] The fragments or 'isolated images with a certain resonance' that embody Mahler's "deafness" suggest, Abbate infers, 'a means of hearing a gesture of musical narration in music without a referential object'.[60]

In *Prénom Carmen* the love scenes are dominated by the third movement of Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 15 in A minor* (Op. 132) titled 'A Convalescent's Holy Song of Thanksgiving to the Deity, in the Lydian Mode'. Beethoven was very ill during the period he spent composing this landmark quartet and in the profoundly expressive third movement, Beethoven's turn to the old church modes signalled a shift in his musical language. The movement has an ABABA structure, with two main sections: the Molto adagio A section, and a lively Andante B section. A chorale, hymn-like melody

forms the central melodic material of the A section, and in Godard's rendition the two B sections are reversed so that the first, titled 'Sentendo nuova forza' ('Feeling new strength') is paired with the morning scenes when the lovers begin to stir. The Lydian hymn of the A section is reordered by Godard but it is not disfigured. The Molto adagio and its special core melody is described by Joseph Kerman as a 'self-contained, hermetic world', as if to foresee what Rilke calls, in his essay on the gestural language of Rodin's sculptures, 'this turning-inward-upon-oneself' and 'this tense listening to inner depths'.[61] This basic hymn, which is divided into five simple and even phrases, is preserved by Godard during these scenes, with the entirety of the chorale melody sounding except for one note.

The love scenes, like Beethoven's score, are paced by and structured around this core hymn-like melody. Beethoven frames it with imitative textures, while Godard frames it visually and aurally, using the loud sounds of waves crashing to punctuate the rhythms as the physical gestures of the characters form a silent choreography (Joseph touches Carmen's shoulder/ Carmen turns her head), their bodies moving in time to the music. The lack of ambient background sound allows the opening phrase of the Molto adagio, consisting of the imitative texture and the chorale melody, to resound peacefully. The music is matched in the visuals by an image of the sea, patterned by a beam of light that spreads over a dark rock in the centre and permeates the water's rippling surface that vibrates with the slow vibrato of the strings (see Figure 3.5). The duration of this sea shot equals the duration of the opening phrase in the music, with a final wave surging forward and accentuating the weak fourth beat of the penultimate bar, producing a slight syncopation.

The waves move steadily from right to left, contravening the left-to-right manner in which the score would be read by the musicians. However, if one treats the score a little differently, conceiving the white paper and the black notation as a stand-alone visual image, a different perspective is possible. The white space of the screen in *Scénario du film Passion* shares an important connection with these scenes in *Prénom Carmen*, recalling Godard's persistent efforts to defy the sequential flow of language and the constraints of the written script. His conception of the screen as a memory space and as the poet's 'white page' on which waves are invented, or as a

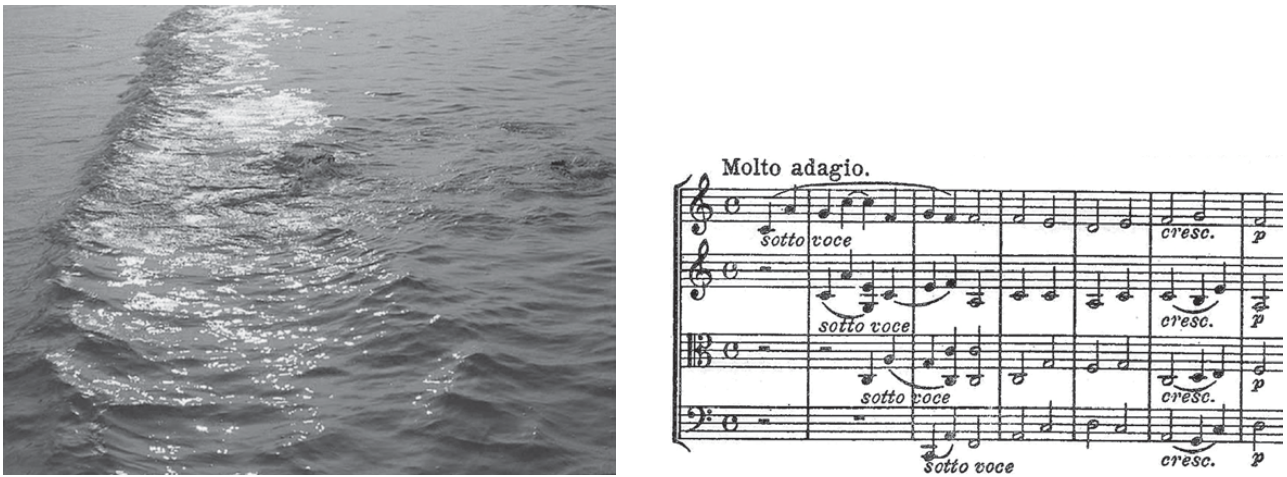


Figure 3.5 Left: light falling on the sea in *Prénom Carmen* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1983). Right: the Molto adagio in Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 15 in A minor* (Op. 132): bb. 1–6

visual score on which musical notes are inscribed, underlies the composition of this sea shot. The entry points of each instrumental line in the fragment of score form a right-angled triangle that is visible on the left-hand side of the page, before the notation on each line (refer to Figure 3.5). This shape is mirrored in the filmic image by the fleeting shape of white light on the water's surface. In the score, the triangle is marked out with clefs, time signatures and five rests, notated as tiny black rectangles on the stave, like a microscopic version of the large dark rocks washed over by waves in the image from the film.

This sequence in *Prénom Carmen* seems haunted by Eisenstein's writing on the 'Odessa Mist' sequence in *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), which the director saw as prefiguring aspects of the audio-visual montage that leads to the 'Battle on the Ice' episode in *Alexander Nevsky* (1938). In *Nonindifferent Nature*, Eisenstein discusses the structure of the 'Odessa Mist' episode, during which the corpse of Vakulinchuk, the sailor and heroic leader of the rebels, eventually appears, holding a flickering candle. Eisenstein likens the 'black mass of a buoy' to 'a massive chord of "Solidity"' that 'bursts out into the elemental water and calmly rolls on the silvery surface of the sea'. This, in turn, comes to be associated with the hard rock of the embankment and with Vakulinchuk's prostrate corpse.[62] The choreography of motifs that Eisenstein identifies reverberates quietly, via the black rocks, the sea and the musical rests in the score, with the sequence in *Prénom Carmen* outlined above. Robertson has drawn attention to the great number of audio-visual metaphors used by Eisenstein in this part of *Nonindifferent Nature*, arising from the synaesthetic associations he makes.[63]

Eisenstein's interest in the pictorial aspect of painting, encompassing the different kinds of 'lines of movement' in European paintings, informs his notion of 'the movement line' in his analysis of the music-image relation in *Alexander Nevsky*, for which Prokofiev composed the score.[64] In an interview on *Prénom Carmen*, Godard explicitly cited the battle scenes in *Alexander Nevsky* as an inspiration for his film, highlighting the centrality of Prokofiev's musical score. Godard states that three-quarters of the scenes in *Prénom Carmen* were made in a manner similar to Eisenstein's film, with the music having 'a certain control over the images'.[65] Again, in a later interview with Thierry Jousse on *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Godard refers to

his method of working 'second by second' to create synchronisms between image and sound, forging picture-music correspondences in the manner of Eisenstein and Prokofiev. He also compares his approach to that of a painter whose vision might emerge piecemeal from colours and sketches.[66]

If the juxtapositions I am making between a section of score and a frame of film in my analysis of *Prénom Carmen* seem to parallel Eisenstein's method of audio-visual montage, it is important to stress their differences. In his famous analysis of the 'Battle on the Ice' sequence, Eisenstein highlights 'a *complete correspondence between the movement of the music and the movement of the eye over the lines of the plastic composition*', deducing that '*exactly the same motion lies at the base of both the musical and the plastic structures*'.[67] By contrast, what I am identifying in my own examples better corresponds to Eisenstein's notion of 'the plastic "rhyming" of visual depiction and lines in a drawing or painting', which he articulates primarily through comparison with Chinese and Japanese poetry. This is not a 'poetry of sound', he notes, but a 'poetry of graphics' or 'music for the eyes'. He explains: 'two objects different in form in terms of "plastic pronunciation" – that is, according to the *graphic manner of their design* – appearing as lines corresponding and repeating each other, are found in conditions of what could be called "*elastic rhyme*"'. Illustrating this idea, Eisenstein notes that 'the line of a mountain avalanche repeats the line of the bent back of an old man'. He then points up the likeness between the hem of a dress and the flow of a river.[68] What is most striking in Figure 3.5 then, is the effect produced by the plastic music of visual rhymes arising from the association between the graphic design of the musical score, and the shapes and sense of motion conveyed within the image.

As the Molto adagio progresses, the harmonies gradually come undone. These motions are matched in the visuals by the quickening onset of night, the accelerating vacillations between exterior and interior space and the increasing proximity of the lovers' bodies. After a brief interval of dialogue and sea sound, another portion of the Molto adagio is played. We hear the scratchy timbre of the first violin, followed by the other string parts, entangled with ambient gull sounds. We see a vast expanse of sand, the distant black specks of human form, strips of shadow and lighter patches and a large stretch of water whose shape echoes the gentle crescendo in

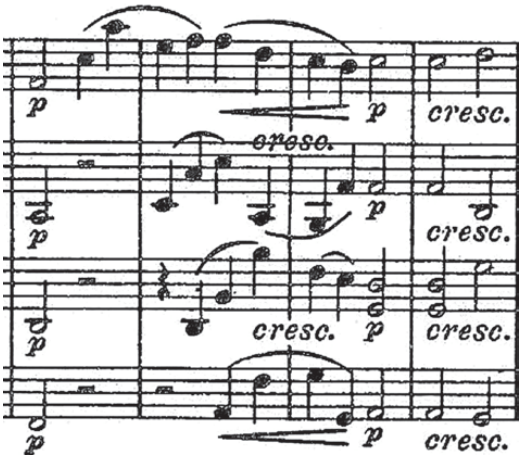
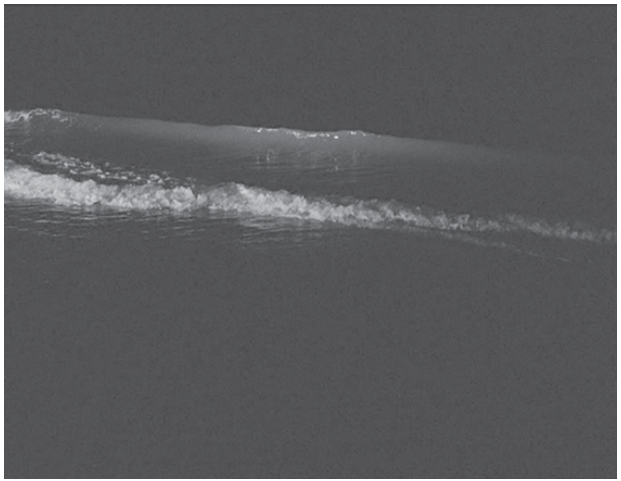


Figure 3.6 Left: the coast at Trouville in *Prénom Carmen* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1983). Right: the imitative texture in the Molto adagio in Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 15 in A minor* (Op. 132): bb. 24–7

the music (see Figure 3.6). The wet sand is saturated with small pools of water and tracks from a vehicle have been scored into the mushy texture, as if the four staves from the score have broken free from the page and now run anarchically into the image. The thick textures depicted, along with the intense fusion of musical and sonic detail, provide a sense of audio-visual proximity and intimacy that is counteracted by the distance depicted in the open coastal scene.

A distinctive sonic cluster, like one of Rodin's sculptural fragments, is crafted from the lively mix of high and lower-pitched gull cries and the fragile thread of the violin melody. Together with the pulpy visual surface, these sounds realise Eisenstein's premise, as noted by Robertson, that '[j]ust as movement in film corresponds with rhythm, visual texture has its auditory counterpart in the texture of sound or timbre'.[69] The intercutting of the seascapes with shots of the musicians working, loads these images with the physical touch of the musicians' fingers and with the energetic exertion of their bodies, as well as with the cutting force of the instruments' vibrating strings. The brief moments I have highlighted in Figures 3.5 and 3.6 resemble the 'isolated images with a certain resonance' that represent deafness in Mahler's music, as Abbate proposed. They come to form a gesture of musical narration whose palpable rhythm the spectator is made to feel, hear and see by way of the visceral intensity of the sonic detail and the visual patterns in the image space.

When the Molto adagio A section returns for a third time, the first phrase is more rhythmically complex, accompanied in the score by the performance direction 'Con intimissimo sentimento'. As the delicate texture of this section of music unfolds, led by the first violin and joined by the chorale melody in the second violin part, the camera cuts to a nocturnal sea shot showing two silvery waves. The sea is filmed at a skewed angle as it rolls across the sand on the beach (see Figure 3.7). The two outer parts in the music, composed of an intricate violin figure that ascends, accompanied by the power of the quiet cello line that makes a two-octave descent, places the spectator in touch with the spatiality of the music. All the while, Godard fractures the music into pieces by inserting lengthy pauses into its flow that are filled with quiet snippets of dialogue. Gradually, as the ambient sea sound increases, Carmen's voice falls to a whisper. The loud



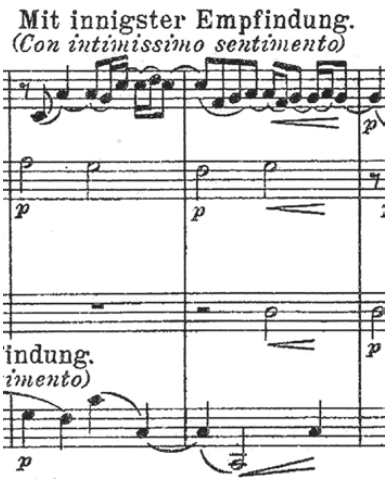


Figure 3.7 Left: the nocturnal return of the Molto adagio in *Prénom Carmen* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1983). Right: Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 15 in A minor* (Op. 132): bb. 171–2

rush of waves dampens and masks her speech that mixes ambiguously with her stammering, amnesiac thoughts. The inaudible music lingers, now a memory, revived only with the rhythmic motion of the waves. The sparse nature of the music heard during the love scenes, fractured by the sounds and images of sea, wind, screeching gulls and by the musicians' dramatic gestures, indicates the faint presence of Abbate's disruptive, marginalised and musical 'voice from outside'.[70]

In his writing on minimalist sculpture and the viewing experience, Alex Potts remarks that:

> Any viewing of a three-dimensional work involves some form of repetitive looping – as one moves right round a work back to the position where one was first standing, or moves in closer and gets absorbed by various local effects of surface shaping and texture and shadowing and then steps back again. The rhythm of such viewing has something of the sense of passing through repeated circuits, which may be more or less regular, more or less expansive, more or less open or closed.[71]

The returns of the chorale melody in the third movement of *String Quartet No. 15*, which are configured a little differently each time, are matched during the love scenes by different types of sea shot. Godard carves the open, voluminous shape of the chorale melody into the film's textural surface where it remains intact, functioning as a sculpted emblem of song that pulls us in and pushes us away. Listening, seeing and feeling, the spectator 'moves around' and experiences these musical and visual forms from different angles, as if moving through an installation.

The fragments or 'isolated images' of the musical score, which are never actually filmed in *Prénom Carmen*, exist as *unseen* images of the film's unconscious. These abstract pictures of music are transposed to the visible sphere as sea shots, offering unconventional cinematic experiences of the appearance of Beethoven's score, to be discovered belatedly by watching and listening to the film on DVD. This interactive 'digital spectator', so termed by Mulvey, who can skip over or revisit a chosen sequence, can make 'unexpected links that displace the chain of meaning invested in cause and effect'. Consequently, Mulvey writes, 'symmetry or pattern can

be detached from the narrative whole or a privileged moment can suddenly take on the heightened quality of a tableau.'[72]

Prénom Carmen showcases what could be described as Godard's and Miéville's continuing efforts to fashion their own kind of 'music for the eyes'. By illuminating different angles of the music via the subtle references to Beethoven's score, the spectator is asked to reflect on Eisenstein's audio-visual montage. The latent visual relation between the sea shots and the music engenders a special cinematic poem intended for the eye that listens: so for the spectator who *sees* (not reads) and thus *hears* the score, in accordance with Godard's desire to see (*voir*), to receive (*recevoir*) and to re-see (*re-ce-voir*) an image, as he expressed so emphatically in the video scenario. The process of stopping and replaying these sequences in *Prénom Carmen*, echoing the stops and starts of the quartet rehearsals, enables the spectator to unlock a set of pictorial correspondences between the film image, the texture of the music and the visual composition of the musical score. The sculpting of music, sound and silence during these scenes in *Prénom Carmen* brings to life a Satiesque variation on an Eisensteinian theme, in a quirky homage to the director.

Conclusion

To finish this analysis let us turn to the middle section of episode 1A, *Toutes les histoires* of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, where we hear the voice of Julie Delpy reciting a passage from Jean Genet's *L'Atelier d'Alberto Giacometti*. The camera becomes a detective's torch, searching for lost artefacts among a collection of film negatives scattered over a white surface. The first chord of the second movement, 'Absence', from Beethoven's *Piano Sonata No. 26 in E-flat major* (Op. 81a) (the 'Lebewohl' Sonata) enters just as the camera cuts to black, the music alluding by way of its title to these dark inverted master images. The next image we see is a photograph of a young Eisenstein wielding scissors and gazing intensely at a strip of film tape, joined by Delpy's reading of Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*.

During a discussion with Youssef Ishaghpour on *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, Godard attempts to define the video series: 'It's cinema, in other words not like literature which is more closely bound to meaning, in film there's

rhythm, it's more like music, that's how I came to use black for rhythm.'[73] Godard's conception of montage is inherently musical, bound intimately to the materiality and malleability of sound and to the raw sensuality of rhythm. As we saw in *Passion*, the hands of the factory worker were also those of the dexterous, humble cutter. Isabelle, the musical figure of *Passion*, whose voice was filled with the enthralling layers of Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G*, was also, finally, a figure of montage, shaped by the hands of the pianist-cum-video artist. These are hands that work simultaneously but at different speeds, playing, painting or, simply, *making* images from an accretion of different musical strands. The diegetic quartet that blurs the fiction in *Prénom Carmen*, disturbs the unfolding of the narrative and marks out a musical territory in the image, emblematised in the love scenes by the sculpted core of the chorale melody.

In Rilke's short essay *Primal Sound*, he explores his first experience of the phonograph, referring to the needle, the parchment, the sound waves and the receptive surface, followed by the trembling hesitations of the resultant recording. What he remembers most are the traces, the 'unforgotten grooves' etched into the wax cylinder. Then something strange happens. During an anatomy class at the *École des Beaux-Arts*, Rilke had the novel idea of resting the needle of the phonograph on the coronal suture of the skull. He asks: 'What would happen? A sound would necessarily result, a series of sounds, music … / Feelings – which?'[74] The primal sound of the body is what Rilke was striving for. Yet in *Scénario du film Passion*, *Passion* and *Prénom Carmen*, it is the sounding and imaging of the disjointed body of musical thought that provides the life force with which the sonic eye sees.

4

Fragments of Time and Memory

Lettre à Freddy Buache (1981) and *Puissance de la parole* (1988)

In *Lettre à Freddy Buache* and *Puissance de la parole*, subversive areas of sensation unfurl as flakes of speech, melody and movement curl into our ears. Attempts are made to dodge rigorous structures, to evade the exactitude of geometrical form and embrace a risky existence that thrives on the freedom to surprise. *Lettre à Freddy Buache. À propos d'un court-métrage sur la ville de Lausanne* is an 11-minute short that was commissioned to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the city of Lausanne. The 25-minute video *Puissance de la parole*, named after Charles Baudelaire's translation of Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Power of Words* (1845), was commissioned by the French telecommunications company France Télécom. Although they were made six years apart and deal with different themes, one key point of commonality that binds the two shorts together is the music of Ravel.

The orchestral works by Ravel that Godard chose to use are the *Boléro* (1928) in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* and *La Valse* (1919–20) in *Puissance de la parole*. These pieces were originally envisaged by Ravel as twin projects for the ballet and would involve the same collaborative team (Ida Rubinstein, Bronislava Nijinska and Alexandre Benois).[1] The conflation of mechanical motion and dance-like rhythms constitutes a striking part of each composition. Moreover, the presence of repetition, circularity and an inclination

towards automatism and dysfunction grants them their place in Ravel's 'dance-machine' trajectory.[2] Mawer points out that *La Valse* has been interpreted as a metaphor for the Franco-German unrest of 1848, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the fall of the Habsburg Empire and the demise of high European culture following World War I, while *Boléro*, on the other hand, has been read as a symbol of torment, madness and death.[3] This chapter will explore how the inner workings of the music play a central role in determining the formal design of each film.

The slow-paced *Lettre à Freddy Buache* and the fast-paced *Puissance de la parole* push against the fragile boundary separating calculated, abstract forms from a visceral physicality by drawing on music inspired by dance, the machine and the body. Godard's slippery disembodied speech in *Lettre à Freddy Buache*, his disfiguring of the *Boléro* and the manipulation of the wandering camera, followed by the hyper-fast visual commotion in *Puissance de la parole*, make the aesthetic of speed an essential factor in each film's choreography. Furthermore, Godard's attentiveness to the transformative force of music is showcased stunningly in *Puissance de la parole*, serving ultimately to foreground the intimate tie between music and montage, a crucial relationship that hinges for Godard on the poetic and visionary act of composing or 'putting together' and uniting incongruent worlds. As Witt points out, Godard's early work in the 1950s as a critic, a dialogue writer and an editor of documentary and silent travel films, and his undertaking of the responsibility of editor in his own projects from the 1970s on, solidifies his self-defined status as a radical 'combiner'.[4] Throughout this chapter, we will see how a vital link is repeatedly forged between the music, evocations of cinema's past, and the electronic medium of video, through Godard's innovative use of fragmentation, distortion and recombination.

Lettre à Freddy Buache: the *Buache-Boléro* mechanism

Lettre à Freddy Buache, co-produced by Sonimage and Film et Vidéo Production Lausanne, was originally commissioned to celebrate the anniversary of the city of Lausanne but instead the spectator is presented with the 'failed' result – a film that fell short of expectation. Ravel's *Boléro*

provides the backbone of the film, a piece made famous for filmgoers by Blake Edwards's comedy *10* (1979), gaining iconic status as perfect background music. The piece premiered at the Paris Opéra in 1928 and over the course of the following decade 25 recordings were made.[5] Ravel's most popular and most commercially successful work serves Godard not only as an archetypal musical commodity to tamper with, but also as a generator of musical thought that comes to fuel the filmmaker's musings on the time of documentary and the time of fiction. *Lettre à Freddy Buache*, dedicated to the German filmmaker Ernst Lubitsch and the American documentary filmmaker Robert Flaherty, consists of images of the cityscape, of people walking in the streets of Lausanne and of Godard operating a tape deck and a record player in his studio.

One of the key rhythmic features of the *Boléro* is the clockwork precision and regularity provided by the ostinato (a continually repeated phrase or rhythm). If slowed down or sped up, the rigorous process would be ruined, the mechanical illusion shattered. Throughout the film we see the sound technician (Godard himself) busy at work. However, his speech is never in sync with his body and his face remains inexpressive. Thinking back to the Sonimage years, *Lettre à Freddy Buache* appears to re-animate and transform the images of Jeannot (Godard) at the end of *Numéro deux*, lying on his arms with his exhausted hands grasping the sound-mixer, finally defeated by the fragmentary energy of the electronic medium of video. In the later film, Godard silently and cunningly takes full control of the sound machinery as the spectator witnesses the 'live' physical performance of a body, listening assiduously through headphones, and operating the music from the enclosed space and alternative time zone of the studio.

The play of imitation and aesthetic conceit runs at full throttle in this film. Godard exploits Ravel's composition, famous for its presentation of extreme control and its subtext of erotic desire and death, in a way that shrewdly fixes our attention, through the *Buache-Boléro* mechanism, on another endangered mechanical body: cinema. The tension that lies at the heart of the *Boléro*, namely the contradictory bind of mechanical beauty, imprisoning repetition and free bodily expression, is one that Godard–Miéville investigated in their Sonimage television series in the late 1970s, in which occasional unprompted outbursts of emotion and lyricism

resuscitate a sense of optimism in the medium. Nevertheless, as Witt deduces, if *À bout de souffle* is credited as Godard's short-lived 'manifesto of cinematic modernity' that privileges outbursts of corporal expression, in the early 1980s, when the 'economic domination and aesthetic infiltration by television' was taking its toll, cinema itself had undergone irreversible changes.[6] Radically diverse influences constitute the huge tension that lies at the heart of the music, which swings between mechanical movement, inspired by the noise of modern life, and a thoroughly uninhibited bodily dance. The *Boléro*, originally written for the ballet, was initially titled 'Fandango', evoking the racy Castilian and Andalusian courtship dance.[7] The fetishistic power of the music, in which the meticulous mechanics of seduction, enchantment and madness are slowly and steadily magnified, is driven by an excess of ritualistic repetition that leads to the climactic 'breakdown' of the vast musical mechanism.

Handling sound and time

The film begins in the shielding cocoon of the studio. We see the anonymous hands of a technician delicately handling the mixing console as Godard's soft voice-off affectionately addresses the eponymous recipient, 'Cher Freddy', who at that time was the director of the Cinémathèque Suisse.[8] The camera cuts to another shot of the technician's arms adjusting the film reel while Godard's speech continues, accompanied by the background sounds of cars speeding past and by a snippet of off-frame dialogue consisting of Godard disputing with police officers. The next cut takes us to a close-up of a tape machine as Godard alludes to the fast-approaching demise of cinema. A giant hand quickly flicks the switches, puts a cassette into the tape deck and a recording of the *Boléro* commences.

Although we assume that the tape recording of Ravel's *Boléro* is the version that we can hear, Godard is filmed throughout *Lettre à Freddy Buache* devotedly operating a record player, which at a later point appears to coincide with the music heard on the soundtrack. Trickery, forgery and illusion are under the spotlight here as the deceptive surface, the lie of the image and the lost enigma of cinema are boldly presented to us. The passage of time literally unfolds before our ears as the linear temporality of the

ostinato drumbeat refuses to give way, while the exploratory camera takes us on a different journey, joined by the winding diversions of Godard's speech, until we reach the concluding dramatic and magical stop-motion images of the city's inhabitants.

The fetish object of the phonograph, whose trace dwells in the image of the LP record, with its spiral groove, hole and stylus, is strongly associated with the urge to capture time itself. New advancements in sound technology that took place in the 1920s, including developments in phonography and the arrival of sound film, meant, as Kahn explains, that 'dramatically new approaches to sound began to materialize'.[9] This was a crucial period in cultural history and in the history of recorded sound. In his article on the phonograph, Charles Grivel writes that the marvel of reproduction has forever been entangled with notions of horror, rapture, repetition and deformation. Through a study of six essays on the phonograph, Grivel highlights how the cold, unaccented soulless breath that vacantly mumbles into the ear of the listener, enticing and devouring its victim, leaks out from this cannibalistic 'animal machine' of the phonograph that splits apart body from voice.[10] The fracturing of body and voice is on display throughout Godard's audio-visual letter. The camera alternates between images of the filmmaker listening in silence to the *Boléro* in the dark shell of his studio, and images of the rough urban terrain outside, while his speech moves fluidly between the two locations.

The sound reproduction equipment on show in the studio shots evokes the revelatory moment in Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *L'Eve future* (1885) when the inventor (a fictional 'Edison') unveils his short film. This is the story of the android Hadaly, whose soul is electric and whose lungs are made from the golden cylinders of a phonograph. In a section of the novel titled 'Danse Macabre', an inspired vision of cinema unfolds. The inventor shows Lord Ewald a film of Evelyn Habal dancing a fandango. When she suddenly begins to sing, her stiff, flat and unattractive voice soon transforms her spectacular image into something monstrous:

> Her movements were as lively as those of life itself, thanks to the procedures of successive photography, which can record on its microscopic glasses ten minutes of action to be projected on the

> screen by a powerful lampascope, using no more than a few feet of film. Edison touched a groove in the black frame and lit a little electric light in the center of the gold rose. Suddenly a voice, rather flat and stiff, a hard, dull voice, was heard; the dancer was singing the *alza* and *ole* of her fandango.[11]

Villiers thus privileges the ear, emphasising the dangerous and delusional act of trusting the reality that lies before our eyes. This is precisely the passage quoted by Bazin in his essay 'Le mythe du cinéma total' ('The Myth of Total Cinema'), in which he refers to this same astonishing vision of the dancer captured by Villiers just a few years before the real-life Edison began investigating the possibility of connecting the phonograph with photography to produce 'talking' motion pictures.[12] The seductive movements of the dancer come undone through sound, as her lacking voice shatters the fantasy of perfection that the idealistic Ewald sadistically craves. In Godard's 11-minute film, this fundamental lineage that charts the coordination of sound and image is humorously staged, speedily taking us back through cinema's anatomical history to its birth.

John Anzalone suggests that the process of unveiling, which traditionally plays a vital role in the shaping of narrative structure, is symbolically enacted through the death-dealing 'undressing' of the bewitching dancer in this part of Villiers's novel. The dancer's costume falls apart, thereby spoiling Ewald's scopophilic pleasure and undermining his controlling gaze.[13] Yet in his *billet-doux* to cinema, Godard surreptitiously omits the climactic collapse of the *Boléro* when the mechanism goes awry. The process of musical unveiling is spoiled because Godard short circuits the goal-directed motion of the mechanical ostinato, undermining the allure of its fatal end, deflating its narrative drive and rechannelling the spectator's musical desire in the process.

Trickery and enchantment

The shots in semi-darkness of Godard operating the studio equipment signify a safeguarding of what Emmerson terms the '*tactile relationship* to sound production' that soon became a 'paradise lost' when computers, sequencers and more advanced samplers redefined the nature of 'live'

performance in the 1980s.[14] A live performance might involve a performer producing sound mechanically or on electronic substitutes, or it might consist of a performer influencing sound through electronically mediated interfaces. Acousmatic music created in a studio and then projected via a loudspeaker system also constitutes a 'live act'. Emmerson stresses that electroacoustic composers sometimes create deliberate ambiguity for audiences by manipulating the cause-effect patterns that link visible gesture to sound production. Although *Lettre à Freddy Buache* is a short audio-visual work, not an 'authentic' electroacoustic composition, it certainly broaches questions of appearance and deception through sound production. Indeed, throughout the film we are never entirely sure where the music emanates from: is it from the cassette player, the record player or from somewhere else entirely? However, as Emmerson states: 'what *sounds* causal *is* effectively causal'.[15] The listener's perception *of* and belief *in* a causal relation is what matters most, whether s/he has been duped by appearance or has perceived the 'real' source.

During the film, Godard provides a short history of the city, referring to the Lausanne near the mountains and the Lausanne near the water, stating that the 'periphery' and the 'centre' have exchanged places. Something similar has happened in the music too: when the *Boléro* begins to play (at 01:38 min in the film), the halfway point in the composition has already passed.[16] The start of the piece is omitted, along with the catastrophic conclusion that Mawer defines as the 'ultimate gesture', triggered by the sudden transposition of the whole piece up a major 3rd (a lurching movement that has been associated symbolically with a flicked switch or pulled lever).[17] The *Boléro* is a composition built on two melodies that repeat nine times, forming a vast crescendo, as the whole structure moves from high C to low C down the octave. Mawer asserts: 'the piece is not concerned with organic growth but with the phased depression of a lever, stopping only at inevitable mechanical failure. Its basic plan comprises two related, repeated melodic materials (AABB) of thirty-four bars' duration'.[18] She notes that Ravel himself likened the two main themes of the piece that alternate throughout to the links of a chain as well as to a *chaîne* (an 'assembly line').

As we will see, Godard's own 'ultimate gesture' in the film (a pastiche of mechanical failure), involves a silent interlude as he stops the music

Figure 4.1 Tracing over musical messages in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1981)

and turns over the record. Prior to this moment, a miniature crescendo is crafted in cinematic fashion, beginning when the camera pans from right to left over the outside surface of a building, passing over two giant red letters, 'A' then 'R'. The camera then continues its journey, catching sight of part of a word that reads 'composition', framed by several chimneys (see Figure 4.1). In this sequence, Godard flaunts the idea of the musical cryptogram, when composers encoded messages into their compositions by using the letter names of musical notes, often forming encryptions of their own name or names of friends. Ravel's cryptogrammic compositions, *Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn* and *Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré*, are famous cases that exemplify, as Mawer suggests, 'symbolic objects of homage' after the Renaissance technique of *soggetto cavato* (a subject carved from words).[19] Godard objectifies Ravel's signature by lingering over the vast red letters, the camera moving like a needle on a stylus, retracing the graphic notation in reverse.

The slow lithe movement of the camera, accompanied by our tricky voice-off guide, soon changes direction, now moving from left to right and smoothly traversing the stony surfaces. The camera moves progressively closer to the hard, grainy rock face, until we leave the jagged terrain behind altogether and plunge into a still close-up of water, before returning to the recording studio in preparation for Godard's aural edit – his own *soggetto cavato* to render homage to Flaherty, Lubitsch and Ravel, inscribed manually through the illusive functioning of the LP record into the sonic support (the *Boléro* vertebrae) of the film. Godard's elliptical speech, having accompanied the camera over various circles (manhole covers), lines (road markings) and rocky surfaces, loses itself in the gentle motion of the water, in the vague background noise and in the strident tones of Ravel's music.

This fluid screen-space briefly conjures a distinctly cinematic moment as we recall the final sequence in *Pierrot le fou* when the camera pans from left to right, past rocks and black smoke, to find a serene image of a line of sea, sky and a patch of white light, accompanied by the lovers' whispered utterance, 'eternity', from Rimbaud's poem 'L'Éternité'. In this part of Godard's ode to cinema in *Lettre à Freddy Buache*, a percussive pattering of consonants leads us gently into the liquid stasis and ambiguous fullness of this pleasurable visual pause, which precedes the cut to the studio (the alliterative flurry of words include: 'pierre', 'remplacer', 'paysage', 'échapper', 'esprit', 'pierre des rochers' and 'pied'). The full-screen image of rippling water, soon echoed by the spinning record, absorbs Godard's deterritorialised vocal tones, implying a transition to a new temporal order. The unhurried, pensive camera style that flourishes in this part of the film accentuates the urgent need, as Godard declared at the start, to film in the right light, to slow down and take the time to see, hear and remain attentive and receptive to the world outside.

Gestures of return

In 1978 Godard gave a series of talks in Montreal that were published in 1980 in *Introduction à une véritable histoire du cinéma* (*Introduction to a True History of Cinema*).[20] This series evolved from earlier plans

for an audio-visual history of cinema to be co-written and co-directed by Godard and the co-founder of the Cinémathèque française, Henri Langlois. Witt states that Godard's aim was to use the talks as 'preparatory research for a longer-term audiovisual study of the history of cinema and television'.[21] This project, conceived as early as 1976 and abandoned following Langlois's death a year later, has been interpreted with hindsight as a crucial 'prototypical vision' of the later *Histoire(s) du cinéma*.[22] Fascinatingly, Witt reveals that before this time, when Godard and Miéville were living in Grenoble, Godard had devised a lengthy and detailed collage in which he set out a future project with Miéville comprising a videocassette series titled 'Histoire(s) du cinéma et de la télévision' ('Studies in Motion Pictures and Television'),[23] of which '[t]he main organising principle was that of a division between silent and sound cinema', a theme that touches all of the multimedia works explored in this book.

With this in mind, let us now turn to the critical studio sequence in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* when the surreptitious aural edit occurs. In the aftermath of the sequence discussed above, Godard utters a phrase by Lubitsch: 'Start with filming mountains. When you know how to film mountains, you'll know how to film people.' Godard had previously cited this phrase during one of the Montreal talks, which began with a screening of excerpts from Flaherty's silent film *Nanook of the North* (1922), Roberto Rossellini's *Francesco, giullare di Dio* (1950) and Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966), followed by a projection of Godard's own feature, *Une femme mariée* (1964). As he cites Lubitsch's phrase in *Lettre à Freddy Buache*, Godard turns over the record and the music stops obediently. He cleans the vinyl surface and carefully repositions the stylus, aided by a bright torchlight, as the spectator awaits the impending musical carnage with which the *Boléro* concludes (see Figure 4.2). Godard declares cannily: 'to depart from … from documentary, from the place [the music returns] where we live, where we have lived. Something that we have known.'[24] Instead of the music continuing logically to its end, what we *hear* is a pause, a slight sonic distortion as the stylus retouches the vinyl surface, and a repetition of a passage from the *Boléro* heard moments earlier: the music has been looped back on itself.

During the talk alluded to above, Godard says of Flaherty's documentary:

Figure 4.2 Godard repositions the stylus in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1981)

> So *Nanook*, I think, was a sense of filming a drama and filming the time of documentary, which is not exactly the same as the time of fiction. And this time has to be returned to fiction a little. So for me a film, whether *Nanook* or – it's a documentary quality, a fragmented quality of reality with a degree of dramatisation.[25]

This is one of the most telling moments in Godard's lecture that captures perfectly the mood conjured and the manoeuvres performed in *Lettre à Freddy Buache*. He goes on to define fiction as 'the moment of communication, the moment when you can receive the piece of evidence', a moment created by looking:

> Fiction is the expression of the document and the document is the impression. […] I would say that impression is the document, but when this document expresses itself or when we need to look at it, at that point we are expressing ourselves. And that's fiction, but fiction is just as real as documentary, it's another moment of reality.[26]

Figure 4.3 Nanook awaits his catch in *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, 1922)

In the same lecture, Godard singles out an episode in Flaherty's film when Nanook goes hunting. Nanook raises his harpoon and then waits and watches (see Figure 4.3). Here Godard highlights the creative potential that can be found in the juxtaposition of different gestures in cinema, before pointing up the similarities between them (in the case of *Nanook*, the notable gesture is that of waiting: 'the fact of waiting'). In the right combination, these gestures might provide the vital documents or 'scientific basis' from which a fiction might materialise.[27]

Godard's comments in this lecture relate to Bazin's thinking on film style in his famous essay 'L'Évolution du langage cinématographique' ('The Evolution of the Language of Cinema'). In this essay, Bazin offers an unusual approach to film history that does not assign priority to the transition from silent to sound cinema. Instead, he casts doubt on the idea that the technical revolution brought about by the talkies was also an aesthetic revolution that led to the emergence of a 'new cinema'. He identifies a certain continuity between silent and sound cinema, especially in terms

of editing, underlining the stylistic affinities that persist irrespective of the break caused by the birth of the talkies.[28] For Bazin, 'it is less a matter of setting silence over against sound than of contrasting certain families of styles, certain basically different concepts of cinematographic expression'.[29] Bazin pinpoints two opposing trends in the cinema between 1920 and 1940: the first encompasses directors who put their faith in the 'plastics of the image' and invest heavily in the 'resources of montage', and the second comprises directors who put their faith in cinema's capacity to record reality. Bazin argues that sound's subordinate status in cinema is dependent on the premise of the first trend, namely, that cinema's true essence lies above all in the artifice of montage.[30]

Bazin traces the lineage of the second trend back to the silent films of Eric von Stroheim, F.W. Murnau and Flaherty. He saw in these films the possibility for a new type of language. These filmmakers pioneered an alternative cinema that could *reveal* physical reality and lay bare its 'structural depth'. Bazin's first example relates to the seal hunt scenes in *Nanook of the North*, observing that Flaherty did not merely 'suggest the time involved' but privileged 'the actual length of the waiting period', foreseeing Godard's later comments on this aspect of the film. Bazin writes: 'the length of the hunt is the very substance of the image, its true object'.[31] This rare trend in a strand of silent cinema was not *erased* by the talkies but it 'represented the richest vein of the so-called silent film' and 'looked to the realism of sound as a natural development'.[32]

Ravel's repetitive *Boléro*, a masterpiece of duration and a powerful means of dramatising visual space, offers Godard an ideal means of establishing a critical dialogue with Bazin's thesis. Paradoxically, by way of his own cunning montage trick, performed specifically on the music, which blends his live sonic act with a gesture from silent cinema (via Flaherty), Godard calls attention to the two main tendencies that Bazin identifies and curiously, he aligns his sound film with the alternative cinema of the second trend: a cinema capable of 'bringing together real time, in which things exist, along with the duration of the action, for which classical editing had insidiously substituted mental and abstract time'.[33] Godard's fashioning of a very Ravellian musical illusion encourages the spectator of *Lettre à Freddy Buache* to listen attentively to the passing (and manipulation) of time, as he

attempts to breathe new life into the 'realism in storytelling',[34] while composing his playful love letter to cinema.

As noted in Chapter 3, Ravel's article, 'Finding Tunes in Factories' discusses the creative possibilities of noise and its relationship with music, while also alluding to the ominous hum of oppression, isolation and silence that dwells in the factory environment. On the adjacent page in the newspaper is an article titled 'Flaherty's Latest', written by the documentary filmmaker John Grierson, in which *Man of Aran* and other upcoming releases are discussed. The newspaper's sections 'Cinema' and 'Music' are printed next to each other. In this way, two of the founding 'images' in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* – Ravel's *Boléro* and Flaherty's documentary work – are set side by side and thereby invite comparison (see Appendix, Figures A.1 and A.2). In the penultimate section of the article, Ravel comments: 'Honegger, Mossolov, Schönberg, and others have gained much of their inspiration from machinery. My own *Bolero* owed its inception to a factory. Someday I should like to play it with a vast industrial works in the background.'[35]

Godard's short film recreates something of Ravel's personal dream. Reflecting on Godard's comments on the 'impression' of the document, one could say that a fiction is awakened from the indexical sign of the newspaper source.[36] Yet in wider historical terms, what is also illuminated is cinema's original task – its documentary function – and for Godard, its definitive failure, for, in Godard's view, cinema failed in its duty to record and *show* to the public the catastrophic genocide taking place across Europe during the Holocaust. *Lettre à Freddy Buache*, then, not only shunts the spectator back in time through cinema history, but it simultaneously prepares her/him for the large-scale experience to come of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, in which Godard is steadfastly entwined with his noisy machinery. Witt writes that *Histoire(s) du cinéma* accentuates the 'documentary root and duty of cinema' and that 'Godard is careful to counterbalance his reading of cinema's role as true art and purveyor of myth with an insistence on its inherently and properly *journalistic* function'.[37] In this respect, the newspaper document stands as an important archival record that Godard 'projects' via his puzzling act of stopping and restarting the music. The document *expresses itself* sonically, and the 'moment of

communication' is here created not by looking, as Godard previously suggested, but by listening.

At this juncture, we should return to the cultural artifact of the LP record, which reverberates troublingly with the opening shot in Renoir's *La Grande illusion* (1937), composed of a close-up of a gramophone record and accompanied by the hands and dreamy singing voice of Jean Gabin.[38] Soon afterwards, Captain de Boieldieu calls over French officers to help him decipher a grey mark on a reconnaissance photograph. De Boieldieu describes the ambiguous stain in the image as 'a little enigma' to be solved. As Colin Davis notes, the opening of *La Grande illusion* constitutes an ominous introduction to the rest of the film, warning of the danger and defectiveness of the visual image and its incapacity to reliably represent the real world. The mysterious 'enigma' of the image, Davis writes, which, for de Boieldieu signifies 'a failing within the photographic process', leads eventually to death (the death of de Boieldieu who is shot down by the Germans and later killed).[39] Moreover, in Godard's *Éloge de l'amour* we again find an image of an LP record, preceded by documentary footage of men observing skeletons from the Holocaust, followed by a cut to black. We see the record spinning, cloaked in darkness as the soundtrack cuts to a grainy recording of the distant sound of Paul Celan reading a line from his Holocaust poem 'Todesfuge' ('Death Fugue').

Both music and poetry become signifiers of danger and suffering but also of hope as Godard, via his failed film that was intended to commemorate Lausanne, continues to explore and communicate his thoughts on cinema's greater 'failure' and its uncertain future. The pure form of the spinning record reverberates with other moments in cinema history and constitutes a special 'image of music' that, as Wills suggests, provides access to 'the music of history',[40] which should be replayed and listened to assiduously.

Puissance de la parole: the relations between

Puissance de la parole explores the power and powerlessness of the spoken word in the modern age. At the same time, it experiments with the creative, analytic and technical potential of the electronic medium of video itself, urging spectators to identify and reflect on historical connections

between images and sounds with its myriad of figured collisions between the body and technology. The video stands as one of several autonomous video shorts made by Godard in the late 1980s when he was continuing to explore the altered state of cinema and spectatorship in the age of television, and in the emerging age of satellite and cable, in anticipation of the explosion of digital media in the following decade. Crucially, *Puissance de la parole* was made at the same time as the early drafts of the first episodes of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* and even incorporates a sequence from episode 1A, bearing testimony to the important interrelationship between the two films. In *Puissance de la parole*, Godard fashions a dense intermedial space of clashing intertexts and explosive encounters between human and cosmic forces, training its spectators to engage with the extreme montage states that he constructs in the later video series.[41] Through the recombination of pre-existing material, this compact video short pulsates with energy and marks an important shift in Godard's 1980s film work, a shift that sees video come into its own as a poetic and interdisciplinary artistic force.

The video is structured around a fraught telephone conversation between ex-lovers Frank (Jean-Michel Iribarren) and Velma (Lydia Andréi) and Frank's gloomy utterance 'Allo' is played at different speeds, evoking the first word allegedly recorded by Edison's phonograph. The dialogue between Frank and Velma consists of an excerpt from James M. Cain's novel *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1934), a classical text for the cinema, with Pierre Chenal's *Le Dernier tournant* (1939), Luchino Visconti's *Ossessione* (1943) and Tay Garnett's *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1945) all based on the same novel. Encircling this stormy inner dialogue is an outer metaphysical circle composed of a lengthy cosmic conversation between two angels, Mademoiselle Oïnos (Laurence Côte) and Monsieur Agathos (Jean Bouise) from Poe's *The Power of Words*.

Godard's fascination with the music of Ravel continues in this video, this time through his riveting treatment of *La Valse*, a work composed for the Ballets Russes and subtitled a 'choreographic poem', implying that it was conceived for the stage. *La Valse*, which premiered at the Opéra in 1929, is a lavish and devastating composition in which the music seems directed towards its own dissolution. Similarly, Godard's own videographic

poem for the screen indulges and deranges the spectator's ears and eyes as the vestiges of cinema's past are recovered, re-examined and configured anew. Godard's handling of recorded sound and music, in conjunction with his treatment of Bacon's paintings *Study from the Human Body* (1949) and *Figure in Movement* (1979), is significant because together the mix of music and painting powerfully expresses the ambivalent convergence between movement and stillness that constitutes what Laura Mulvey calls cinema's 'central paradox'.[42] During the course of this analysis, we will see how a sense of nostalgia for the cinematographic image, mixed with the distant traces of a waltz, gives life to a disorderly spectacle that smashes the boundaries between media, engendering unusual experiences of well-known works and producing new musical visions in the process. Godard's appropriation of *La Valse* and the ephemeral glimmers of Bacon's paintings create vivid intersections between music and visual art through which Godard reflects on the aesthetic power, disintegration and dilapidation of cinema as an art form, while signalling the possibility of its renewal.

Freezing time: sound, painting and photography

Puissance de la parole instigates an intensified use of speed alteration in Godard's film and video work, expressed in the form of acceleration and rapid flash shots. Rather than focusing solely on slow motion, we find what Raymond Bellour refers to as images in search of a new speed. Indeed, in a succinct analysis of the video, he writes:

> Pictures in slow motion, frozen, shattered; or reconstructed, transformed, represented anew thanks to the swiftness of montage and the potency of the special effects. In short, images in search of a new speed, which Godard has been looking for since *France Tour Détour Deux Enfants*, but this time really capable of changing speed, for instance, of going from a 'photographic' representation to (more or less emphatic) sketches of distortion.[43]

In *Puissance de la parole*, the metamorphic potential of fast-paced movement injects into the video an aesthetic force while at the same time operating as a tool of resistance, serving to cut through and reconfigure the

rapid circulation of clichéd images, sounds and sanctioned ideas that are powered by mass media.

The flash shots, superimpositions and speed changes, and the unpitched electronic pulsations, give rise to a rhythmic swarm of colour and sound, constituting what Dubois proclaims as 'a *video-vibration*, like a cardiac pulsing that carries into and echoes throughout the whole universe the infinite marks of thought and speech'.[44] Human thought and emotion migrate from the body, expanding into the visual textures and acoustic environments, and speech is stretched and smeared across the evolving soundscape. Images of racing clouds, freeze-frames of rushing water, steam pouring from barren rocks and billowing purple, pink and red vapours are set against tight grid-like figures and an array of framing structures. The electronic imagery, awash with speed changes and brimming with quiet but menacing stirrings, is also flooded with the colour schemes and consistencies of certain salient paintings, including Bacon's static *Study from the Human Body* and his dynamic *Figure in Movement*, as well as Max Ernst's *Euclid* (1945) and his luxuriant bird goddesses from *Attirement of the Bride* (1940), flushing the visuals with a variety of dream-like forms.

Just as the painters' tableaux are made to break beyond their frame, the audio arrangement is knocked into an irregularly shaped object by the dissolving temporalities, the sheer pressure and raw dynamism of the layered extracts of music, sporadically blown through and distorted by gusts of electronic noise. As the video commences, we hear the sombre opening from the first movement (I. Lento; Allegro ma non troppo) of César Franck's *Symphony in D minor* (1888), which is briefly interrupted by an electrifying flash shot and the first of John Cage's *Sonatas and Interludes* (1946–8) for prepared piano. The prepared piano involves objects such as screws, bolts, fabrics and wood being placed on the strings, thereby altering the pitch by dampening the tones. In Godard's disfiguring of this extract, the percussive sound of electronic pulsations, loud gushing water, birds chirping and crow-like squawks constitute the filmmaker's own additions to Cage's preparations. The interruption of Franck's ill-fated Lento with this Cagean burst of musical sound, and the entirely different form of musical organisation that Cage's composition embodies, portend the beginning of a new temporal order.

In his article on electronic music, Drew Hemment draws on Paul DeMarinis's motif of the 'Edison effect', which conveys what many regarded as the negative impact of the objectification of music and sound that occurred when recording became commonplace.[45] To the ears of many, this new technology destroyed the spontaneity, transiency and uniqueness of musical performance. Hemment replaces this concept with that of 'the Edison *defect*', which celebrates the zone of indeterminacy established through the play of slippage and recontextualisation facilitated by recording technology. Hemment perceives the sonic imperfections that result from 'the *rupture of recording*' as fertile matter, capable of producing 'a new kind of music and another sonic realm'. He notes that the '*musical potential*' of sonic disturbance was appropriated by electronic music artists during the twentieth century, whose work moved away from 'the *telos* of representational technologies', evolving instead from 'accident, manipulation and reuse'.[46] He writes:

> Sound cut up, looped, reversed. But also, and most interestingly, in wresting the audio image out of time, the recording process freezes and isolates a fragment of time, making possible the capture – and reworking – of a plurality of temporalities encoded in individual sounds or passages of music. In morphing a movement in sound the perception of the very passing of time can be toyed with or subverted; time brought into view by being taken out of focus in a twist of the lens.[47]

Hemment comments on the types of editing techniques that were subsequently developed and freed sound up from the restrictions imposed by sequential past-present-future trajectories. The 'audio documents' captured and preserved thanks to the phonograph inadvertently led to a new '*plastic art*' that involved the remixing of sonic textures to produce new species of sound and new mixtures of time,[48] and in *Puissance de la parole* the expression of time is articulated incessantly through references to cinema, photography, and through the manipulation of sound and musical time.

When the video begins, the bright sound and distinctive timbre of a note from Cage's first Sonata is embellished with the sound of gushing water, deepened via electronic pulsations and extended via bird chirps to form

a dense audio image. This initial burst of explosive action is full of abrupt scuffles, splutters and slight de-synchronisations. A spilling-over of thought and feeling is immediately conveyed through a reproduction of Bacon's *Study from the Human Body*, which is mixed via flash shots with fast-moving white clouds. Frank's repeated 'Allo' is elongated and made to stammer as we are propelled hazardously beyond the earth's atmosphere. The camera zooms in and the images begin to flash erratically as Frank tries to make contact with Velma over the telephone. High-pitched electronic tones are mixed with another flashing image of a satellite in space, all the while muddied by Franck's *Symphony in D minor*. The strident fortissimo descent of the Allegro ma non troppo then begins, hurrying us back to earth and into Velma's Degas-esque abode, rerooting us in an enclosed domestic space.

The galactic ringing noise, the electronic screeches and the disturbing buzzing sound, as well as the fierce staccato string chords, harmonise at the end of this frenetic, colourful and brilliantly rhythmic opening section that culminates in a frenzied array of flash shots. The camera zooms in fitfully, dramatically and threateningly on a clump of vegetation with which Velma's body is confused, producing an incongruous fusion of human and plant forms that pertains to the grotesque. Indeed, a crude shot of her squatting posture is crossed through, owing to the fast visual flickering motion of the green foliage, producing a strange electronic frottage effect. This sequence, along with others in the video, seems haunted once again by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's Hadaly, whose soul is electric, whose lungs are made from the golden cylinders of a phonograph and who resides in an underground vault, recalling Velma's fantastical boudoir.

Reconstructing *Study from the Human Body*

In the middle part of the video, the quick three-time beat of Cohen's pop song 'Take this Waltz' is superseded prophetically by a short passage from the first movement, 'Das Lebewohl' ('Farewell') of Beethoven's *Piano Sonata No. 26 in E-flat major* (Op. 81a) titled 'Les Adieux'. Indeed, the sonata's three movements are suitably titled 'Farewell', 'Absence' and 'Reunion'. Beethoven composed this work at the time of the French occupation of Vienna in 1809, when many of his friends were forced to leave the

city, including his patron to whom the sonata is dedicated.[49] Adorno has written fondly of the 'crude' design of Op. 81a, commenting on its 'impulse for extreme humanization and subjectification'.[50] He detects in the opening movement the 'sound of disappearance' conveyed by a three-bar phrase that suggests the clatter of horses' hooves and evokes the 'moving away of the coach'.[51] This motif of disappearance becomes for Adorno a poignant, simple and deeply expressive image of hope: the hope of return.

An image of Velma fades to show a backdrop of a hazy grey path in a brightly-lit forest, accompanied by the faint notes of the piano sonata. The ghostly white shape of her body soon reappears, ephemerally streaked by lines and shadows, reminiscent of an earlier image of Velma in her apartment, in a white towel, brushing her hair and positioned in front of some shutters, mixed with a blue-tinted image of rippling water to create a similar streaky effect. Near the end of the video, just before the explosive finale commences, we see the return of an image that flashed up at the start: Bacon's *Study from the Human Body* (see Figure 4.4). This painting is faded in over a shot of Mlle Oïnos and M. Agathos, accompanied by the same excerpt from Beethoven's 'Das Lebewohl' and joined by the return of the electronic pulsations.

Study from the Human Body constitutes Bacon's first significant adaptation from the serial photography of Eadweard Muybridge, in particular, his photographs of male wrestlers.[52] As Martin Hammer notes, Bacon's work from this period (1949–50) marks a radical break with formal conventions and launches a new type of engagement with the photographic medium, including experimentation with montage techniques and superimposition, as well as with texture and paint application.[53] Bacon's use of pre-existing photographic sources – including x-rays, medical textbook drawings and newspaper photographs to inspire details in his paintings, such as the tiny safety-pin in *Study from the Human Body* – resonates with Godard's own mix of documentary-style images in *Puissance de la parole* (we see satellite graphics, scientific utensils, a computer keyboard and the stamen of a flower). The human figure merges with its surroundings in this haunting painting, generating an uncertain image of a naked body that fuses a sense of primitive desire with feelings of detachment, while preserving a sense of singularity within this expanse of grey.

Figure 4.4 *Study from the Human Body* mixed with a shot of Mademoiselle Oïnos and Monsieur Agathos, accompanied by Beethoven's 'Das Lebewohl' in *Puissance de la parole* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1988)

Bacon was equally fascinated by Edgar Degas's pastels, especially his use of parallel lines in the series *After the Bath*, *Woman drying herself* (c. 1890–5), composed of photographs of women in contorted positions, as well as monotypes, drawings, paintings and pastels. The various pained, isolated postures performed by Velma throughout *Puissance de la parole* function as the redundant leftovers of the painter's tableaux. She is often filmed at the sink, drying herself with a white towel, brushing her hair or dressing, surrounded by yellow and greenish shades and these images tease the spectator through such literal references to Degas's studies of female ritual, ciphered through the scan lines of video. Bacon noted how the striation of form in Degas's pastels works to intensify and diversify the image's reality:

> I always think that the interesting thing about Degas is the way he made lines through the body, you could say that he shuttered the body, in a way, shuttered the image and then he put an

> enormous amount of colour through these lines. And having shuttered the form, he created intensity by putting this colour through the flesh.[54]

The shallow space, photographic quality and atmospheric smudgy effect in *Study from the Human Body* creates a suggestive, mysterious image juxtaposed with the crudeness of flesh, inspired in this case by Degas's crafting of the spine. Godard's fleeting electronic reconstructions of Bacon's use of striation remind us of a theatre curtain or, more aptly, a cinema screen and thus of the revelatory power of the projected image, conjuring similar feelings of melancholy, absence and desire as expressed in the painting.

Hammer writes of *Study from the Human Body*: 'It can indeed be seen to capture, or trap, an image of a human being passing through – passing through a curtain, but also, we might feel, passing through life, or moving in and out of one's own life.'[55] *Puissance de la parole*, contemporary with the first episodes of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, is a work that engages Godard's long-running discourse on the death of the cinematograph as well as his concept of projection. The unique associations forged in these scenes between notions of disappearance, expressed aurally in Beethoven's music and evoked visually in Bacon's painting, communicate something precise and articulate on the transiency and fragility of the cinematograph and of life itself, while fusing feelings of loss with a sense of new hope and possibility in the regenerative potential of electronic imagery and sound. It would be a mistake, therefore, to pass over these audio-visual montages as blithe reproductions of famous works, rendered impotent in their new videographic outfit, since Godard is devoted to the task of fearlessly re-instilling past forms of the image into new technological contexts, while embracing the instantaneousness of the medium's present tense. The *déchets* of past sensation come to recover their aesthetic force in this musical video-vibration, as the rush of audio-visual fragments pummels us from new angles.

Dancing between life and death

Halfway through *Puissance de la parole* and in the concluding moments, Ravel's *La Valse* sweeps in to disrupt the flow of things. Like the effect of

slow motion in a film, the formation of a small inner circle performed by waltzers, who trace a larger circle as they move around the ballroom, creates an illusion of stasis. *La Valse* can be construed as a self-reflexive study of the waltz itself, which makes reference to the Viennese waltz without succumbing to its conventions.[56] As Peter Kaminsky points out, *La Valse* showcases Ravel's creative treatment and refashioning of a particular musical and historical model, namely the waltzes of Johann Strauss.[57] The physical power of the piece and its strong spatial dimension, along with the music's spiralling out of control, are qualities that render the composition a particularly attractive musical model for Godard to re-envision and transform in his own way.

The composer and conductor George Benjamin presents the opening of *La Valse* as a mysterious void. The piece begins, he writes, with a deep unpulsed tremolo and then 'a heartbeat evolves, intimating perhaps that the origins of the waltz are atavistic and physiological, not merely cultural'. Benjamin describes the 'skeleton of the music' as liquid in its early stages. He alludes to the 'cinematically edited glimpses of future themes' and he later likens Ravel's use of chromaticism to a virus that seeps into the texture of the music.[58] The aesthetic of deformation that pervades *La Valse* certainly infiltrates *Puissance de la parole*, as notions of traditional perspective and realistic representation are conjured and swiftly destroyed. Furthermore, from the start, gestures, rhythms and regular musical tempos are offset through techniques of simultaneity and syncopation. For example, we witness Frank's limp as he shuffles across the garage floor and later we see Mlle Oïnos stumble while swaying balletically through a cluster of trees. Her off-beat movement in this middle section of the video triggers a flash shot of Bacon's falling *Figure in Movement*, which is mixed via high-speed visual fluttering with Ernst's *Attirement of the Bride*. The angels' words are superimposed over each other as the signals become confused, producing a spasmodic instance of simultaneity. Bacon's desire to get to the real, raw energy of something ('an attempt to make a figure in movement as concentrated as I could do it') by capturing a sense of immediacy and intensity is seized by Godard in *Puissance de la parole*.[59] Similarly, Godard extracts the primitive rumblings and catastrophic highpoint of Ravel's composition and integrates them into the video, creating

energetic surges that rush in and out of the second half, returning ferociously at the video's close.

The musical montage flattens out harmonically as the earth-shattering conclusion begins. Ravel's *La Valse* (in D major) is twisted together dissonantly with the dark chords of Franck's *Symphony in D minor*, like a distorted mirror image. Bacon's *Figure in Movement* returns for a brief moment to disrupt the closing credits, where it is mixed with a flashing graphic of volcanic lava. In the original painting, we see a falling figure positioned in front of a black panel or mirror, with a purple stain on the floor. Ernst van Alphen writes of this painting: 'The figure is not reflected in the mirror; our gaze at the figure is repeated, not mirrored, in the mirror. Looking itself, not the object in front of the mirror, is reflected.'[60] Van Alphen demonstrates how in Bacon's oeuvre the eye does not reveal but it dissolves, destroys and unmakes the object of looking. Confusion between background and foreground, inside and outside, along with the flattening of perspective, play an important role in the two paintings by Bacon displayed in Godard's video, where the dissolution of stable reference points generates a similar sense of fragmentation, distortion and liquidity, achieved largely through the sonic techniques of amplification, mixing and sound masking.

The textured effect of the attendant's lavish headdress in Ernst's painting, through which Bacon's figure's arms glimmer in the middle section of the video, returns in its new electronic guise during the video's final moments through the thick explosions of coloured smoke that enact *La Valse*'s demise. Mawer sums up:

> This is a road of no return. Civilized control becomes lost in a hallucinatory, disorientated whirling which approaches the barbaric, and the orchestral waltz is robbed of its very identity: in the penultimate bar, its triple metre mutates into four, heavily accented beats.[61]

Like the patterns of contrary motion and inner tension, generated by the freeze-frames and lush flash shots of gushing water in *Puissance de la parole* (see Figure 4.5), the dramatic culminating images and the extraordinary musical montage, enact the inner violations that Ravel's waltz undergoes.

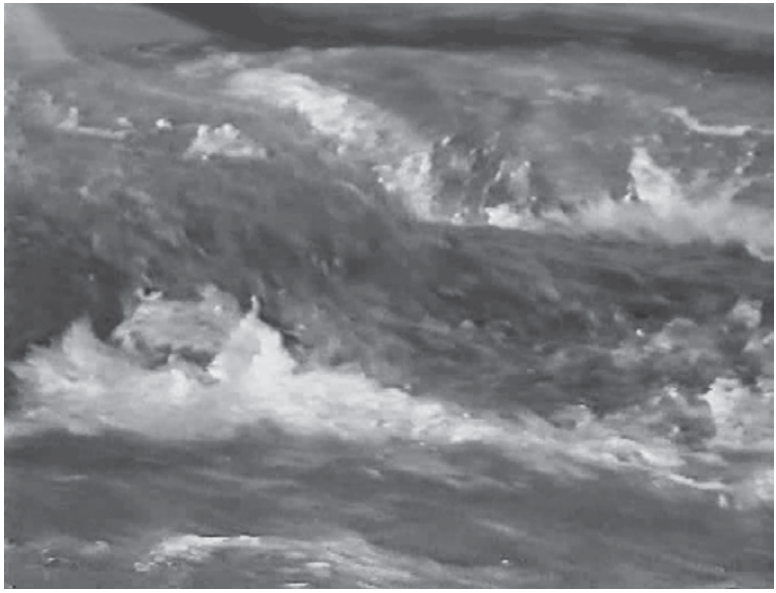


Figure 4.5 A stop-start image of flowing water in *Puissance de la parole* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1988)

The orgiastic rhythms and lethal vortex of *La Valse* bubble up to the surface to hasten the video's end. Godard's finale evokes something of Ravel's original piano manuscript for his choreographic poem. The manuscript, as Mawer reveals, contained swirling ink doodles drawn onto the score by the composer himself, thus underscoring the important visual and physical dimension of the music. Mawer identifies a similar pictorial effect in an anonymous painting named '*La Valse* de Ravel', printed in 1932 in *Le Courrier musical*. In this painting, a vortex effect is fashioned from thick dark lines and marks, as if the artist has attempted to revive for the eye Ravel's original vision.[62] At times in *Puissance de la parole* the images of rushing water pause for a second and we are confronted with a compelling instance of stasis like an object to possess. Similarly, by pausing the video image manually, the spectator can also attempt to capture, after Ravel and

the anonymous artist, visual traces of the intoxicating, palpable force that is heard and felt in the music.

Conclusion

In the first part of this chapter, we saw how in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* Godard's cunning sonic manoeuvre allowed this decentred film to spring to life like a fresh cog in the machine or a dancer freed from the music box. The spectator was enticed into the temporal haziness of an illusion engendered by a single repeat, and the shifting circulation of power converted her/him into an active, critical listener tasked with participating in the performative event of sound. Both *Lettre à Freddy Buache* and *Puissance de la parole* refashion our ways of hearing and seeing and they do so by appealing to the acoustic spectator's historical ear and eye. Although in the latter video, the extracts from *La Valse* occur only in short, infrequent bursts, Ravel's composition serves as a crucial metaphor for the shift that sees the fixed unit of the frame in cinema (evoked via Bacon's allusion to the photographic domain) mutate into the fluid, flexible forms of electronic imagery. The extreme dissonance, unstable tonalities and the chromaticism that permeate Ravel's composition as it progresses could be compared to what Dubois calls the 'virus' of video, a figure of style marked by 'vibratory and infectious acceleration'. The 'video-vibration' gleefully smudges boundaries, dissolves hierarchies, unravels and destabilises unified identities and absorbs all kinds of images, voices, sounds and bodies that mutate and vibrate together as one.[63]

Apart from the temporal unfolding of the film itself, linear and unified structures are thwarted (in the earlier short) and then utterly demolished (in the later short). Yet within this apparent crisis of representation in the new media age, a fresh form of communication stirs. At the end of *Puissance de la parole*, the visuals flash uncontrollably as the sounds and images merge into one giant conglomerate mass and spectators are plunged into a sizzling acoustic space of abandon that, like an awesome clash of cymbals in the finale of a symphony, overwhelms and refreshes one's sensory experience. Just as *Lettre à Freddy Buache* reconnected us with an important critical juncture in cinema history via the object of the

record player and via Godard's 'gesture of return', in *Puissance de la parole* the past is evoked through the distant memory of a waltz, as Godard confronts us with the short-lived glimmers of cinema's former life through reuse, speed alteration and distortion, while shuttling or 'shuttering' us into the future through the fractured patterning of the electronic medium of video. The films discussed in this chapter help us to actively rethink the relations between different media in imaginative and productive ways through a process of listening, and listening again. Indeed, it is predominantly through the aural domain that Godard's audio-visual (re)compositions trigger a critical response and, in doing so, they forge a thinking space, at once silent and overflowing with sound, in the interstice between cinema's past life and its future.

5

Listening Through Curves

On s'est tous défilé (1987), *Soigne ta droite: Une place sur la terre* (1987) and *King Lear (1987)*

Godard's *Soigne ta droite: Une place sur la terre* and *King Lear* create unsettling and ambivalent acousmatic experiences that keep the spectator alert and aurally vigilant. The physical immediacy, emotive capacity and the sensuous qualities of sound also raise the important issue of spectatorial pleasure as our embodied selves become deeply involved in an array of ever-changing sensory experiences. Although acousmatic sound as a concept is usually defined in terms of the visibility or invisibility of an originating cause, this can be misleading, as Kane succinctly deduces:

> the experience of acousmatic sound is epistemological in character, articulated in terms of knowledge, certainty, and uncertainty. Even when described in terms of seeing and hearing, the experience of acousmatic sound is not fundamentally about seeing and hearing. The difference between the eye and the ear is really a synecdoche for the different ways the mind apprehends the exterior world, modulated through the sense organs.[1]

Godard certainly utilises acousmatic sound for its disordering effect and its capacity to generate uncertainty and ambiguity from unknowability, which in turn stimulates the critical faculties of the spectator, who must receive, reflect on and judge what has been presented.

Whilst Dubois spotlights both films, one a comedy, the other a tragedy, as marking the start of a new philosophical-literary phase in Godard's cinema, I am proposing that his treatment of sound is integral to this intellectual gear change.[2] The performative dimension of voice guides my analysis of *Soigne ta droite*, a film that privileges the amorphous nature of the non-sync singing voice and its compositional force. The beats, harmonies and melodies of the music (a music always in the process of becoming), and the sensational agility of Catherine Ringer's nomadic voice, compel the spectator to reflect conceptually on the aesthetic possibilities of sound space in cinema. At the same time, the film conducts a powerful commentary on the ethics of representation, placing the accent on the listening subject. What interests me in this respect is the capacity of sound to disorient the spectator on a visceral level, an effect that Godard exploits through his use of acousmatic sound, to encourage the spectator to respond to the film's ethical concerns by cultivating a form of active listening.

Through consideration of the striking use of stereo and slow-motion sound in *King Lear*, this chapter will also attend to the part played in the film by Virginia Woolf's radical novel *The Waves* (1931), a text that coincided with the transition from silent to sound cinema. We explore ways in which Godard refashions Woolf's modernist 'voice' to generate an imaginary site devoted to the lost space of cinematic projection. First though, to aid our comprehension of the complex auditory arrangements in these feature-length films, let us begin by turning to Godard's fast-paced video *On s'est tous défilé*, which will serve as a miniature case study. The acceleration and deceleration of speech and visual movement send us spinning in this video, as a parade of fashion models file past the camera.

Off-centre couplings: Cohen on Cohen

On s'est tous défilé is a 13-minute offshoot from an advertising film made by Godard for the Swiss fashion designers Marithé and François Girbaud. The video comprises a *défilé* (a 'parade' or 'procession') of bodies streaming past the camera, invoking the term *défilement*, which in cinema describes the movement of the celluloid film passing through the projector. Christa Blümlinger points out that the wordplay in the title (*défiler*/*se défiler*)

conjures up not only the military action of marching or the idea of something passing across the field of vision, echoing the first filmed processions captured by the Lumière brothers, but it also signifies an act of undoing ('to unthread'), while alluding figuratively to the concept of 'stealing away'.[3] As Jean-Louis Leutrat observes, the noun 'défilé' also denotes a 'narrow pass' or 'gorge' and these meanings are linked from the start of the video to notions of anxiety.[4] The parade of beautiful bodies filing past is tainted by a sense of unease, tension and violence. For Leutrat, the sound of *défilé* is itself meaningful because it directs us to the French word *défi* (*un défi* means 'a challenge'), evoking Godard's historical thesis on cinema's culpability: its *shirking of duty* by failing to bear witness to historical catastrophe.

One of the most striking musical moments in the video comprises the superimposition of two signature tracks from Leonard Cohen's album *Various Positions* (1984): 'Dance Me to the End of Love' and 'If It Be Your Will'. In a television interview in 1985, Cohen revealed that the initial idea for 'Dance Me to the End of Love' sprang from his discovery that in Nazi concentration camps musician inmates were forced to perform in string quartets while fellow prisoners were led to the gas chambers.[5] Whilst this sequence in Godard's video appears to make reference to the original music video (1985, b/w) for the track, directed by French photographer Dominique Issermann, in which we see a woman emerge from a lit doorway who then twirls down a narrow corridor towards Cohen and the camera, the distressing undertones of some of the lyrics, the haunting lilt of the music, and the narrow corridor of the catwalk, return us to the paradox of the title ('we all ran away'): the *défilé* of fashion models filing past, combined with, as Leutrat suggests, 'the sense of panic, disorder and abdicated responsibilities.'[6]

The images in this part of the video depict a whole range of actions, from hesitant steps to models walking, skipping and jumping in unison, filmed in fast motion and extreme slow motion. One model is captured freestyling down the catwalk, improvising alongside another, who remains stuck at the right-hand edge of the frame, challenging the straight law of metre with a rebellious rhythmic variation (see Figure 5.1). The same model then hurtles across the catwalk space, enacting a disorderly diagonal line of flight that shatters the mirroring body language. The sudden

Figure 5.1 Defying the law of metre in *On s'est tous défilé* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1987)

accelerations and sustained use of slow motion, as well as the constant flash shots, work to distort the model's body, while at the same time the shot is intercut with throbbing images of legs and strappy sandals.

The writings of the Swiss composer and music educator Émile Jaques-Dalcroze offer interesting insights into the relationship between musical rhythm and physical movement that reverberate throughout this episode. His mission revolved around the concept of 'moving plastic', as set out in his essay 'The Technique of Moving Plastic'. Jaques-Dalcroze sought to explore the possibility of creating 'new habits of motion' and 'fresh combinations' of physical movement. He states that the restrictive customs and etiquette that we adopt in everyday life, including posture control, an elegant walking style and tight-fitting clothes, are factors that prevent the body from expressing itself freely through its natural spontaneity.[7] Jaques-Dalcroze's kinaesthetics aimed ultimately to create a sort of autonomous 'dance without music' inspired by the prospect of a 'silent music incarnate in human bodies'.[8]

In Godard's video, it is through the superimposition of the hymnal 'If It Be Your Will' and the tender and enigmatic 'Dance Me to the End of Love', through the clashing time signatures and harmonies and through the flash shots and dizzying speed changes, that a sort of dream sequence is conjured. Aspects of Jaques-Dalcroze's study flicker beneath Godard's electronic improvisation that exploits the supple 'body' of videographic mutation, performing a novel rendition of Cohen's album title thanks to the plethora of temporal, harmonic and visual dissonances. Jaques-Dalcroze's list of proposed experiments to be conducted for his project include a study of the '[r]elations of the voice (speaking or singing) with walking and gesticulation' and:

> The study of the relations between two associated human bodies, harmonization of their gestures or gait. The stopping of one individual set against the activity of the other, the opposition of two like or unlike activities both in displacements and in dynamisms at any particular speed.[9]

Jaques-Dalcroze also refers to the exciting notion of 'starting-points in gesture', caused by a 'displacement of balance' of the whole body or by a 'muscular ungearing' resulting from a breathing effect.[10]

The flow of space, the scrunching of mismatched tempi and the different types of step enacted are aspects thrown into sharp relief by the musical coupling of the Cohen tracks that are faded in and out and are made to intersect and disfigure the other in one vibrating topsy-turvy channel of movement. This part of *On s'est tous défilé* is dense, excessive and indulgent through its rich resonant strata of visual and sonic mutations. Godard uses acceleration and flash shots to heighten the excitement of the display of movement, while Cohen's pitches bend and the singing voices linger, reverberating through each other as one tonality stretches into the next. The sequence begins when an image of François Girbaud's hand gesture is suddenly caught in slow/reverse motion and is drawn into the rhythm of the introduction of the solemn 'If It Be Your Will'. When the catwalk procession begins, the relentless flash shots commence and the image-display alternates between two pairs of legs facing inwards and two models dressed in white, whose movements are manipulated using slow motion as they skip towards the camera.

In his analysis of Godard's video scenarios from the early 1980s, Dubois writes: 'In video (and, according to him, nowhere else, especially not in the written word), seeing is thinking and thinking is seeing, both in one, and completely simultaneously.'[11] Seeing, thinking and doing are the verbs enacted by the videomaker, who can see 'live' as s/he creates and can thus criticise, modify and instantly alter the results. Dubois contends that one of the main effects of Godard's work with video slow motion in the late 1970s, which enabled him to rediscover a way of relating to the cinematographic image, is a replenished capacity to see images and see the world with fresh eyes: of 'the gaze being renewed'. He adds:

> And we're aware (the spectator is here strictly in synch with Godard) that with each manoeuver, with each change in speed, we feel violently the pleasure of a perceptual revolution, the 'aha' effect of 'so that's what's *in* images, and what I'd never before seen *that way*'.[12]

A similar effect can be produced with slow-motion sound, or through the superimposition of different songs, causing new patterns in the music to rise to the surface and new levels of meaning to come to the fore. By extension, the spectacular nature of this catwalk parade is not simply a showcasing of special effects. The rhythm of the pulsing flash shots throughout the Cohen/Cohen episode is not synchronised perfectly with the beat of the music, which is itself skewed due to the mixing of tracks. The important level of opacity that results from this exuberant performance piece prevents any finite interpretation from being formed. If the overflow of music leaks abundantly into the visual commotion, softening the corners that separate sound from vision, the rhythmic independence of the flash shots and the staggered corporeal movements preserve the heterogeneity of aural and visual motion, thereby maintaining a tension that induces thought by establishing a space for reflection.

In Adorno's article on regressive listening, a concept he places in direct relation to advertising, he defines the regressive listener as an 'acquiescent purchaser' who, incapable of listening attentively to music, seeks out familiarity and peace above all else. Adorno writes: 'A sort of musical children's language is prepared for them; it differs from the real thing in that

its vocabulary consists exclusively of fragments and distortions of the artistic language of music.'[13] Fetishised works become cultural goods that are vulgarised and destroyed. Listening only to the slow movement of a symphony, or isolating and extricating the climactic phrases from a long work, simply objectifies the musical detail and so disfigures 'the multilevel unity of the whole'.[14] If Godard's video appears to confirm Adorno's worst-case scenario, allowing us to hear only short bursts of popular passages from longer works, and forming a patchwork of disconnected extracts (we hear music by Sonny Rollins, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Arthur Honegger and Barbra Streisand), within this simplified language of fragments is the force of primitivism and vitality that Godard protects and exploits to reanimate the particles of sound matter in his search for new rhythms. This garish and circuitous journey of mutation and expansion activates the ear and levers the spectator into crevices of paradox and ambiguity. A gamut of dialectical sound mixtures injects new patterns of thought into the misshapen items that pass before our eyes, as the somatic energies of this glitzy fashion parade are videographically seized and transformed.

Soigne ta droite: the spaces of performance

Throughout *Soigne ta droite*, the film cuts intermittently to a music studio where the French electro-pop band Les Rita Mitsouko (Catherine Ringer and Fred Chichin) are filmed recording tracks for their album *The No Comprendo* (1986). We are coaxed into the film's musical universe by the first studio shots in which Chichin and Ringer are trying to steady the beat and establish the speeds of the backing rhythms. One of the most distinctive features of *Soigne ta droite* is the astounding versatility of Ringer's singing voice that sublimely takes flight as the film gathers momentum. It migrates from the body and glides beyond spatial borders as the scene cuts between studio and sky, evading any attempt to reduce or contain it. Her voice galvanises, ravishes, disrupts and distracts, reaching out to spectators and pulling them in close. The frequent splitting of Ringer's singing voice from its visible source and the sudden immersion of her voice within ambiguous sonic contexts destabilise the spectator's sense of the location of sound in cinematic space. As Brandon LaBelle reiterates, sound cannot be

contained, explained or measured easily. It is a thoroughly relational phenomenon that reaches out beyond itself, transcends boundaries, touching and being inflected by other bodies, and it shapes our experience of physical and imaginary space.[15]

An indication of the film's vital auditory dimension is provided by Caroline Champetier (director of photography) who describes Godard's sparse outline for *Soigne ta droite* as a 'musical score' composed of three elements: the musicians, the sketches with French comic actor Jacques Villeret and the aeroplane sequences with a suicidal pilot (in one sequence we see the pilot reading a booklet titled *Suicide: Instructions for Use*).[16] The spectator is taken on a haphazard journey as we follow the movements of a character named Prince/Idiot (played by Godard himself), whose task is to make a film over the course of one day.[17] His transport has been arranged to ensure that his film is delivered on time for an evening screening (and this event coincides with the end of *Soigne ta droite*). However, when the Prince/Idiot's film, titled *Une place sur la terre* (*A Place on Earth)*, is eventually screened, we see and hear the projection process (the film tape, the operator and the projector) but not the completed film. Similarly, we never hear final versions of the tracks that the band records. This is a film that places and displaces, locates and dislocates, roots and uproots and it comes to life in the making.

In his discussion of human presence in live electronic music, Emmerson examines the interplay between the production of sound and spaces of performance. He deploys the terms 'local' and 'field' to differentiate between the confined stage space of the live performer and the more open, indefinite stage area of the surrounding context or landscape:

> I am interpreting the term *field* in a broader sense as any activity not localizable to the performer as source and which gives us a picture of what goes on around the instrument to establish a sense of wider location.[18]

Our senses are disoriented when our auditory reference points turn hazy and when our perception of the origin and location of a sound is unclear. As Emmerson explains:

> Perceived as a direct result of a live performance gesture the sound's rightful place is in our local domain; but without this

> relation – I stress this is the listener's interpretation – it has more of a field function, as the result of the dislocation from performer as cause.

The whole film is precariously balanced on this fruitful ambiguity, which Emmerson defines as 'play': 'Between the two poles of local and field lies the subtler world of *play*. The inter*play* of these two spheres of operation.'[19]

Throughout the film, low-pitched musical activity, produced by Chichin's electric bass guitar, is melded with more clear-cut sounds from the story world of the film (for example, the noise of a car engine). Emmerson stresses that wave phenomena at low frequencies are tricky to locate because the sound is less directional than sound at higher frequencies. It bends around objects, moves around corners and spreads out in different directions.[20] As well as generating a pervasive sense of unease, the soundtrack constantly surprises us. Comical or unexpected moments, such as the sound of waves crashing spliced with a shot of a Metro exit in Paris, or the eerie sound of heavy breathing, knock us off kilter and muddle our sense of time and place. The sound mixing frequently impedes the listener's attempt to situate the singing voice and other audio elements within a consistent and identifiable sonic context and a considerable degree of uncertainty is created between 'local' and 'field' areas of activity. Emmerson notes that whilst live performers are anchored to a specific location, 'the electroacoustic sound can defy gravity and fly anywhere'.[21] The film's sound design sustains a tension between the familiar and the unfamiliar, between knowing and not knowing and between rootlessness and the anchored pulsed territory of 'A PLACE ON EARTH' (a recurring intertitle).

Inside out: Ringer sings 'Tonite'

In *The Poetics of Space*, the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard refers to a 'dialectics of division' formed from a separation between an outside and an inside. When the rigid split between outside and inside collapses, crushing the logic of geometrical certainty, the poetic imagination is freed.

He asks: 'Where is the main stress, for instance, in *being-there* (être-là): on *being*, or on *there*?' He then remarks: 'In the tonal quality of the French language, the *là* (there) is so forceful, that to designate being (*l'être*) by *être-là* is to point an energetic forefinger that might easily relegate intimate being to an exteriorized place.'[22] Providing a summary of Henri Michaux's prose poem 'L'espace aux ombres' ('Spaces of the Shadows'), Bachelard goes on to affirm:

> we shall find in this passage a spirit that has lost its 'being-there' (*être-là*), one that has so declined as to fall from *the being of its shade* and mingle with the rumors of being, in the form of meaningless noise, of a confused hum that *cannot be located*.[23]

He concludes: 'In this ambiguous space, the mind has lost its geometrical homeland and the spirit is drifting.'[24] Bachelard's description of this nightmarish space without clarity in Michaux's poem, which sees boundaries dissolve, separations effaced and spaces merge, conveys the sonic effect and the poetic and creative compositional force of Ringer's fluid, acousmatic voice as it drifts, unaccompanied by the sight of its originating cause.

One of the most beguiling musical tracks to play in the film is the wailing song 'Tonite', which commences when the camera cuts from a dark apartment room overlooking the beach at Trouville (Normandy) to an exterior shot of sky. Although the 'Tonite' scenes are interspersed with shots of the band working, we never see Ringer singing live. We are gradually lowered into a series of trance-like studio sequences that show her lip-synching with her eyes shut to a playback of her performance. The 'Tonite' episode concludes with a strangely beautiful, ethereal sequence, evoking the mysterious underside of the image, showing Ringer gesturing silently to the beat as she guides Chichin from the adjacent studio. The fragmented image-track becomes increasingly truncated as the 'Tonite' scenes progress producing a sense of detachment and dispersal. At times, the musical recording falters and lyrics overlap, while at other times the electric bass line surges forth from loud blocks of sea sound and certain surreal shots are repeated several times (a close-up of a young girl/a woman in a white fur coat who sporadically strips off and then vanishes/

a half-open window).[25] During this bawdy vignette, the loud sea sound repeatedly interrupts the music, this interval of interference evoking Godard's long-running critique of pure media spectacle, passive spectatorship and the amnesia induced by television culture. The productive power of montage that engenders new kinds of time is contrasted with an idea of blankness, which is conveyed visually during these sequences by the distracted suicidal pilot who gazes emptily at the white clouds through the aircraft's windows.

The camera points down to the ground as the thudding beat of 'Tonite' enters, allowing us to catch sight of the shadow of 'the Individual' (a character played by Jacques Villeret), who, after falling to the floor, stands up and opens a set of French windows that feature prominently in this part of the film. The image of a door or window opening appears regularly in Godard's films, often serving as a metaphor for projection. Godard's use of this visual figure dovetails with Bachelard's poetic conception of the door, specifically the half-open door, as a symbol of daydreaming. Doors can serve to exclude, Bachelard notes, or they can be left wide open.[26] The camera then pans vertically upwards and moves across to the right, while the electric guitar snarls torridly and Ringer's meandering vocal tone merges with the music. The pitch of her voice wavers a little, the volume dips, and the contour of her sound bends into the slow, circling camera movement. As the camera descends, it pauses on a smear of white cloud, which is traversed by a diagonal white line, matched by this instant of pure, simmering vocal energy (see Figure 5.2).

As Gilles Deleuze writes, the close-up, whether of a person or a thing, facialises the object and extracts from it an affective quality. He writes:

> each time we discover these two poles in something – reflecting surface and intensive micromovements – we can say that this thing has been treated as a face [*visage*]: it has been 'envisaged' or rather 'faceified' [*visagéifiée*], and in turn it stares at us [*dévisage*], it looks at us … even if it does not resemble a face.

For Deleuze, 'the face is in itself close-up, the close-up is by itself face and both are affect, affection-image'.[27] The three distinct sounds that accompany this sky shot (the heavy drum beat, the guitar distortion and Ringer's

Figure 5.2 An image of music in close-up in *Soigne ta droite: Une place sur la terre* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1987)

floating voice) enter consecutively, and paired with the flat, radiant visual surface they produce an enigmatic 'faceified' image. The sound qualities are thereby transferred graphically onto the surface of the image, helping to shape our visual perception synaesthetically.

When the camera lingers on the cloud, we hear the heavy drum beat halt for a moment, suspended below the synthesised tones. The pulsing guitar accompaniment crystallises with the glare of light in the centre of the image and mixes deliriously with Ringer's smooth, open vowel sound. Her voice reads like a vaporous scratch on the image's surface while her sound adds volume and depth to the flatness of this visual digression. The pitch of Ringer's voice moves from F# to A, harmonising with the guitar drone, which settles on the note D to form an ephemeral D major triad. Moreover, this visual 'harmony' of sound and image that confronts the spectator constitutes an act of montage, for it reconstructs a truly cinematic moment. Godard forges a spectacular correspondence at this precise instant with the documentary-esque

opening shot of *Passion* (filmed by Godard himself), composed of the white trail of a plane's exhaust fumes.

In *Passion*, as the camera pans to the left to follow the plane's path, we hear the creeping crescendo of the contrabassoon solo from the opening of Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand* (in D major). We are reminded of Williams's assertion that 'for Godard, the power of cinema and cinematic montage is to release the image from its frozen state by revealing its transformative potential and poetic extensibility'.[28] The transitory D major harmony that Ringer and Chichin produce when the camera pauses on the static smear of cloud resonates self-reflexively with the opening visual and musical gestures in *Passion*. If we rotate the flatter, more blanched sky shot in *Soigne ta droite* 180 degrees, it becomes a distorted enlargement – or rather, a mutation, at a different angle – of the cloud pattern in *Passion*, which is surrounded by a deeper, more painterly blue. This richly expansive instant heightens the impact of acousmatic sound on our experience of perspective and our sense of scale, helping us to *hear* as well as *see* from new angles and from different subjective positions.

As we listen to Ringer's voice, we recall the intimate close-ups of her facial expressions in the recording studio, imbuing this fragment of sky with corporeal qualities. The visible image serves literally, as Emmerson writes of the acousmatic condition, to 'fill in' our scant perception of the sound object's source, possibly 'meld[ing] in ("consonantly")' with our own 'quasi-visual mindscape'.[29] Emmerson notes that his sense of hearing is enhanced when his eyes remain *open* as he listens to acousmatic music and that the visual aspect – the listener's envisioned 'images of the music' – constitutes an important part of one's aural experience. He also suggests that the combination of film with acousmatic music might actually intensify the listener's response rather than destroy her/his imaginary world. In the above shot, Ringer's faint vocal tone matches the thin white vapour trail in the image, just as a correspondence can be traced between the translucent patch of cloud below it and the swelling guitar sound. Her singing voice slides sculpturally into the sonic foreground as the spectator is encouraged to perceive the shape, texture and intensity of the music *as* a visual image.

Spectral space and the listening self

In his study of acousmatic sound and space, Smalley explores the tension between movements of levitation (an ascent in spectral space) and gravitation (a descent in spectral space) in acousmatic music. For example, an attraction toward a lower stable region (a 'horizontal plane') that acts as a grounding 'orientational reference point' might be connected by a dynamic 'diagonal force' to an ascending spectral motion. Sounds occupy areas of spectral space, Smalley explains, and 'each piece of music will have its upper and lower boundaries within which spectromorphologies act'.[30] Spectral space, according to Smalley, 'covers a distance between the lowest and highest audible sounds' in both instrumental and electroacoustic music, although in the latter case 'spectral space boundaries are not known in advance but defined in the course of a work'. Spectral space is an analogical concept, where 'higher pitches can be thought of as spatially higher, and lower pitches as lower'.[31] As we are propelled (visually) from the floor to the sky in the example outlined above, we gain a new aural perspective owing to the lower spectral region produced by Chichin's guitar drone, and the levitated spectral space produced by Ringer's ascending voice. Together these disparate, wavering sounds form a locatable auditory reference point or what Smalley terms a 'stable spectral space frame'.[32]

Developing a sonic construction of space, Godard fashions what could be called an *acousmatic* version of scenographic space – 'space set out as spectacle for the *eye* of a spectator', thus termed by Stephen Heath.[33] In his 1976 essay 'Narrative Space', Heath traces perspective in cinema back to the discovery of central perspective in fifteenth-century classical painting: 'What is fundamental is the idea of the spectator at a window, an "*aperta finestra*" that gives a view on the world – framed, centred, harmonious (the "*istoria*")'.[34] Like Heath, Smalley reflects on the emergence of artificial perspective in painting, linking it to the 'multiple viewpoints' offered by the acousmatic stereo image and underlining the 'inescapably visual and physical' nature of the 'perspectival space', with 'the speakers frequently evoking the convention of a window frame through which I observe the receding distal horizon, and between which the most proximate events are active'.[35] The invisible musical structure (the D major triad)

that emerges and quickly vanishes during the 'Tonite' scenes in *Soigne ta droite* engenders feelings of contact and stability as our sonic and visual perceptions coalesce vertiginously in a provisional moment of harmony.

Bachelard's theory of the poetic instant, cited by the Prince/Idiot on board the aeroplane, provides further insight into the vertical and horizontal sonic trajectories as I have outlined them here. Like the Prince's turbulent (aeronautical) flight, the poetic instant cuts across the prosaic time of daily life; it breaks free from the shackles of causality and produces a disruptive 'vertical time'. As Richard Kearney stresses, Bachelard frequently uses auditory metaphors to convey this special convergence of opposing forces. The poetic instant is a 'harmonic relationship' that gives life to a throbbing poetic image that 'literally *sings*'.[36] The friction sparked between the 'Tonite' scenes and the opening of *Passion* produces a salient moment that ruptures the time of the film and executes the 'sudden burst of consciousness' of Bachelard's poetic instant, which, as Kearney makes clear, is experienced as a 'deep moment of listening'.[37] The arresting sky shot seizes our attention in the immediacy of the moment. It transports us into a transient vocal-visual sphere, with the visual outside coming to form an expressive image of music that resounds energetically, sharpening our hearing and activating unseen sonic spaces beyond the visible frame.

The idea of a special stabilising musical structure returns in a later sequence in *Soigne ta droite*, when the camera cuts to a close-up of a single line of barbed wire that crosses the field of vision. It follows a shot of the stranded flight passengers lying on top of each other behind a barbed-wire fence. The close-up is made blurry from the focus pulls, a non-narrative device that, as Daniel Morgan proposes, underscores the *look* of the images. Morgan suggests that the focus pulls extract an aesthetic dimension from the film and cause the spectator to pause, experience and absorb the perplexing beauty of the image that vibrates for a moment in silence.[38] Yet Godard is also foregrounding the *sound* of the image, recalling our earlier encounter with the faceified 'image of music' that created a hesitant hiatus in the film's flow and pushed us into an immediate confrontation with an audio-visual harmony, brimming with raw acoustic energy. This image of barbed wire, which dissolves into a faint abstract line like a suspension in a piece of music, resembles an enlarged guitar string, as if extracted from the

diagonal of Chichin's fingerboard, and carrying the spectator ever closer to the substance of music itself. When this blurry image of wire comes back into focus, it forms a dazzling knot of metal and is linked by the narrator to music: 'the music of crystal'. Writing on Bachelard's poetic instant, Kearney touches on the philosopher's depiction of 'an artist-craftsman liberating the gem out of stone, the reverie of the crystalline substance representing at once an instant and eternity'.[39] This potent image, Kearney details, is also evoked in Bachelard's discussion of 'the philosophy of encounter' in his Preface to the French translation of Martin Buber's *I and Thou*, where it forms part of Bachelard's radical ethics of empathy that is bound to the act of *active* listening.[40]

The silence of listening

As I was drafting my analysis of *Soigne ta droite* I became increasingly preoccupied with the film's unnerving references to the Holocaust, and publications were emerging making similar observations to my own. For example, whilst Morgan privileges the experiential dimension of the focus pulls, rightly warning against the reductiveness of an overly thematic interpretation, he is careful to point up the allusions to iconography of concentration camps via the bodies slumped behind the barbed-wire fence.[41] For his part, Williams highlights the references made in this part of the film to the Vélodrome d'Hiver internment camp and to Kristallnacht, noting also that Ringer herself is the daughter of a Holocaust survivor.[42] I was unsettled by a further episode near the start of the film when the camera cuts to a shot of a ceiling corner in a darkened room. On the soundtrack, we hear a series of alarming loud bangs as a five-pronged star of light darts about over the coving. This image is reminiscent of a moment in Alain Resnais's *Nuit et brouillard* (*Night and Fog*, 1955), when the camera pans over the concrete ceiling inside the gas chamber at Madjanek: this lengthy shot in Resnais's film concludes as the camera pauses in the corner of the room, where the ceiling joins the wall.

These instances are compounded by a later episode: a series of close-ups of the drooping handcuffed hand of the Individual (his hand has been chained to a window on a train). The image is sometimes blurry, often in

shadow and it flickers in the light. These instances led me to contemplate Jacques Rivette's 1961 essay 'De l'Abjection' ('On Abjection'), in which Rivette performs a scathing critique of the abject aesthetics of Gillo Pontecorvo's *Kapò* (1959), which he contrasts with the 'restless movement' of the montage in *Nuit et brouillard*. The sequence in *Kapò* that Rivette discusses consists of a close-up of Terese (Emmanuelle Riva), positioned behind a line of barbed wire in the concentration camp. She commits suicide by throwing herself against the electric barbed-wire fence, and in the aftermath of her suicide a tracking shot commences that moves ever closer to her face, her raised arms and her hands, which, as Griselda Pollock astutely points out, are 'gracefully, almost balletically, posed against the sky in a modernized, crucifixion pose'.[43]

Through the hyperbole of its artifice, by way of its comic and theatrical gestures and owing to the great number of visual close-ups, *Soigne ta droite* establishes a quiet dialogue with Rivette's review of *Kapò*, in which he criticises Pontecorvo for failing to reflect on the 'immoral' nature of his decision to represent in a fictional film the unbearable reality of the camps. We are reminded of Rivette's stark warning that follows – namely, that 'every attempt at re-enactment or pathetic and grotesque make-up, every traditional approach to "spectacle" partakes in voyeurism and pornography'. In reconstructing the horror of an intolerable reality, offering it up as an aesthetic object to consume, the intolerable comes to be tolerated: 'everyone unknowingly becomes accustomed to the horror, which little by little is accepted by morality, and will quickly become part of the mental landscape of modern man'.[44] Pushing against this scenario is the abrupt rhythm of *Soigne ta droite* that is forever disrupting, unsettling and bewildering the spectator. The unnerving hum of the low sonic frequencies that lurk blurrily throughout, on the cusp of the acousmatic horizon, oblige us to remain in a vigilant, alert and unsettled state. In *Soigne ta droite* it is the *sound* of Ringer's singing voice that seeps nonchalantly into this film's soundscape and causes us to pause, drawing our attention to the mind's apprehension of the exterior world, as Kane wrote of acousmatic sound, reconfiguring, through the aural sense, the conventional tie between knowledge and the spectator's omniscient and omnipotent disembodied eye.

Let us now turn to the relevance of the interim episode that precedes the 'Tonite' scenes. Like a muffled acoustic chamber, we hear extracts from works by Samuel Beckett emanating from a cassette player in the shady backroom of the apartment where the Individual is seen clinging to a table. The first extract derives from Beckett's *Texts for Nothing* (*Textes pour rien*) (1950–1), whose title was inspired by the French *mesure pour rien* (bar for nothing), a musical term that refers to the silent bar's rest given by a conductor at the start of a performance to set the tempo.[45] This 'bar for nothing' constitutes a soundless interval of time that gives meaning to the sounds that follow.

As the Individual listens to the recording, we catch sight of a mirror in which the French windows are visible. Behind one of the panes of glass we can see the head and arms of an unnamed young girl who is standing on the balcony outside (in the preceding shot, the girl is filmed in close-up in the same position with her arms stretched out to the side and the half-open windows repeatedly blow shut, slamming against her face).[46] The girl is silenced, shut out of the apartment, able to communicate only via the

Figure 5.3 The child's fleeting reflection in the mirror in *Soigne ta droite: Une place sur la terre* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1987)

sign she is making (see Figure 5.3). Indeed, pressed up against the window, with her arms raised, her pose evokes an iconic Nazi-era photograph that Resnais incorporated into *Nuit et brouillard*, showing a young boy standing, arms raised, in front of a photographer and a Nazi soldier.[47] In *Soigne ta droite*, the child's reflection has been resized, producing a sort of diorama illusion (a scene depicted in miniature) that generates a feeling of vertigo due to the distortion of scale. The sensory ambiguity caused by this visual distortion compels the spectator to question the ethical integrity of the 'just distance', determined by the filmmaker, 'between the subject filmed, the subject filming and the subject spectator', as Serge Daney wrote of *Nuit et brouillard*, in support of Rivette's condemnation of Pontecorvo's film.[48]

Godard's manipulation of scale and visual perspective makes the spectator uncomfortably aware of the complicity and responsibility of the viewer-witness/artist, while the significance of silence and the aural domain forces a reflection on the critical duty of the listener. The windows reflected in the mirror resemble a series of frames on a filmstrip, and the dark pattern of the child's gesture, like an image from a silent film or a giant note on a stave, can be construed as an interstice of silence that falls between two musical tracks ('Un soir, un chien' and 'Tonite') and produces a disturbing metaphor that taints and complicates the 'face' of sky – the 'image of music' – that follows. The positioning of the sky shot after this ominous 'silent' interlude, containing the child's haunting and haunted reflection, calls on spectators to interrogate the political, ethical and aesthetic dimensions of the filmmaking process.

As I studied this sequence, I was reminded of a scene in Robert Antelme's memoire, *L'Espèce humaine* (*The Human Race*) (1947) when Antelme and his comrades are imprisoned at Gandersheim, a subcamp of the Buchenwald concentration camp, and they take it in turns to look at their faces in a fragment of a mirror. In Emil Weiss's 1988 documentary *Falkenau, vision de l'impossible* (*Falkenau, Vision of the Impossible*), Weiss interviews the Hollywood filmmaker and former American soldier, Samuel Fuller, who briefly alludes to the same scene.[49] By looking through 'the magic of the mirror', Antelme writes, the inmates, whose identity and sense of humanity have been annihilated in the camp, have the rare opportunity to see themselves. Yet what they see is entirely irreconcilable with

their inhuman existence in the camp. Describing the appearance of his own solitary reflection, Antelme notes: 'this new, isolated, framed object didn't belong here. It could only provoke a radical despair, since in an intolerable way it made one measure a distance whose very nature was intolerably uncertain.'[50] For Antelme and his fellow prisoners, the 'dazzling' face that can be seen in the mirror reminds the one looking of his own imageless existence.

In Weiss's documentary, interviews are interspersed with footage of Fuller revisiting the site of his very first film, shot in 1945. Using the hand-cranked Bell and Howell movie camera sent to him by his mother, Fuller, a young soldier in the First Infantry Division of the US Army (the 'Big Red One'), recorded the liberation of a small concentration camp in the town of Falkenau.[51] This silent, black-and-white, 16-mm amateur film is incorporated into Weiss's documentary and it is this historical document, narrated by Fuller himself, that belatedly sends shockwaves through the Prince/Idiot's *A Place on Earth*, a film unseen and unheard, in *Soigne ta droite*. As I have suggested, throughout the 'Tonite' scenes and indeed throughout the whole film, the spectator is placed in a series of uncomfortable, unstable and disorienting spectatorial positions, pertaining to Libby Saxton's assertion that, in *Nuit et brouillard*, Resnais's probing of the complex interrelations between different points of view necessarily disturbs 'clear-cut distinctions between innocent and culpable vantage points', implicating the spectator in 'the drama of looking'.[52] Godard's editing purposefully directs our attention to some of the formal strategies and their political import that are deployed in Resnais's film. Yet in *Soigne ta droite*, the drama of looking in which the spectator is enmeshed is only fully realised and made meaningful by way of the silent activity of listening.

King Lear and the multitrack ear

King Lear was conceived in 1986 at the Cannes Film Festival, and following its completion the film was given a limited release in the US but was denied an official release in Europe and did not appear in France until 2002.[53] Whilst critics have been quick to dismiss the film as incoherent, fusty and frustrating, reducing it to a provocative indictment of the film industry, it

has received considerably more attention than *Soigne ta droite*, owing to its explicit references to montage, projection, its photographic meditation on the 'fathers' of cinema and its novel casting of a great tragedy of the Western literary canon. Although the soundtrack has been largely neglected by commentators, it has not gone unnoticed. James Norton, for example, has called for an independent CD release of the soundtrack, suggesting that the aural potency of the web of voices, the 'lurking undercurrent of music' and the refreshing sound of waves lapping, generates an overall effect of '3D in sound'.[54] Curiously though, the significance of Godard's use of slow-motion sound, which infiltrates other of his films and videos, has been overlooked. Indeed, *King Lear* was made one year prior to the early drafts of episodes 1A and 1B of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* and one of the video's most bewildering and powerful sound techniques deployed is slow-motion sound, 'this stretching of acoustical vibrations in time', as Jean Epstein phrased it.[55] As Witt points out, in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* Godard effectively realises the potential of the sonic technique that Epstein, in his article on his 1947 short *Le Tempestaire* (*The Stormtamer*), had already sketched out.[56]

In *King Lear*, the hermetic inventor Professor Pluggy (played by Godard) presents us with his definition of the image and his theory of montage, which is based on a model of poetic rapprochement, inspired by the French poet Pierre Reverdy's prose poem 'L'Image' ('The Image') (1918). One memorable line from the poem is: 'An image is not strong because it is *brutal* or *fantastic* – but because the association of ideas is distant and true.'[57] *King Lear* is set in a post-Chernobyl world at a time when cultural memory has been lost and everything has disappeared. William Shakespeare Jr the Fifth (Peter Sellars), a descendent of Shakespeare, has been set to work by the Cannon Cultural Division and the Royal Library of Her Majesty the Queen to recover the lost works of his famous ancestor. Amid the hubbub of muffled voices and the shrieks and whines of birds, distorted excerpts from Beethoven's late quartets can be heard: we hear accelerated and decelerated excerpts from the second movement (Vivace) of *String Quartet No. 16 in F Major* (Op. 135), as well as passages played at half-speed from the third movement (Molto adagio) of *String Quartet No. 15 in A Minor* (Op. 132), and the third and fourth movements (Lento assai, cantante et tranquillo and Grave, ma non troppo

tratto) of *String Quartet No. 16 in F Major* (Op. 135). We also hear a passage played at quarter-speed from the second movement (Adagio ma non troppo) of *String Quartet No. 10 in Eb Major* (Op. 74), resulting in a drastic two-octave drop in pitch and forming what sounds as a strange and intimate close-up of vibrato in slow motion.

Witt has suggested that stereo sound collage plays a crucial role in Godard's compositional method and it can even be construed as 'a resonant metaphor for his historical image-making practice in general'. Stereo offers Godard 'an invaluable means of pursuing his technique of rapprochement through sound'.[58] When Jonathan Rosenbaum comments on *King Lear*'s 'dazzling contrapuntal sound work', he draws attention to the remarkable use of Dolby that demands a sound system equipped to cope with 'the multiple separations needed for Godard's split, staggered, and overlapping channels – which play a variety of tricks with distance, space, depth, and layered aural textures'.[59] As a result, the film has rarely been shown in Dolby and it is therefore almost impossible, Rosenbaum writes, for the spectator to fully appreciate the intricate tapestry of its sound design. However, by listening carefully to the timings, repetitions, electronic speed alterations, mesh of voices and textural variations, we are, in effect, already able to perceive the film from a range of auditory angles, which enables us to trace from the outside the spatial richness of the uncharted regions generated by the split, staggered and overlapping channels.

In 1970, the Canadian pianist, composer and broadcaster Glenn Gould discussed his work as a recording artist in an interview with Curtis Davis. He explains how he would spend long periods in his studio splicing tape, accentuating phrases and adding reverb, compressors and filters to his recordings. He remarks: 'I think our whole notion of what music is has forever merged with all the sounds that are around us – everything that the environment makes available.' Gould links the developments he perceived in contemporary music at that time to the compositions of the Renaissance contrapuntalists because they were the first composers to realise 'that it was possible and feasible and realistic to expect the human mind and the human ear to be aware of many simultaneous relationships, to follow their diverse courses and to be involved in all of them'.[60] This assertion captures perfectly the spectator's experience of Godard's stereophonic montage and,

like Godard, Gould is also quick to condemn the widespread rigid hierarchy in standard television and radio broadcasts that maintains the prioritisation of the voice's message over all other kinds of sound.

In his own pioneering radio documentaries (his 'contrapuntal radio'), Gould was interested in the spatiality of sound, in simultaneity and in the separation of the different voices.[61] In his moving documentary 'The Latecomers' (1969), the sound of waves crashing often masks the words being uttered. Gould was also fascinated by the creation of depth, area, perspective and points of audition, as well as overlays and collage techniques, and he was especially drawn to the possibilities offered by stereo radio and quadraphonic sound (four-channel sound). He experimented with sound collage and changes in texture to find ways of combatting 'the problem of narration', which he believed merely trained listeners to think linearly, in terms of precedence and priority.[62]

The parallel I am drawing between Gould's contrapuntal radio techniques and Godard's analogical compositional method can be further enriched by turning to Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*. In 1929, the year of Britain's first talkie (Alfred Hitchcock's *Blackmail*), Woolf began writing *The Waves* and a copy of the novel appears in *King Lear* lying on some sand and pebbles next to the lake. At the end of the film we see Edgar (Leos Carax) clutching the novel as he and his comrades await the arrival of their 'first image'. Woolf described *The Waves* as a 'playpoem' and she frequently associated her prose to music, declaring defiantly: 'I am writing to a rhythm and not to a plot', a method that ran counter to traditional narrative conventions.[63] Throughout the writing process Woolf was listening regularly to Beethoven's late quartets and sonatas. Elicia Clements argues that she was listening quite specifically for 'alternative formal models for her new, radical novel'.[64] The special significance of the aural dimension that shaped *The Waves* accords with Godard's radiophonic experimentation with distortion, deceleration and interruption in *King Lear*, which marks the start of a more daring and complex phase of sound design in his oeuvre.

Melba Cuddy-Keane has noted that Woolf lived through the first electronic media revolution and gave several radio broadcasts. From 1925, she owned an Alegraphone, which enabled her to listen regularly at home to new music recordings. Although Woolf was sceptical about new sound

technologies, Cuddy-Keane stresses that there were also other 'strong indications that she connected technological development with a liberating expansion of space'.[65] Another crucial observation made by Cuddy-Keane is that Woolf was keen for *The Waves* to be adapted for the radio. *The Waves* is composed of a chorus of six voices whose monologues take us from childhood to middle age and are framed by a series of italicised interludes that describe the sun and the rhythm of the sea over the course of a day. As Cuddy-Keane has demonstrated, the environmental soundscape of Woolf's text can be likened to radiophonic and electroacoustic art, particularly in its nonhierarchical treatment of the voices and other sounds: 'The novel gradually builds in aural density out of layers and textures of sounds widely diffused in space – conveying in this "music" an apprehension of ongoing, interrelational life.'[66] For Woolf, *The Waves* constitutes an aural work for the ear that moves between a communal, choric plurality and the solo voice of individual existence.

The spatial dimension of *The Waves* can certainly be felt in the series of impersonal interludes that occur throughout the text. These italicised, descriptive passages are endowed with their own unique conception of time, providing a sort of impassive ambient backdrop that hangs behind the web of human voices that occupy the novel's foreground. Writing on auditory experience, Steven Connor highlights the influence of radio technology in the early twentieth century, which showcased sound's ability to disintegrate and reshape space, producing 'a more fluid, mobile and voluminous conception of space, in which the observer-observed duality and distinctions between separated points and planes dissolve'.[67] The multiple voices in *The Waves* and *King Lear* seem to float right through the spectator, enveloping her/him in the fluid, protean mode of sonic spatiality that Connor outlines.

Sounding voices and silent blanks

Written extracts from the only surviving audio recording of Woolf's voice, broadcast by the BBC in 1937, are included in *Virginia Woolf*, a book by the feminist literary critic, historian and writer Viviane Forrester, composed of a transcribed (and revised) series of seven radio programmes that Forrester made with France Culture in 1973. In this book, interviews she conducted with Woolf's family members, acquaintances and other writers are

interwoven with passages from Woolf's diaries, novels and letters. In 1976, Forrester, whose own voice had recently featured as one of the five 'timeless voices' on the soundtrack in Duras's *India Song*, wrote a pointed critique of the repressive nature of the French film industry, denouncing the absence of women directors and the silencing of their voices. Bold and provocative for its time but unduly reductive in its essentialism, Forrester's essay declares that the 'redundant vision' of male directors is lacking women's vision ('what you don't see'). This fatal 'deficiency', she claims, 'not only creates a vacuum but it perverts, alters, annuls every statement'. Women must outwit the clichés that are designed to contain them and free their vision from a perpetually 'withdrawn, concealed' existence. They must dare to see 'fresh, new images of a weary world' and release '[t]he images, the pictures, the frames, the movements, the rhythms, the abrupt new shots of which we have been deprived'.[68]

It is important to note that Godard incorporates passages from the first part of Forrester's later essay 'Le "rien" de Cordelia' ('The "nothing" of Cordelia'), from her 1980 book *La violence du calme* (*The Violence of Calm*), into the soundtrack of *King Lear* without crediting the author.[69] Unlike Woolf's novel or Shakespeare's play, Forrester's text, which clearly inspired several episodes in the film, is deliberately muted as her authorial identity is subsumed under Shakespeare's acclaimed tragedy. To the casual eye, this silencing gesture, flimsily justified by Godard's renowned opposition to intellectual property, seems merely to comply with, and blithely reinforce, patriarchal norms. On the other hand, the outrageously satirical, garbled and parodical world of paternal power and resistance that is Godard's *King Lear* provides a spectacular rebuttal to normative approaches to Shakespearean film adaptation. In this way, it sees Godard perform his own tacit metacritique of Forrester's polemical writing, leaving her unmarked text for spectators to claim as the unlikely missing link – a sort of dissident musical rhythm – at the heart of the film.

During the evening meal at the hotel restaurant in Nyon, where Cordelia (Molly Ringwald), Learo (Burgess Meredith) and Shakespeare Jr are dining together, in addition to the citations from Forrester's essay we hear loud background rustling and clattering sounds, along with the sound of wind whistling, waves crashing and the disorienting chorus of froggy voices (produced by decelerated speech). Our attention is resolutely drawn

to the soundtrack, whose chaotic activity calls to mind the crackling noise of a fuzzy television screen. In Woolf's autobiographical essay *A Sketch of the Past* (1939), she describes her most important childhood memory as hearing the waves breaking outside the window behind a yellow blind, of hearing a splash, seeing light and experiencing the sensations intensely. It was 'the feeling, as I describe it sometimes to myself, of lying in a grape and seeing through a film of semi-transparent yellow'.[70] She continues:

> If I were a painter I should paint these first impressions in pale yellow, silver, and green … I should make curved shapes, showing the light through, but not giving a clear outline. Everything would be large and dim; and what was seen would at the same time be heard; sounds would come through this petal or leaf – sounds indistinguishable from sights.[71]

Some of the images during the restaurant scenes in *King Lear* resonate with scenes in *The Waves*. For example, in Bernard's final soliloquy, he refers to 'the riot and babble of voices' and the 'radiant yet gummy atmosphere'.[72] A sense of memory and loss is poignantly expressed by the strange surplus of dancing wine glasses in this dimly lit, yellow-tinged room, filled with gurgling acousmatic voices and solemn puddles of funereal music, echoing the communal restaurant scenes in Woolf's novel that make space for provisional moments of harmony, contact and wholeness (see Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 Learo and the dancing wine glasses in *King Lear* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1987)

The metaphor of absence that haunts the evening restaurant episode conjures up the sense of loss generated by the premature death of the archetypal hero figure, embodied by Percival in *The Waves* (Percival dies after falling from a horse). His absent seventh voice destabilises the voices of the six remaining figures who then float around like 'hollow phantoms' with no solidity or background (or no projection 'screen'). For Godard, the communal experience of watching a film projected onto a large screen has suffered the chronic invasion of the small screen of television, a medium that tends to privilege prosaic speech and prohibit the sound of silence. In his ceaseless drive to refigure the remnants of the collective dwelling-place of cinema, Godard pulls our attention back to these scenes of 'uninterrupted community', so striking in Woolf's novel, that are savoured by the speakers as they grieve the silent blank left by Percival, the character who personifies the *pierced veil* of semblances.[73]

Although *King Lear* is immersed in Godard's 'death of cinema' discourse, the spectator is forever encouraged to listen out for a new language beneath the mass of voices, the murky colours and distorted slowed-down music. Along with the skewed perspective and strange ambient sounds, Godard brings to life a form of expression that creatively transcends what, for Woolf, was 'the inflexibility of language'.[74] The extracts of recorded music are unhinged and unbalanced, having undergone, like Schaeffer's sound object, a process of mutation through extreme deceleration. And yet along with the excessive primal music of gull cries, slurping sounds, grunts, squealing reptiles and chanting that can be heard on the soundtrack, the image-track becomes swamped in what could be construed as an acoustical aura of revolt, reflecting Cordelia's transgressive silence through that other sonic extremity: noise. This choric babble of artifice is entwined with the bubbling up of a fresh syntax, poised to emerge with new visions and sounds as we shift incessantly from Woolf's experimental 'playpoem' to Godard's 'twisted fairy-tale'.[75]

A different vision: composing a new image

In Woolf's 1926 essay 'The Cinema' she discusses cinema's potential as a new art form, taking a keen interest in the expressiveness of the juxtaposition of

images and the abstract visual patterns, shapes and movements that move, shock and communicate thought. She comments on the violent collision of emotions, while also alluding to cinema's stunning ability to manipulate speed, enabling '[t]he past to be unrolled' and distances annihilated.[76] Woolf mentions her experience of attending a performance of the German film *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (1920), captivated by the possibility that 'thought could be conveyed by shape more effectively than by words'. Soon afterwards, she asks: 'For what characteristics does thought possess which can be rendered visible to the eye without the help of words?'[77]

During a lengthy sequence that takes place in a cinema, where 'Virginia' (Julie Delpy) is selling cigarettes at the door, we see Cordelia and Learo arrive for a screening of the Russian director Grigori Kozintsev's *King Lear* (*Korol Lir*) (1970). Cordelia's profile is filmed in close-up as she watches the film in darkness. We never *see* what she sees as she looks up at the screen. Instead, the camera focuses our attention on Cordelia and Learo as spectators, who are engrossed in the silent activity of listening, drawing our eyes to the shape of Learo's ear and to Cordelia's silhouette. Although we are prevented from *viewing* Kozintsev's film, it comes alive through its soundtrack, which is faintly marked by the soft intrusion of the slowed strains of Beethoven's Molto adagio. The shadowy image of Cordelia silently watching and listening as her own name is pronounced on Kozintsev's soundtrack evokes the ghostly trace of the writer, Woolf herself, experiencing 'through the mists of irrelevant emotions' and 'through the thick counterpane of immense dexterity and enormous efficiency', rare 'glimpses of something vital within', as she wrote of the silent cinema.[78]

In a diary entry, Woolf explains how she came to shape Bernard's final soliloquy in *The Waves* that in its revised form concludes with the words 'O Death!' (the last paragraph of this passage is read aloud at the end of *King Lear*):

> It occurred to me last night while listening to a Beethoven quartet that I would merge all the interjected passages into Bernard's final speech, & end with the words O solitude: thus making him absorb all those scenes, & having no further break.[79]

As Clements deduces, the important relationship between the form and content of the novel, on the one hand, and Woolf's experience of listening

to the quartets, on the other, reveals that it was specifically in the music that Woolf found 'a model for enacting simultaneity'. Clements affirms: 'From the time of *The Waves* onward, Woolf is listening extensively to Beethoven's musical patterns and experiments, using them to reconceptualise her novelistic methods.'[80] As Bernard's soliloquy is read aloud in the film, we begin to hear the half-speed drones of the third movement (Lento assai, cantante et tranquillo) of *String Quartet No. 16*. In *The Waves*, just before this soliloquy begins, we read: 'there is a gradual coming together, running into one, acceleration and unification'.[81] Godard thus assigns to the spectator the task of the radical writer. S/he is placed inside the writer's mind, listening, as Woolf was, to a Beethoven quartet, attempting to compose her final image in the closing moments of the film.

Accordingly, Shakespeare Jr declares: 'to accompany the dawn of our first image'. The word 'image' coincides with an exhilarating shot of a white horse galloping across the field of vision, followed by an eruption of raucous gull cries and a three-second period of silence. This visual sequence returns explosively in stop-start motion, shattering Mr Alien's (Woody Allen) splicing in the editing studio. Williams describes this moment brilliantly:

> Photographed in long shot by the water's edge, the horse raced into the left foreground as if towards the camera and past the viewer in stop-start motion. The shot, lasting only a matter of seconds, had the electroshock force of a sequence in early primitive cinema projected and seen as if for the first time, like Muybridge's horses captured in pristine motion.[82]

Through this final scene of projection, Godard has cinematically recomposed Woolf's vivid finale of unification and defiance in the face of death. The drastic decelerations that Godard has performed on the musical extracts from the start, slow the spectator into a thick bog of sound. Godard *plays* the music in *King Lear* by appropriating and reinterpreting Beethoven's performance directions (the fast-paced Vivace and the slow Molto adagio, Adagio ma non troppo, Grave, ma non troppo tratto, and the Lento assai, cantante et tranquillo) using the electronic devices at his disposal. The electronic speed changes imposed on the music force the spectator to undergo an experience of constraint through sound, and it is our

ears that open our eyes to the surprise of this exalted poetic movement of fresh energy and pure visual emotion, which, like the visible 'roar of time' experienced by the voices in *The Waves*, prepares the way for a new speed, a new rhythm and a new sound.[83]

Conclusion

In *King Lear*, Godard pushes us for the first time into the depths of sonic distortion, owing to a sustained use of half-speed (and a single instance of quarter-speed) playback, performed on the extracts of music, before snapping us back to the present and propelling us forward in a single moment of visual elation. The gloopy string sounds remind us of old, flaccid singing voices that glow, nonetheless, with feeling and warmth. *King Lear* bears the rare and precious stamp of the 'cinematic ethos', which Dudley Andrew defines as 'an attitude of curiosity, spontaneity, and responsiveness to a reality conceived of as indefinitely enigmatic and worthy of our care'.[84] The visually rich and aurally potent presence of Woolf's novel in *King Lear* plays a key role because it fuels the film's drive to create a new set of auditory reference points and an alternative cinematic perspective that serves to regenerate an imaginary site devoted to the lost space of cinematic projection. The spectator is charged with the task of listening carefully, with a receptive critical ear, to the mesh of sounds and textures *and* to the gaps and the different kinds of silence.

The parade of bodies filing past the camera, crossing the field of vision in *On s'est tous défilé*, in which the images and sounds are mixed and manipulated to run at different speeds, can be construed, in conjunction with *Soigne ta droite* and *King Lear*, as forming part of Godard's sustained resuscitation of the rhythms, energy and musical plasticity of the image in silent cinema. In *Soigne ta droite* and *King Lear*, the strong emphasis on acousmatic sound and electronic manipulation provokes a discomfort that alters and expands one's perception of sonic space. This reorganisation of cinematic space, in turn, impels spectators to question their own moral standpoint as well as consider the ethical and aesthetic integrity of what has (and has not) been shown. From the birth of silent cinema, encompassing Woolf's essay on the new art form, to the coming

of sound and her experimental novel *The Waves* in *King Lear*, through the historical reverberations that traverse the electro-acoustic environment in *Soigne ta droite*, we arrive, in reverse motion, at Godard's videographic 'play' with acceleration and deceleration in *On s'est tous défilé*. The three works explored in this chapter offer snapshots of cinema history, tossing us from silence to sound and from aural chaos to sonorous form as an attempt is made to clear a space for the freshness of thought and feeling shaped by sound.

6

A Land Out of Focus: Between Eye and Ear

JLG/JLG: Autoportrait de décembre (1995) and *Nouvelle vague* (CD, 1997)

Nouvelle vague (*New Wave*) is one of Godard's most intricately crafted polyphonic compositions. It revolves around themes of memory, love, power relations and the figure of the heterosexual couple within a late-capitalist world. At the heart of *Nouvelle vague* lie questions of form, notably, the interrelation of sight and sound. As an auditory experience, it offers a lush concoction of different sound types, enveloping listeners in a soundscape suffused with wit, beauty, mystery and feelings of nostalgia. After the release of *Nouvelle vague* the film in 1990, Godard continued to make episodes of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, as well as direct *Allemagne année 90 neuf zéro* (*Germany Year 90 Nine Zero*) and several shorts with Miéville. Two films Godard made during this period were *Hélas pour moi* (*Oh, Woe Is Me*, 1993) and the film essay *JLG/JLG: Autoportrait de décembre*. Then in 1997, the entire soundtrack of *Nouvelle vague* was released by ECM New Series as a stand-alone 2-CD set, produced by Manfred Eicher and digitally remixed by François Musy. Godard's commitment to the multiplicity of sensory experience is particularly striking in *JLG/JLG* and *Nouvelle vague* (the film and CD soundtrack), for together these works encourage an interfilmic mode of engagement. Both film essay and soundtrack rupture the spectator's voyeuristic pleasures

and immerse her/him in a sonorous zone between silence and sound, getting to the heart of Godard's artistic and philosophical vision of cinema, while activating new musical communities of spectators and listeners.

To better understand Godard's unusual approach to the soundtrack phenomenon, let us first reflect on Chion's famous statement that in film '*there is no soundtrack*'.[1] This is because, typically, sound is treated as subsidiary to the narrative and the auditory elements are made meaningful through their relationship with the images. Certain sounds, especially synchronous sounds, are often 'swallowed up' by the fiction, while others, such as background music or voiceover commentary, attract more attention because they are perceived as emanating from an imaginary space, distinct from the visual field. Spectators sort the different sound types according to what they *see* on the screen. In his later book, *Audio-Vision*, Chion clarifies his earlier statement:

> By stating that *there is no soundtrack* I mean first of all that the sounds of a film, taken separately from the image, do not form an internally coherent entity on equal footing with the image track. Second, I mean that each audio element enters into *simultaneous vertical relationship* with narrative elements contained in the image (characters, actions) and visual elements of texture and setting. These relationships are much more direct and salient than any relations the audio element could have with other sounds.[2]

The vertical conjunction of sound and image tends, therefore, to take precedence over the characteristics of the recorded sounds themselves. Yet in Godard and Godard–Miéville's films since and including *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, the spectator is actively encouraged to differentiate the sound from the visuals and to hear the 'horizontal' sonic relationships, as well as to explore the 'vertical' sound-image combinations. It *is* possible, therefore, to speak of the soundtrack because sound has a dynamic relationship with the images *and* with the other soundtrack elements. The horizontal interaction between sound types produces relationships that are just as expressive and interesting as the vertical relationships but they are heard and understood differently. This observation is confirmed when we listen to the ECM CD

soundtrack releases of *Nouvelle vague* and *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, which signal a clear shift in listening and viewing practices, pushing beyond the conventions that Chion invokes.

Rick Altman (with McGraw Jones and Sonia Tatroe) has stressed that often in film sound analysis, authors concentrate on 'music as composed' rather than 'music as heard', and that 'popular "soundtrack" albums, typically reproducing the pre-mix recording stage version, offer anything but the soundtrack itself. Attention is often diverted from the soundtrack itself'.[3] The ECM CDs clearly break with this trend, challenging listeners to consider all of the heterogeneous sonic ingredients and the relationships between them. Contesting Chion's tendency to downplay the impact of the sound-to-sound connections, Altman et al. argues that '[f]or a soundtrack to exist as an independent entity, individual sounds have to be constructed in relation to each other as well as to the image', and that the relationships among soundtrack components require attention too.[4]

For his part, Schaeffer asserts that if most filmmakers have not been trained in composition, they can still be considered musicians. Filmmakers can conceive their work musically by hearing their film with an ear that is as creative and inventive as the eye that pictures it.[5] Like Chion, Schaeffer is quick to acknowledge that film sound is generally treated as the 'minor element', and that the spectator's perceptions are inevitably dominated by the image. Yet he also stresses that cinema consists of the juxtaposition of two tracks: the sound and the image. The soundtrack, he maintains, is composed of three overlapping but radically different elements: noise, the spoken word and music and he singles out noise as the only sound perfectly suited to the image. Cinema presents us with things that can be seen and things that can be heard. For example, we cannot hear a tree or see the wind but the wind can be seen by way of the sight of leaves quivering, just as a tree can be heard via the rustling produced by the wind.[6] Schaeffer proceeds to cite filmmakers such as Jean Grémillon, who does conceive of the soundtrack as a unified entity and who, for Schaeffer, really knows how to *compose with* noise, rhythm, and different intensities of sound.[7] In effect, Schaeffer's keen focus on the materiality of sounds and the images they conjure, has more in common with Altman et al.'s notion of the horizontal 'intrasoundtrack relationships',[8] than with Chion's insistence on verticality.

JLG/JLG: thinking with one's hands

JLG/JLG was conceived of by Godard as a self-portrait (not as an autobiography as Gaumont had requested) and the title is intentionally self-reflexive by design, connoting 'JLG in the mirror'.[9] The film refuses to provide a linear narrative of Godard's life, offering instead an embodied articulation of his filmmaking 'self' through sounds, images, words and the act of montage. Throughout the film, Godard conducts a search for alternative modes of self-representation that not only 'avoid the perils of self-mythologizing' as Morrey suggests, but that pave the way for new methods of listening, seeing and making connections. In her article on Godard's experimentation with authorial death, Silverman observes that 'in *JLG/JLG* language enjoys a radically expanded meaning. It includes not only the linguistic and cinematic signifier, but also sensory perception of all sorts'.[10] Whilst *JLG/JLG* is explicitly aligned with the non-verbal medium of painting, drawing our attention to questions of space, texture and colour, my analysis calls on Wittgenstein's aesthetics of music to examine the significance of one single, transformative musical eruption.

JLG/JLG was released in March 1995 and the script was published the following year in book form as *JLG/JLG: Phrases*, a slender text broken up by white spaces that separate the lines into sparse sections, offering a different experience of the film from a particular text-based perspective. None of the characters' voices are named in the text; the quotations are not sourced and punctuation is not used, giving the writing the appearance not of sentences (*phrases*) as the French title suggests, but of a prose poem or a compressed stream of consciousness. As Nora M. Alter's analysis of the film recognises, the written and verbal 'phrases', recorded on the book's white pages, direct attention to the relevance of music and sound.[11] Indeed, one of the ways in which a musical phrase can be defined is by analogy with language: a phrase is 'a unit of musical syntax, usually forming part of a larger, more complex unit'. A phrase can also be defined 'by the repetition of a rhythmic pattern or melodic contour',[12] and this definition shares common ground with Schaeffer's concept of a 'sound phrase'.

In his 1954 article 'New Sound Techniques and the Cinema', Schaeffer singles out the ending of Marcel Pagliero's *Un homme marche dans la*

ville (1950), notably the striking loop of sound that accompanies the final sequence. He writes: 'Through repetition, what was merely a series of noises from the town, indeed, highly evocative noises, becomes a "sound phrase". Whilst this phrase remains anchored by the film's realism, it drifts like the theme of a symphony.'[13] Something similar occurs in *JLG/JLG* when the thick, muffled sound of a ship's horn is heard several times in close succession. It is first accompanied by gentle rumbles of thunder, then it is mixed with loud wind and sea sounds. Finally, it returns to skewer the climax of Beethoven's Molto adagio from *String Quartet No. 15*, producing a satisfying scrunching effect along the horizontal axis, an example, therefore, of a striking series of sound-to-sound connections. Schaeffer begins the same article by commenting on the likeness of concrete music and cinema, both art forms relying on the material support of magnetic tape. Like the film editor cutting up the filmstrip, 'it is the scissors of the sound editor, turned virtuoso "paster", which mark out the impalpable bar lines'.[14] Later in the article, Schaeffer draws a parallel between composers of concrete music, who construct their work intuitively using different sound samples, and painters and sculptors.

In a film that explores issues of authorship through self-portraiture, it is apt that when Godard hires an assistant to help him edit one of his films (a film that 'no-one has seen'), a woman enters the hall of the studio and guides our eye to a large film poster of Miéville's first feature *Mon cher sujet* (*My Dear Subject*) (1988) by standing in front of it.[15] In *JLG/JLG* the assistant editor is blind and she relies on her ear, her memory and her sense of rhythm, touch and timing to execute the cuts she is asked by Godard to perform. She sits in front of two large posters of *Nouvelle vague* and *Hélas pour moi*, rehearsing the task before her by running the imaginary filmstrip through her fingers (we later discover that the film being edited is *Hélas pour moi*). In between the two posters stands Godard's editing table, which he proceeds to unveil, lifting off the white covering sheet, while listening alongside his assistant to an excerpt (audio-only) from *Hélas pour moi*. In this way, the spectator's future auditory experience of *Nouvelle vague* the soundtrack is anticipated and a clear correspondence is made between the activity of listening and that of editing – namely, of cutting, pasting and *composing*.

The numerous references to blindness, touch and sound in *JLG/JLG* call into question any straightforward relationship between sight and knowledge. Early in the film, Godard reads aloud a passage from Wittgenstein's *On Certainty* (1969) and Diderot's *Letter on the Blind* (1749).[16] These readings lead straight into his demonstration of 'the figure of stereo', which he illustrates by drawing two superimposed triangles on a blank piece of paper. Godard exploits the auditory relation between the spectator and the screen to represent both the projection of images and sounds and the spectator's 'reflection back' as s/he 'listens and watches' from in front of the screen. Jonathan Cray has laid emphasis on Diderot's deeply ambivalent attitude towards vision. In *Letter on the Blind*, Cray points out that Diderot's proposition of 'a tactile geometry' is not a means of devaluing vision but 'a refutation of its exclusivity'.[17] The filming of the assistant editor as she listens to a sequence from *Hélas pour moi*, resonates with the scenes of listening in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* that reflected Godard and Miéville's desire to make visible the activity of listening.

The editor's actions and thoughts expressed in this sequence, incorporating quotations from Merleau-Ponty's *Le Visible et l'invisible* (1964), underline not only a sensorial engagement with cinema's raw materials but they also highlight a pervasive phenomenological tendency in Godard's cinematographic practice that is vitally connected not only to touch but also to the sense of hearing. It is in the method of listening, doing and showing that meaning can be experienced, calling to mind Godard and Miéville's experiments with video in the Sonimage studio. Our task, then, following Denis de Rougemont's affirmation, as cited in Chapter 1, is 'to think with one's hands' and like the composer of concrete music we must achieve the 'intellectual gymnastics' necessary to 'rediscover the inspiration of muscles' through the cutting and pasting of sounds (and images) 'with scissors and glue', as Schaeffer recommended.[18]

Hearing something new: an acoustic vision

Just as for Godard the cinematograph was an instrument designed for thinking, Wittgenstein considered music to be a form that thinks. For

Wittgenstein, thinking occurs in music as well as in words, and as Jerrold Levinson suggests and as Godard's films confirm, it is entirely plausible that other time-based arts such as dance, film and mime could be construed as forms of thinking too.[19] At the same time, as Sarah Worth points out, '[m]usic is often seen as being problematic because of its lack of detectable meaning, but this is precisely why Wittgenstein thinks it has an advantage'.[20] In step with Godard's ideas on montage, for Wittgenstein, the inexpressible, the enigmatic and the non-explicit are vital factors in music's relationship with meaning because, as Worth puts it, '[m]eaning is found beyond the black and white of the score and beyond the individual notes played by the musicians'.[21] Since our experiences of music are often difficult to put into words, Wittgenstein suggests that 'the special "feeling" which a musical phrase gives us' might be best characterised by comparison or analogy with something else.[22]

A vital part of Wittgenstein's aesthetics of music involves his concern with analogy: putting things side by side for comparison. He contends that one can demonstrate an understanding of a musical theme's character by drawing a relevant comparison or analogy between the theme and something else.[23] Elements of this process resonate with Godard's theory of montage, whereby different elements are brought into dialogue, generating moments of dissonance and in doing so providing evidence on which the spectator must pass judgement. For Wittgenstein, it is the imagination that enables us to find 'a new way of looking at ourselves and the people around us', enabling us, in turn, 'to see connections between things that we had not seen before'.[24]

Whilst Wittgenstein famously points up the likeness between understanding a sentence in language and understanding a theme in music, he also frequently alludes to the correspondences between a musical theme and a picture, a gesture and a facial expression, each having a particular aesthetic character. He writes: 'The reinterpretation of a facial expression can be compared to the reinterpretation of a chord in music, when we hear it as a modulation first into this, then into that, key.'[25] Elsewhere, Wittgenstein likens the process of understanding a Gregorian mode to the experience of hearing something new, which in visual terms is akin to seeing something new, for example, we might suddenly see 'the picture of a cube as 3-dimensional' rather than as a flat pattern.[26] These examples are associated

with Wittgenstein's important concept of 'perceiving an aspect', which is dependent on an active imagination. He remarks: 'I observe a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I *see* that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience "noticing an aspect"'.[27] He expands this idea by referring to 'the lighting up of an aspect', which denotes a change in our interpretation of an object. What is perceived, Wittgenstein claims, in this lighting up is an internal relation between the object and other objects, like a sort of image.[28] Wittgenstein goes on to describe the lack of ability to see or hear something *as something*, as aspect-blindness, which he considers analogous to the lack of a 'musical ear'.[29] In *JLG/JLG*, the assistant editor's second task is to imagine a geometrical shape, which she does successfully, picturing it in her mind and then describing what she sees. Throughout this whole episode she is engaged in a Wittgensteinian 'kind of *seeing*' that operates beyond the parameters of the visible, priming the spectator for the forthcoming auditory experience of *Nouvelle vague*.

In the final few minutes of the film, Godard states insistently: 'Self-portrait, not autobiography', and the camera cuts to a tennis court where Godard is taking part in a doubles match. Two handwritten intertitles citing Faulkner's *Requiem For A Nun* (1951) are interposed during the sequence. They read: 'Le passé n'est jamais mort' / 'Il n'est même pas passé' ('The past is never dead' / 'It's not even passed'). These words are accompanied by the sombre bandoneon music of Werner Pirchner's *Sonate vom rauhen Leben*. The tennis match continues as Godard mutters, 'I am as happy to be passed/cut/as not to be passed' and the camera cuts to a full-screen shot of marshy waters (see Figure 6.1). This liminal space, in transition between land and water, is swiftly awakened when the water appears to swell, surging from right to left and half of the image becomes illuminated, now bathed in light as the green reeds and bare branches begin to flicker.

The fine textures are immediately magnified and the landscape resembles a painting, as if to embody Godard's metaphor for cinema as that uncertain space of a land out of focus. In discussion with Gavin Smith, Godard remarks:

> What I like in painting is that it's a bit out of focus and you don't care. In cinema you can't be out of focus, but if you add

Figure 6.1 The lighting up of an aspect with Darling's *Slow Return* in *JLG/JLG: Autoportrait de décembre* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1995)

> dialogue, if you show that in pictures, this kind of looking at reality, then between your very focused cinematographic image and the words there is a land that is out of focus, and this out of focus is the real cinema.[30]

Crucially, the change in light and movement is joined by an arresting fragment of cello music, which 'lights up' the image with its distinctive sound. Although this interjection of music is brief, quickly sinking back into the return of Pirchner's bandoneon melody, it overwhelms the sonic present. Indeed, the poignant and beautiful warping cello melody of David Darling's *Slow Return*, like distant weeping abruptly amplified, lends the image a special inflection or 'a different *ring*',[31] as Wittgenstein writes of intonation. The sound comes as a surprise, asking the spectator to reflect on its significance.[32] The surge of feeling in this blurry gesture of music, which combines vertically with the light, texture and movement of the rippling water, makes a powerful aesthetic impression on the spectator. This

audio-visual *phrase* stands out from the *JLG/JLG* canvas, producing an instance of what Chion calls synchresis ('the forging of an immediate and necessary relationship between something one sees and something one hears'), which he likens to 'an accented chord in music'.[33]

During this fleeting drama of music, movement and light a correspondence emerges between the landscape shot and the emotive cello music, and the opening of the film, when the camera slowly zooms in on a black-and-white photograph of Godard as a child. This gradual zoom-in is joined by a prominent sonic backdrop: we hear the animated sound of children playing, followed by Darling's sprightly *Solo Cello* and by Godard's deep, breathy voiceover. The shot is haunted by the flickering shadow of the filmmaker, whose silhouette, like a visual echo of his whispery voice, crosses the field of vision as he peers into the eye of the camera and films his younger self, thus making clear the constructedness of his self-portrait. A series of close-ups of the photograph ensues, allowing spectators to ponder the child's ambivalent facial expression (see Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2 A photograph of Godard as a child in *JLG/JLG: Autoportrait de décembre* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1995)

If we place the later image of the lake in relation to the photograph, an affinity can be discerned. Something unfamiliar within the later image strikes us for an instant and then the impression weakens, echoing Wittgenstein's observation: 'There is a physiognomy in the aspect which then fades away.'[34] Contained within the form of the landscape are the faint contours and pools of shadow that are seen dancing across the photograph at the film's start. In *The Brown Book*, Wittgenstein refers to 'gestures' and 'inflexions' of pastness which represent the experiences of pastness – 'the feeling of "long, long ago" ' – and he describes one such experience through its association with a melody.[35] In *JLG/JLG*, the literal 'lighting up of an aspect' as the cello melody slides and as the light sweeps over the ripples, generates a sense of distortion indicative of a self-reflexive act. The intensity of the cello music, horizontally embedded within the very different sound of Pirchner's low bandoneon melody, draws our attention to the expression of a new perception via an internal relation founded on a subtle likeness between the texture and pattern of the painterly landscape at the end of the film, and the photo-portrait from the start. The spectator's memory of the photograph and the human form it represents, along with the accompanying sound of children playing, resurfaces to haunt the later aquatic shot, while instilling into the sequence an aura of pastness. Now dissolved in the amorphous lake, the photograph is transiently brought back to life, as if the music itself is suddenly remembering cinema's former innocence.

The eruptive fragment from *Slow Return* resembles an aural evocation of what Van Alphen calls an 'intrusion of bodily turbulence' in his discussion of the relation between body and space in Bacon's paintings.[36] The unspoken juxtaposition between the initial framed photograph and the concluding open 'frameless' landscape calls to mind the critical bond between music and montage that confirms to us, as Williams makes clear, that 'music in late Godard always records a free and positive act of creation.[37] The beauty and brevity of this culminating gesture of self-portraiture reverberates movingly in a belated climax with the final audio-visual phrase in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (4B, *Les signes parmi nous* [*The Signs Amongst Us*]). Marked by the crisp sound of a piano chord, a close-up of Bacon's *Study for a Portrait of Van Gogh II* (1957) suddenly appears at the end of 4B, like a colourful visualisation of the sober piano harmony. Bacon's painting seems fragile, positioned between rapid flash

shots of a yellow rose and a black-and-white image of Godard's face (his adult self). When the painting returns, it blends in a stunning dissolve with the shadowy photograph of Godard, whose facial features merge with the bodily qualities of the backdrop. The sunglasses over his eyes are streaked with red-yellow paint, his sight blinded by the overflow of colour and his rough stubble produces a stippled effect, its grainy pattern mixing with the dark flecks on the road and with the smudges of shadow. His nose and lips accentuate the dark human figure in the painting, positioned between two trees – the artist mid-journey on a strip of road. The piano music disappears, Godard's final words cease, and for a few seconds we are left to hear, see and feel the soft beat of this mysterious musical silence *as* the blurry homeland of cinema.

Crucially, the figures in Bacon's 'Van Gogh' series are not neatly framed by the surrounding landscape. Bacon's use of the impasto technique, where paint is applied in heavy strokes, produces thick-textured landscapes, almost videographic in their tactility, that make it difficult to distinguish the physical body from the surrounding space, as if, in musical terms, the strong beat of human form is displaced onto the weak beat of the backdrop. Van Alphen writes: 'The landscape is in fact a bodyscape, and a bodyscape cannot frame the body into a whole because, as the expression already suggests, it is part of that which has to be framed.'[38] The liminal strangeness and sense of volume generated by the flare of *Slow Return* in *JLG/JLG* kindles a sort of cinematic impression of the violent impasto in Bacon's paintings. Reminiscent of the missing portrait in *Passion*, Godard's self-portrait is both absent and omnipresent in this later film essay. It rises up and stands out from the surface of the screen, like a three-dimensional acoustic vision, brought to life by the music.

Bridge passage: UNE VAGUE NOUVELLE

Godard was perhaps interested in Bacon's Van Gogh painting because the original that served him as a model (Van Gogh's self-portrait, *Painter on the Road to Tarascon*, 1888) was confiscated by the Nazis and destroyed during World War II.[39] Consequently, Bacon was forced to base his study on a colour reproduction of the missing work. This point is key because it taps into Godard's conception of the French New Wave, whose films are

marked by a distinctive fascination with film history, and in particular with the otherwise 'invisible' films that Henri Langlois revealed to them at the *Cinémathèque française* in the late 1940s and 50s. During the press conference for *JLG/JLG*, Godard states:

> Langlois arrived and he turned the projection of films into a sort of production, he showed things that weren't seen, either prohibited or unknown. These people were like prophets. Essentially, the true cinema, that which remains for me in a way the 'great' cinema, is that which can't be seen. Physically … That was the New Wave. Nothing else.[40]

The references in *JLG/JLG* to *Hélas pour moi* as 'a film that no-one has seen', along with the poster of *Nouvelle vague* (*New Wave*) hanging behind the assistant editor, and the faint proleptic allusion to Bacon's study of Van Gogh's self-portrait (a portrait that Bacon had never seen), can be connected to Godard's tribute to Langlois and the French New Wave, which comes to the fore in episode 3B, *Une vague nouvelle* (*A New Wave*) of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*.[41]

Langlois's unique conception of an 'exploratory form of visual cinema history' was showcased at the *Cinémathèque française* in Paris from the 1940s onwards. This form of cinema history eschewed chronology and was based on a compositional technique of 'comparative projection', consisting of the juxtaposition of films from different periods and different geographical regions.[42] Langlois's innovative programming method, which enabled films to be projected, compared and in effect recreated, was rooted in a strong commitment to the rescuing of film stock from destruction, especially forgotten silent films, which were miraculously brought back to life from their abandoned and invisible existence.[43] As a prelude to my discussion of *Nouvelle vague*, let us consider a section from *Une vague nouvelle*, which will serve as an anchor point and a bridge passage, linking my discussion of *JLG/JLG* to the later CD soundtrack.

In *Une vague nouvelle*, we return to the origins of the French New Wave and to the pivotal influence of Langlois and his pioneering projections. Maurice Jaubert's accordion music from Jean Vigo's *L'Atalante* (1934) creeps into the polyphonic whirl of references and is immediately associated with Langlois and the New Wave filmmakers. The relationship between music, composition

and cinematic projection is further amplified when in the next sequence an image of the Lumière brothers' motion-picture camera and projector is mixed with a shot of Godard gesturing in front of a music stand, resuscitating the rhythms of the forgotten films in the history of cinema. After excerpts from *King Lear* (Pluggy's demonstration of montage/Virginia selling cigarettes in the cinema) and Eisenstein's *Que Viva Mexico!* (1979) have passed, the screen-text introduces Murnau's *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* (1927) that was cherished by Godard and other *Cahiers du cinéma* critics. Jonathan Rosenbaum notes that *Sunrise* was made at a utopian time in film history when the silent period was coming to an end, when the expressive power of visual imagery had reached its peak, and when cinema as a universal language was still viable: 'Properly speaking, *Sunrise* is less a silent picture than a pre-talkie, existing in a strange netherworld between sound and silence.'[44] Moreover, he suggests that the film's evocative synchronised soundtrack, composed of music and effects but no dialogue, lends the film great mystery and charm.

A clip from Murnau's film ensues, accompanied by Godard's whispered references to the 'forgotten', the 'forbidden' and the 'invisible'. Traces of imaginary worlds waiting to be born, dreamt up by Langlois, the visionary *producer* of images, resonate not only with the envisioned images and objects 'seen' by the assistant in *JLG/JLG*, or indeed with Van Gogh's destroyed self-portrait, but they also look ahead to the vivid aural impressions produced by *Nouvelle vague* the soundtrack. The serene entrance of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (*Sanctus*) (Op. 123) then establishes a path that links Langlois's projections to Woolf's experimental prose. A photograph of Woolf is faded in and out as the music approaches its cadence. Woolf's words from *The Waves* give way to the final image from *King Lear* showing Cordelia lying on a rock. The photograph of Woolf returns and the screen-text 'UNE VAGUE NOUVELLE' appears, through which we glimpse a vision of Cordelia's body, a metaphor for the writer's silent inner world that sounds as an interval between death and rebirth.

Nouvelle vague: mapping the sound of cinema

In her study of *Sunrise*, instead of analysing the soundtrack per se, Melinda Szaloky explores the film's 'visual acoustics', highlighting Murnau's

'conscious effort to convey important *sound effects* (and also, to a lesser extent, other sense perceptions) through a distinctive use of plastic elements'.[45] She demonstrates how 'visualised' sound might be evoked using close-ups, camera movement and actor's gestures. The 'visual acoustics' of *Nouvelle vague* are alluded to in the third of three written scenarios that Godard drafted for the film version. He associates the succession of sequence shots with tempo markings in music (an Allegro, a Vivace, an Andante, a Largo). The comings and goings of servants, waiters and passers-by are described as incidental 'noise' to be conveyed by the camera movement to illuminate the 'silent sound' that seals the bond between the two protagonists. Godard specifies: 'From the flowing social and worldly movements, conveyed by the movement of the camera, the amorous relationship emerges like something solid, a little as though from music, sculpture is born.'[46] The complex bond between the central couple, Elena Torlato Favrini (Domiziana Giordano) and Roger/Richard Lennox (Alain Delon), musically inflected through this metaphor of silence, is to emerge from the hubbub of musicalised motion as a special silent image.

The powerful musicality of *Nouvelle vague* is conveyed by the repetitions and variations, by the surges in volume, the layering of speech melodies and by the zones of sonic detail that suddenly unfurl. In 'The Same, Yet Other: *New Wave/Nouvelle vague* (1990)', Silverman and Farocki comment on the recurring sequences, quotations and musical extracts in the film, noting that many scenes 'are placed in a metaphoric relation to each other through musical echoes'.[47] Williams spotlights Godard's non-chiastic use of music in the film, analysing the 'sublime musical moment' produced by the specific combination of Paul Hindemith's *Trauermusik* (1936) and a breathtaking lateral tracking shot. When music is used in this open and projective mode, he suggests, it 'can also generate formally of itself the originality and emotion of montage'.[48] The sound designer Philip Brophy classes the CD soundtrack a landmark work, characteristic of the 'neo-plasticism' of Godard's films of this period. Godard's soundtracks, for Brophy, 'dance in a series of splayed and webbed curves which envelope each other, stringing aural merges of opposing details'. *Nouvelle vague* the CD, Brophy concludes, is all musical and all cinematic.[49]

Traces of the entwined histories of cinema and music surface with the sounds of Schoenberg's deeply expressive string sextet, *Verklärte Nacht* (*Transfigured Night*) (1899), composed during the earliest years of the silent era. In 1935, Schoenberg met with Irving Thalberg, a highly influential film producer for Hollywood's MGM studios.[50] Thalberg had listened to *Verklärte Nacht* and wanted to commission music of a similar kind for his next (and final) film project, *The Good Earth* (dir. by Sidney Franklin, 1937) but this film-music production would never be realised. Although Schoenberg produced several careful sketches for the score, detailing motifs and themes, negotiations between producer and composer fell through owing to the refusal of each to comply with the demands of the other.[51]

The production of *Nouvelle vague* unfolded rather differently. The CD soundtrack is founded on a co-creative three-way dialogue between filmmaker, sound mixer and record producer. As Andrew Blake contends, record producers are skilled listeners, capable of putting themselves in the place of the listening customer. Eicher, he writes, is particularly attentive to the detail and grain of sound, which enables him to 'act as the inspired mediator between artist and listener' as he creates unique recordings.[52] The cross-media production of *Nouvelle vague*, existing as a film and an audio CD, is further expanded by the inclusion in the CD booklet of a riveting text titled 'Interior view: Jean-Luc Godard's *Nouvelle Vague*', produced by Claire Bartoli, a French writer and storyteller who lost her sight when she was 23. The booklet serves as an intriguing interface between the listener-spectator and the film and its soundtrack. It is composed of an intricate account of Bartoli's personal experience of listening to the soundtrack, constituting an inspired acoustic vision of the sound world of the film. She begins: 'I've listened to *Nouvelle Vague*, yes, the film *Nouvelle Vague*. I've heard it. I can't see it.' She continues: 'There are some film sequences I am convinced I have seen "with my own eyes", so powerful and clear is the impression left on me by their scenes and colours.'[53] Bartoli goes on to construct a typed transcription of her listening experience of the film's sound world, yet she refrains from providing a chronological record of the auditory events and instead she renders those moments that move or fascinate her.

Bartoli begins by guiding us through her compositional method. She recorded her initial impressions on a tape recorder after listening several times to the soundtrack. She then copied up her notes before listening to the soundtrack again, recording more thoughts and feelings, rereading her previous impressions and making more notes, which she transcribed using her braille typewriter. She explains: 'I used a cutting technique. I snipped away at the braille page with my scissors, cutting out, subject by subject, little scraps of paper that I then put together again when I thought they matched.' After her immersion in the editing process she remarks, 'I could not, as I could with other films, accurately depict in my mind's eye what the sounds evoked, I could not visualise them. What remained was a melody, a musical mosaic,'[54] an indication perhaps of the work's strong sound-to-sound connections. With the help of the *L'Avant-Scène Cinéma* script, Bartoli was able to check the accuracy of the dialogues as she ordered her composition, which gradually began to reflect some of the rhythms and patterns heard (and seen) in the film.

The layout of Bartoli's text is significant, for she distinguishes between her own thoughts, descriptions of sounds as she perceived them (indented and in small capitals), along with her interpretation of them, and italicised fragments of the dialogues (see Figure 6.3). Bartoli describes listening as a pleasure and an effort. It demands intense concentration, especially in the cinema, and she draws on her past visual memories and the inventiveness of her imagination 'to bridge the silent gaps' and to foster what she terms 'my "internal cinema"'. In the fifth section of the text, she remarks:

> Losing my sight made me feel that the eye projects towards the outside. The ear takes us back in to our interior world. Time is both inside us and outside us. That's what *Nouvelle Vague* reminds me of in its interlacing of moments, memories, seeds for the future, where it is the interior being that re-assembles the scattered moments of life....[55]

Bartoli's interpretation of the soundtrack's inner logic of memory, dream and feeling coalesces with the spectator's own internal sound world arising from the experience of *Nouvelle vague*, forming an intimate and singular bond. She emphasises the polyphony of voices and highlights Godard's adept manner of crafting a kind of *musique concrète* for the cinema, combining sounds,

No place, no time for me, another reality, the metamorphosis of the universe of sound.
Godard, with large cuts of the scissors, divides the material into fragments, producing sound miniatures, as pure elements.

THEN COMES THE RUMBLING OF THE STORM, FOLLOWED BY THE NOISE OF A VACUUM CLEANER, SWEEPING, AND A MAN'S VOICE – *There wasn't enough time to discover, like a lamp that has just been switched on, the chestnut-trees in bloom.*

My attention sharpens in an attempt to discover the faintest drop of sound: a beating of wings, the chimes of the clock, some snatches of a song, the trickling of water, nuggets deposited with the gentle care of a goldsmith or an alchemist.

STEPS ON THE PAVING, inside a house, THE VOICE CONTINUES, also inside. IT SPEAKS OF FRAGILITY. And everything one hears renders it fragile: THE RUSHING OF THE WOMAN AND THE SERVANTS, THE RINGING OF THE TELEPHONE ... – things of our times that fill life and yet hollow it out, rendering it empty, void.

If Godard adjusts the sounds with the subtlety of a composer, creating shadows and sparks by rubbing them together, I deem him to be a magician capable of producing a bird from a hat, the individual elements being contained in each other.

THE DISTANT SOUNDS OF A CAR HORN ARE ENGENDERED IN THE MUSIC ITSELF, THE LATTER IS AMPLIFIED; SPEED, TOOTING, SLAMMING OF BRAKES. The fusion of the two elements generates the intensity of a perturbing, tragic sonorous event.

Interlude, A SONG BY PATTI SMITH. A more reassuring rhythm and beat

71

Figure 6.3 'THE SOUND' in Claire Bartoli's 'Interior view: Jean-Luc Godard's *Nouvelle Vague*', in the CD booklet to Jean-Luc Godard, *Nouvelle Vague*, prod. by ECM Records (1997)

thoughts, images and sensations into a potent mix 'that does not hew to the beat, that toys with the irrational'. She writes of the sound design:

> Godard dislodges the sounds of the world, fashions them, isolates them from the life peculiar to them: a bark, a strain of music, a few words by a writer, the ring of a bell, the sound of waves returns to them their peculiarity. . .[56]

Bartoli's spontaneous and adventurous textual response indicates how the soundtrack release provides access to what Eicher calls 'the other side of the musical listening experience', namely, not that of listening to a performance or of playing an instrument but of shaping and *producing* the recording.[57] Indeed, Bartoli is also a kind of producer, who makes music and conjures images from the intensity of her responses to the soundscape. Her unique textual 'recording' carries within it traces of her back-and-forth listening

method that sees her shift continuously between a concrete sensory experience and an abstract textual score.

Sound, space and the listener

From the very beginning of *Nouvelle vague*, the pervasive rustling, soft tremors and array of different sound textures create a shimmering effect, like a reflection on the water's surface or a wavering silent image from early cinema. Near the beginning of CD1, the sound of drilling provides a backdrop to the ongoing dialogue. The sibilant sounds in Lennox's accented speech become interlaced with the opening notes of the cello melody from Darling's *Solo Cello* [CD1, 9:53].[58] As the sparse melody continues and the spoken dialogue becomes more distant, the loud repetitive and impersonal clanging of the machines enters into a contrapuntal, dance-like dialogue with the graceful cello melody, responding brashly to its rhythm. The sound of spurting water emerges, drenching and softening the locked programmed movements of the machines, before the factory din is cut. A few harsh crow caws then ground us in a new acoustic environment, tearing into the unaccompanied cello line, before the sonic activity peters out and we hear only the background sound of wind and faint scrunching, scraping and crinkling sounds, a little sharper than the spurting water, like a peeling, shaving or outer rim of the raspy crow caws. Once the music has disappeared, the rustling continues and the dynamics grow quieter, drawing us further from the aerated factory soundscape into a more internal and concentrated auditory space.

Smalley deploys a whole range of terms to designate what Georgina Born calls 'the perception of spatial sound'.[59] In his description of an evening soundscape, Smalley notes:

> This holistic space comprised an array of zoned spaces. I could regard the frog-river-crow zone as a *nested* [sonic] *space* (spaces within a space) in which three adjacent sub-zones combine to create a riverbed zone, invested with a slight elevation due to the crow event.[60]

Smalley defines the concept of 'nested space' as 'the embracing of one space within another'.[61] In the trajectory described above, the floating cello

gesture is nested within the 'mechanised space' of the factory (conveyed by the drilling and machine sounds) and becomes entangled with the 'utterance spaces' provided by the various dialogues.[62] Once the factory soundscape has faded, the cello melody transports us from the noisy, reverberant sonic interior to a more personal acoustic region embedded within the freer, environmental soundscape of the world outside. The erasure of visible sound sources enables us to focus attentively on the different paths of sound and on the timbres, textures and sonic detail that lead into the mental space of Elena's private thoughts, articulated in a mix of French and Italian.

The composer Heiner Goebbels points up the interrelational nature of the auditory elements in *Nouvelle vague*. Focusing on the opening few minutes, he writes: 'even the noises, animal sounds and human voices are constructed in terms of pitch and rhythm.'[63] For Goebbels, the fusion of noises, words and music challenges our customary perceptual habits, making it difficult for the listener to easily distinguish between the separate sound types. S/he listens to the strains of music in the same way that s/he listens to the noises and vice versa. He remarks:

> Nothing is in its rightful place. Although the component parts are not all that unusual – dogs, cars, voices, instruments – this 'muddle' opens up our faculties of perception. The levels of meaning stretch apart revealing gaps that we fill with our imagination. The pleasure of poetic listening gives rise simultaneously to several theatres in which action takes place.[64]

Goebbels writes of an exciting and varied 'acoustical theatre' created from the film's unpredictable, multilayered and non-hierarchised audio arrangement that grants access to multiple places at once.

The acoustical theatre of *Nouvelle vague* is conveyed powerfully at the start of CD2. Here a cluster of music, birdsong and ambient wind sound suddenly decreases in volume when the soft eruption of horses neighing and a dog barking occurs. A powerful thick-textured musical-mechanical crescendo then commences, with the surging bandoneon melody from Dino Saluzzi's *Andina* forming a rich harmony with the low growls of an engine. This produces a loud, full and voluptuous elevated sonic space, which is

multiplied with arbitrary barks, high-pitched telephone rings and chirping. Steve Reich's pertinent notion of 'gradations of symmetry', a phrase he uses to convey, in musical terms, 'the difference between the pulses of a metronome, the pulses of the human heart, and waves landing on the shore',[65] is an apt way to conceive of the sonic proximity between the bandoneon surges, the throbbing engine sound and the periodic overflow of ringing, which muddy our effort to locate the sounds causally in space.

This undulating mass of sonic sensation peaks when the sombre bandoneon sound mixes with the piercing ringing and the gruff engine noise, generating a slow, rhythmic and vibrant fusion of texture and tone colour from an unlikely combination of sources. Dislodged sounds and their spaces morph into each other, generating a special tangible constellation of atypical sounds and the haze of images they evoke. The colourful cluster of sound objects that forms this salient crescendo creates a sort of stylised protrusion in the flow of *Nouvelle vague* at the halfway point. This dense mix of rough, rich and strident textures that gathers pace, reinvigorates the work's momentum by carving out a dynamic sonic-spatial encounter for the listener to engage with.

The activity of poetic listening, introduced by Goebbels, is related to the role of the active imagination. As John Young writes in his article on the role of imagery in electroacoustic music:

> a poetic dimension is afforded by the removal of visual sources since, in representational terms, acousmatic sounds become partial objects – potentially evocative of their sources yet at the same time introducing ambiguities, potentially impressionistic and requiring active imaginative input to effect reconstruction of a scene or resolve contradictions of context.[66]

A poetic-visual dimension plays a crucial role in the listener's active response to this section of *Nouvelle vague*, with the auditory imagination responding spiritedly to the unusual sonic combinations.

Nouvelle vague the soundtrack gives birth to a new community of spectators and listeners who see and hear the film from an alternative perspective through its soundtrack. The CD set can certainly be read as part of a broader history of acousmatic sound that encompasses Walter Ruttmann's sound

montage *Wochenende* (*Weekend*, 1928), described by Ruttmann as a form of 'blind cinema' for the ears, that presaged Schaeffer's early experiments in the following decade.[67] Godard's CD soundtrack makes an important contribution not only to cinema but also to contemporary musical and listening cultures, constituting a new form of film experience and a novel genre of sonic art. As Julie Brown points out, it is entirely plausible that more people in the twentieth-century heard symphonic music and complex sound designs in the cinema than ever attended a concert of twentieth-century 'art' music or electro-acoustic music.[68] Music is commonly experienced through its relationship with moving images, and consequently our understanding of musical culture must be broad enough to take account of the various visual and sonic contexts within which compositions are heard.

Conclusion

In part one of his essay on the soundtrack, Schaeffer contends that cinema has lost its spontaneity and its power to shock, move and make audiences feel. To escape the stifling conformity of those 'pleasant' and 'comfortable' experiences offered by contemporary cinema, it is necessary to return to silent cinema, or to 'films such as those by [Paul] Féjos, situated in a borderland world between silent film and talking pictures'.[69] This borderland world is what Godard is striving towards in *Nouvelle vague*, a soundtrack that consists of a choreography of contrapuntal speech patterns mixed with sudden noises, everyday sounds, interesting static atmospheres and resonant musical excerpts. It is also awash with incongruous sonic images, like pixels or flecks of brightly coloured paint that form each time a recognisable sound-source is suddenly made strange. As Lotte Eisner wrote of Murnau's *Sunrise*, 'sound becomes perceptible everywhere through the power of the images',[70] and as *Nouvelle vague* the soundtrack makes clear, images become perceptible everywhere through the power of sound.

Nouvelle vague the soundtrack is perhaps best defined as a multiform work composed of different platforms for performance, between which lies a blurry cinematic dream space. In *Music, Sound and Space*, Born calls attention to the public-making capacities of music and sound, notably the 'virtual or stranger alliances and collectivities generated by the mediated

circulation of music and sound', an idea we will address in Chapter 7. Born gives emphasis to music's capacity to bring about emotional identification in its listener, which is musical, cultural and social. She writes: 'A musical public is, in this sense, an aggregation of the affected, of those participating in or attending to a musical or sonic event'.[71] *Nouvelle vague*, experienced on CD, is an ambitious *musique concrète* composition that offers fresh and exciting experiences of sound, whether familiar noises and ambient sound or famous works from the modernist canon. It also paves the way for new cross-media communities to form, generating a versatile and dispersed musical-sonic-cinematic public, engaged in novel listening practices. For the first time, as my discussion of *Nouvelle vague* has shown, the acoustic spectator merges fully with the cinematic listener, who becomes deeply involved in the multisensory interactions of a cinema that exceeds visibility and of a soundscape swarming with images. The spectator is permitted to hear not a compilation of songs but the complete *soundtrack itself*, firmly shifting our attention to the 'internal sound-to-sound coherence' of the *mise-en-bande* – the 'putting onto the sound track' as Altman et al. puts it.[72]

During the press conference for *Nouvelle vague* the film, Godard compares the rhythmic 'exchange' that occurs during a tennis match with the 'silent dialogue' of cinema, forging a prescient link with the musical event of self-portraiture in *JLG/JLG*, which was preceded by a doubles match. The special dialogue of rhythm and gesture in tennis enacts the relational process of giving and receiving that constitutes, for Godard, the lifeblood of cinema. He explains:

> there's *découpage* in tennis. There's a rhythm and a cadence. It's very musical. There's a silent dialogue. Cinema is a silent dialogue … My film, without the soundtrack, will be better. But if you see only the soundtrack without the images, it will be better still.[73]

In the case of the CD soundtrack, an alchemical process takes place that generates a refreshed and indirect reflection of the film in the language of sound. The spectator, like Bartoli, is the cutter, painter and producer of images and sounds. Both *JLG/JLG* and *Nouvelle vague* unleash vivid musical experiences that float in a cinematic netherworld between sound and silence, between music and image, eye and ear, and between the screen and the acousmatic screen. This is a land where what cannot be uttered is shown to us and is heard.

7

Acoustic Dystopias and Rhythms of Change

Film socialisme (2010) and *Adieu au langage* (2014)

Godard's keen ambition to experiment with different media formats burgeoned again in 2010 with the release of *Film socialisme*, which marked another collaborative venture with Miéville.[1] The film was followed in 2014 by Godard's first feature in 3D, *Adieu au langage*. In this final chapter, then, we navigate the waters of the moving site of cinema, drifting ever further from sound's relationship to narrative and into uncharted experimental territory, beginning with a discussion of the expressive force and political import of noise and silence in *Film socialisme*. Then we listen to the restless rhythms and harmonies of *Adieu au langage*, a film that gathers significance when compared with Jean Mitry's aquatic film essay, *Images pour Debussy*. Exploring connections with Bazin's review of Mitry's film and with Germaine Dulac's silent film essay *Étude cinégraphique sur une arabesque*, I suggest ways in which *Adieu au langage* is concerned with thinking historically about French experimental and 3D filmmaking from a specifically audio-visual standpoint. Then, inspired by Pelechian's notion of the 'ancient language' of cinema, I suggest that far from being extinguished, the language of cinema is musicalised and revitalised to become a form of rhythmic 'sensuous speech'.

Like *JLG/JLG*, *Film socialisme* was accompanied by the publication of another 'phrases' book titled *Film socialisme: Dialogues avec visages auteurs* but this time Godard integrates into the text photographs of writers, philosophers and other intellectuals whose names appear in the credits. A striking feature of *Film socialisme* is the ingenious 'Navajo English' subtitles that teasingly confound audiences by only partially translating the dialogue and merging words together into a sort of code that reverberates poetically with the images and sounds. Ramping up the bewilderment even further, Godard made six trailers to accompany the feature, expertly edited by his cinematographer, Fabrice Aragno, with five out of the six consisting of the film's entire image-track in extreme fast-forward motion.[2] Godard also distributed an accelerated four-minute version of the film on YouTube in advance of its release, and the entire film was made available for early download just after its official premiere at Cannes.[3]

Film socialisme is set primarily on the Costa Concordia cruise ship as it tours the Mediterranean. The savage blows of disorienting noise and the periods of sudden silence reverberate with grainy surveillance footage and shaky mobile phone imagery. Shot using a range of digital cameras, the film performs a vicious assault on the indifferent spectator-consumer, whose picture-perfect surroundings are intermittently befogged by the lurid colouring and disturbing sounds that engulf this pleasure voyage.

The spectator as transient participant

Film socialisme can be regarded as a microcosm of cinema and spectatorship in their expanded situations, in line with Godard's developing sonic and filmic practice. As he continues to work across different media, with the film experience transcending the enclosure of the traditional cinema auditorium, the spectator's role becomes ever more fluid and multi-dimensional, encompassing a listener, a reader and in the case of *Film socialisme*, a travelling visitor. Just as we might choose to play a CD soundtrack in the comfort of our own home, we can access the film's online trailers via a laptop, tablet or smart phone. We can also listen through headphones, generating what Born calls 'mobile, individuated

listening enclaves nested within the wider acoustic and social environment'.[4] In *Film socialisme* we see passengers talking on their mobile phones, reading newspapers, looking at pictures and listening to and watching online videos. In one instance, we see a group of passengers taking part in a virtual aerobics class. In another, the camera seats us in a darkened space among other spectators who are attending a film screening. In this way, a multitude of social and virtual spaces of interaction are made visible, all of which make links with places elsewhere.

As we touched on in Chapter 6, in her discussion of musical and sonic publics Born outlines the important part played by twentieth-century cultural technologies in the formation of 'stranger publics', a valuable concept put forward in Michael Warner's study of publics and counterpublics. Born emphasises that 'these are publics engendered solely by participation in mediated discourses or other circulating forms of cultural material'.[5] In *Publics and Counterpublics*, Warner makes the crucial observation that '[m]ost of the people around us belong to our world not directly, as kin or comrades or in any other relation to which we could give a name, but as strangers … We are related to them (as I am to you) as transient participants in common publics'.[6] For Warner, a public is partial; it is a space of discourse that is self-creating and self-organised and '[i]t exists *by virtue of being addressed*'.[7] And yet, Warner notes, the indefinable and potent strangeness of this public is frequently 'hidden from view', overshadowed by the classic bourgeois idea of a concrete audience assembled 'in common visibility and common action'.[8] Godard's online trailers, books and CD soundtracks give visibility to the third kind of public that Warner outlines, which might organise itself around visual, aural or literary texts, pushing spectators, listeners and readers to participate in different media forms that exceed the spatial limits of the cinema auditorium. In this way, a new social imaginary is constructed via the 'peculiarly indirect and unspecifiable' social relationships among strangers that arise.[9]

Exploring the concept of 'translocal space', Johan Fornäs et al. perform a fascinating analysis of the 'local and global' space of Sweden's Solna Centre shopping mall. In one passage, the authors propose that mobile phones create 'talk spaces' that 'bind physically distant places together while inscribing a circle around the talking individual, separating him or her from the

surroundings'.[10] The caller's bodily gestures, tone of voice and conversation topic come under the spotlight as a private dialogue becomes a public performance. The cruise ship, like the shopping mall, is a site of commerce, communication and performance that buzzes with quick transactions and short-lived encounters among strangers. The paying passengers, seduced by the different attractions, are intermittently invited to partake in an array of social acts (attend a lecture on Husserl by French philosopher Alain Badiou, take part in a virtual exercise class, dance at an on-board night club, attend Mass, play bingo). In doing so, a sense of temporary locality and community is kindled within the more anonymous public spaces on the ship. The stop-start flow of passengers who move between different activities on board echoes the movement of the floating container as it stops off and restarts its journey from different geographical locations.

Fornäs et al. also discuss the relationship between migration and media, citing Arjun Appadurai's framework for examining the workings of the new global cultural economy, highlighting the relationship he establishes between 'ethnoscapes' ('the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live') and 'mediascapes', which are landscapes of images (and sounds) that produce and disseminate information via various media forms. As Appadurai suggests and as *Film socialisme* confirms, 'the world of commodities and the world of news and politics are profoundly mixed' and the clear divide between the realistic and the fictional continues to grow perilously hazy. The 'narrative-based accounts of strips of reality' offered up by the print media, television, the internet and radio provide audiences around the world with the 'characters, plots, and textual forms' with which to create partially fabricated scripts of 'imagined lives', whether their own or those of others lived elsewhere.[11]

Godard's acerbic critique of contemporary global politics and culture in *Film socialisme* is ciphered vociferously through the glitzy haven of the cruise ship, which presents us with a cynical vision of an amnesiac, individualistic and unthinking modern world. The recurrent images of water are associated with the seemingly indestructible relationship between artistic production and financial gain or 'monetary creation and literary creation', as a voice utters faintly. At first glance, it seems that the bleak outlook articulated by the muffled voice of Godard (as Pluggy) at the start

of *King Lear* has become a thoroughly entrenched reality. Images, words and sounds have become detached from their histories, 'twisted without reason, spread flat, as if perspective has been abolished' and 'the vanishing point has been erased'.[12] The characters on board the cruise ship seem to have lost their bearings, audiences have been set adrift and society has lost its moral compass: for example, Patti Smith ambles about aimlessly, carrying her guitar on her back like a rifle, while Alissa (Agatha Couture) blows around the deck haphazardly before tumbling into a swimming pool (see Figure 7.1). When a simulated image of the Costa Concordia appears on one of the ship's big screens, a mirroring *mise-en-abyme* is produced that confuses the boundaries of representation as the spectator's self-reflecting gaze merges with that of the fellow passengers.

On the one hand then, the cruise ship – *Film socialisme*'s prime protagonist – stands as the perfect embodiment of Zygmunt Bauman's dystopic vision of 'fluid' or 'liquid' modernity that defines the 'post-Panoptical'

Figure 7.1 Robert Maloubier, French SOE agent, and Constance (Nadège Beausson-Diagne) in conversation as Alissa bangs into the glass behind them in *Film socialisme* (Jean-Luc Godard, 2010)

society of our time; one characterised by lightness, speed, inaccessibility, evasion and disengagement, that callously destroys 'territorially rooted' social networks to ensure 'the flow of new, fluid global powers'. Power, Bauman writes, has become 'exterritorial', capable of moving 'with the speed of the electronic signal' and is 'no longer bound, not even slowed down, by the resistance of space'.[13] However, Bauman's thesis seems to be based on a markedly visual construction of the world. Many of the adjectives he uses to depict the ominous 'liquid' state of late modernity also apply to the mercurial condition of sound: sound flows like an invisible fluid that is at once temporal, spatial, perspectival and relational. As LaBelle has effectively highlighted, sound can be brutally disruptive and soothingly harmonious and it is '*always* in more than one place'.[14] Differing from other visual-oriented arts such as architecture, and capable of offering an alternative vision of community and social bonds, LaBelle stresses that sound functions 'according to a different notion of borders and perspective – it is unfixed, ethereal, evanescent, and vibratory',[15] and it is capable of refashioning our experience of space.

A noisy space of deviation

Described by Godard through analogy to music as a 'symphony in three movements', *Film socialisme* calls to mind Ravel's vision of 'a modern liner putting out to sea' as the theme for a symphony inspired by the noisy 'disordered sounds' of machines.[16] The film's 'first movement' is struck by overwhelming jolts in volume level and sound quality, as the soundtrack switches erratically between abrasive silences, merciless beeps and blasts of heavy visceral noise, redolent of a war zone.[17] We cannot help but feel the direct impact and tactile force of sound on the body. Noise and silence, as LaBelle highlights, are experienced as 'extreme points on the sonic spectrum' and they can be understood in myriad ways.[18] LaBelle also makes clear that both silence and noise play a key role in shaping our sense of place and placelessness. In many settings, what is considered noise is simply sound 'which occurs *where* it should not' within the confines of particular urban spaces or, for that matter, within the parameters of Western classical music traditions.[19] Consequently, noise operates as a 'deviating

sonority' that disturbs and transgresses acceptable thresholds,[20] much like the uncompromising, sound-saturated opening of *Film socialisme*, a film that defiantly contorts our understanding of the familiar stable categories of 'sound', 'noise', 'music' and 'silence'.

Within the first five minutes, the spectator is confronted with a series of ambient soundscapes that increase steadily in length, reaching a climax with a 20-second passage of excessively loud, proximate sound (possibly captured by a phone camera) that emanates from a dance floor on board the ship. In the build-up to this moment, the frequent disparity between the left and right audio channels perturbs the spectator who is relentlessly made to confront the turbulent sonic encounter head on. The endless bustling and murmur of voices merge with clinking cutlery, before the soundtrack swerves erratically into another passage of bleary wind sound. Finally, the accumulation of these ambient sonic-spatial planes triggers an explosion as the spectator is battered during a sustained period of extreme sonic distortion.

This sonic commotion is visualised by a low-angle, jittery shot of the dance floor awash with strobe lighting, moving bodies and smudges of bright colour. The abrasive treatment of sound stops us in our tracks and ruptures our sense of place, summoning, if but for a few seconds, sinister glimmers of what Suzanne G. Cusick identifies as an 'acoustic dystopia', a term she uses to convey 'a world divided acoustically between the aggressively noisy and the silent', in which isolation reigns and relationships of reciprocity are annihilated to devastating effect.[21] From one angle, the loud wind and sea sounds make us brutally aware of our vulnerability to the violence and force of sonic sensation. The brash sounds and abrupt silences cut into the soundtrack and the resulting auditory experience hammers and fractures the spectator, whose basic spatial reference points are eroded. Consequently, s/he is left with the overwhelming feeling of not being able to hear properly and of not being heard.

The fractured world of *Film socialisme* is evident right from the start when a silent image of two red parrots fills the screen. The parrots turn towards each other in a split-second gesture of affection, before turning away, accompanied by a divisive, high-pitched electronic beep that proceeds to flit disturbingly between right and left channels as if our hearing is

faltering. Owing to their ability to imitate speech, the parrots can be construed as symbols of artificiality and for this reason they incite anxiety by signalling a space of empty repetition, without depth or perspective, while simultaneously kindling uncanny feelings that get to the heart of what Mulvey articulates as 'cinema as an apotheosis of the human as machine' in her discussion of Charlie Chaplin.[22] Yet the parrots also constitute a pair of eavesdropping spies, whose ephemeral presence, marked by sonic blankness, urges the spectator to listen carefully in order to find meaning in the corruption and chaos that is about to ensue.

This shot, which is quickly followed by a cut to black, calls to mind the story of Noah's Ark – a holy vessel constructed to save mankind and two of every animal from the apocalyptic global flood that looms on the horizon. This repressive Noah's Ark view of the world consisting of a space of refuge and salvation based on a system of binary oppositions conjures an initial disparaging metaphor for the binary code of digital media. It also chimes with the loss of the creative temporality of the space *between*, a notion that Godard has rendered pertinently elsewhere as 'the journey time' (*le temps du voyage*), and which serves as a metaphor for cinema. Indeed, it is precisely the imaginative state of being 'in transit' that for Godard enables communication and by analogy, the cinema, to exist.[23]

Godard's manipulation of silence and noise plays a central role in the film's questioning of power relations, communication and community. The radical audio dynamics function not only to disrupt the binary unconscious of the social order by disturbing relationality, but they signal what LaBelle renders as the discordant *beginning* of communication, like the chink that rings out when a note is first struck. As a deviating sonority that challenges accepted decibel levels and ruptures our sense of place, noise creates opportunity for 'the coming of future community' and it does so partly by making audible the expression of difference.[24] Interestingly, Godard's primary audio strategy in *Film socialisme* is almost the opposite of that deployed in *Ici et ailleurs*, when turning the volume up too loud meant erasing the realities of the lives of others, and obfuscating the spectator's capacity to listen and see beyond the chains of images diffused by the news media.

As Daney wrote of *Ici et ailleurs*, '[o]ne of its conclusions is what Godard denounces as "playing the sound too loud" (including the Internationale), i.e. covering one sound with another, thus becoming incapable of simply seeing what's in the images'.[25] Instead of lowering the volume to enable masked utterances to be heard, in *Film socialisme* the volume is increased to ear-splitting levels in an optimistic gesture that challenges the spectator to listen to the image and its multiple meanings, making space, through sonic confrontation, for a refreshed encounter with the world. The musical vibrancy of the sonic distortion deployed in the film is hinted at by Aragno, who made recordings of wind sounds and experimented with the results like a composer of concrete music. He reveals: 'I made a composition of distorted sounds of the wind I made myself, it was something symphonic, very expressive, in surround and all.'[26] Although this particular recording was not used in the film, Aragno's approach to 'making sounds' demonstrates a keen attentiveness to the materiality of acoustic phenomena that we are compelled to feel with our bodies in *Film socialisme*.

Inspired by Michel Serres's writing on noise in his 1980 book *The Parasite*, LaBelle writes: 'A fugitive sound, noise may push forth as a sort of itinerant figure to spin wildly within the social and, as Michel Serres proposes, rend the system open.'[27] Noise, for LaBelle, like silence, is an 'ethical volume', since it is not only indicative of violence, unlawful disorder and irresponsibility but it also provides a 'rich encounter for the making of responsibility'. Through reference to the political philosopher Chantal Mouffe's 'agonistic' model of public space, LaBelle suggests that 'to continue to engage politically requires an ongoing responsibility for the demands of the other, which may actually make noise a dramatically important platform for renewing political subjectivity and community today'.[28] Interrogating the relationship between art and democracy, Mouffe discusses the possible forms that artistic intervention could take in the fight against dominant hegemony. Critical art, she argues, is often deemed incapable of challenging the prevailing symbolic order because it is immediately 'recuperated and neutralized' by capitalism.[29] Without a common consensus to guide our aesthetic judgments the tendency is to replace them with moral judgements and to rashly conflate the moralistic with the political. However, for Mouffe, artistic intervention *is* still possible

when an 'agonistic' model of democracy is adopted, whose aim is not to create consensus but 'to unveil all that is repressed by the dominant consensus'. She states: 'According to the agonistic approach, critical art is art that foments dissensus, that makes visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate.'[30] Consequently, the endorsing of a post-political consensus as a sign of progress for democracy can be seized as an opportunity for critical artistic practices to 'disrupt the smooth image that corporate capitalism is trying to spread'.[31]

Film socialisme passionately embraces antagonism, presenting us with the noisy, pluralist agonistic 'battleground' that Mouffe sets out.[32] And yet this is not a world devoid of balance and harmony. A serene moment of unity surfaces in the film's 'final movement' involving a scintillating, dream-like excerpt from Agnès Varda's *Les plages d'Agnès* (*The Beaches of Agnès*) (2008). The sequence consists of trapeze artists performing on a beach against the glittering backdrop of a sun-strewn sea (see Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2 The trapeze artists touch mid-movement in *Film socialisme* (Jean-Luc Godard, 2010)

Godard manipulates the framing by bringing the image closer to us. He also enhances the stammering stop-start motion by interspersing a black screen into the acrobatic display. As a result, the spectator is made to pause, reflect and listen to the bodies gliding freely through the air. Yet it is also the gentle, multilingual stammering of voices that shows up the fragility and evanescence of this hesitant, contemplative and melodious space of human contact and exchange.

The soundtrack plays a vital role in this part of *Film socialisme*. Like the visual extract from *Les plages d'Agnès*, the soundtrack derives from another film altogether, and it is soon mixed with a different song again to form an entirely new listening experience. Just before the trapeze artists appear, Godard incorporates an audio-only excerpt from Karin Albou's *Le chant des mariées* (*The Wedding Song*) (2008), a film about a friendship between a Muslim girl and a Jewish girl during the German occupation of Tunisia in 1942. In the final moments of *Le chant des mariées*, we hear an intricate montage of two overlapping female voices, the first reciting a passage in Palestinian Arabic from the Koran and the second reciting a passage in Hebrew from the Talmud.

In Albou's film, the girls' prayers accompany the sight of their swaying and embracing bodies, producing what Kathryn Lachman describes as 'a fleeting image of religious plurality and tolerance in North Africa.'[33] However, Lachman contends that this hopeful image is soon extinguished by the entrance of the Nina Hagen Band's punk rock song, 'Naturträne' ('Nature's Tears'), pointing out that the operatic style and impressive range of Hagen's vocal in this song haunts the chanting voices with intimations of Nazi-era German neoclassical opera. The German lyrics of the song and the volume at which it plays drown out the girls' voices, thereby silencing the 'alternative music' of their indigenous prayer with loud European sounds. Lachman argues that the overwhelming presence of this song 'support[s] the narrative of anti-Semitism and Nazi aggression' so pertinent to Albou's portrayal of Tunisia under German rule. On the other hand, she notes that Hagen's presence as a powerful female vocalist, of East German-Jewish heritage, prevents the sequence from being reduced to a simple dichotomy of 'German oppression' versus 'Jewish victimhood' and in

this way it preserves hope for the emergence of a global, 'transnational feminist solidarity'.[34]

The gesture performed via Albou's expressive montage is repeated and modified in *Film socialisme*. Almost as soon as the operatic tones of Hagen's voice enter, they are faded out and replaced with the voice of the American folk singer and activist (of Mexican and Scottish descent), Joan Baez. As the trapeze artists swing back and forth, we hear Baez's German version of the anti-war song *Where Have All the Flowers Gone* (*Sagt mir, wo die Blumen sind*), originally written in 1961 by the American pacifist Pete Seeger. The German version was written by the German-Jewish screenwriter Max Colpet for Marlene Dietrich, who performed the song in Paris, Germany and Israel.[35] In Godard's montage, one set of German lyrics is superseded by another, plunging the former religious utterances further into the depths of memory. Yet by replacing the punk rock song with an anti-war anthem, Godard's recomposition allows the Hebrew and Arabic chanting, like a musical evocation of the girls' rhythmic embrace, to flow into the space of the image, which, in turn, 'let[s] the visual image enter into the movement of sound', as Niney wrote of Pelechian's films.[36] This is where Miéville's influence in *Film socialisme* is perhaps most emphatically felt. In *Ici et ailleurs* it was Miéville who made Godard acknowledge that he had forgotten to translate the Arabic speech of the *Fedayeen* militants, thereby triggering the realisation that all of the other sounds in the film were too loud, silencing the voice of the other. As Daney observed in 1977, in *Ici et ailleurs*, 'one sound doesn't critique another … but – and this is far more important – permits it to be heard'.[37]

This section of the soundtrack in *Film socialisme* offers a provisional utopian expression of a form of solidarity that navigates the frontiers of nation and faith. One begins to *see* the different dialects in the diagonal lines and crosses, as one begins to *listen* to the image. The organisation of sound allows the spectator to indulge in a pleasurable audio-visual experience that does not erase the layers of history and meaning that subsist in the music and rhythms of corporeal motion, as the bodies from Varda's film swing together and apart, suspended between the parallel lines of sound, sense and sensation. This tentative acoustic space

of touch and physical interaction abolishes any hint of a schism between the aesthetic and the political, while appearing to unfold as a passing utopian dream amid the discordant surroundings.

The moving site of cinema

The image of the cruise ship in *Film socialisme* comes to figure as a forbidding container haunted by a cinema of the past. The opacity of certain images in the film's first movement rends our focus and disorients the gaze, transporting spectators beyond the 'high-gloss' sights and into more abstract territory while keeping their ears and eyes alert. For example, a dubious dark mass bobbing on the water's surface could be a clump of sticks and seaweed, a mysterious sea creature, or even a bomb, drifting alongside the ship and eluding definition, like a strange visual depiction of cinema's elusive sonic counterpart (see Figure 7.3). These more unusual images

Figure 7.3 An unidentified floating object in *Film socialisme* (Jean-Luc Godard, 2010)

contribute to the striking ambiguity of perspectives that arises, which tugs the spectator awkwardly into uncertain zones of sensory experience, producing a distinctive kind of visual music, reflective of a world turned inside-out.[38] Yet woven into this world are the simple pleasures and vague outlines of more familiar cinematic forms and figures. The figure of Alissa dressed in white and rotating unsteadily on deck (see Figure 7.1) awakens a drained memory of the character Juliette in Vigo's *L'Atalante*, when her ethereal image magically appears in the murky waters of the canal and her figure twirls slowly and luminously as the white ripples in her dress dance with the bubbles.

Godard performs a small but artful revolutionary gesture in contorting the familiarity of a social space while flaunting its visibility, and demanding the attention of the ear by aggressively subjecting the spectator to excessive sound levels. Godard attempts to recuperate something of the shock and spectacle of 'the cinema of attractions' from early pre-1906 cinema to reinvigorate the quickly consumable attractions on board.[39] The enclosed setting of the cruise ship, which cuts the water with poise as it glides ever forwards, following a predetermined itinerary, is transposed into a non-linear, imaginary and critical space-time *in transit* that adheres to a different rhythm and a different sensory order. In this light, it becomes endowed with the strange powers of a 'timeless fable', as Delahaye wrote of Bresson's *Au hasard Balthazar*.[40] Godard converts an archetypal tourist space, populated by a vast array of screens, sounds and signs, into the stunning imprint of an atemporal myth, set beautifully and indelibly against the chaotic white noise of the ocean.

Film socialisme bears all the hallmarks of the poetic system of montage that Bresson outlined in response to Delahaye and Godard's remarks: 'Take elements as disparate as possible in the world, and bring them together in a certain order, not according to the usual order but according to your own.'[41] This is a dissonant order that launches a heady critical assault on the political reality of our time. Once the cruise has reached Barcelona, the last legendary site on its schedule, the film swiftly terminates. The camera pans upwards as we hear somebody asking for the time and two white streaks can be seen in the sky. The hazy streaks sketch a faint cross above the Sagrada Família, making visible the film's

moment of truth – 'Nothing but the right time' (*Rien que l'heure juste*) – a voice responds, waking us up to the present with the deafening collision of montage.

A metapoetic of language – *Adieu au langage*

The erratic soundscape of *Film socialisme* softens in *Adieu au langage*, one of Godard's most musically inflected films. As with other of Godard's films, *Adieu au langage* cannot be treated as a solitary art work but it must be heard through its correspondences with other films and documents. These correspondences lead to a deeper understanding of the film's theme of 'language' and what I will refer to as its 'essential musicality', borrowing from Bazin. The documents to which I will turn consist of a short dialogue between Godard and Pelechian from 1992, Mitry's 1951 experimental film essay *Images pour Debussy*, Bazin's commentary on Mitry's film in his review 'L'Eau danse', and Dulac's pioneering silent film essay *Étude cinégraphique sur une arabesque*.[42] Dulac's film took inspiration from the form, movement and arabesque motif in Claude Debussy's *Deux arabesques* (*Two Arabesques*) for piano, both of which feature on the soundtrack in Mitry's later film.

An intriguing conversation took place between Godard and Pelechian in 1992 in which the filmmakers discuss the idea of cinema as a universal 'language before Babel'. As the discussion moves to issues of sound, Godard associates the introduction of the talkies with the rise of fascism in Europe and Pelechian explains how he uses 'absent images' in his films to recover the 'ancient language' of cinema:

> I use what I call absent images. I think you can hear the images and see the sound. In my films the image is situated next to the sound and the sound next to the image. These exchanges bring about a result that is different from the montage in the time of silent films, or, better, of 'non-talking' films.[43]

This discussion opens an auditory pathway into the experience of *Adieu au langage*, a film composed of repetitions, doublings and symmetries, channelled through two parallel stories that echo each other ('1 Nature' and

'2 Metaphor'), and through two interchangeable couples, Josette (Héloïse Godet) and Gédéon (Kamel Abdelli)/Ivitch (Zoé Bruneau) and Marcus (Richard Chevallier).

David Bordwell conveys the film's structure in Pelechian-inflected terms as one of 'distant counterpoint' or 'barely discernible rhymes'.[44] Pelechian's manner of formulating his theory of distance montage, which places significant emphasis on music and nonverbal sound, shares notable parallels with Godard's longstanding insistence that one should 'listen' to the image and 'look' at the sound. Indeed, Pelechian frequently refers to the possibility of hearing images and seeing sounds as two harmonic processes. In conversation with Niney, he clarifies his views on sound cinema:

> The pioneers of silent film, like Griffith or Chaplin, were afraid that the coming of the talkies would destroy the cinema that they had developed. But I believe they were wrong. Those who were not afraid were wrong too, because they used sound badly; they were content with a synchronous cinema, as in life, of sonic illustration. No one noticed that sound could take the place of the image, and that then the latter could merge with the former.[45]

For Godard and Pelechian there is an important difference between what they construe as the poetic force of the primitive language of film and the more prosaic 'theatrical' language of the talkie. Sound and music are vital elements of cinematic composition and it is not sonic presence *per se* that they are resisting but the overarching dominance of narrative-based sonic representation.

It is within this context that I would like to introduce Mitry's 'Arabesque en sol', the final 'piece' (just under five minutes long) from *Images pour Debussy*, a poetic film essay with music but no dialogue, that won the 1952 Prix Louis Lumière and whose central theme is water. As indicated in the prologue, this film does not intend to 'illustrate' Debussy's music but it attempts to create a 'plastic equivalent' by forging correspondences in the visuals with the movements, lines and forms heard in the music to produce a 'choreography of the world and of things'.[46] In the subsection 'Audiovisual Structures' under 'Speech and Sound', in his two-volume *Esthétique et*

psychologie du cinéma (1963–5) (*The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*), Mitry criticises Dulac's 'cinegraphic ballet', as it was subtitled, for merely illustrating the music by creating a visual interpretation of its 'arabesque' theme, rather than of the music itself. Although, after studying the duration of the shots in Dulac's film, in conjunction with Debussy's composition, Tami Williams has revealed that the arabesque motif is also 'mirrored in the film's overall editing structure', hinting at a more complex design than Mitry suggests.[47] For Mitry, however, Dulac's images of raindrops and water spurting onto a lawn, produce patterns that lack any 'tonal or rhythmic correlation' with the inner workings and formal design of the music.[48]

Mitry then goes on to discuss the possibility of associating images and music in film poetically through evocation and suggestion. Music should serve not as an accompaniment or support but as a 'parallel content' to the images, sharing the same rhythmic structure and infusing the visuals with the temporal dimension they lack. The images in Mitry's film were not *composed for* Debussy's music, he affirms with vigour. Instead, he took as his starting point the theme of water as it is conveyed musically, alluding to Debussy's shimmering harmonies and 'crystal-clear sounds', evocative of 'the eddies, reflections and transparency of running water'. Debussy's music provides 'a musical framework as the dynamic foundation of a visual progression', leading to the creation of a 'metapoetic of water'.[49] For Mitry, what is crucial is that the emotional shocks produced by both music and image should become indissociable in the spectator's mind. The sound-image relationships must seem '*arbitrary but perceptible*' and produce a constant uncertainty as to whether 'we are hearing the images or seeing the music'.[50]

The elliptical style and general opacity of *Adieu au langage* has dominated many reviews of the film but in the multifarious Godardian universe an immediately accessible story world is never to be expected. To appraise the film in terms of whether the story actions are obvious (to the critic's eye) or obscure (to the layperson's eye) constrains the focus to narrative comprehension in terms of visual coherence, and overlooks the power of the spectator's aural imagination, which is here put to the test.[51] By listening to the film as though it were a piece of sonic art or poetry rather than

attempting to comprehend it in terms of its adherence to a storyline of visible events, its elliptical effect is reduced and a new pattern emerges from a set of radical rhythms and harmonies that tug the imagination into an alternative, fantastical reality. For Mitry, reality should be placed 'in the abstract' to prevent 'overrepresentation', while what must be preserved is the substance, sensation, emotion and the rhythm – the *tangible reality* – of the object being filmed.[52] Godard abides by this principle in his manipulation of the acoustics, colouring and textures in *Adieu au langage*, whose abstract, sensuous and painterly qualities are extended by way of the 3D effect.

A swirling, progressive magic

In *Adieu au langage*, the interplay between flatness and depth is experimented with visually *and* aurally. We should remind ourselves here of the omnidirectional nature of hearing and the immersive qualities of sound. As Holly Rogers reminds us, just as sound in cinema can move freely into the space of the audience, in 3D cinema, the image can 'leap from the screen and press into the viewer's space'.[53] When I first experienced this film in 2D the passages of music and the duration of the film itself felt markedly longer, while in 3D its spherical form, along with the optical tricks and surround sound absorb the spectator more intensely in what feels like an installation artwork. In Erika Balsom's compelling article on 3D cinema, she maps out the long and complex history of 3D film, rightly observing that *Adieu au langage* is not unique in its nonconformist approach to the 3D image and in its staging of '"bad" 3-D'.[54] Balsom is here referring to the film's famous separation shots involving two parallel cameras that move out of sync with each other (one stays still, the other moves), producing an uncomfortable sense of optical misalignment, which our eyes try hard to resolve, like a visualisation of a resultant pattern in a Reichian 'phasing' piece. Yet through its silent dialogue with French experimental film history, *Adieu au langage* is certainly engrossed in thinking historically about 3D filmmaking practice.

At the start of one striking sequence in *Adieu au langage*, the camera cuts from a shot of the dog, Roxy Miéville (the film's roving protagonist),

to a close-up of a painting consisting of thick-textured stripes and swirls of black paint with bluish inflections, suggestive of an ancient drawing etched on to a cave wall. In the same instant, the first chord from the Allegretto of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7 in A Major* (Op. 92) resounds, producing a rich audio-visual harmony with the paint, over which the camera moves quickly and jerkily, mimicking the dog's inquisitive temperament. The loud ambient sound of rain enters and the camera cuts to a shot of sodden dark earth, roots and puddles. The chugging refrain from the Allegretto begins to falter, signalling the awakening of a memory. The music stops and starts, echoing the shaky camera movement and the dog quickly turns to the left as a high-pitched whistling enters, after which the camera begins to cut rapidly between Roxy's profile and repeated shots of a train pulling into a station, filmed using different levels of brightness. We see Roxy's head positioned in front of what looks like the flickering dots of a blank screen, which is intermittently lit up by flashes of light and is soon replaced by the windows of the passing train. The music, broken up by loud engine sounds, pauses again as Roxy embodies the perfect spectator in front of the 'screen' of the train, whose rectangular windows evoke a filmstrip shuttling across the editing table.

This sequence of intercutting appears to reference the Lumière brothers' 1935 stereoscopic remake of their 1895 short *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat*, which, as Balsom points out, has been mythologised as a 3D film owing to the spectators' agitated reactions to the very real sight of the locomotive coming towards them. She also notes the connection between 3D film and the history of the stereoscope, citing Cray's discussion of the device and its role in 'signalling a move away from perspectival organization toward tactile space' in his study of vision in the nineteenth century.[55] The stereoscope, Cray writes, was devised not simply to achieve likeness but 'immediate, apparent *tangibility*' that would provide 'a purely visual experience'. It created the impression of a 'three-dimensional solidity', whose '"vividness" of effect' grew with the 'apparent proximity of the object to the viewer'.[56] We are reminded too of Godard's remarks to Pelechian concerning the history of cinematic projection that touch on the concept of 'descriptive geometry', which uses mathematics to represent graphically three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface.[57]

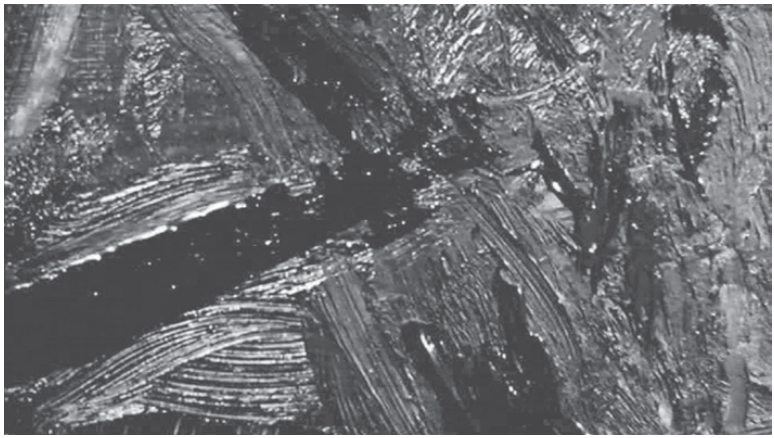


Figure 7.4 Close-up of glistening blue-black paint in *Adieu au langage* (Jean-Luc Godard, 2014)

The tactile space generated by 3D film is also apparent in *Images pour Debussy*, where the film's tangibility is inseparable from the spatialisation of the music's rhythm. At times in 'Arabesque en sol', the water resembles shiny black ink and at others times thick black paint, reverberating with the series of thick-textured images outlined above in Godard's film (see Figures 7.4 and 7.5). Moreover, the shot of sodden soil, roots and puddles is remarkably similar to a recurring shot of rain pouring onto waterlogged soil and grass in Dulac's *Étude cinégraphique*, as Godard composes his own set of choreographic *rapprochements*, linking *Adieu au langage* via Mitry's film to Dulac's silent cinegraphic ballet, and thereby revealing the musical and experimental kernel of his film's design. Mitry's strident shots of water, filmed using positive and negative imagery, are contrasted with lucid close-ups of bubbles, elegant circles of rippling water and spherical patterns of gushing water. During a later sequence in *Adieu au langage*, when Ivitch exclaims hopelessly, 'Words!', the camera cuts to black and the music returns ('The Rose Garden at Midnight' from Tabakova's *Suite in Old Style 'The Court Jester Amareu'*), bathed in the sound of the sea.[58] This moment chimes with a scene at the film's end showing a paintbrush briskly stirring black paint in a palette. The soundtrack is silent, serving to embolden the words uttered by Godard himself in the run-up to this

Figure 7.5 Close-up of water in 'Arabesque en sol' from *Images pour Debussy* (Jean Mitry, 1951)

shot ('depth', 'suffering', 'the other world'). The black screen that follows Ivitch's exclamation summons that other ancient pre-Babel language that vibrates beneath the film's surface. Images of swirling water then reoccur from a side angle, reminiscent again of the painterly shots of fast-flowing water from Mitry's film (see Figures 7.6 and 7.7). In *Adieu au langage*, the tactile visual textures that synchronise with the stirring harmonic changes load Tabakova's music with a dazzling 'three-dimensional solidity', as Cray wrote of the stereoscopic effect, superimposing distinctive audio-visual shapes onto the spectator's mind.

Mitry underlines the gradual tendency towards abstraction in *Images pour Debussy*. He details how images of material objects such as a river and trees overhanging the water, were first represented concretely, even illustratively. Then gradually the focus turned to the reflections of these objects, which were turned upside-down, replacing reality with 'a similar yet different universe'. Consequently, the image that remains in the spectator's mind,

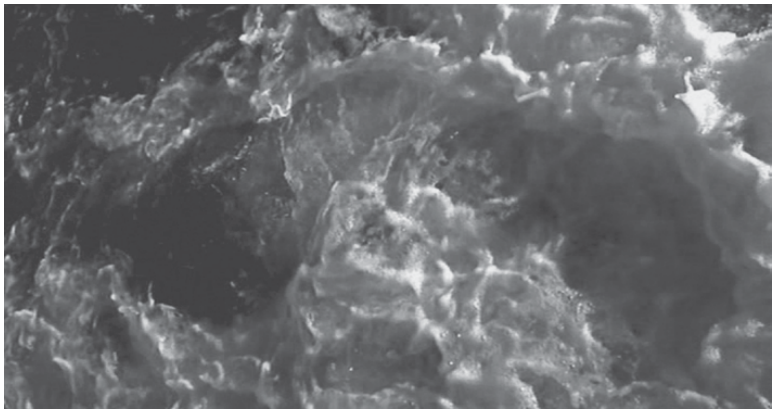


Figure 7.6 Side shot of water swirling in *Adieu au langage* (Jean-Luc Godard, 2014)

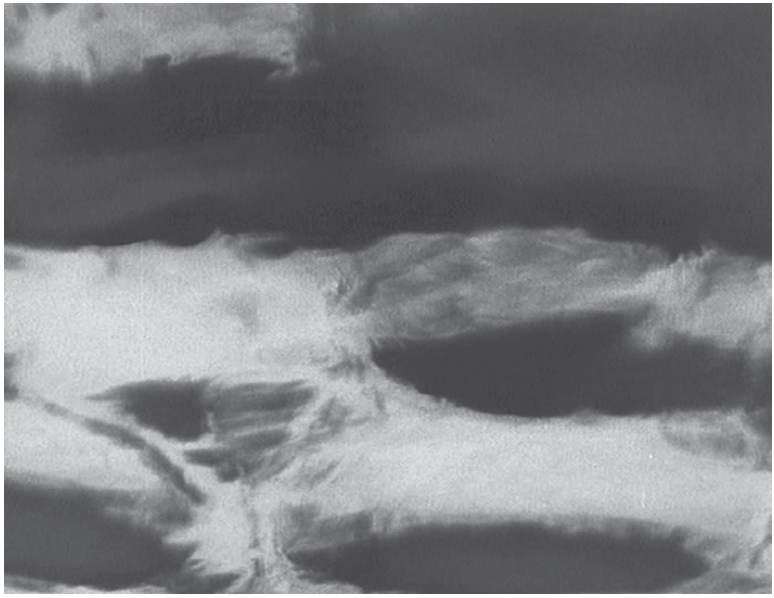


Figure 7.7 Shot of gushing water in 'Arabesque en sol' from *Images pour Debussy* (Jean Mitry, 1951)

Mitry observes, is not the visual representation of an object but 'the "image of the object's image"'.[59] Dulac's early silent film essay also includes a shot of tree branches quivering, reflected in water, as well as close-ups of flowers, foliage and an array of abstract shapes and patterns. *Adieu au langage* takes us on a parallel journey, owing to the many shots of water, flowers, trees and woodland, incorporating imagery that hints at abstraction such as a shot through a car window of Roxy, whose body glistens, patterned in snowy white marks due to the reflected light. In one instance, we even see a stunning upside-down image showing the undulating reflection on the water's surface of a bright blue sky and a vivid orangey-green blaze of trees, realising Mitry's unfulfilled wish to shoot his film in colour to exploit the 'whole range of nuances' that fall silent in black and white.[60]

Grant Wiedenfeld points out that when 3D film appeared, Bazin was optimistic about the new medium. In his critique of the hand-painted abstract films of Norman McLaren, Bazin describes them as '*abstract painting in motion and in 3D*', suggesting that the specific combination of 3D and colour provided new tools that would enable painters to 'create moving forms in space'.[61] It is precisely the distortion of space, colour saturation, overexposure and abstraction that Godard gleefully exploits in *Adieu au langage* in order to force a different understanding both of 'coherent' communication and poetic cinematic expression. In doing so, he infuses his film with the *feel* of the special form of rhythmic realism that Bazin identifies in Mitry's film. In his 1951 review of *Images pour Debussy*, Bazin enthuses about the third and fourth segments ('Reflets dans l'eau' and 'Arabesque en sol'), praising Mitry's montage of water, which he compares with the drawings and paintings of Len Lye, MacLaren and Oskar Fischinger, and with Disney's *Fantasia* (1940). Bazin celebrates the malleability of the images of water that change according to the music, dancing to its rhythm. Most fascinating to Bazin is the progressive 'de-concretisation' of the image, exemplified by the 'pure movement' of a reflection of light on the water's surface. He notes that the material reality is now only of secondary importance to its reflection, that is, to its rhythm:

> It is precisely this rhythmic accessibility of matter which contributes most in divesting it of its realism, in drawing out of it a kind of abstract first principle compared to which material

> reality is of only secondary importance. A reflection shows itself first and foremost as rhythm. Compared with this essence, water is nothing more than an accident. Just like the image of the sky in water, the relationship of idea to object is inverted. The perceptible world is merely the reflection and, as it were, the epiphenomenon of an *essential musicality*.[62]

The spectator's experience of rhythm as the essence of things pushes the imagination beyond any notion of 'fixed representation', plunging the eye and the ear into a fantasy world where objects and words are perceived musically and made meaningful through their rhythm. Evocative of Schaeffer's theory of the acousmatic condition, the correspondences between music, movement and image that Godard, Mitry and Dulac create, dissipate feelings of familiarity and fire up the acoustic spectator's imagination 'by letting it wander beyond the charted paths',[63] like Roxy the roaming dog, free to seek out a different sensory experience of the world.

Conclusion

Moving from *Film socialisme* to *Adieu au langage*, Godard maps out a propitious vision of a fragmented but expanded multimedia universe to be perceived from continuously shifting historical perspectives. At the same time these films confront us with 'the abrupt and violent feeling of life', as Niney wrote of Pelechian's films.[64] The cruise ship of *Film socialisme* exists as a poetic object of reinvention that inscribes itself into the symphonic screen-space *as* cinema, that is, as movement, communication and emotion. It forms a dark and enigmatic shadow of an image that moves and *moves* us, while the brute presence of noise paves the way for the haptic 3D effect in *Adieu au langage*. This latter film is one that seeks not to explain, as Mitry wrote of his aquatic film essay, but that sinks the spectator into 'a malleable universe' of pure stimulation and evocation, a universe '*possessed by the music*'.[65] It exudes a transformative force that galvanises a rhythmic engagement with a sonorous 'non-talking' form of audio-visual language.

Forcefully and energetically, through speed changes, subtitling, colour, leaps in volume and a succession of tactile audio-visual harmonies, Godard compresses, twists and squeezes words, extracting meaning from them as

he attempts to reinvent cinema's language in a way that conjures, cinematically, the intuitive and visceral experience of what Susan Sontag calls 'sensual speech'. In her essay 'The Aesthetics of Silence', she writes: 'Explicitly in revolt against what is deemed to be the desiccated, categorized life of the ordinary mind, the artist issues his own call for a revision of language.' Art then becomes 'a kind of counterviolence, seeking to loosen the grip upon consciousness of the habits of lifeless, static verbalization, presenting models of "sensual speech." '[66] Sontag defines sensual speech as 'the unmediated expressive instrument of the senses, proper to beings integrally part of sensuous nature – that is, still employed by all the animals except that sick animal, man'. Her definition derives from the writings of the Christian mystic Jakob Boehme, for whom this is 'the only "natural language," ' and the only language 'free from distortion and illusion'.[67]

In *Film socialisme*, Godard undertakes the noisy and painful process of disrupting the monotone language of smooth digitised landscapes, while making the spectator feel distinctly out of place and out of time. We are presented with a mythic, atemporal vision of a collective experience that simultaneously reveals the cracks that fracture the experience into pieces. This vision is entirely musicalised in *Adieu au langage*, a profoundly rhythmic and poetic experience of spatialised sound and time. From one film to the other, the spectator's relationship with the sounds and pictures is misaligned and realigned as Godard persistently searches for different ways to forge new radical associations and make sounds and images heard in all their opacity, with a kinetic intensity that causes our ears to ring.

Coda

Shadows and Sparks

> The experience of hearing and sharing the same things together, or breathing the same pauses, phrases or intervals.[1]
>
> Manfred Eicher

The enthralling sound worlds of Godard's late films make for eye-opening experiences that stay with us after the final beat. The rhythmic energy that permeates each work shoots through our bodies like electricity. The expressivity, poetry and sheer dynamism of the acoustic phenomena compel us to recognise that these are films not organised around looking and seeing in the usual sense. They are films infused with a musical logic and coherence that accords with a mode of meaning-making that is attuned to the sense of hearing. Whilst, as Barthes reminds us in his essay 'Listening', '[*h*]*earing* is a physiological phenomenon' and '*listening* is a psychological act',[2] each of us hears differently according to how we receive and process the sound. Likewise, each of us listens differently depending on our sonic sensibility, our cultural and social influences, our listening habits and our purpose. Listening is an everyday activity, at once complex and mundane, that is forever creating new relational and communicative pathways between the intimate and the impersonal, and between the listener and the world.

Attuning ourselves to the auditory dimension of film experience alters not only our sense of space and location but also our perception of time. We become more sensitive and responsive to moods and atmospheres, variations in texture and shape and transitions between movements and moments. When Manfred Eicher likens Godard to a composer, he comments specifically on Godard's ability to harmonise musical sounds with natural noises, which generates friction between them, producing 'shadows and sparks'. Little by little, Eicher writes, our perception sharpens and we begin to 'discern even the tiniest shards of sound'.[3] Unfamiliar or unusually intense sonic combinations imprint a pattern onto our mind that lights up acoustic patterns in our everyday aural environment that we had not noticed before. For example, the harsh experience of being plunged into stretches of loud wind and sea sound makes us more keenly aware of the ambient sounds that are constantly there, colouring our experience of the world. In an interview with Chris Darke, Musy speaks of Godard's adventurous enthusiasm for going off and searching for certain sounds. Musy and Godard are dedicated collaborators who are forever pushing the limits of what is technically and conceptually possible. Together they participate in the exciting activity of listening to and recording sound in different ways.[4] The spectator, in turn, is invited to consider the many ways in which we listen, carried along by the same tireless curiosity and by a willingness to listen carefully, thoughtfully and fearlessly from different perspectives.

I hope the discussions in this book will inspire readers to embark on and revel in their own personal auditory journeys through film and other audio-visual media. I hope they will also pave the way for new studies of the sonically rich Sonimage films, especially *Ici et ailleurs* and *Numéro deux*, as well as lesser-studied films by Godard and Godard–Miéville such as *Allemagne année 90 neuf zéro*, *Soft and Hard: Soft Talk on a Hard Subject Between Two Friends*, *Hélas pour moi* and *For Ever Mozart*, as well as generate new responses to *Éloge de l'amour* and *Notre musique*. They should establish fresh points of entry into *Histoire(s) du cinéma* that probe the archival and transmedial relevance of the portions of soundtrack and

excerpts of music that reoccur in different contexts. Whilst it has been beyond the scope of this book to engage in detail with Godard's New Wave cinema or with the films he made with Jean-Pierre Gorin and the Dziga Vertov group, my close readings have endeavoured to set the stage for a broader reconsideration of Godard's sonic practice specific to these periods.[5] They might also lead to a more thematic method of analysis, focusing, for example, on the politics of noise or on Godard's interest in cinema's transition from silent to sound. My inclusive, holistic approach to film sound, that refrains from privileging music or dialogue and embraces the interaction between different sound types, drawing freely on a wide range of critical and theoretical discourses, aspires to encourage other multidisciplinary theoretical approaches to be crafted, not only in relation to contemporary French and Francophone film but also to other contemporary cinemas across the world, rooted in particular aural and audio-visual cultures and traditions.

The activity of listening to Godard and Godard–Miéville's films requires patience, eagerness and a receptiveness to the uncertain and the unknown. Above all, these are films that train the one listening in the practice of attentive or *ethical* listening, thus termed by Marcel Cobussen. This kind of 'unconditional' listening is 'sensitive, responsive or hospitable'; it concentrates on the unheard and fosters an attitude of openness and responsiveness that sees listeners 'meet an otherness without reducing it to the order of the same'.[6] This is a kind of active and 'artful' listening that sociologist Les Back calls 'a listening for the background and the half muted' and it is hard to do because it 'challenges the listener's preconceptions and position while at the same time it engages critically with the content of what is being said and heard'.[7] This mode of listening discourages the reliance on simplistic judgments that feed off misrepresentation and it quietly combats the unjust distortions so prevalent in media-saturated culture by being ever mindful of, and alive to, the contradictions and complexities of human experience while remaining alert to the creeks and shudders of what has come before and what may yet come to pass.

Godard and Miéville touch on the characteristics of attentive or ethical listening in their initial synopsis for *Notre musique*. They refer to the film's first sequence as a 'musical spring' because

> hope is what it's about, and wherever the music takes shape and takes flight, in town or village, in war or peace, our music, which speaks to us and about us in ways that the press and television no longer can, with honesty and fervour.[8]

Sound and music come to articulate sensations and experiences that cannot be fully grasped, rendered or definitively pinned down. And these are the qualities most deserving of attention in the films that we have explored in this book, in which the vibrant fusions of musical sound and natural noises act as a force of resistance that unmakes and remakes meaning, while helping to establish a new sense of equilibrium within a reordered sensorium.

Godard and Godard–Miéville's films and videos dislocate, disorient and re-root us in our bodies, making us intensely aware of ourselves as listeners, while our sensory compass is altered and a different form of relationality takes shape. The sounds and images that confront us extend into other formats, including audio CD, book and 3D film, and each time they are heard, seen and felt from a fresh perspective. Perhaps in the future Godard will delve into the immersive simulations of virtual reality technology. Anything is possible. To finish, let us now turn to Godard's 17-minute 2013 short, *Les trois désastres* (*The Three Disasters*), which forms part of the 3D triptych *3X3D* and constitutes Godard's first experiment with stereoscopic film.[9]

Codetta: *Les trois désastres*

In *Les trois désastres*, the transformational power of the musician's creative act is exposed in a series of striking close-ups of the moving hands of two pianists.[10] The mix of muscular and intellectual play is brought to the fore during these beguiling scenes, evoking Steven Connor's idea of 'cultural phenomenology' that stresses the affective and somatic aspects of cultural experience. He writes:

> To say that something is cultural is to say simultaneously that it is shared and that it is made. Culture means shared conditions of making. It means the experiencing of the world as a way of repeatedly making the world, and making it in common.[11]

Seeing the four hands gliding, leaping and brushing over each other during these scenes brings us face to face with an intimate, imaginative and co-creative act that involves mutual listening, a process that works 'in common' with the ear of the spectator. In *Scénario du film Passion*, Godard spoke of 'composing an image' and 'composing a movement', which is here a communal and musical movement that causes the film to shudder. We are made to traverse and *go through* an experience that helps us make sense of the making, unmaking and remaking anew of multiple and fragmentary meanings.

In the first of these sequences we glimpse the ferry boat from *Adieu au langage*, an image haunted by the dead commodity of the cruise ship in *Film socialisme*. This vehicle is surrounded by gushing white foam and dark green waves, as the water runs diagonally and voluptuously over the pianists' hands, flooding the keyboard as they overlap gently, majestically and soundlessly, sinking sensually into the black-and-white keys. The four hands of the pianists appear in a multiplied, almost hypertrophic state, cut off from the rest of the body. However, what we hear is not the music they are playing but a whispered extract (the voice of Julie Delpy) from Baudelaire's 'Le Voyage' ('Voyaging'), a poem dedicated to the travel photographer and writer Maxime Du Camp:

> 'We've seen the stars
> And waves, and we have seen the sandy shores;
> Despite disasters, all our jolts and jars,
> On sea, on land we find that we are bored.
>
> The glorious sun across the violet sea,
> Great sunlit cities dreaming as they lie,
> Made our heart yearn with fierce intensity
> To plunge towards those reflections in the sky.'[12]

After a few moments of watching the ethereal hands moving silently up and down the keyboard, an extract from Bach's *Prelude in C* from *The Well-Tempered Clavier* enters.

In *Atlas of Emotion*, Giuliana Bruno reminds us that cinema derived its name from the Greek word *kinema*, denoting both 'motion' and emotion'. A little later, she replaces the notion of 'sightseeing' with 'site-seeing' to stress the relationship between 'sight' and 'site'. Deviating from film theory's established concentration on the 'filmic gaze' and the traditional Lacanian concept of the voyeur, Bruno moves instead 'toward the construction of a moving theory of site', shifting the focus from a perspectival optical position to a haptic form of site-seeing and to the *emotion* of viewing space. The spectator becomes 'a *voyageur*, a passenger who traverses a haptic, emotive terrain'.[13] This idea is rendered powerfully in the first piano sequence in *Les trois désastres*. The sight of the ferry boat amid the waves, mixed with an image of the pianists' hands at the keyboard, forms a charged musical passage filled with the desires of Baudelaire's travellers who yearn to escape the mundane, to get *out of time*, that 'deadly enemy', and to find and experience all that is new.

The soundtrack in this section consists of an extract from episode 2A, *Seul le cinéma* of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. In 2A we hear an extensive quotation from the same poem, including the two stanzas heard here, read aloud by Delpy, whose profile is mixed with a black-and-white photograph of Orson Welles on a boat at sea. This section of 2A commences with the screen-text 'ENVOI' (sending) accompanied by a noisy projector sound. Behind the screen-text is a projectionist standing alongside the projector, whose lens and beam of light shines into our eyes. In *Les trois désastres* a similar sequence occurs in the run-up to Delpy's reading. We see two digital cameras placed close together in front of a mirror, recording their own reflection. One of the cameras is positioned the right way up while the other is upside-down. This sequence stages a manual construction of the 3D effect, calling attention to Godard's commentary in *Histoire(s) du cinéma* on the allure and demise of the projected image, a subject that pervades *Seul le cinéma* where it is initiated by Godard's references to Jean-Victor Poncelet's treatise on projective geometry. In the same vein, a little later in 2A, Delpy's reading is interrupted by an exerpt from the filmed interview between Godard and Daney that runs throughout the episode, as Godard continues to muse on cinematic projection, the active cinematic

spectator who is 'attracted' to the images and sounds, and the 'rejected' television viewer.

Later in *Les trois désastres*, when the image of the musicians' hands returns, sound replaces silence: the pianists' finger patterns are now synchronised for the first time with the correct music, that is, with Ravel's mysterious and eruptive *Prélude à la nuit* (*Prelude to the Night*) from his *Rapsodie espagnole*, the piece that was in fact being played all along.[14] Here, then, we are made to tune in and listen to the dramatic preludial sparks of newness in the inauspicious *[dés]astres* (disasters/the stars) before us.[15] During the first close-up of the pianists' hands, the asynchrony between the sight of the hands darting up and down the keyboard (playing Ravel), drowning in the greenish waters, accompanied by the superimposed sound of Bach, recalls the nascent movements, murmurs and rippling waves of the white screen (the poet's 'white page' into which 'musical notes' were inscribed) in *Scénario du film Passion*, where in the video scenario's closing stages we heard Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G* playing softly, while Godard uttered three times in darkness: 'And here is the cinema.'

The second time we see the musicians' hands at the keyboard, the mood is nightmarish and the hands appear scratched and bloodied, as if engulfed in flames.[16] The cut to this sequence falls on the third syllable of the noun 'politique', pronounced by Godard himself, and it is joined immediately by Ravel's *Prélude à la nuit*. Godard's ominous allusions to 'moral wrongdoing' and 'state crimes' summon ideas of guilt and corruption, reminding us too of the warped ethics of a society atomised through consumerism and stripped of the power to act collectively – a society composed of self-interested, alienated and power-seeking subjects who are no longer capable of *listening*, to their past, to their surrounding environment or to each other. The images of the musicians' hands also summon the many references in Godard and Godard–Miéville's films to the concept of work and the artist's unstoppable drive to create. Most of all, these images remind us of the affirmation, cherished by Godard, that '[t]he mind is only real when it *manifests* its presence, and in the word manifest there is *main* [hand]', from Denis de Rougemont's *Penser avec les mains*.[17] What is different now, however, is that the act of thinking is explicitly linked with the intellectual,

emotional and bodily activity of music-making, echoing Schaeffer's allusion to Rougemont's book (as cited in Chapter 1) and reinforcing Godard's sculptural way of working with sound, as a raw compositional material and as a mode of creative thought that thwarts the measuredness of clock time with the kink of musical time.

The image grows increasingly abstract as the dynamics increase, the *Prélude* almost hastening the image's disintegration with its sound. The hands and instrument flicker, resembling a bundle of embers before the music peters out. A form of impulsive rhythmic writing is 'performed' into the space of the image during these instances, plunging us into the screen through the musicians' bodily gestures, energetically attempting to return to us the power to receive, to dream and imagine, to listen actively and respond to the world that surrounds us. Exploring the concept of projection in the films and installations of Chantal Akerman, Bruno defines empathy as a special kind of projection, taking her definition from the German word *Einfühlung*, deriving from late nineteenth-century German aesthetics and signifying 'the act of "feeling into"'. This word describes 'a material response to an object, an image, or a spatial environment'. She writes: 'It depends on the ability to sense an inner movement that takes place between the object-space and the subject.' One can empathise not just with other human beings but with the 'expressive, dynamic forms of art and architecture', including surfaces, textures, colours, sounds, scenery and situations.[18]

During these scenes of music-making in *Les trois désastres* the concept of acoustic spectatorship is manifested before our ears and eyes. The spectator dives with the musicians' hands into the unknown, feeling into the rich mesh of tinctures and timbres, into the deep, rhythmic and melodic swells and into the inner textural patterning of acoustic and visual space. Godard frequently manipulates the audio elements in his films in a way that challenges and reconfigures the spectator's perceptual habits, teaching her/him to question and listen again to the aesthetic, political and ideological import of the organisation of images and sounds, which, in *Les trois désastres*, are *made* and *played* in front of us while our sensory acuity is distorted and realigned. We are asked, ultimately, to consider anew and *play back* our perspective on the world, through the acoustical thinking of an active ear.

In Hannah Arendt's *The Life of the Mind*, she describes the passageway or groove forged by the act of thinking as 'the small inconspicuous track of non-time beaten by the activity of thought within the time-space given to natal and mortal men'.[19] She affirms:

> It is the quiet of the Now in the time-pressed, time-tossed existence of man; it is somehow, to change the metaphor, the quiet in the center of a storm which, though totally unlike the storm, still belongs to it. In this gap between past and future, we find our place in time when we think, that is, when we are sufficiently removed from past and future to be relied on to find out their meaning, to assume the position of "umpire," of arbiter and judge over the manifold, never-ending affairs of human existence in the world …[20]

The immediacy of sonic sensation shares something in common with this special 'timeless time' of thought, arising from the noisy clash of the future and the past. Losing oneself in a moment of silence amid commotion, or being struck by a sound that suddenly bursts forth, seizing our attention and shifting our perspective, conjures Arendt's mysterious 'non-time' region of thought, which paradoxically re-situates us as listeners and thinkers *in time*. And the acoustic spectator, unconcerned with the need to understand every detail, gently but persistently listens, extending her/himself towards each sonic variation and rhythmic nuance, as listening and feeling merge with the act of thinking. If each chapter in this book has privileged the spectator's auditory experience of film, each analysis confirms that Godard's work with sound does not merely overturn the basic notion of *viewing* film, but it compels us to understand spectatorship first and foremost as an acoustic practice of active, interactive and imaginative listening.

Notes

Introduction

1. Keith Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists: La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 11 and Paul Hillier, 'Introduction', in Steve Reich, *Writings on Music 1965–2000*, ed. by Paul Hillier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 3–18 (p. 5).
2. Roger Sutherland, *New Perspectives in Music* (London: Sun Tavern Fields, 1994), p. 174.
3. An example of what Bowie means by 'putting faith in music' is provided at the start of his book, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity*. Here he cites a passage from Daniel Barenboim's tribute to his late friend Edward Said. The citation reads: 'However, the most surprising thing for me, as his friend and great admirer, was the realisation that, on many occasions, he formulated ideas and reached conclusions through music; and he saw music as a reflection of the ideas that he had regarding other issues.' Andrew Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 2.
4. Ibid., pp. 11–13.
5. I am defining 'late Godard' very broadly as the period running from 1979, the year of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, a film co-edited by Miéville, through to Godard's 2014 feature *Adieu au langage*. Readers should note that most of the films under discussion in this book are directed by Godard. When my analysis engages with Godard–Miéville's collaborative work this is clearly highlighted.
6. Currently only two monographs exist that deal with the subject of sound and music in Godard's films: Louis-Albert Serrut's *Jean-Luc Godard, cinéaste acousticien: des emplois et usages de la matière sonore dans ses œuvres cinématographiques* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011) and Jürg Stenzl's *Jean-Luc Godard – musicien: Die Musik in den Filmen von Jean-Luc Godard* (Munich: Edition Text + Kritik, 2010).
7. Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 7.
8. See 'acoustic, adj. and n.' in the *Oxford Dictionary of English*, ed. Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 14.

9. Evelyn Glennie, 'Hearing essay' (1 January 2015). Available at https://www.evelyn.co.uk/hearing-essay/ (accessed 20 March 2016).
10. Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* [1990], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), pp. xxv–xxvi.
11. Rick [Charles F.] Altman, 'Psychoanalysis and cinema: the imaginary discourse', *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 2 (August 1977), pp. 257–72 (pp. 261–2).
12. Judith Mayne, *Cinema and Spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 17–18 (original emphasis).
13. Ibid., pp. 6–7.
14. Laura Mulvey, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', *Screen* 16/3 (Autumn 1975), pp. 6–18 (p. 11).
15. Rick Altman, 'Introduction', *Cinema/Sound* (special issue), ed. Rick Altman, *Yale French Studies* 60 (1980), pp. 3–15 (p. 3).
16. Pascal Bonitzer, *Le Regard et la voix: essais sur le cinéma* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1976), pp. 23 and 42.
17. Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema* [1982], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 5–6 and 21.
18. Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. viii (original emphasis). The concept of the 'acoustical' mirror had already been highlighted in 1980 by Mary Ann Doane, who extracts the term from the work of Guy Rosolato. See Mary Ann Doane, 'The voice in the cinema: the articulation of body and space', *Cinema/Sound* (special issue), ed. Rick Altman, *Yale French Studies* 60 (1980), pp. 33–50 (p. 44).
19. Vivian Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. xv (original emphasis).
20. Ibid., pp. xvi–xvii (original emphasis).
21. Ibid., p. 25. An exception to Sobchack's emphasis on visuality can be found in her later captivating analysis of Dolby Digital trailers in 'When the ear dreams: Dolby Digital and the imagination of sound', *Film Quarterly* 58/4 (2005), pp. 2–15.
22. I am thinking of Laura U. Marks's *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); Giuliana Bruno's *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* [2002] (New York: Verso, 2007); and Jennifer M. Barker's *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009). It is important to recognise that whilst in her Preface to *The Skin of the Film* Marks points out that sound will not be her main focus, she does underline the multisensorial nature of cinematic experience and goes on to include a compelling section on haptic sound.

23. Davina Quinlivan, *The Place of Breath in Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 59–62 and 137–42. See also Jenny Chamarette's *Phenomenology and the Future of Film: Rethinking Subjectivity beyond French Cinema* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), especially her chapter on 'the acoustic and vocalic' in Chris Marker's films.
24. For an insight into the varied ways in which sound and music function in *Histoire(s) du cinéma,* see Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian*, pp. 201–208 and Miriam Heywood, *Modernist Visions: Marcel Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu and Jean-Luc Godard's Histoire(s) du cinéma* (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2011), pp. 119–67.
25. Wills offers a Deleuzian reading of the significance of music as the 'absent image(s)' of a cinema to come, through studies of *Week-end*, *Éloge de l'amour* and *Notre musique*, while Williams performs close readings of arresting musical moments in *Je vous salue, Marie*, *Nouvelle vague* and *Éloge de l'amour*. See David Wills, 'The audible life of the image', *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy – Revue de la philosophie française et de langage française* 18/2 (2010), pp. 43–64. Available at http://jffp.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/jffp/article/view/212 (accessed 2 June 2015). James S. Williams, 'Music, love, and the cinematic event' in Michael Temple, James S. Williams, and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 288–311.

Chapter 1 The Evolution of a New Sound Cinema

1. Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987).
2. Since the early 1980s, Musy has worked both alone and in collaboration on many of Godard's films. He also digitally remixed the CD soundtrack releases of *Nouvelle vague* and *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1999). The second long-running partnership to begin in the late 1980s, and continuing to this day, is between Godard and Miéville, and Manfred Eicher, the founder of ECM Records.
3. Carlos Palombini, '"Dans un bureau à Marseille, un jeune ingénieur rêve"', in Pierre Schaeffer, *Essai sur la radio et le cinéma: esthétique et technique des arts-relais 1941–1942*, created and ed. Sophie Brunet and Carlos Palombini (Paris: Éditions Allia, 2010), pp. 63–111 (p. 72).
4. Simon Emmerson and Denis Smalley, 'Electro-acoustic music', *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*. Available at http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/08695 (accessed 9 July 2015).
5. Pierre Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, trans. Christine North and John Dack (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), p. 8.

6. Ibid., p. 32.
7. Ibid., p. 175.
8. Emmerson and Smalley, 'Electro-acoustic music'.
9. Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, p. 175.
10. The RTF was replaced in 1964 by the ORTF, the French Radio and Television Office, which was dissolved in 1974 and divided into seven different organisations.
11. Tamara Chaplin, *Turning on the Mind: French Philosophers on Television* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 113.
12. The first English translation of this book appeared in July 2017. It was published too late for incorporation in the present volume but readers may find it useful to consult. See Pierre Schaeffer, *Treatise on Musical Objects: Essays Across Disciplines*, trans. Christine North and John Dack (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017).
13. Pierre Schaeffer, *Traité des objets musicaux: Essai interdisciplines* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966), p. 33.
14. In his 1954 article 'Les Nouvelles techniques sonores et le cinéma' ('New sound techniques and the cinema'), Schaeffer highlights the parallels between film and concrete music, pointing up similarities between filmmakers who work spontaneously with images and sounds instead of from a pre-written script, and *musique concrète* musicians who work directly with recorded sound rather than from a score. Schaeffer, 'Les Nouvelles techniques sonores et le cinéma', *Cahiers du cinéma* 37 (July 1954), pp. 54–6. I am indebted to Michael Witt for drawing my attention to this article.
15. Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 17–18. For example, Makis Solomos claims that it was Merleau-Ponty's 1945 work *Phénoménologique de la perception* (*Phenomenology of Perception*) that introduced Schaeffer to phenomenology and played a critical role in his approach to the discipline. Makis Solomos, 'Schaeffer phénoménologue', in Denis Dufour (ed.), *Ouïr, entendre, écouter, comprendre après Schaeffer* (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), pp. 53–67.
16. Kane, *Sound Unseen*, p. 25 (original emphasis).
17. Ibid., pp. 148 and 151.
18. Along with Malraux's essay on cinema, Schaeffer kept a copy of the composer Maurice Jaubert's 1936 article 'Le cinéma: Petite école du spectateur (suite): La musique' (published in *Esprit* 43, pp. 114–19). See Palombini, '"Dans un bureau à Marseille"', pp. 75–7.
19. Merleau-Ponty's lecture was given at the Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques (IDHEC) and the text was later published in *Sens et non-sens* (Paris: Les Éditions Nagel, 1948) and went on to exert its influence on Godard's 1960s filmmaking.

20. Nicola Bizzaro, 'Pierre Schaeffer's Contribution to Audiovisual Theory', *Worlds of Audio-Vision* (2011), pp. 1–11 (9). Available at http://www-5.unipv.it/wav/pdf/WAV_Bizzaro_2011_eng.pdf.
21. Pierre Schaeffer, 'L'Élément non visuel au cinéma (I). Analyse de la "bande son"', *La Revue du cinéma* 1/1 (1 October 1946), pp. 45–8.
22. Altman, 'Introduction', pp. 13–15.
23. Ramona Fotiade, *À bout de souffle* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 2013), p. 63.
24. See also Kareem Roustom, 'Michel Legrand Scores *Une femme est une femme*' in Tom Conley and T. Jefferson Kline (eds), *A Companion to Jean-Luc Godard* (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 2014), pp. 71–88, for a study of Godard's collaboration with the composer Michel Legrand in *Une femme est une femme*.
25. Fotiade, *À bout de souffle*, p. 62.
26. Jean Collet, 'An audacious experiment: the sound track of *Vivre sa vie*' in Royal S. Brown (ed.), *Focus on Godard*, trans. Royal S. Brown (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp. 160–2 (p. 161) (original emphasis). First published in *Le Revue du son*, 116 (December 1962), p. 513.
27. Ibid., p. 162.
28. Royal S. Brown, *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 189 and 191–2.
29. Ibid., pp. 200–19 for Brown's analysis of the soundtrack in *Pierrot le fou*.
30. Chris Darke, *Alphaville (Jean-Luc Godard, 1965)* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2005), p. 39.
31. Jacques Aumont, 'Lumière de la musique', *Cahiers du cinéma, Spécial Godard 30 ans depuis* 437 (1990), pp. 46–8.
32. David Wills, 'The audible life of the image', p. 51.
33. Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, pp. 14–19.
34. Ibid., p. 32.
35. Ibid.
36. *Le Gai Savoir* was shot in 1967, produced originally by the ORTF. It was heavily censored before its release, resulting in the replacement of select lines of dialogue with a silencing beep, particularly those that targeted the French media. See David Faroult, 'Le livre *Le Gai Savoir*: la censure défiée' in Nicole Brenez, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2006), pp. 109–14 (pp. 111–12).
37. Colin MacCabe with Mick Eaton and Laura Mulvey, *Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1980), p. 18.
38. The neologism *sonimage* translates literally as 'soundimage'. The term is composed of the French nouns *son* (sound) and *image* (image). The word 'son' in

French is also a possessive pronoun meaning 'her' or 'his': *sonimage* thus also implies 'her/his image'.

39. To gain further insight into the partnership of Godard and Miéville, see Jerry White, *Two Bicycles: The Work of Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013).
40. Part of this film performs an auto-critique of the rushes shot in 1969–70 by Godard and Gorin for their unfinished project *Jusqu'à la victoire*, a film shot in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan in 1969–70 that was originally made to document the victorious Palestinian revolution but instead became a record of death and destruction. See Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian*, pp. 46–7 and Witt, 'On communication: the work of Anne-Marie Miéville and Jean-Luc Godard as "sonimage" from 1973 to 1979', PhD dissertation, University of Bath, 1998, pp. 39–44.
41. In this film, music is associated with the act of seeing the unbelievable (*voir l'incroyable*), an expression that derives from the lyrics of Ferré's 'Tu ne dis jamais rien', underscoring the poetic idea of seeing beyond the parameters of the visible – the sexual politics of family life.
42. Michael Witt, 'Altered motion and corporal resistance in *France/tour/détour/deux/enfants*', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 200–13 (p. 212).
43. Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian*, p. 52.
44. For details concerning the relationship between Schaeffer and French New Wave film composers, see Orlene Denise McMahon's *Listening to the French New Wave: The Film Music and Composers of Postwar French Art Cinema* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014).
45. Schaeffer, *Traité*, p. 34.
46. Robert Bresson, 'La Question', interview by Michel Delahaye and Jean-Luc Godard, *Cahiers du cinéma* 178 (May 1966), pp. 26–35 and 67–71 (p. 30).
47. Artavazd Pelechian, 'Montage-at-a-distance, or: a theory of distance', trans. Julia Vassilieva, *Lola* (December 2015). Available at http://www.lolajournal.com/6/distance.html (accessed 3 June 2016).
48. François Niney, 'Montage with images that don't exist: interview with Artavazd Pelechian', trans. Timothy S. Murphy, *Discourse* 22/1 (Winter 2000), pp. 94–126 (p. 95). First published in *Cahiers du cinéma* 454 (April 1992), pp. 35–7.
49. Daniel Fairfax, 'Artavazd Pelechian', *Senses of Cinema* 62 (March 2012). Available at http://sensesofcinema.com/2012/great-directors/artavazd-pelechian/(accessed 8 May 2016).
50. Robert Robertson, *Eisenstein on the Audiovisual: The Montage of Music, Image and Sound in Cinema* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009), pp. 37–8.
51. Niney, 'Montage with images that don't exist', pp. 94–5.

52. Gerald Matt, 'Preface', in Gerald Matt and Angela Stief (eds), *Our Century* (Vienna: Ursula Blickle Stiftung/Kunsthalle Wier/Kerber Verlag, 2004), pp. 6–9 (p. 7).
53. Scott MacDonald, *A Critical Cinema 3: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 101–2.
54. Matt, 'Preface', p. 8.
55. Robert Fink describes teleology in music as 'a fundamental phenomenological aspect of the Western listening experience: the sense that the music has a coherent *teleology*'. The virtue of Western music, he writes, is '[t]his feeling that the work as a whole "is going somewhere" (and that it makes you, the listener, want to go there too)'. Robert Fink, *Repeating Ourselves: American Minimal Music as Cultural Practice* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 31 and 132.
56. Ibid., p. 135.
57. Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian*, pp. 28. See also André Malraux, 'Sketch for a psychology of the moving pictures' in Susanne K. Langer (ed.), *Reflections on Art: A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1958), pp. 317–27. First published in *Verve* 8/2 (1940), pp. 69–73.

Chaper 2 Constructing Voices

1. Arthur Rimbaud, *A Season in Hell and Illuminations*, trans. M. Treharne (London: J.M. Dent, 1998), p. 115.
2. Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. I (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma/Éditions de l'Étoile, 1985), p. 461. All translations are my own unless I have indicated otherwise.
3. Michael Witt, 'On communication: the work of Anne-Marie Miéville and Jean-Luc Godard as "sonimage" from 1973 to 1979', PhD dissertation, University of Bath, 1998, pp. 9–13. For a brief overview of Miéville's career and her collaborations with Godard, see also Albertine Fox, 'Love and work differently: Anne-Marie Miéville's cinema of companionship', *Sight and Sound* online (February 2016). Available at http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/love-work-differently-anne-marie-mieville-s-cinema (accessed 1 March 2016).
4. Philippe Dubois, 'Video thinks what cinema creates: notes on Jean-Luc Godard's work in video and television', trans. Lynne Kirby, in Raymond Bellour (ed.) with Mary Lea Bandy, *Jean-Luc Godard Son + Image 1974–1991* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992), pp. 169–85 (pp. 177–8).

5. I am indebted to Corin Depper for drawing my attention to the relevance of this episode in *The Man with a Movie Camera*.
6. Witt, 'Altered motion and corporal resistance in *France/tour/détour/deux/enfants*', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 200–13 (p. 207).
7. Ibid., p. 205.
8. Annette Michelson (ed.), *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, trans. Kevin O'Brien (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 40–1.
9. Ibid., p. 243.
10. Pierre Schaeffer, *Essai sur la radio et le cinéma: esthétique et technique des arts-relais 1941–1942*, created and ed. Sophie Brunet and Carlos Palombini (Paris: Éditions Allia, 2010), p. 53.
11. Ibid., p. 98 (original emphasis).
12. See Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 148.
13. Douglas Kahn, 'Introduction: histories of sound once removed', in Douglas Kahn and Gregory Whitehead (eds), *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-garde* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 1–29 (p. 14).
14. See Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 22 and 147.
15. Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. I, p. 469.
16. Kristin Thompson, *Breaking the Glass Amor: Neoformalist Film Analysis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 277.
17. Richard Morris, '"To realise the ideal": miscellaneous remarks on Godard's conceptual processes apropos of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*', *Film Studies* 5/1 (2004), pp. 1–7 (pp. 5–6).
18. The librettist Arrigo Boito based the story of *La Gioconda* on Victor Hugo's play *Angélo, tyran de Padoue* (1835). The central theme of this play is social injustice and the battle of the sexes in a male-dominated world and in the preface to the play, Hugo reveals that the symbol of the crucifix unites the characters, thus redeeming society of its sins, while in *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* as in Ponchielli's opera it is the musical event in the final 'act' (the final intertitle reads: '4 MUSIC') that provides the grand denouement. Victor Hugo, *Théâtre complet II*, 2 vols, ed. J.-J. Thierry and Josette Mélèze (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1963–4), pp. 555–7.
19. As Heather Laing reveals, Yared has spoken passionately of the time he spent working on *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*. It was a 'decisive' experience that greatly influenced his future approach to film music composition. Godard presented him not with images to set music to but a rough script from which to work, granting Yared great freedom and fostering an 'equal to equal; novice to novice;

discoverer to discoverer' relationship. See Heather Laing, *Gabriel Yared's The English Patient. A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004), p. 6.

20. In setting out his theory of vertical montage, Eisenstein likens the succession of images in film to the simple horizontal line of development in each instrumental part of a musical score; crossed through this is the complex vertical line or 'super-structure' that indicates the correlation of sound and picture within a particular unit of time. Sergei M. Eisenstein, *The Film Sense*, ed. and trans. Jay Leyda (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), pp. 67–8.
21. Jean-Luc Godard, 'Lettre numéro un aux membres de la commission d'avance sur recettes' in Nicole Brenez, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2006), p. 307. This letter is dated April 1979.
22. Neil Verma, *Theater of the Mind: Imagination, Aesthetics, and American Radio Drama* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 136.
23. Ibid., pp. 137–8.
24. Ibid., p. 139.
25. Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* [1990], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 165.
26. Erik Davis, 'Recording angels: the esoteric origins of the phonograph', in Rob Young (ed.), *Undercurrents: The Hidden Wiring of Modern Music* (London: Continuum, 2002), pp. 15–24 (p. 18).
27. Rimbaud, *A Season in Hell and Illuminations*, p. 115.
28. James S. Williams, 'Music, love, and the cinematic event', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams, and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 288–311 (pp. 293–4).
29. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema* [1982], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p. 21. Chion's original coinage of the term *acousmêtre* was inspired by Schaeffer's notion of 'the acousmatic'.
30. Verma, *Theater of the Mind*, p. 148.
31. Kahn, 'Introduction', p. 17.
32. Verma, *Theater of the Mind*, pp. 227–8.
33. Michel Poizat, '"The blue note" and "The objectified voice and the vocal object"', trans. Arthur Denner, *Cambridge Opera Journal* 3/3 (1991), pp. 195–211 (p. 196).
34. The figure of Gioconda does reappear in various guises throughout the film: aurally via the disembodied voice of Marguerite Duras as the anonymous female hitchhiker ('la dame du camion') from her film *Le Camion*, and visually during the concluding voyage at the end of the film that sees mother and daughter irreversibly transported through a sort of technological portal, leading, potentially, to a new digitised reality.

35. For more on the significance of voice in Duras's cinema and novels, especially the disembodied female voice-off, readers should consult Marie-Claire Ropars-Wuilleumier's work on voice, writing and notions of re-writing in *Écraniques: Le film du texte* (Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1990), pp. 57–83. For a Derridean reading of *India Song*, encompassing the link between writing and the disjunction of voice and image, see Ropars-Wuilleumier, 'The disembodied voice: India Song', trans. K. Smith, *Yale French Studies* 60 (1980), pp. 241–68.
36. Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, pp. 19–21.
37. Marguerite Duras, *Le Camion: suivi de entretien avec Michelle Porte* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1977), p. 14.
38. Marguerite Duras, *Green Eyes*, trans. Carol Barko (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 71.
39. Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 178 (my emphasis).
40. Ibid., p. 183.
41. Schaeffer, *Essai sur la radio et le cinéma*, pp. 39–40.
42. Ibid., p. 51.
43. David Wills, *Prosthesis* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 12.
44. David Wills, 'Techneology or the discourse of speed' in Marquard Smith and Joanne Morra (eds), *The Prosthetic Impulse: From a Posthuman Present to a Biocultural Future* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 237–63 (p. 246).
45. Although Paul Godard is not merely a doppelganger of the director, his slow-motion virtual death, along with the inclusion of the back wheel of a motorbike in the final shot of the film, carry echoes of Godard's own near-fatal road accident, which he suffered in the early 1970s.
46. Schaeffer, *Essai sur la radio et le cinéma*, p. 36. In a footnote, Schaeffer expresses his preference for the term 'sound screen' (*écran sonore*) over 'loudspeaker' (*haut-parleur*).
47. Witt, 'On communication', p. 131.
48. Godard made this comment in a 1980 interview on *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* with Dick Cavett. Responding to a question about the peculiar use of overlap dialogue and sound in the film, Godard insists that the image and the sound are the same: they are tools to be used in equal measure. See 'Interview with Jean-Luc Godard', *The Dick Cavett Show* (1980), online at https://youtu.be/93HCeGy6vzk (accessed 20 December 2012). Pelechian's comments cited here derive from Scott MacDonald, *A Critical Cinema 3: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), p. 102 (original emphasis).

49. Roland Barthes, 'Music, voice, language' in *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art and Representation* [1982], trans. Richard Howard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 278–85 (284–5) (original emphasis).

Chaper 3 Sound, Body and Audible Space

1. Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. ix.
2. Ibid., p. xi.
3. Ibid., p. 13 (original emphasis). Abbate is here referring to Barthes's 1972 essay, 'The grain of the voice'. See Roland Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art and Representation* [1982], trans. Richard Howard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 267–77 (p. 276).
4. Ibid., p. 29.
5. Ibid., p. 19 (original emphasis).
6. Ibid., pp. 26–7 (original emphasis).
7. Alain Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 1, (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma/Éditions de l'Étoile, 1985), pp. 574–6.
8. *Scénario du film Passion* was broadcast as part of the series 'Visions' on Channel 4 in 1983. An earlier unreleased version of this video scenario, made in 1981, was titled *Passion, le travail et l'amour: Introduction à un scénario*, or *Troisième état du scénario du film Passion*.
9. Jean-Luc Godard, '*Scénario du film Passion*', *L'Avant-Scène Cinéma* 323/324 (1984), pp. 79–89 (p. 81).
10. In French, the word *vague* is a homonym and can mean 'wave' (*une vague*) and 'vagueness' (*le vague*) as well as the English adjective 'vague'.
11. In her study of temporality and memory in the theses of Freud and Étienne-Jules Marey, Mary-Ann Doane discusses Freud's 'Mystic Writing-Pad', especially the associations he establishes between the recording of traces and the forging of sites of memory or 'spaces of storage' that resist the onslaught of external stimuli. Mary Ann Doane, 'Temporality, storage, legibility: Freud, Marey, and the cinema', *Critical Inquiry* 2/2 (1996), pp. 313–43 (pp. 319–21).
12. Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey; in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, vol. XIX (1923–5), *The Ego and the Id and Other Works*, (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), pp. 227–32 (pp. 228–30).
13. Ibid., p. 230.
14. Godard, '*Scénario du film Passion*', p. 88.
15. Cited in Robert Orledge, *Satie the Composer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 221–2.

16. Ibid., p. 222.
17. Godard, '*Scénario du film Passion*', p. 86.
18. Robert Bresson, *Notes on the Cinematographer* [1975], trans. Jonathan Griffin, intro. J.M.G. Le Clézio (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1986), p. 37.
19. Kaja Silverman and Harun Farocki, *Speaking about Godard* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), p. 176.
20. Vladimir Jankélévitch, *Ravel*, trans. Margaret Crosland (New York: Grove Press, 1959), pp. 79–81.
21. Maurice Ravel, 'Finding tunes in factories', *New Britain* (9 August 1933), p. 367.
22. Daphne Leong and David Korevaar, 'Repetition as musical motion in Ravel's piano writing', in Peter Kaminsky (ed.), *Unmasking Ravel: New Perspectives on the Music* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011), pp. 111–42 (p. 118).
23. Ibid., p. 119.
24. Barthes, 'Rasch', in *The Responsibility of Forms*, pp. 299–312 (p. 301) (original emphasis).
25. Ibid., pp. 301–302.
26. Abbate, *Unsung Voices*, pp. 62–7. Although Abbate's discussion here relates to 'scenes of narration' in opera, the distinction she makes between 'reflexive' narrative moments and 'monaural' narrative moments (when narrative information is conveyed 'accurately' and 'straightforwardly' in an 'unfictionalised' manner), helps to show up the difference between the softly expressive and reflexive Ravellian musical episodes in *Passion*, and the more spectacular visual reconstructions that surround them.
27. Ibid., p. 29 (original emphasis).
28. Laura Mulvey, 'The hole and the zero: the Janus face of the feminine in Godard', in Raymond Bellour (ed.), with Mary Lea Bandy, *Jean-Luc Godard: Son + Image 1974–1991* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992, pp. 75–88 (p. 79).
29. Barthes, 'Rasch', p. 306 (original emphasis).
30. Philippe Dubois, 'Video thinks what cinema creates: notes on Jean-Luc Godard's work in video and television', trans. Lynne Kirby, in Bellour, *Jean-Luc Godard Son + Image 1974–1991*, p. 170. Dubois is referring here to the Sonimage films, *Ici et ailleurs*, *Numéro deux* and *Comment ça va*.
31. Ibid., p. 174 (original emphasis).
32. Jerzy is plagued by the question 'Qu'est-ce que c'est que cette histoire?', meaning both 'What's going on?' and 'What's this story?', which is repeatedly asked by characters.
33. Jürgen E. Müller, '"I am playing leapfrog with myself"' in *Vertigo* 30 (2012). Available at https://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/vertigo_magazine/

issue-30-spring-2012-godard-is/i-am-playing-leapfrog-with-myself/ (accessed 23 April 2012).

34. Jonathan Jones observes that what is striking about this painting is not that Moroni shows us an ordinary artisan at work but that 'he gives him the same nobility of pose and countenance as his aristocratic clients. The Tailor holds scissors in the same way Moroni's nobles display swords'. Jonathan Jones, 'Why everyone should see this painting', *Guardian* (1 May 2007). Available at http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2007/may/01/art (accessed 7 July 2014).
35. See Ann Davies and Phil Powrie, *Carmen on Screen: An Annotated Filmography and Bibliography* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2006).
36. Ann Davies, 'High and low culture: Bizet's *Carmen* and the cinema', in Phil Powrie and Robynn Stilwell (eds), *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing), pp. 46–56 (pp. 48–9).
37. Susan McClary, '*Carmen* as perennial fusion: from habanera to hip-hop', in Chris Perriam and Ann Davies (eds), *Carmen: From Silent Film to MTV* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005), pp. 205–16 (p. 205).
38. Charles Krance (ed.), *Samuel Beckett's Mal vu mal dit/Ill seen Ill said: A Bilingual, Evolutionary, and Synoptic Variorum Edition* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), p. xii.
39. Bogue highlights the parodic aspect of Godard's treatment of myth in the film. He refers to the 18 close-ups of Carmen, which work not only to extract her profile from the image-track but signal Godard and Miéville's attempt to reconfigure a simple 'pure image' from the numerous visual clichés of feminine beauty. Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze's Way: Essays in Transversal Ethics and Aesthetics* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), pp. 73–4 and 83.
40. Édouard Léon Scott de Martinville, *Histoire de la sténographie depuis les temps anciens jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Charles Tondeur, 1849), pp. 7–14.
41. For more detail on the phonautograph, see Patrick Feaster (ed.), 'The phonautographic manuscripts of Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville'. Available at http://www.firstsounds.org/publications/articles/Phonautographic-Manuscripts.pdf (accessed 4 April 2012).
42. Alain Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2 (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 1998), p. 306.
43. Adorno uses the term 'hear-stripe' to convey the undercurrent of continuous noise in broadcast music. He proposes that the psychological effect of the hear-stripe could be compared to the spectator's awareness of the screen in cinema and that 'music appearing upon such a hear-stripe may bear a certain image-like character of its own.' Adorno, 'The radio symphony', in Theodor W. Adorno, *Essays on Music*, intro., commentary and notes Richard Leppert; new

trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 251–70 (p. 251).

44. Anthony Gritten and Elaine King, 'Introduction', in Anthony Gritten and Elaine King (eds), *Music and Gesture* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), pp. xix–xxv (p. xx).
45. Robert S. Hatten, 'A Theory of Musical Gesture and its Application to Beethoven and Schubert', in *Music and Gesture*, pp. 1–23 (p. 1) (original emphasis).
46. Ibid.
47. Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 1, p. 565.
48. Phil Powrie, 'Godard's *Prénom: Carmen* (1984), Masochism, and the Male Gaze', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 31/1 (1995), pp. 64–73 (pp. 65–6).
49. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Rodin and Other Prose Pieces*, trans. G. Craig Houston, intro. William Tucker (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1986), pp. 3–43 (p. 19).
50. Christopher Hasty, *Meter as Rhythm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 4.
51. See Musy's comments on the soundtrack in his interview with Alain Bergala: 'Les Mouettes du pont d'Austerlitz: entretien avec François Musy', *Cahiers du cinéma* 355 (1984), pp. 12–17 (p. 17).
52. Abbate refers to Bizet's *Carmen* and to the heroine's 'scandalous femininity', which, she suggests, is expressed through Carmen's unashamed desire to sing. Carmen's 'phenomenal' performances constitute striking reflexive moments in the opera. Abbate defines phenomenal performance as 'a musical or vocal performance that declares itself openly, singing that is heard by its singer, the auditors on stage, and understood as "music that they (too) hear" by us, the theater audience'. Abbate, *Unsung Voices*, p. 5.
53. Musy, 'Les Mouettes du pont d'Austerlitz', pp. 14 and 17.
54. Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 1, p. 584.
55. Jean-Luc Godard, 'The carrots are cooked: a conversation with Jean-Luc Godard', interview by Gideon Bachmann, *Film Quarterly* 37/3 (Spring 1984), pp. 13–19 (p. 17).
56. Theodor W. Adorno, *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music: Fragments and Texts*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), pp. 154–61 (original emphasis).
57. Ibid., p. 164.
58. Abbate, *Unsung Voices*, p. 125 (original emphasis). The subject of Abbate's discussion in this part of the book is Mahler's *Todtenfeier*, the first movement of his *Symphony No. 2 in C minor*.
59. Ibid., p. 152 (original emphasis).
60. Ibid., p. 152.
61. Rilke, *Rodin and Other Prose Pieces*, p. 17 and Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 254–6.

62. Sergei Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 228 and 294. Fascinatingly, Witt has revealed that in 1972, while making *Tout va bien*, Godard and Gorin made efforts to model one of the shots from their film on the sequence portraying Vakulinchuk's death in *Battleship Potemkin*. Crucially, by attempting this, Godard and Gorin became keenly aware of their own inability to create nothing more than an empty imitation of former cinematographic techniques. They 'discovered that the secrets behind the insights of the great poet-filmmakers of the silent era, in areas such as framing, montage and rhythm, appeared to have been forgotten'. This realisation left its mark on Godard and went on to influence the project that would become *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 11.
63. Robert Robertson, *Eisenstein on the Audiovisual: The Montage of Music, Image and Sound in Cinema* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009), p. 179.
64. Ibid., pp. 177–8.
65. Godard, 'The carrots are cooked', p. 16.
66. Godard is here referring to episode 4A: *Le Côntrole de l'univers*. To access the recording, consult Track 2 on *Godard/Jousse: Les Écrans sonores de Jean-Luc Godard* (France Culture and Harmonia Mundi, 2000) [on CD].
67. Sergei Eisenstein, *The Film Sense*, ed. and trans. Jay Leyda (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), p. 139 (original emphasis). For a discussion of Eisenstein's contentious audio-visual analysis, including a commentary on the controversy it provoked, see Nicholas Cook, *Analysing Musical Multimedia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 57–65.
68. Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature*, pp. 221–2 (original emphasis).
69. Robertson, *Eisenstein on the Audiovisual*, p. 180.
70. Abbate, *Unsung Voices*, p. 152.
71. Alex Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 196–7.
72. Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), pp. 27–8.
73. Jean-Luc Godard and Youssef Ishaghpour, *Cinema: The Archeology of Film and the Memory of a Century* [1999], trans. John Howe (Oxford: Berg, 2005), p. 24.
74. Rilke, *Rodin and Other Prose Pieces*, pp. 127–32 (p. 129).

Chapter 4 Fragments of Time and Memory

1. Deborah Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel: Creation and Interpretation* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), p. 219.

2. Mawer applies this term to three works in Ravel's ballet repertory (*Daphnis et Chloé*, *La Valse* and *Boléro*) that involve 'the creation, exploration and destruction of mechanised (often high-speed) dance'. Deborah Mawer, 'Musical objects and machines', in Deborah Mawer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 47–67 (p. 57).
3. Ibid., p. 52. See also Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, p. 155.
4. Michael Witt, 'Montage, my beautiful care, or histories of the cinematograph' in Michael Temple and James S. Williams (eds), *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), pp. 33–50 (p. 34).
5. Deborah Mawer, 'Ballet and the apotheosis of the dance', in Mawer, *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel*, pp. 140–61 (p. 155).
6. Michael Witt, 'Altered motion and corporal resistance in *France/tour/détour/deux/enfants*', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 200–13 (pp. 211–12).
7. Mawer, 'Ballet and the apotheosis of the dance', p. 156.
8. I am using the term 'voice-off' and not 'voiceover' in accordance with Britta H. Sjogren's reasoning that the former term better conveys the expressive, heterogeneous force of this kind of disembodied voice. See Britta Sjogren, *Into the Vortex: Female Voice and Paradox in Film* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006), pp. 6–9.
9. Douglas Kahn, *Noise Water Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), p. 71.
10. Charles Grivel, 'The phonograph's horned mouth', trans. Stephen Sartarelli, in Douglas Kahn and Gregory Whitehead (eds), *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-garde* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 31–61.
11. Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, *Tomorrow's Eve* [1886], trans. Robert Martin Adams (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1982), p. 117.
12. André Bazin, *What Is Cinema?*, vol. I, foreword Jean Renoir, new foreword Dudley Andrew, essays selected and trans. Hugh Grey (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 20–1.
13. John Anzalone, 'Danse macabre, ou le pas de deux Baudelaire-Villiers: essais sur un chapitre de *L'Eve Future*', in John Anzalone (ed.), *Jeering Dreamers: Villiers de L'Isle-Adam: Essays on L'Eve Future* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1996), pp. 117–25 (p. 118).
14. Emmerson defines 'live' in the context of electronic and acousmatic music as '[t]he presence of a human performer: who takes decisions and/or makes actions during a performance which change the real sounding nature of the

music'. Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), pp. 90–2 (original emphasis).

15. Ibid., p. 93.
16. The entrance of the *Boléro* in *Lettre à Freddy Buache* corresponds to Figure 9^{+3} in the score. See Maurice Ravel, *Bolero* (Paris: Durand & Cie, 1929), p. 23.
17. Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, p. 221 and Mawer, 'Ballet and the apotheosis of the dance', pp. 156–60. Godard cuts the music at Figure 18^{-4} in the original score.
18. Mawer, 'Ballet and the apotheosis of the dance', p. 156.
19. See Mawer, 'Musical objects and machines', p. 52.
20. For a revised and corrected version of Godard's Montreal talks (originally recorded on video and published in the 1980 French edition *Introduction à une véritable histoire du cinéma* (Paris: Editions Albatros, 1980)), see Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, ed. and trans. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose Books, 2014).
21. Michael Witt, 'Archaeology of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*', ibid., pp. xv–lxix (pp. xxvii–xxix).
22. In April 1968, Langlois was invited to Montreal by Serge Losique, a professor of French film. Langlois soon began projecting films and delivering three-hour lectures to students at the Conservatoire d'art cinématographique, which had been recently established by Losique. After Langlois's death in January 1977 and once *France tour détour deux enfants* had been completed, Godard agreed to give regular lectures at the Conservatoire, following in Langlois's footsteps.
23. Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), p. 12. This text/image script is available to view in Jean-Luc Godard, 'Histoire(s) du cinéma et de la television' ('Studies in motion pictures and television'), in Nicole Brenez, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2006), pp. 281–5.
24. Jean-Luc Godard, '*Lettre à Freddy Buache*', *L'Avant-Scène Cinéma* 323/324 (1984), pp. 68–75 (p. 75).
25. Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, p. 155.
26. Ibid., p. 157.
27. Ibid., pp. 167–8.
28. Bazin, *What Is Cinema?*, vol. I, pp. 23–4.
29. Ibid., 24
30. Ibid., p. 26.
31. Ibid., p. 27.
32. Ibid., p. 38.

33. Ibid., p. 39.
34. Ibid., p. 39.
35. Maurice Ravel, 'Finding tunes in factories', *New Britain* (9 August 1933), p. 367.
36. It is also pertinent that Godard's first film was the short documentary *Opération béton* (*Operation Concrete*) (1955), almost double the length of *Lettre à Freddy Buache*. This film focuses on a concrete dam in Switzerland and the passage of time makes itself known as images stream past composed of pulley mechanisms, turning wheels and viscous lumps of concrete. In an important sense, *Lettre à Freddy Buache* constitutes an affectionate return to the 'documentary' voice, the assembly line and to the rhythms of labour (alluded to through the *Boléro*) that inhabit the emergence of Godard's first filmic imprint.
37. Witt, 'Montage, my beautiful care', p. 44 (original emphasis).
38. Lubitsch's *To Be Or Not To Be* (1942), Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940) and Renoir's *La Grande Illusion* and *La Règle du jeu* (1939) are among the films cited by Godard as examples of works that exhibit cinema's documentary function by anticipating the forthcoming catastrophe of World War II. As Monica Dall'Asta puts it: 'according to Godard, the death of Captain de Boieldieu in *La Grande illusion*, 1937, and the death of the little rabbit in *La Règle du jeu*, 1939, were saying something that spectators didn't want to hear, thus revealing their passivity as a form of complicity, for "the forgetting of extermination/is part of the extermination"'. Monica Dall'Asta, 'The (im)possible history', in Temple, Williams and Witt, *For Ever Godard*, pp. 350–63 (p. 59).
39. Colin Davis, *Scenes of Love and Murder: Renoir, Film and Philosophy* (London: Wallflower Press, 2009), pp. 117–18.
40. In his analysis of *Éloge de l'amour*, Wills describes the close-up shot of the spinning LP record as an 'image of music' situated on 'the other side of darkness' that leads the spectator into 'the music of history recited by Celan'. David Wills, 'The audible life of the image', *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy – Revue de la philosophie française et de langage française* XVIII/2 (2010), pp. 43–64. Available at http://jffp.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/jffp/article/view/212 (accessed 2 June 2015), p. 58.
41. Jean-Louis Leutrat, 'The power of language: notes on *Puissance de la parole*, *Le dernier mot* and *On s'est tous défilé*', in Temple and Williams, *The Cinema Alone*, pp. 17–88 (182–3).
42. Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), p. 12.
43. Raymond Bellour, 'The double helix', trans. J. Eddy, in Tim Druckrey (ed.), *Electronic Culture: Technology and Visual Representation* (New York: Aperture Foundation, Inc., 1996), pp. 173–99 (p. 197).

44. Philippe Dubois, 'Video thinks what cinema creates: notes on Jean-Luc Godard's work in video and television', trans. Lynne Kirby, in Raymond Bellour (ed.) with Mary Lea Bandy, *Jean-Luc Godard Son + Image 1974–1991* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992), pp. 169–85 (p. 182) (original emphasis).
45. Drew Hemment, 'Affect and individuation in popular electronic music', in Ian Buchanan and Marcel Swiboda (eds), *Deleuze and Music* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), pp. 76–94 (pp. 79–80).
46. Ibid., p. 80 (original emphasis).
47. Ibid., p. 90.
48. Ibid., pp. 79–80 (original emphasis).
49. William Kinderman, 'The piano music: concertos, sonatas, variations, small forms', in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 105–28 (p. 119).
50. Theodor W. Adorno, *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music: Fragments and Texts*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p. 174.
51. Ibid., pp. 174–5 and 243n.295. See also Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997), p. 453.
52. Martin Hammer, *Bacon and Sutherland* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 47.
53. In this section of the book, Hammer emphasises Bacon's interest in cinema, notably his use of stills of the nanny from the Odessa steps sequence in Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*. See ibid., pp. 46–8.
54. David Sylvester, *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon*, 3rd edn (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 1987), p. 176.
55. Hammer, *Bacon and Sutherland*, p. 231.
56. Sevin H. Yaraman, *Revolving Embrace: The Waltz as Sex, Steps, and Sound* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2002), p. 92.
57. Peter Kaminsky, 'Introduction', in Peter Kaminsky, *Unmasking Ravel: New Perspectives on the Music* (New York: University of Rochester Press), pp. 1–6 (p. 5).
58. George Benjamin, 'Last dance', *The Musical Times* 135 (July 1994), pp. 432–5 (p. 432).
59. Sylvester, *The Brutality of Fact*, p. 168.
60. Ernst van Alphen, *Francis Bacon and the Loss of Self* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), p. 63.
61. Mawer, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel*, p. 154.
62. A reproduced image of this painting can be found ibid., p. 150.

63. Dubois, 'Video thinks what cinema creates', p. 182. See also Philippe Dubois, *La question vidéo: entre cinéma et art contemporain* (Crisnée: Éditions Yellow Now, 2011), p. 238.

Chaper 5 Listening Through Curves

1. Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 224.
2. Philippe Dubois, 'Video thinks what cinema creates: notes on Jean-Luc Godard's work in video and television', trans. Lynne Kirby, in Raymond Bellour (ed.) with Mary Lea Bandy, *Jean-Luc Godard Son + Image 1974–1991* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992), pp. 169–85 (p. 182).
3. Christa Blümlinger, 'Procession and projection: notes on a figure in the work of Jean-Luc Godard', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 178–87 (pp. 178–9).
4. Two captions displayed in the opening section of the video read: 'anxiety, from the Latin *anguista*' and '*défilé*, from the Latin *anguista*'. See Jean-Louis Leutrat, 'The power of language: notes on *Puissance de la parole*, *Le dernier mot* and *On s'est tous défilé*', in Michael Temple and James S. Williams (eds), *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), pp. 179–88 (pp. 183–4).
5. Sylvie Simmons, *I'm Your Man: The Life of Leonard Cohen* (London: Vintage Books, 2013), p. 318.
6. Leutrat, 'The power of language', p. 184.
7. Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, 'The technique of moving plastic', trans. Fred Rothwell, *The Musical Quarterly* 10/1 (1924 (1922)), pp. 21–38 (pp. 22–3).
8. Daniel Albright (ed.), *Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 86.
9. Jaques-Dalcroze, 'The technique of moving plastic', p. 24.
10. Ibid., p. 23.
11. Dubois, 'Video thinks what cinema creates', p. 178.
12. Ibid., p. 177 (original emphasis).
13. Theodor W. Adorno, "On the fetish-character in music and the regression of listening', in Theodor W. Adorno, *Essays on Music*, intro., commentary and notes Richard Leppert; new trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 288–317 (p. 307).
14. Ibid., pp. 298–9.
15. Brandon LaBelle, *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art* (New York: Continuum, 2006), p. xi.

16. Caroline Champetier, 'Entretien avec Caroline Champetier', with Thierry Jousse, *Cahiers du cinéma* (Special Issue) 437 (November 1990), pp. 54–7 (p. 54).
17. Throughout the film, Godard is seen reading Dostoyevsky's novel *The Idiot* (1868), from which his character's name derives.
18. Simon Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), p. 94.
19. Ibid., pp. 95–6.
20. Ibid., p. 166.
21. Ibid., p. 96.
22. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas, foreword Etienne Gilson (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 213 (original emphasis).
23. Ibid., p. 217 (original emphasis).
24. Ibid., pp. 217–18.
25. The hypervisible fantasy figure of the woman dressed in a white fur coat provides an apt reference to Federico Fellini's comic and nostalgic film *Amarcord* (a form of the verb *mi ricordo*, 'I remember') (1973). When the woman (perhaps a takeoff of Gradisca/Magali Noël) first appears in the whitewashed room in *Soigne ta droite*, the Individual's lines resemble those uttered in *Amarcord* during the evening dance at the Grand Hotel. The 'Individual' is an alienated character, played by Jacques Villeret, who performs a variety of roles in the film including a gardener, a golfer's caddy, a prisoner and a dance companion.
26. Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, pp. 222–4 and Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), pp. 60–4.
27. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* [1983], trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986), p. 88.
28. James S. Williams, 'Silence, gesture, revelation: the ethics and aesthetics of montage in Godard and Agamben', in Asbjørn Grønstad and Henrik Gustafsson (eds), *Cinema and Agamben: Ethics, Biopolitics and the Moving-Image* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), pp. 27–54 (p. 45). A revised version of this chapter can be found in *Encounters with Godard: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics* (see Bibliography).
29. Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music*, pp. 168–70.
30. Denis Smalley, 'Space-form and the acousmatic image', *Organised Sound* 12/1 (2007), pp. 35–58 (p. 44).
31. Denis Smalley, 'Spectromorphology: explaining sound-shapes', *Organised Sound* 2/2 (1997), pp. 107–26 (pp. 121–2).
32. Smalley, 'Space-form and the acousmatic image', p. 46.
33. Stephen Heath, *Questions of Cinema* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1981), p. 30 (my emphasis).

34. Ibid., p. 28.
35. Smalley, 'Space-form and the acousmatic image', p. 50.
36. Richard Kearney, 'Bachelard and the epiphanic instant', *The Expanding Horizons of Continental Philosophy* 33, special SPEP issue of *Philosophy Today 52* (2008), pp. 38–45 (p. 39) (original emphasis).
37. Ibid., p. 41.
38. Daniel Morgan, *Late Godard and the Possibilities of Cinema* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), pp. 44–50.
39. Kearney, 'Bachelard and the epiphanic instant', p. 41. Gaston Bachelard, *La Terre et les rêveries de la volonté* (Paris: Jose Corti, 1943), p. 302.
40. See Gaston Bachelard, 'Preface to Martin Buber's I and Thou', trans. Edward K. Kaplan, *International Studies in Philosophy* 35/1 (2003), pp. 89–94 and Kearney, 'Bachelard and the epiphanic instant', pp. 41–2.
41. Morgan also mentions the verbal references to 'Klaus Barbie' and 'Hotel Terminus' and draws a parallel between the image of wire set against the sky and the opening of Alain Resnais's *Nuit et brouillard* (*Night and Fog*, 1955). Morgan, *Late Godard and the Possibilities of Cinema*, pp. 47–8.
42. Williams, 'Silence, gesture, revelation', p. 36. Ringer's father, a painter, was a Polish Jew by origin. In 1947 he travelled to France, having spent several years in Nazi concentration camps. Ringer's biography can be accessed online at http://www.rfimusic.com/artist/chanson/catherine-ringer/biography.html (accessed 24 July 2016).
43. Griselda Pollock, 'Death in the image: the responsibility of aesthetics in *Night and Fog* (1955) and *Kapò* (1959)', in Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman (eds), *Concentrationary Cinema: Aesthetics as Political Resistance in Alain Resnais's Night and Fog* (1955) (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), pp. 258–301 (p. 263).
44. Jacques Rivette, 'De l'Abjection', trans. David Phelps with the assistance of Jeremi Szaniawski, *Cahiers du cinéma* 120 (June 1961), pp. 54–5. Available at http://www.dvdbeaver.com/rivette/OK/abjection.html (accessed 10 July 2015).
45. Stan E. Gontarski and C.J. Ackerley, '"The knowing non-exister": thirteen ways of reading *Texts for Nothing*', in Stan E. Gontarski (ed.), *A Companion to Samuel Beckett* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 289–95 (p. 289).
46. See also Williams, 'Silence, gesture, revelation', pp. 41–2.
47. This photograph appears in Godard's later short *Les trois désastres*. For more detail on the photograph in the context of *Nuit et brouillard* see Libby Saxton, '*Night and Fog* and the concentrationary gaze', in Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman (eds), *Concentrationary Cinema: Aesthetics as Political Resistance in Alain Resnais's Night and Fog (1955)* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), pp. 140–51 (pp. 142–3).

48. Serge Daney, 'The tracking shot in *Kapo*', in Daney, *Postcards from the Cinema*, trans. Paul Douglas Grant (Oxford: Berg, 2007), pp. 17–35 (p. 20).
49. The DVD edition also includes a filmed interview with Fuller, conducted in July 1986, titled *A Travelling is a Moral Affair*. This phrase echoes Godard's famous dictum, uttered in 1959, that 'tracking shots are a question of morality' based on Luc Mollet's assertion that 'morality is a question of tracking shots', a comment he made in reference to the films of Samuel Fuller.
50. Robert Antelme, *The Human Race* [1947], trans. Jeffrey Haight and Annie Mahler (Evanston, IL: The Marlboro Press/Northwestern, 1998), pp. 52–3.
51. In his extensive reading of Fuller's 1945 film, Georges Didi-Huberman points out that, for Fuller, dignity is the film's foremost subject and its central concern. In Weiss's documentary, Fuller describes his short film as a very brief lesson of humanity 'killing humanity and burying humanity and walking away from inhumanity'. This is demonstrated powerfully when the soldiers can be seen dressing the corpses in the camp, before organising a burial in the town to honour each victim. In doing so, Didi-Huberman notes, the soldiers open up '*a space and a time for dignity amid the horror*'. Didi-Huberman also makes the poignant observation that the silences in Fuller's 1988 voiceover commentary sound as 'punctuations destined to make this dignity more readable.' Georges Didi-Huberman, 'Opening the camps, closing the eyes: image, history, readability' in Pollock and Silverman. *Concentrationary Cinema*, pp. 84–125 (p. 108) (original emphasis).
52. Saxton, '*Night and Fog* and the concentrationary gaze', p. 147.
53. Douglas Morrey, *Jean-Luc Godard* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 168.
54. James Norton, 'King Lear', *Vertigo* 30 (2012). Available at http://www.closeup-filmcentre.com/vertigo_magazine/issue-30-spring-2012-godard-is/king-lear/ (accessed 30 April 2013).
55. Jean Epstein, 'Slow-Motion Sound' [1948], trans. Robert Lamberton, in Elizabeth Weiss and John Belton (eds), *Film Sound: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp. 143–4.
56. Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian*, p. 207.
57. Pierre Reverdy, *Nord-sud, Self Defence et autres écrits sur l'art et la poésie (1917–1926)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1975), p. 74 (original emphasis). In *King Lear* Pluggy cites a modified version of a section from this poem. His words are accompanied by the sight of two juxtaposed video monitors displaying various images to demonstrate the basic components of Godard's theory of montage.
58. Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian*, pp. 199 and 206.
59. Jonathan Rosenbaum, 'The importance of being perverse (Godard's *King Lear*)', *The Chicago Reader* (1988). Available at http://www.chicagoreader.com/

chicago/the-importance-of-being-perverse/Content?oid=872015 (accessed 26 March 2013).

60. Glenn Gould and Curtis Davis, 'The well-tempered listener', in John McGreevy (ed.), *Glenn Gould: By Himself and His Friends* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1983), pp. 275–94 (p. 280).
61. Gould created a series of radio documentaries for the Canadian Broadcasting Company between 1967 and 1977: 'The Idea of North', 'The Latecomers' and 'The Quiet in the Land'.
62. Tim Page (ed.), *The Glenn Gould Reader* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), pp. 380–87.
63. Virginia Woolf, *A Reflection of the Other Person: The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, vol 4: 1929–31 (London: Hogarth Press, 1978), p. 204.
64. Elicia Clements, 'Virginia Woolf, Ethel Smyth, and music: listening as a productive mode of social interaction', *College Literature* 32/3 (2005), pp. 51–71 (p. 61).
65. Melba Cuddy-Keane, 'Virginia Woolf, sound technologies and the new aurality', in Pamela L. Caughie (ed.), *Virginia Woolf in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), pp. 69–96 (p. 76).
66. Ibid., pp. 87–8.
67. Steven Connor, 'The modern auditory I', in Roy Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the present* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 203–23 (pp. 206–207).
68. Viviane Forrester, 'What Women's Eyes See', in Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (eds), *New French Feminisms: An Anthology* (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1981), pp. 181–2.
69. Forrester's publishing house (Éditions du Seuil) later sued Godard for copyright infringement. See Morrey, *Jean-Luc Godard*, p. 175.
70. Virginia Woolf, *Moments of Being*, ed. Jeanne Schulkind, 2nd edn (London: The Hogarth Press, 1985), p. 65.
71. Ibid., p. 66.
72. Virginia Woolf, *The Waves* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2000), pp. 140–2.
73. Ibid., p. 149. For more on the symbolic significance of Percival's name (from Old French, 'pierce the veil' [*perce le voile*]), see Maria DiBattista, *Virginia Woolf's Major Novels: The Fables of Anon* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 152–3.
74. Deborah Parsons, 'Introduction', in Woolf, *The Waves*, pp. v–xvii (p. vi).
75. When he first appears, we hear Shakespeare Jr ask: 'Why don't they just order some goblin to shoot this twisted fairy-tale?' as the intertitle KING LEAR/A STUDY flashes up on the screen.
76. Virginia Woolf, 'The cinema', in David Bradshaw (ed.), *Virginia Woolf: Selected Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 172–6 (p. 175).
77. Ibid., p. 174.

78. Ibid., p. 176.
79. As cited in Clements, 'Virginia Woolf, Ethel Smyth, and music', p. 61.
80. Ibid., p. 61.
81. Woolf, *The Waves*, p. 165.
82. Williams, 'Silence, gesture, revelation', p. 42.
83. Bernard refers to the 'roar of time' and 'the huge blackness of what is outside us' during a description of the group's last dinner together. Woolf, *The Waves*, p. 156.
84. Dudley Andrew, *What Cinema Is!: Bazin's Quest and its Charge* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p 94.

Chaper 6 A Land Out of Focus: Between Eye and Ear

1. Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema* [1982], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp. 3–5 (original emphasis).
2. Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* [1990], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 40 (original emphasis).
3. Rick Altman with McGraw Jones and Sonia Tatroe, 'Inventing the cinema soundtrack: Hollywood's multiplane sound system', in James Buhler, Caryl Flinn and David Neumeyer (eds), *Music and Cinema* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 2000), pp. 339–59 (p. 340).
4. Ibid., pp. 341 and 356. In his study of the emergence of the soundtrack in Hollywood film production between 1925 and 1932, Altman et al. stresses that the notion of a 'soundtrack' came about gradually, following a period of disagreement concerning the 'differing traditions regarding the "proper" way to present sound'. He points out that '[s]eparate components were increasingly combined according to a new set of conventions designed to facilitate simultaneous coexistence of multiple sound types in a single sound space. As these conventions became accepted, the soundtrack itself became an independent reality.'
5. Pierre Schaeffer, 'L'Élément non visuel au cinéma (II). Conception de la musique', *La Revue du cinéma* 1/2 (1 November 1946), pp. 62–5 (p. 65).
6. Pierre Schaeffer, 'L'Élément non visuel au cinéma (I). Analyse de la "bande son"', *La Revue du cinéma* 1/1 (1 October 1946), pp. 45–8 (p. 46).
7. Schaeffer notes that Grémillon recorded and creatively 'recomposed' two hundred different noises for his 1943 film *Lumière d'Été*. See ibid., pp. 45 and 47.
8. Altman, 'Inventing the cinema soundtrack', p. 341.
9. Alain Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2 (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 1998), p. 306.

10. Kaja Silverman, 'The author as receiver', *October* 96 (Spring 2001), pp. 17–34 (p. 26).
11. Nora M. Alter, 'Mourning, sound, and vision: Jean-Luc Godard's *JLG/JLG*', *Camera Obscura* 15/2 44 (2000), pp. 74–103 (pp. 93–4).
12. Don Michael Randel (ed.), *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 4th edn (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 651.
13. Pierre Schaeffer, 'Les Nouvelles techniques sonores et le cinéma', *Cahiers du cinéma* 37 (July 1954), pp. 54–6 (p. 56).
14. Ibid., p. 54.
15. Miéville is a filmmaker, writer and photographer, and the co-author, co-director and co-editor of numerous film projects with Godard but her contribution and output is often overlooked. Godard's ironic critique of himself as a visionary artist in *JLG/JLG*, and his reference in the editing studio to Miéville as an independent filmmaker, subtly bring to the fore the significance of their mutually inspiring and longstanding partnership that sees them slide between collaborators and solo artists. See Catherine Grant, 'Home-movies: the curious cinematic collaborations of Anne-Marie Miéville and Jean-Luc Godard', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 100–17.
16. To better understand the relevance of Wittgenstein's thinking in Godard's films, see Vicki Callahan, 'The evidence and uncertainty of silent film in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*', in Michael Temple and James S. Williams (eds), *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), pp. 141–57 and Christina Stojanova, 'Jean-Luc Godard and Ludwig Wittgenstein in new contexts', in Douglas Morrey, Christina Stojanova and Nicole Côté (eds), *The Legacies of Jean-Luc Godard* (Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2014), pp. 127–41. The excerpt from Wittgenstein's *On Certainty* that Godard reads in *JLG/JLG* comprises an anecdote about a blind man who questions the certainty of knowledge based on sight.
17. Jonathan Cray, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), pp. 59–60.
18. Pierre Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, trans. Christine North and John Dack (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), p. 175.
19. Jerrold Levinson, 'Musical thinking', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 27 (2003), pp. 59–68 (p. 64).
20. Sarah E. Worth, 'Wittgenstein's musical understanding', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 37/2 (April 1997), pp. 158–67 (p. 158).
21. Ibid., p. 166.

22. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte, rev. 4th edn P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), p. 191.
23. Jacques Aumont makes a Wittgensteinian observation along these lines when he comments on the mixing of a two-bar phrase from Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 16* with a fragment of Juliette's dialogue in Godard's *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* (1966), remarking: 'the understanding of a sentence is closer than it first seems to the understanding of a musical theme.' Jacques Aumont, 'Lumière de la musique', *Cahiers du cinéma, Spécial Godard 30 ans depuis* 437 (1990) pp. 46–8 (p. 47).
24. Ray Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein* (London: Granta, 2005), p. 74.
25. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, pp. 152–3.
26. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks*, ed. Rush Rhees, trans. Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), p. 281.
27. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 203.
28. Ibid., p. 223.
29. Ibid., pp. 225.
30. 'Interview: Jean-Luc Godard', interview by Gavin Smith, *Film Comment* (March–April 1996). Available at http://www.filmcomment.com/article/jean-luc-godard-interview-nouvelle-vague-histoires-du-cinema-helas-pour-moi/ (accessed 1 November 2016).
31. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 225 (original emphasis).
32. Darling's *Slow Return* is the first track on his 1979 album *Journal October* (ECM Records), scored for acoustic and electric cello, voice and percussion. Tracks from this album also flood the soundtracks of *Hélas pour moi* and *Nouvelle vague*.
33. Chion, *Audio-Vision*, p.5.
34. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 222.
35. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), p. 184. In this passage, Wittgenstein refers to Schumann's piano cycle, *Davidsbündlertänze*, Op. 6 ('Wie aus Weiter Ferne').
36. Ernst van Alphen, *Francis Bacon and the Loss of Self* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), p. 146.
37. James S. Williams, 'Music, love, and the cinematic event', in Temple, Williams and Witt, *For Ever Godard*, pp. 288–311 (p. 305).
38. Van Alphen, *Francis Bacon*, p. 144.
39. Jennifer Lynde Barker, *The Aesthetics of Antifascist Film: Radical Projection* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 184.
40. Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2, p. 304.

41. An early version of 3B was screened at the Locarno International Film Festival in August 1995, the year before the release of *Nouvelle vague* on CD and five months after the release of *JLG/JLG*.
42. Michael Witt, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), pp. 91–3.
43. David Brancaleone, 'The interventions of Jean-Luc Godard and Chris Marker into contemporary visual art', *Vertigo* 30 (Spring 2012). Available at https://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/vertigo_magazine/issue-30-spring-2012-godard-is/the-interventions-of-jean-luc-godard-and-chris-marker/ (accessed 1 March 2016).
44. Jonathan Rosenbaum, 'The stuff of dreams', *Guardian* (January 2004). Available at https://www.theguardian.com/film/2004/jan/31/1 (accessed 2 May 2016).
45. Melinda Szaloky, 'Sounding images in silent film: visual acoustics in Murnau's "Sunrise"', *Cinema Journal* 41/2 (Winter 2002), pp. 109–31 (p. 117) (original emphasis).
46. Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2, p. 193.
47. Kaja Silverman and Harun Farocki, *Speaking about Godard* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), p. 198.
48. Williams, 'Music, love, and the cinematic event', pp. 302–304.
49. Philip Brophy, 'Musique concrete, electronica and sound art', *The Wire* 164 (October 1997). Available at http://www.philipbrophy.com/projects/scrthst/ShatterHarmony.html (accessed 10 October 2015).
50. The double-edged significance of Thalberg for Godard comes to light in episode 1A of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Godard admired Thalberg, the young producer and successful businessman – the 'founding father' of Hollywood – who produced a vast number of films. Yet Thalberg's film production methods helped to fashion and shape Hollywood's studio system, whose unbridled power is 'inseparable in Godard's narrative', as Scott Durham suggests, 'from that of expanding American capital and empire'. See Scott Durham, '"An accurate description of what has never occurred": history, virtuality, and fiction in Godard', in Tom Conley and T. Jefferson Kline (eds), *A Companion to Jean-Luc Godard* (Malden, MA: John Wiley and Sons, 2014), pp. 441–55 (pp. 445–6).
51. Sabine M. Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 121.
52. Andrew Blake, 'Recording practices and the role of the producer', in Nicholas Cook, Eric Clarke, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and John Rink (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 36–53 (pp. 36 and 53).

53. Claire Bartoli, 'Interior view: Jean-Luc Godard's *Nouvelle Vague*', printed in the CD booklet to Jean-Luc Godard, *Nouvelle Vague*, prod. ECM Records (1997) [on CD], p. 68.
54. Ibid., p. 69.
55. Ibid., p. 89.
56. Ibid., p. 72.
57. Manfred Eicher, 'The periphery and the centre', in Steve Lake and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM* (London: Granta Books, 2007), pp. 7–12 (10).
58. All references to the CD soundtrack refer to Jean-Luc Godard, *Nouvelle Vague*, 2-CD (Munich: ECM New Series 1600/01, 1997).
59. Georgina Born, 'Introduction', in Georgina Born (ed.), *Music, Sound and Space: Transformation of Public and Private Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 1–69 (p. 13).
60. Denis Smalley, 'Space-form and the acousmatic image', *Organised Sound* 12/1 (2007), pp. 35–58 (p. 37) (original emphasis).
61. Ibid., p. 55.
62. Smalley defines 'mechanised space' as a 'space produced by sound-emitting machines, mechanisms and technologically based systems, independently of human activity' and 'utterance space' as '[a] space produced by vocal sound. This may be an intimate, personal, or social space.' Ibid., pp. 38–9 and 55–6.
63. Heiner Goebbels, 'Sound and vision: ECM and film', in Steve Lake and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM* (London: Granta Books, 2007), pp. 128–9.
64. Ibid., p. 129.
65. Reich's phrase 'gradations of symmetry' was inspired by Michael Snow's film work, specifically his use of a continuous or repetitive camera movement. See Steve Reich, *Writings on Music 1965–2000*, ed. and introduction Paul Hillier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 33.
66. John Young, 'Reflections on sound image design in electroacoustic music', *Organised Sound* 12/1 (2007), pp. 25–33 (p. 25).
67. Seth Kim-Cohen, *In the Blink of an Ear: Toward a Non-Cochlear Sonic Art*, 2009 (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), p. 10. *Wochenende* consisted of an experimental imageless soundscape of a Berlin weekend, composed of a collage of everyday sounds that were recorded onto the soundtrack of optical film. Laurent Jullier notes that Ruttmann's sound montage was actually released as a CD in 1994 by the French *musique concrète* label, Métamkine, founded by Jérôme Noetinger, as part of their 'Cinéma pour l'oreille' ('Cinema for the ear') mini-CD series. Laurent Jullier, 'JLG/ECM', in Temple, Williams and Witt, *For Ever Godard*, pp. 272–87 (p. 424n.40).

68. Julie Brown, 'Music in film and television', in J.P.E. Harper-Scott and Jim Samson (eds), *An Introduction to Music Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 201–18 (p. 214).
69. Schaeffer, 'L'Élément non visuel au cinéma (I)', p. 48.
70. Lotte H. Eisner, *Murnau* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1973), p. 181.
71. Born, 'Introduction', p. 35.
72. Altman, 'Inventing the cinema soundtrack', p. 341.
73. Jean-Luc Godard, '*Nouvelle Vague*', *L'Avant-Scène Cinéma* 396/397 (November/December 1990), p. 11.

Chapter 7 Acoustic Dystopias and Rhythms of Change

1. Miéville is listed in the opening credits under 'Logos' but her role is not specified.
2. Trailer one (4 min. 15 sec.) plays at standard speed, while the other trailers comprise the whole film speeded up in fast-forward motion, with the rapidness of the visuals increasing progressively while the length decreases correspondingly (trailer six is only 1 min. 7 sec. long).
3. See Samuel Bréan, 'godard english cannes: the reception of *Film Socialisme*'s "Navajo English" subtitles', *Senses of Cinema* 60 (October 2011). Available at http://sensesofcinema.com/2011/feature-articles/godardenglishcannes-the-reception-of-film-socialismes-navajo-english-subtitles/#b26 (accessed 2 June 2016). See also Jordan Mintzer, 'Review: "Film Socialisme"', *Variety* (May 2010) http://variety.com/2010/film/markets-festivals/film-socialisme-1117942789/ (accessed 2 June 2016).
4. Georgina Born, 'Introduction', in Georgina Born (ed.), *Music, Sound and Space: Transformation of Public and Private Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 1–69 (pp. 26–7).
5. Ibid., p. 30.
6. Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), pp. 7–8.
7. Ibid., pp. 67–8 (original emphasis)
8. Ibid., p. 66.
9. Ibid., p. 75.
10. Johan Fornäs, Karin Becker, Erling Bjurström and Hillevi Ganetz, *Consuming Media: Communication, Shopping and Everyday Life* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), p. 148.

11. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization, Public Worlds*, vol. 1 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 33–5.
12. These lines, uttered by Pluggy (Godard), are relayed via voiceover during the first restaurant scene in *King Lear*.
13. Bauman associates the 'post-Panoptical' stage of modernity with 'the end of the era of mutual engagement', referring to the model of Panopticon power ('the archmetaphor of modern power') as put forward in Michel Foucault's theory of social control and the institutional gaze in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975). See Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2000), especially pp. 11–14.
14. Brandon LaBelle, *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art* (New York: Continuum, 2006), pp. x–xii.
15. Ibid., p. 150.
16. Maurice Ravel, 'Finding tunes in factories', *New Britain* (9 August 1933), p. 367.
17. This kind of sonic disarray is hinted at in the second of the online film trailers. In trailer two, the entire soundtrack of *Film socialisme* is drastically accelerated in an echo of the visual velocity, producing an alarmingly squeaky and scratchy sound.
18. Brandon LaBelle, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life* (New York: Continuum, 2010), p. 79.
19. Ibid., p. 47 (original emphasis).
20. Ibid., p. 61.
21. Suzanne G. Cusick, 'Towards an acoustemology of detention in the "global war on terror"', in Born, *Music, Sound and Space*, pp. 275–91 (p. 285).
22. Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), p. 178.
23. In an interview following the release of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*, Godard affirms: 'Film, or to communicate, doesn't mean being in one place and going to another … for most people … time only exists when it has solidified, as it were, so either one stays in a place from where one must leave, or one arrives there, and between the two, this doesn't exist. For me, I think that what exists is the *between*.' See Alain Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 1 (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma/Éditions de l'Étoile, 1985), p. 458 (original emphasis).
24. LaBelle, *Acoustic Territories*, pp. 53–4.
25. Serge Daney's 'Preface' [1977], *Ici et ailleurs* (17 January 2009). Available at http://kinoslang.blogspot.co.uk/2009/01/preface-to-here-and-elsewhere-by-serge.html (accessed 23 April 2016).

26. Adam Cook, 'Beauty in the defects: an interview with Fabrice Aragno', *MUBI: Notebook Feature* (23 October 2012). Available at https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/beauty-in-the-defects-an-interview-with-fabrice-aragno (accessed 18 April 2016).
27. LaBelle, *Acoustic Territories*, p. 84. See also pp. 61–2.
28. Ibid., p. 82.
29. Chantal Mouffe, 'Art and democracy: art as an agonistic intervention in public space', *Open* 14, *Art as a Public Issue* (2008), pp. 6–15 (p. 7).
30. Ibid., p. 12.
31. Ibid., p. 13.
32. Ibid., p. 10.
33. Kathryn Lachman, 'Music and the gendering of colonial space in Karin Albou's *Le chant* des mariées', *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 7/1 (Spring 2013), pp. 1–18 (p. 10).
34. Ibid., pp. 11–12.
35. Steven Bach, *Marlene Dietrich: Life and Legend* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), p. 415. As David Phelps notes in his commentary on *Film socialisme*, Colpet also co-wrote Rossellini's *Germany, Year Zero* (1946), to which Godard pays homage in *Allemagne année 90 neuf zéro* (1991). David Phelps, 'No comment two (the invention of facts)', *MUBI: Notebook Feature* (28 November 2012). Available at https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/no-comment-two-the-invention-of-facts (accessed 4 May 2016).
36. See François Niney, 'Artavazd Peleshian, or, reality taken apart', in Artavazd Peleshian, *Our Century*, ed. Gerald Matt and Angela Stief (Vienna: Ursula Blickle Stiftung/Kunsthalle Wier/Kerber Verlag, 2004), pp. 421–5 (p. 421).
37. Serge Daney, 'Les Cahiers à Nantes', *Cahiers du cinéma* 275 (April 1977), pp. 63–4 (p. 64).
38. This shot also calls to mind the 'massive chord of "Solidity" ' of the vast black buoy, which appears in the misty waters of Odessa's harbour in *Battleship Potemkin*. As noted in Chapter 3, the combination of visual motifs that Eisenstein proceeds to identify in the 'Odessa Mist' sequence extends to encompass death in the form of Vakulinchuk's corpse. See Sergei Eisenstein *Nonindifferent Nature*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 228 and 294.
39. Tom Gunning, 'The cinema of attractions: early film, its spectator and the avant-garde', *Wide Angle* 8/3/4 (1986), pp. 63–70 (pp. 63–4).
40. Robert Bresson, 'La Question', interview by Michel Delahaye and Jean-Luc Godard, *Cahiers du cinéma* 178 (May 1966), pp. 26–35 and 67–71 (p. 68).
41. Ibid., p. 69.
42. André Bazin, 'L'Eau danse', *Cahiers du cinéma* 7 (December 1951), pp. 58–9.

43. Jean-Luc Godard, 'A language before Babel: film conversation between Artavazd Peleshian and Jean-Luc Godard' (April 1992), in Peleshian, *Our Century*, pp. 415–19 (p. 419).
44. David Bordwell, '*Adieu au langage*: 2 + 2 x 3D', David Bordwell's Website on Cinema (7 September 2014). Available at http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/2014/09/07/adieu-au-langage-2-2-x-3d/ (accessed 10 April 2016). As Bordwell notes, the first 15 minutes of the film is split into two parts: '1 Nature' and '2 Metaphor'. This is followed by two longer sections, labelled in identical fashion.
45. François Niney, 'Montage with images that don't exist: interview with Artavazd Pelechian', trans. Timothy S. Murphy, *Discourse* 22/1 (Winter 2000), pp. 94–126 (p. 94).
46. The soundtrack in *Images pour Debussy* consists of four of his compositions: 'En bateau', 'Arabesque en mi', 'Reflets dans l'eau' and 'Arabesque en sol'.
47. Tami Williams, *Germaine Dulac: A Cinema of Sensations* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), pp. 156–7.
48. Jean Mitry, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, trans. Christopher King (London: The Athlone Press, 1998), p. 257. See also Jean Mitry, *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2001), p. 352.
49. Ibid., p. 268.
50. Mitry here quotes Schaeffer's assertion that when the association between music and image is successful, 'it "produces the truly artistic satisfaction which lies in seeing diversity in unity, divergence in simultaneity, the extension of a moment in time" (Pierre Schaeffer)'. See ibid., p. 267 (original emphasis).
51. For example, in the first long section of the film ('1 Nature'), we hear a car crash but see only tourists walking along a pier. The sound of glass smashing, a vehicle rushing by, the skidding of tyres and the high-pitched sound of breaks slamming and cars skidding blend into a series of off-beat bangs. The aural commotion then spins with the acousmatic revving of an electric guitar as the camera cuts to a close-up of bright red liquid whirling in a fountain. A man's deep voice murmurs something that emerges from the guitar sound, as a character complains, 'I can't hear a thing'. This percussive sequence is haunted by an earlier scene of violence between Josette and her husband and it also recalls the two car accidents in Bresson's *Au hasard Balthazar*, which occur in close succession (the first is heard and seen but the second is only heard). As Godard suggests in his analysis of Bresson's film, the editing of these shots amounts not to an ellipsis but to a repetition because the second accident is still 'witnessed' aurally via the soundtrack. See Bresson, 'La Question', pp. 29–30.
52. Mitry, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p. 266.

53. Rogers, Holly, *Sounding the Gallery: Video and the Rise of Art-Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 92.
54. Erika Balsom, 'Parallax plurality: 3D beyond the feature film', *Artforum International* 54/1 (September 2015), pp. 354–61 (p. 360).
55. Ibid., pp. 356–7.
56. Jonathan Cray, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), pp. 122–4.
57. In his conversation with Pelechian, Godard specifically refers to the French mathematician Jean-Victor Poncelet's theory of 'projective geometry' set out in his 1822 *Treatise on the Projective Properties of Figures*. Projective geometry signifies 'the relationships between shapes and their mappings, or "images", that result from projecting the shapes onto a surface'. See Clifford A. Pickover, *The Math Book: From Pythagoras to the 57th Dimension, 250 Milestones in the History of Mathematics* (New York: Sterling Publishing Company, 2009), p. 142. See also Godard, 'A language before Babel'. Godard had already referred to Poncelet's treatise in Episode 2A of *Histoire(s) du cinéma* in his discourse on the invention of cinematic projection.
58. Tabakova describes her *Suite in Old Style 'The Court Jester Amareu'* as a homage to the eighteenth-century French composer and music theorist Jean-Philippe Rameau (Amareu is an anagram of his name), for whom 'harmony is the source of music's structure and its expressive power'. In opposition to Rousseau's philosophy of music that privileged the importance of melody as 'the source of musical expression', Rameau believed that 'a piece of music with a good harmonic succession "relates directly to the soul" while the pleasure induced by an unadorned melody "does not pass beyond the ear canal"'. Through its inference to the depth of harmony and the flatness of melody, this debate whimsically befits Godard's experimentation with depth and different ways of producing the three-dimensional illusion in *Adieu au langage*. See http://www.dobrinka.com/ under 'Music: suite in old style' (accessed 13 May 2016) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages and Writings Related to Music, The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 7, ed. Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly, trans. John T. Scott (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998), pp. xxiv–xxvi.
59. Mitry, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p. 269.
60. Ibid., p. 270.
61. Grant Wiedenfeld, 'Bazin on the margins of the seventh art', in Dudley Andrew (ed.), with Hervé Jaubert-Laurencin, *Opening Bazin: Postwar Film Theory and Its Afterlife* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 262–7 (p. 262) (original emphasis).
62. As quoted in Mitry, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p. 270. See also Bazin, 'L'Eau danse' (my emphasis).

63. Ibid.
64. Niney, 'Artavazd Peleshian', p. 424.
65. Mitry, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, p. 270 (original emphasis).
66. Susan Sontag, 'The aesthetics of silence', in *A Susan Sontag Reader*, intro. Elizabeth Hardwick (London: Penguin Books, 1983), pp. 181–204 (pp. 195–6).
67. Ibid., p. 195.

Coda

1. Paul Griffiths and Steve Lake, '"We work in the dark": an interview with Manfred Eicher', in Steve Lake and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM* (London: Granta Books, 2007), pp. 373–80 (p. 375).
2. Roland Barthes, 'Listening', *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art and Representation* [1982], trans. Richard Howard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 245–60 (p. 245).
3. Manfred Eicher, 'The periphery and the centre', in Lake and Griffiths, *Horizons Touched*, pp. 8–9.
4. *François Musy on Sound, Direct Sound, Godard*, dir. by Larry Sider, 2003, 40 min. I am grateful to Michael Witt for making a copy of this film available to me.
5. A selection of Godard and Gorin's collaborative film work has recently been made available on DVD and Blu-ray in a new box set (Arrow Films, September 2017) titled *Jean-Luc Godard + Jean-Pierre Gorin: Five Films, 1968–1971*.
6. Marcel Cobussen and Nanette Nielsen, *Music and Ethics* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 27 and 33.
7. Les Back, *The Art of Listening* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), pp. 8 and 23.
8. Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville, 'Our music: synopsis for a film', n.d., in Lake and Griffiths, *Horizons Touched*, pp. 5–6.
9. The portmanteau film *3X3D* is 70 minutes in length and comprises shorts by Godard, Peter Greenaway and Edgar Pêra. This trilogy, produced by Rodrigo Areias, was commissioned by the Portuguese city Guimarães, the 2012 European Capital of Culture. It was screened at the Cannes Film Festival in 2013.
10. The resonant images of the pianists' hands in *Les trois désastres* return to haunt *Adieu au langage*. In the latter film, a similar shot arises but here the four hands are doubled by their reflection in the instrument's black varnish and paired with a passage from Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* that featured in *Nouvelle vague*.
11. Steven Connor, 'CP: or, a few don'ts by a cultural phenomenologist', *parallax* 5/2 (1999), pp. 17–31 (p. 21).
12. We hear the first two stanzas from section IV of Baudelaire's long poem 'Le Voyage', the final poem in *Les Fleurs du Mal*. See Charles Baudelaire, *The Flowers of Evil* [1857], trans. James McGowan, intro. Jonathan Culler (Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 287. Reproduced by permission of Oxford University Press.

13. Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* [2002] (New York: Verso, 2007), pp. 6–7 and 15–16.
14. Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole* (1907–8), scored for orchestra, was first composed in 1907 as a four-hand piano piece. For an analysis of this work see Michael Russ, 'Ravel and the orchestra', in Deborah Mawer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 118–39 (pp. 118–25). In *Adieu au langage*, a two-second fragment from *Prélude à la nuit* can be heard during a scene near the start, alerting the spectator to the dark dream world of *Les trois désastres* that lurks beneath its surface.
15. The French nouns *désastres* (disasters) and *des astres* (the stars) are homophones because they have the same pronunciation but different meanings.
16. We are reminded of the images in *Adieu au langage* of Josette bathing her hands in water, followed later by a red-haired woman's bloodied hands, as if to evoke Lady Macbeth's guilt-ridden hand-washing gesture in Shakespeare's tragedy.
17. Denis de Rougemont, *Penser avec les mains* (Paris: Editions Albin-Michel, 1936), p. 14.
18. Giuliana Bruno, 'Projection: on Akerman's screen, from cinema to the art gallery', in Dieter Roelstraete and Anders Kreuger (eds), *Chantal Akerman: Too Far, Too Close* (Antwerp: Ludion and M HKA, 2012), pp. 15–26 (p. 24).
19. Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1971), p. 210.
20. Ibid., p. 209.

Appendix

Cinema **JOHN GRIERSON**

Flaherty's Latest

From Flaherty's film of the Aran Islands

IT IS DIFFICULT TO HAVE COURAGE OF CINEMA ON THESE HECTIC NIGHTS, WITH nothing on the bills half so expansive as the sky across Piccadilly, or a Flaherty in from the Aran Islands. When Flaherty tells of the film he is making there, the *Narrow Corners* seem very narrow indeed. "Short is man's life, and narrow is the corner in which he dwells." The legend begins the film at the Regal, and ends it; as though high philosophy, significant of much, were sandwiched between. But the story only tells how a boy running from a charge of murder finds the girl of his heart on a South Sea island. You may find it difficult to generalize from so scanty a particular.

Flaherty with his tale of simple people living from the sea comes so much nearer the mark as to make the other ridiculous. Who more narrow in their corner than these islanders of the Arans, and who, by definite threat of nature and a scrimpy livelihood, shorter in their lives? If the legend is significant of anything it is that, within such limitations, man will take thought of starry heavens above and moral law within, or of some or such declaration of worth—Kantian or otherwise—as gives him a modicum of nobility. You may find illustration in Mr. Douglas Fairbanks Junior's very fortunate discovery of a pretty girl on an unpromising island, but I doubt it. Flaherty talks of a small boy fishing from a cliff, without sense of the three hundred feet of eternity beneath him, and of storms encountered in curraghs for the sake of a meal: suggesting all the while that the drama is not in consciousness of danger and posturing over it, but in the very custom of danger. A delicate distinction still obscured from all eyes whatsoever in commercial cinema!

Man of Aran should come to the theatres with the New Year, and if only half the accounts of it are true, it must bring a new view-point altogether to our English schedules. English cinema has never been very brave about its subject matter. In a country built more than any on epic feats of exploration and discovery, and hard battles with alien horizons, we have confined ourselves very exclusively to the dithering diversions of the West End. How much, a film like *Ninety Degrees South* at the Polytechnic shows by its very exception.

This is the well-known record of the Captain Scott expedition, and it is a good record. But it was made before the War, and there is something as pathetic as the film itself in the resurrection of its worn negative. We have had nothing over the years to put with it. You may also wonder when you see it why a country so rich in individual braveries should have to emphasize a noble occasion so desperately. It is difficult to overdramatize a matter of death, but understatement, as Shakespeare very frequently demonstrates, will sometimes fly higher than rhetoric. Trotsky used to say that it was difficult to shout louder than the fact of the matter. Mr. Ponting, in his commentary, tries very hard to.

In *Hearts of Oak*, another film shown over the week, there is a similar phenomenon. This, too, is a resurrection. Its original version was *Zebrugge*, and Bruce Woolf, who made it, will tell you how he hawked it originally down Wardour Street and could not find a renter to take a chance on it. It made a minor fortune for him, but only after he had founded a company to force it through to the theatres. There is nothing very good about it, except its theme of silly, preposterous mass suicide. It is fussy and overdone, and now, with synchronized sound, it is also noisy. Following the dreadful fashion, the commentator will not allow a single bravery to escape you or leave a single agony to your imagination; and more nauseous, sickly, indecent, overpatriotic tripe I never heard in my life. But it does at least tell of something done and done bravely, and they resurrect it for lack of anything similar or anything better.

The summer number of the *Cinema Quarterly*, just out, will give you as fair an analysis as any of the deeper reaches of the situation. Sitting by sad sea waves, or musing on the king, thy father's ghost, you will find the bright men of Edinburgh have gathered in most of the information and, in a peculiarly uncritical world of discourse, enough critical talent to make cinema as exciting as it should be. I shall except my own lugubrious account of our film work at the E.M.B. Since writing it, the E.M.B. has been summarily executed and the account has become an epitaph: on things we did, but mostly hoped to do. Much more pleasant is Herbert Read's discourse on the possible poetics of cinema. You may find good cause for argument, for he associates his theory far too closely with sur-realist theory. You may properly argue that poetry is not exclusively from beyond life but, very commonly, from within it. Read, however, is the only man of academic worth in the country who deals with cinema, and he takes the whole business of criticism ten reaches higher than we are accustomed to. He says, only too rightly, that "the film of imagination will not come until the poet enters the studio". But what poet would?

R. S. Lambert has an article on the Film Institute; which grows slowly, and will presently, one hopes, take charge of our very muddled educational film world. There is an interview with Pabst in explanation of *Don Quixote*, notes on Expressionism by Leontine Sagan, on Superimposition by Stuart Legg, on Screen Adaptation by Victor Saville, and some excellent criticism by Forsyth Hardy and Basil Wright. You should also examine the very pretty parodies of the critics by J. N. G. Davidson: guessing if you will the identities of A. C. L'Imortelle, Osric Batsinthebelfry and the Verandah Brothers. They discuss the stardom of one Lilli Baumenturd.

An invitation to write about your holiday
see page 382

What Government would you choose?
see page 384

A.1 John Grierson, 'Flaherty's Latest', *New Britain*, 9 August 1933, p. 366 (left page)

Music

MAURICE RAVEL

Finding tunes in factories

FOR CENTURIES MAN HAS BEEN INSPIRED BY MUSIC THAT OWES ITS INCEPTION TO THE works of Nature. The rippling stream, the rustling leaves, songs of birds, and cries of beasts, all have been interpreted into music of enduring beauty.

But all of these are now established. We cannot continue to use them as the inspiration for new works, for *the time would surely come when the world would so* tire of hearing new themes based upon old inspirations that all music would suffer an eclipse.

Inspiration from Noise

In our search for fresh inspiration we cannot over*look the appeal of modern life. Our cities* are said to "hum" with traffic, machinery to "purr", and although these sounds may seem pleasant or unpleasant, there is *no reason why they should not* be interpreted into great music.

Unquestionably the mechanics of this age will leave their imprint on music that will be handed down through generations, and more and more of our composers will find inspiration in what some now regard as mere noise. In the past battles have been made the themes of world-famous symphonies, and surely the sound of battle is no more inspiring than the hum of a vast machine?

Tchaikowsky's *1812* and Von Suppé's *Light Cavalry* had their birth, not in the ordered sounds of the parade ground, but in the chaotic clash of arms and the irregular thunder of cannon. Beethoven composed a symphony based on the life of Napoleon; why should not a modern composer base a similar work on the life of a great captain of industry?

Business Man as Hero

It is the tendency of the age to look to our industrial leaders, rather than to our politicians and soldiers, for our advancement. This can very naturally be interpreted into music, and must be done if the music of this age is correctly to represent the life of our peoples.

The strange, disordered sounds of a great motor vehicle pulling up a steep hill may not impress with their beauty, but when translated into music they would have a different appeal. The song of the nightingale in the forest is very different from the musical interpretations that have found their way into our scores; similarly, the agitation of a great engine set to music would be *quite unlike the* actual sounds of the struggle.

To set such sounds to music is true art. Of course the music *does not necessarily suggest the noises, but* it can tell in music the story of the machine and interpret the machine's works.

Beauty in Industry

Let us consider the factory. Set on a great plain, or in the heart of a crowded industrial city, it is the life, the home, the entire being of thousands of workers. Throughout the day its mighty engines turn and turn and turn. Clanging bells punctuate its ordered progress, piles of finished goods pay tribute to the efficiency of the mechanism and to the greatness of the brain that conceived it.

At dusk the clash and clang and thunder of toil is stilled. The great gates open and the air rumbles with the voices of thousands of workers pouring out and back to their homes. A little later the last lights are extinguished, and where a few hours before was noise and toil is stillness and desolation.

Music of Machines

What a musical story there is in that factory! Musicians, together with historians and writers of fiction, must carry on the tale of the mechanics of this age to our children and our children's children.

We have had nature, war, and a hundred other themes *in music, and it amazes me that musicians have not yet* captured the wonder of industrial progress.

Honegger, Mossolov, Schönberg, and others have *gained much of their inspiration from machinery. My* own *Bolero* owed its inception to a factory. Some day I should like to play it with a vast industrial works in the *background.*

An Aeroplane Symphony

The aeroplane, which has done so much to bring greater convenience, faster travel, and to facilitate discovery in these times—what a theme for a symphony it *would make! Great flights showing the epic courage of* our aviators, the perils of earth, sea, and sky, could all be interpreted into music which would be a monument *to our heroes of the air.* A modern liner putting out to sea with her complement of many hundreds of souls on board, the coming of a storm, man's conquest of the elements—all these could be epitomized into musical story. The ordinary, everyday sounds of our railways could be made into works which would tell of our progress, which would show how we had overcome the obstacles of nature and permitted the ingenuity of man to triumph.

But over all would be the triumph of the machine, the vast monster that man has created to do his bidding. What a noble inspiration! Surely one that will in future years be felt by hundreds of our composers, who will bring into being music that will faithfully and beautifully reflect the spirit of the age in which machinery struggled to lighten the burdens of man.

A.2 Maurice Ravel, 'Finding Tunes in Factories', *New Britain*, 9 August 1933, p. 367 (right page)

Select Bibliography

Primary material

Books, interviews, scripts

Bergala, Alain (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 1 (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma/Éditions de l'Étoile, 1985).

———, *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2 (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma, 1998).

Godard, Jean-Luc, *Introduction à une véritable histoire du cinéma* (Paris: Editions Albatros, 1980).

———, 'Interview with Jean-Luc Godard', *The Dick Cavett Show* (1980). Available at https://youtu.be/93HCeGy6vzk (accessed 20 December 2012).

———, 'The carrots are cooked: a conversation with Jean-Luc Godard', interview by Gideon Bachmann, *Film Quarterly* 37/3 (Spring 1984), pp. 13–19.

———, '*Lettre à Freddy Buache*', *L'Avant-Scène Cinéma* 323/324 (1984), pp. 68–75.

———, '*Scénario du film Passion*', *L'Avant-Scène Cinéma* 323/324 (1984), pp. 79–89.

———, '*Nouvelle Vague*', *L'Avant-Scène Cinéma* 396/397 (November/December 1990).

———, 'Interview: Jean-Luc Godard', interview by Gavin Smith, *Film Comment* (March–April 1996). Available at http://www.filmcomment.com/article/jean-luc-godard-interview-nouvelle-vague-histoires-du-cinema-helas-pour-moi/ (accessed 1 November 2016).

———, *JLG/JLG: Phrases* (Paris: P.O.L., 1996).

———, '*Nouvelle vague: Genèse*', three versions of the script of *Nouvelle vague*, in Alain Bergala (ed.), *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*, vol. 2 (Paris: Cahiers du cinéma/Éditions de l'Étoile, 1998), pp. 189–94.

———, 'A language before Babel: film conversation between Artavazd Peleshian and Jean-Luc Godard' (April 1992), in Artavazd Peleshian, *Our Century*, ed. Gerald Matt and Angela Stief (Vienna: Kerber Verlag, 2004), pp. 415–19.

———, 'Histoire(s) du cinéma et de la television ('Studies in motion pictures and television'), in Nicole Brenez, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2006), pp. 281–5.

———, 'Lettre numéro un aux membres de la commission d'avance sur recettes' in Nicole Brenez, David Faroult, Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *Jean-Luc Godard: Documents* (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2006), p. 307.

———, *Film socialisme: Dialogues avec visages auteurs* (Paris: P.O.L., 2010).

———, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, ed. and trans. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose Books, 2014).

———, and Youssef Ishaghpour, *Cinema: The Archeology of Film and the Memory of a Century* [1999], trans. John Howe (Oxford: Berg, 2005).

———, and Anne-Marie Miéville, 'Our music: synopsis for a film' (n.d.), in Steve Lake and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM* (London: Granta Books, 2007), pp. 5–6.

Secondary material

Books

Abbate, Carolyn, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).

Adorno, Theodor W., *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997).

———, *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music: Fragments and Texts*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

Albright, Daniel (ed.), *Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Alphen, Ernst van, *Francis Bacon and the Loss of Self* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992).

Andrew, Dudley, *What Cinema Is!: Bazin's Quest and its Charge* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

Antelme, Robert, *The Human Race* [1947], trans. Jeffrey Haight and Annie Mahler (Evanston, IL: The Marlboro Press/Northwestern, 1998).

Appadurai, Arjun, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization, Public Worlds*, vol. 1 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

Arendt, Hannah, *The Life of the Mind* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1971).

Bach, Steven, *Marlene Dietrich: Life and Legend* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

Bachelard, Gaston, *La Terre et les rêveries de la volonté* (Paris: Jose Corti, 1943).

———, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas, foreword Etienne Gilson (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969).

Back, Les, *The Art of Listening* (Oxford: Berg, 2007).

Barker, Jennifer Lynde, *The Aesthetics of Antifascist Film: Radical Projection* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

Barthes, Roland, *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art and Representation* [1982], trans. Richard Howard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

Baudelaire, Charles, *The Flowers of Evil* [1857], trans. James McGowan, intro. Jonathan Culler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Bauman, Zygmunt, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2000).

Bazin, André, *What Is Cinema?*, vol. 1 [1958], foreword Jean Renoir, new foreword Dudley Andrew, essays selected and trans. Hugh Grey (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

Bellour, Raymond (ed.), with Mary Lea Bandy, *Jean-Luc Godard Son + Image 1974–1991* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992).

Bogue, Ronald, *Deleuze's Way: Essays in Transversal Ethics and Aesthetics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

Bonitzer, Pascal, *Le Regard et la voix: essais sur le cinéma* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1976).

Born, Georgina (ed.), *Music, Sound and Space: Transformation of Public and Private Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 1–69.

Bowie, Andrew, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Bresson, Robert, *Notes on the Cinematographer* [1975], trans. Jonathan Griffin, intro. J.M.G. Le Clézio (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1986).

Brown, Royal S., *Overtones and Undertones: Reading Film Music* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994).

Bruno, Giuliana, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* [2002] (New York: Verso, 2007).

Chaplin, Tamara, *Turning on the Mind: French Philosophers on Television* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Chion, Michel, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* [1990], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

———, *The Voice in Cinema* [1982], ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

Cobussen, Marcel and Nanette Nielsen, *Music and Ethics* (London: Routledge, 2012).

Cook, Nicholas, *Analysing Musical Multimedia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Cray, Jonathan, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990).

Darke, Chris, *Alphaville (Jean-Luc Godard, 1965)* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2005).

Davies, Ann and Phil Powrie, *Carmen on Screen: An Annotated Filmography and Bibliography* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2006).

Davis, Colin, *Scenes of Love and Murder: Renoir, Film and Philosophy* (London: Wallflower Press, 2009).

Deleuze, Gilles, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* [1983], trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986).

DiBattista, Maria, *Virginia Woolf's Major Novels: The Fables of Anon* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980)

Duras, Marguerite, *Le Camion: suivi de Entretien avec Michelle Porte* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1977).

———, *Green Eyes*, trans. Carol Barko (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990 (1987)).

Eisenstein, Sergei, *The Film Sense*, ed. and trans. Jay Leyda (London: Faber and Faber, 1986).

———, *Nonindifferent Nature*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

Eisner, Lotte H., *Murnau* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1973).

Emmerson, Simon, *Living Electronic Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007).

Fink, Robert, *Repeating Ourselves: American Minimal Music as Cultural Practice* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

Fornäs, Johan, Karin Becker, Erling Bjurström and Hillevi Ganetz, *Consuming Media: Communication, Shopping and Everyday Life* (Oxford: Berg, 2007).

Forrester, Viviane, *La violence du calme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1980).

Fotiade, Ramona, *À bout de souffle* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013).

Foucault, Michel, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975).

Freud, Sigmund, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey; in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, vol. XIX (1923–5), *The Ego and the Id and Other Works*, (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), pp. 227–32.

Gorbman, Claudia, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987).

Gritten, Anthony and Elaine King (eds), *Music and Gesture* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006).

Hammer, Martin, *Bacon and Sutherland* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005).

Hasty, Christopher F., *Meter as Rhythm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Heath, Stephen, *Questions of Cinema* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1981).

Heywood, Miriam, *Modernist Visions: Marcel Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu and Jean-Luc Godard's Histoire(s) du cinéma* (Bern: Peter Lang AG, 2011).

Jankélévitch, Vladimir, *Ravel*, trans. Margaret Crosland (New York: Grove Press, 1959).

Kahn, Douglas, *Noise Water Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

Kane, Brian, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Kerman, Joseph, *The Beethoven Quartets* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

Kim-Cohen, Seth, *In the Blink of an Ear: Toward a Non-Cochlear Sonic Art* [2009] (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).

Krance, Charles (ed.), *Samuel Beckett's Mal vu mal dit/Ill seen Ill said*: *A Bilingual, Evolutionary, and Synoptic Variorum Edition* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1996).

LaBelle, Brandon, *Background Noise: Perspectives on Sound Art* (New York: Continuum, 2006).

———, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life* (New York: Continuum, 2010).

Laing, Heather, *Gabriel Yared's The English Patient. A Film Score Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004).

MacCabe, Colin, with Mick Eaton and Laura Mulvey, *Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1980).

MacDonald, Scott, *A Critical Cinema 3: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998).

Marks, Laura U., *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

Martinville, Édouard Léon Scott de, *Histoire de la sténographie depuis les temps anciens jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Charles Tondeur, 1849).

Mawer, Deborah, *The Ballets of Maurice Ravel: Creation and Interpretation* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006).

Mayne, Judith, *Cinema and Spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, *Sens et non-sens* (Paris: Les Éditions Nagel, 1948).

Michelson, Annette (ed.), *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*, trans. Kevin O'Brien (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984).

Mitry, Jean, *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2001).

———, *The Aesthetics and Psychology of the Cinema*, trans. Christopher King (London: The Athlone Press, 1998).

Monk, Ray, *How to Read Wittgenstein* (London: Granta, 2005).

Morgan, Daniel, *Late Godard and the Possibilities of Cinema* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013).

Morrey, Douglas, *Jean-Luc Godard* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

———, Christina Stojanova and Nicole Côté (eds), *The Legacies of Jean-Luc Godard* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2014).

Mulvey, Laura, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006).

Orledge, Robert, *Satie the Composer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Page, Tim (ed.), *The Glenn Gould Reader* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984).

Potter, Keith, *Four Musical Minimalists: La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Potts, Alex, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

Quinlivan, Davina, *The Place of Breath in Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012).

Reich, Steve, *Writings on Music 1965–2000*, ed. and introduction Paul Hillier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Reverdy, Pierre, *Nord-sud, Self Defence et autres écrits sur l'art et la poésie (1917–1926)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1975).

Rilke, Rainer Maria, *Rodin and Other Prose Pieces*, trans. G. Craig Houston, intro. William Tucker (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1986).

Rimbaud, Arthur, *A Season in Hell and Illuminations*, trans. M. Treharne (London: J.M. Dent, 1998).

Robertson, Robert, *Eisenstein on the Audiovisual: The Montage of Music, Image and Sound in Cinema* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009).

Rogers, Holly, *Sounding the Gallery: Video and the Rise of Art-Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Rougemont, Denis de, *Penser avec les mains* (Paris: Albin-Michel, 1936).

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Essay on the Origin of Languages and Writings Related to Music, The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, vol. 7, ed. Roger D. Masters and Christopher Kelly, trans. John T. Scott (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998).

Schaeffer, Pierre, *À la recherche d'une musique concrète* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1952).

———, *Traité des objets musicaux: essai interdisciplines* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966).

———, *Machines à communiquer 1: genèse des simulacres* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1970).

———, *Machines à communiquer 2: pouvoir et communication* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1972).

———, *Essai sur la radio et le cinéma: esthétique et technique des arts-relais 1941–1942*, created and ed. Sophie Brunet and Carlos Palombini (Paris: Éditions Allia, 2010).

———, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, trans. Christine North and John Dack (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012).

———, *Treatise on Musical Objects: Essays across Disciplines*, trans. Christine North and John Dack (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017).

Serrut, Louis-Albert, *Jean-Luc Godard, cinéaste acousticien: des emplois et usages de la matière sonore dans ses œuvres cinématographiques* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011).

Silverman, Kaja, *The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988).

Silverman, Kaja and Harun Farocki, *Speaking about Godard* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

Sobchack, Vivian, *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Sontag, Susan, *A Susan Sontag Reader*, intro. Elizabeth Hardwick (London: Penguin Books, 1983), pp. 181–204.

Stenzl, Jürg, *Jean-Luc Godard – musicien: die Musik in den Filmen von Jean-Luc Godard* (Munich: Edition Text + Kritik, 2010).

Sutherland, Roger, *New Perspectives in Music* (London: Sun Tavern Fields, 1994).

Sylvester, David, *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon*, 3rd edn (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 1987).

Temple, Michael and James S. Williams (eds), *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000).

Temple, Michael, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004).

Thompson, Kristin, *Breaking the Glass Amor: Neoformalist Film Analysis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

Verma, Neil, *Theater of the Mind: Imagination, Aesthetics, and American Radio Drama* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, Auguste, *Tomorrow's Eve* [1886], trans. Robert Martin Adams (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1982).

Warner, Michael, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002).

White, Jerry, *Two Bicycles: The Work of Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2013).

Williams, James S., *Encounters with Godard: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2016).

Williams, Tami, *Germaine Dulac: A Cinema of Sensations* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2014).

Wills, David, *Prosthesis* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995).

Witt, Michael, *Jean-Luc Godard, Cinema Historian* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013).

Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *The Blue and Brown Books*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969).

———, *Philosophical Remarks*, ed. Rush Rhees, trans. Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975).

———, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte, rev. 4th edn P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2009).

Woolf, Virginia, *A Reflection of the Other Person: The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, vol 4: *1929–31* (London: Hogarth Press, 1978).

———, *Moments of Being*, ed. Schulkind, Jeanne, 2nd edn (London: The Hogarth Press, 1985).

———, *The Waves* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2000).

Yaraman, Sevin H., *Revolving Embrace: The Waltz as Sex, Steps, and Sound* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2002).

Articles, chapters in books, theses, interviews

Adorno, Theodor W., 'On the fetish-character in music and the regression of listening', in Theodor W. Adorno, *Essays on Music*, intro., commentary and notes Richard Leppert; new trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 288–317.

———, 'The radio symphony', in Theodor W. Adorno, *Essays on Music*, intro., commentary and notes Richard Leppert; new trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 251–70.

Alter, Nora M., 'Mourning, sound, and vision: Jean-Luc Godard's *JLG/JLG*', *Camera Obscura* 15/2 44 (2000), pp. 74–103.

Altman, Rick [Charles F.], 'Psychoanalysis and cinema: the imaginary discourse', *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 2 (August 1977), pp. 257–72.

———, 'Introduction', *Cinema/Sound* (special issue), ed. Rick Altman, *Yale French Studies* 60 (1980), pp. 3–15.

———, with McGraw Jones and Sonia Tatroe, 'Inventing the cinema soundtrack: Hollywood's multiplane sound system', in James Buhler, Caryl Flinn and David Neumeyer (eds), *Music and Cinema* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 2000), pp. 339–59.

Anzalone, John, 'Danse macabre, ou le pas de deux Baudelaire-Villiers: essais sur un chapitre de *L'Eve Future*', in John Anzalone (ed.), *Jeering Dreamers: Villiers de L'Isle-Adam: Essays on L'Eve Future* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1996), pp. 117–25.

Aumont, Jacques, 'Lumière de la musique', *Cahiers du cinéma, Spécial Godard 30 ans depuis* 437 (1990), pp. 46–8.

Bachelard, Gaston, 'Preface to Martin Buber's I and Thou', trans. Edward K. Kaplan, *International Studies in Philosophy* 35/1 (2003), pp. 89–94.

Balsom, Erika, 'Parallax plurality: 3D beyond the feature film', *Artforum International* 54/1 (September 2015), pp. 354–61.

Bartoli, Claire, 'Interior view: Jean-Luc Godard's *Nouvelle Vague*', printed in the CD booklet to Jean-Luc Godard, *Nouvelle Vague*, prod. ECM Records (1997) [on CD].

Bazin, André, 'L'Eau danse', *Cahiers du cinéma* 7 (December 1951), pp. 58–9.

Bellour, Raymond, 'The double helix', trans. J. Eddy, in Timothy Druckrey (ed.), *Electronic Culture: Technology and Visual Representation* (New York: Aperture Foundation, Inc., 1996), pp. 173–99.

Benjamin, George, 'Last dance', *The Musical Times* 135 (July 1994), pp. 432–5.

Bizzaro, Nicola, 'Pierre Schaeffer's contribution to audiovisual theory', *Worlds of Audio-Vision* (2011), pp. 1–11. Available at http://www-5.unipv.it/wav/pdf/WAV_Bizzaro_2011_eng.pdf (accessed 3 March 2016).

Blake, Andrew, 'Recording practices and the role of the producer', in Nicholas Cook, Eric Clarke, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and John Rink (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 36–53.

Blümlinger, Christa, 'Procession and projection: notes on a figure in the work of Jean-Luc Godard', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 178–87.

Bordwell, David, '*Adieu au langage*: 2 + 2 x 3D', David Bordwell's Website on Cinema (7 September 2014). Available at http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/2014/09/07/adieu-au-langage-2-2-x-3d/ (accessed 10 April 2016).

Brancaleone, David, 'The interventions of Jean-Luc Godard and Chris Marker into contemporary visual art', *Vertigo* 30 (Spring 2012). Available at https://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/vertigo_magazine/issue-30-spring-2012-godard-is/the-interventions-of-jean-luc-godard-and-chris-marker/ (accessed 1 March 2016).

Bréan, Samuel, 'godard english cannes: the reception of *Film Socialisme*'s "Navajo English" subtitles', *Senses of Cinema* 60 (October 2011). Available at http://sensesofcinema.com/2011/feature-articles/godardenglishcannes-

the-reception-of-film-socialismes-navajo-english-subtitles/#b26 (accessed 2 June 2016).

Bresson, Robert, 'La Question', interview by Michel Delahaye and Jean-Luc Godard, *Cahiers du cinéma* 178 (May 1966), pp. 26–35 and 67–71.

Brophy, Philip, 'Musique concrete, electronica and sound art', *The Wire* 164 (October 1997). Available at http://www.philipbrophy.com/projects/scrthst/ShatterHarmony.html (accessed 10 October 2015).

Brown, Julie, 'Music in film and television', in J.P.E. Harper-Scott and Jim Samson (eds), *An Introduction to Music Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 201–18.

Bruno, Giuliana, 'Projection: on Akerman's screen, from cinema to the art gallery', in Dieter Roelstraete and Anders Kreuger (eds), *Chantal Akerman: Too Far, Too Close* (Antwerp: Ludion and M HKA, 2012), pp. 15–26.

Callahan, Vicki, 'The evidence and uncertainty of silent film in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*', in Michael Temple and James S. Williams (eds), *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), pp. 141–57.

Champetier, Caroline, 'Entretien avec Caroline Champetier', with Thierry Jousse, *Cahiers du cinéma* (Special Issue) 437 (November 1990), pp. 54–7.

Clements, Elicia, 'Virginia Woolf, Ethel Smyth, and music: listening as a productive mode of social interaction', *College Literature* 32/3 (2005), pp. 51–71.

Collet, Jean, 'An audacious experiment: the sound track of *Vivre sa vie*', in Royal S. Brown (ed.), *Focus on Godard*, trans. Royal S. Brown (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp. 160–2. First published in *Le Revue du son* 116 (December 1962), p. 513.

Connor, Steven, 'The modern auditory I', in Roy Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the present* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 203–23.

———, 'CP: or, a few don'ts by a cultural phenomenologist', *parallax* 5/2 (1999), pp. 17–31.

Cook, Adam, 'Beauty in the defects: an interview with Fabrice Aragno', *MUBI: Notebook Feature* (23 October 2012). Available at https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/beauty-in-the-defects-an-interview-with-fabrice-aragno (accessed 18 April 2016).

Cuddy-Keane, Melba, 'Virginia Woolf, sound technologies and the new aurality', in Pamela L. Caughie (ed.), *Virginia Woolf in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), pp. 69–96.

Cusick, Suzanne G., 'Towards an acoustemology of detention in the "global war on terror"', in Georgina Born (ed.), *Music, Sound and Space: Transformation of Public and Private Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 275–91.

Dall'Asta, Monica, 'The (im)possible history', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 350–63.

Daney, Serge, 'Les Cahiers à Nantes', *Cahiers du cinéma* 275 (April 1977), pp. 63–4.

———, 'The tracking shot in *Kapo*', in Daney, *Postcards from the Cinema*, trans. Paul Douglas Grant (Oxford: Berg, 2007), pp. 17–35. Originally pub. as 'Le travelling de *Kapo*', *Trafic* 4 (Fall 1992) (P.O.L. Editions, 1992).

———, 'Preface' [1977], *Ici et ailleurs* (17 January 2009). Available at http://kino-slang.blogspot.co.uk/2009/01/preface-to-here-and-elsewhere-by-serge.html (accessed 23 April 2016).

Davies, Ann, 'High and low culture: Bizet's *Carmen* and the cinema', in Phil Powrie and Robynn Stilwell (eds), *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film* (Aldershot: Ashgate), pp. 46–56.

Davis, Erik, 'Recording angels: the esoteric origins of the phonograph', in Rob Young (ed.), *Undercurrents: The Hidden Wiring of Modern Music* (London: Continuum, 2002), pp. 15–24.

Doane, Mary Ann, 'The voice in the cinema: the articulation of body and space', *Cinema/Sound* (special issue), ed. Rick Altman, *Yale French Studies* 60 (1980), pp. 33–50.

———, 'Temporality, storage, legibility: Freud, Marey, and the cinema', *Critical Inquiry* 2/2 (1996), pp. 313–43.

Didi-Huberman, Georges, 'Opening the camps, closing the eyes: image, history, readability', in Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman (eds), *Concentrationary Cinema: Aesthetics as Political Resistance in Alain Resnais's Night and Fog (1955)* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), pp. 84–125.

Dubois, Philippe, 'Video thinks what cinema creates: notes on Jean-Luc Godard's work in video and television', trans. Lynne Kirby, in Raymond Bellour (ed.) with Mary Lea Bandy, *Jean-Luc Godard Son + Image 1974–1991* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992), pp. 169–85.

Durham, Scott, '"An accurate description of what has never occurred": history, virtuality, and fiction in Godard' in Tom Conley and T. Jefferson Kline (eds), *A Companion to Jean-Luc Godard* (Malden, MA: John Wiley and Sons, 2014), pp. 441–55.

Eicher, Manfred, 'The periphery and the centre', in Steve Lake and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM* (London: Granta Books, 2007), pp. 7–12.

Emmerson, Simon and Denis Smalley, 'Electro-acoustic music', *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online* http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/08695 (accessed 9 July 2015).

Epstein, Jean, 'Slow-Motion Sound' [1948], trans. Robert Lamberton, in Elizabeth Weiss and John Belton (eds), *Film Sound: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp. 143–4.

Fairfax, Daniel, 'Artavazd Pelechian', *Senses of Cinema* 62 (March 2012). Available at http://sensesofcinema.com/2012/great-directors/artavazd-pelechian/ (accessed 8 May 2016).

Forrester, Viviane, 'What Women's Eyes See', in Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (eds), *New French Feminisms: An Anthology* (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1981), pp. 181–2. Originally published as 'Le regard des femmes', *Parole… elles tournent*, (des femmes de) Musidora (Paris: Éditions des femmes, 1976), pp. 12–13.

Fox, Albertine, 'Love and work differently: Anne-Marie Miéville's cinema of companionship', *Sight and Sound* online (February 2016). Available at http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/love-work-differently-anne-marie-mieville-s-cinema (accessed 1 March 2016).

Glennie, Evelyn, 'Hearing essay' (1 January 2015). Available at https://www.evelyn.co.uk/hearing-essay/ (accessed 20 March 2016).

Goebbels, Heiner, 'Sound and vision: ECM and film', in Steve Lake and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM* (London: Granta Books, 2007), pp. 128–9.

Gontarski, Stan E. and C.J. Ackerley, '"The knowing non-exister": thirteen ways of reading *Texts for Nothing*', in Stan E. Gontarski (ed.), *A Companion to Samuel Beckett* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 289–95.

Gould, Glenn and Curtis Davis, 'The well-tempered listener', in John McGreevy (ed.), *Glenn Gould: By Himself and His Friends* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1983), pp. 275–94.

Grant, Catherine, 'Home-movies: the curious cinematic collaborations of Anne-Marie Miéville and Jean-Luc Godard', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 100–17.

Griffiths, Paul and Steve Lake, '"We work in the dark": an interview with Manfred Eicher', in Steve Lake and Paul Griffiths (eds), *Horizons Touched: The Music of ECM* (London: Granta Books, 2007), pp. 373–80.

Grivel, Charles, 'The phonograph's horned mouth', trans. Stephen Sartarelli, in Douglas Kahn and Gregory Whitehead (eds), *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-garde* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 31–61.

Gunning, Tom, 'The cinema of attractions: early film, its spectator and the avant-garde', *Wide Angle* 8/3/4 (1986), pp. 63–70.

Hatten, Robert S., 'A theory of musical gesture and its application to Beethoven and Schubert', in Anthony Gritten and Elaine King (eds), *Music and Gesture* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), pp. 1–23.

Hemment, Drew, 'Affect and individuation in popular electronic music', in Ian Buchanan and Marcel Swiboda (eds), *Deleuze and Music* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), pp. 76–94.

Jaques-Dalcroze, Émile, 'The technique of moving plastic', trans. Fred Rothwell, *The Musical Quarterly* 10/1 (1924 (1922)), pp. 21–38.

Jones, Jonathan, 'Why everyone should see this painting', *Guardian* (1 May 2007). Available at http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2007/may/01/art (accessed 7 July 2014).

Jullier, Laurent, 'JLG/ECM', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 272–87.

Kahn, Douglas, 'Introduction: histories of sound once removed', in Douglas Kahn and Gregory Whitehead (eds), *Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-garde* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 1–29.

Kaminsky, Peter, *Unmasking Ravel: New Perspectives on the Music* (New York: University of Rochester Press).

Kearney, Richard, 'Bachelard and the epiphanic instant', *The Expanding Horizons of Continental Philosophy* 33, special SPEP issue of *Philosophy Today* 52 (2008), pp. 38–45.

Kinderman, William, 'The piano music: concertos, sonatas, variations, small forms', in Glenn Stanley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 105–28.

Lachman, Kathryn, 'Music and the gendering of colonial space in Karin Albou's *Le chant des mariées*', *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image* 7/1 (Spring 2013), pp. 1–18.

Leong, Daphne and David Korevaar, 'Repetition as musical motion in Ravel's piano writing', in Peter Kaminsky (ed.), *Unmasking Ravel: New Perspectives on the Music* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011), pp. 111–42.

Leutrat, Jean-Louis, 'The power of language: notes on *Puissance de la parole*, *Le dernier mot* and *On s'est tous défilé*', in Michael Temple and James S. Williams (eds), *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), pp. 179–88.

Levinson, Jerrold, 'Musical thinking', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 27 (2003), pp. 59–68.

Malraux, André, 'Sketch for a psychology of the moving pictures', in Susanne K. Langer (ed.), *Reflections on Art: A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1958), pp. 317–27.

Matt, Gerald, 'Preface', in Gerald Matt and Angela Stief (eds), *Our Century* (Vienna: Ursula Blickle Stiftung/Kunsthalle Wier/Kerber Verlag, 2004), pp. 6–9.

Mawer, Deborah, 'Musical objects and machines', in Deborah Mawer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 47–67.

———, 'Ballet and the apotheosis of the dance', in Deborah Mawer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ravel* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 140–61.

McClary, Susan, '*Carmen* as perennial fusion: from habanera to hip-hop', in Chris Perriam and Ann Davies (eds), *Carmen: From Silent Film to MTV* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005), pp. 205–16.

Morris, Richard, '"To realise the ideal": miscellaneous remarks on Godard's conceptual processes apropos of *Sauve qui peut (la vie)*', *Film Studies* 5/1 (2004), pp. 1–7.

Mouffe, Chantal, 'Art and democracy: art as an agonistic intervention in public space', *Open* 14, *Art as a Public Issue* (2008), pp. 6–15.

Müller, Jürgen E., '"I am playing leapfrog with myself"', *Vertigo* 30 (2012). Available at https://www.closeupfilmcentre.com/vertigo_magazine/issue-30-spring-2012-godard-is/i-am-playing-leapfrog-with-myself/ (accessed 23 April 2012).

Mulvey, Laura, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', *Screen* 16/3 (Autumn 1975), pp. 6–18.

———, 'The hole and the zero: the Janus face of the feminine in Godard', in Raymond Bellour (ed.) with Mary Lea Bandy, *Jean-Luc Godard Son + Image 1974–1991* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992), pp. 75–88.

Musy, François, 'Les Mouettes du pont d'Austerlitz: entretien avec François Musy', *Cahiers du cinéma* 355 (1984), pp. 12–17.

Niney, François, 'Montage with images that don't exist: interview with Artavazd Pelechian', trans. Timothy S. Murphy, *Discourse* 22/1 (Winter 2000), pp. 94–126.

———, 'Artavazd Peleshian, or, reality taken apart', in Artavazd Peleshian, *Our Century*, ed. Gerald Matt and Angela Stief (Vienna: Ursula Blickle Stiftung/Kunsthalle Wier/Kerber Verlag, 2004), pp. 421–5.

Norton, James, 'King Lear', *Vertigo* 30 (2012). Available at http://www.closeup-filmcentre.com/vertigo_magazine/issue-30-spring-2012-godard-is/king-lear/ (accessed 30 April 2013).

Palombini, Carlos, '"Dans un bureau à Marseille, un jeune ingénieur rêve"', in Pierre Schaeffer, *Essai sur la radio et le cinéma: esthétique et technique des arts-relais 1941–1942*, created and ed. Sophie Brunet and Carlos Palombini (Paris: Éditions Allia, 2010), pp. 63–111.

Parsons, Deborah, 'Introduction', in Virginia Woolf, *The Waves* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2000), pp. v–xvii.

Pelechian, Artavazd, 'Montage-at-a-distance, or: a theory of distance', trans. Julia Vassilieva, *Lola* (December 2015). Available at http://www.lolajournal.com/6/distance.html (accessed 3 June 2016).

Phelps, David, 'No comment two (the invention of facts)', *MUBI: Notebook Feature* (28 November 2012). Available at https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/no-comment-two-the-invention-of-facts (accessed 4 May 2016).

Poizat, Michel, '"The blue note" and "The objectified voice and the vocal object"', trans. Arthur Denner, *Cambridge Opera Journal* 3/3 (1991), pp. 195–211.

Pollock, Griselda, 'Death in the image: the responsibility of aesthetics in *Night and Fog* (1955) and *Kapò* (1959)', in Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman (eds), *Concentrationary Cinema: Aesthetics as Political Resistance in Alain Resnais's Night and Fog* (1955) (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), pp. 258–301.

Powrie, Phil, 'Godard's *Prénom: Carmen* (1984), masochism, and the male gaze', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 31/1 (1995), pp. 64–73.

Ravel, Maurice, 'Finding tunes in factories', *New Britain* (9 August 1933).

Rivette, Jacques, 'De l'Abjection', trans. David Phelps with the assistance of Jeremi Szaniawski, *Cahiers du cinéma* 120 (June 1961), pp. 54–5. Available at http://www.dvdbeaver.com/rivette/OK/abjection.html (accessed 10 July 2015).

Rosenbaum, Jonathan, 'The importance of being perverse (Godard's *King Lear*)', *The Chicago Reader* (1988). Available at http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/the-importance-of-being-perverse/Content?oid=872015 (accessed 26 March 2013).

———, 'The stuff of dreams', *Guardian* (January 2004). Available at https://www.theguardian.com/film/2004/jan/31/1 (accessed 2 May 2016).

Saxton, Libby, '*Night and Fog* and the concentrationary gaze', in Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman (eds), *Concentrationary Cinema: Aesthetics as Political Resistance in Alain Resnais's Night and Fog (1955)* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), pp. 140–51.

Schaeffer, Pierre, 'L'Élément non visuel au cinéma (I). Analyse de la "bande son"', *La Revue du cinéma* 1/1 (1 October 1946), pp. 45–8.

———, 'L'Élément non visuel au cinéma (II). Conception de la musique', *La Revue du cinéma* 1/2 (1 November 1946), pp. 62–5.

———, 'Les Nouvelles techniques sonores et le cinéma', *Cahiers du cinéma* 37 (July 1954), pp. 54–6.

Silverman, Kaja, 'The author as receiver', *October* 96 (Spring 2001), pp. 17–34.

Smalley, Denis, 'Space-form and the acousmatic image', *Organised Sound* 12/1 (2007), pp. 35–58.

———, 'Spectromorphology: explaining sound-shapes', *Organised Sound* 2/2 (1997), pp. 107–26.

Stojanova, Christina, 'Jean-Luc Godard and Ludwig Wittgenstein in new contexts', in Douglas Morrey, Christina Stojanova and Nicole Côté (eds), *The Legacies of Jean-Luc Godard* (Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2014), pp. 127–41.

Szaloky, Melinda, 'Sounding images in silent film: visual acoustics in Murnau's "Sunrise"', *Cinema Journal* 41/2 (Winter 2002), pp. 109–31.

Wiedenfeld, Grant, 'Bazin on the margins of the seventh art', in Dudley Andrew (ed.), with Hervé Jaubert-Laurencin, *Opening Bazin: Postwar Film Theory and Its Afterlife* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 262–7.

Williams, James S., 'Music, love, and the cinematic event', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 288–311.

———, 'Silence, gesture, revelation: the ethics and aesthetics of montage in Godard and Agamben', in Asbjørn Grønstad and Henrik Gustafsson (eds), *Cinema and Agamben: Ethics, Biopolitics and the Moving-Image* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), pp. 27–54.

Wills, David, 'Techneology or the discourse of speed', in Marquard Smith and Joanne Morra (eds), *The Prosthetic Impulse: From a Posthuman Present to a Biocultural Future* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 237–63.

———, 'The audible life of the image', *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy – Revue de la philosophie française et de langage française* 18/2 (2010), pp. 43–64. Available at http://jffp.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/jffp/article/view/212 (accessed 2 June 2015).

Witt, Michael, 'On communication: the work of Anne-Marie Miéville and Jean-Luc Godard as "sonimage" from 1973 to 1979', PhD dissertation, University of Bath, 1998.

———, 'Montage, my beautiful care, or histories of the cinematograph', in Michael Temple and James S. Williams (eds), *The Cinema Alone: Essays on the Work of Jean-Luc Godard 1985–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), pp. 33–50.

———, 'Altered motion and corporal resistance in *France/tour/détour/deux/enfants*', in Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds), *For Ever Godard* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004), pp. 200–13.

———, 'Archaeology of *Histoire(s) du cinéma*', in Jean-Luc Godard, *Introduction to a True History of Cinema and Television*, ed. and trans. Timothy Barnard (Montreal: Caboose Books, 2014), pp. xv–lxix.

Woolf, Virginia, 'The cinema', in David Bradshaw (ed.), *Virginia Woolf: Selected Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 172–6.

Worth, Sarah E., 'Wittgenstein's musical understanding', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 37/2 (April 1997), pp. 158–67.

Young, John, 'Reflections on sound image design in electroacoustic music', *Organised Sound* 12/1 (2007), pp. 25–33.

Scores

Beethoven, Ludwig van, *String Quartet No. 14 in C# minor*, Op. 131, rev. by Wilhelm Altmann (London: Ernst Eulenburg, 1970).

———, *String Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132*, rev. by Wilhelm Altmann (London: Ernst Eulenburg, 1911).

Ravel, Maurice, *Bolero* (Paris: Durand & Cie, 1929).

Saladino, Michele, *La Gioconda, English Adaptation, Complete Arrangement for Voice and Pianoforte* (Milan: Ricordi, 1986).

Select Filmography

Films by Godard and Godard–Miéville

Opération béton (*Operation Concrete*), 1955, 35 mm, b/w, 20 min.
À bout de souffle (*Breathless*), 1960, 35 mm, b/w, 90 min.
Vivre sa vie. Film en douze tableaux (*My Life to Live*), 1962, 35 mm, b/w, 85 min.
Une femme mariée. Fragments d'un film tourné en 1964 (*A Married Woman: Fragments of a Film Shot in 1964*), 1964, 35 mm, b/w, 98 min.
Bande à part (*Band of Outsiders*), 1964, 35 mm, b/w, 95 min.
Pierrot le fou, 1965, 35 mm, col, 110 min.
Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle (*Two or Three Things I Know About Her*), 1966, 35 mm, col, 87 min.
La Chinoise, 1967, 35 mm, col, 95 min.
Week-end, 1967, 35 mm, col, 96 min.
Le Gai savoir (*The Joy of Knowledge*), 1968, 35 mm, col, 95 min.
Tout va bien (*All's Well*), co-dir. Jean-Pierre Gorin, 1972, 16 mm, col, 95 min.
Ici et ailleurs (*Here and Elsewhere*), co-dir. Anne-Marie Miéville (co-dir. Jean-Pierre Gorin for *Jusqu'à la victoire*), 1974, 16 mm and video, col, 53 min.
Numéro deux (*Number Two*), 1975, 35 mm and video, col, 88 min.
Comment ça va (*How Is It Going?*), co-dir. Anne-Marie Miéville, 1976, 16 mm and video, 78 min.
Six fois deux (Sur et sous la communication) (*Six Times Two (On and Under Communication)*), co-dir. Anne-Marie Miéville, 1976, video, col, 610 min (12 episodes).
France tour détour deux enfants (*France tour detour two children*), co-dir. Anne-Marie Miéville, 1979, video, col, 12 x 25 min episodes.
Scénario de Sauve qui peut (la vie). Quelques remarques sur la réalisation et la production du film (*Scenario for Sauve qui peut (la vie): A few remarks on the making and production of the film*), 1979, video, col, 21 min.
Sauve qui peut (la vie) (*Every Man for Himself, aka Slow Motion*), 1979, 35 mm, col, 87 min.
Lettre à Freddy Buache. À propos d'un court-métrage sur la ville de Lausanne (*Letter to Freddy Buache: About a short film on the town of Lausanne*), 1981, video transferred to 35 mm, col, 11 min.
Passion, 1982, 35 mm, col, 87 min.

Scénario du film Passion (*Scenario of the Film Passion*), in collaboration with J. Bernard Menoud, Anne-Marie Miéville and Pierre Binggeli, 1982, video, col, 53 min.

Prénom Carmen (*First Name: Carmen*), 1983, 35 mm, col, 83 min.

Soigne ta droite: Une place sur la terre (*Keep Your Right Up: A Place on Earth*), 1987, 35 mm, col, 81 min.

King Lear, 1987, 35 mm, col, 90 min.

On s'est tous défilé (*We All Ran Away*), 1987, video, col, 13 min.

Puissance de la parole (*The Power of Words*), 1988, video, col, 25 min.

Nouvelle vague (*New Wave*), 1990, 35 mm, col, 89 min.

Allemagne année 90 neuf zéro (*Germany Year 90 Nine Zero*), 1991, 35 mm, col, 62 min.

Hélas pour moi (*Oh, Woe Is Me*), 1993, 35 mm, col, 84 min.

JLG/JLG. Autoportrait de décembre (*JLG/JLG: December Self-Portrait*), 1995, 35 mm, col, 56 min.

Histoire(s) du cinéma, 1998, video, col, 264 min. Episodes: 1A *Toutes les histoires* (*All the (Hi)stories*); 1B *Une histoire seule* (*A Solitary (Hi)story*); 2A *Seul le cinéma* (*The Cinema Alone*); 2B *Fatale Beauté* (*Fatal Beauty*); 3A *La Monnaie de l'absolu* (*Aftermath of the Absolute*); 3B *Une Vague nouvelle* (*A New Wave*); 4A *Le Contrôle de l'univers* (*The Control of the Universe*); 4B *Les Signes parmi nous* (*The Signs Amongst Us*).

Éloge de l'amour (*In Praise of Love*), 2001, 35 mm and digital video, b/w and col, 94 min.

Notre musique (*Our Music*), 2004, 35 mm, col, 76 min.

Film socialisme, 2010, HD video, col, 102 min.

Les trois désastres (*The Three Disasters*), 2013, 35 mm, HD video 3D, b/w and col, 15 min 52 sec (segment in *3X3D* – see below).

3X3D, Jean-Luc Godard, Peter Greenaway and Edgar Pêra, 2013, 35 mm, HD video 3D, b/w and col, 69 min.

Adieu au langage (*Goodbye to Language*), 2014, 35 mm, HD video 3D, b/w and col, 67 min.

Films by other directors

Nanook of the North, dir. Robert Flaherty, 1922, silent, 75 min.

Battleship Potemkin, dir. Sergei Eisenstein, 1925, silent, 69 min.

The Man with a Movie Camera, dir. Dziga Vertov, 1929, silent, 68 min.

Étude cinégraphique sur une arabesque (*Cinegraphic Study of an Arabesque*), dir. Germaine Dulac, 1929, silent, 7 min.

Fury, dir. Fritz Lang, 1936, 89 min.

La Grande illusion (*The Great Illusion*), dir. Jean Renoir, 1937, 113 min.
Un homme marche dans la ville, dir. Marcel Pagliero, 1950, 85 min.
Images pour Debussy (*Images for Debussy*), dir. Jean Mitry, 1951, 22 min.
Nuit et brouillard (*Night and Fog*), dir. Alain Resnais, 1955, 31 min.
Au hasard Balthazar, dir. Robert Bresson, 1966, 95 min.
Korol Lir (*King Lear*), dir. Grigori Kozintsev, 1971, 137 min.
Le Camion, dir. Marguerite Duras, 1977, 80 min.
Falkenau, vision de l'impossible (*Falkenau, Vision of the Impossible*), dir. Emil Weiss, 1988, 62 min.
François Musy on Sound, Direct Sound, Godard, dir. Larry Sider, 2003, 40 min.
Le chant des mariées (*The Wedding Song*), dir. Karin Albou, 2008, 100 min.
Les plages d'Agnès (*The Beaches of Agnès*), dir. Agnès Varda, 2008, 110 min.

Discography

Nouvelle Vague, 2-CD (Munich: ECM New Series 1600/01, 1997), Part I: 50:18 min; Part II: 38:50 min.
Histoire(s) du cinéma, 5-CD (Munich: ECM New Series 1706–10, 1999). Box set of 5 CDs and 4 multilingual art books.
Godard/Jousse: Les écrans sonores de Jean-Luc Godard (France Culture and Harmonia Mundi, 2000).

Index

Works by Godard, Godard and Jean-Pierre Gorin, and Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville are listed under their titles.