

PHILIPPE GRANDRIEUX: SONIC CINEMA

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Philippe Grandrieux: Sonic Cinema is a study of the auteur stripped off from auteurist concerns and problems thereof. Scanning the entire career of Grandrieux, Greg Hainge writes *Philippe Grandrieux: Sonic Cinema* as a conceptual accompaniment to Grandrieux's work resonating with its formal audacity. In the introduction to the book, Hainge clarifies how his methodology differs from other scholars', like Brophy, Chion, or Birtwistle's engagement with sound and cinema. *Philippe Grandrieux: Sonic Cinema*, in Hainge's words, "approaches the cinema through concepts and vocabularies that originate in the realm of the sonic ... such as 'accompaniment', 'harmony', 'resonance'", and rhythm (p. 13). Although the title of this book is "*Philippe Grandrieux: Sonic Cinema*", it should not mislead one to think that this book is a study of sound in Grandrieux's cinema. Indeed, Grandrieux considers sound as the most important element in a film; however, Hainge's utilization of the sonic operates beyond the auditory phenomenon. Rather than being aimed to analyze sound in Grandrieux's films, the sonic is deployed to engage with his works in video, TV, and cinema and specifically images as "defined primarily by movement in time" (p. 13). Sound or, to put it in better terms, the sonic is used in this book in an expanded acoustic sense by Hainge to describe Grandrieux's cinema as well as earlier video installations in the 1970s and TV productions in the 1980s that provide the director with the conceptual breakthrough happening in 1990 and defining his approach to filmmaking in the rest of his career. The conceptual breakthrough, defined as "a principle or diagram for a new mode of image production that can be put into operation by any film-maker", is about relating to a work on its own terms by resonating with the internal forces that are constitutive of the work itself (p. 44). Hainge shows how, rather than imposing a narrative or authorial intentionality, Grandrieux displays in his own later cinematic works the principle of a relation to alterity outside fixed precepts of representational modes, narrativization, ideology, historicism, morality or psychology that predetermine and hence limit the possibilities of the world the artwork relates to. This principle of relation is further discus-

sed in the section titled "Relation" ending the chapter on *Sombre* (1998). As Hainge discusses in the first two chapters of the book, this principle is already found in Grandrieux's earlier works such as *Via Video*, the 1975 video work on Claude Viallat and how an image comes into being, or his collaboration with Thierry Kuntzel in the audiovisual translation of Jean Paulhan's text, *La Peinture Cubiste* (1990).

One of the greatest strengths of Hainge in this book is his incorporation of all kinds of academic and critical receptions of Grandrieux's works not shying away from tackling the ones that are overtly and harshly disparaging or the ones that criticize his own previous published work on the director. The greatness lies not only in his ease with having a dialog with others who are openly acerbic in their criticisms but also in the way he skillfully points to the deficiencies in their approaches and reasoning that are limited by an expectancy of cognitive processing, foregrounding of cerebrality, narrativization, or auteurist agential control. Hainge shows his principle of relating to a work on its own terms in harmony with and accompanying the forces internal to it and its formal elements is necessary not only in the relation the filmmaker establishes between the body of the cinema and one's own body but also in the relation between those films and their audiences who encounter them during their transmission, propagation, and emission. In "Intermezzo", the fourth chapter following the author's engagement with Grandrieux's video works, TV productions, and long-form documentaries and before the analyses of his films, Hainge best clarifies these new figural processes during the making, transmission, and reception of Grandrieux's works and what it means "to figure the body in terms of a sonic body", i.e. "a wave form" in constant relation to other bodies and its environment (p. 80).

Intermezzo is also the chapter in which Hainge warns against reducing the sonic to other senses, specifically tactility that has become the popular to-go sense in the scholarship of contemporary affect theory. Despite tactility's utilization against distancing, totalizing, and perspectival emphasis of vision, Hainge points to its failures in the way the scholarship ties it to efforts of making meaning. Similarly, in this chapter and earlier in the introduction, Hainge warns against a generalization of affect, a tendency found in Deleuzians and especially Deleuzian theories of affect that tend to overlook form, as noted by Brinkema. Following Grandrieux and taking Deleuze's book on Bacon as more relevant to cinema and Grandrieux's relation to cinema than Deleuze's *Cinema* books, Hainge weaves a thread of affect, figure, the figural, pre-identitarian states, the Real, vibrations, and for-

ces to complete an embroidery of “the sonic” in Grandrieux in this book. This act of weaving the thread of Deleuze on Bacon into an embroidery of the sonic is unpacked most explicitly in the intermezzo and the afterword and is found in dialog with Artaud on cruelty in the “Openings” section ending the chapter on *La Vie nouvelle* (2002). Ordering his chapters according to a not very strict chronology in the filmmaker’s career, Hainge discusses the video works Grandrieux produces before turning to his next feature-length film, *Un lac* (2008). In the chapter titled “The Turn to Nature”, Hainge foregrounds the aesthetic similarities between these video works and Grandrieux’s feature films that he also phrases as a “desire to reconfigure the scopic” borrowing Metz’s term, which translates to a “nouvelle vision” in Brenez’s terms that Hainge also borrows to explain Grandrieux’s attempt to trouble Cartesian perspectivalism stripping the image from obeying a social overcoding of reality in three-dimensionality.

Listening to *Un lac*, paying attention to the film’s attention to the act of listening, Hainge turns to Nancy’s “l’écoute (listening)”. By the help of this attentive mode of listening in Nancy, Hainge is able to utilize the sonic to relate to the images and sounds in Grandrieux’s film, whose interest in desubjectification surfaces in these relations as well as resonant or harmonic relations occurring among all the bodies, i.e. the filmmaker’s, the actors’, the cinema’s, the audiences’. I would offer that Hainge, similarly, resonates with Grandrieux and sonic cinema attentively, in the way he relates to Grandrieux’s works not discriminating against his lesser known ones like his video installations or film essays. The chapter that follows the one on *Un Lac* is about the filmmaker’s recent works from the last decade including a film essay on Masao Adachi and a triptych titled *Unrest*, more directly reminiscent of Deleuze on Bacon’s triptychs. The triptych format of display as split into three with *Unrest*, also naming the triptych, as the centerpiece and *White Epilepsy* and *Meurtière* on each side resonates with these works’ transformations from text to moving images as art installations, to semi-choreographed dance performances to films. Finalizing his close analyses, which could be better termed as “acts of attentively relating to”, of Grandrieux’s works with his last film from 2015, *Malgré la nuit*, Hainge returns to his and Grandrieux’s starting point about Deleuze’s book on Bacon being a book about the cinema in the concluding chapter. Operating outside representation, individuating forms of being, or fixed and predetermined psychological, moral, socio-political, historical contextualization, the cinema, for Grandrieux and Hainge, is a sonic one in its most basic form of an “interplay of light and sound in time and space” (p. 261) that propagate and relate at a

pre-conceptual and pre-identitarian level with a new vision of bodies traversing us in their rendering thinkable unthinkable forces.