



Post-Cinematic Affect

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Post-Cinematic Affect is about what it feels like to live in the affluent West in the early 21st century. Specifically, it explores the structure of feeling that is emerging today in tandem with new digital technologies, together with economic globalization and the financialization of more and more human activities. The 20th century was the age of film and television; these dominant media shaped and reflected our cultural sensibilities. In the 21st century, new digital media help to shape and reflect new forms of sensibility. Movies (moving image and sound works) continue to be made, but they have adopted new formal strategies, they are viewed under massively changed conditions, and they address their spectators in different ways than was the case in the 20th century. The book traces these changes, focusing on four recent moving-image works: Nick Hooker's music video for Grace Jones' song Corporate Cannibal; Olivier Assayas' movie Boarding Gate, starring Asia Argento; Richard Kelly's movie Southland Tales, featuring Justin Timberlake, Dwayne Johnson, and other pop culture celebrities; and Mark Neveldine and Brian Taylor's Gamer.

Post-Cinematic Affect Details

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From Reader Review Post-Cinematic Affect for online ebook

ralowe says

this fun little book is so much fun because its objects of study by dint of the postcinematic itself is all online for free! grace jones' corporate cannibal is on youtube duh and the movies are all on instant. as a true postcineaesthete i had them on while reading about them. the effect is in aiding me to believe shaviro's capitilism's-overthrowal-via-accelerationism thesis by watching flicks i'd otherwise would not have even ever in remotest of human possibility given 2 shifts about. i mean the movie gamer? seriously? although i did truly love olivier assayas' boarding gate, and it does aesthetically illustrate the current global condition where through immaterial and affective value can be extracted from all points of production. i got to indulge some schadenfreude watching bro dude richard kelly's flop southland tales. not that i wasn't begrudgingly entertained by DD, it's just that dude is such a dude and he totally got the hookup by dating drew Barrymore. dude could never get booed at Cannes enough.

Post1000Tension says

In 2012, before I really had any sense of myself as a leftist, I read Steven Shaviro's blogpost on GAMER and it totally altered my way of seeing. By using a film's formal qualities to illustrate the way the world works, Shaviro spoke to me in a language I'd never heard. I'd always been interested in the philosophical and ideological implications of movies, but never had I been so challenged to adjust my own understanding to an interpretation like this. It was the most absorbing dissection of the unlikeliest source material, I thought at the time. I'd seen GAMER, but there was no way I could pull everything out of it that Shaviro had. It was a bracing moment of encountering a known unknown, realizing all this knowledge was out there and I'd yet to discover it.

Since then I've read so much of Shaviro's work, explored so many of his favorite artworks, and spent so much time thinking over his conceptual apparatus that this book almost feels like an anti-climax. However, I only feel that way because I've caught up at last with the ideological grounding that makes Shaviro's readings possible in the first place. It's like finally coming full-circle, back to the source of all my intellectual wanderings of the past six years. And even now I can tell I'll be revisiting this book constantly throughout my life. What else is there to say? This book has seeped into my DNA, and I wouldn't be the same without it (despite only just now reading it). Can't think of a recommendation any higher than that.

Ayanna Dozier says

Shaviro's account for post-cinematic affect is an appealing and, dare I say, affective one. While I was thoroughly engaged and, at many times thoroughly convinced, by Shaviro's argument there were some notable problems with the texts that he analyzed in addition to how he drew his conclusions that left me feeling a bit sour. The latter emotive is most notably felt when reading his account of Grace Jones' "Corporate Cannibal" video. From Shaviro's analysis of Jones' video it is clear that he is a fan of not only Jones but of the video itself, however, his adoration and praise of Jones is not enough to ignore the doggy analysis of race and the "posthuman Black subject" that he argues from his reading of the music video. Lacking citations from Black studies scholars, Shaviro's argument unfortunately plays into the dominant

trend in critical studies and popular media that believes "certain" Black artists are able to "transcend" their race and move beyond their body, and by extension no longer need critical race analysis because they are beyond skin. I have several issues with this line of thinking. One, I see it as primarily serving a white audience who are not only unfamiliar with Black studies but have no desire in engaging with the ways in which Black scholars and artists have renegotiated our relationship to the flesh that begins to rethink what scholar and poet Fred Moten notes as how Blackness is a history of objects speaking back. Moten's statement here refers to the fact Slavery, where Black bodies were dehumanized and made into objects. Thus contemporary Black artists relationship with the body, may at times, speak to that relationship and history of being treated as "thing/object." If an artist plays with the corporeality of their body in a way that disavows their embodiment it is not an effort to blur the distinction of Blackness to make it more accessible to white purveyors but rather could suggest playing with a different history/relationship to Blackness all together. The problem with Shaviro's argument here is that it leaves that complex relationship and history out to favor an argument that might make Jones' body more digestible to white readers. Moreover, the specious belief that Black artists need to "transcend" their race is reductive, tired, and lazy. It is an argument that is used to grant access to Black bodies' history and culture to non-Black individuals that would otherwise feel left out from their art practices and narratives. While I do not believe that this was Shaviro's intention, his argument certainly left room for this impact to be felt.

In later chapters Shaviro makes interesting choices for the cinematic films that make up the argument for a post-cinematic affect. I had a hard time connecting to his selection of films which are, *Southland Tales*, *Boarding Gate*, and *Gamer*. For the most part Shaviro was able to convince me that these films (all of which he notes are polarizing and at times are boring and "bad") are able to produce affective responses through formal digital techniques but at the same time I can't help but think that these films were chosen because they provoke negative responses within the reader (and viewers). I applaud the decision to present "bad" (not bad as in bad-good but bad as in boring-bad, in my opinion, which is what I think of *Southland Tales*, although I admit I may need to watch the film again) films as case studies with an awareness that your reader may disagree but I just can't help but think that some of these arguments would have flowed better if Shaviro did not spend so much time trying to reason with his reader over the selection of films (which is clear that he anticipated some resistance). Overall, *Post-Cinematic Affect* is a concise book that offers clarity to the digital techniques used today that make contemporary cinematic viewing practices different today than how they were in the past.

Matthew Siemers says

The book frequently wanders, providing interesting insight into the media productions during their analysis, but fails to make the relevant connections between these tangents and the subject matter of the book. Less than a quarter of the book actively addresses the topics put forth in the introduction, creating a lot of intelligent (and very good) rambling on the part of the author.

The review of each media production was interesting and thought provoking, but there isn't much in common between the projects. Many times these projects were used as a means to express the author's views on neoliberal capitalism instead of showing how neoliberal capitalism affects the ways we view and perceive the films.

Good ramblings, but fails to address the proposed intentions of the book set forth in the introduction. Individually the reviews are worth a read, but not collectively.

Jessica Zu says

The theory part is a bit weak, but the analysis of the movies are top-notch!

Steven says

Short book. Read it in a few days. Shaviro is always interesting and "current." This book rehashes a lot of the ideas from his first book, "The Cinematic Body" (which I recommend for a more fleshed out account of the role of affect in film viewing), but it's different (and interesting) in that it focuses solely on digital film production, not celluloid. This raises some very old questions about mimesis, representation, and visual fascination, in some new, post-analog, post-cinematic, ways.
