Launching

As we launch this journal, we think of the scene in *Citizen Kane* when Orson Welles, as the young Kane, reads the “Declarations of Principle” he has just written for his newspaper *The New York Daily Enquirer*. We do not claim the same aims—nor anticipate the same future—but we feel something of the same excitement. Journals are not easy to get started, but this one came into being in a short amount of time after we conceived its goals. A number of very fine journals are already published on film, but none, we feel, puts film (and the visual arts in general) into the dynamic and developing intellectual current of our time.

Why do that? Why not just talk about film like film—as Detective Kinderman suggests in the novel and film versions of *The Exorcist*, why not just “critique” films? Because for us film is a window to the mind; it is the art form of all the art forms that requires the most mental and perceptual involvement. And this happens to be the time when we are learning about the mind and perception with extraordinary detail and rapidity. Scientists, psychologists, and philosophers are beginning to apply this knowledge to art—seeking to understand its roots, its function in our culture, its role in our psychic makeup, its creation by our mind and brain.

We focus on film but we also include in our purview other visual arts. We do so because all are interrelated in the apparatus of the mind and each extends our understanding of the others. Film has always been the most technological of art forms, not only in its dependence on the machinery of filming and exhibition but also in its ability to create new visions on the screen. At the same time film has expanded its venues and the term itself may apply to a work that has never involved any stage of film stock. When we talk about film we may refer to a work that has been made digitally and that we have seen digitally projected in a theater, or perhaps on a DVD player, television movie channel, portable computer, or iPod. We start with the mindset that we will discuss film in the traditional mode of the movie theater, but at the same time we are prepared to discuss alternative ways of viewing that differently influence our responses to the work.

Similarly, we are prepared to publish any critical or theoretical methodology that seems consistent and reasonable. Our intent is to open, not close, the discourse. We are convinced that no single methodology or theory has a

unique claim to the truth, that our understanding of art (and ourselves) is contingent upon multiple approaches, and even that a debate among these approaches is educational (and fun). We are responsive to the application of psychoanalysis and cognitivism—so far the two major psychological schools in our understanding of film. But we are also responsive to the application of such fields as evolution, genetics, and neuroscience that are changing the ways we think about everything. We will, of course, be responsive to traditional methods of interpretation that root our discussions in actual films themselves. We are an interdisciplinary journal prepared to engage in any thought that will enlighten our understanding and appreciation of film, art, and the mind.

The six essays in our first issue convey a number of approaches, sometimes in a single essay, but all with the same goal of expanding our awareness of how the filmic medium (and in one case a portrait) works and impacts on the viewer. The first essay, by Ira Konigsberg, seeks to relate the new work in neuroscience to psychological film studies and establish its relevance to modern film theory. The second essay, by Gilbert Rose, begins as a clinical case study involving a portrait and develops into a theory of motion and visual art supported by neuroscience. Patrick Colm Hogan's essay uses a cognitive approach to explain how our emotions are influenced by anticipation and discontinuity and then documents the argument with techniques of editing in Muzaffar Ali's classic Bollywood film *Umrao Jaan*. Norman Holland's essay on metafilm (films in which the physical medium of film is part of the story) uses Freud's concept of the "uncanny" as a jumping off place to explain our responses to such films (in this case *Adaptation*) in the context of neuroscience and the physical brain. Silvia Bell's essay on *Lovers of the Arctic Circle*, a film by the remarkable Spanish director Julio Medem, demonstrates how a psychoanalytic theory of childhood development can be drawn from and, at the same time, open up our understanding of a film. We finish the essays with a flourish when Torben Grodal explains to us why we can like films with negative experiences through his application of evolutionary psychology.

Although it has a life of its own, our journal is officially published by the Forum for Movies and Mind, a relationship we hold most dear. The Forum began in 1985 (back then known as The Forum for the Psychoanalytic Study of Film). Members of the Forum, including Bernardo Bertolucci, have led or participated in discussions of more than 200 films in most of the major cities in the U.S. and many abroad. The Forum has co-sponsored programs with the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the New School in New York City; the American Film Institute, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Gallery of Art, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Georgetown, George Washington, and American Universities in Washington D.C.; and the Mill Valley Film Festival in California.

This relationship benefits the journal greatly, bringing it to the attention of the wider world and opening its pages to screenings, symposia, and conferences.

Since the audience of this journal is interdisciplinary, the essays are written to be both challenging and accessible. In future issues we will be expanding our coverage by including interviews with filmmakers and symposia on specific topics. While we cover a wide range of films, from the well-known to the obscure, we will seek to bring attention to films and filmmakers that best support Hugo Münsterberg's 1916 prediction that film, "more than other art [is] destined to overcome outer nature by the free and joyful play of the mind." We welcome expressions of interest and feedback as we go forward in this new venture.

The Editors