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## [Introduction to] Wim Wenders: Making Films That Matter

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# Introduction: New Perspectives on Wim Wenders as Filmmaker and Visual Artist

Olivier Delers and Martin Sulzer-Reichel

In a career that spans more than forty-five years, Wim Wenders is still busy adding to his extensive body of work: in the past two years alone, he has released two full-length feature films, exhibited his large-scale landscape photography at the Museum Kunstpalast in Düsseldorf, and announced a new documentary project featuring conversations with Pope Francis. And yet, despite being considered one of the leading figures of New German Cinema and a “cult” filmmaker thanks to films like *Alice in the Cities* (1974), *Paris, Texas* (1984), and *Wings of Desire* (1987), Wenders in recent years has played a relatively minor role in the field of film studies.<sup>1</sup> The last monograph on his films, Alexander Graf’s *The Cinema of Wim Wenders: The Celluloid Highway*, was published in 2002,<sup>2</sup> and, if we exclude the sudden proliferation of studies devoted to his collaborations with Peter Handke, research on Wenders has been stagnant and somewhat directionless, in particular for films released in the twenty-first century. No one, for instance, has written about Wenders’s ongoing visual and narrative exploration of Los Angeles and the American West in a second trilogy of sorts—*Million Dollar Hotel* (2000), *Land of Plenty* (2004), *Don’t Come Knocking* (2005)—and very little has been said about his acclaimed documentaries *Pina* (2011) and *Salt of the Earth* (co-directed with Juliano Salgado; 2014).

Wenders has certainly not been silent or resting on his laurels. On the contrary, over the past fifteen years, he has taken on new challenges, not only by exploring new motifs and using new technology in his substantial filmic and photographic output but also by acting as a champion of European cinema and reflecting upon the power of images in the digital age. Of particular interest to film studies scholars is a recent publication *Inventing Peace: A Dialogue on Perception*, published in 2013. Conceived as a series of dialogues between Wenders and his coauthor

Mary Zournazi, the book addresses Wenders's attempt to be more socially and politically engaged in his later films. It also theorizes what Wenders calls a "peaceful" gaze, a technical and spiritual way of looking at the world, inspired in large part by the films of Yasujiro Ozu, that has the potential to inspire images and films that participate in a new visual language of peace.<sup>3</sup>

*Inventing Peace* belongs to a larger body of self-reflective and critical writings that Wenders has produced over the years, most notably *The Logic of Images* (1992), *On Film* (2001), and *A Sense of Place* (2004). Along with the fascinating director's commentaries he has recorded for new releases of his films on DVD, these essays and interviews reveal the importance for Wenders of thinking critically, as both a practitioner and a public intellectual, about what images do. They also offer a unique vantage point from which to examine his creative process and to understand what might motivate him to keep making new films. Perhaps the following statement best explains how Wenders sees the role of cinema in the twenty-first century:

Entertainment today constantly emphasizes the message that things are wonderful the way they are. But there is another kind of cinema, which says that change is possible and necessary and it's up to you. Any film that supports the idea that things can be changed is a great film in my eyes. It doesn't have to be overtly political. On the contrary a film can promote the idea of change without any political message whatsoever but in its form and language can tell people that they can change their lives and contribute to progressive changes in the world. Any movie that has that spirit and says things can be changed is worth making.<sup>4</sup>

For Wenders, the "idea of change" need not be exclusively political but should be apprehended in relation to the idea that cinema has a role to play in helping us, as human beings, move forward and see things from multiple perspectives. What he sees as the power of "another kind of cinema" also sounds like a personal manifesto and a key to reading his films. In other words, following a recipe for success that one has mastered is not enough—Wenders once responded to critics by saying that he no longer knew how to make a film like *Wings of Desire*, for instance.<sup>5</sup> One has to make films that matter *now* and that imbue the auteur perspective with a keen sense of the ethical responsibilities of filmmaking.

Do Wenders's films still matter? And, if so, how do they matter? We attempt in the collection of chapters here to answer these questions by taking stock of research published in the past fifteen years or so and arguing that Wenders

studies deal with some of the most pressing questions posed in film studies and, more broadly, cultural studies. Three major themes emerge in the scholarship published on Wenders in the past fifteen years or so: first, the intermedial strategies used by Wenders to adapt texts written by Peter Handke and to make them come alive on the screen; second, the problematic representation of the non-European other and of subaltern spaces in several Wenders films; and, third, the transnational and translingual dimension of his *oeuvre*. We also pay particular attention to Wenders's newer films and show how they direct us toward new ways of questioning film as a medium. Wenders's unique painterly gaze channels the style, mood, and perspective of realist painters like Edward Hopper or Andrew Wyeth. In this respect, several of his films are decidedly transmedial, moving seamlessly between an original written text, its visual translation into film, and references to painterly images that inform the meaning of particular scenes. Wenders is also a pioneer in 3-D auteur filmmaking and has used the technology to capture the movements and energy of Pina Bausch's *Tanztheater in Pina*, to establish closer emotional identification between characters and viewers in *Every Thing Will Be Fine* (2015), and to explore the proximity of stage and filmic storytelling in *The Beautiful Days of Aranjuez* (2016). Finally, we focus on the theoretical underpinnings of Wenders's visual aesthetic of peace and analyze its implementation in his films, arguing that the concept, even though it stems from Wenders's own faith and personal vision, can be useful for thinking about making films that matter in the twenty-first century.

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Adaptation and intermediality, the first overarching theme that stands out in the recent scholarship on Wenders, both harkens back to the beginning of his career (*The Goalkeeper's Fear of the Penalty* in 1972, a film adaptation of a novel with the same title by Peter Handke) and is directly relevant to one of his latest films (*The Last Days of Aranjuez*, also drawn from Handke's repertoire). No less than four books on the collaboration between the two men were published between 2004 and 2011: David Coury's *The Return of Storytelling in Contemporary German Literature and Film: Peter Handke and Wim Wenders* (2004), Carlo Avventi's *Mit den Augen des richtigen Wortes: Wahrnehmung und Kommunikation im Werk Wim Wenders und Peter Handkes* (also in 2004), Simone Malaguti's *Wim Wenders' Filme und ihre intermediale Beziehung zur Literatur Peter Handkes* (2011), and Martin Brady and Joanne Leal's *Wim Wenders and Peter Handke: Collaboration,*

*Adaptation, Recomposition* (2011). This outpouring is not particularly surprising since, as Brady and Leal have noted, the Wenders/Handke relationship is “perhaps the most important collaboration between a writer and filmmaker in the history of European cinema.”<sup>6</sup> Of course, Wenders has adapted works or coauthored scripts with other major literary figures: Patricia Highsmith for *The American Friend* (1977), Sam Shepard for *Paris, Texas* and *Don’t Come Knocking*, and Peter Carey for *Until the End of the World* (1991), to name only the most important ones. But the Wenders-Handke partnership offers a particularly interesting case study because it reflects a range of adaptational strategies and challenges the assumption that an adaptation is a mere “copy” that should be as faithful as possible to the original. Their collaboration exemplifies some recent advances in the field of adaptation studies: adaptation is about “the mutation of forms across media” and should be understood as “metamorphosis,” “transvocalization,” “performance,” or “actualization.”<sup>7</sup> Handke, in a joint television interview with Wenders, added another, more loaded, term to characterize their work together: “betrayal.” Whereas Handke felt that it was unnecessary, for instance, to represent the act of writing the dialogue between the two lovers in *The Last Days of Aranjuez*, Wenders argued that the person standing behind the typewriter had to be represented because it was also him, the film director—both the eyes that frame images and the brain in charge of transposing the story he is adapting.<sup>8</sup> Hence, “betrayal” is not necessarily a negative term. On the contrary, it is a central aspect of the complex relationship between two different media with their own strengths and limitations and between two ways of thinking about authorship and its textual presence.

While adaptation theory can certainly offer new concepts or metaphors for deciphering the multiple dimensions of the Wenders-Handke relationship, the films born out of their collaboration have the potential to complicate our sense of what it means for them to work together and to enter into a creative dialogue through words and images. At one end of the spectrum, adapting means translating a novel into a different medium and bringing to life both Handke’s “goalkeeper” and his concerns with the ways in which language frames our perception of reality. At the other end of the spectrum, it means living with Handke’s texts and drawing inspiration from them, even if they are not referenced directly in the film itself (as was the case when Wenders was preparing for and shooting *Alice in the Cities*).<sup>9</sup> Sometimes, adaptation involves a ménage à trois of sort. For *Wrong Move* (1975), Handke rewrites one of Goethe’s masterpieces for the screen, inspiring Wenders to cast Rüdiger Vogler as an angst-ridden

Wilhelm Meister and Nastassja Kinski as a nymphet Mignon. *Wings of Desire* also functions as a polytextual film, in which Paul Klee's painting *Angelus Novus* and Walter Benjamin's reference to the "Angel of History" cross paths with Handke's poem "Song of Childhood" and Wenders's own vision of angels roaming around a divided Berlin that still bears the scars of the Second World War. These four creative encounters make it possible for Wenders to stretch the limits of what cinema, as a medium, can convey. He can "reflect essayistically," "assimilate images and music," "address the problem of writing through the iconography of German Romantic painting," and "commission poetic dialogue to signify the capacity of film to tell stories that were once the province of the oral tradition." In that sense, the Wenders/Handke films constitute "a tetralogy on the strengths and weaknesses of literary cinema and . . . a protracted experiment in different modes of collaborative productions."<sup>10</sup>

In the 1970s, that experiment addressed openly some of the debates that agitated New German Cinema: the overreliance on literary texts by filmmakers even as they tried to emancipate themselves from traditional narrative modes, but also the more fundamental question of the inherent "literariness" of cinema. In his early films, Wenders wonders whether it is "possible for the camera to film objects without embedding them in language" and whether "one can 'see' the world without 'reading' it."<sup>11</sup> The nature of language is still a central theme in later Wenders films, even as he progressively moves away from "the tradition of anti-narrative cinema" and displays "a newfound advocacy for storytelling."<sup>12</sup> But language is now explored in connection with the waning power of images and the interaction of words and images in a medium that is as obviously visual as it is inescapably entangled in words. Brady and Leal explain that

[Wenders's] initial faith in the authenticity of images gives way to a growing distrust of their signifying power, not least as his awareness of their co-option and manipulation by the entertainment and advertising industries goes. As he becomes more suspicious of the image, his belief in the auratic power of literary language increases, precisely because it would seem able to resist the co-option for nefarious purposes to which images are so susceptible. A growing commitment to language as integral to cinematic signification is coupled with an increased conviction in the vital function of narrative in the process of structuring and making human experience liveable.<sup>13</sup>

The different layers of this transition are methodically laid out in film essays such as *Tokyo-Ga* (1985) and *Lisbon Story* (1994), but this new outlook on cinema

is perhaps best represented in *Wings of Desire*, admittedly the high point of the Wenders-Handke relationship and the film in which the common thread of their collaboration, “melancholy self-reflexivity,” is most fully realized.<sup>14</sup> In *Wings of Desire*, self-reflexivity is not meant to draw attention to the construction or sheer materiality of the film, or, in other words, it is not used as a postmodern way of “defamiliarizing” the viewer. Instead, it participates in the articulation of a complex intermedial poetics, refined through a series of drafts that enter into dialogue with one another. Wenders said that he could only imagine *Wings of Desire* because he had made *Tokyo-Ga* a few years earlier; likewise *Lisbon Story* is implicitly about continuing the conversation with the three masters (Truffaut, Tarkovsky, and Ozu) to whom *Wings of Desire* is dedicated. These drafts are also conversations with other texts, literary texts like Handke’s poem, palimpsestic historical texts, and of course visual texts, whether they belong to a network of foundational images or are perverted by the omnipresence of commercial signs.

*Wings of Desire* continues to fascinate film scholars, and some of the most interesting insights about the film concern its complex intermedial dimension and the presence of two full-fledged authorial voices, Wenders’s and Handke’s. The film explores “issues of authorship, agency, readerly and writerly texts,” but it does so by “blurring” different perspectives and foregrounding formal elements: “the intermixing of narrative and non-narrative film styles, the use of color and black-and-white film stock, and characters speaking directly to the camera.”<sup>15</sup> Likewise, the successful integration into the film of Peter Handke’s “Songs of Childhood” goes beyond its affinity with the main themes and overall mood of the film. It is also part of a quest to make cinema “speak the language of poetry.”<sup>16</sup> Thomas Martinec speaks of a “film-poem” and lists a number of cinematic elements that bring to mind the formal features of poetry: “the emphasis on spontaneity in the making of the film . . . ; the attempt to film the invisible; the coherence achieved by light and camera treatment rather than a narrative; the concern for audible words; and the musical use of languages.”<sup>17</sup> In a 2017 essay, Pablo Gonçalves argues that understanding the intermedial qualities of *Wings of Desire* requires taking a closer look at the script itself, as “an archival record of the development process” and as “a transitional sort of writing, a text that wants to be another text.”<sup>18</sup> In a sense, the film and script enter into a relation of “reverse ekphrasis.” Instead of being a text that brings a visual text to life in words, the script is a medium that requires its reader to imagine and dramatize what a written text would look like as a series of

images. This reversal is important for Handke, “a writer who has transposed poetic dilemmas of ekphrasis between scripts, radio plays, novels and films.”<sup>19</sup> It is perhaps even more important to understand another way in which Wenders has used ekphrasis in his films, as a recreation in moving images of paintings that have influenced his own visual universe.

Critics have commented on Wenders’s tendency to linger on a particular situation or landscape and suggested that it lends his films a unique atmospheric and painterly quality. Gonçalo, for instance, compares his camera work to Vermeer’s paintbrush, but the relation between Wenders and the painters who have influenced him is not only stylistic.<sup>20</sup> It is a mimetic attempt to make a painting come alive and to have it bear both formally and thematically on the film. Brigitte Peucker has linked Wenders’s attempt to stage two paintings by Vermeer in *Until the End of the World* to the tradition of the *tableau vivant*.<sup>21</sup> First theorized by Diderot in the eighteenth century, the *tableau vivant* is by definition transmedial. It relies on the potential of three art forms (painting, drama, and sculpture) to produce a strong emotional reaction in the viewer—and, as a result of that reaction, to highlight the moral implications of the situation depicted. In mixing elements of Vermeer’s *Girl with a Pearl Earring* and *Young Woman with a Water Pitcher* in a single scene, Wenders adds other representational layers to his *tableau vivant*. In *Until the End of the World*, the characters’ visual experiences can also be processed through a special neuro-camera that captures brain waves at the same time as it records images, so that what is recorded can eventually be “seen” by the hero’s mother, who has lost her sight. The result is striking. Seen through that filter, the pixelated images look like “animated watercolors”<sup>22</sup> or like an abstract version of a pointillist painting. As Peucker notes, they possess a strong inter pictorial presence, in turn bringing to mind the works of Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter, or Chuck Close.<sup>23</sup> In this case, the intense *mise en abyme* serves to advance one of the central themes of *Until the End of the World*: both the yearning for original images and the impossibility of reclaiming them, whether they come from childhood memories or have been collected through a lifetime of observing and drawing inspiration from our visual experiences. For Peucker, the presence of *tableaux vivants* in film makes apparent one of the central characteristics of cinema: it is “a medium where different representational systems collide.”<sup>24</sup> In a sense, many of Wenders’s films explore this collision, either as adaptation of written narrative material or as an ekphrastic inquiry focused on the continuities and tensions between cinema and painting.



In a 2012 TV interview, Wenders confesses that he has been using Hopper's paintings as models since the 1970s and that he likes them for their intensely kinetic and anticipatory qualities: they always give the viewer "the impression that something violent is going to happen next."<sup>25</sup> Hopper's influence can be felt in several early films, both visually—in the green and red tones that dominate *The American Friend*<sup>26</sup>—and thematically, to the extent that the struggles of Wenders's characters in *The Road Trilogy*, for instance, echo Hopper's central themes, "the futility of action, the difficulty of meaningful connection, and the solace of being alone."<sup>27</sup> In *The End of Violence* (1997), Wenders recreates Hopper's masterpiece, *Nighthawks*, as a scene in an intradiegetic Hollywood crime film, and this reinforces the neo film noir aesthetics of the film itself. Here again, Wenders's filmic ekphrasis is highly self-reflexive: the viewer can see the camera moving along the diner's windowpane and the director following the shooting on his monitor.

In subsequent films, Hopper is quoted in more subtle ways, but, paradoxically, his paintings seem to be everywhere. For instance, many shots in *Million Dollar Hotel* look into private rooms through a window. They bring to mind iconic paintings by Hopper that portray individuals alone and isolated in their room (such as *Hotel Room* [1931], *Room in New York* [1932], and *Night Windows* [1928]). In *Don't Come Knocking*, the cinematography borrows the color tones and poetic realism that define Hopper's style. The buildings and houses filmed by Wenders in Butte, Montana resemble Hopper's rendition of Brooklyn and of small-town life in the 1930s and 1940s (such as *Williamsburg Bridge* [1928], *House at Dusk* [1935], and *Pennsylvania Coal Town* [1947]). Rather than recreating specific paintings, Wenders explores visual motifs and perspectives that recur in Hopper's *oeuvre*: the voyeuristic observation of private lives, the looking in from an elevated outside position or capturing moments when characters stare at a window in a pensive or melancholic way, the importance of windows as frames that double the frame of the painting or the shot, and, more generally, the omnipresence of glass panes (in private homes, diners, or store fronts) that act as both a physical separation and an invitation to enter the lives of others. Hopper and Wenders both like to sketch out stories even if they are never fully realized—except perhaps as aesthetic experiments. As was the case with Handke, one can speak of "non-hierarchical adaptation" when it comes to Wenders referencing Hopper's paintings in his films.<sup>28</sup> Except in instances when he is purposefully creating a *tableau vivant*, Wenders has internalized a large set of images which resurface as visual echoes or retinal memories that

viewers may recognize or not. Visual experiences are palimpsestic by nature, and one should always be mindful of the fact that an image can conceal, recall, cite, or transpose many other past images. In other words, Wenders suggests that every image that he has shot exists in relationship with all the images that he has seen or remembers. Hopper kept a quote from Goethe in his wallet that is strangely applicable to Wenders's own creative process and relationship with the visual world: "The beginning and end of all literary activity is the reproduction of the world that surrounds me by means of the world that is in me, all things being grasped, related, re-created, molded and reconstructed in a personal form and original manner."<sup>29</sup> For Wenders, ekphrasis can take the form of a mimetic search that makes an image come to life and activates the story contained in it. It can also be part of a personal aesthetic journey in which the real activates visual memories and is imagined anew in a filmic form in relation to a specific narrative project.

The intermedial relationship between painting and film is complicated by the influence of other media and technologies on Wenders's adaptational and creative endeavors. For example, the first traces of Wenders's fascination with Andrew Wyeth's work can be seen in a 2000 photograph titled *Wyeth Landscape*. More than the lone farmhouse placed at the center of the photograph, it is the Wyethan color palette that Wenders perfectly captures in his shot, particularly in the brownish-yellow tones of the prairie grass and in the subtle grades of blue of the cloudy sky. In *Inventing Peace*, Wenders reflects on Wyeth's most famous painting, *Christina's World*, and sees in it both photographic and filmic qualities. It exudes "a freshness that you think you know only from photo snapshots," and it is not "static"—in fact it gives the viewer the feeling that the "woman might turn around in the next second."<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, Wenders shot a scene based on *Christina's World* for *Every Thing Will Be Fine* but did not include it in the final cut. Still, Wyeth's influence is vividly reflected in the film. It can be felt in the casting of Charlotte Gainsbourg, who shares the same frail silhouette and bony features as Christina; in the rural isolation of the farmhouse where her character lives; in the formal attention to windows and doors; and in the film credits themselves.<sup>31</sup> Wenders's obsession with Wyeth and his paintings produces a complex transmedial relation between the different texts that are interlaced in his film. In the process of being adapted for the screen, the original screenplay by Bjørn Olaf Johannessen makes referencing and recreating certain images possible, and this, in turn, takes the story, the cinematography, and the casting in unexpected directions. Conversely, Wyeth's visual legacy is also necessarily transformed by the narrative material

that it influenced, since it now serves as a visual network of references for stories and places that were not originally present in the painter's imagination.

Wenders's painterly gaze is defined by the obsessive behavior of the fan, the careful and detailed work of the artist who takes on the challenge of transposing a painting into a different medium, and the challenge of aesthetic experimentation. Perhaps the best example of this three-pronged approach is the way in which Wenders takes advantage of 3-D technology in *Every Thing Will Be Fine* to convey the sense of depth that characterizes many of Wyeth's paintings. In a short yet beautiful scene, Wenders shoots a sheer curtain floating in the air in front of an open window. The moment is clearly inspired by Wyeth's *Wind from the Sea*, a painting which Wenders also directly references and discusses in *Inventing Peace*. The 3-D version of the film creates a visual separation between the window in the background and the curtain, which slowly moves in front of the viewers' eyes, in a space that is no longer constrained by the flatness of the cinema screen. By translating a visual impression typically achieved by the masterful application of pigments on a canvas into a different medium, Wenders succeeds in rendering in a 3-D film what he sees as the great quality of Wyeth's paintings:

Wyeth painted the lace of that curtain for months,  
and the momentary and utterly elusive split second of a gust of wind  
that gently moved it.  
Again, as in *Christina's World*, there is the instant and eternity.  
Wyeth teaches us, or helps us, to see both.  
And maybe that's the greatest lesson  
for our damaged and limited perception in need of guidance  
to learn again to be in the moment and outside of its time.  
He makes us see the wonder of both,  
which is exactly what our daily avalanche of images is hiding.  
The more pictures we see,  
the less we see how extraordinary every slice of life is.<sup>32</sup>

The *Wind from the Sea* scene in *Every Thing Will Be Fine* places us close to the objects of everyday life, and, by doing so, transforms our perception of them. They are no longer "in the background" but live and breathe with us, as if the documentary impulse of the filmmaker/photographer created an ontological complicity between the intradiegetic and extradiegetic worlds.

The fascination with American landscapes and cityscapes has been a constant in Wenders's films, from the views of the New York skyline shot from the Empire State Building in *Alice in the Cities* to the very conscious references to Andrew Wyeth's paintings in *Everything Will Be Fine*. At the same time, the clear shift in his filmography from transatlantic to transnational cinema is hard to miss. The first part of his career can be summarized by the term "Amereurope," which Silvestra Mariniello coined to characterize "the encounter between (or 'the marriage' of) the American landscape (human, sonar and musical, geographic, etc.) and a European gaze replete with memory."<sup>33</sup> Wenders's early films explore the ambiguous relation between German and American cultures, as it relates to both cultural norms and ways of seeing (in *Kings of the Road*, Robert famously says to Bruno: "The Yankees have colonized our subconscious") and also to the conception of what it means to be an auteur filmmaker, a question discussed in *The State of Things* (1982) through a pointed criticism of Hollywood and the film "industry." After *Tokyo-Ga* (1985), *Until the End of the World* (1991) is the first Wenders film to travel to non-Western spaces. Originally conceived to include stops on every continent, the film "tries hard to be a global film" as it takes the viewer from Venice to the Australian outback.<sup>34</sup> The opening scene of *Lisbon Story* (1994) depicts "the first journey across the newly opened European 'frontier'" before making Lisbon the stage of an elusive love story that doubles as a sustained reflection on cinema and sensory memory.<sup>35</sup> In *Land of Plenty* (2004), Wenders returns to a city that he knows well, Los Angeles, but offers a "transnational contribution to the memory of 9/11" by following characters from different faiths and backgrounds and "merging national and transnational experiences in a new understanding of human suffering."<sup>36</sup>

Of course, Wenders's 1998 documentary *Buena Vista Social Club* stands out as another attempt to tell a compelling transnational story. Even though the film was well-received by critics and loved by audiences around the world, it has also been the target of some particularly virulent criticisms. For instance, Tanya Hernandez argues, in an essay titled "The Buena Vista Social Club: The Racial Politics of Nostalgia," that the film foregrounds "a narrative of an ahistorical nostalgia for a prerevolutionary Cuba that was presumably more appreciative of its Black talent than socialist Cuba, and thereby ends up serving as a justification for the unilateral reentry of U.S. corporate interests into the affairs of Cuba."<sup>37</sup> The attack is, to some extent, ideologically motivated, but, in Hernandez's view, the film glorifies Cuba's "faded mansions and glamorous hotels" and implies that "socialist Cuba does not appreciate the talent of its populace in the way a White

North American like Ry Cooder can.”<sup>38</sup> While it is true that Cooder’s position as the American “expert” who rediscovers the lost talents of a prerevolutionary past is problematic, it is only one part of a broader, more pervasive nostalgia in Wenders’s approach to the places and people he films in Cuba.

In fact, it draws our attention to a larger issue that several critics have raised: his lack of interest in challenging Western-centric and neocolonial views in representations of the non-European “other.” For instance, Dimitris Eleftheriotis suggests that Wenders’s representation of “foreign” places is problematic in *Until the End of the World*:

The film represents the world as a set of attractive and exotic locations that provide a commercially appealing and visually stunning background to the action. The engagement with “other” cultures is completely superficial as they are often reduced to orientalist stereotypes. While “depth” is required to re-capture Europe’s “soul,” “surface” is rendered adequate for the representation of Russia, Siberia, China and Japan as the worn out clichés demonstrate.<sup>39</sup>

Others have taken issues with how Wenders represents Lisbon. The city “appears frozen in time at the beginning of the twentieth century” in *Until the End of the World*,<sup>40</sup> while in *Lisbon Story*, “the issue of colonialism and post-colonialism, and of Lisbon’s multiculturalism, is almost completely erased from Wenders’s film.”<sup>41</sup> More generally, there seems to be a discrepancy between the nature of the Wendersian gaze and the imperatives of a postcolonial and postorientalist consciousness for which the act of looking back nostalgically is seen as a betrayal of political ideals that should be shared by “progressive” artists of all types. For many, Wenders’s position as one of the figureheads of European auteur cinema means that he has a responsibility at least to gesture toward an awareness of the colonial weight of the European gaze when it is applied to peripheral spaces.

This discrepancy helps us consider why most of Wenders’s films, more or less since *Wings of Desire*, have been received with reservations—or, in some cases, misunderstood—by the specialized press. For the most part, Wenders has not created the kind of films that have been expected of him. Critics continually fault him for his elliptical style of storytelling, for instance, but rarely point out the deep thematic continuities that run through both his fiction films and documentaries. In the past thirty years, Wenders has in fact continued to blaze his own trail as a visual artist and theorist, without giving in to the dictates of what auteur films should look like or of the kinds of stories they should tell. Our point here is that the transnational dimension of his films cannot be properly

understood without exploring at the same time the type of visual project that underpins them. Representations of cultural otherness in Wenders's films, as fraught as they may be, cannot be detached from his ongoing reflections on the nature and power of images.

*Tokyo-Ga* provides a matrix of sorts for resolving the tension between the drive to formal innovation and a tendency toward orientalism. On the one hand, a large portion of the film is devoted to what Westerners would typically consider the peculiarities of Japanese culture. On the other hand, the film is less a documentary concerned with the visual transcription of observed reality than a true "film essay."<sup>42</sup> Counterintuitively perhaps, Tokyo is not the main theme or the center of the film. It is a means to an end for a personal reflection on the act of seeing, one that parallels the filmmaker's journey through Japanese images, from Ozu's postwar films to the saturation of signs brought about by the mass production and consumption of television images in the 1970s and 1980s. *Tokyo-Ga* is not about recording reality but about how the act of recording images is deeply connected to the act of seeing, to the impression of having already seen as representation something that is in fact experienced for the first time, and of remembering through the filter of how a particular place has been filmed by others.

Those who fault Wenders for his nostalgic or orientalist tendencies also acknowledge—albeit sometimes unwittingly or in roundabout ways—that Wenders's visual epistemology can complement in productive ways the cultural dimension of his fiction films and documentaries. In *Until the End of the World*, for instance, Wenders's tendency to rely on clichés in filming places like Lisbon, Tokyo, or San Francisco is intimately linked to a *mise en abyme* of images that are part of our collective memory and that continue to frame our visual approach to these places. The second part of the film makes it clear that visual memories are both what structure our psyches and what threaten to destroy them. In that sense, the film "can be read not only as an allegorical manifesto on the future of cinema but also as a fiction about the future of technologies of vision and vision itself."<sup>43</sup> It also functions as a warning against defining a monolithic transnational aesthetics and as "a humanist critique of the myth of the 'shrinking world': far from bridging the distance between people, or between individuals, and their dreams and desires, modern technologies of vision appear to be alienatory and destructive."<sup>44</sup> Similarly, *Lisbon Story* is constructed as a palimpsestic film which harkens back to the days of silent cinema and Soviet formalism.<sup>45</sup> As Paulo de Medeiros admits: "Wenders has always searched for identification through

alterity; but in the case of Lisbon, even though the city can be seen as central to his memory, it is not so much a representation of Lisbon that one finds but rather a phantom of Wenders's own desire.<sup>46</sup> Wenders suggests that we distance ourselves from the immediacy of "meaning" (of the symbolic value and weight of cultural representations) and invites us instead to look at the images that he shoots as being deeply embedded in a journey of self-discovery and in a visual grammar that both defines and organizes fictional and lived experiences.

As Alberto Medina brilliantly explains in his essay "Jameson, 'Buena Vista Social Club' and Other Exercises in the Restoration of the Real," Wenders is not interested in "documenting" or in selecting images that preserve an idealized past. For Medina, filming places like Tokyo, Lisbon, or Havana is an "exercise in restoration," but in the sense that "the very meaning of cinema is restoration, the recovery of a reality whose truth has somehow been lost."<sup>47</sup> This approach offers a more productive way of thinking about Wenders's transnational ambitions. It does not preclude readings of his films focused on storytelling and the exploration of new spaces, yet, at the same time, it ascertains the primacy of the aesthetic process: a process that is dialogic and intertextual in nature (Tokyo and Ozu's films, Lisbon and Manoel de Oliveira) and centrally concerned with reflecting upon what cinema can and cannot accomplish. To put it differently, Medina recognizes that "Wenders' films exist somewhere between the faithful depiction of reality and its nostalgic re-production."<sup>48</sup> But rather than seeing in this a lack of political consciousness, he connects it to an ethical yearning focused on reclaiming a visual essence that has been lost in the postmodern age and to an attempt to "save the truth of images from extinction."<sup>49</sup>

It is not surprising that cameras—and those who use them—are featured prominently in both Wenders's documentaries and fiction films. They serve as a constant reminder that there is something at stake for the filmmaker beyond telling stories or capturing outside reality. Cameras speak, so to say, and they speak different visual languages. Translingualism in Wenders's body of work is a natural extension of his approach to transnational cinema. It invites a dialogue between the different cinematic languages that a filmmaker can learn and speak and the multiple languages spoken in many of his films. In doing so, it also gestures toward a larger aesthetic and ethical ambition: the desire to outline a new visual language of peace that would influence both what cinema does and how it does it.

Wenders himself resorts to the language metaphor, in particular to justify his interest in 3-D technology. As he explains in interviews and in the book *Pina*:

*The Film and the Dancers*, the challenge of filming *Pina* in 3-D went beyond the necessity of designing, testing, and ultimately using new types of cameras.<sup>50</sup> It also meant learning a new visual grammar and exposing viewers to a cinematic language that they did not speak fluently or that they had perhaps “mislearned.” Indeed, for Wenders, 3-D aesthetics were appropriated and defined too quickly by big studio productions and equated with speed, action, and special effects. As a result, its potential for other film genres was not seriously considered, and his 3-D “trilogy” (*Pina*, *Every Thing Will Be Fine*, and *The Beautiful Days of Aranjuez*) stands out as an attempt to try out different modes made possible by 3-D.

*Pina*, of course, is about Pina Bausch, but the film also posits that the creation of a new cinematic language was necessary to record the language of dance, and that it is only by listening to the nine different languages spoken by Pina’s dancers that one can get to the heart of who she was and what she meant to them. The dancers’ monologues tell a number of “translingual migration stories” and, in doing so, help “restage a transnational *Academia polyglotta* that variously tests, agitates and elides presumptive contemporary models of multilingual citizenship.”<sup>51</sup> The first monologue, however, already indicates a slippage from a literal to a metaphorical understanding of language. “Meeting Pina was like finding a language, finally,” one of her dancers tells us. “Before, I didn’t know how to talk, and then she suddenly gave me a way to express myself, a vocabulary.”<sup>52</sup> The close-up on the dancer’s face, enhanced by the depth provided by 3-D, shows the strong emotional bond that Pina had with members of her ensemble. The fact that the dancer is technically not speaking—we hear her voice but her lips do not move—also gives the sensation that we have direct access to her thoughts. At the same time, Wenders’s formal choices—3-D, the paradox of a silent monologue, and the foreignness of the spoken languages—all create a certain distance from the scene and hint at its metatextual dimension. The filmmaker himself is looking for a vocabulary and a way to express an art form that is hard to capture for the screen.

These metatextual moments are regularly repeated in *Pina* and systematically foreground the deep connections between spoken language, the language of dance, and the language of cinema. For instance, the presentation in the film of one of Pina Bausch’s most celebrated pieces, “Café Müller,” begins with the dancers as the performance gets underway. The wide-angle shot of the stage quickly fades into a shot of a small-scale model of the space, with the same white walls, grey floor, and randomly arranged black chairs. In his Director’s Commentary, Wenders explains the reason for this transition: distracting the



audience's attention from one of the shortcomings of 3-D. From a distance, the actors can appear "as if they were miniaturized."<sup>53</sup> Two of Pina's dancers walk around the model stage and discuss—in French, their native language—their memories of how Café Müller came to be. We learn about Pina's creative process, from her idea of adding chairs, to her set designer's suggestion of having a male dancer move them around to create a safe path for a female dancer who keeps her eyes closed and thus does not see the obstacles in her way. But the scene does more than document Pina's artistry or her dancers' recollections. It links a shot of a stage in 3-D with a three-dimensional model of that stage on which moving bodies finally appear as the film returns to the performance. In "Translating Pina for *Pina*," Carrie Smith-Prei perfectly summarizes what is at stake here:

The body is the language transferred between the media of stage and film, or between choreographic process and filmic process. . . . Wenders' choice of 3D film causes the medium of film to display its materiality at every turn; while attempting to simulate the real experience of sitting in the Tanztheater, the film shows clearly that this is a staged reality.<sup>54</sup>

In *Pina*, the intermedial process is more than just a formal exercise: it is embodied through the physical presence of the dancers and the polyphony of their voices.

Wenders's translanguaging approach to cinema culminates in *Pina*, but it is also clearly visible in a number of other films, so much so that one could wonder: Does the presence of multiple spoken languages drive formal innovation in his films? Or is it perhaps the other way around? Suffice it to say that there is a strong codependency between the two. *Salt of the Earth*, for instance, moves seamlessly between English, Portuguese, and French, as the film provides biographic information on its main subject, the Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado, makes his photographs come alive in his commentary, and frames his work and life story into a coherent narrative. But the real challenge facing Wenders and his co-director Juliano Salgado had to do with a different kind of "language" issue: How to get the photographer to talk about his work in such a way that it would come alive for the viewers? A traditional interview format in which Sebastião Salgado would look at photographs on a flat surface failed to produce quality footage. Salgado struggled to be both engaged and engaging. The two directors ended up creating a setting that put the photographer in direct conversations with his photographs by having him sit directly in front of the image and concealing the camera behind it. The visual trick made it possible to show Salgado's face

superimposed on his images and to let the ruggedness of his facial features—also shot in black and white—speak for themselves and add to his words.

Wenders's preoccupation with language can be traced back to early films like *Alice in the Cities*. Even though Philip Winter can express himself in both German and English, he struggles with a more profound translation issue: he has difficulties putting into words what he has seen and experienced during his road trip from North Carolina to New York. Even a visual language—the “instant” representation through Polaroid pictures of American scenes—has difficulty capturing the essence of particular moments and places.<sup>55</sup> In *The State of Things*, the three spoken languages (Portuguese, German, and English) are loosely connected to three cinematic languages: that of an experimental science-fiction film at the beginning, of European auteur cinema that self-consciously reflects on its own nature and commercial viability, and of a classic Hollywood crime plot at the end. In *Lisbon Story*, the sepia scenes shot with a hand-cranked camera enter into a dialogue with Friedrich Monroe's attempt to remove subjectivity from his films by carrying a camera on his back facing away from him, in a film that is both polyphonic and defined by the music of Madredeus. Of course, a more extended analysis would be necessary to understand how different languages intersect and produce meaning in these films and others.

Wenders's latest theoretical intervention is also fundamentally about language. *Inventing Peace: A Dialogue on Perception* collects a series of conversations with the philosopher Mary Zournazi and includes several short essays by Wenders written in his signature freeform prose—his “reflexive style of writing.”<sup>56</sup> Beyond providing a summary of the films, visual artists, and ideas that have influenced him, the book outlines the singular visual philosophy that he has methodically developed over the years. For instance, Wenders and Zournazi spend time considering what makes Yasujiro Ozu's films so special and how his technical choices create an ethical language that leads us toward more “gentle” ways of seeing. They explain that “Ozu takes all the obstacles away between his language and our reception of it” by systematically using a 50-mm lens, making things appear closer to us, and by positioning his camera at the eye level of someone sitting on the floor.<sup>57</sup> Taken together, these two techniques give his films an aura of hospitality and inclusion, as if they were letting the viewer come home, both physically and symbolically.

Other filmmakers are featured prominently in *Inventing Peace*—Robert Bresson and his 1966 film *Au Hasard Balthazar*, for example—but what is particularly striking is to see that Wenders continues to be preoccupied with

the same theoretical concerns that already informed his early films: the power of cinema (and photography) to “rescue the existence of things,” to use Béla Balázs’s expression. The thought that he might be the only person looking at a particular space at a specific moment gives him a “sudden sense of responsibility” and makes him ask: “How much of the ‘world’ did the history of photography and film cover? How much of it was ‘captured,’ so to speak?”<sup>58</sup> For Wenders, seeing and recording through a lens is a necessary response to the fact that we are always in a process of losing traces of lived experience. Photography, especially in the pre-digital era, was a way of both remembering and archiving in a physical object moments with ontological potential: “each and every single picture ‘represented,’ / yes, in the very sense of the word, actually ‘stood for’ / a single, unique, unrepeatable instant, / a truthful glimpse from one person’s existence / and into his (or her) point of view of the world.”<sup>59</sup>

Interestingly, Wenders’s continued interest in the responsibility of photography and filmmaking to preserve things is related to the increasingly visible influence of Christian thought on his personal and artistic outlook. In his mind, we are all “God’s instruments / the ‘projectionist’ of his (or her) creation / together sharing an ever-shifting moving image of the world, / a ‘feedback.’”<sup>60</sup> Seeing, in that sense, is also (and perhaps foremost) a double act of bearing witness. As we record for God our visual experiences on Earth, we also reflect the presence of the divine in our lives. Here, Wenders’s spiritual considerations are deeply embedded in his aesthetic thought. The reverse angle is always there in-waiting in any act of seeing and inexorably “reveal[s] the eye behind the lens.”<sup>61</sup> In other words, film and photography go inward at the same time as they go outward, creating a continuity between the self and the real that carries with it the possibility of spiritual transcendence.

It is within this framework that Wenders and Zournazi seek to define a new visual language of peace that has the potential of “reenchanting the world.”<sup>62</sup> They wonder why images of war and violence are so pervasive when “peace” itself sounds like such an abstract notion, or a fleeting hope, that rarely finds productive translations in artistic representations. As Homer laments in *Wings of Desire*, “no one has thus far succeeded in singing an epic of peace.”<sup>63</sup> Inventing peace begins with redefining how we understand the word itself and with a pragmatic reframing of what a more peaceful world would look like. For Wenders and Zournazi, the idea of peace is not meant to exclude preemptively the existence of all conflicts. On the contrary, conflict must be an integral part of a dialectic of peace that is based on “the love of opposing views.”<sup>64</sup> Likewise, peace can no

longer appear to be a utopian ideal and instead must be grounded in the great social issues of our time and in the practice of compassion. “There is certainly no THINKING ABOUT PEACE today that can be detached from THINKING ABOUT POVERTY,” Wenders emphatically claims in a letter to Zournazi, “And there is no valid thinking, PERIOD, that has not known suffering.”<sup>65</sup>

As one would expect, the emphasis in *Inventing Peace* is on learning to see in new ways. The book, however, does not read like a manifesto for the transformative power of images, or, for that matter, of cinema. In fact, Wenders’s approach to the question in one of his personal essays is surprisingly dialectic and exploratory. On the one hand, he suggests that our intense visual culture might be responsible for the absence of peace. If peace is defined as presence (with “people,” “things,” “places”), then images, because they are only re-presentations, always create a certain distance from the world. In that sense, they contain “an inbuilt violence” and produce “void, longing, regret, anger” rather than the kind of “concord” and “harmony” that comes with presence.<sup>66</sup> This leads him to a somewhat pessimistic conclusion: “I have a hunch that in order to appreciate PEACE, / and to be able to perceive it again, / we might have to move away from our culture of images, / and come back to the things themselves.”<sup>67</sup> On the other hand, Wenders and Zournazi are committed to “redress[ing] the limits of our vision” and do not give up on finding a path for a new visual culture of peace.<sup>68</sup> At the center of their argument lies the idea of fostering “gentle perceptions” based on “good and soothing encounters and experiences.”<sup>69</sup> This loving look is best understood not as an idealistic proposition but as an outgrowth of Martin Buber’s philosophy: a true “I–You” relationship is one of dialogue and observation in the service of a greater and fuller awareness of the Other. In visual terms, the relationship is mediated by a tool—the camera—that “reflect[s] a very exact mirror image of the emotion you empower them with.”<sup>70</sup> Photography and film do create a distance from things, but it is that distance, that mediation, which creates the possibility to see again, to see “with affection,” and to reframe our perceptions.<sup>71</sup>

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In Wenders’s films and in his theoretical writings, intermedial practices are often deeply integrated with transnational and translingual concerns. In the past forty years, Wenders has produced a coherent body of work based on a visual and narrative system that operates in and evolves with each new project. It feeds

into a philosophy of perception that can be traced back to his early films, but has found new expressions and remained relevant through Wenders's creative collaborations and technological innovations. At a panel at the Cannes Film Festival in 2017, Wenders explained that one "cannot intend to make a film that matters," but that sometimes something miraculous happens and "a film that is dear to somebody's heart, like the filmmaker's, becomes dear to other people's hearts and, all of a sudden, the fact that it matters appears as something that you do together, the audience as well as the filmmaker, and that you feel together."<sup>72</sup> We hope that the ten chapters that follow provide ample evidence that Wim Wenders occupies a unique place in the contemporary landscape of auteur filmmaking, not only because he still makes films that matter—aesthetically, culturally, and technologically—but also because his early works keep bringing people together, in this case in the form of new scholarly interpretations and perspectives.

In that spirit, we open with three chapters on films from the 1970s, a period still seen by many as the most accomplished in Wenders's career. The Road Trilogy (*Alice in the Cities*, *Wrong Move*, and *Kings of the Road*) marks Wenders's engagement with New German Cinema, but it also betrays a desire to reference and subvert the German romantic tradition. Oliver Speck's chapter "Search for the Sublime: The Road Trilogy, or Wenders's *Roam-man-ticism*" defines Wenders's male protagonists as postmodern nomads whose circular quest points to the negotiation of national identity in postwar Germany at the same time as it questions the very notion of representation. In the three films, it is not just the characters who roam and wander but also the camera itself as it sketches a new kind of postmodern sublime. In "Writing in the Blood of the Past: *Wrong Move* and the Search for a Contemporary German Identity," Kristin Eichhorn focuses on the symbolic dimension of the second film of the trilogy, arguing that the main character's outburst of violence should be seen as generational inheritance. *Wrong Move* suggests that the great literary and artistic achievements of the nineteenth century can conceal the crimes of the Nazi period for a time, but the film also functions as a call to address the "German catastrophe" openly. In loosely borrowing from the plot of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, *Wrong Move* suggests a disturbing continuity between romantic ideals and the logic of National Socialism. In his chapter, Philipp Scheid explains that Wenders reflects on the act of seeing by using windows and windshields as a metaphor for the lens of the camera. In doing so, Wenders partakes in a long tradition in art history that permeates the works of the German romantics, from E. T. A. Hoffman to

Caspar David Friedrich. In *Alice in the Cities* and *Wrong Move*, most notably, Wenders references this tradition and builds on it to investigate the relation between inner and outer spaces. Windows function as a symbolic barrier or interface that tell us about the mental state of his protagonists as they seek to break boundaries and find a purpose in life or decipher the incomprehensible language of landscape and media.

The second section is devoted to Wenders's deep intermedial engagement with other art forms, namely photography and dance. In "As If It Were For the Last Time: Wim Wenders—Film and Photography," George Kouvaros argues that Wenders's approach to photographic images is central to understanding two recurring themes in his films: how to live with images and how to be conscious of time, of its finite and singular quality. Following Walker Evans, Nicholas Ray, and Yasujiro Ozu, Wenders explores the paradox of photography through prose poems in several photobooks, suggesting that capturing images is both an act of preserving a moment that would have otherwise been lost forever and a way of realizing that we are surrounded by the ghosts of all the images that have already been taken. Darrell Varga's "Wenders—Salgado: Space, Time, and Transformation in *Salt of the Earth*" considers photography and filmmaking as critical interventions into social and political issues, both in Wim Wenders's film essays of the 1980s and in his engagement with the work of Sebastião Salgado in his documentary *Salt of the Earth*. Salgado's life story is presented as a mythical journey that parallels the history of the second part of the twentieth century. The Brazilian photographer's repeated experiences of devastation away from his homeland are not fundamentally different from Wenders's exploration of existential loss in his fiction films. Both are a search for home amid the "wreckage of human history," to borrow Walter Benjamin's expression. In "Wim Wenders's *Pina*, a Cinematic Homage to Pina Bausch," Peter Beicken outlines the strategies used by Wenders to film Pina's complex kinetic structures and to translate motion on the stage into emotion on the screen. Placing his cameras where Pina would have been seated in the theater, Wenders seeks to adopt both her gaze and her method of collaboration with her dancers, based on a creative process of self-representation and self-narration. Beicken shows how the film is both a fascinating human story and a feat of technology, since Wenders was inventing a new visual language from scratch at the same time as he was celebrating the legacy of his friend Pina.

The last section deals with the rich transnational dimension of Wenders's films. Simone Malaguti's essay argues that ecological and transcultural theories

can inform our understanding of Wenders's films, photography, and picture-stories. Drawing on examples from films like *Until the End of the World* and *Salt of the Earth*, photobooks like *Once* and *4 Real & True 2*, and the book *Inventing Peace*, she suggests that Wenders's works reveal how a personal poetics of space can function as a communicative strategy and how intermediality and interculturality can bring together aesthetic and cultural reflections in productive ways. In "'I Can Imagine Anything': The European Project in Wim Wenders's *Wings of Desire*," Mine Eren shows that in his portrayal of German identity and counter-identity under the pressures of the Cold War, Wenders subverts fantasies of cultural homogeneity by creating a collective "we" that challenges traditional concepts of home, belonging, and citizenship. *Wings of Desire* presents more than an aesthetic intervention into German political discourse on memory. By capturing the sights and sounds of a "twilight zone" in which Wenders's guardian angels live and observe West German life, the filmmaker invites the film's audiences to experience Berlin as a transnational space. Bill Baker's "Blandness and 'Just Seeing' in the Films of Wim Wenders" draws a comparison between the cinematographic styles of Yasujiro Ozu and Wenders and a wider philosophy of seeing characterized by what the French essayist François Jullien has defined as "blandness." Both Ozu and Wenders seek to facilitate a more direct access to the immediacy of experience by filming bland, everyday scenes that acknowledge universal qualities of human sight and experience. *Alice in the Cities* and *Paris, Texas* feature characters who view the world without expressing thought or judgment: their lack of determinate expression echoes what Wenders posits as a core tenet of his visual philosophy in *Tokyo-Ga*: "Just to look, without wanting to prove anything." In the last chapter of the book, "The Heart of Things: Wim Wenders and the Evocations of Peace," Mary Zournazi builds upon the philosophical and ethical dialogue that she and Wenders began in *Inventing Peace*. Zournazi discusses Wenders's commitment to indispensable images and shows how three broad themes—listening, seeing, and dreaming—can help us better apprehend Wenders's vision of the world and the sense of presence and responsibility with which he infuses his films.

## Notes

- 1 The relative lack of attention to Wenders by film studies scholars is not a new phenomenon. Over two decades ago, in their introduction to *The Cinema of Wim*

- Wenders: Image, Narrative, and the Postmodern Condition* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1997), Roger Cook and Gerd Gemünden were already observing that “although Wenders is arguably the leading European filmmaker of the last two decades, he has not received as much attention from scholars either in the United States or Europe as some of his colleagues who also had their beginning in New German Cinema” (24).
- 2 Alexander Graf, *The Cinema of Wim Wenders: The Celluloid Highway* (London: Wallflower Press, 2002).
  - 3 Wim Wenders and Mary Zournazi, *Inventing Peace: A Dialogue on Perception* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013).
  - 4 Wim Wenders, “Wim Wenders Talks with WSWS: ‘The Culture of Independent Film Criticism has Gone Down the Drain,’” interview by Richard Phillips, World Socialist Web Site, January 10, 2000, [www.wsws.org/en/articles/2000/01/wwen-j10.html](http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2000/01/wwen-j10.html)
  - 5 See Jason Wood, *Last Words: Considering Contemporary Cinema* (London: Wallflower Press, 2014), 147; and Martin Brady and Joanne Leal, *Wim Wenders and Peter Handke: Collaboration, Adaptation, Recomposition* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), 288.
  - 6 Brady and Leal, *Wim Wenders and Peter Handke*, 19.
  - 7 Robert Stam, “Introduction: The Theory and Practice of Adaptation,” in *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, ed. Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 25. For more on adaptation theory, see for instance Linda Hutcheon’s *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
  - 8 François Busnel, in conversation with Wim Wenders and Peter Handke, “Wim Wenders adapte au cinéma la pièce de Peter Handke ‘Les beaux jours d’Aranjuez,’” *La Grande Librairie*, October 28, 2016, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4sLktgdJ0U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4sLktgdJ0U)
  - 9 Brady and Leal, *Wim Wenders and Peter Handke*, 31.
  - 10 *Ibid.*, 286.
  - 11 Brad Prager, “29 February 1972: With *Die Angst des Tormanns beim Elfmeter* New German Cinema Learns to Read,” in *A New History of German Cinema*, ed. Jennifer M. Kapczynski and Michael D. Richardson (Rochester: Camden House, 2012), 438.
  - 12 David Coury, *The Return of Storytelling in Contemporary German Literature and Film: Peter Handke and Wim Wenders* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004), 115.
  - 13 Brady and Leal, *Wim Wenders and Peter Handke*, 251–52.
  - 14 *Ibid.*, 28.
  - 15 Nathan Wolfson, “PoMo Desire? Authorship and Agency in Wim Wenders’ *Wings of Desire*,” *Film and Philosophy* 7 (2003): 133.



- 16 Thomas Martinec, “‘Some Kind of Film Poem’: The Poetry of Wim Wenders’ *Der Himmel über Berlin/Wings of Desire*,” *Studies in European Cinema* 6, no. 2–3 (2009): 167.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 176.
- 18 Pablo Gonçalo, “Film in Words/Words in Pictures: Ekphrasis Modulations in Peter Handke and Wim Wenders’ Cinematic Collaborations,” *Journal of Screenwriting* 8, no. 1 (2017): 84 and 88.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 88.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 93.
- 21 Brigitte Peucker, “Filming Tableau Vivant: Vermeer, Intermediality, and the Real,” in *Rites of Realism: Essays on Corporeal Cinema*, ed. Ivone Margulies (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 295–96.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 311.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 310.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 295.
- 25 Wim Wenders, “Wim Wenders influencé par Hopper,” interview by Jean-Pierre Devillers, *Grand Palais*, 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=SakYrQaOLJQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SakYrQaOLJQ) (my translation).
- 26 See Fabien Gaffez’s “Le rouge et le vert: D’Edward Hopper à Robby Müller,” *Positif* no. 621 (November 2012), 104–5.
- 27 Carol Troyen, “Edward Hopper’s Stories,” *Magazine Antique*, April 2007, 84.
- 28 Brady and Leal, *Wim Wenders and Peter Handke*, 15.
- 29 Quoted in Barbara Haskell, “Edward Hopper: Between Realism and Abstraction,” in *Modern Life: Edward Hopper and His Time*, ed. Barbara Haskell in collaboration with Ortrud Westheider (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2009), 52. The quote is from a letter from Goethe to Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, August 21, 1774. Hopper mentioned it in “Invitation to Art,” an interview with Brian O’Doherty, first broadcast on April 10, 1961.
- 30 Wenders and Zournazi, *Inventing Peace*, 151.
- 31 “Wim and Donata Wenders would like to thank . . . The paintings of Andrew Wyeth.” Wim Wenders, *Every Thing Will Be Fine* [01:58:22].
- 32 Wenders and Zournazi, *Inventing Peace*, 154.
- 33 Silvestra Mariniello, “Experience and Memory in the Films of Wim Wenders,” *SubStance* 34, issue 106, no. 1 (2005): 165–66. Timothy Corrigan argues that “Wenders’s cinema is dislocated between two cultures, between that of Goethe and Heidegger and that of Ray and Ford” (“Wenders’s *Kings of the Road*,” in *New German Film: The Displaced Image* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983], 19).
- 34 Dimitris Eleftheriotis, “Global Visions and European Perspectives,” in *Aliens R Us: The Other in Science Fiction Cinema*, ed. Ziauddin Sardar and Sean Cubitt (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 169.

- 35 Randall Halle, *The Europeanization of Cinema: Interzones and Imaginative Communities* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2014), 17.
- 36 Bridget Dawes, "Celluloid Recoveries: Cinematic Transformations of Ground Zero," in *Media and Cultural Memory / Medien und kulturelle Erinnerung: Transnational American Memories*, ed. Udo Hebel (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 302.
- 37 Tanya Hernandez, "The Buena Vista Social Club: The Racial Politics of Nostalgia," *Latino/a Popular Culture*, ed. Michelle Habell-Pallan and Mary Romero (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 61.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 66 and 67.
- 39 Eleftheriotis, "Global Visions and European Perspectives," 176.
- 40 Paulo de Medeiros, "Representing Lisbon: Wenders, Memory and Desire," *Journal of Romance Studies* 1, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 78.
- 41 Ewa Mazierska and Laura Rascaroli, *Crossing New Europe: Postmodern Travel and the European Road Movie* (London: Wallflower Press, 2006), 208.
- 42 Nora Alter explains that "*Tokyo-Ga* appears as a film about films rather than a film about reality (or rather about the rest of reality, since obviously film is part of reality), a filmic practice both defined and confined by cinematographic illusion" ("Global Politics, Cinematographic Space: Wenders's *Tokyo-Ga* and *Notebooks on Cities and Clothes*," in *Projecting History: German Nonfiction Cinema, 1967-2000* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002], 117).
- 43 Eleftheriotis, "Global Visions and European Perspectives," 170.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 171.
- 45 Mazierska and Rascaroli, *Crossing New Europe*, 205.
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- 62 *Ibid.*, 12.
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- 64 Wenders and Zournazi, *Inventing Peace*, 38.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 28 (their capitalization).
- 66 *Ibid.*, 67–68.
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