

## **“LE CINÉMA EST UN LANGUAGE UNIVERSEL”**

**CIS BIERINCKX AND PHILIPPE VERGNE IN CONVERSATION AT THE WALKER ART CENTER, AUGUST 29, 2002.**<sup>1</sup>

**Philippe Vergne:** As a film and video curator you’ve been programming across disciplinary boundaries for a long time now. Why do you think it’s important for your practice to break through these boundaries?

**Cis Bierinckx:** For me, it’s always a question of looking farther than your own nose. Breaking boundaries is very important in our world because the world is conditioned primarily by broadcasting and manipulated images. It’s clear that in certain (even highly developed) countries **the televised image fulfills nothing more than a conditioning task. Pictures are framed. You can select what you want to show and what you want to crop out. For us in the film/video field, it’s important to give the screen to the voiceless, to subjects that are not covered by television, journals, mass media.** Most of the television networks are connected to all sorts of national politics, to commerce, to industry, or to ideological groups ranging from the left to the extreme right. Cinema can provide a platform for other perspectives and voices. It is remarkable that even in the early history of film there was a very specific sense of “globalism” in place ... first by anthropological films, later by festivals. In the early days of Cannes, which is one of the oldest film festivals in the world, one could discover the films of Indian master Satyajit Ray, which confronted the viewer with an Indian culture quite unfamiliar to Western audiences.

I can’t explain why it has always been easy to cross borders in cinema, whereas it has taken a long time for the visual arts to develop an equally global interest. Although there were always visual artists who were crossing borders, even going back to the nineteenth-century French painters who were fascinated with Japan or *chinoiserie*. They reflected this fascination with the exotic in their paintings. Traditionally, however, curators either didn’t show any real interest in non-Western work or organized exotic shows that did show African or Chinese art but avoided any global reflection. Times were different and colonialism was still strong then; today the global is active in the visual arts in a very different way and functions as a means of challenging a century of orthodoxy.

Film has always had a different attitude. Certainly in Europe, festivals were always looking to the “other,” were open to the “other” and to those voices. Maybe it was simply because cinema was easier to transport than paintings. Film has long been viewed as entertainment and not as art. Movies never played in special buildings—art temples that could be entered only by climbing up the stairs of the sacred. **The movie house was always a public, popular space rather than a holy dome for spiritual enlightenment.**

**PV:** You’ve talked to me before about Cinema Novo in Brazil. What was the importance of that movement?

**CB:** Cinema Novo of the 1960s was the cinema of the poor. An unofficial history I’ve heard concerns an obscure Brazilian filmmaker, José Marins, who made horror pictures with almost no money. The shoestring budget

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<sup>1</sup> Cis Bierinckx is curator of film and video at the Walker Art Center; Philippe Vergne is curator in the visual arts department and curator of *How Latitudes Become Forms: Art in a Global Age*.

forced him to be creative, and it was this apparent limitation that inspired him and other Cinema Novo filmmakers. They were political activists who wanted to express themselves. In Marins they found an example demonstrating that money isn't as important as creativity and the will to tell your story. Money is a Hollywood concept. Very important movies have been made on almost no budget. In the United States, examples include the early films of Jim Jarmusch, films by Cassavetes, and so on. The Cinema Novo movement was very important in the political language of Brazil.

At the moment we see something similar happening in China. **The digital camera has created new possibilities for many Chinese filmmakers to express themselves outside the political system.** Digital filmmaking has contributed to a kind of democratization process that enables more people to express themselves. It's cheap; one can film without thinking of expenses and even edit at home. A videocassette is also easier to distribute illegally than film reels. In this way the digitalization of the image is having an impact comparable to the introduction of 16mm and Bolex cameras in the 1960s. **This democratization of cinema, first in the 1960s with the 16mm camera and now with the digital camera, has created throughout the world a direct cinema with greater political content.** The sociopolitical views of the 1960s are certainly in a period of revival right now, although the approaches are different because it is a different world today.

PV: What does the term globalism mean to your practice?

CB: Globalism in film, like globalism in its broadest definition, has its good and bad sides. There is definitely greater access to world cinema at this moment than ever before. However, the problem with world cinema is that the European market tries to get their hands on it, in the same way that the markets drive the visual arts world. For instance, many African filmmakers live in France. They're not really familiar with the French film industry, but they get funding to make their films through governmental organizations. A prerequisite to receiving such funding is to have a French producer. Often, not really knowing this producer (as happened with Senegalese filmmaker Mansour Sora Wade and his film *Ndeysaan* [*The Price of Forgiveness*]), they go ahead without first building a relationship. Oftentimes, these producers are merely after the money and tell the naive filmmaker that the money has run out even before the film is finished. Where the money has gone remains a mystery, and nobody asks, as long as the producer's books are in order. It's an awkward system that protects the producer more than the filmmaker. The international sales agents, who are holding tight reins on the sale of non-European films, are another obstacle. Thai cinema, films from China, Iran, Hong Kong, South Korea, Argentina, and Mexico are all reaching new heights of popularity, overshadowing even American independent cinema. It is painful to know, however, that these sales agents sometimes interfere with the look of the film or request that the filmmaker do a new edit. Take for instance Jia Zhang-ke's *Platform*. When I saw it in Venice it was twenty minutes longer than the version we received here to screen. The French sales agent had requested that the filmmaker cut it down. He told him that they wouldn't be able to sell it at the original length. Even independent world cinema is becoming more and more a product of sales and marketing considerations. This is in opposition to the original intention of the filmmakers—of every artist—whose concern is in the first place to get exposure for their work. They want their work to be seen, but it has become unavoidable with the rise of the film and art markets that they lose their creative freedom and no longer have a say in what is done with their work. Isn't that right?

Aside from these factors, and coming back to my own practice, we face another misfortune as programmers. We are charged a lot of money by the sales agents for screenings because, as they say, there are too many festivals at which to show global cinema and only those who can pay will get the product.

PV: Is globalization essentially an economic phenomenon?

CB: Globalism is rooted in the economy. In our practice we use the term globalism in another connotation. **We see globalism as opening the windows to the world, but the reality is that globalism is and remains a factor of the market and the economy. We borrowed the word from economics.** Our vision of globalism and our dreams are of a completely different order than those of economic globalism. However, in our practice we are so often confronted with the economic side of things that we get frustrated in our global thinking.

PV: But if we have to think about the economical side, how does that inform our practice? How do you maintain the heart of your programming?

CB: The heart is no problem as long as it keeps beating. I'm looking for stories, because I believe everyone is interested in stories. Storytelling is a tradition we may be losing, but I believe that people haven't lost interest in good stories. Every curator has a personal touch. I've been curating since the early 1970s, not only film but performing and visual arts as well. My personal concern has always been with what story is important to tell right now. My approach to curating in the 1970s was completely different from how I curate now. The times and politics (in its broadest sense) partly affect my choices.

PV: How so?

CB: At the moment there is a greater need for social and political questioning than in the 1970s for instance. Two strategies in cinema are always guiding me strongly: cinéma modeste and cinéma d'urgence. Modest cinema and urgent cinema both stem from a need that stays close to a recognizable reality. At this time, I think this is more important than abstraction. Certainly when we talk about the moving image or cinema—and I'm not immediately talking about film related to visual arts—it's important that we offer images that the media doesn't show. It's important that we give a forum to artists who try to express their concerns through their films, who reveal their own cultural identity (without propagandistic goals) and try to give voice to the voiceless through cinema. This might be labeled political cinema, but there seems to be a need for such a political cinema these days, certainly in the world as it's turning now. We are living in somewhat desperate times, and it's important to provide questions, to make an effort to look at other cultures, and to listen to other opinions. We aren't living in a world of happy endings any more. Happy endings are what Hollywood is about. I like people to go home with more questions than when they came into the screening room, questions about what an image is, what they saw, what an image represents. Cinéma d'urgence and cinéma modeste are complementary to each other and invite the public to participate rather than to watch passively.

PV: How do you define cinéma d'urgence?

CB: Cinéma d'urgence is a cinema created out of a need, out of a concern. It often comes directly out of a personal conflict the filmmaker has in relation to his local or world experience. Cinéma d'urgence and cinéma modeste are both connected in spirit to a sixties idealism. But times and images change, so the approach to the subject matter changes as well. Cinéma réalité, cinéma d'urgence, and cinéma modeste are all interactive with one another and are experiencing revival at the moment. There is an urgency to give voice to some people, to find "truth." But what is "truth" and what is "reality"? It all depends on where you stand, and in the end film, video, and television will never reveal the absolute truth or show absolute reality because they are, fundamentally, lying machines. This doesn't take away my pleasure and interest in listening to the people who tell stories that are very important to hear right now: stories about forgiveness, tolerance, beauty, sadness, humanity, death, love, hate. It remains crucial, however, to question and reflect on what you see. For instance, these days I hear a lot of people ask, "Why do so many people hate the United States?" It's important to find this out, and through cinema (and visual arts) we can provide hints to possible answers. It's important to put an audience in an awkward and uneasy situation, to disturb them rather than provoke them. Provocation is an easy tool. To disturb is subtler, and it doesn't hurt anybody, whereas provocation is intended to hurt.

PV: And what is cinéma modeste?

CB: What I've been saying is, in fact, true for both. Cinéma modeste is, as I said, complementary to a cinéma d'urgence. It has a sort of fictional reality, as in the films of Abbas Kiarostami for instance. We sometimes also call it cinéma primitif. The elimination of all distraction around the characters and the story leads to a pure cinema focused on the essence of the human soul, of humanity, of being, of beauty. That's why Kiarostami is so revered. This is cinema that is close to the heart and immediately recognizable. It is the kind of cinema that goes back to postwar Italian neo-realism and films by Rossellini, de Sica, and others.

PV: You mentioned Hollywood and dominant versus dominated forms of cinema. Do you think that the move toward a more global network is providing a counterculture, a politically counterpublic voice?

CB: There is an urgent need for voices that counter the power of politics and economics. We need more Public Enemies shouting "Don't believe the hype."

Part of our practice and mission is to create awareness. Considering the time in which we are living and what we do for a living, we carry an important responsibility. Whatever we do, whether in visual arts or in film, we need to open a dialogue not only about art for art's sake but about culture, identity, society, politics, and humanity. We can't relive a sixties idealism simply by returning to that political theater or regurgitating those political statements. To reach our audiences, we have to define a contemporary and actual context for speaking and expression. It is absurd to create a new kind of counterculture. More important to my point of view is to pave ways toward as many audiences as possible, to participate in the dialogue we are trying to establish throughout our programs.

The exhibition *How Latitudes Become Forms: Art in a Global Age* and Rineke Dijkstra's piece in the Walker's permanent collection<sup>2</sup> are proof of our search to fulfill such a mission. Both the exhibition and Dijkstra's video installation tell a great deal about a culture, in the "now." They are not there in the galleries with the intention of bringing future hotshots to public attention to show how smart we are; they are there because we feel that they represent a need to be seen at this moment, that they reflect the pulse of the times rather than being timeless. That's how I select my film programs as well. We need to keep our feet on the ground. We have been entertained enough. In all of our efforts, we should create an awareness or a countervoice (rather than a counterculture) without (I keep repeating this) provoking. I don't know how many people we'll reach, but if we keep on this way and if we are articulate enough about what we are doing, if we tell the story well, people will listen. It is important now to not give up under the pressure of a more popular-oriented tendency that is overshadowing the world right now—mostly directed by power-sick politicians. What we do is, in this overly controlled political and economical world, needed now more than ever.

PV: When you say we've been entertained enough, I think of the etymology of the word entertainment. If you go back to the Latin root, it means "to look somewhere else." It is like creating a fiction, distracting one's attention ...

CB: I see contemporary entertainment more as a type of easy escapism.

PV: So do you think the cinema that is emerging through a more global model—what you call the *cinéma modeste* or the *cinéma d'urgence*—is embracing a form that is different from that of the cinema intended to entertain?

CB: Certainly.

PV: Something else you mentioned, which I find very important, is storytelling. I remember talking with a filmmaker in China who told me, "We do documentaries, we don't do fiction, because what we want to do through documentaries is to tell stories and to embrace storytelling." Is there a link there with *cinéma modeste*?

CB: I see *cinéma modeste* as an answer to the realities of television. Chinese filmmakers or a filmmaker like Frederic Wiseman, for example, counter the new "reality TV" and those shows that make entertainment out of the misery of others. Wiseman never makes cuts in his films (which sometimes run four hours or longer) to make the subject more appealing. In television, thirty seconds without a cut is already a sin. Wiseman lets his subjects speak. He keeps everything that passes through his lens: the sadness, the beauty, and so on. You see this as well in Chinese realist and direct cinema. These filmmakers don't want to make their stories spectacular. On the other hand, there also exists a certain desire in Asian cinemas to copy the West. Certainly South Korean cinema is taking a little twist. It comprises a group of serious, independent filmmakers, but the call

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<sup>2</sup> Reneke Dijkstra, *The Buzz Club*, Liverpool, England / *Mysteryworld*, Zaandam, Netherlands, 1996-1997.

for action is great. Asian cinemas might be the strongest cinema in the future. They are already bit by bit taking over the American market and Hollywood, according to recent industry reports. Jackie Chan and John Woo are highly recognized Hollywood directors. At the same time, Asian businesses are investing more and more in the L.A. dreamland or in their own self-made version of it. There is a very strange twist going on, and it might be that in the future Asian cinemas are more powerful than Hollywood cinema. But aside from that, there are still independent and young Asian cinemas that have something important to say.

**PV:** Do you think it's a matter of responsibility? To tell a story that nobody else can tell?

**CB:** I believe in the purity of stories told by interesting filmmakers. Of course, what is purity when a camera is in front of your face? It's important to gain knowledge of other cultures. It is all too easy to say of (sorry for using the word) "others": they are bastards, they are this or that, without making an effort to understand their culture. One has to start not at "I" but at "we." We are not God Almighty; we are just part of a greater system called the globe. It's critical that through visual art, through cinema, and through what we are doing as curators, we find ways to position ourselves in this "mechanism" that is so much bigger than the little spot where we live.

**PV:** What you're describing seems very close to journalism.

**CB:** No, it's not journalism. I think the essence of our lives is about searching for our place in the world. And we can be helped in this search through complex or simple paintings and films. We are all looking to define a place, our place. And as I sometimes say, the only moment I truly feel my place in the world is when I'm on top of a mountain. You know, maybe what we present in visual art or film are all little mountaintops. And, shouts echo better from atop a summit.

**PV:** To play devil's advocate ... Isn't this type of production questionable because it's full of goodwill, which we know belongs to an industry as well?

**CB:** We shouldn't belong to a commercially driven industry or market, but we shouldn't belong to UNICEF either. We have to be very aware of and shielded against global impacts of any kind.

**PV:** So the global film practice lies somewhere between Hollywood and UNICEF?!

**CB:** When you look closely at the UNICEF calendars, they sometimes look like Hollywood stills from a desert or jungle film. UNICEF sells them for a good cause. But it is the look and the message that I tackle here, the photographic manipulation used to reel in the poor sensitive souls of ambitious middle-class do-gooders. But I should be more serious here, though a connection between Hollywood and UNICEF does make some sense. Let's take the Grand Canyon as a metaphor. I see UNICEF on one side and Hollywood on the other, and we are in the canyon looking up at the vultures but still safe. And to be honest I prefer the frog's-eye perspective over the bird's-eye perspective.

**PV:** If I said to you tomorrow, "We're doing an exhibition that addresses the issue of globalization and cultural practices and we need a concurrent movie program," and I asked you to name five films that are really important in this context, what would they be? Would you pick Pocahontas?

**CB:** Pocahontas was a wrong film and I should program it for that very reason. It was not about Native Americans; it was all about the male, white character. She only had to be beautiful ...

**PV:** Exotic.

**CB:** Yes, exotic. Exoticism is something we must avoid in our practice, but our consumer society just adores it. It is easier to present a group of half-naked Brazilian dancers on stage performing so-called traditional dances than a contemporary Brazilian dance company or a performer dealing with some serious actual issues. Pocahontas is a typical Disney product. Every Disney film should be banned, but you cannot say that too loud

or you will be called a lefty. Disney had and still has big problems. But getting back to your five films question. It is hard to name the five films. If I asked you for your five favorite visual artists you would be completely in trouble, too.

**PV:** Yes, I know. But I might be able to tell you which artists I think have really made a difference in the context of globalism.

**CB:** A filmmaker close to my heart is Abbas Kiarostami and certainly some African filmmakers as well. Kiarostami changed something in my mind and my way of looking. He is for me the only representative of Iranian cinema. He opened my eyes, my senses, and grabbed me very, very strongly through his cinematic approach and the way he treats his characters.

**PV:** Is that because he created a new vocabulary of filmmaking?

**CB:** Well, it's not really a new vocabulary because in some ways it's very close to postwar Italian neo-realism. Many neo-realist films—for example, *The Roof* or the more popular *Bicycle Thief*—start from very simple elements. Father, son, a bicycle: that's it. Kiarostami works in a same way. His films prove how with the minimum one can create the maximum.

**PV:** Instead of creating the minimum with the maximum. Is what you describe close to the critical theory of Third Cinema?

**CB:** In a certain way, yes. Cinemas such as the Brazilian Cinema Novo and the African cinema of the 1970s and 1980s were using this principle as well. Unfortunately, African cinema has lost its strength at the moment because of the lack of a leading figure comparable to Kiarostami in Iran. An African filmmaker told me recently, "You know what the problem is with African cinema and what's so good about Iranian cinema? Iranian filmmakers were forced to create their own voice because they couldn't look back to other cinemas. They were freed from American influence because those films were banned. That's why they were able to develop a purely rooted Iranian cinema."

I was talking one day with Mansour Sora Wade, and he said, "Whatever you do with your cinema, the most important thing—even if you are trying to create or adapt your work to reach a larger international audience—is to not lose or betray your identity." I think his statement, to not create simply to be a part or a function of the market, is important. It is possible, as he proved with his film, to create without losing your identity and still be part of the market.

**PV:** You've mentioned the market and the distribution systems of films, and the impact of digital cameras. When we see these images from all over the world, does the medium, the digital medium, derive not only from an economical system but also from a formal system of filmmaking?

**CB:** We need to make a clear distinction between the standard film format (what we see in the movie house) and the digital cinema. The digital market is still an alternative market, although it's very present at international film festivals. Why is there such a boom in digital images? Before delving into this I want to recount a particular story. When I was living in Ljubljana the war was still going on. I met a Belgrade filmmaker who had just shot an interesting digital film in his home town. "For us," he said, "the digital camera is the most ideal because with a 16mm camera you cannot run as fast. **With a mini-DV in your hand you can escape the police faster.**"

The digital camera allows for a certain democratization of the moving image, which also has a negative side because now there are too many moving images created by people who think they're artists. However, in every wave there occurs a kind of natural selection. We can no longer avoid digital cinema in our practice because it has become a major tool of expression in the contemporary film and visual art world. Because many of these contemporary artists grew up with moving images, it is normal that they use the moving image as an element

of creativity, that they experiment with it and use it. It's amazing that everyone has access to images now and the ability to create his or her own images.

**PV:** Do you consider this a type of guerrilla activity? That the moving image and digital culture allow people to re-create an alternative voice or guerrilla politics?

**CB:** Well, in a subtle way, perhaps. But we also have to see a lot of crap. But that's okay, because when you see a lot of crap you really notice the pearls. Last June I went to the New York Video Festival. For three days I was watching all kinds of video works and found myself occasionally asking, "Why was this work selected?" "What are the selection criteria?" I must remain polite to my colleagues in New York, because I'm not God and I make mistakes as well. But there is so much mediocre work around. One problem is that many young artists are simply enthralled with the possibilities of the digital tool and forget about making quality work. I'm a defender of this democratization of the moving image, but, contrary to what Joseph Beuys said, not everybody is an artist.

**PV:** Are we in a period similar to the 1960s? There seems to be a drive to document our recent history, bear witness to social and political shifts, and provide an alternative voice.

**CB:** The shift really started in the 1990s. Art and artists have always been connected to what's happening in the world, even if the establishment has controlled them in a certain way through the market. Unfortunately, or some might say luckily, the establishment is currently more interested in war politics, economic wealth, and populism, and is intentionally bending toward extreme right viewpoints. I'm disappointed that, in contrast to the university populations of the 1960s, students and professors today are virtually silent. I don't know why there is this lack of action at the moment. Luckily, I see some filmmakers and visual artists who are more driven to get a political message out in their work.

**PV:** Do you see your activity as a film curator in an art center as being able to provide this alternative voice?

**CB:** Within the Walker we can certainly give exposure to these films and these different voices. Last year I showed a Romanian film called Interview with a Torturer. It was about how to deal with someone who was on the wrong side. Can there be forgiveness? How do we confront the past? How do we look at the past from the perspective of today? There are certain gaps that I think film can fill more easily than visual arts. I might be wrong, because I know there is visual art that functions in the same way. I see this as a part of our mission today as much as it was when I was curating arts in the 1970s. There is another necessity, another challenge: the need to communicate with an audience. Whatever we do, if we present a visual art exhibition or a film series, the essence is to communicate, to create a dialogue far away from hermetic snobbism. We don't want people to be estranged. Even if they don't understand the work, there might be a moment when they look at it. And the moment they look at it, you have already reached something.

**PV:** It seems that recently the documentary form or aesthetic has taken a very important place in visual art practices and in "moving image" installations. As a film curator, how do you react to that?

**CB:** Cinema started with the documentary—people leaving the factory or riding on the train. In fact, fiction came much later, though in many films, such as those by Kiarostami, there are both elements, and there is an entire cinema going on right now that lies somewhere between fiction and documentary. Recently at Cannes I overheard some people who had watched a documentary and said, "Oh, it was just like a fiction film." That was a confirmation for me that this distinction—what is documentary, what is fiction—should be retired because the fundamental thing is that you can never tell the truth when you frame something. When you put a camera in front of somebody's face it's very rare that the person remains natural.

**PV:** But how do you understand the leaking of this documentary language into the language of art installations?

**CB:** The nice thing about art installations is that people can come and go as they please, unlike the cinema where you sit there until it's over. But a problem with this mobility in art installations is that it might take ninety minutes or so to watch an entire artwork. (Luckily there are a lot of people now making three- or five-minute

films.) In the gallery environment you have much more liberty. If you like the work, if you are really fascinated by it, you can sit down and enjoy the whole thing. But no one obliges you to stay. There is an unwritten rule when you enter the cinema that you have to stay to the end. It's a pretty rare occasion when people walk out on a film. **What is interesting about showing films in the galleries is that it gives the viewer greater liberties.** I'm always fascinated when I see people stay through to the very end. When I went to Cologne to see Matthew Barney's *Cremaster* cycle (I saw only three of the five films), I was amazed that people sat through the whole thing, only taking breaks between the films. There was this continuity of viewing. People will do this in the galleries if the work is really powerful, if it's something that fascinates them, mesmerizes them, attracts them. I saw the same thing happen with Doug Aitken's piece in your exhibition *Let's Entertain*.<sup>3</sup> It was a marvelous piece, a piece exactly about this freedom. You could sit down, you could watch, you could leave. And you had all these different screens to choose from.

This explosion of cinematic artistic practice is really central to both of our fields and to the discourse around the moving image as an art form. I think it is time that visual art and film curators join each other when it comes to the moving image and that any remaining boundaries between the two fields disappear without creating tensions and maelstroms.

**PV:** We've been discussing so many of these issues in the context of the Walker's global initiative. How do you think this shift toward the global is affecting not only the history but also the future of cinema and cultural institutions? What changes has this initiative brought to you and to your practice?

**CB:** In terms of my practice, I have continued to do what I was used to doing. The biggest pleasure is that I found an audience for it, that the programs have attracted a wide variety of communities. One incredible example was when we had a public talk after screening a Senegalese film. The filmmaker was speaking French, someone was translating into English. Suddenly some people started to talk with him and I was lost, because they were speaking in a native dialect. There was all this animated discussion going on and I was completely lost ... but these are beautiful moments. When I presented a Romanian film—my God, I didn't know there were Romanians in Minneapolis! Through my programming I am able to find out just how many communities there are in the cities. For me this is the greatest reward, to discover these different communities and have conversations with them all. However, I hate to program for a particular community. I think we should program out of our desire to tell certain stories, the things that we feel need to be told, whether it's coming from China or Russian or Nepal or wherever.

**PV:** Or Wisconsin.

**CB:** We just have to look for amazing work and present amazing work. There are so many cultures here, and they are present even when you don't program something specially for them. Sometimes I don't know how they even find out about a certain series or screening, but they show up. And it's always a benefit to have these communities in the audience and to hear their questions because, of course, they have their own life experiences and they ask different questions. The pleasure is that the community is there and our regular audience is there, and suddenly there is something like a chemical reaction, a chemical bonding. Those moments are what I love so much; there starts the exchange.

**PV:** So the Landmark Theaters are right: "le cinéma est un langage universel."

**CB:** Of course it's a universal language ...

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<sup>3</sup> Doug Aitken, *these restless minds*, 1998.