

Introduction

Almost two decades after the inception of the Society for Phenomenology and Media and the publication of our very first issue of *Glimpse*, the journal is now poised to take a rather momentous step and move up into the higher ranks of academic scholarship. *Glimpse* began as a documentation of the proceedings of SPM's annual international conferences, offering an edited version of the papers presented each year. In 2014, when I began taking on certain editorial duties, I floated the idea of making *Glimpse* into a selective, double-blind peer reviewed journal and creating a second publication, the *Proceedings*, which would be, as the title implies, a record of papers presented at the annual conferences. The *Proceedings* would now take over the role that *Glimpse* had fulfilled for the first 15 years of SPM's conferences. *Glimpse* would move from being a record of conference proceedings to a serious academic journal. It has taken a few years to get this idea off the ground, but I believe we are now on the cusp of a whole new era for *Glimpse* and for SPM.

The 2017 edition of *Glimpse*, I am proud to announce, is the result of a double-blind peer review process and many hours of editing and fine-tuning of the reviewed and selected manuscripts. Moreover, *Glimpse* has been accepted for online hosting in digital form as an

“e-journal” by the Philosophy Documentation Center, based in Charlottesville, Virginia, in the United States (<https://www.pdcnet.org/glimpse>). This is the first step in getting our journal widely recognized and fully accessible to anyone with an internet connection. The next objective is to be indexed on a prominent database such as JSTOR, Project Muse, Springer, or one of similar worldwide presence. It will take a little time for us to start building up the sort of recognition I believe we deserve, but we are much further along now than when I first undertook the task of editing for SPM. Very soon, we will open the journal to submissions from authors outside of SPM, combining in the same issue papers presented at the annual conference and selected papers from external contributors that hew to the specific interests, philosophical themes, and theoretical approaches of SPM in general and to conference topic areas in particular. There will remain a preference for submissions from SPM contributors; however, it is part of the plan for growth upward and outward to extend the reach of our calls for papers.

Appearing in this first fully blind-reviewed edition of *Glimpse* is a selection of articles that, I believe, provide an excellent representation of what SPM is all about. Also of note in this edition is a departure from the usual alphabetical ordering

of the contents according to the author's last name. Instead, the essays here are presented according to a thematic scheme, with papers that explore connected topics or engage with related problems grouped together. As things are currently organized, papers presented at the conference may be submitted for blind review to be selected for publication in *Glimpse*. Papers that make the cut and are accepted for *Glimpse* may still be sent back to the author(s) in case any revisions are recommended by the reviewer(s). All remaining submissions representing SPM conference papers are then edited for inclusion in the SPM *Proceedings*. In this way, the full complement of papers presented at the annual conference and submitted for publication will find a home either in *Glimpse* or *Proceedings*. But make no mistake, it is something of an achievement to be included in either publication; that said, those papers making it into *Glimpse*, now that we have a double-blind review process in place, clearly have the higher honor. This edition of *Glimpse* features papers revolving around the themes of mediatization, technology, and power; phenomenology of mind, brain, and experiential consciousness; the imaginary and the real in fiction and cinema, and technological interventions in post-phenomenological practices. Leading the way in the first group of papers exploiting the joint themes of mediatization, technology, and power is Paul Majkut's "Mediated, Unmediated, and Immediated." Majkut traces developments, reversals, and transitions that occur in "cusp periods of media change"—"media-paradigm" shifts. He opens the piece

by considering the case of the evolution of the hand-crafted title page of the medieval manuscript to the machine-produced title page of the Renaissance printed book. The transition between these textual presentations, or entrances into the text, signals a move that removes media barriers standing between what the text is intended to reveal or communicate and the reader, i.e., the "mediated knower." Majkut argues that this example serves as an historical model for understanding contemporary digital media, alerting us that "Each and every medium has inherent in its own structure weaknesses that frame content, and, as a consequence, distort meaning." His purpose is to suggest how to go about removing these "media barriers" that not only distort but also stand in the way of the knower's getting in touch with the "thing-in-itself," the true object of knowledge—that which hides under the cover of text, is circumscribed by the architecture of arbitrary frames, or becomes obliterated through the homogeneity of digital strokes. A solution would entail the *disembodiment* of the reader or media consumer to "unmediate," or go inside, to effect a media *epoché*, by suspending mediated communication, and in this way to escape "media imprisonment." However, we manage to attain greater descriptive objectivity and diminish subjectivity, through temporal distance or a process of unmediation, this does not take us quite far enough. The liberation resulting from the unraveling of "the totality of the elements of meaning that confront the reader" reveals "an encompassing determinism in the

relationship of a medium and *its* text.” The next move is to immediacy—direct cognition of the world; however, there can be no return to a premediated world. We will need to depend on media metaphors of the past, eventually transforming and formalizing them to serve as explanatory “concepts and tropes.” So even in the only kind of immediacy that is now available in the unearthing of meaning and grasping of objective truth, Majkut reminds us that “Just as *all* words are necessary, *all* words are inadequate to the task of conveying complete meaning.”

Going deep into mediatization theory, Lars Lundsten advocates an approach that appeals to a process of “re-mediation” to explain the shaping of social institutions in a mediatized society in “The Concept of Mediatization: Some Phenomenological and Ontological Remarks.” Lundsten rejects mediatization theories that rely on (mere) causal explanations of the dependence relation between society and communication media in favor of Ingarden- and Searle-style social ontologies that invoke ground-consequent dependence (or entailment) to account for the shaping and framing of social discourse and societies as institutions. He argues that re-mediation offers “a qualitatively new mechanism of meaning-making” which, through acts of iterated mediation, creates new types of the social institutions exemplified in a mediatized society. Rounding out this first section of papers, Randall Dana Ulveland weighs in on the theme of media’s structuring of social institutions in “Revisiting

McLuhan: Pedagogy and the Ontology of Efficiency and Scientific Management.” Ulveland focuses on the institution of education, urging that we need our pedagogy to be renewed by fresh metaphors and ways of thinking to bring about a “liberatory education,” rather than, as he sees the current reality, cementing us in a standardized, instrumentally rational discourse left over from “the rigid programmatic instruction informed by the relics of historical language.” We need to go beyond McLuhan’s dictate, for the medium now is the schooling practice redolent of a hegemonic and technological discourse. To change the message, we must adopt a different language and rewrite the training and indoctrination practices of the existing educational institutions that silence the call of wonder and inhibit the freedom to attain the kind of understanding that leads to true liberation and self-transcendence. In the next group of papers, the authors employ phenomenological analysis to explore various aspects of the mind-brain connection and how it enables mediation of different moments of conscious experience to flow together to produce aesthetic experience, time-consciousness and social-consciousness.

In “An Approach the Social Media ‘Meme’ through Peirce’s Phaneroscopy,” Paniel Cardenas and Dora Tamayo bring forward an ingenious use of C. S. Peirce’s idiosyncratic brand of phenomenology which he names, “phaneroscopy,” in explicating the concept of the “meme” as it occurs in social media. Calling on Peirce’s system of ontological and epistemological

categories, they explain that the concept of the social media meme is unlike Dawkins' concept of the meme, which gets its meaning from the biological process of repetition through viral-style self-reproduction. Cardenas and Tamayo apply Peirce's quasi-phenomenological categories of *firstness*, *secondness*, and *thirdness* in developing an account of the metaphysical status of the social media meme, which they claim is a "legitimate and new form of human expression" that achieves its communicative and transformative power through the particular dynamic of the mediation (Peirce's *thirdness*) of the immediacy (*firstness*) and resistance (*secondness*) of the meme itself.

Although they do not specifically refer to Peirce's peculiar terminology, Alberto Carrillo and Luis Vera continue the reference to Peirce's philosophy, also citing the work of art historian Ernst Gombrich and neuroscientist Antonio Damasio in "Illusion, Emotion, and Feeling in Cinema." Carrillo and Vera combine considerations from phenomenology, art theory, and neuroscience in the attempt to analyze the difference between viewing a single cinematographic shot within a film and viewing the entire sequence of shots that comprise an entire film. They admit that both types of experience are integral to having a "full-fledged cinematographic experience," but they wish to focus their sites on the experience of viewing a single cinematographic shot. They argue that although the importance of the single shot is minimized when considering the film as a "global narrative process," that the (perhaps abstracted) moment of viewing a

single shot calls for "use of the concept of *aesthetic illusion*, which is basic for understanding *cinematographic effects*." Their claim is that the non-narrative experience to be had in the viewing of a single shot is a pre-requisite for complete comprehension, a "full-fledged" grasping, of the cinematographic experience as a whole. Carrillo and Vera wish to depart from the Platonic notion that illusion is something to be derogated to the realm of delusion or falsehood. In the phenomenology of aesthetic experience, illusion plays a central role. For Carrillo and Vera, aesthetic illusion and aesthetic imagination are legitimate grounds of aesthetic beliefs.

Echoing the analysis put forward by Cardenas and Tamayo of the social media meme in terms of Peirce's quasi-phenomenological categories, Carrillo and Vera conclude that a single cinematographic shot, similar to what Cardenas and Tamayo say about the meme, has three elements or "moments": the autonomic emotional state evinced by the original reaction to the perceptual configuration of the shot; the aesthetic illusion that corresponds to the meaning attributed to the configuration; and the final upshot that is the feeling generated by the mediation of the initial bodily reaction and the meaning elicited in the aesthetic illusion.

The third article in this section also brings in facts from neuroscience in the effort to blend a phenomenological approach with the methods of cognitive science. In "The Hypothesis of the (Action-Oriented) Predictive Brain: Experiencing the Being that Anticipates the Being," Patricia King

Dávalos argues for the advantages of the “Hypothesis of the Predictive Brain” over a related but different hypothesis, the “Hypothesis of the Features Recognizer Brain.” The former is to be preferred over the latter because of its grounding in the concept of the “active brain” and its relation to human thought and behavior, while the latter conceives of the brain and related systems of human action as passive. King Dávalos makes the interesting connection between the notion of the active brain and Marxist thought that relates the phenomenology of individual experience and social action. She claims that the neuroscientist conducting research on the brain is well aware that what he or she observes, in terms data displays on MRI scanners or the “flashing points” that may light up on a computer image of a brain scan, has much more going on than what such representations convey. The researcher understands brain activity from a phenomenological standpoint as well. King Dávalos claims that this is analogous to Marxist commentary on praxis: the activity of the researcher goes beyond mere observation and data measurement. The researcher “comes seeking to *realize* an end, full of *expectations* about what he will see.” The next question after “What is this?” is “What is next?” This is evidence for preferring the Hypothesis of the Predictive Brain.

In “Melody, Rhythm, Time: Phenomenology of Music in Augustine, Brentano, and Husserl,” the final paper of this section, Hye Young Kim provides a detailed analysis of these philosophers’ various phenomenological studies of

music (the melody of tones) and rhythms in relation to time and time-consciousness. Kim begins by pointing out that we perceive music as something distinct from meaningless noise even before we understand language. The guiding questions of Kim’s analysis ask how we understand music and what happens when we listen to it. Kim finds that in order to hear a series of tones, played for certain durations with a certain rhythm, as music or melody, the listener must modify the construct of time: “At each now, the past and the future are *modified* to construct the flux of time. In this way we hear the melody, not the sum of tones.” The upshot of this is, for all three thinkers (and Kim brings in Aristotle as well as Heidegger into the discussion), that our understanding of the process of time can be represented or at least probed by thinking about our understanding of how we recognize music or melody. Kim concludes that “the phenomenology of music in, in essence, the phenomenology of time.”

We turn now to a group of contributors to this edition who follow phenomenological and psychological pathways to explore literary or cinematic works that delve into interwoven realms of the imaginary, the symbolic, the uncanny, and the real. In Luis Acebal’s comparative study of the work of J. L. Borges and Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Hawthorne and Borges: Romance where the Imaginary and Real Mingle,” he notes how both authors employ the devices of romantic fiction to create narratives that represent the interweaving of dream states and waking life. Both authors give us

protagonists who cross over the boundaries of everyday experience to inhabit the liminal space between the real and the imaginary. Acebal discloses that “Romance becomes a way of representing forms of consciousness that cannot be represented in a concrete or cohesive way” and illustrates how this approach to writing fiction can reveal hidden depths and a concealed richness in the nature of the relationship of consciousness to the world by blurring the lines between what is real and what is not.

In the second piece that uses a literary work as the impetus for philosophical and phenomenological reflection, Kurt Cline offers up, “‘A Quotation from Baudrillard’: J. G. Ballard and the Psycho-Phenomenology of Media in Everyday Life,” which, like Acebal’s article, compares the influence and philosophical thrust of the work of two literary artists. Cline selects Ballard’s novel, *Super-Cannes*, as his point of departure for elaborating on the role of media in shaping our apparent reality, which as Baudrillard would avow, is merely a simulacrum that in a strange reversal, precedes and provides the model for what we call reality. In tracing out the details of Ballard’s dystopic vision of the future-that-is-now, Cline concurs that the effects of technology and the technologized media of today on human psychology result in a variety of psychopathies. Feedback loops, media labyrinths that lead us to confusion between real news and “fake news,” and a society that condemns violence while “at the same time lives upon it like a vampire” bring us to a place of exacerbated fear that mass media

manipulates and uses to fascinate, overpower, and in the end, effect a kind of disembodiment that makes the “modern mediated human” into a cold, distrusting, paranoid yet insatiable ego that wants nothing more than interaction with the “communication network.”

Our third author in this section, Jonathan Weidenbaum, investigates the artistic medium of film as a source of spiritual replenishment in “Incarnating the Resolution to the Unhappy Consciousness: Hegel, Dewey, and the Relevance of Film for Healing the Spiritual Self.” Weidenbaum looks at the thought of John Dewey and the philosopher’s preoccupation with overcoming the sorts of dualities that can stand in the way of the spiritual seeker’s quest for “a more primordial or inclusive unity.” Weidenbaum explains Dewey’s notion of a “*consummatory* experience—an experience”: these are the sorts of experiences that “possess a recognizable inception and culmination,” a feature that is integral to an experience’s significance in the formation of meaning, both spiritual and aesthetic. The fulfillment of such meaning-making, is for Dewey, “art in germ” and the spark that can ignite spiritual bliss. After clarifying Dewey’s understanding of how our mere “creature existence” can expand into a spiritually and aesthetically rich life, Weidenbaum discusses scenes from George Lucas’s *THX 1138*, Michael Radford’s *1984*, Bernard Rose’s *Immortal Beloved*, and Kim Kiduk’s *Spring, Summer, Winter...and Spring* to illuminate and highlight Dewey’s experiential philosophy of aesthetic and religious meaning.

The last group of papers in this 18th volume of *Glimpse* introduces technological interventions in post-phenomenological practices. In “Teledildonics and Digital Intimacy: A Phenomenological Analysis of Sexual Relations through New Digital Devices,” Nicola Liberati treats us to a phenomenological and post-phenomenological analysis of the effects of *teledildonics* on society and develops a discussion of innovative computer technologies involving physical devices that enable the virtual extension of the natural limits of the “mere flesh” of a subject’s living body. To be precise, he is talking about devices that enable the simulation, or “recreation” (pun intended?), of perceptual organs in different physical locations from that of the subject in question—in other words, “distant dildos.” He claims that this technology “has the potential to re-shape our living body and, in so doing, re-shape our affections as well as our perceptions of the world.” Liberati goes on to describe in some detail how the devices work and how the technology might change or augment important aspects human subjective experience. The phenomenology is related to the experience of cybersex through the use of teledildonics; the post-phenomenology part is how such devices may in fact be thought of as part of a subject’s perceiving body; i.e., the rise of new horizons of embodiment. Coupled with the use of these “virtually real” prosthetics is the added bonus of the ability of users to “change who they are by allowing them to freely shape their sexual body.” Hence a whole new world of possible experiences,

possible bodies, possible selves, and possible relationships opens for those subjects ready to experience a rejection/transformation/augmentation of their natural body for a technologically device-enabled, “flexible’ body that can easily be transformed and enter into relations with other subjects without being related to their ‘original’ body.”

In the final article included in this volume, “A Few Little Prunes: *e-Tree*, a Critical Art Practice Based on Ziarek,” May Zindel and Abner Quiroz present an approach they call, “critical art practice,” which they understand as both an art form and a practice that generates community participation through the design of a mobile app. Following the work of Krzysztof Ziarek, Zindel and Quiroz utilize Ziarek’s theoretical framework that promotes an engagement with “critical art” and proposes a “power-free art” in their project of focusing on tree devastation in the city of Puebla, Mexico. Their mobile app, “*e-Tree*” is a multi-faceted tool that allows users to investigate, document, and critique not only the devastation and dismemberment of trees in their community, but it also offers the possibility for creation of works of art, specifically of the kind that Ziarek calls “telematic artwork.” Such artworks would involve the affected trees and social or personal interventions that can function not only as a creative act, but also as a kind of healing, a mediation between engulfed nature and engaged individuals that instantiates the capacity of art to revolt against destructive or negating forces. The *e-Tree* project is a real-world application of Ziarek’s idea that “the

social function of art can be recovered by using a 'new force' that subtracts or denies the hegemony of production as the true manifestation of 'power.'"

—Melinda Campbell

Editor