REDEFINING FILM:

CAN CINEMA EXIST WITHOUT THE CAMERA?

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Imagine for just a moment you are in a movie theater. You dig your hand into the half empty bag of popcorn, your hands slick with butter. You are enthralled; you're in a room with hundreds of strangers, yet you feel alone. You are motionless but the images before you move with complete fluidity. You're an hour and 50 minutes into the run time and both of your legs have fallen asleep. The hairs on the back of your neck rise. There's a pit in your stomach, a jolt in your seat. You don't feel like yourself, and for some inexplicable reason, you don't mind it.

We've all experienced this at some point or another; we've experienced the virtue of film. Cinema has this power over us as viewers that can be hard to understand; how do a projector, a screen, and dramatized story keep us coming back for more? How do we connect with stories of the screen as if they were actually happening before us? How do we describe this utter immersion of film-watching? What allows for such captivation? It can be assumed that the moving image is the most popular medium of the modern era. This is all thanks to Thomas Edison, WKL Dickson, and the Lumiére Brothers, all of whom were monumental in cinema's origin. These men have largely constructed the medium as we know it today; they created the camera. Since its birth, the motion picture has depended upon its functional apparatus, for how can an artist paint without a brush? We, as viewers, tend to surmise that cinema is reliant upon this invention. We often presume that the power of the medium comes specifically from a camera. In the writing that follows, I ask you this: can cinema exist without the camera? It is easy to say no. It is natural to dismiss this as philosophical mumbo jumbo. This paper will serve as an assessment of this question's validity as I seek to prove that cinema is independent of the

camera. This is not to say that cinema can exist without images, but rather that the functions of a camera are not at root the essence of cinema.

As it stands, it is widely assumed that a film cannot and will not exist without a camera. There are good reasons to believe this to be true. The majority of movies in theaters were shot either digitally or on film via a camcorder of some sort. Visuals, of course, are central to cinema, yet this doesn't entail the visuals were captured by a camera. Animated films are hand-drawn or computer-generated, but because we view them on the same screen we watch live-action, reality captured stories, the illusion of a camera controlling what is displayed before us is ever-present. Though animation lacks the apparatus, we immediately associate it with the tool. But before assessing the necessity of this assumption, we must first understand what exactly cinema is.

Philosophers have long discussed cinema's defining attributes. There have been long-running debates regarding its artistic capacity and whether or not a photograph is purely a copy of reality or an art form of its own right. I will be exploring the theories of Noel Carroll, who happens to agree with my thesis, cinema can exist without the camera, however, he doesn't dwell on it for long. He, a well-respected voice in the conversation, has offered five qualifications of what is essential for cinema to exist in his essay "Defining the Moving Image" (1996). Refuting arguments of the medium essentialist, or rather he who defines an art by the limitations of that said art form (suggesting that the so called medium of an art form is also the essence of that art), has laid out the groundwork for a solid theory. For the medium essentialist, cinema cannot exist without the camera, as it is the limitations of the critical tool that allows for any artistic potential. He refers to cinema as the moving image and argues that if one is to consider an entity, "x", as a said moving image, it must exhibit all five of these features. They are as follows:

I. **"x is a detached display"** (Carroll 130)

This is to say that the moving image is a display, and it is detached because it is not occurring in an "egocentric space."

II. **"x belongs to the class of things from which the impression of movement is technically possible"** (130)

In other words, the spectator visually experiences what is displayed as moving.

III. *"***Performance tokens of x are generated by a template that is a token"** (130)

A token, being the event of a screening, is replicated and generated as templates, which consist of DVDs, film prints, video recordings, etc. These templates store the the moving image and represent it through showing it.

IV. ***"*Performance tokens of x are not artworks in their own right"** (130)

The screening of a film, can not itself be considered an art form, unlike an orchestra playing a symphony; in other words, point III can not be considered an art piece.

V. **"x is a moving image only if it is two dimensional"** (130)

Cinematic visuals are achieved by the means of a flat surface, hence theatric art is not considered cinema.

Before I address my issues with these above distinctions, I must give credit to Carroll. As I've already stated, he believes cinema may exist without the camera, but I think his perception of the question is limiting based on his five standards. Carroll, unlike many film watchers and film makers, is not by any means closed minded in regard to cinematic art, and hence he makes room for avant grade, camera-less films in his argument. In addressing medium essentialism

theory, he notes the abstractions of the medium. In his response to Gregory Currie, "The Essence of Cinema," Carroll takes issue with the previous status quo outlined by Currie: that all films are pictorial, all films use movement, and all films are visual. These claims, at surface level, are warranted, but as Carroll argues, they only describe the *typical* film. He proceeds to assert that a film may lack any or all of these elements and still be regarded as cinema if, and only if, the lack of the said elements is stylistically purposeful in its neglecting of conventions (Carroll 328). For example, if a director told the life story of Freddie Mercury without images with no intent or purpose, then this would merely be an audio recording audiences could listen to on their morning commute. If a screenwriter were to write a screenplay about the life of Stevie Wonder where no images were included to better immerse the viewer into the life long blindness the musician experienced, then audiences are indeed engaging with a piece of cinema. The film "Blue" directed by Derek Jarman is similar to this narrative structure and will be addressed more extensively later in this paper.

So if I am in accordance with Carroll's claim that cinema can exist without the camera, you might ask why I am taking issue with his five conditions. I believe that though his reasoning is sound in regard to defying conventions, there is far more to be said about the hypothesis. In other words, Carroll's reasoning is just one piece of evidence for a claim that has bountiful resources to be proven. In a way, he's unable to prove the point further because of the five restrictions. As cinema has evolved, not only have the conditions aged poorly to fit technological advancements, but they, more critically, limit the scope of the cinematic art form. I will now outline where these conditions falter, and how a reevaluation of the moving image's essence can

provide a more thoughtful, abstract approach to viewership. It's time to change our existing perceptions of cinema.

I want to begin by observing Carroll's last point, that "x is a moving image only if it is two dimensional." This is far too literal. Yes, cinema technically only exists upon a screen, but its qualities are far more immersive. Though we go to the movies and sit in front of a flat screen with images projected upon the canvas, it doesn't feel like we are watching a screen. Movie theater screens were constructed to be massive for a reason, that reason being to limit the viewer's depth perception and peripheral vision. When watching a successful film, one isn't looking at the edges of the frame, but is rather submerged in the visuals before them. This doesn't even take into account the inclusion of three dimensional viewing, or even four dimensional experiences where the seat moves with the action on screen, or a the menacing dragon blows fire at our hero, and we feel heat pour out of the vents below us. There is no discussion regarding the rise of the 3-D film and how its introduction breaks the very 2-D boundary referenced. Moreover, the film industry is moving in direction where the junction of virtual reality and cinema is far from unlikely. Even so, this technology *technically* still occurs on a two dimensional plane, and I will indulge this assumption. Yet, however two dimensional the medium may physically be, I will assert that is not the manner in which it is perceived.

Cinema at its very origin is comprised of illusions. Carroll refers to cinema as a moving image as that is exactly what it is: a series of images at a certain frame rate to craft a perception of seamless concession. Jeffery Zacks, a professor of psychological and brain studies, provides an explanation for this seamlessness. The viewer's retina is made up of detectors that are closely connected to "spatiotemporal patterns of retinal stimulation," meaning we see perceive motion

relative to both space and time. He points out that we actually interpret motion in a “three dimensional” way, these three dimensions being horizontal position, vertical position, and time (Zacks 12). Successive frames engage these detectors just as something moving in our three dimensional reality would, hence creating the illusion that what is occurring on the screen is actually moving. While we generally don’t think of three dimensionality in this way, it is how really perceive all 3-D motion. Typically, three dimensionality has an X, Y, and Z axis, the X axis being horizontal, the Y axis being vertical, and the Z axis creating depth, whether a point on this line is near or far. This is how we perceive reality visually, objects on that Z axis will physically grow closer or farther depending on one’s movement along that line. In cinema, while this is not physically possible, the time axis acts as a substitute for the Z axis, creating the illusion of depth and the assumption of a digital object’s existence.

The visual cortex is made up of 5 visual areas, V1 being the earliest of these areas. In these early visual areas, the detectors pay attention to the motion of simple features consisting of moving edges and changes in light. In later areas, the detectors process more complex movement sequences, where complicated colors and patterns become increasingly more discernible (Huff). Zacks explains that this neurological processing accounts for why low frame rates create a convulsive perception of movement. There is a disconnect between the early and later visual areas’ neurons, the early ones respond to “smaller regions of visual space” while the later ones focus on the “larger regions”. If the object you are perceiving is moving too fast and the frame rate is too low, the visual signal skips over the early visual regions and goes straight to the later regions. The early regions thus perceive no motion whilst the later regions perceive excessive motion (Zacks 12). This illustrates the importance of understanding film viewing as a three

dimensional process. Though Carroll's two dimensional distinction makes sense in practicality and in regard to the screening medium, it is not at the root of the essence cinema. Carroll says himself that "performance tokens of [the moving image] are not artworks in their own right," therefore the qualifications he's placed on cinema only apply to the token (a screening) and not the art itself, that is if we continue to refer to cinema as two dimensional (Carroll 130).

At first glance, it may seem as though Carroll has accounted for this separation in his second qualification, identifying that we experience the two dimensional images as actually moving. I put forth that there is more to the viewer's experience than just believing the images are in fact moving and succumbing to the visual illusion discussed above. It is instead, in essence, not the belief that movement is occurring, but rather the belief that we are experiencing a narrative through movement. In other words, movement is not the core of what defines cinema, but narrative immersion is. While theatric works and novels act similarly on the spectator's psyche, they lack certain immersive capacities that cinema innately has, and I will address this further later in this paper. Carroll does anticipate this response to his thesis, clarifying that there are films that don't contain movement such as Oshima's comic strip set to screen *The Band of Ninjas* and Takahiko Iimura's *1 in 10,* where only addition and subtraction are displayed on screen. To this he argues that there is fundamentally the "anticipation of movement" in all cinema, even when motionless (Carroll 125). This thinking is still limiting, we need to get away from the idea that the concept of motion is quintessential to cinema's existence, despite the status quo. With Carroll's assumptions, it is difficult to discern his moving image from a flip book. As flip books are typically short in length and must be small enough to physically flip, they have little capacity for immersion. Plus, they don't allow for a solid grasp of seamless frame rate,

making it two dimensional as it there is no control of the time axis Zacks introduces. With this assumption in mind and a refutation to his last four points in place, let us now observe his first assertion, that the moving image must be a detached display.

I take issue with this claim especially as it largely limits what cinema is. First, it is important to understand what he means by a "detached display." This is to say that the art must be displayed upon a screen, or in his words "a token," that must be consciously accepted as separate from the viewer. This eliminates the temptation to regard reality, and more specifically theater, as cinema, for our eyes are attached displays. The art itself must be a separate entity from the observer, and hence makes the movie watching experience is not "egocentric." That is to say the movie watching experience is solely empirical and observational; it's an experience that should not include the viewer in its art. I will now argue how the inverse is true.

Firstly, Carroll's "detached display" fails to distinguish cinema from the theater now that we've refuted his argument for cinema's "two dimensional" nature. He states that the main difference between cinema and theater is the token, or the display of the art itself; films can be replicated through templates whilst stage performance is live and its template is the theater itself (Carroll 128). The two mediums are both detached displays. What's important to note here is that his claims have analyzed only the "template" of cinema, and not the art form itself (the narrative); this is the problem with his two dimension theory. Hence there is no separation, in Carroll's argument, of theater and cinema. Carroll states that "we are necessarily 'alienated' from the space of detached displays" (Carroll 124). This is basically identical to the very definition of theatricality provided by philosopher Josette Féral in her journal "Theatricality: The Specificity of Theatrical Language." She defines the stage as a detached display, stating that "by watching,

the spectator creates an ‘other’ space, no longer subject to the laws of the quotidian, and in this space he inscribes what he observes, perceiving it as belonging to a space where he has no place except as an external observer” (Féral 105). To apply this thinking in cinema would suggest that the performance on the screen is perceived by audiences no different than on the stage in a theater. This is not the case.

Féral’s ideas are relevant to stage performance, but should not be adopted for the screen. In theater, there is a physical wall between actor and audience; between reality and fiction. This boundary is, of course, the stage. This is what makes tools like breaking the fourth wall so powerful in the stage play; for a moment the audience is part of the actor’s space: the story. Apart from moments like this, there is an obvious separation between the stage and the house, and the audience is aware of it. The observer goes to the theater to purely observe a story from a distance. Despite physically being in the same space, the audience and the actors do not exist in the same plane of reality. In cinema theaters, however, this boundary is hardly present. Yes, there is a screen before us, but because of the three dimensional quality of the moving image and the visuals being projected on an all encompassing screen, it is impossible to feel disconnected from a successful story. In theater, lines are delivered with passion, but without detail. We can’t see the slight tremble in an actresses’s hand, or the sweat on her brow, or the single tear in the corner of her eye on the stage; we’re not right next to her. On a movie screen, these same actions can fill the entirety of our guided spectatorship. That trembling hand fills the screen, you can’t miss it. Thus, theatricality is paired with dramatization, or the emphasis of certain movements, to make them apparent to the spectator on the mezzanine. We’re up close and personal with *everything* in cinema. We aren’t in any means detached from the display; we’re immersed.

Siegfried Kracauer's "Theory of Film" (1960) identifies this immersion by calling it "lowered consciousness." Looking at a perceptive french woman's thoughts on movie-going, he reveals exactly how attached we are to the display. This movie goer describes the cinematic experience in a very profound manner: "In the theatre I am always I, but in cinema, I dissolve into all things and beings" (Kracauer 159). In Kracauer's analysis of this claim, he brings french philosopher Henri Wallon into the conversation, who articulates exactly what she means by this, referring to it as "dissolution." He states that cinema is successful once the spectator identifies with the images. He says this immersion, or dissolution, causes him, and other spectators, to "more or less forget [themselves] in what is being displayed on the screen. [The spectator is] no longer in [their] own life, [they are] in the film projected in front of [them]" (Kracauer 159). There is an obvious unison in spectatorship and cinema. Kracauer credits this lowered consciousness to the darkness of theaters as it reduces our connections to reality and actuality. The darkness prohibits our brain to absorb our environment and make judgements of our surroundings (Kracauer 158). I call this complete and utter immersion, and while it entails the deprivation of the sense of self, cinematic spectatorship still operates with egocentric functionality. We forget ourselves, but are instead totally in tune to how we empathize with characters.

My final refutation to Carroll's detached display point returns to the neurological analysis of how our brains perceive the moving image. Zacks would likely disagree with the concept of the detached display from a psychological standpoint. He reminds us that our brains were not made for cinema, but rather cinema was constructed for our brains. The tricks used on the screen to captivate us empathetically are a result of filmmakers taking advantage of the pre-existing

neurological functions inherent to the healthy engaged spectator (Zacks 2). There are two concepts we must be familiar with before proceeding: the “mirror rule” and the “success rule”. Both refer to how we respond to situations in the real world.

The “mirror rule” is a process in our brain, Zacks states, that responds to stimuli with “do what you see” (Zacks 2). You see this operation at work everyday. When someone is laughing, you might immediately find yourself unable to hold back your own chortles (yes, chortles). Say you go see an action movie and you’re seated next to a group of ten year olds who are kicking relentlessly in their seats, flinching with every explosion. Zacks tells us that these children are prime examples of “mirroring” in the movie theater.

The “success rule” reacts to stimuli in more advantageous way, saying “do what has worked” (Zacks 3). Zacks explains that we’re taught to operate with this rule in mind as its, obviously, more successful. This is what psychologists refer to as operant conditioning, as it is how we learn new skills with what the world has put in front of us. As we habitually use these successful responses, they grow more and more automatic. Zack cites a good example: when you approach a traffic light that turns red, you hit the brake before even processing the sequence of events that caused this reaction; you’ve conditioned yourself to move your foot to the brake when you see the color red in stop lights and stop signs. You continue to do this without thinking of it because it has always been successful.

These two rules further erode the wall between display and spectator, contributing to a viewing experience that engages with an attached display due to this crumbling “wall.” They explain why we have such intense emotional responses to cinema, even when such responses our futile as we have absolutely no control in regard to the narrative structure; our responses will not

change the outcome of the script. While this lack of control may seem to support Carroll's claim, I argue that it actually reinforces the opposite. We mirror the close ups of smiles by smiling ourselves. When we see a character try to hold back tears, it's almost impossible to hold back our own. The success rule operates in a manner that prepares to do what the character should do. Zacks refers to J. Schlesinger's 1976 film *Marathon Man.* When the audience sees Dustin Hoffman being chased by his enemies, the viewer's pupils may dilate, they may hunch over in their seat, and their heart rate will increase all because we are preparing to execute a flight or fight response. We experience what Hoffman is experiencing because it is the automatic response that leads to a successful escape. In Zacks' terminology we undergo "appraisal" and "direct action" (Zacks 7). Appraisal allows us to infer if something bad happened to a likable character, we would exhibit the emotion sadness. Direct action, on the other hand, consists of bodily responses that advance emotional responses. In philosopher William James' terms, "We feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, afraid because we tremble" (James 449-450). Thus, despite a cinematic narrative occurring in a reality that is not our own, it becomes our own for the two hour runtime due to the real emotional responses drawn from the cinematic medium. It's an empathetic process.

Now we have dissected Carroll's definition of the moving image. We've identified the flaws in referring to cinema as a two dimensional art, and how, actually, the medium is three dimensional from not only psychological standpoint but also an emotional one. Because Carroll assumes all of these conditions are two dimensional, we can assume his analysis of tokens and templates is insufficient as they only apply to the 2-D image. With this distinction, we assessed the limitations of defining cinema purely as a medium entirely based on motion. Finally we

disproved the condition that for x to be cinema, it has to be a detached display. We've thus re-evaluated the definition of cinema to be a purely immersive art. We can now answer the question "can cinema exist without the camera?"

As I said earlier, Carroll would agree with my claim that, yes cinema is not dependent on the camera, but he would be dissatisfied with my approach as I plan to disregard the argument he puts forth in response to question. Just as a refresher, he claims that, yes, the moving image can exist without the camera and without motion, but only if it is stylistically challenging the conventions of cinema. With the distinctions we've made so far in this paper, I will now challenge our dependence upon the camera, freeing its tight grasp around the definition of cinema. I don't plan to dwell on animation or CGI as these distinctions are arbitrary and refutable; both try to replicate the camera, or in other words, imagine what the camera could/ would have captured if it was there. I will instead argue that cinema depends more so on emotional responses, immersion, and lowered consciousness than it does upon the camera.

I propose that we stop considering cinema as solely an art form and that we start looking at it as a mindset; a feeling. My definition of the moving image is as follows: cinema describes the moment in which we forget ourselves and begin experiencing stories as someone else in a visual sense. What does this mean? It's essentially what Henri Wallon was talking about: losing oneself in the film before them. This largely due to the emotional responses discussed by Zack. What the mirror rule and success rule really demonstrate is the human capacity for empathy, and as Zack states, cinema as we know it is merely using preexisting neurological pathways to tell an effective story. In other words, the idea of cinema existed before what we refer to as "cinema" today existed. This is demonstrated effectively in one of the Lumiere Brothers' first films,

Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat (1895). The film is short and simple, but it is rumored to have caused quite a stir in theaters. The only shot is a continuous one of a train approaching the cinematographe (camera) which stands on the platform. As the train approached, audiences leapt out of their seats in fear, closed their eyes and clenched their fists, for they believed the train was actually approaching them. This shows just how attached we are as viewers to the display, but more importantly signifies this immersive quality of cinema. Audiences in the late nineteenth century had never seen marvels like this before, so they had no choice but to operate purely through the "success rule." They were conditioned to flee a train, or brace for impact, for they believed the train was about to flatten them. This example doesn't, however, help us understand the lowered state of consciousness, nor does it reject the convention of a camera, though it serves as an example of the power of cinema; they'd forgotten their own reality of being safe and secure in the four walls of a theater.

The mirror rule and success rule are so relevant to my theory because they *force* the viewer to be at least a little bit immersed and empathetic. This is largely due to the narrative tools that exist only cinema and not theater. In cinema, though it requires the use of a camera, close ups play a fundamental part in the subconscious operation of the mirror rule. We miss these small character reactions on the stage and often times in literature, as I mentioned before. This is the first step of immersion: mirroring the protagonist. This is the idea of guided spectatorship, you're shown exactly what the director and editor want you to see. The second step of immersion, I assert, takes shape through soundtrack and narration. In cinema, we can often times hear our protagonist's thoughts through their inner-monologue, like in *Fight Club* where Edward Norton narrates his unnamed character's life as the said character. He's a nobody, and the viewer, thus,

experiences the narrative through him and as him. With soundtrack, we come to understand and feel how the characters feel. Psychologist Oliver Vitouch crafted a study regarding the impact of music in films, and concluded that "Viewers' / listeners' *expectations* of the further development of a scene are clearly influenced by the underlying film music, which implicitly co-determines the recipients' psychological reality" (Vitouch). If a soundtrack's melody is in a major key and moderato (medium tempo), perhaps a character displayed beneath this tune is happy. This is similar to the Kuleshov Effect, where we make distinctions about narrative based on the sequence of images. Music creates the tone of the protagonist's state of mind, and put the spectator right in the same headspace as the fictional character. This is key in immersion.

Let us now consider Derek Jarman's *Blue* (1993). This film consists of just the color blue for the entirety of its 75 minute runtime; just blue. Jarman, who directed several other works, had been diagnosed with AIDs and was losing his eyesight. To combat the impending blindness, he was prescribed a medication that caused him to see everything through a foggy, blue hue. The film consists of poetry and narration, all exploring the meaning of the color blue; its spiritual meaning, its melancholic qualities, and its associations. All the while, bells ring, chimes sound, and clocks tick, yet we see none of it. It's haunting. This film is incredibly immersive, perhaps even more so than several pop culture films. We, the viewer, become Derek Jarman in his final years, seeing only blue as the time slips by, forced to examine the existentialism and profundity that was lingering in his mind. What's fascinating is that this film wasn't marketed as avant-garde, but rather as a drama/documentary as it was broadcasted all over on Channel 4 (Ramsay). It's also interesting to note that this film has received a 7.3/10 on IMDb; that's better than Joe Johnston's *Jumanji* (1995), outscoring it by 0.3 points. One may ask, is this really cinema? What

separates it from radio? Max Ramsay answers this question nicely in his article “In Praise of Blue,” saying that we are drawn to a “point of focus” with “no new image to distract or guide the mind” (Ramsay). This is why in my definition of cinema, I’ve included “in a visual sense;” the visual is perhaps the strongest element of *Blue*. This is a novel example of immersion; you can’t focus on anything else, you can barely focus on yourself. You experience life as Jarman did, no camera necessary.

If my definition of a camera-independent cinema revolves around the fundamental idea of an empathetic viewer, then would cinema exist in reality? What if we fully empathize with someone else and really take a walk in their shoes? Well, technically, by my definition, you could experience cinema in daily life, but it is incredibly difficult and almost impossible. In reality, we are generally at a heightened sense of self and consciousness, not the lowered consciousness we experience in theaters. This is why movies are optimal for experiencing “cinema,” they promote this empathetic experience by dulling all consciousness to the viewer’s actual environment and instead immerse spectators into a three dimensional viewership. This is why tools like soundtrack and voiceover are so relevant; we don’t get that kind of experience in the real world. We cannot hear others’ thoughts, nor experience exactly what they are feeling. We don’t see others in their most private moments, nor observe the smallest details of their gestures. It is near impossible to experience the empathy that keeps up coming back to movie theaters.

I theorize that, for this reason, this is why we see children try to emulate their heroes; it’s why they want to dress up as Spiderman on Halloween. We, as humans, crave this sort of empathy; we subconsciously crave the feeling of being someone else. Spiderman is powerful, relatable, kind, and heroic. Children lack that power, and when they go into theaters and

experience the world through Spiderman's eyes, they get the feeling, for just a couple hours, that they too are powerful. Films actually promote this type of viewership. One of my favorite examples is drawn from Buster Keaton's *Sherlock Jr.*. Keaton plays a projectionist at a movie theater who has secret longings to become a suave detective. When he loses his fiancé after being framed for theft, he returns to his job and falls asleep while sitting in the protecting a detective film; we'll call this a lowered state of consciousness. He then dreams that he exists within the screen, the lead actors of the film are replaced by those who exist in his reality; he becomes the protagonist. This is literal immersion. Moreover, when he wakes up, his fiancé apologetically enters the projection room, having learned her future spouse is innocent. Keaton, unsure how to be "suave", looks through his projection window at the screen and mirrors what the lead actor does with his partner, first holding her hands, then giving a quick kiss, and placing a ring on her finger. We seek to become the characters we experience. This movie is a perfect example of the immersion that is quintessential to the essence of cinema, I'd highly recommend watching it.

I'd also like to address a potential counter to my definition: by my terms, cinema could be likened to literature. To this I assert that literature was an early form of my definition of cinema, but it lacks the same immersive quality as films. Of course one might say that they often get lost in good books more so than in movies, but to that I'd like to quote Zacks to respond. Zacks states in his section "The Movie in your Head" that "movies almost always give you information about the color, shape, and size of the people and objects they depict. In a book, it is the author's choice whether to describe those features or not" (Zacks 5). By this notion, it is less immersive as the reader must create "event models," or narrative details, themselves. This, of course, is still immersive, but in a different way. One could say cinema without the camera is just

a novel. This is valid. The reader visualizes the words in their head. Hence, readers still empathize with characters on the page, but what the experience lacks is a lowered state of consciousness. You can't read in the dark, nor have audible and physical bodily responses. In a horror movie there are jump scares which warrant a jolt in a seat, a scream, a surprise. In horror novel, there is dread, but not in the same capacity that correlates to the success rule. Think of the *Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat.* Reading that in a book with vast details about the position and velocity of the train still would not arouse such fear as the short's premiere. The train can't come through the page, but on the screen, we believe it really is approaching us. The same thinking can be applied to *Blue*. You can read about Jarman's deteriorating eyesight, but it requires you to use your own. You can only experience what he was experiencing through the film medium. You can't read through a blue filter, or read blue words on a blue page.

Where does all this leave us? I've illustrated cinema as a prominently psychological experience rather than a visual art. It's a language of immersion. Thus, the camera becomes useful in evoking the state of being I've discussed, but it is not necessary, as demonstrated by films such as *Blue*. I've tried to expand upon Carroll's theory regarding a camera-less cinema. While, yes, film can exist without the camera when done for the purpose of evoking the audience to imagine a camera-less medium, this is not, in essence, at the root of cinema itself. I've explained how constituting only avant-garde films as camera-less cinema is a false presumption. For if cinema is an empathetic experience of immersion, the camera becomes secondary to evoking its impact. By understanding cinema as a deeper experience than what Carroll has defined to as, we can learn more about ourselves as viewers, and as the characters upon the screen. So yes, cinema can exist without the camera, to see it any other way would be rather

limiting to cinematic understanding. Cinema is more than a series of qualifications. It's a series of neural networks firing synapses. It's a beginning of understanding empathy. It's that moment:

You don't feel like yourself, and for some inexplicable reason, you don't mind it.

It's an experience.

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