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### Thinking Images

#### The Essay Film as a Dialogic Form in European Cinema

Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Wien, 2012. XII, 191 pp.

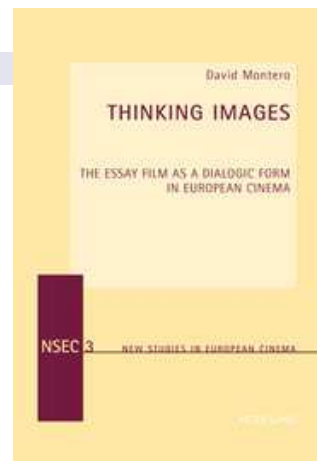
New Studies in European Cinema. Vol. 3

Edited by Wendy Everett and Axel Goodbody

**Print:** ISBN 978-3-0343-0730-7 pb. (Softcover)  
SFR 51.00 / €\* 41.60 / €\*\* 42.80 / € 38.90 / £ 35.00 / US\$ 54.95

**eBook:** ISBN 978-3-0353-0299-8  
SFR 53.75 / €\* 46.29 / €\*\* 46.68 / € 38.90 / £ 35.00 / US\$ 54.95

**Order online:** [www.peterlang.com](http://www.peterlang.com)



### Book synopsis

The essay film – ‘a form that thinks’ – serves to create a self-reflexive space for contemporary society by challenging expectations and demanding the creative involvement of the spectator. Using film to provoke thought has never been more important than now, when non-fiction films are gaining in popularity and playing a growing part in debates about culture and politics. This timely publication argues that the appeal of the essay film lies primarily in the dialogic engagement with the spectator and the richness of the intellectual and artistic debate it stimulates. The book focuses on the work of three key European film directors associated with the essay film: Chris Marker, Harun Farocki and José Luis Guerín. It provides a detailed analysis of several films by each director, exploring the relationship between dialogism and essayism in their work and placing this in the wider context of debates on the cinematic essay as a genre. Central aspects of essayistic filmmaking are explored, including its radical approach to knowledge, its distinctive patterns of subjectivity, its challenging of the formal representation of reality, and its contribution to new understandings of spectatorship. Written with clarity and perception, this volume offers new insights into the rise of the non-fiction film and the essay film, in particular.

### Contents

Contents: The thinking form – Questions and answers: Towards a dialogical understanding of the essay film – Essayistic filmmaking as a non-fictional practice: Self-reflexivity and heteroglossia in Harun Farocki's *Workers Leaving the Factory*, José Luis Guerín's *Train of Shadows* and Chris Marker's *Sunless* – Beyond the 'I': Subjectivity and dialogical authorship in Chris Marker's *Level 5* – Unfinalizability, addressivity and tact: Harun Farocki's *Videograms of a Revolution* – Interpellation, active spectatorship and the returned gaze: José Luis Guerín's *In the City of Sylvia* – Mapping the origins of an essayistic sensibility in five films.

### About the author(s)/editor(s)

David Montero is a lecturer and postdoctoral researcher in film and communication studies at the University of Seville, Spain. He completed his PhD at the University of Bath in 2009 and has previously published on the essay film.

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