

EDITORIAL
THINKING DOCUMENTARY FILM

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Documentary films constitute a challenge for philosophical thinking. Based on reality and addressing it explicitly as well, they raise the problem of the encounter between world and images in a particularly acute way. The images they feature do not merely reproduce the real in its immediacy, but also constitute, in themselves, a relation to it. Rather than a pure objective material, they are always a product of a dialogue between the visible and its perception, the historically developed reality and the meanings ascribed to it. This issue of *Cinema-Philosophy and the Moving Image* aims to address this complex relationship between film and reality in documentary films.

Opening this issue are two introductory texts written by the editors, which are conceived as complementary approaches to the subject, akin to the cinematic technique of shot and counter-shot: Stefanie Baumann develops the potential meaning of the concept of reality in and through documentary film, while Susana Nascimento Duarte addresses the reality of film images themselves, as they compose and recompose ‘phenomenal reality’. Thereafter, a series of original articles approach the philosophical dimension of documentary through particular examples. Francesco Cattaneo examines through the lenses of Jacques Ellul’s philosophy the meditation on technology and on machines generated in Godfrey Reggio’s *Qatsi Trilogy*, while Vittorio Lubrano explores the potential of posthuman aesthetics through the experimental documentary films of Johann Lurf and Jodie Mack. Jeremy Hamers questions the idiosyncratic stance taken on by Christoph Schlingensiefel in his late film *The African Twin Towers*. Pedro Florêncio engages in an investigation of Wang Bing’s “most discreet – and yet monumental” film *Traces*, and Anna Wiehl analyses through the film *Racing Home* how Korsakow documentary, a type of interactive database documentary, mediates the conjunction between ‘reality’ and its medial constructions.

The following special section features three contributions of particular interest to the questions raised by the issue: the English translation of Jacques Rancière’s text “The Uncertainties of Dialectics” (*Les incertitudes de la dialectique*) on Harun Farocki’s *Images of the World and the*

Inscription of War, Paula Rabinovitch's sensitive reevaluation of documentary in times of COVID, and the Portuguese translation of Trinh T. Minh-ha's seminal text "The Totalizing Question of Meaning".

Instead of the usual classical interview, the editors decided to conclude this issue with a "virtual round table" bringing together various outstanding filmmakers, artists, philosophers, and theorists from different backgrounds around the question of philosophy and documentary film. The round table is virtual in a particular sense: the participants did not actually communicate with each other, but sent their comments, elaborations and thoughts on the proposed subjects directly to the editors, who, in turn, orchestrated these heterogeneous contributions experimentally so as to crystallize them into a readable constellation. Thereby, they attempted to generate a sort of imaginary dialogue between complementary positions expressed through different languages (English, French and Portuguese). In order to emphasize the experimental character of the "virtual round table", two versions of the round table are proposed: one that adopts the linear form of an imaginary discussion transposed as a text, the other that takes on the form of an associative atlas inspired by the montage principles of Aby Warburg's *Atlas Mnemosyne*.

The editors would like to warmly thank the authors and the translators who took part in this issue, the contributors to the "virtual round table", Maile Colbert for her correction of the English parts, and Philip Farah and Margaux Dauby for her assistance in the editing process.

This work is funded by national funds through FCT –
Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia