

does the montage aesthetic fall short, at least in its earliest accounting of the effects and affects it was likely to have. In art and experience, collision is everywhere, but what may result proves difficult to foresee. The inadequacy of social and cinematic dialectics lies in the fact that struggles, collisions, and reactions simply do not end precisely or predictably. This is especially true when the collisions and chemical reactions take place inside of the spectator's head.

Eisenstein:

For us, to know is to participate. For this we value the biblical term—"and Abraham *knew* his wife Sarah"—by no means meaning that he became acquainted with her.

Perceiving is building. The perceiving of life—indissolubly—is the construction of life—the *rebuilding* of it.<sup>70</sup>

The genetic metaphor is an apt one. Wim Wenders asks: "At what moment is a film born? Or perhaps it would be better to say conceived?"<sup>71</sup> The phenomenological element is an essential part of the montage equation; as with any coupling, the realities of genetics, of dominant and recessive genes, not to mention environmental determinations, make the outcome of the meeting impossible to predict.

Films have no existence other than through our eyes. In fact, they are always seen twice: first by a director with the help of his writer, cameraman, actors and a few other people, and second by everyone in 'the audience'. Everybody sees and creates his/her own film, the reviewer, too. Like anyone else he is guided by the film on the screen adding (or subtracting) his own emotions, memories, opinions, sense of humour, openness, colours and so on.<sup>72</sup>

The original notion of the cinema of attraction was not neutral. It had a decided hierarchy, with the artist at the top. Though it presupposed audience involvement, its ultimate flaw was that it did not sufficiently account for the viewer.<sup>73</sup>

But it is not sufficient simply to affirm audience rights while offhandedly acknowledging that that audience is pretty diverse. What is the nature of that diversity?

Dziga Vertov wrote in 1923 that "a ballet audience haphazardly follows first the ensemble of the groups of dancers, then random individuals, then somebody's feet: a series of incoherent