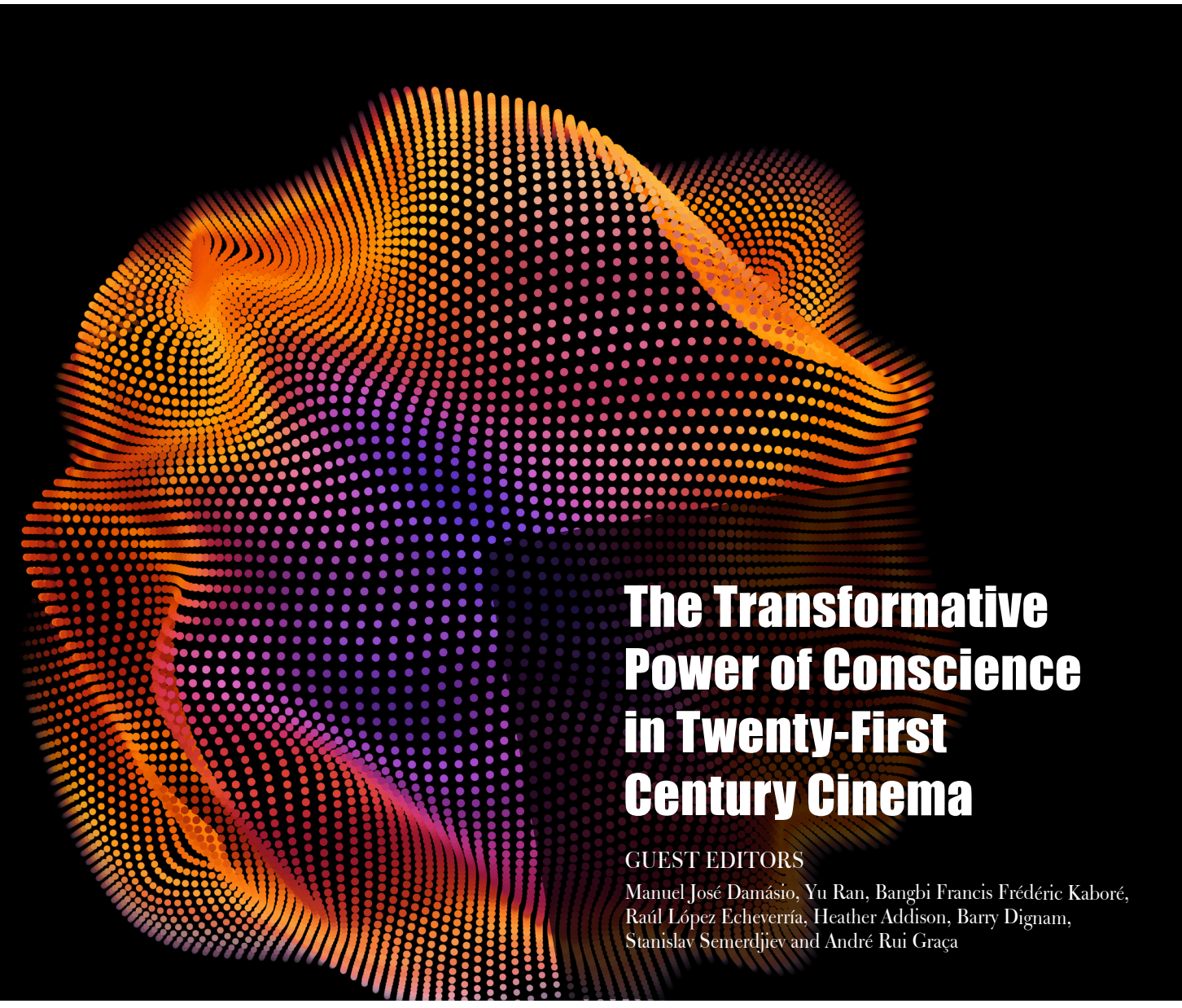
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The Transformative Power of Conscience in Twenty-First Century Cinema

GUEST EDITORS

Manuel José Damásio, Yu Ran, Bangbi Francis Frédéric Kaboré, Raúl López Echeverría, Heather Addison, Barry Dignam, Stanislav Semerdjiev and André Rui Graça

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CONTENTS

4 EDITORIAL
THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF CONSCIENCE IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY CINEMA
Manuel José Damásio, Yu Ran, Bangbi Francis Frédéric Kaboré, Raúl López Echeverría, Heather Addison, Barry Dignam, Stanislav Semerdjiev and André Rui Graça

6 THE FILM AND TELEVISION INSTITUTE OF INDIA AND THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF FILM PEDAGOGY
Debjani Halder

24 CHINESE ARTISTIC CONCEPTION IN CHINESE INK-WASH ANIMATION: WANDERING-VIEWING AND MIRRORING-DRIFTING
Yuan Wei, Vimala Perumal, Zainudin Bin Siran, Mohamad Razeef Shah, Mohmad Rafik

56 EDUCATING FILMMAKERS: BALANCING CREATIVITY AND ETHICS UNDER VIETNAM'S CINEMATOGRAPHY LAW
Đặng Thu Hà

68 BEYOND EFFICIENCY: REFRAMING AI HALLUCINATION AND REFUSAL AS AESTHETIC-MORAL GESTURES IN CINEMATIC PRACTICE
In Sun JUNG, Dokyun Lee, Sangmi Im

84 DREAMING THE POSTHUMAN: ONHUMAN ENTANGLEMENTS AND AFFECTIVE SONIC IMMERSION —A CASE STUDY
Fernando Torres Viteri

100 THE LIMITS OF THE IMAGE: ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY AND FILM EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE
Hoang Da Vu

115 PHOTOGRAPHY, CRITICAL THINKING AND PEDAGOGY: THINKING THE CITY WITH GABRIELE BASILICO
Joana Nunes, Henrique Soeiro Andrade, Lorenzo Stefano Iannizzotto

134 THE FAULTS OF DOCUMENTATION. MIGRATION THROUGH AN EXPERIMENT IN FILM PEDAGOGY
Edwin Culp, David Grimaldo

153 THE FICTIONAL CONTRACT AND THE CONTEMPORARY DRAMATURGY
Jorge Paixão da Costa

163 REDESIGNING UNDERGRADUATE DIRECTING CURRICULA BEYOND THE AUTEUR MODEL
Roberto Franco Moreira

176 CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES OF OTHERNESS: RETHINKING ETHICS AND INCLUSIVENESS IN FILM EDUCATION
Miriam Martínez Villar, Antonio Francisco Alaminos-Fernández

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EDITORIAL THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF CONSCIENCE IN TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY CINEMA

MANUEL JOSÉ DAMÁSIO, YU RAN, BANGBI FRANCIS FRÉDÉRIC KABORÉ, RAÚL LÓPEZ ECHEVERRÍA, HEATHER ADDISON, BARRY DIGNAM, STANISLAV SEMERDJIEV AND ANDRÉ RUI GRAÇA

This special issue of the *International Journal of Film and Media Arts* is published in collaboration with CILECT, the global association of film schools, and presents a curated selection of papers originating from the CILECT 2025 congress held in Guadalajara, Mexico, convened by CILECT and the University of Guadalajara. The issue adopts the congress theme, **"The Transformative Power of Conscience in Twenty-First Century Cinema,"** and foregrounds the conference's central inquiries: **What films should be made? For whom are they made?** and **Why make them?**

The 2025 CILECT congress sought to foster sustained dialogue among educators committed to preparing the next generation of filmmakers. It emphasized critical reflection on the ethical responsibilities of cinema within contemporary society and on the pedagogical role of film education in cultivating meaningful, socially engaged practice. The conference provided a forum for interrogating how conscience and responsibility inform creative decision-making and curricular priorities in film schools.

To extend and deepen the intellectual exchange initiated at the congress, the editors and CILECT devised an alternative publication model for this special issue. Presenters at the conference were invited to submit substantially revised and expanded versions of their conference papers to the journal. This approach required contributors to elaborate on initial arguments, incorporate further evidence or theoretical framing, and situate their work more explicitly within ongoing scholarly and pedagogical debates. A substantial number of authors responded to this invitation and submitted revised manuscripts for peer review.

The revised submissions address a range of interrelated concerns in film and media pedagogy, including:

- Ethics and responsibility in film education
- Preparing students to consider the social impact of cinematic projects
- Pedagogical strategies that foster motivation, critical thinking, and creative development
- Curricular redesign to support diverse and inclusive narratives
- Integration of cultural and social diversity into teaching
- Emergent models of film education and pedagogical innovation amid technological change

These contributions reflect a shared commitment to rethinking the role of film education in the twenty-first century. They point to the need for pedagogical approaches that are not only responsive to industrial transformations but also attentive to broader cultural, social, and ethical considerations.

Following a rigorous peer-review process, a select group of papers was chosen for inclusion in this issue. The resulting collection demonstrates the value of the editorial model in strengthening the nexus between a major annual academic event—the CILECT congress—and the journal. By encouraging authors to revisit and expand their work, this model fosters greater depth, clarity, and scholarly rigour, while also extending the lifespan and impact of conference-based research.

We contend that this approach merits further exploration. It offers a productive framework for consolidating research agendas in film and media arts education, promoting sustained reflection on the interplay between research and creative pedagogy, and reinforcing the role of academic journals as spaces for ongoing dialogue within the field.