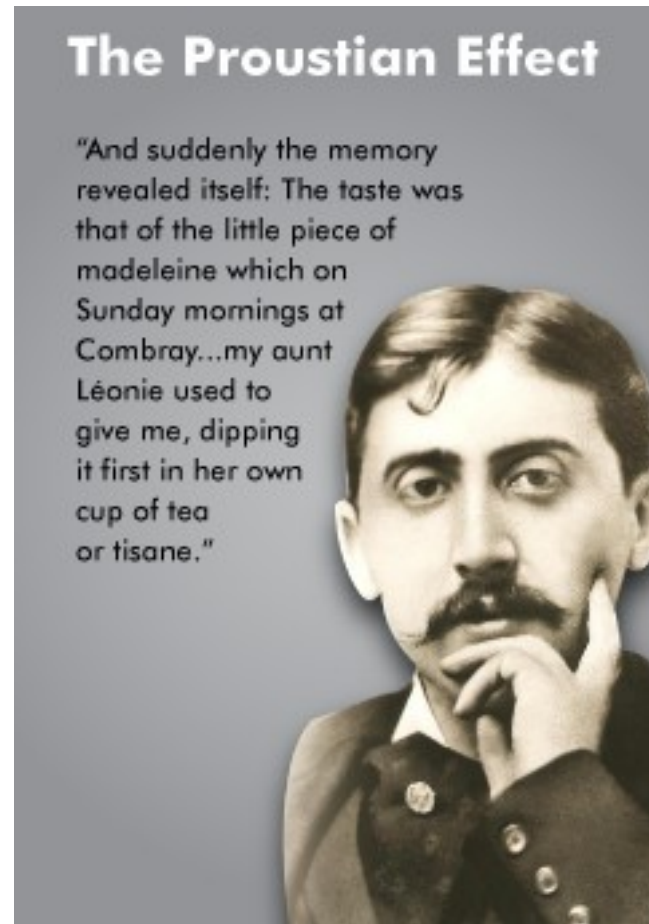
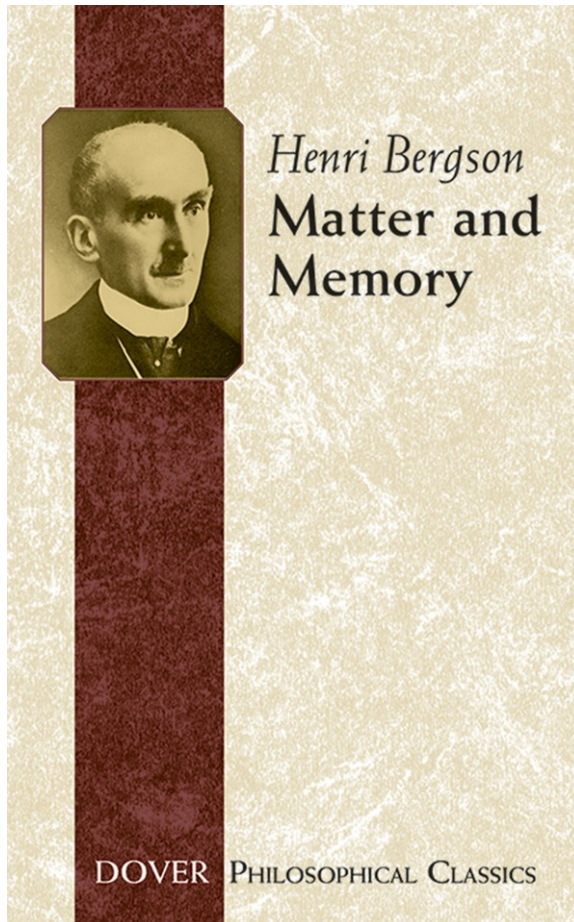




Phil Powrie

**The acoustic wound: reflections on the crystal-song in
five American films from 2016-2018**



‘The pure present is an ungraspable advance of the past devouring the future. All sensation is already memory.’

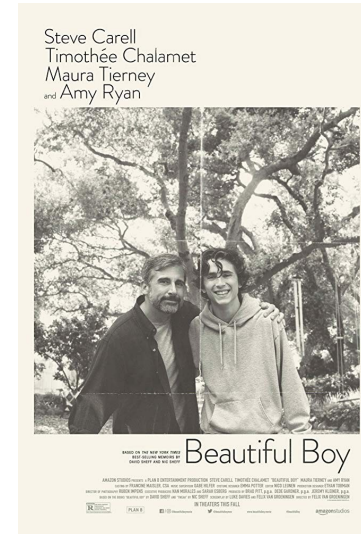


New considerations

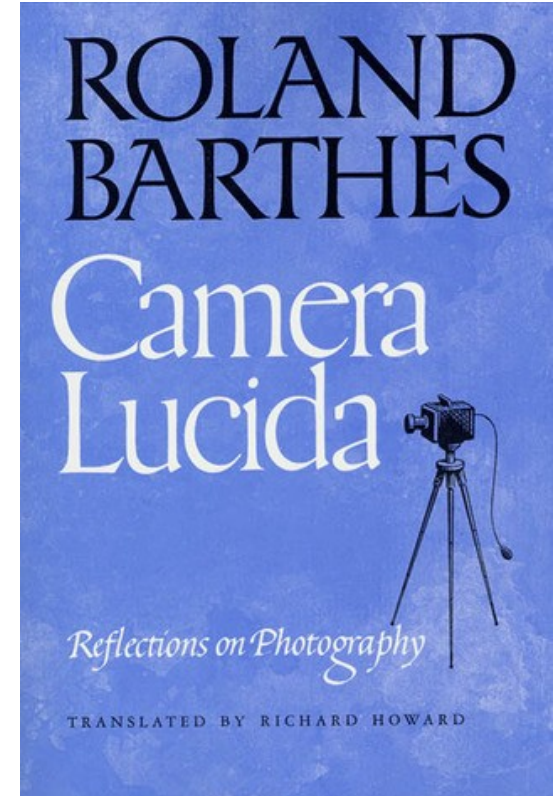
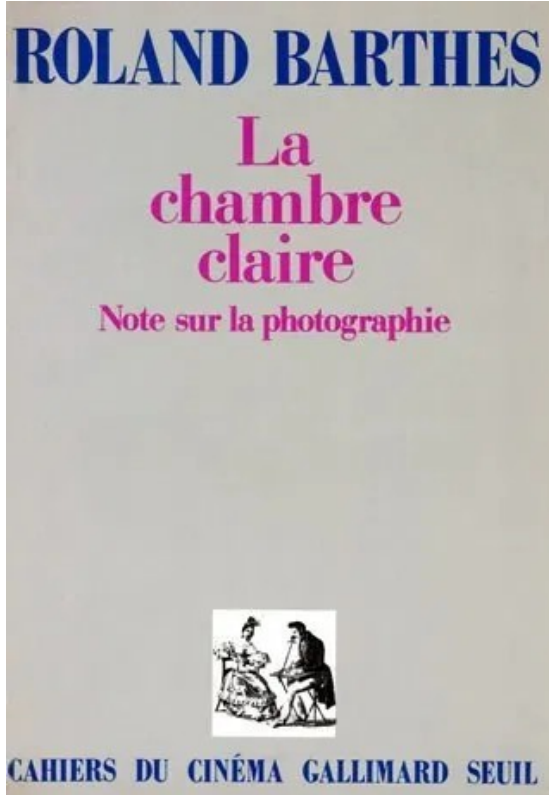
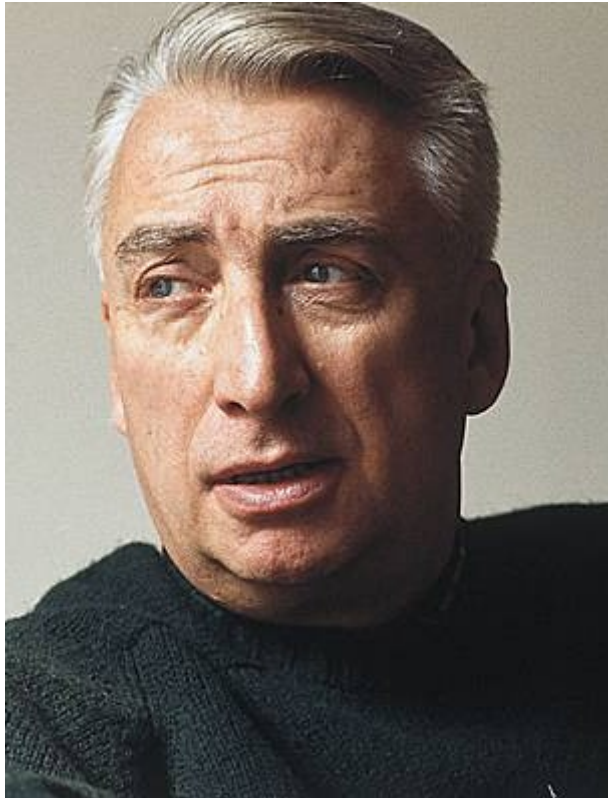
The background of the slide is a complex, artistic representation of musical notation. It features several black treble clefs and five horizontal staves that curve across the frame. Various musical symbols, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and sharp signs, are scattered throughout the composition. Some symbols are solid black, while others are light gray, creating a layered and dynamic visual effect.

- The title song of a film
- The narrative position of a film which reinforces its pivotal function
- The congruence or lack of congruence with the period in which the film is set
- Extreme repetition of a musical motif

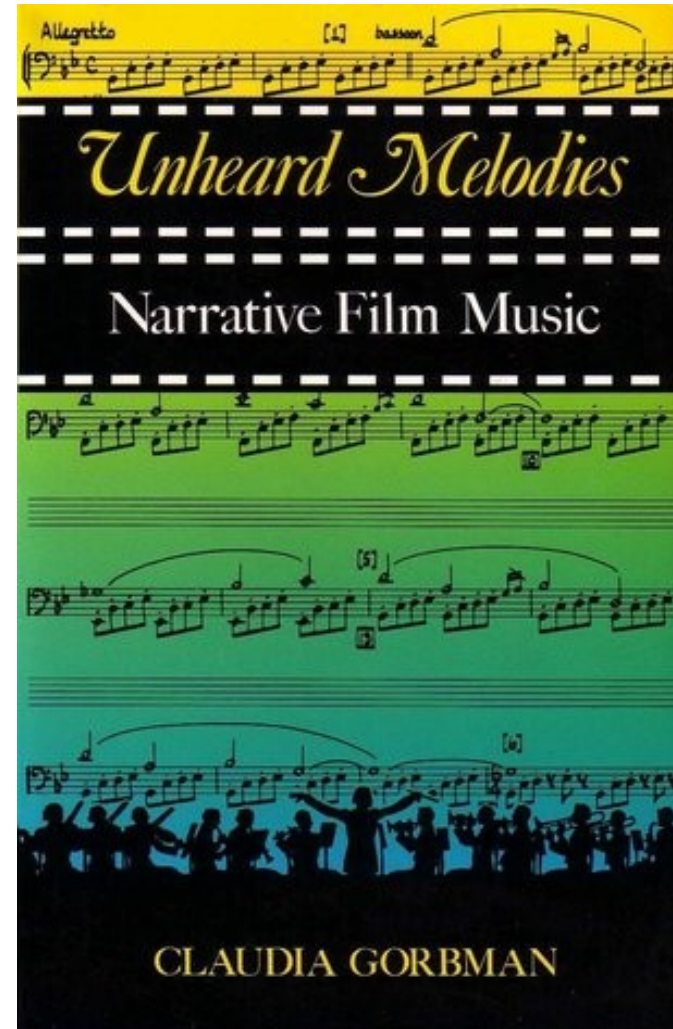
My films



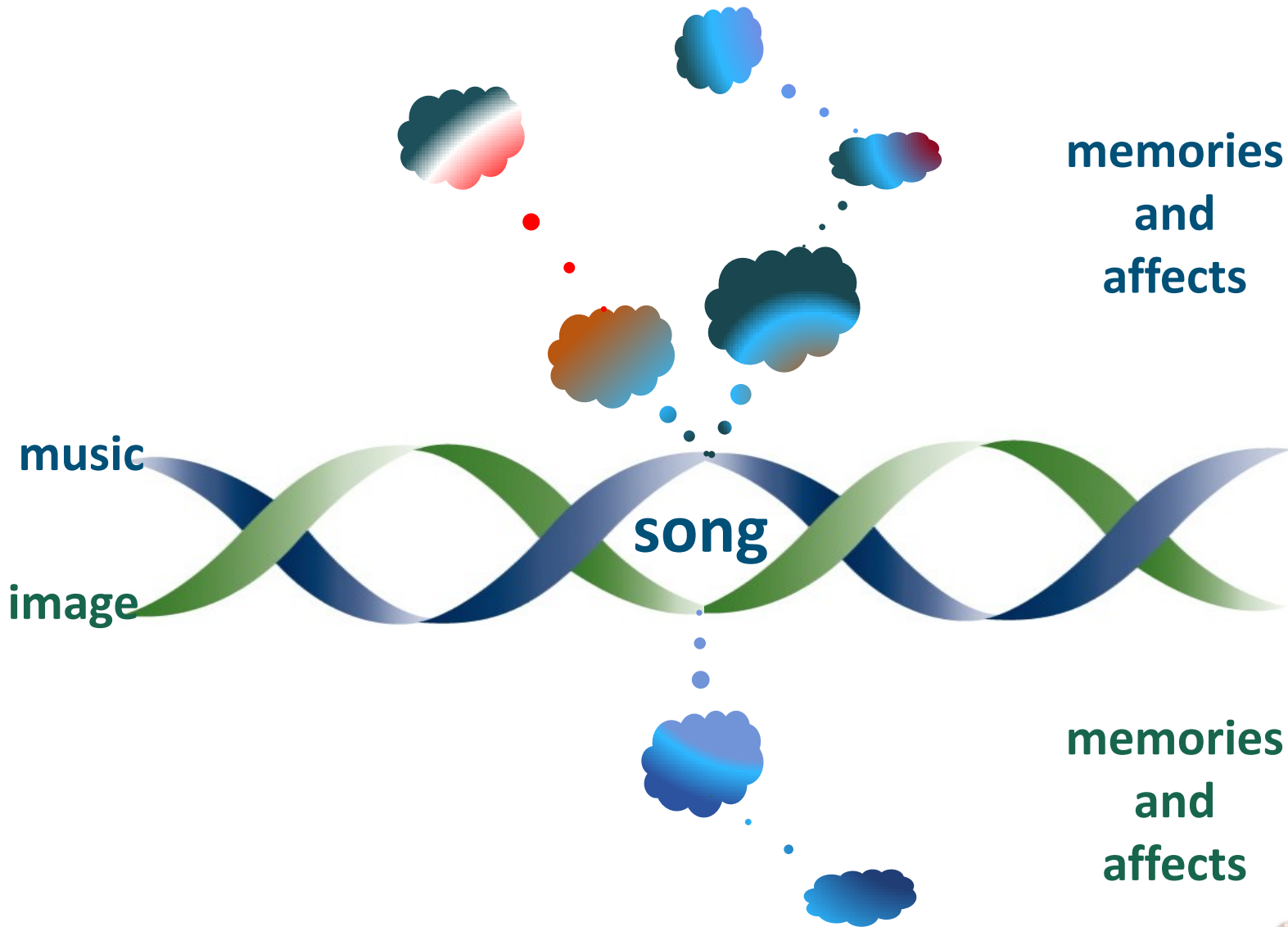
La chambre claire (1980)



'Unheard melodies'









Subjective v objective



'Momentous'

Oxford English Dictionary

Of a thing or an event: of moment; of great weight and importance.

1874 J. R. GREEN *Short Hist. Eng. People* v. 181. 'The years which follow the fall of Wolsey are among the most momentous in our history.'

Having motive force.

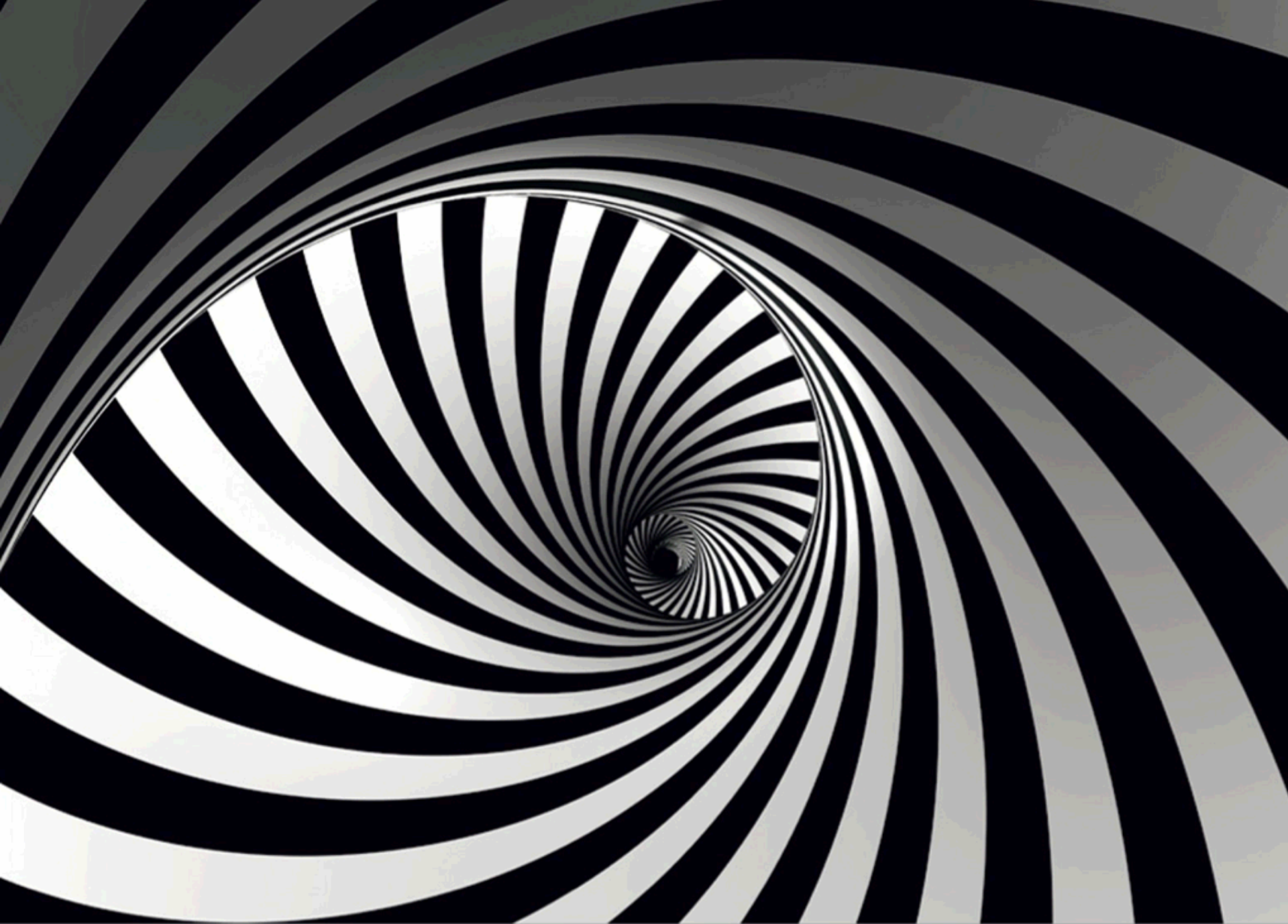
1652 L. S. NEALE *Discourse of the Nature and Extent of the Right of the Crown* p. 107. 'In such particulars...as are not momentous to the improvement of the public welfare.'

momentous









The title song: *American Honey*

Andrea Arnold, 2016

American Honey (Andrea Arnold, 2016)

Realist road movie



The film is based on the country song 'American Honey' by Lady Antebellum. The film follows Star, a teenage girl from a troubled home, who runs away with a traveling sales crew who drive across the American Midwest selling magazine subscriptions door to door.



Studies
In
French
Cinema

GO LONDON



FILM

Cannes 2016: American Honey, film review – In effect a music video of tediously exaggerated proportions

On an adventure: Sasha Lane

DAVID SEXTON

Monday 16 May 2016 13:12

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The title song

Lady Antebellum (2010)



The song's female narrator states a desire to escape her adult lifestyle and return to her childhood, which is described in the lyrics as 'American honey'.



American Honey reaction: Cannes 2016

By [Jordan Farley](#) May 15, 2016 [News](#)

like” is treated like a way of life. Brilliantly, Arnold pulls a rare trick and revisits most songs multiple times, because who doesn’t listen to songs they like over and over again? The film’s only major on-the-nose musical choice comes when the entire van wholeheartedly bellows Lady Antebellum’s American Honey – an oddly meta moment, especially given how at odds the song is to their choice of music to that point.



INTERVIEW

Andrea Arnold on her mesmerizing party on wheels, *American Honey*



Esther Zuckerman
9/30/16 12:00am • Filed to: FILM



20



Photo: Stephane Cardinale/Corbis/Getty Images

AVC: What was the order—did the song come first, and then the line from Krystal [Riley Keough] that Star is an “American Honey,” and then the title?

AA: I think the song probably came first. Then it started to take on this feeling of what I was trying to do with the film, which was, for me, mixing in my impressions of America from growing up, and now my new impressions of America from having spent a lot of time going around and looking. The “American Honey” song seemed to start symbolizing something that felt like the bigger picture in the film. So that came first. And then the title from that, and then Krystal saying that. I thought that’d definitely be Krystal’s music, apart from the R&B.



Studies
In
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Cinema

The 'American Honey' sequence



The Rihanna sequence



The Rihanna sequence



Andrea Arnold's *American Honey* Spins Its Wheels on the Fruited Plain

DANNY KING | SEPTEMBER 26, 2016 | 12:00PM

LA WEEKLY

These scenes are not the movie's problem. In fact, they're among its most cathartic, as they're daringly obvious and openhearted, even ridiculous, in their pursuit of an emotion or idea. They generate the precious few bursts of seeming spontaneity: the flirty, stuck-out tongue 18-year-old Star (Sasha Lane) throws at Jake (Shia LaBeouf) in a Rihanna-blasting department store; the sweet little wink-back QT (Veronica Ezell, one of the non-actors Arnold enlisted to fill out the dozen-strong ensemble) sends to Star over the Lady Antebellum chorus.



Studies
In
French
Cinema

The final sequence



LED BY INTUITION

'American Honey' lyrics

There's a wild, wild whisper
Blowin' in the wind
Callin' out my name
Like a long lost friend
Oh, I miss those days
As the years go by
Oh, nothin' sweeter than summertime
And American honey

Get caught in the race of this crazy life
Tryin' to be everything
Can make you lose your mind
I just wanna go back in time
To American honey

There's a wild, wild whisper
Blowin' in the wind
Callin' out my name
Like a long lost friend
Oh, I miss those days
As the years go by
Oh, nothin' sweeter than summertime
And American honey

Gone for so long now
I gotta get back to her somehow
To American honey





'American Honey' lyrics

The bell tower in Hitchcock's *Vertigo*

She grew up on the side of the road

Where the church bells ring

And strong love grows

She grew up good

She grew up slow

Like American honey



WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW THE WORDS TO 'AMERICAN HONEY' IN TRUMP'S AMERICA

'AMERICAN HONEY' IS A DIFFERENT KIND OF AMERICAN ROAD TRIP MOVIE, WITH A DIFFERENT KIND OF AMERICAN AT ITS CENTER



IRA MADISON III
10/03/2016

As a black person entering a white space for the first time, I've often been confronted with cultural references foreign to me. In the moment in *American Honey* when Krystal (Riley Keough) asks Star (newcomer Sasha Lane) if she's ever heard the Lady Antebellum song "American Honey," I immediately related to Star's confusion. I can't tell you how many rock songs I've had to pretend I know the words to while singing along in an all-white setting (it's usually something by fucking Sublime). This wasn't her world — she was Alice, waking up after tumbling down a rabbit hole. Star's ignorance of the song is Krystal's first sign that she isn't truly "one of them."



'God's Whisper' lyrics

I won't compromise

I won't live a life

On my knees

You think I am nothing

I am nothing

You've got something coming

Something coming because

I hear God's whisper

Calling my name

It's in the wind

I am the savior



The title song: *Beautiful Boy*

Felix Van Groeningen, 2018

Drama

Steve Carell
 Timothée Chalamet
 Maura Tierney
 and Amy Ryan



BASED ON THE NEW YORK TIMES
 BEST-SELLING MEMOIRS BY
 DAVID SHEFF AND NIC SHEFF

Beautiful Boy

AMAZON STUDIOS PRESENTS A PLAN B ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTION STEVE CARELL TIMOTHEE CHALAMET "BEAUTIFUL BOY" MAURA TIERNEY AND AMY RYAN
 CASTING BY FRANCINE MASLER, CSA MUSIC SUPERVISOR GABE WILFORD COSTUME DESIGNER EMMA POTTER EDITOR NICO LEONEN PRODUCTION DESIGNER ETRIAN TOOPMAN
 DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY BUREN IMFENS EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS NANI MORALES AND SARAH SHERID PRODUCED BY BRAD PITT, P.G.A. DEBBE CARONER, P.G.A. JEREMY KLEINER, P.G.A.
 BASED ON THE BOOKS "BEAUTIFUL BOY" BY DAVID SHEFF AND "MELBA" BY NIC SHEFF SCREENPLAY BY LUKE DAVIES AND FELIX VAN GROENINGEN DIRECTED BY FELIX VAN GROENINGEN

IN THEATERS THIS FALL

PLAN B

amazonstudios

Teenager Nicolas Sheff (Timothée Chalamet) seems to have it all with good grades and being an actor, artist, athlete and editor of the school newspaper. When Nic's addiction to meth threatens to destroy him, his father (Steve Carell) does whatever he can to save his son and family.



Studies
 In
 French
 Cinema

REVIEW

Steve Carell Saves ‘Beautiful Boy’ From the Worst Soundtrack in Years

As obviously well-intentioned as the film is, and as much as I liked it, *Beautiful Boy* is far from perfect. The constant relapses followed by tears of regret grow tedious, and all of it is accompanied by the film’s worst flaw—one of the most annoying and intrusive musical scores in years that drowns every emotion in musical chaos. Almost every scene is overwhelmed and the dialogue obliterated by decibel-crunching rock and roll, punctuated by ugly electronic humming. At the lowest point of desperation, when the father has lost touch with the son and everything seems hopeless, the sound track floods us with phony emotional treacle playing—wait for it—Perry Como’s unctuous recording of “Sunrise, Sunset” from *Fiddler on the Roof*.

idies

nch
ema

'Beautiful Boy'



A photograph of a man with glasses holding a baby in a hospital room. The man is smiling and wearing a white hospital gown. The baby is wrapped in a yellow blanket. In the background, a woman is sitting in a hospital bed, also wearing a white gown. The room has a wooden headboard and a shelf with various items.

‘Beautiful Boy’

1980

Close your eyes

Have no fear

The monster’s gone

He’s on the run and your daddy’s here

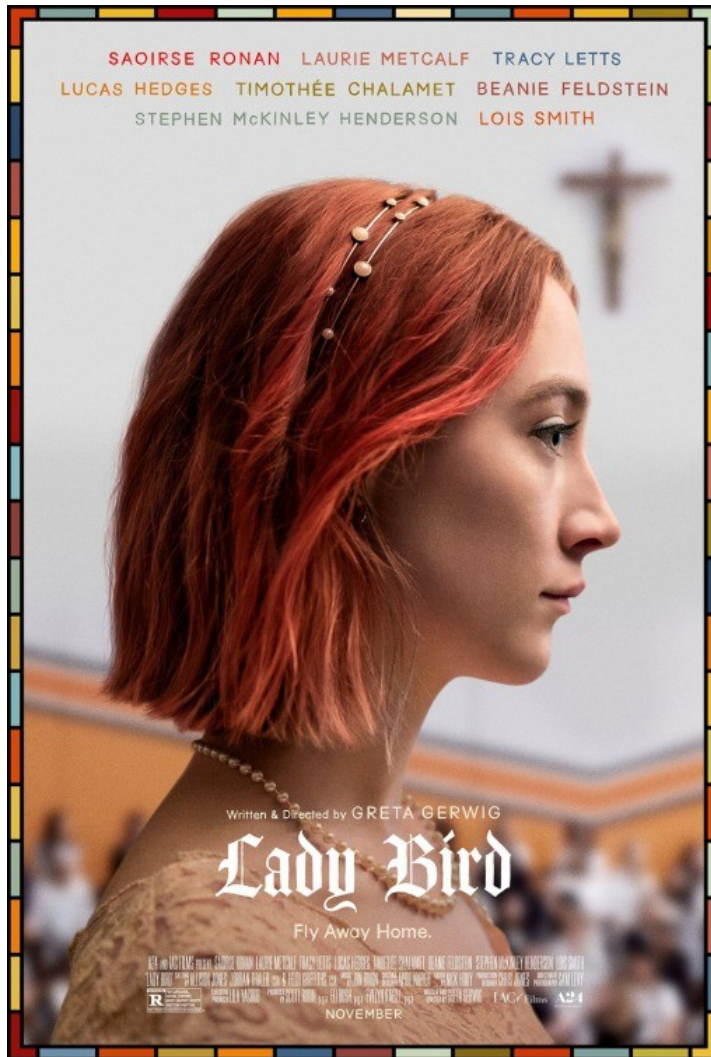
The song that the characters talk about: *Lady Bird*

Greta Gerwig, 2017

Lady Bird

Coming of age comedy drama

Marion McPherson, a nurse, works tirelessly to keep her family afloat after her husband loses his job. She also maintains a turbulent bond with a teenage daughter who is just like her: loving, strong-willed and deeply opinionated.



Studies
In
French
Cinema

The 'Crash into Me' sequence



The talked-about song

‘Crash into Me’ (Dave Matthews Band, 1996)

‘Crash Into Me’ is a song by American rock group Dave Matthews Band. It was released in December 1996 as the third single from their second album, *Crash*. It reached number 7 on the US *Billboard* Modern Rock Tracks chart in March 1997. The song was nominated for Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals at the 1998 Grammy Awards.



Zack Sharf, *Indiewire*

IndieWire

News + Film + TV + Awards + Toolkit +

Dave Matthews Loves 'Lady Bird': 'Everything to Do With the Film' and 'Crash Into Me' Was 'So Lovely'

"'Lady Bird' allowed me to hear my music without having to impose myself on it," Matthews said of hearing his music in Greta Gerwig's indie darling.



Zack Sharf
May 14, 2018 10:10 am



Greta Gerwig knew using [Dave Matthews Band's](#) 1996 classic "Crash Into Me" in her solo directorial debut "[Lady Bird](#)" was so important that she hand wrote a letter to Matthews asking if she had his permission to use the track. Matthews agreed, and the song's appearance in Gerwig's Oscar nominee went on to be one of the great music moments in film in 2017. Even those people who hate Dave Matthews Band and "Crash Into Me" found themselves falling for the song in "Lady Bird." Speaking to [Vulture](#), Matthews reacted to "Lady Bird" and said he is flattered by the way Gerwig incorporated his song into the film.

John McDermott, *MelMagazine*

‘LADY BIRD’ HAS MADE IT SAFE TO LIKE DAVE MATTHEWS BAND AGAIN

In the climactic scene in *Lady Bird*, Greta Gerwig’s new coming-of-age dramedy, the titular protagonist Christine “Lady Bird” McPherson (Saoirse Ronan) is riding shotgun with her (kinda? sorta?) boyfriend Kyle when the song “Crash Into Me” by Dave Matthews Band comes on the radio.

Kyle (Timothée Chalamet) promptly declares that he hates this song, because of course he does. Kyle is a self-styled sophisticate in a world full of conformist dolts. He reads Howard Zinn. He rolls his own cigarettes. He plays bass in a rock band. And when he’s not in his Catholic school uniform, he wears all black. Dave Matthews Band—with its middlebrow, mainstream radio bro-rock—offends every aspect of his well-curated hipster sensibility.



Clayton Purdom, *AVClub*

The heart of *Lady Bird* is an old Dave Matthews song about jacking off



Clayton Purdom

1/13/18 12:00pm • Filed to: LADY BIRD ▾



84



5



happens to be about a voyeur's masturbatory fantasy. The film ends with glimpses into Lady Bird's college dating life, with a guy disdainfully leafing through her CD wallet; if you were in college around then, you know you couldn't sneeze without hitting a melancholy dude finger-picking "Crash Into Me" on an acoustic guitar, all of which bodes poorly, at least for her immediate romantic future. But instead the movie ends mid-cycle, with Lady Bird calling her mom to accept the hometown, the family, even the birth name she'd been so desperate to shed. The film itself serves as a nod of acceptance to the music of the era, adding to its sweetness. We've all got musical skeletons in our closet, but *Lady Bird* reminds us how they got there.



Studies
In
French
Cinema

Amanda Petrusich, *The New Yorker*, November 7, 2017

GRETA GERWIG SOMEHOW REDEEMS DAVE MATTHEWS BAND’S “CRASH INTO ME”

“I love Dave Matthews,” the actor, writer, and director Greta Gerwig announced earlier this year, at a screening of “Lady Bird,” her nimble and charming new feature about a young woman growing up in Sacramento, California. Gerwig was responding to a question from an audience member at the Toronto International Film Festival; “Crash Into Me,” a single by Dave Matthews Band, is broadcast during two of the film’s most important scenes. In each instance, the movie’s titular protagonist, played by Saoirse Ronan, is forced to reckon with the devastating incongruity between reality and the fantasies we conjure of love. “I feel like it’s an incredibly romantic song, and I always wanted to make out to that song, and I never did,” Gerwig said.



Clayton Purdom, *AVClub*

The heart of *Lady Bird* is an old Dave Matthews song about jacking off



Clayton Purdom

1/13/18 12:00pm • Filed to: LADY BIRD ▾



Like a lot of those jokes, it feels lighter than it is. “Crash Into Me” serves as the movie’s unlikely spine, with each act hinging into the next alongside the breakup-to-“Crash” routine. We don’t, after all, get to pick the music that



Amanda Petrusich, *The New Yorker*, November 7, 2017

GRETA GERWIG SOMEHOW REDEEMS DAVE MATTHEWS BAND’S “CRASH INTO ME”

and the landscape she was born into. The second time “Crash Into Me” plays, a pretentious young man—an aspiring anarchist who nonetheless attends an expensive private Catholic school—snidely dismisses it. “I fucking love this song,” Lady Bird responds. She knows that the song is deeply uncool—by 2002, Dave Matthews’s earnest emoting had been displaced by irony and dissonance, touchstones of brooding-hipster culture—and thus her confession becomes a kind of emotional climax: Lady Bird finally acknowledges an interiority that doesn’t hew to her own expectations of herself. Sometimes we aren’t who we



The anachronic song: *Call Me by Your Name*

Luca Guadagnino, 2017



It's the summer of 1983, and precocious 17-year-old Elio Perlman is spending the days with his family at their 17th-century villa in Lombardy, Italy. He soon meets Oliver, a handsome doctoral student who's working as an intern for Elio's father. Amid the sun-drenched splendor of their surroundings, Elio and Oliver discover the heady beauty of awakening desire over the course of a summer that will alter their lives forever.



Elio and Oliver



'Futile Devices'

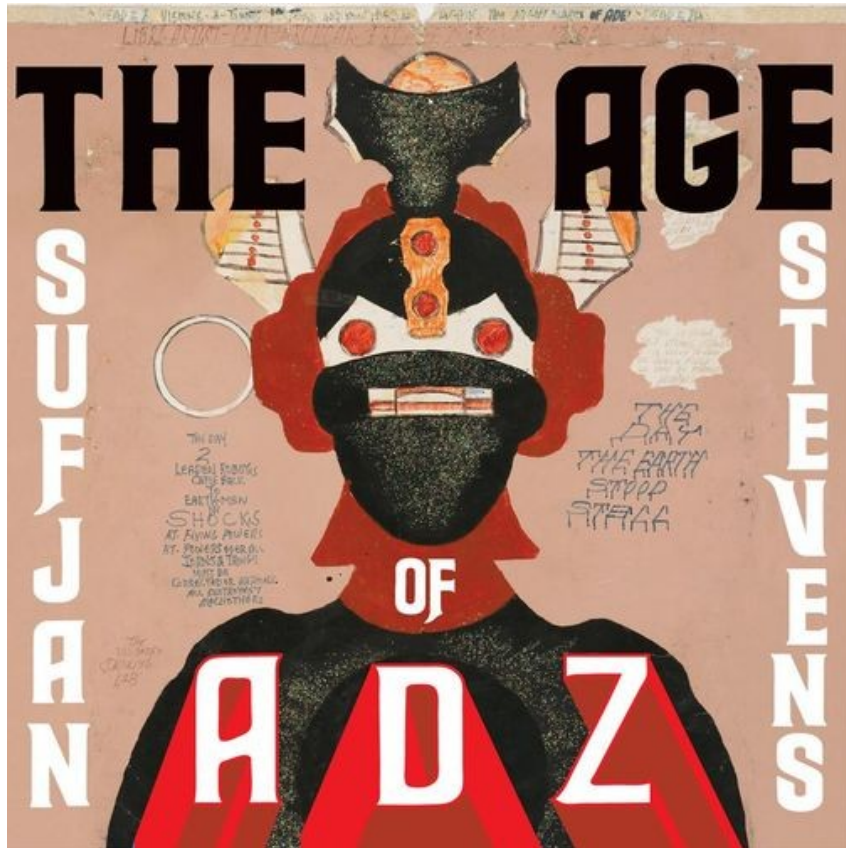


Pop songs

| TITLE | YEAR | COMPOSER(S) | SINGER(S) |
|------------------------|------|--|-----------------------|
| M.A.Y. in the Backyard | 1984 | Ryuichi Sakamoto | Sakamoto |
| J'adore Venise | 1982 | Ivano Fossati | Loredana Bertè |
| Paris Latino | 1983 | Carlos Perez, José Perez | Bandolero |
| Lady Lady Lady | 1985 | Giorgio Moroder, Keith Forsey | Moroder, Joe Esposito |
| Love My Way | 1982 | John Ashton, Tim Butler, Richard Butler, Vince Ely | The Psychedelic Furs |
| Germination | 1983 | Ryuichi Sakamoto | Ryuichi Sakamoto |
| Words | 1981 | Martin Kupersmith, Louis S. Yaguda, Robert Fitoussi | F. R. David |
| Radio Varsavia | 1982 | Franco Battiato, Giusto Pio | Battiato |

'Futile Devices'

2010



‘Mystery of Love’

‘Like Hephaestion who died/Alexander’s lover/Now my riverbed has dried/Shall I
find no other?’



'Visions of Gideon'

'I have loved you for the last time /And I have kissed you for the last time'

A close-up shot of a young boy with dark, curly hair, looking down with a somber expression. The background is dark with a window showing a blurred view of the outdoors. The lighting is soft and focused on the boy's face.

SUFJAN STEVENS

*Visions
of
Gideon*

I would say I love you/But saying it out loud is hard/[...]Words are futile devices'





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCJquKusENs> (34:56-46:00)



The Sad Young Man and the moment of transition

Richard Dyer, 'Coming out as going in: the image of the homosexual as a sad young man', *The Matter of Images* (1993), pp. 86, 88.

Twilight [...] connotes sadness [...] ; it is also a period of transition, which here is not so much that of childhood to adulthood as between straight and gay worlds. The idea of a 'half-world' suggests both being in between the sexes and also not being a self-sufficient world [...] The sad young man allows for an expression of the experience of libidinal fluidity while offering the reassurance that it will not last.

[photo: Sal Mineo and James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause*]

The song without words: *La La Land*

Damian Chazelle, 2016

« Entertainment and Utopia »

In Only Entertainment, 2002, p.20.

‘Entertainment does not [...] present models of utopian worlds [...]. It presents [...] what utopia would feel like rather than how it would be organized.’

- crystal-songs can function in the musical
- cumulative repetition of a performed number can be a feature of the crystal-song
- the crystal-song does not have to be a song with lyrics

The second element will break (or punctuate) the *studium*. This time it is not I who seek it out (as I invest the field of the *studium* with my sovereign consciousness), it is this element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow, and pierces me. A Latin word exists to designate this wound, this prick, this mark made by a pointed instrument: the word suits me all the better in that it also refers to the notion of punctuation, and because the photographs I am speaking of are in effect punctuated, sometimes even speckled with these sensitive points; precisely, these marks, these wounds are so many *points*. This second element which will disturb the *studium* I shall therefore call *punctum*; for *punctum* is also: sting, speck, cut, little hole—and also a cast of the dice. A photograph's *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me).





Musician Sebastian (Ryan Gosling) and aspiring actress Mia (Emma Stone) are drawn together by their common desire to do what they love. But as success mounts they are faced with decisions that begin to fray the fragile fabric of their love affair, and the dreams they worked so hard to maintain in each other threaten to rip them apart.



'City of Stars'

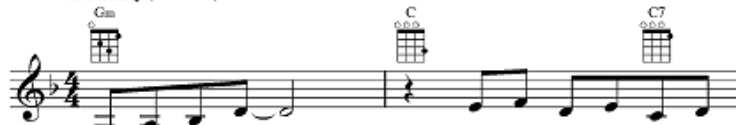
City of Stars

from LA LA LAND
Music by Justin Hurwitz
Lyrics by Benj Pasek & Justin Paul

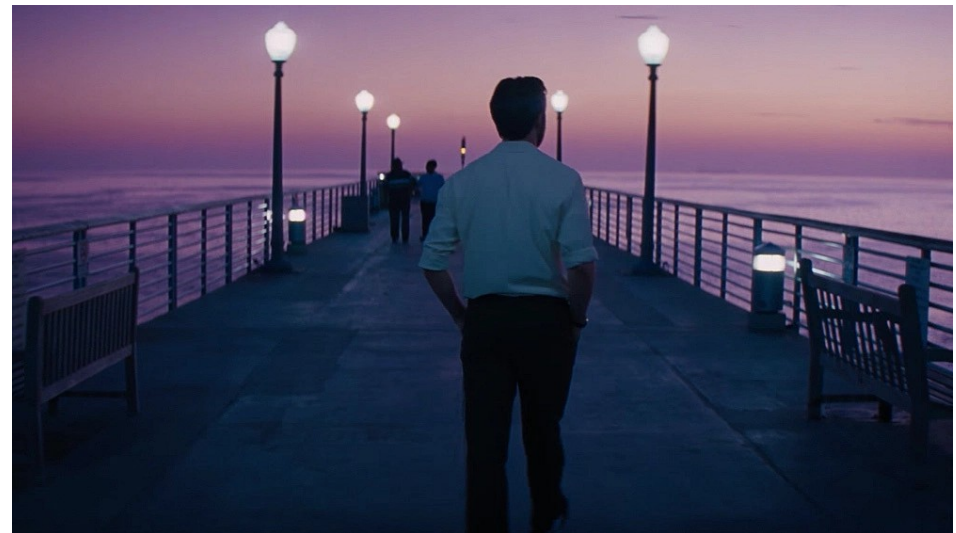
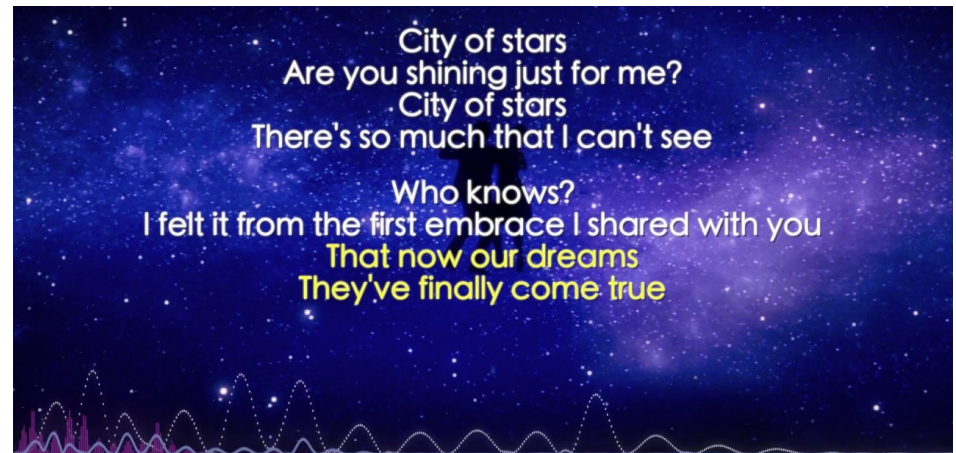
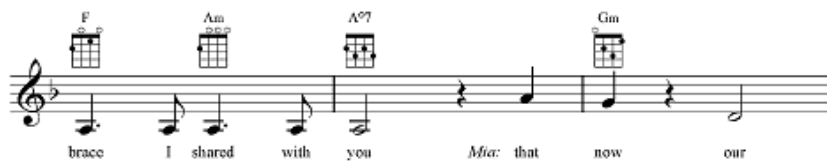
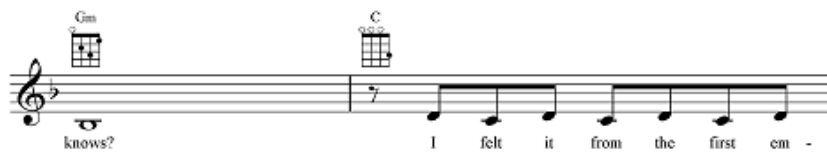
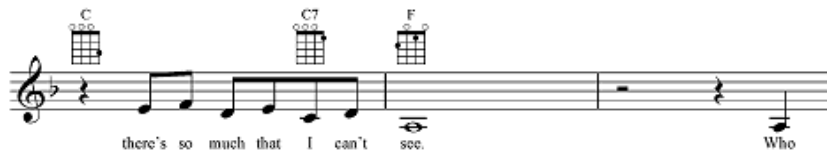
First note



Verse
Moderately (♩ - ♩ - ♩)

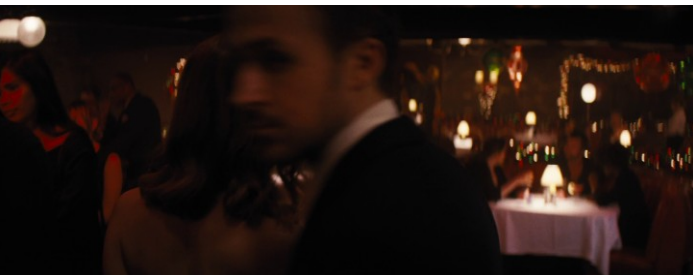


Sebastian: 1. Cit - y of stars, — are you shin - ing just for

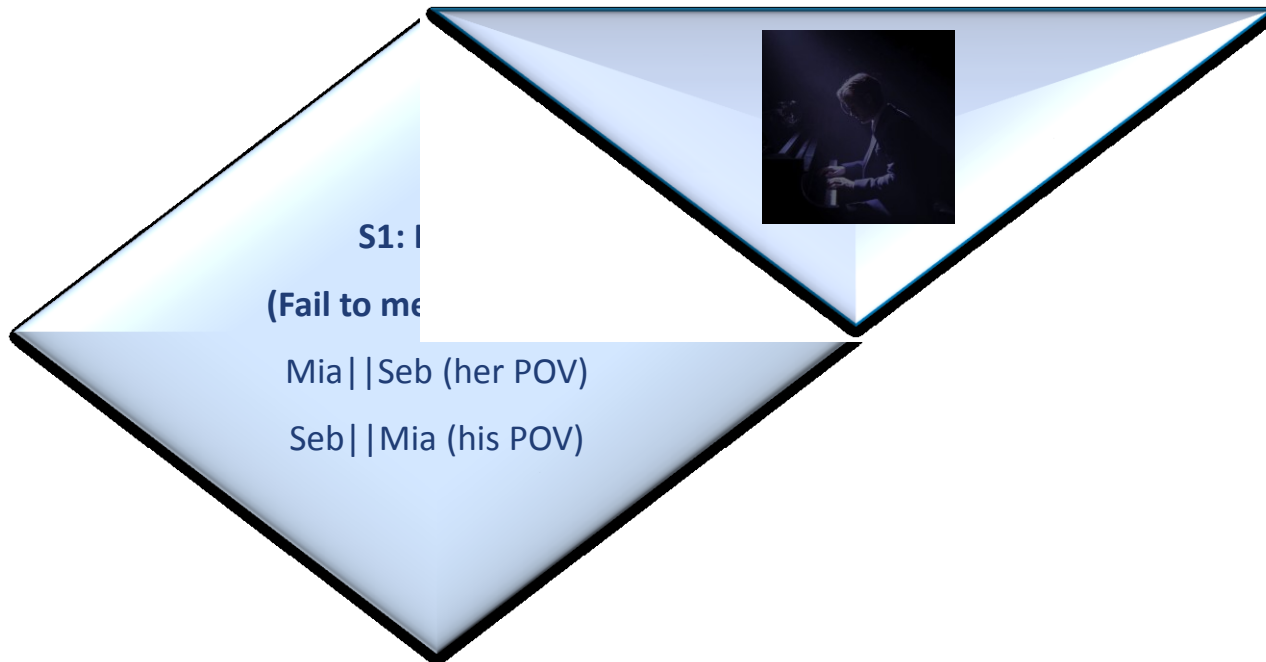


Studies
In
French
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Sequence 1: the failed meeting

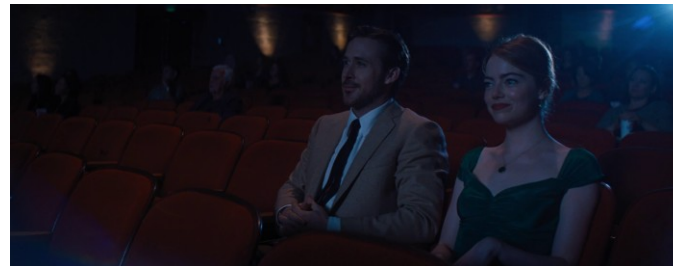
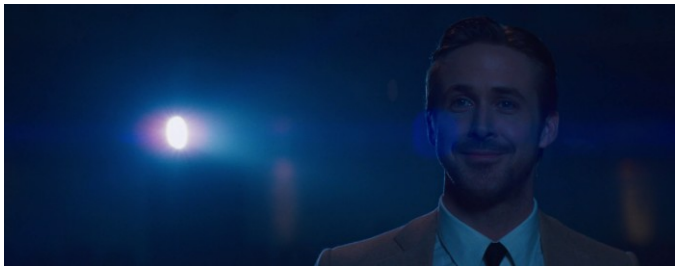
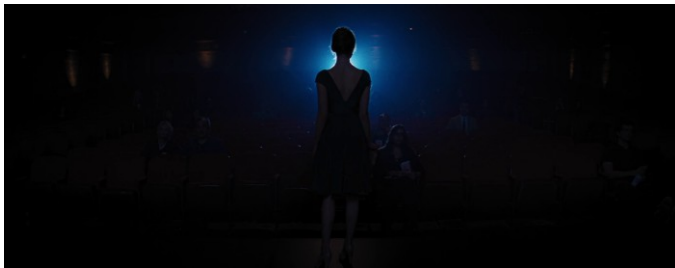


Two variant perceptions of the same event

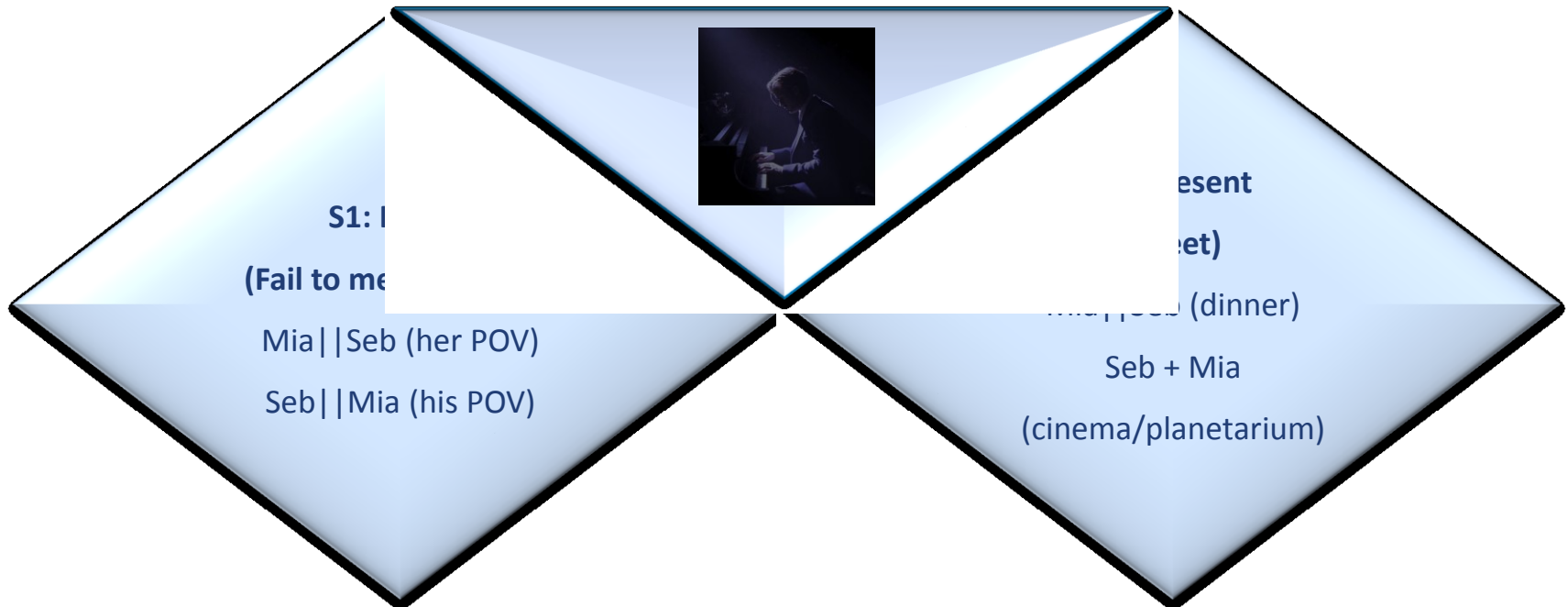


Sequence 2: the successful meeting

From the restaurant to the cinema

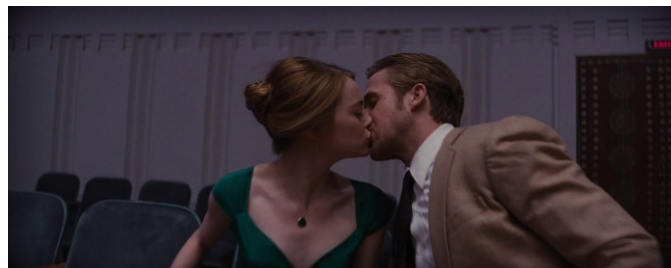
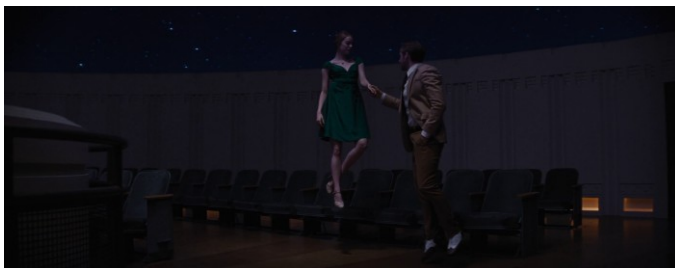


From boring boyfriend dinner to Seb and cinema

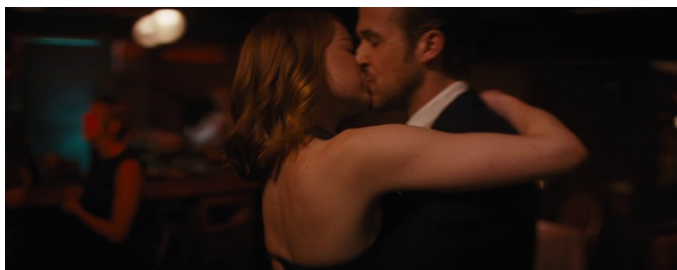
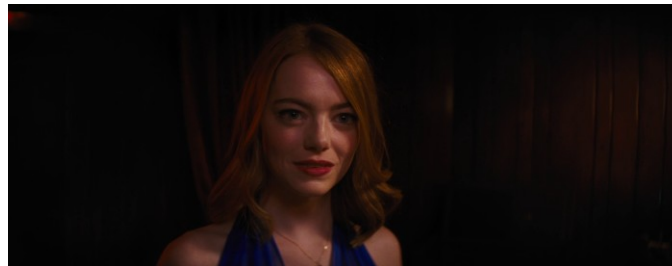


Sequence 2: the successful meeting

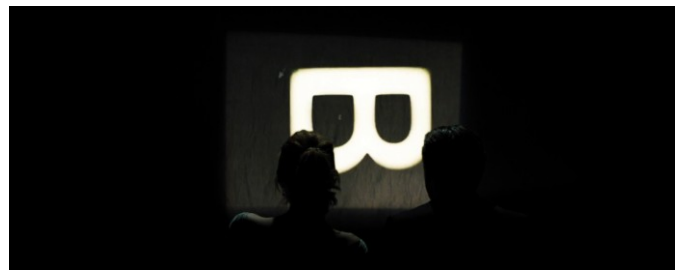
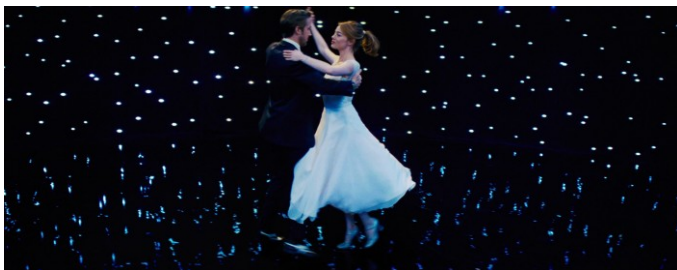
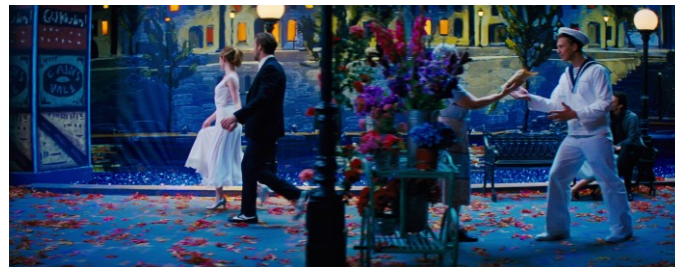
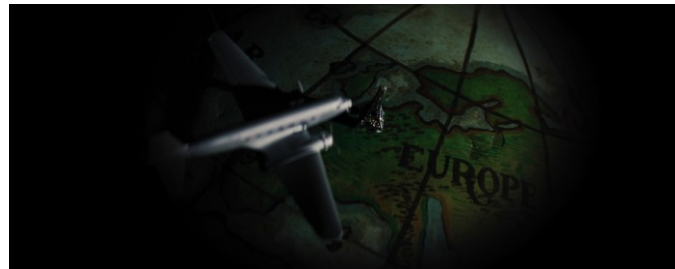
The planetarium



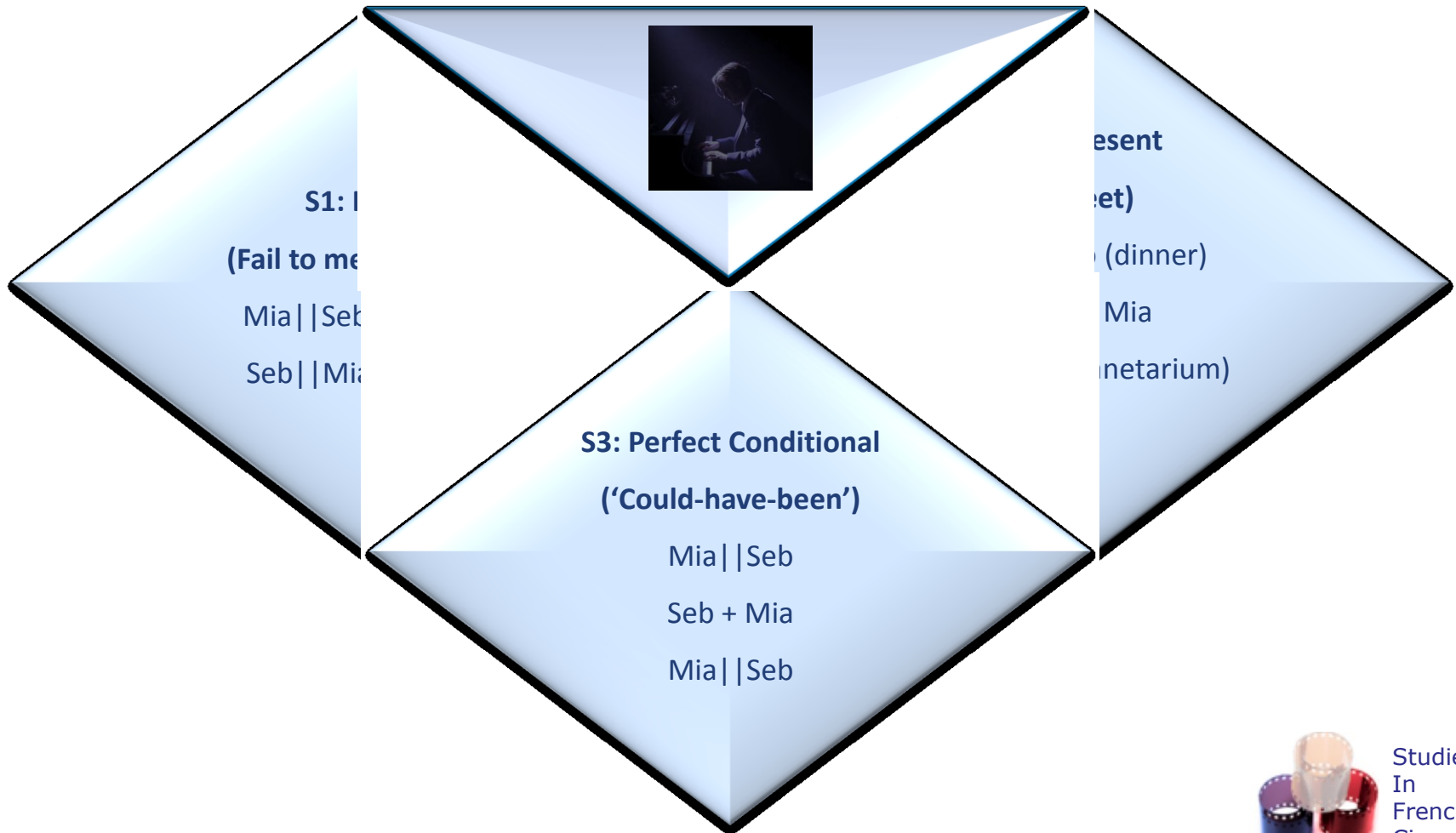
Sequence 3: the 'could-have-been'



Sequence 3: the 'could-have-been'



The togetherness that could have been to the present apart



Final minutes

Transition from the perfect conditional to the nostalgic present



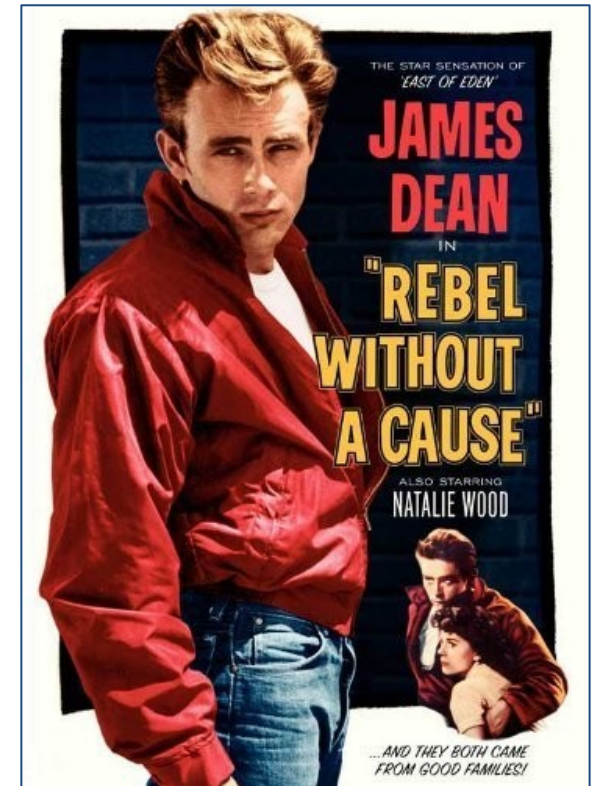
Intertexts

Casablanca (1942) and *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (1964)



Casablanca (1942)





The crystal

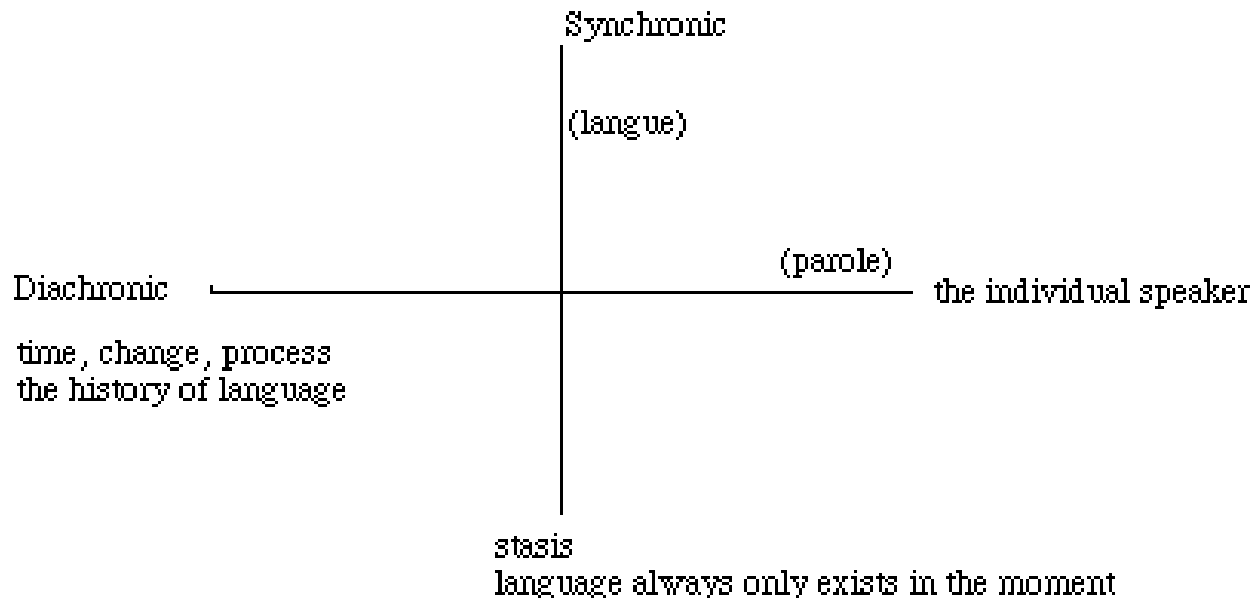
sheets of time



Diachronic/Synchronic

DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC

DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC. Contrasting terms in **LINGUISTICS**, which make a distinction between the study of the history of language (*diachronic linguistics*) and the study of a state of language at any given time (*synchronic linguistics*). Language study in the 19c was largely diachronic, but in the 20c emphasis has been on synchronic analysis. The terms were first employed by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who used the analogy of a tree-trunk to describe them:
horizontal cut synchron



Conclusion

Infolding/Outfolding

Immersed/Emersed

