Pervasive Animation is a contribution towards bridging the enormous gap in dialogues between burgeoning animation film production and its critical counterparts, responding to existing theoretical stances, investigating radical contemporary practice and creative innovations and foregrounding specific disciplines and their interrelations with animation. The book also challenges clichéd conceptions about animation to widen the scope of our creative and intellectual capital to a larger cultural mediation. It will facilitate much-needed dialogue and new perspectives centred on the pervasive and multidisciplinary nature of animation, its future development and its ethical responsibilities for spatial politics and moving image culture.

The book is mainly structured according to a chronological timeline and investigates the aesthetic, stylistic and technical diversity of animation film in research, commercial, independent, avant-garde communities around the world. It includes two sets of colour inserts. Most of its contributors are widely renowned and respected scholars from cinema and media studies and animation studies, others are new and strong voices in the intellectual community. There are essays on precursors and alternatives to cinematic animation and their cultural, scientific and philosophical concepts and impact (Zielinski, Gunning, Griffin). The troubled notion of the illusion of life in animation is addressed (Zielinski, Lamarre, Buchan, Kim) as are investigations of indexicality and of documentary (Gunning, Skoller, Bartlett, Ehrlich). Some authors take a notably political or cultural stance to challenge hegemonies of technology and culture (Zielinski, Cubitt, Kim), comment on sociocritical and ecocritical aspects of power, technology, labour, war and death (Leslie, Cubitt, Skoller, Ehrlich, Ward), or question systems of history and historiography (Zielinski, Bartlett, Skoller). There are contributions that focus on the effects of stillness, duration and movement (Leslie, Lamarre) and the viewer’s perceptual and aesthetic experience of these in theatrical and alternate settings (Buchan, Skoller, Griffin, Carels). The materials of animation are examined (Cubitt, Buchan, Griffin, Carels) as are graphic cinema and the line (Cubitt, Leslie, Lamarre), as well as animation technologies and media specificity (Lamarre, Bartlett, Griffin) and animation as process (Ward, Griffin). Almost all engage with the observer / spectator, often with an interest in the non-, post- or contemporary human condition. Some refer to prevailing methodologies, others offer new exemplars or introduce new concepts, terms and approaches. The authors’ references augment both film and animation studies with writings from a wide range of related disciplines. We hope that this anthology of new writing – that is also a philosophy of animation – provides a holistic set of tools and resources for students and researchers; it aims to be forward-looking in that it proposes a wide range of exemplary approaches and critical methodologies to build upon for future research.

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