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The printed screen

Quadrant

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Abstract: A cardinal dogma of the more misty-minded ideologues of the emerging image polity is that the cinema is something purely 'visual' (which somehow includes the sounds of dialogue, music, effects, and even narration), in contrast and probably in fundamental opposition to now archaic 'verbal' modes of discourse. In particular those employing print to present words to readers. To understand the exaggeration,

especially any purposes that recognize the responsibilities, old and new, in a new way of seeing, is to forgive much - but not to the point of acceptance of the cant of anti-rationalists who delude themselves that 'seeing', as they say it, is something wholly of ocular sensation. As if reading itself, as blind literates everywhere may attest, does not induce 'seeing', too. The implied simplistic notion of the complexities of imagination and experience, however 'immediate', is hardly humane, much less scientific. Nor is it new, among periodic resurgences of naive sensationalism, for all the bright discoveries of new galaxies of disconnected metaphors for organismic perception, that pass for illumination in the current glare.



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