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## **Visceral Viewing and Nonlinear Embodiment: (Re-)Conceptualizing Our Approach to the Film Experience**

The work of Bert O. States (1985) and Stanton B. Garner, Jr. (1994) have offered performance studies a means of theatrical analysis that specifically accounts for the embodied experiences of each subject involved in the performance process: from performer to spectator. In a similar vein, Steven Shaviro (1993) and Vivian Sobchack (2004), both working within the discipline of film studies, focus on the affective responses and *embodied experiences* of the cinematic spectator. Given the similar focus and intent of all these works it is both surprising and frustrating that the two disciplines—theater and performance studies, and film studies—continual refuse to partake in each other's discourses.

As part of a larger project that articulates the concept of cinematic performance for and within performance studies, in this paper I argue for a phenomenological consideration of the cinema as a performance text. Using the methodologies of States and Garner, I demonstrate the qualities of the cinematic performance text—as distinct from those of the theater and other "live" performance genres—that deserve closer interrogation and analysis within performance studies. In doing so I account for the "presence" of the cinema (the intangible materiality of the film experience) given the deep liminal spaces between each moment of the cinematic performance process. Through an understanding and articulation of cinematic performance we can better understand the way films inform our embodied being-in-the-world, how and why we structure our actions and modes of thinking, and the ways in which ideologies seep into the intertwined fabrics of our identities and self-understanding.