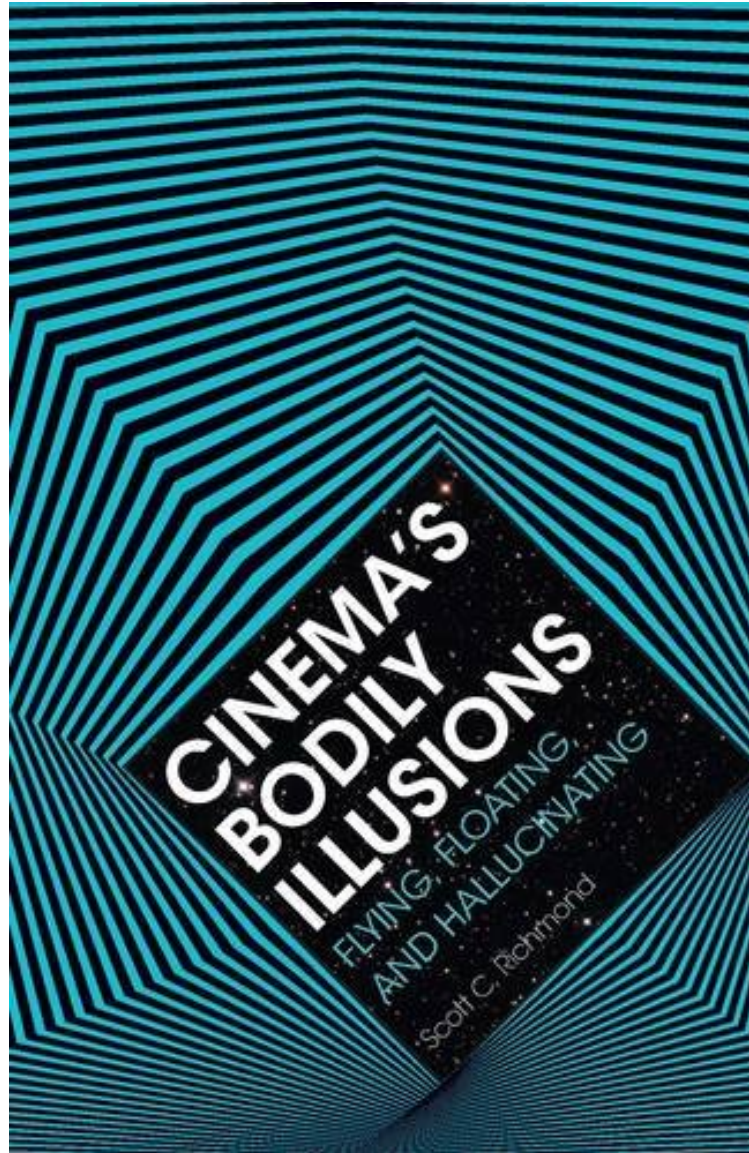


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Cinema's Bodily Illusions: Flying, Floating, and Hallucinating

Scott C. Richmond

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#1051729 in Books 2016-10-15 Original language: English 8.50 x .70 x 5.50l, .0 #File Name: 0816690995264 pages | File size: 24.Mb

Scott C. Richmond : Cinema's Bodily Illusions: Flying, Floating, and Hallucinating before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cinema's Bodily Illusions: Flying, Floating, and Hallucinating:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An exciting new lens through which to think about cinematic ...By Hank Gerba An exciting new lens through which to think about cinematic experiences (and anything else involving screens, really). Richmond helps us understand the cinema as a modulation of perception, which opens the doors to an

unapologetic discussion of visual illusion, usually disparaged or disregarded, as an reflexive affirmation of embodied existence. Really exciting book !!

Do contemporary big-budget blockbuster films like Gravity move something in us that is fundamentally the same as what avant-garde and experimental films have done for more than a century? In a powerful challenge to mainstream film theory, *Cinemas Bodily Illusions* demonstrates that this is the case. Scott C. Richmond bridges genres and periods by focusing, most palpably, on cinema's power to evoke illusions: feeling like you're flying through space, experiencing 3D without glasses, or even hallucinating. He argues that cinema is, first and foremost, a technology to modulate perception. He presents a theory of cinema as a proprioceptive technology: cinema becomes art by modulating viewers' embodied sense of space. It works primarily not at the level of the intellect but at the level of the body. Richmond develops his theory through examples of direct perceptual illusion in cinema: hallucinatory flicker phenomena in Tony Conrad's *The Flicker*, eerie depth effects in Marcel Duchamp's *Anemic Cinema*, the illusion of bodily movement through onscreen space in Stanley Kubrick's *2001*, Godfrey Reggio's *Koyaanisqatsi*, and Alfonso Cuarón's *Gravity*. In doing so he combines insights from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception and James J. Gibson's ecological approach to perception. The result is his distinctive ecological phenomenology, which allows us to refocus on the cinema's perceptual, rather than representational, power. Arguing against modernist habits of mind in film theory and aesthetics, and the attendant proclamations of cinema's death or irrelevance, Richmond demonstrates that cinema's proprioceptive aesthetics make it an urgent site of contemporary inquiry.

"In laying out his theory of proprioceptive aesthetics in cinema, *Cinemas Bodily Illusions* makes a boldly provocative contribution to the study of bodies, film screens, and media technology. Rescuing cinematic illusion from the perjorative sense with which modernist film scholarship disparages it, Scott C. Richmond finds a visceral (rather than cerebral) thematization of the resonance between ordinary perception and cinematic perception." Jennifer M. Barker, author of *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience*