



A Companion to
Wong Kar-wai

Edited by
Martha P. Nochimson

WILEY Blackwell

A Companion to Wong Kar-wai

Edited by

Martha P. Nochimson

WILEY Blackwell

This edition first published 2016

© 2016 John Wiley & Sons, Inc. except for Chapter 14 © P.O.L., 2009

Registered Office

John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

Editorial Offices

350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA

9600 Garsington Road, Oxford, OX4 2DQ, UK

The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

For details of our global editorial offices, for customer services, and for information about how to apply for permission to reuse the copyright material in this book please see our website at www.wiley.com/wiley-blackwell.

The right of Martha P. Nochimson to be identified as the author of the editorial material in this work has been asserted in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Designations used by companies to distinguish their products are often claimed as trademarks. All brand names and product names used in this book are trade names, service marks, trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. The publisher is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty: While the publisher and author have used their best efforts in preparing this book, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this book and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. It is sold on the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering professional services and neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for damages arising herefrom. If professional advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data applied for.

9781118424247 (hardback)

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Cover image: Photo of Wong Kar-wai © Fairfax Media / Getty Images.

Set in 11.5/13pt Dante by Aptara Inc., New Delhi, India
Printed and bound in Malaysia by Vivar Printing Sdn Bhd

A Companion to Wong Kar-wai

Wiley Blackwell Companions to Film Directors

The Wiley Blackwell Companions to Film Directors survey key directors whose work together constitutes what we refer to as the Hollywood and world cinema canons. Whether Haneke or Hitchcock, Bigelow or Bergman, Capra or the Coen brothers, each volume, comprising 25 or more newly commissioned essays written by leading experts, explores a canonical, contemporary, and/or controversial *auteur* in a sophisticated, authoritative, and multi-dimensional capacity. Individual volumes interrogate any number of subjects – the director's *oeuvre*; dominant themes, well-known, worthy, and under-rated films; stars, collaborators, and key influences; reception, reputation, and above all, the director's intellectual currency in the scholarly world.

A Companion to Michael Haneke, edited by Roy Grundmann

A Companion to Alfred Hitchcock, edited by Thomas Leitch and Leland Poague

A Companion to Rainer Werner Fassbinder, edited by Brigitte Peucker

A Companion to Werner Herzog, edited by Brad Prager

A Companion to Pedro Almodóvar, edited by Marvin D'Lugo and Kathleen Vernon

A Companion to Woody Allen, edited by Peter J. Bailey and Sam B. Girgus

A Companion to Jean Renoir, edited by Alastair Phillips and Ginette Vincendeau

A Companion to François Truffaut, edited by Dudley Andrew and Anne Gillain

A Companion to Luis Buñuel, edited by Robert Stone and Julián Daniel Gutiérrez-Albilla

A Companion to Jean-Luc Godard, edited by Tom Conley and T. Jefferson Kline

A Companion to Martin Scorsese, edited by Aaron Baker

A Companion to Fritz Lang, edited by Joseph McElhaney

A Companion to Robert Altman, edited by Adrian Danks

A Companion to Wong Kar-wai, edited by Martha P. Nochimson

Notes on Contributors

Ackbar Abbas is Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine. His book *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance* was published in 1997.

Raymond Bellour, researcher and author, is a Research Director Emeritus at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in Paris. He has an interest in literature, both Romantic – the Brontës, *Ecrits de jeunesse* (1972); Alexandre Dumas, *Mademoiselle Guillotine* (1990) – and contemporary: *Henri Michaux* (1965); the edition of Michaux's complete works in "La Pléiade" (1998–2004); and *Lire Michaux* (2011). He also has an interest in cinema – *Le Western* (1966); *L'Analyse du film* (1979), translated as *The Analysis of Film*; *Le corps du cinéma: Hypnoses, émotions, animalités* (2009) – as well as in mixed states of images (painting, photography, cinema, video, virtual images), the passages between them, and the relations between words and images: the volumes *L'Entre-Images: Photo, cinéma, vidéo* (1990), translated as *Between-the-Images*; *Jean-Luc Godard: Son+Image* (1992); *L'Entre-Images 2: Mots, images* (1999); and *La querelle des dispositifs: Cinéma – installations, expositions* (2012). He has curated the exhibitions *Passages de l'image* (1989), *States of Images: Instants and Intervals* (2005), *Thierry Kuntzel, Lumières du temps* (2006), and *Thierry Kuntzel–Bill Viola: Deux éternités proches* (2010). He is a founding member of the film journal *Trafic*.

Giorgio Biancorosso holds a PhD in musicology from Princeton University, and was for three years a Mellon Fellow at the Society of Fellows, Columbia University. In 2005, he took a teaching position at the University of Hong Kong (HKU), where he is now Associate Professor in Music. He has published in the areas of musical aesthetics, film, music, Hong Kong cinema, and the psychology of music. His book *Situated Listening: Music and the Representation of the*

Attention in the Cinema is forthcoming. Biancorosso is active in Hong Kong as a programmer and curator.

Thorsten Botz-Bornstein received his PhD from Oxford University and his “habilitation” from the EHESS in Paris in 2000. He has been researching in Japan, in particular on the Kyoto School and on the philosophy of Nishida Kitarô, has worked for the Center of Cognition at Hangzhou University (China), and taught at Tuskegee University in Alabama. He is currently Associate Professor of Philosophy at the Gulf University for Science and Technology in Kuwait. His publications include *Place and Dream: Japan and the Virtual* (2004); *Films and Dreams: Tarkovsky, Sokurov, Bergman, Kubrik, Wong Kar-wai* (2007); *Vasily Sesemann: Experience, Formalism and the Question of Being* (2006); *Aesthetics and Politics of Space in Russia and Japan* (2009); *The Cool-Kawaii: Afro-Japanese Aesthetics and New World Modernity* (2010); *La Chine contre l'Amérique: Culture sans civilisation contre civilisation sans culture?* (2012).

Yomi Braester is Professor of Comparative Literature, Cinema, and Media at the University of Washington in Seattle. Among his publications are *Witness Against History: Literature, Film, and Public Discourse in Twentieth-Century China* (2003) and *Painting the City Red: Chinese Cinema and the Urban Contract* (2010). His current book projects include *Cinephilia Besieged: Viewing Communities and the Ethics of the Image in the People's Republic of China*, which is supported by a Guggenheim fellowship.

Shohini Chaudhuri is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies at the University of Essex. She is author of three books – *Cinema of the Dark Side: Atrocity and the Ethics of Film Spectatorship* (2014), *Contemporary World Cinema: Europe, the Middle East, East Asia and South Asia* (2005), and *Feminist Film Theorists* (2006). She has written widely on the politics and aesthetics of contemporary world cinema, including articles in journals such as *Screen*, *Camera Obscura*, and *South Asian Popular Culture*, and essays in the edited collections *Postcolonial Cinema Studies* (2012) and *Storytelling in World Cinemas* (2013).

Timmy Chen Chih-ting (陳智廷), a PhD candidate in musicology at the University of Hong Kong, is completing a thesis titled “In the Mood for Music: Sonic Extraterritoriality and Musical Exchange in Hong Kong Cinema.” He received his BA in English from National Taiwan University after spending a year at the University of Maryland, College Park straddling Shakespeare studies and choral conducting. Using Wong Kar-wai’s *In the Mood for Love* as the launching pad for theoretical and “textural” interventions in film music/sound scholarship, his thesis attempts to theorize “sonic extraterritoriality,” “intertextuality,” and “musical gifts.” Chen is active in Hong Kong as both a film writer and curator.

Michel Chion is a composer of concrete music, a writer, a researcher, and a director of short films and videos. He has published more than 30 books, several of which have been translated into English by Claudia Gorbman. They include *Audio-vision* (1994), *Voice in Cinema* (1999), and *Film: A Sound Art* (2009, Richard Wall Memorial Award by the TLA, NYC). In 2014–2015 he was Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Germany. Website: michelchion.com.

David Desser is Emeritus Professor of Cinema Studies, University of Illinois. He received his PhD in cinema from USC and currently teaches at Chapman University. He has authored and edited eleven books, most recently *Small Cinemas in Global Markets*. His best known works include *The Samurai Films of Akira Kurosawa*, *Eros plus Massacre: An Introduction to the Japanese New Wave Cinema*, *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, *American Jewish Filmmakers*, *The Cinema of Hong Kong: History, Arts, Identity*, and *Ozu's Tokyo Story*. He provided commentary on Criterion DVD editions of *Tokyo Story* and *Seven Samurai*.

Karen Fang is Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Houston. Author of *John Woo's A Better Tomorrow* (2004), she has two forthcoming volumes on surveillance in Hong Kong and Asian cinema.

Matthew Kwok-kin Fung is a Lecturer at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Having degrees in English, cultural studies, and English language teaching (ELT), his interests include film and cinema studies as well as cultural studies, particularly related to Hong Kong culture. He collaborated with Mike Ingham on the chapter "On Location in Kowloon: Discontinuities of the Urban Film Set," in *Kowloon Cultural District*, edited by Esther Lorenz and Li Shiqiao (2014).

Mike Ingham is Associate Professor in the English Department at Lingnan University. He co-authored *Hong Kong Documentary Film* (with Ian Aitken, 2014). His critical writing on cinema includes the films of Evans Chan in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Documentary Film* (2005), studies of Chan in *Studies in Documentary Film* (2007) and in *Postcolonialism, Diaspora and Alternative Histories: The Cinema of Evans Chan* (2015), and *Johnnie To Kei-fung's PTU* (2003).

Joseph G. Kickasola is Professor of Film and Digital Media and the Director of the Baylor New York program, Baylor University. His book *The Films of Krzysztof Kieślowski: The Liminal Image* won the 2006 Spiritus Award for best academic writing on religion and film. He has published in numerous anthologies and academic journals including *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film*, *Film Quarterly*, *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, and *Journal of Religion and Film*. He lives in New York City.

Vivian P.Y. Lee is an Associate Professor at the City University of Hong Kong. Her work on Chinese and East Asian cinemas has been published in academic journals and collected volumes including *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, and *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film*. She is the author of *Hong Kong Cinema Since 1997: The Post-Nostalgic Imagination* (2009) and editor of *East Asian Cinemas: Regional Flows and Global Transformations* (2011).

Helen Hok-Sze Leung is an Associate Professor in the Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University. She has published widely on queer cinema and is the author of *Undercurrents: Queer Culture and Postcolonial Hong Kong* (2008) and *Farewell My Concubine: A Queer Film Classic* (2010). She is a co-editor of the *Queer Asia* book series and serves on the editorial boards of *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *Performance Matters*, and *Asian Visual Cultures*. Her current research projects include a study of queer film classics from sonic perspectives; a study of Vancouver as a transpacific film location; and (co-authored with Audrey Yue) an examination of the theoretical impact of queer Asian knowledge production.

Gina Marchetti teaches courses in film, gender and sexuality, critical theory, and cultural studies. Her books include *Romance and the "Yellow Peril": Race, Sex and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (1993), *From Tian'anmen to Times Square: Transnational China and the Chinese Diaspora on Global Screens* (2006), and *The Chinese Diaspora on American Screens: Race, Sex, and Cinema* (2012). Her current research interests include women filmmakers in the HKSAR, China and world cinema, and contemporary trends in Asian and Asian American film culture.

Joe McElhaney is Professor of Film Studies at Hunter College/City University of New York. His books include *The Death of Classical Cinema: Hitchcock, Lang, Minnelli, Vincente Minnelli: The Art of Entertainment*, *Albert Maysles*, and *A Companion to Fritz Lang*. He has published numerous essays on aspects of American, European, and Asian cinema.

Martha P. Nochimson is Professor Emerita, Mercy College, where she developed and chaired her own Film Studies Program. She also taught for over a decade at the Tisch School of the Arts of New York University in the Department of Film and Television. She is the author of six books, including *No End to Her: Soap Opera and the Female Subject* (1992); *The Passion of David Lynch: Wild at Heart in Hollywood* (1997); *Dying to Belong: Gangster Movies in Hollywood and Hong Kong* (2007); and *David Lynch Swerves: Uncertainty from Lost Highway to Inland Empire* (2013). Nochimson has been interviewed on American, Canadian, and French television about Asian film, American soap opera, and David Lynch's

Wild at Heart, and has been a frequent contributor to *Film Quarterly*, *Cinema Journal*, and *Cineaste*, where she served as an associate editor for six years. She is an associate of the Seminar on Cinema and Interdisciplinary Interpretations of Columbia University Seminars and is currently working on a book about television beyond formula.

Ken Provencher is Associate Professor of the Faculty of Media Studies at Josai International University in Tokyo, Japan. His work has appeared in *Film Quarterly*, *The Velvet Light Trap*, and *The Quarterly Review of Film and Video*.

Angelo Restivo is Associate Professor of Moving Image Studies, Department of Communication, Georgia State University. He is the author of *The Cinema of Economic Miracles: Visuality and Modernization in the Italian Art Film* (2002). His work explores the aesthetic forms of emergent postmodern culture, and their geopolitical implications.

Bérénice Reynaud is the author of *Nouvelles Chines, nouveaux cinémas* and Hou Hsiao-hsien's "A City of Sadness." Her writing has been published in *DV-MADE CHINA: Digital Subjects and Social Transformations after Independent Film*, *The New Urban Generation*, *The New Chinese Documentary Movement*, *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture*, and *Storia del Cinema Mondiale*; in *Sight and Sound*, *Film Comment*, *CinemaScope*, *Senses of Cinema*, *Cahiers du cinéma*, *Le Monde diplomatique*, *Libération*, *Meteor*, *Springerin*, and *Nosferatu*. A program consultant for The Viennale and the San Sebastian International Film Festival, she is co-curator of the film series at REDCAT (CalArts multimedia theater). She teaches at the California Institute of the Arts.

Carlos Rojas is Associate Professor of Chinese Cultural Studies, Women's Studies, and Arts of the Moving Image at Duke University. He is the author of *Home-sickness: Culture, Contagion, and National Transformation in Modern China* (2015), *The Great Wall: A Cultural History* (2010), and *The Naked Gaze: Reflections on Chinese Modernity* (2008). He is also the co-editor of five volumes, including *The Oxford Handbook of Chinese Cinemas* (with Eileen Cheng-yin Chow, 2013).

Stephen Teo is Associate Professor at the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He has contributed numerous articles and book chapters to film journals and anthologies, and is the author of several books, including *Hong Kong Cinema: The Extra Dimensions* (1997); *Wong Kar-wai* (2005); *King Hu's A Touch of Zen* (2007); *Director in Action: Johnnie To and the Hong Kong Action Cinema* (2007); *Chinese Martial Arts Cinema: The Wuxia Tradition* (2009); and *The Asian Cinema Experience: Styles, Spaces, Theory* (2013). His forthcoming book is *Eastern Westerns: Film and Genre Outside and Inside Hollywood*.

Yiman Wang is Associate Professor of Film and Digital Media at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She is the author of *Remaking Chinese Cinema: Through the Prism of Shanghai, Hong Kong and Hollywood* (2013). She is currently working on two book projects: one on Anna May Wong, and the other on animality in cinema.

Wai-ping Yau is Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Hong Kong Baptist University. His research interests include Chinese film and literature, literary translation, screen translation, and film adaptation.

Audrey Yue is Associate Professor in Cultural Studies at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Her recent publications include *Sinophone Cinemas* (2014), *Transnational Australian Cinema: Ethics in the Asian Diasporas* (2013), *Queer Singapore: Illiberal Citizenship and Mediated Cultures* (2012), and *Ann Hui's Song of the Exile* (2010).

Acknowledgments

First, I wish to thank the twenty-six scholars and two translators who joined me on this journey into Wong Kar-wai's cinema. They were all imaginative, diligent, and collegial. Sometimes they were even intrepid and they were steadfast until the final task was accomplished. They each opened my eyes to some new aspect of Wong's artistry, as they will most likely do for you. Out of this very fine group, I would especially like to acknowledge Joseph G. Kickasola and Ken Provencher, who each gave willingly of their time for necessary consultations.

The Columbia University Seminar on Cinema and Interdisciplinary Interpretations has been extremely supportive, both intellectually and financially, in the production of this volume. Thank you to Robert Pollack, Alice Newton, Pamela Guardia, William G. Luhr, Cynthia Lucia, David Sterritt, and all who attended when Giorgio Biancorosso and I presented our work on Wong Kar-wai for their consideration. In the prescribed language: "The author expresses appreciation to the Warner Fund at the University Seminars at Columbia University for their help in publication. Material in this work was presented to the University Seminar: Cinema and Interdisciplinary Interpretations."

At Wiley Blackwell, thanks, as always, to my exceptional editor, Jayne Fargnoli, for her receptiveness, counsel, and support, and to Brigitte Lee Messenger, Julia Kirk, and Lesley Montford who struggled masterfully and made sense out of the innumerable details that required attention.

Some of the contributors have embedded, within their chapters, their thanks to those who went beyond the call; others join me here in expressing their gratitude. My thanks to Patricia Ondek Laurence, Debarati Biswas, Chris Berry, and Adrian Martin for their suggestions and insights. Shohini Chaudhuri wishes to thank Chris Berry for his generous support; Yau Wai-ping thanks Jessica Young and Mike Ingham for their support and encouragement; Gina Marchetti thanks

Kasey (Man Man) Wong, Iris Eu, and Derek Lam for their help with the preparation of her chapter; and Michel Chion thanks Claudia Gorbman for her always excellent assistance translating his chapter.

Finally, thanks to my family – husband Richard, son David, daughter Holly, and granddaughter Amara. They anchor, delight, and illuminate.

Contents

Notes on Contributors	ix
Acknowledgments	xv
Part One Introduction	
Wong Kar-wai: Invoking the Universal and the Local <i>Martha P. Nochimson</i>	3
Part Two Mapping Wong's Liminality	
1 Transnational Wong <i>Ken Provencher</i>	23
2 It is a Restless Moment: Wong Kar-wai and the Phenomenology of Flow <i>Joseph G. Kickasola</i>	47
3 Wong Kar-wai and his <i>jiang hu</i> <i>Bérénice Reynaud</i>	80
Part Three Thresholds of Texture and Mood	
4 Wong Kar-wai's Cinema of Repetition <i>Ackbar Abbas</i>	115
5 Wong Kar-wai: The Optics of the Virtual <i>Angelo Restivo</i>	135
6 Color Design in the Cinema of Wong Kar-wai <i>Shohini Chaudhuri</i>	153

- 7 The Value of Re-exports: Wong Kar-wai's Use of Pre-existing Soundtracks 182
Giorgio Biancorosso

Part Four In the Corridors of History and Culture

- 8 Wong's Ladies from Shanghai 207
Gina Marchetti
- 9 The Sinophone Cinema of Wong Kar-wai 232
Audrey Yue
- 10 New Queer Angles on Wong Kar-wai 250
Helen Hok-Sze Leung
- 11 "Pity about the furniture": Violence, Wong Kar-wai Style 272
Karen Fang
- 12 In the Mood for Food: Wong Kar-wai's Culinary Imaginary 295
Mike Ingham and Matthew Kwok-kin Fung
- 13 *Chungking Express*, Tarantino, and the Making of a Reputation 319
David Desser

Part Five Close-up of Wong's Inflections of Time and Space

- 14 *Chungking Express*: Slow – Images – Ahead 347
Raymond Bellour (translated by Allyn Hardyck)
- 15 Wong Kar-wai: The Actor, Framed 353
Joe McElhane
- 16 Infidelity and the Obscure Object of History 378
Vivian P.Y. Lee
- 17 Metonymy, Mneme, and Anamnesis in Wong Kar-wai 397
Thorsten Botz-Bornstein

Part Six Focus on Individual Films

- 18 Serial, Sequelae, and Postcolonial Nostalgia: Wong Kar-wai's 1960s Hong Kong Trilogy 419
Yiman Wang
- 19 We Can't Go On Not Meeting Like This: *Fallen Angels* and Wong's Intertextuality 438
Martha P. Nochimson
- 20 The Third Reality: *In the Mood for Love* 462
Michel Chion (translated by Claudia Gorbman)

21	Cinephiliac Engagement and the Disengaged Gaze in <i>In the Mood for Love</i> Yomi Braester	467
22	Wong's America, North and South: <i>My Blueberry Nights</i> and <i>Happy Together</i> Ken Provencher	485
23	Queer Utopias in Wong Kar-wai's <i>Happy Together</i> Carlos Rojas	508
24	Wong Kar-wai's Genre Practice and Romantic Authorship: The Cases of <i>Ashes of Time Redux</i> and <i>The Grandmaster</i> Stephen Teo	522
25	Wong Kar-wai, Auteur and Adaptor: <i>Ashes of Time</i> and <i>In The Mood for Love</i> Wai-ping Yau	540
	Filmography	558
	Appendix I Wong Works in Television Chih-ting Chen	562
	Appendix II Wong Works in Advertising Chih-ting Chen	569
	Selected Bibliography	586
	Index	600

Part One

Introduction