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# *Many ways of directing a film: teaching the 'modes of creative practice'*

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**Many Ways of Directing a Film: Teaching the 'Modes of Creative Practice'**

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The ideas in this chapter spring from a simple observation, that the title 'Film Director' does not tell us much about the rich and varied nature of this profession - it is a little like using the term 'Artist' without the multiple subcategories of painter/sculptor/illustrator/printmaker…Yet only occasionally do we hear closer definitional terms for a film director, such as the labels *actors' director* or *action director* - hesitant attempts to acknowledge the huge range of roles, and the types of creativity, encompassed by this profession.

In the making of live action fiction film, there exists an implicit understanding that the creative practices undertaken by directors will be highly differentiated. Given the extraordinary multiplicity of different film types in cinema, it is axiomatic to say that the working practice of film directors during the creation of these films must vary accordingly. So, as educators whose concern is to train new generations of film directors, we need to think carefully about the huge differences in the nature of the role, and then attempt to find generalisations that might guide us to design new and varied teaching approaches that can reflect the different realities of film directing.

A starting point is to ask, What is the best way to categorise the creative practice of 'film directing' in all its complexities? Films themselves have been given an array of categorisations, separating them according to systems based on genre, scale and budget, target audience, financing and production system, medium, and

form. But films as texts are not difficult to divide into such taxonomies: a completed film exists on the screen, it can be closely observed by scholars, replayed repeatedly, scrutinised and evaluated for where it will sit in the highly-developed categories of film criticism. But what about the *process* of making a film? This is mostly invisible to the student of film studies: on the screen they can witness the results of the process of creation, from which certain features of the filmmaking practice can be deduced, but the moviegoer and the critic are provided with no direct access to how the film was made. This tantalising barrier that separates the audience from filmmakers' practice provokes fascination amongst film buffs and has led to the development of a whole industry of 'Behind The Scenes' documentaries, from feature-length (*Hearts of Darkness*, 1991) to special features added to DVDs and Blu-rays. It is in these short factual accounts that directors reveal themselves and discuss aspects of their work, though mostly they disappoint, clinging to an anodyne presentation of their craft apparently intent on preserving the mysteries and myths that circulate in the public perception of film directing. If we listen to a DVD's 'commentary' over the movie, we are most frequently presented with an affable reunion of two or three of the filmmakers, who chatter alongside the film offering anecdotes. A systematic analysis of the practice of creating the film is not offered.

It is therefore not surprising that film scholarship has failed to adequately develop a coherent and comprehensive Theory of Film Practice (and I include Noël Burch in this criticism). Popular discussions on the creative practice of film have a similarly patchy record, with the discourse centred on the most visible elements of film style: actors and performance, flamboyant instances of camerawork, music, and perhaps a nod to production design. Film Directors themselves are not fully reflective of the nature of their creative practice: if they categorise themselves at all, it is usually

in terms of the type of films they produce, rather than the *way* in which they create their films.

The commonalities of directors' creative work seem most apparent: we all create stories using script, actors, camera and microphone, and postproduction. There is a linear progression of the stages of film production that seems logical and is adhered to by most filmmakers. Yet it is abundantly clear to those who work with directors that there are starkly different approaches to the craft. First ADs will attest to their experience of reorienting their own role according to the approach of the specific director with whom they are working. Sometimes the variations are based on the weight of interest that a director puts on a particular aspect of filmmaking; sometimes the differences stem from the idiosyncratic nature of the individual concerned.

However, understanding variations in filmmaking practice on an individual, director-specific level is not useful to us. We need to identify patterns of difference that can be sorted into coherent schemes of creative practice, in order to generate clear pedagogic significance for film education. My recent doctoral research has been targeted towards this end. A conclusion of this project is that the systems of creative practice initiated by film directors are highly varied, but those variations can be grouped together into different 'Modes', with each having distinct features. I will outline here the ideas around three such Modes of Creative Practice. In doing so, my intention is to begin a process of evolving a Theory of Film Practice that relates to the making of screen fiction; it is a work-in-progress, but already I believe it has relevance to the approach of educators working with advanced-level students in our film schools.

A foundation of the concept of 'Modes of Creative Practice' in filmmaking is the idea that, in the making of every movie, directors and their teams can choose to

adopt particular creative and organisational strategies in order to achieve desired creative outcomes for their film. However, I should stress immediately that not all contexts for film production allow for manipulation and experimentation in the form of film practice: in more 'industrialised' production environments, the ability of a film director to alter the norms of filmmaking are constrained. In more independent contexts, the system of film practice is a part of the creative choice available to a director. Certain directors are particularly conscious about their working methods, and by studying their creative practice we can find valuable lessons that illuminate the choices that all filmmakers have available to them.

**The Performance-centred Mode of Creative Practice**

The first Mode that I will describe focuses on the working relationship between directors and actors. While a concern for performance is common to all fiction filmmakers and is structured into the working processes of production, directors working within the 'Performance-centred Mode' put such a heavy emphasis on this part of their role that clear variations in practice emerge. Some directors have become internationally renowned for the intensity of their collaboration with actors, others have a lower profile but are equally significant in developing distinct forms of practice. In my study have looked at the creative methods of a small number of directors from a selection of national cinemas:

1. Argentina: Federico Godfrid
2. Australia: David Marchand
3. Denmark: Annette K. Olesen
4. France: Blandine Lenoir

5. United Kingdom: Mike Leigh, Sally Potter

6. United States: John Cassavetes, Jake Doremus

Directors in the Performance-centred Mode stand out due to the neglect by many other film directors of the needs of their cast. An extreme case was reported by the leading Hollywood actor, Hugo Weaving, when he was cast to help create the creature, Megatron, in *Transformers: Dark of the Moon* (Michael Bay, 2011). He commented publicly about his relationship with the director: 'I have never met him […] I know nothing about him, really. I just went in and did it. I never read the script. I just have my lines, and I don't know what they mean' (interview by Radish 2012). Michael Bay's lack of interest in performance is unusual, as most directors are intellectually and creatively engaged with their actors. However, the film industry offers little space for the process of rehearsal, a period of collaboration that is deemed vital in the theatre and forms the basis of actors' training. I will illustrate how this differs in the Performance-centred Mode, by looking at the creative practice of two directors who have developed their strategies for collaboration with actors from the theatrical tradition.

The UK director Mike Leigh began his career in regional British theatre in the 1970s, where he formulated an improvising method that allows his actors to devise their unique characters over long periods. Story elements - how the characters meet and interact to create drama - would emerge later, after extensive work on character development was completed. The important alteration that Leigh makes to mainstream filmmaking practice is the position of the screenplay. Whereas the writing of the screenplay is the first creative stage in most feature film projects, Leigh begins work on a new film without any clarity as to the final script outcome. He has

emphasised this in interview: ‘People say to me “Do you know the story (when you begin)? Do you know the end? Do you know the narrative?” The answer to those questions is “No, No and No”’ (Carney 2000: 6).

In this, Mike Leigh is positioned at the extreme end of the practice of devising, a technique that is a characteristic of the Performance-centred Mode. Other directors, such as Federico Godfrid or Jake Doremus, will begin with a very loose draft of a script before engaging a cast to develop it further. In Mike Leigh’s ‘blank sheet’ process, the leading actors are engaged for six months, with weeks of one-to-one work with the director to devise their characters. Leigh may also use techniques to help his actors develop their research, sending his players away for weeks at a time to the region of England that their character comes from. As a writer-director, Leigh is thus relying very heavily on the independent work of the performer in constructing key elements of his film: ‘Each actor takes total possession of his or her character and has complete responsibility for him or her’ (Raphael 2008: 31).

Having worked individually with actors, after several months’ work Leigh begins to construct how the characters will meet and interact. This is where his filmmaking practice begins to return to a familiar screenplay-led structure, but Leigh is at pains to emphasise that his process is still different from the norm: ‘Just before shooting begins, I write a scenario – a shooting script, I call it. It’s a very short thing. Merely a structure. No dialogue. No detailed descriptions’ (Interview in Raphael 2008: 30). Dialogue is generated by the actors themselves, a characteristic of the creative process that is typical within the Performance-centred Mode.

The enlarged creative contribution of the performer to the film and its screenplay is significant in Mike Leigh’s process, and is an attribute that distinguishes the ‘Performance-centred Mode’ from other filmmaking practices. However, it should

be emphasised that the director working in this mode still maintains ultimate control of the creative decision-making.

*Godfrid's Journey*

Federico Godfrid has directed two feature films, *La Tigra, Chaco* (2008) and *Pinamar* (2016)[i]. He is also an educator who presented a paper at CILECT's Conference at HFF, Munich, in November 2015. His earlier career was in fringe theatre, in which he adopted semi-devised processes of creating plays, a background which reflects that of Mike Leigh. Both Godfrid's films are low-budget productions made using practices developed by the director in order to integrate his performers closely in the process of creating these movies.

Similar to the creative process of Mike Leigh, in Godfrid's work the rehearsal stage of developing performance becomes highly extended. However, he chooses a different starting point: whereas Leigh commences work with a 'blank sheet' and an ensemble, Godfrid develops a rough first draft screenplay before casting his actors. The innovation introduced by Godfrid to the director-actor collaboration is what he calls the 'Journey'. The physical location of his films is of particular significance to Godfrid; he will usually source the shooting locations before the drafting of his script. These two elements, screenplay and location, are the director's primary resources before embarking on a collaboration with his actors. He has conceived a form of manifesto for the creative process which involves both himself and his cast: he calls this 'The Journey as Emotional Catalyst: To generate a fiction film from the collaborative work between the director and actors travelling to a place away from their everyday life'. The expectation that Godfrid makes is that the locations he has chosen will have a profound impact on his performers: their responses to new

environments will impact significantly on their creative decisions in developing their screen characters. He wants the actors to observe local people, to allow the specific characteristics of the social locus of the film to inform how their fictional character behaves. Most interestingly, Godfrid includes himself in this process of creative reaction to an environment. The journey is not just one for the performers, in order to help them to build unique characters, but also for him as the filmmaker. This is a significant extension of the Mike Leigh process, which requires that the actors research, but without the presence of their director. Godfrid puts himself with the performers at every stage of the preproduction and shooting process, so that the 'Journey' is an intimate experience of collective discovery.

*Teaching the 'Performance-Centred Mode'*

The careful development of alternative forms of practice by directors such as Mike Leigh, Federico Godfrid and others gives us a strong rationale for describing a distinctive *Performance-centred Mode of Creative Practice* within film directing. Many of us have been aware of different approaches to filmmaking by such directors, but until now we have treated these as individual cases. Yet internationally there are enough filmmakers adopting variations on these techniques for us to treat this as a distinct subset of worldwide film practice.

As an educator, I believe that film students should be made aware of the traditions of performance-centred filmmaking and to develop the skills to direct in this Mode if they wish. The question for Film Schools is to identify the particular skills that a film student, at an advanced level, will need to acquire if they are to work in the Performance-centred Mode. Some schools, such as the Beijing Film Academy,

already include drama and performance as part of the education of film directors, providing a strong foundation for work in this Mode.

There are three areas of consideration in building a curriculum for the Performance-centred Mode of directing, which naturally prioritise the director's collaboration with actors over other aspects of the role.

- The processes and techniques of improvisation, and the leadership of performers during this creative journey.
- Repositioning of the screenplay within students' understanding of the filmmaking process, training them to develop dramatic possibilities through collaboration with actors in a devising process.
- An approach to editing that is almost exclusively focussed on performance.

**The Design-centred Mode of Creative Practice**

The concept behind the 'Design-centred Mode of Creative Practice' is that in certain directors' work, the creation of the visual environment of the film becomes absolutely dominant, absorbing the filmmaker's attention. The creation of layers of meaning through the use of props, set design, colour, costume, and makeup, take precedence over other forms of expression. While every film uses these elements to a greater or lesser extent in its construction, in some these processes of design are the primary concern of the team.

Certain directors intend from the outset to work with this creative emphasis. Directors such as Guillermo del Toro, Peter Greenaway and Terry Gilliam have established filmic styles in which their works' design is central and provides the spectator with a coherent and recognizable authorial imprint. Other directors work

only occasionally in the Design-centred Mode, showing an ability to adapt their filmmaking practice when this is required. There are also certain genres, such as SciFi and Fantasy, as well as non-generic traditions such as Historical Film, which require filmmakers to adopt a Design-centred Mode. To successfully create films within these genres, a director must possess or develop particular skills in conceiving elaborate visual worlds, and be capable of visual leadership in their construction.

I should make it clear that in defining the 'Design-centred Mode', my focus has been on analogue processes and not the use of digital Visual Effects (VFX) to generate fictitious environments. The skills involved in creating visual worlds using VFX are quite distinct from those using analogue techniques, so in establishing modes of creative practice we might consider VFX-heavy filmmaking in a separate category. However, the ease with which the new generation of Production Designers incorporate digital methods into their practice may require a broadening of the definition of the Design-centred Mode.

In the 'Design-centred Mode' as in the 'Performance-centred Mode', a shift in the locus of authorship is apparent. The leading British filmmaker from the mid-twentieth century, Michael Powell, when working in a design-centred creative environment, acknowledged other Heads of Department as more significant than himself in the creation of his films:

> It is not generally recognised by the public that the most genuinely creative member of a film unit, if the author of the original story and screenplay is excluded, is the art director…in the film world the producer and director and cameraman are so full of themselves that it is not sufficiently acknowledged that the art director is the creator of those miraculous images up there on the big

> screen, and that besides being a painter and an architect, this miracle man has to be an engineer as well (2000: 343)

Powell is describing (in an era when women were excluded from leading roles in production departments) the process of filmmaking from the point of view of a director steeped in the practices of the 'Design-centred Mode'. Powell's statement is more than simple English modesty, it represents one of the most useful illuminations of the difference of creative practice and responsibility in this Mode. Many of his most celebrated films, such as *Black Narcissus* (1947, Production Designer Alfred Junge) or *The Red Shoes* (1948, Production Designer Hein Heckroth) were triumphs of studio art departments. We must also remember the historical context in which Powell was working: the most lavishly designed film of his era was *Gone With The Wind* (Victor Fleming, 1939), a movie in which the Production Designer, William Cameron Menzies, performed most of the director's roles in preproduction long before Fleming was hired to helm the picture, and was given the credit 'this production designed by', which was unique at that time. In Powell's view, to be 'genuinely creative' on a film set is to be the person who creates that set, and all the meaning within its rich visual texture. For him, the role of the Director in a design-centred production is different from our usual understanding of the job: while they remain responsible for performance issues and storytelling, in terms of the visual elements that dominate such a film the director is a coordinator and a consultant, awe-struck by the work of those that they theoretically command.

The range of practices confronting the director in the Design-centred Mode is extremely broad. The team involved in making these films will bring skills from many other design-based professions such as architecture, engineering, construction,

fashion, model-making, fine art and interior design. The job of the film director in coordinating all these involves a greater depth of understanding of design processes than is required in most other forms of filmmaking. In the past, some directors leading highly design-focussed productions have simply delegated responsibility for the conception and creation of visual aspects of the film to their Heads of Department (Stephen Frears says of his Costume Designer, Consolata Boyle, 'I barely need to speak to her as I know what she's doing is going to be dazzling'[ii]). The great design-centred filmmakers, however, take a lead in the creation of their cinematic worlds. Some directors in this Mode bring skills from fine arts: Jean Cocteau was an artist before his career as a director, Tim Burton and Terry Gilliam were animators, Peter Greenaway began as an artist and muralist. Others bring a generalist knowledge of design to their films.

*Teaching the 'Design-Centred Mode'*

Film students rarely get the opportunity to create short films that are heavily-dependent on production design and the primary reason is cost. Creating films in the Design-centred Mode is particularly expensive, for this reason, we need to teach pragmatism in the conception of these films, and resourcefulness in the use of design. However, the significant recent increase in design-heavy screen work, particularly in high-end TV drama, means that student directors who have been trained in the Design-centred Mode of film practice will be prepared for the opportunities in this sector.

Educating students in this Mode involves prioritising their training in:

- Visual communication of creative ideas using graphic skills.

- Close understanding of the creative work of all departments of film design: the art department, the costume department, hair and makeup, props making.
- Sensitivity of the impact of a designed cinematic world on screenplay writing.
- An understanding of the impact of a design-heavy film environment on the performer.
- Application of design skills to both studio and location filming.

A further important consideration is where film educators might locate the training of directors in the Design-centred Mode. Professor Eli Bø of Stockholm University of the Arts has suggested that the education of young directors with this interest should be 'in an environment where a director can be part of the design department developing world-building techniques'[iii]. Her team-based ethos of training production designers creates a structure in which directors could learn the Design-centred Mode alongside, and as part of, the design team.

**The Social Realist Mode of Creative Practice**

Social Realism has long been recognised as a particular form, or genre, of cinema. Less closely studied are the ways in which those directors working to create social realist films have developed very clear approaches to the filmmaking process. The distinct ways in which they have manipulated the traditions of filmmaking practice allow us to conceive of a Social Realist Mode of film directing.

The distinct features of the Social Realist Mode have roots in the strong motivations of the films' directors. Filmmakers within this tradition are uniformly interested in using their art not just to tell engaging screen stories, but also as a form of political intervention, in the broadest sense. Samantha Lay, writing about British Social Realism, sees this as a definitional quality of the form: 'The conviction that

films should have a social purpose, and a moral force, rather than being merely entertaining or diverting, is shared to varying degrees by all the film-makers' (2002: 2). This sense of purpose has developed distinct methods of film practice during the development of social realist cinema in the last fifty years.

*Realism and Authenticity*

Filmmakers in the social realist tradition show a determination to achieve an authentic representation of the social and political world of their characters. This has huge impact on decision-making in preproduction, as well as the way in which visual style is deployed in the creation of their films. Film locations play a strikingly enlarged role in the creative process of the director in social realism. The search for authenticity is a significant consideration in the decision-making involved in choosing where to shoot scenes, and subsequently to how the locations are used in the creative practice of the film shoot.

Filmmakers will, out of choice, decide to shoot a film in the very locale of their characters' world, and they will seek to leave the location in the real state in which they find it. Robert How, who as Location Manager worked twice for Ken Loach, on the films *Ladybird, Ladybird* (1994) and *Carla's Song* (1996), told me how location scouting with Loach was entirely about finding a place that was authentic. They would view potential locations, together with Loach's Production Designer, Martin Johnson. Bob How described what would happen if Loach walked into a space that he knew was right for the film: 'This is perfect!, he would say, 'Martin - don't change a thing!' Loach's response was first-and-foremost a reaction to the authenticity of the location. The technical skill of Martin Johnson was brought to bear after Loach had departed. He and his Art Department understood that their task was to

make the set look and feel on camera exactly how it had appeared to the director when he first visited the location. As the film camera tends to 'clean up' the look of interiors (this is particularly a feature of digital cinema cameras), Johnson would know that unless he worked hard to 'dirty it down', through repainting and set-dressing, the location would only disappoint Loach when he returned to shoot.

When creatively engaging with the film locations, social realists frequently favour a design approach that emphasises what Philip Mosley calls an 'unadorned' representation of the physical environment of the film. The role of the Art Department here is not to layer meaning upon the location using dressing props and other devices – the creative intention of filmmakers in other Modes. Instead, production design in the Social Realist Mode emphasises the ordinariness of the set, trying to preserve the location in its natural state.

*Casting*

A very distinct feature of social realist cinema is its lack of stars. In its relationship with the audience, this form of film consistently eschews the use of recognisable actors for the purpose of attracting publicity. Indeed, so ingrained is this feature, that it could be argued that one of the pleasures of social realism is the experience of watching unfamiliar faces on the screen. This characteristic of social realist cinema has developed over many decades. While there are occasional exceptions, it points to an approach to casting that is common across directors working in the form.

Casting in this mode reflects attitudes towards film performance itself. This genre of film characteristically features very naturalistic screen acting. While other genres such as comedy or action film may celebrate exaggerated or mannered performance, directors in social realist cinema frequently seek a level of low-key, life-

like acting from their casts. This may be linked to the principles of realism and authenticity.

The search for a different, uninflected naturalism in performance has a major impact on the practice of casting in the Social Realist Mode. Directors will choose actors who are able to perform with such transparency, or will cast individuals who have no drama training whatsoever in the hope of finding completely unselfconscious performances. Ken Loach sees the experience or training of the actor as irrelevant:

> I actually think that the distinction between actors and non-actors is a false one because the whole process of meeting actors and auditioning them is about finding people who are believable, who can make something that is fictional true, and make a film live. (quoted in Fuller 1998: 18)

Loach is not the only director working in the Social Realist Mode who mixes professional and non-professional performers in their cast. A further alteration to the norms of filmmaking practice is in his insistence on shooting his films in story order. Other directors have also adopted this technique, which is used in order to help performers through a natural development of their character storyline. Ken Loach goes to the extreme of not even showing his actors the script, placing them in semi-real situations and provoking them to respond with naturalism instead of delivering a 'performance'.

*The Camera in the Social-Realist Mode*

Visual style is a defining feature of social realist cinema, with its recognisable 'gritty' image quality and unelaborate use of camera, which clearly contrasts with the high

production values of mainstream film. The nature of social realist cinema's visual style is also self-consciously oppositional. In the UK, 1960s social realist cinema defined itself in opposition to the Hollywood of the period and 1950s British middle class comedy, while the 'Brit Grit' cinema of the 1990s was a self-conscious reaction to the 'heritage' cinema of Merchant Ivory and others. Lay comments on Ken Loach's adoption of camera style for very specific effect: 'Loach's cinema verité style makes his features look like documentaries, which activates the social or 'critical realism' and work to differentiate his films' (Lay 2002: 89).

In their study of social realist cinema, Hallam and Marshment discuss the film style chosen by this group of filmmakers and offer a very broad statement that intends to unify the genre in terms of its use of the film camera: 'social realism tends to be associated with an observational style of camerawork that emphasises situations and events [… ] creating "kitchen sink" dramas and "gritty" characters studies of the underbelly of urban life' (Hallam and Marshment 2000: 184).

The key term employed here is 'observational', one that implicitly highlights the connection frequently made between the style of social realism and documentary film. This link with documentary style is supported by Loach's regular cinematographer, Barry Ackroyd, who has described how the documentaries that he shot at the start of his career fed into his work with the director.

Paul Greengrass is another filmmaker who began in documentaries, where he developed a camera style handheld and frenetic that provided him with an approach to delivering the narrative in his first fiction films, social realist features such as *The Murder of Stephen Lawrence* (1999) and *Bloody Sunday* (2002). Having reached this maturity of film style in his early Social Realist films, Greengrass had developed a distinct visual 'voice' that he has barely deviated from while working in Hollywood.

His collaboration with Barry Ackroyd on his bigger budget films keeps a visual link to the earlier Social Realist works. Greengrass very clearly recognises the link between his work and social realism: he told his BAFTA audience at the David Lean Lecture in 2014 that his cinema is 'operating classical British social realist traditions', describing himself as 'very old-fashioned'.

*Teaching the 'Social Realist Mode'*

One thing cannot be taught to a new Social Realist director – their personal commitment to make a politically-charged social drama. However, by isolating key differences in the creative practice of making such films, we can help film students with such a commitment to achieve their creative goals.

- The biggest challenge for a young film director wanting to work in the Social Realist Mode is the difficulty of first casting, and then collaborating with, a mixed ensemble of actors and non-professionals. Film Schools can help students develop these skills by developing an approach to teaching performance-directing that is specially geared to this Mode.
- The use of the film camera follows a different logic within the Social Realist Mode, from the long lens of Ken Loach, to the 'corps-caméra' concept developed by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, to the 'reactive camera' of Greengrass and Ackroyd. Teaching of approaches to cinematography in the Social Realist Mode would therefore engage with these mode-specific practices.
- The 'long take' is frequently used by Social Realist directors, motivated by particularly aesthetic and ideological concerns. The understanding of the creative

rationale and the practical challenges in this technique would be a unique learning achievement within this Mode.

**Conclusion**

I am aware that my notes on the educational implications of the Modes of Creative Practice may appear like work-in-progress – indeed, this chapter is the very beginning of the pedagogic interpretation of the theory. The 'Modes' concept itself is also a work-in-progress as a Theory of Film Practice: the three Modes that I propose here will certainly not be the end of a process of clustering groups of film directing practice. I should also emphasise that the Modes of Creative Practice are not conceived as closed or exclusive, they will always overlap with each other – and inventive directors will adapt them to their creative ends.

To the teachers of filmmaking, I believe that addressing the Modes of Creative Practice as categories can provide a useful conceptual basis from which we can develop pragmatic strategies of educational delivery. An interesting question is, why has such an approach to filmmaking pedagogy not been tried before? I suspect that this is because as teachers we lack an over-arching theory of filmmaking practice that we can use to guide us, or for us to rebel against, in developing our strategies of education. In taking inspiration from the work of our heroes, we follow the film studies approach of textual analysis, extrapolating meaning from the completed film and not delving into the careful decisions by these film practitioners during the creation of their work. Take Roberto Rossellini as an example: we know that he was a film director of extraordinary versatility, moving between the genres of neorealism, melodrama and historical drama. His films have been the subject of extensive study, yet Rossellini's methods of filmmaking practice have never been studied in such

detail, despite the fact that the careful alterations in his creative methods were part of the genius of his career as a director. For students at Film School, understanding the ways in which he made films is as valuable to their learning as appreciating the beauty of Rossellini's cinema.

With the 'Modes of Creative Practice', I am offering a theoretical approach that gives equal emphasis to the methods and praxis of filmmaking as to the culture of cinema. Students of film directing should be aware that their creative powers can be applied not just to the cinematic output of their work, but to *manipulating the actual process that they adopt in making their films*. The concept of the Modes of Creative Practice helps illustrate the point that *how films are made* has a profound impact on the nature of the films that are being created. I hope this theory of film practice will allow new approaches to teaching directors to develop – such as Professor Bø's idea of teaching the Design-centred Mode of film directing within the context the art department.

The ideas here are, by their nature, more appropriate to advanced film students than to those at the start of their journey. I believe that by the time young filmmakers reach a postgraduate level of experience and self-knowledge, if introduced to the concept of the separate Modes of Creative Practice in filmmaking, many will already know which way their future lies. The opportunity for Film Schools is to offer them not just a standard development of their pathway as a director, but the development of the specific skills that will help them move towards a form of film practice that matches their own creative ambition. The teaching approach that flows from the theory may have useful implications in the context of the 'conservatory training' outlined by Ben Gibson in his contribution to CILECT's Volume 1 of *The 21st Century Film, TV & Media School*[iv].

The need for a fresh approach to teaching film directing was brought home to me recently when leading the MA Filmmaking at the University for the Creative Arts (UK), a course that I designed only a few years earlier on a traditional model of film education. One particularly talented student from China rapidly absorbed the learning offered to her by the course, but when she came to develop her major project, to my surprise it was clear that her sensibilities were exclusively within one approach to filmmaking: Northern European social realism. This student had never engaged in a detailed study of the films of the Dardenne brothers, Ken Loach, or Eric Zonca, but the work she wanted to create was a direct development of these film directors' approach. As a teacher, I realised that I would have served her better by offering a film school education based specifically around her chosen Mode of film practice, not the generalist one that I had designed for the course. My writing of this chapter, as well as my broader research, is inspired by a motivation to provide a film school education that is responsive to students such as this.

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[i] Godfrid's second feature was selected for the San Sebastian Film Festival.

[ii] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/film/florence-foster-jenkins/consolata-boyle-on-catastrophic-couture/ [Accessed 15.7.2018]

[iii] Interview with the author, 30.05.2019

[iv] Gibson, Ben (2016). 'What is 'Conservatory Training' for Film and Television?', in Mourao, Semerdjiev, Taylor (Eds) *The 21st Century Film, TV & Media School: Challenges, Clashes, Changes.* Volume 1. Sofia: (CILECT, pp.136-149).