ABSTRACT: Most scholars would agree that cinephilia results not simply from a spontaneous love of movies but historically has also been inseparable from processes of legitimization, audience training, and formations of taste. Yet we still know little about the deeper history of cinephilia's emergence: how audiences learned to love the movies and why. This article considers one site for thinking about this question during the "first wave" of cinephilia in the 1920s, namely the puzzle contest as it developed and proliferated in the new landscape of popular magazines in England, France, Germany, and other European countries. Culminating in a discussion of the Viennese magazine Mein Film, this article examines the media-historical and cultural contexts of photographic puzzles to show how they figured in a broader program of participatory and playful pedagogy by which readers could learn to frame film knowledge, film affect, and film experience in the context of an emerging European star system.

KEYWORDS: cinephilia, magazines, puzzles, interactivity, film societies, film culture

"It is far more likely that the globe has seen multiple and geographically dispersed cinephilias since the invention of cinema, and what's more, those cinephilias have not stood still for over a hundred years but have been constantly transforming and mutating over time, each in its own distinctive fashion."

Girish Shambu, The New Cinephilia

As both individual passion and shared practice, cinephilia is deeply bound up with the media that facilitate and sustain it. This relation is more apparent than ever today in the age of the Internet, when blogs, electronic journals, and other online forums have helped to transform more elitist and centralized models of cinephilia associated with the Cahiers du cinéma into a cinephilia of global
mediascapes, in which anyone can participate from anywhere in the world where a laptop can meet a Wi-Fi signal. As the most extensive analysis of the phenomenon to date, Girish Shambu's recent study *The New Cinephilia* (2014) outlines a thoroughgoing mutation of nearly every aspect of cinephilia in the age of participatory media, including not only the global dispersion of cinephilic communities but also the destabilization of traditional art-house canons, the blurring of lines between writers and readers, the emergence of new viewing situations, and the transformation of cinephilic memory.

But Shambu's book also suggests a set of questions for a deeper history of cinephilia and the media that made it possible. Alongside his analysis of contemporary specifics, he also highlights historical continuities, in particular cinephilia's reliance on what might be called *externals*: the ritual forms of conversing, writing, collecting, and exchanging ideas; techniques of memory; tactics for cultivating and sustaining enthusiasm; various nodal points of institutional support; and above all, the physical presence of media, from film magazines to the Internet. What results is a theoretical understanding of cinephilia not so much as a spontaneous love of movies, but as a passion that must be learned and cultivated through mutual interactions, and as a communal undertaking that—in Benedict Anderson's sense—relies on the simultaneous engagement with and through specific media.

Taking up this theoretical impetus, I want to look backward in this article to interwar Europe to examine one of the ways early film magazines facilitated the emergence of a new model of cinephilic engagement. Scholars have often described the school of *photogénie* theorists in interwar France as a "first wave" of cinephilia, and like its latter-day counterpart around the *Cahiers du cinéma*, this first wave was intimately bound up with print media, namely the explosion of new, audience-oriented publications such as *Cinéa—Ciné pour tous* (founded 1921), *Cinémagazine* (founded 1921), *Mon Cine* (founded 1922), and *Mon film* (founded 1923). But we can also extend this observation to other national contexts in Europe; in the German-speaking world, for instance, prewar trade journals such as *Der Kinematograph* (1907) and *Lichtbild-Bühne* (1908) were joined in the 1920s by a plethora of new cinephilic publications such as *Der Filmfreund* (1924), *Mein Film* (1926), *Film-Magazin* (1928), and *Filmwelt* (1929). Cinephilia, of course, might seem like a fraught term with which to regroup both highbrow journals and fan magazines alike, as well the majority of publications that fell somewhere in between. But I use the term expansively here in order to convey what these publications shared; while they may have represented different interests and can be plotted at various points on the continuum from elitist to popular, they all found their mission—as Christophe Gauthier has shown in the French context—in cultivating a particular kind of passion for cinema.
I explore more fully below, they also shared a project of teaching readers, as it were, how to love the movies.

This pedagogical impulse could, in many cases, assume forms decidedly more autocratic than the participatory Internet sites described by Shambu; for instance, readers of *Vous avez la parole*, a monthly supplement to *Mon ciné* dedicated to audience letters, encountered a veritable catechism of cinephilic instruction dispersed in bold print among the texts of their own letters—telling them to refrain from singing and talking, to favor subtle aesthetic choices over garish ones, to chastise theater directors who show films at the wrong speed or neglect damaged screens, and so on. “Avoid reading inter-titles aloud!” admonished one commandment; “The cinema is not a school where uneducated people learn to read.”7

Such directives fit well within a familiar narrative of spectatorial discipline in the era of institutionalization. But the pedagogical impulse of these journals also involved numerous more playful rubrics that were conceived explicitly for audience participation. This applies particularly to the ubiquitous use of contests, which, as Marsha Orgeron has shown in the American context, sought to give readers a sense that “what they said and did mattered” by allowing them to vote on their favorite films and stars, submit essays to demonstrate their film knowledge, or propose titles and slogans for future films.8 While this participatory dimension provides an important chapter in the history of fandom, however, it was also integral to a broader cinephilic education, which framed and encouraged the kinds of investments of knowledge and affect that played a critical role in the widespread legitimization of a cinephilic culture in the 1920s. In what follows, I explore this confluence of cinephilia, participation, and pedagogy as it informed a particular type of contest that came to play a key role in interwar European magazines: the film puzzle contest.

**PUZZLE CONTESTS AND THE MODERN MAGAZINE**

In his now famous 1924 lecture on “some conditions of photogénie,” Jean Epstein took a moment to praise one such contest for its potential to encourage a certain type of spectatorial vision:

> I very much appreciated the competition recently organized by one of the film magazines. The goal was to identify forty actors from the big screen, all more or less well-known, whose photos had been cropped by the magazine to leave only their eyes. Hence the goal was to find forty personalities in the gaze. This was a curious and unconscious attempt to get spectators into the habit of studying and recognizing the striking personality of the fragment eye.9

MICHAEL COWAN | LEARNING TO LOVE THE MOVIES
Fig. 1: "A qui sont ces yeux?" Contest series, sixth installment. (Cinéa, no. 82 [December 29, 1922]: 7)
Though Epstein doesn’t name the magazine in question, his description matches a competition launched in November 1922 by the editors of Cinéa—the same magazine in which Epstein’s lecture would be published before going on to appear as a chapter in his book Le Cinématographe vu de l’Etna (1926). For Epstein, the eye puzzle promised to initiate readers into the animistic pleasures of photogenic spectatorship. Cut free from the familiar semiotics of the actor’s face, the “fragment eye” gained a life of its own on the page, not unlike all those objects which, isolated through close-up, acquire an optical “personality” on the screen far in excess of a given film’s narrative economy. Epstein’s reading of the eye puzzles corresponds well with the critical definition of cinephilia set out by Paul Willemen, Mary Ann Doane, and others as an unorthodox attention to detail, whose presence for a given spectator comes to exceed the intentions of directors, performers, and even theorists. But it also represents something of a productive misreading—one Epstein himself seems to have recognized with his qualifier “unconscious.” After all, the readerly activity solicited by the Cinéa puzzle was not to liberate the eyes from their facial context but precisely to reconstruct that context by identifying the stars to which the eyes belonged.

In this, moreover, the contest was hardly alone. Cinéa ran other puzzles enjoining readers to name actors shown, for example, with their backs turned to the camera or in disguise (one such contest, entitled the “Concours des incognitos,” appeared next to Epstein’s article in August 1924). Similar contests abound in other magazines that proliferated in Europe during the same period, such as the British Pictures and the Picturegoer (founded 1913), the Italian Cinema illustrazione (1926), and the Austrian Mein Film (1926). The cropped-eye game was perhaps the most familiar form these film puzzles took, but the possibilities were endless. In other variants, readers were asked to identify stars with parts of their faces blotted out or transformed, star profiles shown in silhouette, stars reduced to their noses, childhood pictures of stars, or star photographs that had been cut apart and jumbled in a kind of photographic jigsaw puzzle. Though they ranged from the simple to the highly complex, nearly all of these puzzles operated on the same basic principle, challenging readers to identify well-known performers and scenes from recent films they ought to have seen.

If visual identification puzzles enjoyed such a widespread appeal and familiarity to European readers in the 1920s, this is, not least of all, a sign of the increasing self-evidence of the star system. In order to play the game, readers had to recognize national stars such as Ève Francis (France) and Paul Richter (Germany), as well as international stars such as Ramon Novarro and Bebe Daniels. Turning this observation around, one could say that puzzle contests
Dans notre numéro 86 nous présentons trois questions destinées.

Nous présentons aujourd'hui à la sauce de nos lecteurs ces trois questions nouvelles. Dans un de nos prochains numéros, nous en poserons trois autres. Ce concours est ouvert à nos fidèles lecteurs au numéro comme à nos abonnés. Rédigez votre réponse comme suit:

Le dos n° 1 appartient à  
Le dos n° 2 appartient à  
Le dos n° 3 appartient à  

500 francs de prix en nature seront attribués aux réponses justes, selon la classification de la question subsidiaire suivante: Combien recevrons-nous de réponses exactes? N'oubliez pas de répondre à cette deuxième question. Toutes les réponses exactes seront récompensées.

Fig. 2: "A qui sont ces dos?" Contest series, second installment (Cinéa, no. 89 [April 3, 1923]: 5)
Fig. 3: "Masks & Faces." Contest. (Picturegoer 11, no. 63 [March 1926]: 37)
Fig. 4: "Wer erkennt sie?" Contest. (Mein Film, no. 132 [1928]: 9)

Fig. 5. (opposite): "Le Puzzle cinématographique." Contest series, sixth installment (Cinémagazine 3, no. 10 [March 9, 1923], 431)
RÈGLEMENT DU CONCOURS

Dix portraits de notre collection de photographies d'égones ont été découpés en de nombreux morceaux.
Voici quelques-uns de ces morceaux. Gardez-les précieusement. Nous publierez la semaine prochaine, la 7e et dernière planche et il faudra, à la fin du concours, en découplant ces morceaux et les collant sur une feuille, reconstituer le plus grand nombre possible de portraits pour gagner un des nombreux prix que nous offrirons à nos lecteurs.

Conserver le bon ci-contre qui sera exigé avec la réponse :

BON N° 6
also helped condition readers to approach film *in terms of* stars, star recognition, and affective investments in stars. The star system, of course, had already been underway in the United States since the 1910s, its emergence facilitated in no small part by magazines such as *Motion Picture Story Magazine* and *Photoplay* (both founded 1911). In prewar Europe, however, where film personalities often came from the world of stage and dance, the phenomenon of the film star took shape more unevenly. Despite well-known cases such as Max Lindner, Asta Nielsen, and Henny Porten, it was only after World War I, when European film markets came under the influence (direct or indirect) of Hollywood models, that a culture of stars—supported by the new cinéphilic magazines—fully emerged. Within this context, European magazine editors could draw on a thriving tradition of filmic contests in order to help initiate readers into a star-centered approach to film, since their American counterparts had already developed an entire repertoire of participatory rubrics. Part of what film puzzles offered, then, was a technique to help naturalize the organization of film culture around stars (often still referred to as “artists”), to train readers in the visual recognition of important personalities, but also to negotiate the boundaries of emerging national cinemas by valorizing “vernacular” stars alongside their international counterparts.

But if they reflected the new demands of the star system, such puzzle contests also had a lot to do with the increasing presence of inexpensive photographic reproductions and the corresponding changes in attitude toward photography. Photographs were, of course, central to the star system from the beginning, and early magazines such as *Motion Picture Story Magazine* and the British *Pictures and the Picturegoer* were created not least of all as forums for publishing, trading, and selling star photographs, the latter often in high-quality reproductions such as photogravure. The integration of photographs into puzzle contests took longer, likely because publishers at first followed a well-established magazine tradition of text-based and hand-drawn puzzles such as rebuses, riddles, and ciphers. Early puzzles printed in *Motion Picture Story Magazine*, for example, challenged readers to rearrange the letters of telegram messages to reveal the names of “popular players.” There were also numerous drawn puzzles in the rebus tradition, such as a series of “Actors Name Puzzles” published by *Photoplay* or a 1915 “Screened Stars” competition printed in *Pictures and the Picturegoer* (fig. 6). Only later did the designers of puzzle contests begin to integrate and manipulate photographs in games specifically geared toward visual recognition. One of the first of these was also the precursor to Epstein’s eye puzzle, published in *Photoplay* in 1917 under the title “Can You Read Their Names in Their Eyes?” It was this model of the photographic puzzle that proliferated in the newly founded film magazines in Europe in the
Fig. 6: "Screened Stars." Contest series. (Pictures and the Picturegoer 9, no. 36 [October 9, 1915]: 38)
1920s, where editors cropped, dismembered, and rearranged photographic star portraits in ever-new variations.\footnote{31}

This playful interaction with star photos can be seen in part as a sign of the times; the 1920s was, after all, marked by myriad forms of montage in both film and photography, as changing reproduction methods rendered photographs cheaper than handmade images, and artists learned to engage with the new sense of “abundance, play and radical possibility” promoted by mass culture.\footnote{32} While the practice is most often associated with Dada and political art, new forms of photomontage were also pervasive in the magazine culture of the 1920s, such as Der Querschnitt in Germany (founded 1921) and Vu in France (founded 1928). Film magazines, likewise, grew more playful in their photo layouts throughout the 1920s.\footnote{33}

If film puzzle contests asked readers to engage in a similar kind of play, however, they did so within carefully controlled parameters, for they always operated with a view toward restoring the integrity of the photograph, at least virtually, by asking readers to fill in the missing parts or literally piece photos back together. In this sense, interwar film magazines developed a particular mixture of play and pedagogy, which also translated into a particular kind of interaction with the star photo. On the one hand, editors were willing to tear photographs apart and, in some cases, to ask their readers to do the same. A Cinémagazine contest of 1923 titled “Le puzzle cinématographique,” for instance, presented readers with jumbled fragments of ten star photos over seven issues, telling them explicitly to “cut out these fragments” and reassemble all of the star photos at the end of the series (fig. 5).\footnote{34} According to the editors, the journal received over twelve thousand submissions.\footnote{35} A similar contest initiated by Photoplay in 1924 under the title “Cut Puzzle Contest” garnered over thirty thousand submissions.\footnote{36} On the other hand, the very point of the cut puzzle contests was to reassemble the dismembered pictures, restoring the integrity and authority of the star photo. Accordingly, submissions were judged on what the editors of Cinémagazine called “the care and taste brought to the presentation of the [reassembled] portraits.”\footnote{37} Although Cinémagazine did not print photos of the winning submissions, we know from descriptions that these included presentations in photo albums with opulent binding, presentations that supplemented the star photos with signature attributes from the stars’ best-known films, and presentations of the reassembled portraits in gilded frames. Submissions for the Photoplay contest were even more lavish, with portraits sewn into pillows and lampshades, glued onto fashionable folding fans (fig. 7), arranged in gilded albums, or framed by miniature theaters. Not incidentally, high-quality star photos also figured among the frequent prizes for contests such as the Cinémagazine cut puzzle contest and the eye contest.
Winners of Photoplay’s Cut Puzzle Contest

Mrs. S. M. Farrel presents her solution to the puzzle of an elaborately made Jan made of orange and black georgette. Narrow black lace ornaments it, combined with a small wreath of colored flowers, which are placed at the base. Words are quite inadequate to describe the amount of work and care bestowed upon it. The pictures of the stars are inserted under a layer of orange georgette, and are correct in every detail.

Fig. 7: Winning entry in “Cut Puzzle Contest.” (Photoplay 25, no. 1 [January 1924]: 33)

mentioned by Epstein, where sixty-eight lucky contestants received special Cineá photo editions of Stacia Napierkowska with poetry by Jean Tedesco. In other cases, moreover, the very activity of cutting pages was discouraged, as when the editors of Cineá admonished readers who “mutilated” the pages of their journal. Here, the photograph—as well as the paper of the magazine itself—becomes the object of a negotiation between play and authority, where the encouragement of readerly participation had to coexist with the need to maintain the aura of the photograph. But if the film puzzle contest was bound up with the vicissitudes of star photographs, the phenomenon also has deeper roots in modern print culture. With the rise of mass literacy, and the concomitant proliferation of mass-produced periodicals in the nineteenth century, print, as Lisa Gitelman has put it, “came unglued,” losing some of its status as a repository of stable facts and values to become a more fugitive forum for the dissemination of ephemeral current events—a status underscored by the very periodicity of periodicals with their weekly or monthly shelflives. This shift was matched by the destabilization of reading publics themselves as public spheres multiplied and ever-new periodicals emerged to cater to new constituencies. Within this process, it would be difficult to overstate the importance of mass postal systems, whose subsidization of postal rates for periodicals beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century allowed for an explosion in magazine circulation. It is also here that we find the emergence of regular puzzles and contests, as magazines such as Good Housekeeping (founded 1885) in the United States, Daheim (founded 1864) in Germany, or La petite revue (founded 1882) in France
took advantage of cheaper postal rates to spur on readerly interactions with publishers and each other.\textsuperscript{42} Magazine editors, of course, weren't the only ones to use contests (even if the latter were generally published \textit{in} magazines). More broadly, contests came to form a key technique of modern advertising from the late nineteenth century onward, where they allowed newly minted brands to vie for consumer loyalty by forging a sense of shared community.\textsuperscript{43} As early as 1887, companies such as Schultz's Star Soap published rebus puzzles with prizes for successful solutions, while other companies challenged customers to submit verses for their advertisements.\textsuperscript{44} For magazines themselves, similarly, contests offered a means of managing the increasing competition for loyal readers (not least of all, by frequently limiting contest participation to subscribers). In this sense, contests also undergirded the very function of the modern magazine as a medium for forging readerly communities. Not only were readers engaging in the ritual of simultaneous reading, they were also playing the same games on the same schedule. Like the serialized novel, the serialized contest served to underscore this sense of shared participation over time, while adding a playful element of interactive participation by mail.\textsuperscript{45}

All of these functions came to inform the proliferation of puzzle contests in the film magazines of the 1920s. If contests promised to help the new and often precarious film magazines secure and maintain subscribers,\textsuperscript{46} they also helped to promote a sense of community through their promotion of a shared knowledge, a shared passion, and a shared focus on current events. Many—if not most—of the puzzle competitions were presented as \textit{series}; the eye contest admired by Epstein, for example, appeared in four installments (each containing ten cropped photos) from late 1922 to 1923, and one could cite many other examples.\textsuperscript{47} While some of these series were more meticulously planned in advance than others, nearly all of them followed—and emphasized—the rhythm of the magazine's publication, announcing themselves as "another" puzzle contest or "the latest" puzzle contest. Challenging readers to draw on their moviegoing knowledge, these contests positioned readers as part of a community of impassioned and up-to-date moviegoers, who had amassed—or should amass—a mental repertoire of shared film experience analogous to the collections of actor photos.

\textbf{PLAY AND FILMIC EDUCATION}

In this sense, such games conform well to one of the two great categories of play that Roger Caillois, in his well-known typology, termed "ludus." For Caillois, forms of play could be located on "a continuum between two opposite poles."\textsuperscript{48} While one pole, which he called "paidia," encompassed various forms of child's
play with its anarchical pleasure in undoing order, the other—ludic—pole was associated with processes of "training": the acquisition of skills, the formation of habits, and the solidification of shared rules and values. For Caillois, ludic forms of play had an eminently pedagogical function, contributing at once to the "disciplining" of individuals and the "civilizing" of humanity. Not insignificantly, he saw the ludic tendency embodied most fully in his own time by the kinds of skill-based puzzles that had come to populate the pages of print media since the nineteenth century, such as rebuses, crosswords, and anagrams, and "those contests such as newspapers organize on occasion."

The puzzle contests adopted by film magazines were clearly part of this ludic tradition, and seen in this light, they reveal a more serious form of cinephilic play. They represented one component within a larger program shared by the new movie magazines, all of which called on readers to organize film knowledge and invest film affect around celebrities. More often than not, this meant actors, but it could also include great directors, cameramen, scriptwriters, and so on. In this, the contests resonated with other participatory features that film magazines inherited from the nineteenth-century forerunners, such as the ubiquitous letter columns, in which readers could demonstrate both their knowledge and love of film personalities. Where Christophe Gauthier speaks of "mass cinephilia," we might also borrow a key term from the time to describe this as the production of the ami du cinéma, the Filmfreund or "film friend," whose affective adherence to the emerging institutional film culture was crucial to that culture's future.

From the point of view of an emerging critical film theory, it was easy to write off such reader activity as a form of ideological manipulation. Siegfried Kracauer, for example, in a scathing discussion of the magazine Filmwelt written at the height of the Great Depression, argued that conventions such as fan letter columns were creating an acquiescent public of dreaming sleepwalkers, distracted from urgent political questions by the illusory promise of participation in the lives of the flickering heavenly bodies above. With its utterly trivial questions concerning the habits and preferences of stars, such pseudoparticipation fabricates a marvelous world on high, full of princes and princesses, and from now on the ignorant will mistake appearance for reality and gaze as though intoxicated at the fairy world above. They will thus be made useless and distracted from a struggle that could actually help them achieve better conditions of existence. But the correct task, which film too ought to share, is precisely not to mesmerize them into sleep, but rather to awaken them from their spell.
This image of the “mesmerized” spectator would go on to form a mainstay of ideological film critique well into the era of apparatus theory and beyond. From our current standpoint in the age of participation, however, such a write-off of spectatorial activity begs for reconsideration. For one thing, audience activities were hardly limited to letter writing or even puzzle solving. In addition to the ubiquitous voting contests and title contests, most magazines also included more critical rubrics, such as The Picturegoer columns “What Do You Think?” and “Pulling Pictures to Pieces,” which invited every reader to be a film critic (fig. 8). Readers were also enjoined to take part in film in many other ways. Most publications tapped into a long-standing tradition of beauty contests to place readers in front of the camera through screen aptitude tests or—as they were often called in the pages of French and Italian journals—“photogénie” contests. Other contests invited readers to emulate the work of industry professionals by, for example, designing movie posters for important films (fig. 9), submitting screenplays testing their directorial skills, or showing their screen-acting abilities. Still other contests, in what might be seen as a forerunner to current forms of participatory cinema, called for collaborative productions of screenplays. In addition, most magazines encouraged readers to practice forms of amateur cinema and photography and ran contests to feature readers’ work. In short, film magazines quite consciously used interactive games to allow spectators to take part in cinema, if only within well-defined limits. In this sense, the pages of the magazine offered readers a very different media experience from the darkened space of the movie theater, which—partly due to the cinephilic education at work in these journals—was increasingly associated with audience pacification. This is not to argue that audiences were ever really immobilized following the institutionalization of modern movie theaters. Given recent research into nontheatrical modes of cinema in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as studies emphasizing the haptic dimensions of film spectatorship in the classical period, few today would see Baudry’s “standard apparatus” of darkened theater, frontal seating, and sensory reduction as the only model of cinema in the interwar period. Nonetheless, even historians of filmic interactivity acknowledge that the kinds of bodily and vocal interaction characteristic of attractions cinema (and lampooned in films such as Edwin S. Porter’s Uncle Josh at the Picture Show [1902]) were later curtailed in the process of institutionalization, as theaters discouraged what Wanda Strauven has called the “player mode” of pre- and early cinema spectatorship. Occasionally, postwar filmmakers did produce explicitly “interactive” films, such as Paul Leni and Guido Seeber’s Rebus films, a serial collection of filmic crossword puzzles made from 1925 to 1927, which audiences solved on puzzle cards handed out with tickets. These films harken back to the pre–World War I
In the Spring the young fan's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of Rudy—or so it would appear by the state of my mail-bag. The Ants are flourishing because "Tell 'em the Old, he won the Popular Film Lover Contest;" and the Dyed-in-the-Wool Valentino worshippers are exultant over it in seven to ten page effusions. They are perfectly beautiful epistles, all of them, but, my dear Miss Terri, I cannot fill this page with your eulogies and disparagements, Rudolph. I cannot think of something else besides the "Brick-bats and Bouquets" for our more delicate susceptibilities were praised and commended. Captain Blood came under the heading of: "Commended with Reservations."

Here's the paragraph—"Tons and of costume weighing down a thrilling tale by Rafael Sabatini. J. Warren Kerrigan and Jean Paige wearing clothes to the manner of old songs with pictures, the rest of the cast supplying action and thrills."

"What funny people Americans are. The other day I picked up an American film magazine and glanced down the filmgoers guide. All the pictures do not turn out as "Differ. But—musty or too strong for our filmgoers. They were praised and commended. Captain Blood came under the heading of: "Commended with Reservations."

"Now to our English minds, Kerrigan lacked nothing, he fitted the role wore his costumes and manners correct to period, plus the dignity which we make fun of it and brag about the great open spaces of America where men are men."

"This is what I think," confides Picture Lover (London). "We all want to see our British Film Industry win through. Well, I would like to say my little piece. I don't think our films come up to the American standard yet, although I must admit I've seen some very good ones. They never seem to have the same extravagance, don't care a—yes, you say it—for the expense look about the American movies? I find it in so many of the current releases and I don't like it. It makes the movies more artificial than ever. What do you think?"

"As an ardent fan and a painstaking peruser of every screen magazine that I can afford to buy, I know all about the limitations of movie stars as to "effects" with which present-day films are presented, add to the pleasure of the entertainment, and I have come to the conclusion that in America they do not," writes R. M. P. (Kent)."
Fig. 9: Winning entries in poster contest. (Cinéa, nos. 69–70 [September 1922]: n.p.)
“Preisrätselfilme” (prize puzzle films) of Joe May and others, in which audiences were asked to participate in tracking down a fictional criminal, and both prewar and postwar forms of the puzzle film can be understood as efforts to remediate print genres for the animated screen: from the interactive detective contests of turn-of-the-century newspapers to the vogue for crossword puzzles that hit German magazines (including film magazines) in 1925. Such puzzle films could be seen as part of a long history of interactive cinema—stretching from nineteenth-century optical toys down to the contemporary vogue of mind-game films and fan reworkings—that also included early versions of the shooting gallery and popular instructional films such as Franz Wolfgang Koebner’s 1000 Schritte Charleston (1000 Charleston Steps, 1926), where audiences danced in their seats along with the representations on the screen. By the 1920s, however, such interactivity had become carefully regulated, in particular by being confined to short films in the preliminary program. On the whole, feature-film spectatorship was marked by the kinds of disciplining efforts noted above in Vous avez la parole. As Strauven puts it, the new cinema screen of the 1920s was a screen “that protects the apparatus from the touching hand, creates a safe distance between the view and the viewer, and thus acts as ‘shield.’”

If physical interaction was increasingly curtailed in movie theaters, however, spectators found another outlet for interacting with film culture in print magazines, which promised—as the title of a regular column for the Picturegoer had it—to take readers “behind the screen”: to unveil the secrets of the film industry, reveal the lives of stars, and allow readers to take part in film culture in myriad ways. This participatory promise, as it played out across a range of “high” and “low” publications, formed a crucial site for the emergence of a cinephilic public. Here, readers could learn, through a playful form of embodied pedagogy, to generate and govern investments of affect, to frame the kinds of film knowledge worthy of cultivating, and to see themselves as part of a community of “film friends” with its shared rituals and protocols.

CASE STUDY: MEIN FILM

To elucidate the stakes of this participatory education more fully, the remainder of this article examines how puzzles intersected with broader forms of participatory cinephilia in a specific example: the Viennese journal Mein Film. Founded in 1926 by the theater critic turned film aficionado Friedrich Porges, Mein Film, which was distributed throughout the former Austro-Hungarian empire as well as in Germany and the United States, would go on to become one of the longest-running film magazines in Austria. In founding Vienna’s most elaborate film magazine to date, Porges clearly sought to legitimate cinema in a cultural context still dominated by the theater. Against this background,
the magazine’s central mission was to impart what the editors referred to as “Filmbildung” (film education) to a broader public. More aptly, as we learn in an article under this title signed by a certain Hugo, they sought to make cinephilic education an integral component of that “general education,” which “is a requirement for a cultured person.”

Like its theatrical counterpart, the editors argued, film knowledge—including “familiarity with geniuses of acting or directing [...], recognition of films that are already ‘classics’ and will go on to become milestones in film history, knowledge of the ABCs of film technique”—should be a self-evident part of everyone’s repertoire of knowledge. To this end, the magazine ran, in addition to countless pieces on stars and industry personalities, weekly columns with titles such as “Wie ein Film entsteht” (How a Film Is Made), “Kunst und Technik des Films” (Film Technology and Art), and “Wie es gemacht wird” (How It Is Made), which sought to educate readers in various aspects of film techniques, film history, and film appreciation. There were also numerous articles designed to teach readers how to watch a film, what to look for, and—in a gesture that Epstein surely would have appreciated—how to single out details such as hands, clothing, hairstyles, landscapes, automobiles, or the movements of actors’ feet. In addition, the journal published a yearly book, the Mein Film-Buch (fig. 10), with short pieces on topics including the history of cinema technology (which the editors traced back to ancient shadow play), national studios and industries in Central Europe and the United States, and various aspects of filmmaking explained by luminaries of German cinema, alongside numerous photos of stars, directors, and producers.

Here again, however, the education of the “film friend” was never conceived in terms of passive absorption, but relied above all on activities and interactivities such as photo and autograph collecting, letter writing, collaborating, voting, and entering dozens of puzzle contests. From the first page of
the first issue, the journal presented itself as a forum for ludic play. The cover page featured a montage of star photos with the caption "Welche und wieviele Filmstars in ihren neuesten Rollen erkennen Sie auf diesem Bild? Sagen Sie es uns!" (Which and how many film stars in their latest roles can you recognize in this image? Tell us!) (fig. 11). In subsequent issues, these puzzles only became more creative. In addition to the familiar eye puzzle, readers encountered "film stars in pieces" ("Filmstars in Stücken"), which they had to reassemble (fig. 12);87 "stars who have lost their heads" ("Stars, die den Kopf verloren haben"), which they had to identify from the truncated bodies;88 composite montages mixing the faces of one star and the signature "masks" (hair and headdress) of another, which readers had to disentangle (fig. 13);89 heads glued onto the wrong bodies, which they had to put back in their respective places (fig. 14);90 massive photomontages reminiscent of Hannah Höch, which asked them to identify as many stars as possible;91 cut jigsaw puzzles, which readers had to piece together to identify the film and actors;92 famous film scenes with the actors silhouetted, which "most of our readers will surely remember having seen in the cinema";93 and many others.94 Such contests, which saw their heyday in the late 1920s and early 1930s, formed part of a thoroughgoing participatory agenda in Mein Film, centered on the adulation of stars.95 Beginning in 1929, the contests would be subsumed under the rubric "Filmstars beschenken unsere Leser" (Film stars offer gifts to our readers), in which famous actors, who also formed the objects of the puzzles, would offer a gift from among their personal possessions to the winning reader: a signed copy of Büchner’s Wozzeck from Olga Chekhova,96 a chess game from Gustav Fröhlich,97 a George Romney painting of Lady Hamilton from Leni Riefenstahl,98 an engraved golden bracelet from Willy Forst,99 and so on.

In this way, contests—and the gift exchanges that they helped to institute—contributed to one of the magazine’s implicit promises to readers: to restore a sense of personal interaction between audiences and film stars. As the introduction to the magazine’s first popularity contest suggests, the editors explicitly understood the movie magazine as a forum that could compensate for the lack of bodily interaction within the movie theater:

In the cinema, no one would dare risk the embarrassment of erupting into shouts of "Bravo Paul Richter!," "Bravo Henny!," or "Bravo Fairbanks!" Still, the tongue so longs to overflow with the joys that fill the heart. Or, as one of our most cherished idealists sang: "I want to carve it into every piece of bark, to scrawl it into every gravel pathway—and I long to write it on every blank piece of paper."
Welche und wie viele Filmstars in ihren neuesten Rollen erkennen Sie auf diesem Bild? Sagen Sie es uns! . . .

Fig. 11: Mein Film, no. 1 (1926), cover page
Wir stellen unseren Lesern einzigartige und lösungsreiche Prämienfunde, für deren richtige Lösung wir ebenfalls wertvolle Preise ausgesetzt haben.

In den „Zerlegten“ der aktiven Stars sind diese Photografien in eine Kombination gestellt, die den Namen des betreffenden Stars aufweist. Die Zahlen dieser gleichen bei allen Verwirrungsveranstaltungen so verlangt, werden von den von uns gespielten Vorderkanten der in Stücke geschnittenen, die beiden jedoch auf das bestimmte, doch zu unseren Lesern gelangt, die nie der richtige Person zu bleiben. Am besten ist es, die richtigen Gesichts- und Gegenstände zusammenzuschalten und zuerst auszumessen. Es ergibt sich auf diese Art sicherlich sehr interne Kombinationen. Die Entfernung der Lösungen hat sich zu erfolgen, daß die Anzahl der zusammengelegten Gesichtsparten mit dem Namen des betreffenden Stars zu zweit werden können. (Das Beispiel 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.)

Für die richtigen Lösungen haben wir folgende Preise ausgesetzt:

1. Preis: 50 Schilling bar,
2. Preis: 3 Porträttaufnahmen,

Für „Die Einberufung“ haben wir die drei Preispreise in Form von je sechs Künstlerkarten von Filmstars ausgesetzt.


Fig. 12: “Filmstars in Stücken.” Contest. (Mein Film, no. 25 [1926]: vii)
Sind sie es? - Oder sind sie es nicht?

Daher beschworren sich die Filmstars selbst: daß man sie "typisiert" hat und daß sie eigentlich immer nur gleichermaßen Rollen spielen, und zwar die tatsächlich gewählten Typen verkörpern dürfen. Die Roulade, die mit ihrer ersten "Naive" Rolle Erfolg errang, und im Film die blonde Ursache führte, die zu dem Schmalen und zivilen Verbrechen war. Der ernste Charakterdarsteller, der Typenvertreter des Boulevard, muß eine "Rote Barone" sein und dem Bechnitt schenken, ja, es diene ihm die Herzensbeleidigung zu empfinden. Die zwei Bilder, die wir hier veröffentlichen, sind ein Protest gegen die Typisierung. Wir, von "Mein Film"-Gnadens, haben – wenigstens, was die Masken betrifft – von den populären Filmstars die Rolle verdächtig, die sie sonst nicht spielen dürften.

In der kommenden Nummer 105 von "Mein Film", veröffentlichen wir zwei weitere derartige Bilder.

Und ihr, verehrte Leserinnen und Leser, auch erfreut, welche Star sich unter den ungewohnten Masken verbergen!

Wer nach Nummer 105 alle vier Lösungen kennt, kommt in die Räume der Preisverleihung, unter denen das Los entdeckt. Wir setzen Ihnen eine Prämie für die richtige Lösung aus:

1. Preis: Eine Groß-Film-Preisaufnahme von 6 Meter Länge bei Pietschner-Payer.
2. Preis: Eine Große-Film-Preisaufnahme bei Pietschner-Payer.
3. Preis: Originalfotos Werke in 5 Blättern.


Brief an den Herausgeber

Von Olga Tschechowa

Sehr geehrter Herr Porperv!

Aus London, wo ich sechs Monate gelebt habe, sende ich Ihnen und Ihren lieben Leserinnen und Lesern die herzlichsten Grüße und Weihnachtsgrüße. Ich habe seit meiner Rückkehr in London lebhafte Flirtbewegungen. Da können Sie sich vorstellen, mit welch kindlicher Freude freute ich jetzt meinen lieben Ufern...
Die besten. Ich allein konnte nicht mehr weiter und konnte mich absolut nicht mehr aus. Ich will natürlich meine Dankbarkeit geradezu erwähnen und habe dafür für die Personen, die in der Lage sind, mir aus meiner Verleumdung zu helfen, respektive stärkeren Bilder zu retouren, unverbindliche vereinbarungen getroffen, einige Preise gesetzt.

Als 2. Preis: Das oben erwähnte "Mein Film-Buch" 1928.
Als 5. Preis: 10 Künstlerpostkarten.

Ihr verfertigt mit geeignetem ans passenden Menschenliebe aus Freude an allem, was mit Film zu tun hat, helfen, doch wird es nach etwas anpassen sein, nach noch diese Bedingungen für eure Arbeit, die nur die meisten erleichtern soll zu erhalten.

Also, zeigt was ihr könnt, und zeigt auch, das ihr bereit seid, einen armem, unschuldigen im Eifer geratenen Mann zu helfen. Die Einwendungen sind, mit dem Kennwort "Bilderedakteur" verarbeitet, an die Redaktion unseren Briefen, bis langstens 20. d. M. zu richten.

Der unglückselige Bilderedakteur.

Obenauf: Wer geht es, der macht sich ans Besorgen auf der Bilderedakteur-Postkarte? (Mein Film, no. 107 [1928]: 6

Fig. 14: "Wer hilft mir?" Contest. (Mein Film, no. 107 [1928]: 6)
It is here, with this blank piece of paper, that the magazine *Mein Film* comes in, to create a kind of “substitute realm” for its enthusiastic readers to express their applause.100 If readers could no longer vocalize their appreciation in the impersonal theater, they could at least write that appreciation in the pages of the magazine (also through fan letters, which the magazine dutifully modeled for readers).101

But while fan activities like this were key to the magazine’s mission, they were only one small part of a broader program. *Mein Film* allowed readers to collaborate on film scripts,102 submit caricatures of film stars,103 and engage in numerous other forms of participation. For example, one serial installment entitled “The ABCs of Film” (Das A-B-C des Films) consisted entirely of humorous couplets submitted by readers and selected by the editors for publication. The only rule was that “the verses should combine the name of a star with that of another star or with a film concept.”104 In another contest, variants of which could be found in other magazines, the editors published film stills and asked readers to place their film knowledge on display by imagining the wittiest subtitles.105 The results of such contests would surely have provided ample fodder for a critic like Kracauer. (One lucky participant in the rhyming contest, for example, submitted the lines: “Conrad Veidt wirkt sehr dämonisch, Buster Keaton ist recht komisch” [Conrad Veidt can be demonic, Buster Keaton very comic].)106 But however banal the content of readers’ submissions might have been, the point of the game resided elsewhere: namely, in the very gesture of participating in film culture by putting one’s film knowledge on display through witty contributions. The “ABCs of Film” column began with the sentence: “Here, too, we require the collaboration of our readers” (Auch dazu brauchen wir die Mitarbeit unserer Leserinnen und Leser), and the heading wasn’t mere pretense; the mission to legitimize a cinephilic culture in Vienna required the participation of readers—lots of readers, who demonstrated their passion for cinema by writing verses, solving puzzles, and taking part in film photo contests.

The journal’s participatory agenda was undergirded by the founding of a film club, the Kinogemeinde or “film community,” also known as the Association of Film Friends (Vereinigung der Filmfreunde), in November 1926 (fig. 15). The club was launched amid a controversy of sorts, following an embarrassing publicity event in Vienna with Conrad Veidt to which, apparently, no one showed up. Information on the “Veidt affair,” as it was known, is scarce, but Porges charged that it had been organized by “enemies of cinema” led by a former “Claquechef” (paid applauder in the theater) with the intention of embarrassing the film world.107 Against this background, Porges and his entourage sought to found an association that would elevate film’s status in relation to theater. In a report
on the occasion of the group's founding published in Mein Film, secretary Karl Tanner outlined the plans for the association as follows:

a. Biweekly film screenings. These should consist of cultural films (Kulturfilme), films that for whatever reason cannot be seen in cinemas, or rescreenings of valuable, artistic films that have disappeared from the cinema programs.

b. Practical and theoretical courses on film art and film technology, as well as excursions to film studios.

c. Lectures on relevant topics.

d. Entertaining events, when possible with the participation of prominent film artists.¹⁰⁸

To judge by subsequent reports in the magazine, the Kinogemeinde delivered on its promise; from its initial base at the Kosmos-Kino—a specialty cinema that ran both commercial and educational films¹⁰⁹—the group organized regular
meetings, educational screenings (including Porges’s own series of short educational films Der Film im Film, 1923–24), illustrated lectures, film discussions, and tours of laboratories and studios such as Sascha-Film.\footnote{110}

In these activities, the Kinogemeinde might have taken a page from existing ciné-clubs in France.\footnote{111} But the Viennese film club could also find a more immediate model in Vienna’s main interwar theater club, the Theatergemeinde (theater community) established in 1919.\footnote{112} And indeed, despite the group’s explicit rivalry with the theater, there was something profoundly theatrical and particularly Austrian about the Kinogemeinde’s events, which also included numerous musical evenings with lieder, chansons, and jazz performances; dances both traditional and modern; and masked balls and costume parties, in which participants dressed up as their favorite film stars.\footnote{113} Often such festive occasions were combined with contests, as when a 1931 costume ball included awards for members who best resembled their chosen star.\footnote{114} There were also carnival celebrations in February, and in the summer months, the group organized informal excursions to the countryside or trips down the Danube by steamship, where members could socialize, play music, or practice amateur photography (fig. 16).\footnote{115} Given this integration of local and seasonal traditions, one could say that the Kinogemeinde constituted a kind of “vernacular” ciné-club in Miriam Hansen’s sense, where the “serious” film-aesthetic education blended with more familiar local forms of sociability.\footnote{116} This blend was embodied quite literally by what came to be known as “bunter Abend” (colorful evening), a kind of participatory cabaret, where dancing and performances alternated with film lectures, poetry recitations, and discussions.\footnote{117} It also blended play and pedagogy, providing a communal forum where members could engage in both serious and ludic activities: asking questions, dressing up, dancing, showing their work, and displaying filmic wit. In addition, the association and the journal heavily encouraged amateur filmmaking. The Kinogemeinde established a “Section for Amateur Photographers and Filmmakers” in 1927, led by Karl Kotlik, who also edited a regular column in Mein Film titled “Der Film-Photo Amateur,” offering advice on such topics as what cameras to purchase, how to shoot and edit, tips for scenarios, acting, lighting, and so on.\footnote{118} In late 1926, one article could claim that half of Paris and Vienna had now succumbed to “Drehfieber” or “cranking fever” as laymen and—in particular—lay women acquired Pathé Baby cameras and turned the crank for themselves.\footnote{119} “In place of the children, young ladies, and young students who could once be seen armed with a Kodak, people soon appeared at every interesting spot with their little three-legged, hand-cranked cameras.” Like other participatory forms encouraged by the magazine, amateur film here appears as a way for readers to take part in film, albeit within certain limited
Der zweite Kinogemeinde-Ausflug


Fig. 16: Kinogemeinde, excursion to Vienna Woods. (Mein Film, no. 80 [1927]: 15)

parameters ("if not exactly the genuine business of big-budget films, then at least its little brother, amateur film").

All of this suggests that the editors of Mein Film understood the reader’s film education as an embodied experience, one that implicated the hands, the voice, the body, and the senses in a performative acquisition of admission into a cinephilic community. And in this sense, the positioning of readers in these magazines went far beyond the ideological distraction decried by Kracauer. Adapting Walter Benjamin’s terminology, we might better understand it as a project to create a public of lay “experts,” a hands-on audience who could overcome the “shield” of the movie screen, get close to film, communicate with its stars, learn its secrets, practice it, and even judge it. And yet, this education was cinephilic through and through, encouraging readers as it did to love film art and to share that love with others.
Precisely this interplay of knowing and loving was evident in a 1928 article entitled "Was ist Filmillusion?" (What Is Film Illusion?). There, the editors defended the journal against industry charges that film magazines deflated the pleasures of moviegoing by taking readers behind the scenes. True, they wrote, magazine readers might know all the technical secrets of cinema: that the scenery consisted only of the barest facades or magnified Schüfftan models, or that "the terrible snowstorm in which [the heroine] is about to die is really only salt and baking soda." Indeed, they added, in language remarkably prescient of apparatus theory, audiences know well that "everything the spectator experiences at the moment of viewing (buildings, landscapes, people, and objects) is nothing more than flickering light and shadow on a white screen, which disappears without a trace the instant the beam of light is extinguished." And still, the article concludes, when we sit in the darkened theater, we dream with the film: "We laugh and cry and fear and hope and tremble and rejoice." In many ways, such an argument portends later analyses of film fetishism ("I know very well, but all the same . . ."). Yet, rather than try to "disengage the cinema-object from the imaginary and win it for the symbolic," as Christian Metz's oft-cited phrase would have it, the editors of Mein Film celebrate the persistence of those illusions that Kracauer held in suspicion. Indeed, this was the very definition of the magazine's cinephilia. "For film is like love," the article concludes. "We know exactly how much or how little is behind it. And yet our illusions will never disappear."

Still, in trying to understand the kind of cinephilia represented by these magazines, we should not underestimate the pleasures of knowing that they also modeled for readers again and again: the interactions with film technology and aesthetics, the look "behind the screen," the unveiling of technical secrets, as well as the lives of film stars. The cinephilia of Mein Film was about both love and knowledge; more precisely, it sought to maintain both poles in a particular equilibrium, teaching readers to manage both through interactive practices that would help sustain the newly promoted passion for cinema. Taking another cue from the magazines themselves, we might describe this as a culture of the amateur in the broadest sense of the term: a public of cinema lovers who would also be hands-on dabblers and players, who would find in the space of the magazine a forum for interacting with film culture in a way increasingly discouraged within the silent space of the movie theater.

The figure of the amateur has returned to the forefront in writing on cinephilia today. In one of the most frequently cited discussions of the topic, Jacques Rancière has proposed the phrase "politique de l'amateur" (a variation on Truffaut's "politique des auteurs") to outline a position that "challenges the authority of specialists" and acknowledges "that everyone
is justified to trace, between certain points of this topography, a singular path that contributes to cinema as a world and to its knowledge." For critics like Shambu, this revalorization of amateur knowledge, epitomized by savvy Internet users, contains an "anti-hierarchical thrust" that provides a counterpoint to the institutional strictures of academic film studies and ultimately promises to "weaken the barriers between the two worlds." But despite the similarity in terms, it is important to see how the amateurism of 1920s cinephilia was part of a different dynamic. While allowing readers to take part in film, these magazines also enfolded that participation into an educational project, teaching audiences both to love film and to organize film knowledge around emerging categories. Whereas Rancière's politics of the amateur seeks to intervene in a context where film studies has already been institutionalized as an academic discipline, the amateur politics of early film magazines was part of the project to institutionalize film culture in the first place. Whereas Rancière's amateurism stands opposed to claims of theoretical expertise, the amateurism of the 1920s promised to help audiences acquire a certain expertise (however amateur), which would shape their approach to cinema and inform their love for it.

To be sure, such an acquisition, and the film education that undergirded it, could easily be seen as part of a process of disciplining audiences. And yet, that concept cannot quite account for the kinds of self-cultivation being elaborated in print publications such as Mein Film. A better approach might draw on Foucault's later writings on the "care of the self": those practices of self-management that, according to Foucault's well-known reading, constituted the irreducible performative basis of ancient philosophy in its efforts to "know" the self. Of course, the communities of "film friends" promoted by magazines like Mein Film were hardly engaged in ascetic rituals or (for the most part) philosophical pursuits. But these journals did elaborate certain practices through which audiences could learn to manage their own experience of film. If these involved puzzle contests and the social activities of groups such as the Kinogemeinde, they also encompassed activities more reminiscent of spiritual exercises. For example, the yearly Mein-Film books included a "Film-Tagebuch" (film diary), in which readers were asked to keep a record of all the films they saw in a single year with stars, directors, and personal notes. "If the hours spent in the cinema brought you experiences, record those experiences here. Every film friend who carefully maintains this diary throughout the year will have a lovely and durable book of memories!" The film diary and its particular brand of ars memoria suggests, once again, that cinephile experience is never spontaneous but always bound up with practices: in this case acts of writing down, operations of mental collecting, and techniques of recollection.
As Shambu reminds us, cinephilia has always depended heavily on writing as an aid to memory, especially in prevideo eras when storing and replaying films was beyond the purview of most audience members. Cinephilia is never simply a transparent record of a fixed film text; rather, it is the cumulative result of performative iterations, changing over time like a "palimpsest" as cinephiles read about films and revisit them in their minds. Shifting the question slightly, I would emphasize here that such memories were (and are) intended to be shared, providing models of experience for other filmgoers. For its part, *Mein Film* encouraged such sharing through participatory rubrics such as "Mein erster Kinobesuch" (My first time in a cinema), in which readers were asked to send in memories of their first trip to a cinema, and "Mein größtes Filmerlebnis" (My greatest film experience), in which they were invited to share their most memorable aesthetic experience before a screen. Many submissions recounted life-changing moments akin to religious conversions. For example, one reader described his first trip to the cinema to watch Fritz Lang's *Die Nibelungen* with a school group:

The school instructed us to go see the newly released *Nibelungen* film. I reluctantly followed the order, annoyed by such an affront to my taste.

And then . . .

Every artistic experience makes a deep impression on the mind of a fifteen-year-old boy, but this one left me completely overwhelmed and utterly transformed. Siegfried's ideal appearance aroused an indescribable enthusiasm within me: I felt with him; I shared his joy; I fought by his side; and—a fact that I'm not ashamed to admit here—I shed warm tears after his horrible death. [ . . . ] Since then, I have succumbed with heart and soul to the dreamland of film, that ideal and limitless world of fairy tales. And I am a believer—forever.

Other readers were more analytical. In a letter reprinted in "Mein größtes Filmerlebnis," for example, one man described his memory of a shot from the Asta Nielsen film *Dirnttragödie* (Tragedy of a Prostitute, 1927), in which the eponymous prostitute, who had finally saved enough money to purchase a shop that would lift her out of her abject poverty, raised her head in pride only to bump it on the oppressive staircase of her shabby tenement building: "This little nuance contained the entire tragedy of the aging prostitute. She can no longer escape her destiny. She will never be able to hold her head up proudly and optimistically, for her past weighs too heavy upon her, pressing her down into the filth and misery of the street." While the magazine editors could describe these
columns as aids to memory. They clearly also stood as stimulants and models of film experience. Another letter writer in the “Mein größtes Filmerlebnis” contest described how a particular scene from *Die Nibelungen* (Etzel’s astonished reaction upon seeing Kriemhild for the first time) took on all the more significance for him after he subsequently read Lang’s account of the ways in which film could convey inner feelings without words. Reading readers’ accounts of their own experiences today, one can’t help wondering whether such accounts themselves didn’t similarly help to reshape the memory of other readers who had seen the same films, so that here too memory operated on a palimpsestic principle, as one’s “experience” of a given film was supplemented by encounters with other memories in the pages of the film magazine.

Rubrics such as the “Mein größtes Filmerlebnis” and the film diary suggest that the film education promoted by *Mein Film* might best be understood as a set of blueprints for work on the self, where the management of film knowledge and film affect according to certain shared conventions formed the basis for the acquisition of a cinephilic sense of self, one inseparable from the sense of belonging to a shared cinephilic community. In this, such rituals form part of a much broader set of techniques of participation that accompanied the institutionalization of cinema in Europe, which found their point of density in the film magazine and its associated ciné-club. While it would surely be a mistake to celebrate such techniques uncritically as evidence of audience agency, we should also avoid reducing them to mere ideological manipulation. Rather, what *Mein Film* offered—and what its readers signed on to—were models for participating in a new cinephilic culture, models that provided immense pleasures even as they undergirded the institutionalization of a star-centered system of film in interwar Austria.

Picture puzzles played a role in this process. And while Epstein might have understood the function of those puzzles differently from the editors of *Cinéa*, he nonetheless shared their sense that such games could help to induce certain shared ways of seeing and experiencing the image. If they could be harnessed to buttress the star system, they could also, as Epstein intuited, help to generate moments of excess enjoyment. In either case, however, the resulting experience, although modeled by the industry, always also required the work of readers. On this negotiated terrain, popular magazines such as *Mein Film* laid the foundation for a type of cinephilic self-cultivation, whose influence would be felt for decades to come, and whose future is still playing out today across the screens and platforms of our own participatory media.
APPENDIX OF JOURNALS REFERENCED

Many of the journals discussed in this article have been digitized at least in part. The following list provides some online sources for salient titles. Each entry includes the years of the magazine (where known) and the years covered by online sources to the best of my knowledge. For titles not available online or those with only very limited availability, I have provided the names of relevant national libraries or cinematheques. Digitization of European journals is still highly uneven, and not all issues are available each year in online archives. In most cases, digitization projects have not included publications around journals such as supplements, yearbooks, and almanacs.

**Cinéa—Ciné pour tous** (1921–32)
- Media History Digital Library (1921–23): www.mediahistoryproject.org
- Bibliothèque Nationale Française

**Cinema illustrazione** (1926–?)

**Cinemagazine** (1921–35)

**Der Filmfreund** (1924–26)
- Deutsche Kinemathek (Berlin)

**Film-Magazin** (1927–30)
- Media History Digital Library (1929): www.mediahistoryproject.org
- Virtual History (1928): http://www.virtual-history.com/movie/magazine
- Deutsche Kinemathek, Berlin

**Filmwelt** (1929–49)
- Media History Digital Library (1929): www.mediahistoryproject.org
Der Kinematograph (1907–35)
- Media History Digital Library (1907–8): www.medialhistoryproject.org
- Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin

Lichtbildbühne (1908–40)
- Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin

Mein Film (1926–39, 1945–57)
- Austrian Newspapers Online (1926–39): anno.onb.ac.at

Mon ciné (1922–37)
- Bibliothèque Nationale Française

Mon film (1924–67)
- Bibliothèque Nationale Française

Motion Picture Story Magazine / Motion Picture Magazine (1911–77)
- Media History Digital Library (1914–41): http://medialhistoryproject.org/

Photoplay (1911–80)

The Picturegoer / Pictures and the Picturegoer (1913–60)
- Media History Digital Library (1915–16, 1921–25, selected issues): http://medialhistoryproject.org
- British Film Institute

Der Querschnitt (1921–36)
- Illustrierte Magazine der klassischen Moderne: http://magazine.illustrierte-presse.de/

Vous avez la parole (1924–26)
- Bibliothèque Nationale Française
Notes


2. Thus, Shambu emphasizes "the centrality of the role of conversation to cinephilic life: how to initiate it, cultivate it, practice it in many forms both spoken and written, and sustain it by constructing institutional structures such as clubs, organizations, journals, magazines and communities" (Shambu, The New Cinephilia). Shambu is certainly not the only scholar to underscore the performative and media-based supports of cinephilia. Antoine de Baecque and Thierry Frémaux, in their 1995 article on the history of cinephilia, highlighted the rituals that helped to create a sense of cinephilic community: "Ce que l'on définit alors, par ces questions rituelles, c'est une communauté d'interprétation: le groupe cinéphile de base, clan, chapelle, revue, ciné-club, produit, grâce à ses gestes autant que par ses paroles et ses écrits, un sens commun qui confère son épaisseur à chaque moment particulier de l'histoire du cinéma." Antoine de Baecque and Thierry Frémaux, "La Cinéphilie ou l'invention d'une culture," Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire, no. 46 (April–June 1995): 135.

3. "[T]he passion and the curiosity of the Internet cinephile are not innate; they are not born solely from within. They are sparked and sustained by frequent contact with a global community of cinephiles." Shambu, The New Cinephilia. See also Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 35.


5. This is not to argue that one can find no precursors to such publications in Europe before World War I, which would include magazines such as Pictures and the Picturegoer (UK, 1913) and Illustrierte Filmwoche (Germany, 1916). But the 1920s saw an entirely new scale of audience-oriented magazines. Many of these were short-lived, while others went on to become more stable, long-term publications, but they all contributed to a new paradigm of cinephile film culture.

"Gardez-vous de lire les titres à hautes voix! Le cinéma n’est pas une école où les ignorants apprennent à lire." Vous avez la parole! Organe du public des cinémas. Supplément mensuel, 1925, 3. For more on this context, see also Gauthier, La Passion du cinéma, 261. One can find similar behavior lessons in humorous articles from the time. See for example, "Der Mann, der hinter mir sitzt," Mein Film 98 (1927): 4.


For the launch of the contest, see Cinéa—Ciné pour tous, no. 79 (November 7, 1922): 13; no. 82 (December 20, 1922): 7.

See Epstein, “De quelques conditions de la photogénie,” 7. As Epstein puts it shortly afterward in the same text: "And a close-up of a revolver is no longer a revolver. It is the revolver-character, that is, the desire or guilt for the crime, for bankruptcy, for suicide... It has a character, customs, memories, a will, a soul" (ibid., 7). The use of body fragments in puzzle contests would find an interesting echo a few years later in Epstein’s film La glace à trois faces (1927), where the final sequence of a speeding car alternates fragments of René Ferté’s face (the eyes, a mouth) with other fragments from the landscape around him.


For other versions of the eye contest, see for example, Mon Film: Ciné pour tous, May 8, 1925, 5; The Picturegoer 11 (March 1926): 33; Mein Film, no. 12 (1926): 3.


“A qui sont ces nez?” Mon Film: Ciné pour tous, June 5, 1925, 5.

“Wer erkennt diese Kinder?" Mein Film, no. 60 (1927): 8.

Examples of the latter, which I discuss further below, can be seen in Pictures and the Picturegoer, 1918 (microfiche, BFI, date and page numbers not identified); Cinémagazine 3, no. 10 (March 9, 1923): 431; Mein Film, no. 185 (1929): 12–13.

This is not to suggest that all cinephiliac magazines featured photographic puzzles; some featured puzzles in nearly every issue, while others were less consistent and still others included few if any puzzles. While this may have had a lot to do with finances, as elaborate puzzle contests were beyond the budget of some of the more ephemeral magazines of the period, it also had to do with audience; trade journals for professionals and political journals such as the German Film und Volk tended to avoid puzzles. But among cinephiliac journals, it is striking how the use of puzzles cuts across divisions of...
“high” and “low,” appearing in both fan magazines and magazines with more artistic aspirations such as Cinéa.


24. See Orgeron, “You Are Invited to Participate.”

25. I borrow Miriam Hansen’s term vernacular here to emphasize the relation to the United States in which the European star systems emerged. See Hansen, “The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism,” Modernism/modernity 6, no. 2 (1999): 59–77. While I cannot develop the question here, it would be worthwhile to examine how puzzle contests helped to negotiate vernacular versions of the star system as distinct from American models.


27. On the long history of print puzzles, see especially Eva Maria Schenck, Das Bilderrätsel (New York: Hildesheim, 1973). Early film popularity contests did include photographs of the winners, but the contest announcements were often limited to text-based announcements. See for example, “Popular Players Contest,” Motion Picture Story Magazine 3, no. 6 (July 2012): 35. The earliest contests generally followed this pattern of audience voting (a format which carried over into the 1920s). Another early contest that The Motion Picture Story called “Cash Prize Contest” asked readers to answer the question “What story in the motion picture magazine did you like best and why?” “The Cash Prize Contest,” Motion Picture Story Magazine, 1911, 151.

28. “Telegram Puzzle,” 6, no. 11 (December 1914): 146. For a similar example, see “Another Puzzle to Interest the Curious,” Motion Picture Story Magazine 4, no. 2 (February 1913): 31.

29. See “Screened Stars,” Pictures and the Picturegoer 8, no. 84 (September 1915): 500; “Photoplay Actors Name Puzzle,” Photoplay 12, no. 4 (September 1917): 42–43. One other form that shows up early on is the silhouette puzzle. See for example, “Silhouette Puzzle,” Motion Picture Magazine, September 1914, 132.

30. “Can You Read Their Names in Their Eyes?” Photoplay 11, no. 6 (May 1917): 42–43.

31. It should be mentioned that the use of text-based riddles and hand-drawn puzzles also continued in the 1920s, likely catalyzed by the new vogue of crossword puzzles, which began in the 1910s in the United States and came to Europe in 1925. There were also examples of film rebuses, such as a series of six hand-drawn rebus puzzles run by Vous avez la parole in 1924, in which audiences had to guess film titles from the picture fragments.

33. One can observe this increasing playfulness in a magazine like *Illustrierter Filmkurier* from its founding in 1919 to the late 1920s.

34. "Le puzzle cinématographique," *Cinemagazine* 3, no. 10 (March 9, 1923): 431.


37. "Le puzzle cinématographique," *Cinemagazine* 3, no. 15.

38. See *Cînea—Cîné pour tous*, no. 26 (February 23, 1923): 16. Other prizes included products, blotting paper, and—for the lucky first-place contestant—a pearl necklace.

39. See *Cînea—Cîné pour tous*, no. 80 (December 1922): 14: "Several participants in our last competition 'Who Do These Eyes Belong To?' thought it was a good idea to tear out the page of *Cînea* containing the photos in order to send them in. This mutilation is absolutely unnecessary. We ask our readers not to mutilate the present issue, whose assemblage required even more care than the previous one."


42. This is also the period that oversaw the rise of popular puzzle associations. According to one history of modern contests, "the first convention of puzzlers was held at Philadelphia in July, 1876, exactly a century after the founding of the nation. The Eastern Puzzlers' League held its first meeting in 1883 and since that time conventions have been held twice a year. The name of the organization was changed in 1920 to National Puzzlers' League (NPL)." John R. Burnham, *The Contest Story* (Philadelphia: Dorrance & Company, 1951), 125.


44. Burnham, *The Contest Story*, 45–46. There were also many hybrid forms, in which magazine contests were sponsored by product manufacturers.

45. Incidentally, such contests were also frequently employed by movie theaters to build a loyal public. See John F. Barry and Epes W. Sargent, *Building Theater Patronage: Management and Merchandising* (New York: Chalmers, 1927), 155–69.

46. For example, an insert in *Cînea* outlining the advantages of subscription stated: "Only our subscribers can participate in special competitions such as the Great Competition of Photogénie." *Cînea—Cîné pour tous*, no. 87 (March 9, 1923), insert.

47. For example, *Mon Film* published a six-part series titled "Le Tournoi des vedettes" in 1925.


49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., 33.
51. Ibid., 21.
52. Ibid., 31.
53. Gauthier, La Passion du cinéma, 51.
54. The term was especially prevalent in French ciné-club culture. The model here was the "Club des amis du septième art" (CASA) founded by Riccardo Canudo in 1920. Cinémagazine later ran a club called "Les amis du cinéma," while another club, "Les amis du film," was linked to the magazine Mon ciné. But the term was also used in other national contexts, such as the Viennese club Die Vereinigung der Filmfreunde, which I discuss in further detail below. In addition, Hans Richter drew on this language for the title of his 1929 book Filmgegner von heute, Filmfreunde von morgen. Here again, the language of the "film friend" cuts across popular and more avant-garde associations.
56. See for example "Quelle est la plus photogénique?" Cinémagazine, no. 26 (July 15, 1921): 27; "Concours de photogénie," Cinéa, no. 82 (December 29, 1922): 1; "Siete voi fotogenico?" Cinema illustrazione 6, no. 12 (March 25, 1931): 14.
58. The first competition run by Cinéa was a screenplay competition ("concours de scénarios"), in which the editors instructed readers to emulate the screenplays published in previous magazines "which have taught you about editing, style and movement in this special kind of work." Cinéa—Ciné pour tous, no. 1 (May 6, 1921): n.p. (end pages).
59. For a game testing directorial skills, see "Haben Sie Talent zum Filmregisseur?" Mein Film, no. 80 (1927): 9. The contest presented a drawing of a film shoot and asked readers to pick out which elements were wrong in the scene.
60. Cinema illustrazione ran a competition in 1931 entitled "Concorso delle espressioni," in which the editors prescribed a series of "themes" and readers sent in photographs demonstrating their ability to express the themes using gestures and facial expressions. See Cinema illustrazione 6, no. 30 (July 29, 1931): 10.
61. The magazine Mein Film ran a contest in its first year in which the editors stipulated the basic idea for a film story and had audience members submit suggestions for how the story should develop. See "Der Film des Publikums," Mein Film, no. 3 (1926): 4.
62. Cinéa, for example, ran a contest of amateur photography in 1921, asking readers to send in "photos of any format representing cinema actors in their private life, glimpses of cinema production work occurring outside, in a studio, etc., or any subject that relates to the screen and which could summarize in some way the sets of cinema." Cinéa—Ciné pour tous, no. 1 (May 13, 1921), insert. For another example of an amateur photo contest, see "Unser Photopreis-Ausschreiben," Mein Film, no. 58 (1927): 3. Amateur cinema also figured frequently among the prizes of puzzle contests. For example, the winner of Cinémagazine's cut puzzle contest received a Pathé Baby camera, and participants of contests in Mein Film (see my discussion below) were frequently awarded free film aptitude tests.
63. While the journals sometimes discouraged readers from trying to get into film, there were also cases of readers who crossed over. Thus, according to the editors of Mein Film, Lien Dijers signed her first contract with Fritz Lang after he discovered her through a film contest.
aptitude contest launched by the journal. See "Fritz Lang entdeckt bei seinem 'Mein-Film'—Autogrammtag einen neuen Filmstar," Mein Film, no. 97 (1927): 5.

64. See Michael Cowan, "Taking It to the Street: Screening the Advertising Film in the Weimar Republic," Screen 54, no. 4 (2013): 463–79.


66. Wanda Strauven, "The Observer's Dilemma: To Touch or Not to Touch," in Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications, ed. Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 148–63. Strauven borrows the term player mode from André Gaudreault and Nicholas Dulac, who use it to describe the mode of engagement with optical toys. I've cited Strauven's text here because her explorations of the vicissitudes of player mode in classical film culture and beyond are more germane to the topic here.

67. On the Rebus film series, see my article "Moving Picture Puzzles: Training Perception in the Weimar 'Rebus' Films," Screen 51 (2010): 197–218. Though it is difficult to know how many such puzzle films existed in the 1920s, the German example was not an isolated one. The editors of Cinémagazine reported in 1925 on a certain American publisher that "shows a crossword puzzle on the screen every week during the actualities, which spectators are invited to fill out." "Echos et Informations," Cinémagazine 5, no. 13 (March 27, 1925): 609.


69. On the print background to early Preisrätselfilme, see Peter Fritzsche, Reading Berlin 1900 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 51–86. Puzzle films of the Rebusfilm variety similarly adopted well-known print puzzle formats. This was quite literally true in one experiment undertaken by the magazine Mein Film in conjunction with the Viennese puzzle magazine Sphinx. Mein Film ran a series of print crosswords in 1927, and the winning puzzle solvers were invited to appear in a "Rätselfilm" (puzzle film) produced by the magazine. The resulting film, released under the title Alles will zum Film, was a comedy that included embedded puzzle elements to be solved by filmgoers. See "Die Aufnahmen zu dem Rätselfilm haben begonnen," Mein Film, no. 81 (1927): 11.


71. Strauven, "The Observer's Dilemma," 158. Strauven's term shield here specifically refers to the potential etymology of the term screen in the Old High German skirm or skerm, modern German Schirm.

72. This metaphor of taking readers behind the screen was used frequently in magazine columns. A column for Cinéa was also titled "Derrière l'écran."

73. Before founding Mein Film, Porges (1890–1978) had assisted his brother Edmund in editing the trade journal Kinematographischer Rundschau (1909), served as editor of the film
section of the magazine Film- und Theaterzeitschrift, and also made a few films, including the three-part series Der Film im Film: Ein Blick hinter die Kulissen (1923–24), the themes of which would be taken up in print form in Mein Film.

74. Information on distribution can be seen in the journal price list printed in Mein Film, no. 105 (1928): 5.

75. The magazine appeared continuously from 1926 to 1938 and then in a postwar version from 1945 to 1957.

76. Mein Film had a few forerunners directed at audiences, including Kinowoche (1919–22) and Die Filmwelt, which ran from 1919 to 1925. Most film journals, however, were trade journals such as Paimanns Filmlisten (founded 1916), a weekly program of available films directed at urban and provincial theater owners, and Der Kinobesitzer (1917–19).


78. Ibid.

79. See for example, Mein Film, no. 14 (1926): 11.

80. See for example, Mein Film, no. 31 (1926): 6.

81. See for example, Mein Film, no. 75 (1927): 7.

82. See for example, “Das mimische Spiel der Füße,” Mein Film, no. 5 (1926): 13; “Die Sprache der Hände,” Mein Film, no. 12 (1926): 13; “Die Landschaft im Film,” Mein Film, no. 15 (1926): 5.

83. “Vom Schattenspiel zum Spielfilm,” Mein Film-Buch: Vom Film, Von Filmstars und von der Kinematographie, ed. Friedrich Portes (Wien: “Mein Film”-Verlag, 1926), 7-24. This text was reprinted with slight variations in 1928.

84. Later editions also included reports on the French industry.

85. The 1929 edition included articles by Guido Seeber (on trick film), Karl Freund (on camera techniques), Eugen Schufftan (on sets and special effects), and others.

86. Most editions of the book also ended with a set of model letters in various languages for requesting autographs, as well as the addresses of central European stars and directors.


94. Some competitions also mixed various forms together. See for example, “Wer erkennt sie!” Mein Film, no. 132 (1928): 9; no. 135 (1928): 9.

95. See “Filmstars beschenken unsere Leser,” Mein Film, no. 170 (1929): 2.

96. “Filmstars beschenken unsere Leser,” Mein Film, no. 188, 11.

97. “Filmstars beschenken unsere Leser,” Mein Film, no. 196, 8.
“Filmstars beschenken unsere Leser,” Mein Film, no. 253 (1930): 11.


“Wer ist Ihr Ideal?” Mein Film, no. 4 (1926): 2.

This motif of the magazine as a substitute forum for applause recurs frequently. The introduction to a rubric entitled “Mein größtes Filmerlebnis” (discussed further below) stated: “as numerous letters to our editors made clear, filmgoers, who are not allowed to clap in the cinema, often feel an urge to express their pleasure over a particular film experience.” “Mein größtes Filmerlebnis,” Mein Film, no. 103 (1926): 2. In a later contest, the journal asked readers whether it was appropriate to applaud in the theater and, according to the editors, received mixed responses. See “Solll man im Kino applaudieren?” Mein Film, no. 229 (1930): 9; and no. 233 (1930): 10.

See “Der Film des Publikums,” Mein Film, no. 2 (1926): 2.

“Karrikieren Sie ihren Liebling!” Mein Film, no. 34 (1926): 8.

Das A-B-C des Films! Mein Film, no. 4 (1926): viii.

Filmdichter heraust” Mein Film, no. 113 (1928): 4.

Das A-B-C des Films, Mein Film, no. 15 (1926): 4.


On the history of the Kosmos-Kino, see Robert Gold and Peter Payer, Das Kosmos-Kino: Lichtspiele zwischen Kunst und kommerz (Wien: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1995). The venue would subsequently change several times as the group grew larger.

See “Die Arbeit der Kinogemeinde,” Mein Film, no. 45 (1926): 4; see also installments of “Mitteilungen der Kinogemeinde (Vereinigung der Filmfreunde),” in Mein Film, no. 48 (1926): 4; no. 50 (1926): 10; no. 51 (1926): 10; no. 53 (1927): viii; no. 61 (1927): 8; no. 89 (1927): 12; no. 98 (1927): 9. Porges also organized autograph signings with famous actors. See for example, “Rudolf Klein-Rogge gibt Autogramme,” Mein Film, no. 69 (1927): viii.

Mein Film ran a regular “Letters from Paris” series by Jean Lenauer, and the Kinogemeinde even offered French lessons. On the latter, see “Mitteilung der Kinogemeinde,” Mein Film, no. 91 (1927): 10.

According to a reporter from Neues Wiener Journal, the Kinogemeinde was fashioned “nach dem Vorbild der jüngst geschaffenen Theatergemeinde.” “Gründung einer Kinogemeinde,” 4. For the establishment of the Theatergemeinde, see for example Oskar Maurus Fontana, “Wiener Theater,” Die neue Schaubuhne 1 (1919): 193.


See “Welchem Filmstar ähneln Sie?” Mein Film, no. 282 (1931): 5.

See “Der erste Ausflug der Kinogemeinde,” Mein Film, no. 72 (1927): viii; “Vom ersten Ausflug der Kinogemeinde,” Mein Film, no. 74 (1927): 9. One later report suggests that the participants of an excursion shot an amateur film that subsequently played in Viennese

116. Film historians have yet to explore the rich variety of ciné-clubs beyond France, England, and Holland—for example, the ciné-clubs founded in Milan and Rome in 1930. See Cinema Illustrazione, no. 49 (1930).

117. For one description of an evening that mixed lectures with dances and poetry recitations, see "Der große Abend der Kinogemeinde," Mein Film, no. 103 (1928): 12. Elsewhere these evenings were referred to as the "bunte Akademie." See Mein Film, no. 108 (1928): 9.

118. For the establishment of the amateur photo and film section in the Kinogemeinde, see "Wege und Ziele der Amateurkinematographie," Mein Film, no. 61 (1927): viii.

119. "Vienna Is Filming!" trans. Erik Born, forthcoming in The Promise of Cinema, ed. Kaes, Baer, and Cowan. Originally published as "Wien filmt!" Mein Film, no. 40 (1926): 15–16. The article goes on to recount a humorous anecdote of a woman who jumped in front of press cameras to film the president of the republic during a public appearance: "Our president was very amazed to hear that this little camera was a movie camera, and further that it was possible to film 'free hand' while walking."

120. Ibid.


122. The article begins: "In professional circles, we often hear the wish that film periodicals would not inform their readers so extensively, in words and pictures, 'how it is made.' Knowledge of technical secrets, experts say, will cause the audience, to lose all of their illusions." K. W., "What Is Film Illusion?" trans. Alex Bush, forthcoming in The Promise of Cinema, ed. Kaes, Baer, and Cowan. Originally published as "Was ist Filmillusion?" Mein Film, no. 128 (1928): 7. (Subsequent citations are from the same forthcoming translation.) This opening may or may not have represented a straw-man argument as there is little evidence that the film industry was criticizing movie magazines in Vienna. But it did allow the anonymous writer to outline a theory of cinephilic pleasure as I describe below.


practices rather than simply a body of knowledge (with which it would come to be identified after Descartes). His perspective could shed useful light on early cinephilia, which similarly involved the elaboration of specific practices. Indeed, despite the very different contexts and emphases, everything Foucault emphasized with regard to the philosophical schools of late antiquity—the focus on embodied practice and behavioral rules, the value placed on self-management, the social bonds formed around self-care—could also apply to the emerging culture of cinephilia with its magazines, contests, and ciné-clubs: "The precept according to which one must give attention to oneself was [...] an imperative that circulated among a number of different doctrines. It also took the form of an attitude, a mode of behavior; it became instilled in ways of living; it evolved into procedures, practices, and formulas that people reflected on, perfected and taught. It thus came to constitute a social practice, giving rise to relationships between individuals, to exchanges and communications, and at times even to institutions. And it gave rise, finally, to a certain mode of knowledge and to the elaboration of a science" (Care of the Self, 45–46).


129. It is important to specify that this was not universally true. Even in the 1920s, those who could afford 9.5mm projectors could also purchase copies of selected films for home use. The winner of Cine-Magazine's cut puzzle contest from 1923 received a Pathé Baby projector as well as twelve films (the titles of which were not given in the announcement). See "Le puzzle cinématographique," Cinémagazine 3, no. 15 (April 13, 1923): 56.


135. The journal's presentation of the "Mein größtes Filmerlebnis" contest emphasized just this point: "The time of the film image is fleeting. It disappears without a trace from the white screen. [...] Only the minds of a few thankful cinema-goers retain memories of this or that great film idea, of a particularly impressive acting performance, a clever intuition of a director." "Mein größtes Filmerlebnis," Mein Film, no. 103 (1926): 2.
