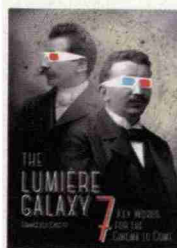


The Lumière Galaxy: 7 Key Words for the Cinema to Come

By Francesco Casetti Columbia University Press, \$30



At the risk of giving away the ending, Yale film and media professor Francesco Casetti concludes *The Lumière Galaxy: 7 Key Words for the Cinema to Come*, his luminous account of the impact of digital technologies on contemporary cinema, with this line: "Cinema is still an object to be discovered." True, he attenuates his ebullient summation with a counterpoint: that, given the evidence, we can also determine that cinema is dead. However, Casetti's entire book vividly argues to the contrary, and this acknowledgment of an alternate point of view signals the scholar's generosity more than his conviction.

Using seven key subjects—relocation, relics/icons, assemblage, expansion, hypertopia, display, and performance—Casetti deftly parses the health of cinema, demonstrating how shifts in production and reception signal not death but redefinition. Perhaps more significantly, however, Casetti's argument builds from the earliest days of cinema, before it was highly codified as an industrial apparatus, and makes excellent use of the prescient wisdom of its first theorists. His knowledge of this period of film history and criticism is considerable and international in scope, and his rich tapestry of citations ranges from the likes of Béla Balázs, Ricciotto Canudo, and Blaise Cendrars to contemporary theorists and historians such as Mary Ann Doane, Raymond Bellour, and Jacques Rancière. This broader contextualization demonstrates the rich vitality of cinema beyond the confines of classical Hollywood cinema.

The book also looks to myriad novel possibilities as the medium is reactivated in new places, as it forms a dialogue with contemporary art, as spectators appropriate and remake it, and as spectatorship blurs into participation, with viewers now enjoying a kind of tactility with images that brings things full circle to the flip books at cinema's origins. *The Lumière Galaxy* is an exuberant, gracefully written book inviting us to understand the relocations, expansions, and reinventions of cinema and its possibly grand future in close, loving proximity to its rich past.—*Holly Willis*

