***Jacques Perconte: Digital Landscapes***

**10-11 June 2022 (BIMI, Birkbeck University; Close-up Cinema, London)**

[**http://blogs.bbk.ac.uk/bimi/jacques-perconte-digital-landscapes/**](http://blogs.bbk.ac.uk/bimi/jacques-perconte-digital-landscapes/)

Report for BAFTSS

**Programme Description**

The two-day event presented the work of Jacques Perconte, a visual artist and a major figure in the French digital art and avant-garde-scene.

Jacques Perconte [https://www.jacquesperconte.com] is very prolific and produces a variety of works: films, but also generative pieces, audiovisual performances, photographs and installations. Recently he worked on several commissions including a monumental installation for the Council of the European Union, *Europaaour* (2022). Perconte’s work has been focusing on landscapes for more than fifteen years. He travels to specific places, be it in France, Scotland or Madeira, and then wanders and roves around, filming and re-filming the same area, exploring the various natural elements, forest, sky, sea, birds, but also traces of human life inscribed in these territories. Then, with his highly sophisticated tools he re-works the digital flow and takes us on a journey into shapes, movements, colours, light, and texture, revealing intimate and unexpected aspects of a performed landscape, as well as unforeseen features of digital moving images. Perconte’s films are a poetic encounter between nature, culture and digital technologies.

The first evening, in the cinema at Birkbeck, included a masterclass given by Jacques Perconte, two screenings (*Salammbô* (2022), and *Chuva* (2012)), and time for Q&A.

The Saturday afternoon took place at Close-up Cinema (London) and included film introductions, papers, screenings and a final round table.

The screenings consisted of: *Or/ Or, Hawick* (2018), *Avant l’effondrement du Mont-Blanc* (2020), *M* (2014) and *Ettrick* (2015). Fred Brayard (UCLAN University) delivered a paper on “Jacques Perconte and the non-human becomings of the world: making film with ‘no-matter-what’ makes world”. Dr Muriel Tinel-Temple introduced *Ettrick* and chaired the round table. And all participants, including Jacques Perconte, participated in the round table. Joel McKim (Senior Lecturer at Birkbeck) was due to be a respondent, but unfortunately he couldn’t be present, as he tested positive for Covid that day.

**Expenses**

The £300 BAFTSS funding was spent towards a substantial budget, which included renting fees for the films, travel and accommodation for Jacques Perconte, as well as a meal on Friday evening for the participants, and the production of a flyer.

The £300 covered the £210 of the train ticket and part of the Friday evening meal, which helped enormously.

The event was also funded by BIMI (Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image), Vasari Research Centre for Art and Technologies, and CFFCS (Centre for French, Francophone and Comparative Studies).

**Outcomes**

The event was relatively well attended, especially on the Friday and generated great discussions. Most of the films screened were UK premieres and therefore a discovery for the UK audience and the academics who attended the event.

The discussion focused on digital technologies, especially data-moshing and the role of the ‘machine’, but also on approaches towards landscape representations, and the way Perconte ‘records’ the places, i.e. without necessarily ‘seeing’, and then, in post-production, revealing movements, shapes and colours, which were there but unnoticed.

The project is now to prepare a publication in English in the form of an article accompanied by an extensive interview with Perconte, discussing his background, methods and ethics. I have already started a series of interviews and I’m aiming to present aspects of my research in various conferences this year in order to submit an article (or chapter) early 2024.



