

Jennifer Marman & Daniel Borins

Three Dimensions

Reading List

McIntosh Gallery, July 27 – December 5, 2026

In conversation with the artists, we've created this Reading List so you can dive into themes, inspirations, and interests of this exhibition. All materials are available online, in the gallery, or through logging into your Western Libraries Omni Account.

There are three categories below:

- ★ On Marman and Borins
- ★ Suggested Readings
- ★ Suggested Viewings

Interested in arranging a group visit with your class, tutorial, lab or staff unit? We can provide background and contextual slide decks for the exhibition in advance of your visit, and we can provide tailored tours and activities. Contact Ruth Skinner, Curator (Interdisciplinary Initiatives), at rskinne6@uwo.ca for more information.

On Marman and Borins

[Companion press kit package for *Three Dimensions*.](#)

[Video Tour and artists' interviews, hosted by Cristin Tierney Gallery.](#)

Melissa Bennett and Linda Jansma, *The Collaborationists* by Jennifer Marman & Daniel Borins. Exhibition catalogue published by Art Gallery of Hamilton, 2013. (copy available in gallery, or [request a digital copy](#))

Featured are their signature sculptural and kinetic installations along with several smaller works that together form an experimental journey around the artists' ideas on modernist art. In particular, cool geometric minimalism is used as part of a strategy of critique within the context of the information age. References to Wikileaks, Google, electronic surveillance, and information suppression are disimilated within works marked by bright colours, enchanting movements, and humour. It is possible to see this collaborative work as both a playful encounter and a relevant critique of the supposed utopia of total information access.

Josée Drouin-Brisebois, *Caught in the Act: The Viewer as Performer*. Exhibition catalogue published by The National Gallery of Canada, 2008. (copy available in gallery)

Caught in the Act: The Viewer as Performer is a dynamic, experimental and above all, experiential exhibition that gives viewers the chance to become active participants in the artistic process, and engage directly with projects created by 11 Canadian artists and

collectives. Their sculptures, immersive environments and installations encourage an active exchange between viewers, the gallery space and the work of art - an interaction that is in fact as significant as the artworks themselves. By promoting these new types of relationships, the artists all share the same goal: to implicate the audience in new and exciting ways. They seek to surprise us, to challenge us, and to show us how meaning is shaped through collaboration.

Gabrielle Moser, “[Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins](#),” *Canadian Art*, Vol 30 No. 1 (2013), p.124. (short exhibition review)

In the gallery's front room, Marman and Borins riff on the traditions of Abstract Expressionism using the language of computer software in seven large-scale paintings composed of squares in vibrantly coloured hues.

Ben Portis, “[Finders Keepers](#),” *Canadian Art*, Vol 26 No. 3 (2009), p.117. (short artist profile and exhibition review)

Marman and Borins regard their practice as "generative," every project a building block that contributes to their technical skills and experience, and also to the set of ideological tenets that are the heart of their repertoire. Consequently, artworks and ideas from earlier stages of their collaboration often reappear in updated guises or reconsidered contexts.

Stephen Wozniak, “[Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins' 'Three Dimensions'](#)”, *Observer*, January 11, 2024. (exhibition review)

By playing with history and our senses, one interactive exhibition might just help us gain greater perspective, act naturally and swim safely in the seismic sea of A.I. and virtual reality.

[Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins: Project for a New American Century](#). Exhibition catalogue published by Art Gallery of York University, 2009. (copy available in gallery)

Project for a New American Century is a 'what if' scenario that in part has its source in a little-known historical event. During the Spanish Civil War, anti-Franco anarchists operated prisons using 'psychotechnic' torture in the form of 'coloured cells' based on the principles of abstract and surrealist painting. In reference to this history, the Toronto collaborative team of Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins created an installation at the Art Gallery of York University combining architecture, painting, and sculpture, building a monolithic prison-like enclosure but updating it with reference to utopian brutalist architecture from the 1950s and 1960s and op art painting.

Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins: Three Dimensions. Exhibition catalogue published by Beaverbrook Art Gallery with Contemporary Calgary and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 2026. (copy available in gallery)

The installations in Jennifer Marman and Daniel Borins: Three Dimensions blend conceptual, interactive experiences. Together, they explore themes of authenticity, agency, and the digital age through performativity and interactivity. They reference both high and popular culture, blending science fiction, politics, and current events in a pop-minimalist setting. For Marman and Borins, the aim is to disrupt traditional notions of

reality — whether authentic or synthetic — and present dimensions that challenge the viewer's perception, blurring the line between 'audience' and 'participant.'

Suggested Readings

Josef Albers, [Interaction of Color](#). Published by Yale University Press, 1963. (2009 reprint available in gallery)

Josef Albers's Interaction of Color is a masterwork in art education. Conceived as a handbook and teaching aid for artists, instructors, and students, this influential book presents Albers's singular explanation of complex color theory principles.

Jean Baudrillard, [Simulacra and Simulation](#). Translated by Sheila Faria Glaser. Published by The University of Michigan Press, 1994.

Jean Baudrillard's first important step toward theorizing the postmodern. Moving away from the Marxist/Freudian approaches that had concerned him earlier, Baudrillard developed in this book a theory of contemporary culture that relies on displacing economic notions of cultural production with notions of cultural expenditure. Baudrillard uses the concepts of the simulacra - the copy without an original - and simulation. These terms are crucial to an understanding of the postmodern, to the extent that they address the concept of mass reproduction and reproduceability that characterizes our electronic media culture.

Clair Bishop (editor), [Participation – Documents of Contemporary Art](#). Published by Whitechapel Galleries and MIT Press, 2006.

The point of departure for the selection of texts in this general reader is the social dimension of participation – rather than activation of the individual viewer in so-called 'interactive' art and installation. The latter trajectory has been well rehearsed elsewhere: the explosion of new technologies and the breakdown of medium-specific art in the 1960s provided myriad opportunities for physically engaging the viewer in a work of art.¹ Less familiar is the history of those artistic practices since the 1960s that appropriate social forms as a way to bring art closer to everyday life.

Clair Bishop, "[The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents](#)." Artforum, February 2006.

This expanded field of relational practices currently goes by a variety of names: socially engaged art, community-based art, experimental communities, dialogic art, littoral art, participatory, interventionist, research-based, or collaborative art. These practices are less interested in a relational aesthetic than in the creative rewards of collaborative activity—whether in the form of working with preexisting communities or establishing one's own interdisciplinary network.

Nicolas Bourriaud, [Relational Aesthetics](#). Published by Les Presses du Réel, 1998. Translated by Simon Pleasance & Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland.

First published in 1998, Nicolas Bourriaud's Relational Aesthetics laid out a thesis for art's turn toward participation, experience, and the whole of human relations. Where

does our current obsession for interactivity stem from? After the consumer society and the communication era, does art still contribute to the emergence of a rational society? Nicolas Bourriaud attempts to renew our approach to contemporary art by getting as close as possible to the artists' works, and by revealing the principles that structure their thoughts: an aesthetic of the interhuman, of the encounter, of proximity, of resisting social formatting.

Kathryn Brown, “[Computer Art and the Cosmopolitan Imagination](#).” In *Interactive Contemporary Art: Participation in Practice* (ed. Kathryn Brown). Published by I.B. Tauris, 2016. (copy available in gallery)

Works in digital media have played a mixed role in recent discussions about the social implications of participatory art forms. Although bearing many of the hallmarks of a ‘relational aesthetic’ as described by Nicolas Bourriaud in his influential essay of 1998, computer art is largely absent from Bourriaud’s account of the integration between artist, artwork, and community that, in his view, formed one of the most significant trends in art production of the 1990s.

Peter Bürger, [Theory of the Avant-Garde](#). Translated by Michael Shaw. Published by University of Minneapolis Press, 1984.

Peter Bürger’s Theory of the Avant-Garde (1974) is an essential contribution to the reflexion of the contradictory tendencies at work within modern art. Bürger characterizes the avant-garde movements of the first half of the twentieth century as an attack on the institution of art, guided by the aim to merge art and life praxis. According to Bürger, this avant-garde intention manifests itself primarily in the form of the production of “inorganic” artworks. Bürger maintains that avant-gardes have failed in their aspirations, yet nonetheless grants them the role of a fundamental break in the development of modern art. In Bürger’s view, the avant-gardes’ historical importance resides in the fact that they have made recognizable the normative frame of art as an institution and its decisive influence on the social import of artworks.

Jan Butterfield, *The Art of Light & Space*. Published by Abbeville Press, 1993. (copy available in gallery)

Ethereal, evocative, the art of Light and Space pushes the viewer beyond the everyday limits of perception. It takes many different forms and uses many different materials, ranging from natural daylight and scrim to glass, plywood, neon, and fire. It taps into far-ranging ideas and systems of knowledge, including alchemy, Buddhism, aerospace technology, witchcraft, astronomy, physiology, and phenomenology. Written by the foremost authority on the subject and based on more than two decades of research, The Art of Light and Space is the first book to provide an overview of this powerful and increasingly public art form. With rare photographs, extensive artist interviews, and her own insightful observations, Jan Butterfield vividly documents the history of this diverse and sometimes elusive work. Following a useful introduction that succinctly places the art of Light and Space in the larger context of modern art, the book is divided into ten chapters, each focused on one artist.

Anna C. Chave, “[Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power](#),” *Arts Magazine* 64, no. 5 (1990): 44–63.

Examines the rhetoric inscribed in Minimalism and the discursive context of the movement in relation to the socio-political climate of the United States in the 1960s. Attempts to understand the cool displays of power in Minimal art through an analysis of the "hidden" meanings of this patently non-narrative art. Cites the suggestive titles of many of the objects now regarded as cornerstones of the movement, including Frank Stella's black paintings, whose titles make associations with Nazism and the Holocaust. Discusses the works of a number of artists including sculptures by Richard Serra, Dan Flavin, Tony Smith, Robert Morris, Walter De Maria and Carl Andre.

Florian Cramer, "[What Is 'Post-digital'?](#)", *APRJA* 3, no. 1 (2014), pp. 11-24.

This article discusses the postdigital as a term that can be used to describe either a contemporary disenchantment with digital information systems and media gadgets, or a period in which our fascination with these systems and gadgets has become historical. After Edward Snowden's disclosures of the NSA's all-pervasive digital surveillance systems, this disenchantment has quickly grown from a niche 'hipster' phenomenon to a mainstream position — one which is likely to have a serious impact on all cultural and business practices based on networked electronic devices and Internet services.

Guy Debord, [The Society of the Spectacle](#). An unauthorized translation published by Black & Red, 1970.

Debord's landmark work presents 221 short theses, or aphorisms, developing and presenting his concept of the Spectacle. This first English printing is an image-heavy version, published by the anarchist-leaning publisher Black & Red.

Guy Debord, [The Society of the Spectacle](#). Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Published by Zone Books, 1995.

Debord's landmark work, presenting 221 short theses, or aphorisms, developing and presenting his concept of the Spectacle.

Gilles Deleuze, "[Postscript on the Societies of Control](#)," *October* 59 (1992): 3–7.

*Published 35 years ago in the countercultural *L'Autre Journal* is Deleuze at his most accessible and prophetic. Written at a time when the Cold War was ending, computers were becoming more common, and the internet was beginning to connect institutions, the essay describes the emergence of a new kind of society – one not ruled by a single stern voice but by the soft hum of networks. ([Summary by Cameron Shackell for The Conversation](#)).*

Ellen Mara De Wachter, "[Co-art: the art of collaboration through the ages](#)." In *Co-Art: Artists on Creative Collaboration* by Ellen Mara De Wachter. Published by Phaidon Press, 2017. (copy available in gallery)

*Art history is traditionally presented as the individual's struggle for self-expression, yet over the past fifty years, the number of artists working collaboratively has grown exponentially. *Co-Art: Artists on Creative Collaboration* explores this phenomenon through conversations with twenty-five leading art-world pairs and groups, who offer insight that is relevant beyond the art world, making this book vital for all who seek to work creatively and effectively with others.*

Umberto Eco. Travels in Hyperreality. Published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986.

Some of Umberto Eco's most popular essays, recording the incisive and surprisingly entertaining observations of his restless intellectual mind. As the author puts it in the preface to the second edition: "In these pages, I try to interpret and to help others interpret some 'signs.' These signs are not only words, or images; they can also be forms of social behavior, political acts, artificial landscapes." From Disneyland to holography and wax museums, Eco explores America's obsession with artificial reality, suggesting that the craft of forgery has in certain cases exceeded reality itself. He examines Western culture's enduring fascination with the middle ages, proposing that our most pressing modern concerns began in that time. He delves into an array of topics, from sports to media to what he calls the crisis of reason.

Michel Foucault. Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. Published by Vintage, 1995. Translated by Alan Sheridan.

Foucault's analysis of the social and theoretical mechanisms behind the changes that occurred in Western penal systems during the modern age based on historical documents from France. He argues that prison did not become the principal form of punishment just because of the humanitarian concerns of reformists. He traces the cultural shifts that led to the predominance of prison via the body and power. Prison is used by the "disciplines" – new technological powers that can also be found, according to Foucault, in places such as schools, hospitals, and military barracks.

Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," in Art and Objecthood (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 148-172.

Much acclaimed and highly controversial, Michael Fried's art criticism defines the contours of late modernism in the visual arts. Written during a time of intense controversy about the nature of modernism and the aims and essence of advanced painting and sculpture, Fried attempts a set of basic terms for understanding key issues in high modernism: the viability of Clement Greenberg's account of the infralogic of modernism, the status of figuration after Pollock, the centrality of the problem of shape, the nature of pictorial and sculptural abstraction, and the relationship between work and beholder.

F. Lanier Graham. The Rainbow Book, Being a Collection of Essays & Illustrations Devoted to Rainbows in Particular & Spectral Sequences in General, Focusing on the Meaning of Color (Physically & Metaphysically) from Ancient to Modern Times. Published by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1975. (copy available in gallery)

A cult text of post-1968 psychedelic culture: The Rainbow Book is a collection of essays and illustrations devoted to the rainbow and color spectra, analyzing the significance of color (both physical and metaphysical) from antiquity to modern times. An encyclopedia of the cultural and artistic manifestations of the rainbow: in myth, magic and paintings, as well as in prints and poems. The book includes poems by Virgil, Dante, Blake, Keats, Wordsworth, and others; paintings by Giotto, Bosch, Van der Weyden, Dürer, Rubens, Blake, Turner, Constable, and Church; and the sacred art of Tibet.

Seymour M. Hersh, “[Huge C.I.A. Operation Reported in U.S. Against Antiwar Forces, Other Dissidents in Nixon Years](#),” The New York Times, December 22, 1974.

The Central Intelligence Agency, directly violating its charter, conducted a massive, illegal domestic intelligence operation during the Nixon Administration against the antiwar movement and other dissident groups in the United States, according to well-placed Government sources.

Johannes Itten, [The Elements of Color](#). Translated by Ernst Van Hagen. Published by Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1970. (copy available in gallery)

An accessible condensation of Johannes Itten’s 1961 work, The Art of Color, this book outlines Itten’s foundational Bauhaus color theories, detailing the twelve-part color circle, color contrasts, and practical exercises. It also establishes a bridge between subjective artistic intuition and objective color principles.

Rosalind E. Krauss, “[A Voyage on the North Sea](#)”: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition. Published by Thames & Hudson, 2000.

Exploring the nature of the aesthetic medium has been at the heart of much of modern art. For exponents of high modernism, the essence of each medium lay inherently in its own particular material properties. Accordingly, the import of painting was its “flatness,” as exemplified by the monochrome canvas. But some artists rejected this description as inadequate. Citing the examples of film, television, and video, they understood and articulated the medium as a complex structure of technical supports and layered conventions distinct from physical properties.

Rosalind Krauss, “[Sculpture in the Expanded Field](#),” October, Vol. 8 (Spring, 1979), pp. 30-44.

In 1979 art historian Rosalind Krauss published a now well-known essay called “Sculpture in the Expanded Field.” In it, Krauss argues that she can no longer analyze emerging artistic forms using the tools in the contemporary art toolkit at her disposal. New hybrid forms demand new, expanded categories if they are to be accountably dealt with.

Lucy R. Lippard, [The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society](#). Published by The New Press, 1997.

In The Lure of the Local, Lucy R. Lippard weaves together cultural studies, history, geography, and contemporary art to provide a fascinating examination of our multiple senses of place. Divided into five parts—Around Here; Manipulating Memory; Down to Earth: Land Use; The Last Frontiers: Cities and Suburbs; and Looking Around—the book extends far beyond the confines of the art worlds, including issues of community, land use, perceptions of nature, how we produce the landscape, and how the landscape affects our lives.

Susan Magsamen and Ivy Bridgewater, [Your Brain on Art: How the Arts Transform Us](#). Published by Random House, 2023. (available online via Western Libraries)

Have you ever gotten chills while listening to a particularly gorgeous piece of music? Or

felt a sense of calm while gazing at a painting of a serene landscape? We have experiences like those every day, but rarely stop to consider what's happening internally to cause them. In Your Brain on Art, founder of the International Arts + Mind Lab at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Susan Magsamen and Google designer Ivy Ross explain how, by understanding how we biologically react to aesthetic experiences, we can not only heal as individuals but thrive as communities. They refer to the new science of neuroaesthetics, which explores our physiological reactions to art and how the arts can effect change in society writ large.

Claudia Mareis and Nina Paim (eds.), [Design Struggles: Intersecting Histories, Pedagogies, and Perspectives](#). Published by PLURAL and the SWISSDESIGNNETWORK, 2021.

Design Struggles critically assesses the ways in which the design field is involved in creating, perpetuating, promoting and reinforcing injustice and inequality in social, political, economic, cultural and ecological systems. This book shows how this entanglement arose from Eurocentric and neoliberal thinking.

Marshall McLuhan, [Counterblast](#). Published by Rapp and Whiting Limited, 1970.

In 1969 Marshall McLuhan observed that “today we live invested with an electric information environment that is quite as imperceptible to us as water is to a fish.” He was convinced that the new electronic media shape not only the information they convey but also our very consciousness and that in order to actually perceive this a counter environment is needed. To demonstrate his point McLuhan wrote Counterblast. More a manifesto than a book, Counterblast is a typographically explosive compilation of short essays and probes (complex ideas compressed into a few thought-provoking words), all of which focus on the effects of media on the human condition.

Margaret Morse, “[Video Installation Art: The Body, the Image, and the Space-in-Between](#),” in Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art. Published by Aperture Foundation, 1990.

The following hypotheses on video installation art are speculative answers to fundamental questions that someone rather new to video installation as an art form would ask.

Martin J. Osborne and Ariel Rubinstein. [A Course in Game Theory](#). Published by MIT Press, 1994.

A Course in Game Theory presents the main ideas of game theory at a level suitable for graduate students and advanced undergraduates, emphasizing the theory's foundations and interpretations of its basic concepts. The authors provide precise definitions and full proofs of results, sacrificing generalities and limiting the scope of the material in order to do so. The text is organized in four parts: strategic games, extensive games with perfect information, extensive games with imperfect information, and coalitional games. It includes over 100 exercises.

Tom O'Neill and Dan Piepenbring. [Chaos: Charles Manson, the CIA and the Secret History of the Sixties](#). Published by William Heinemann, 2019.

A journalist's twenty-year fascination with the Manson murders leads to "gobsmacking"

(The Ringer) new revelations about the FBI's involvement in this "kaleidoscopic" (The New York Times) reassessment of an infamous case in American history.

Real Art. "[The Cult of the Claw: How a Quirky Steam Shovel Game Clawed Its Way into Arcades Everywhere](#)." Published on Thought Lab (Medium), March 26, 2014.

"The Claw is our master," croons a green alien in the first Toy Story movie. To him, the claw's metal grasp is an unrelenting and capricious god, "The Claw chooses who will go and who will stay." But before claw machines plucked out Pixar characters, plush NBA basketballs, and lobsters, they were the Candy Crush of the art deco age, a cultural phenomenon found in casinos, carnivals, and drug stores across the land.

Jasia Reichardt (editor), [Cybernetic Serendipity](#). 2d ed. Published with the Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1968. (copy available in gallery)

Cybernetic Serendipity was an exhibition of cybernetic art curated by Jasia Reichardt, shown at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, England. One part of the exhibition was concerned with algorithms and devices for generating music. Some exhibits were pamphlets describing the algorithms, whilst others showed musical notation produced by computers. Devices made musical effects and played tapes of sounds made by computers. Another part described computer projects such as Gustav Metzger's self-destructive Five Screens With Computer, a design for a new hospital, a computer programmed structure, and dance choreography.

Jasia Reichardt (editor), [Cybernetics, Art and Ideas](#). Published by New York Graphic Society Ltd., 1971. (copy available in gallery)

Exploring the intersection of computer technology, creative expression, and systems theory. This collection of essays examines how cybernetic devices, random systems, and computers extend human creativity in visual arts, poetry, and music. Coverage includes computer-generated graphics, cybernetic sculptures, and cybernetic environments.

Julie H. Reiss. [From Margin to Centre: The Spaces of Installation Art](#). Published by MIT Press, 1999.

A study of installation art, from its marginalized beginnings in the late 1950s to its central position in today's art world. Unlike traditional art works, installation art has no autonomous existence. It is usually created at the exhibition site, and its essence is spectator participation. Installation art originated as a radical art form presented only at alternative art spaces; its assimilation into mainstream museums and galleries is a relatively recent phenomenon. The move of installation art from the margin to the center of the art world has had far-reaching effects on the works created and on museum practice. This is the first book-length study of installation art.

Michael Rush, "[Video Installation Art](#)" in New Media in Late 20th Century Art. Published by Thames & Hudson, 2012.

All the major movements in modern art, from Cubism and Dada to Performance and Installation, were initiated in reaction to the centuries-old tradition of representing the world visually in recognizable ways. Reflecting intellectual, scientific, and technological developments, artists abandoned strict adherence to traditional materials and embraced

any means which best served their purposes, redefining art and the countless ways in which it can be experienced. This book traces the history of new media in art and includes discussions of film making, video, digitally manipulated photography, virtual reality, installation and performance.

Hito Steyerl, [Duty Free Art: Art in the Age of Planetary Civil War](#). Published by Verso, 2017.

Filmmaker and writer Hito Steyerl wonders how we can appreciate, or even make art, in the present age. What can we do when arms manufacturers sponsor museums, and some of the world's most valuable artworks are used as a fictional currency in a global futures market that has nothing to do with the work itself? Can we distinguish between creativity and the digital white noise that bombards our everyday lives? Exploring artefacts as diverse as video games, Wikileaks files, the proliferation of spam, and political actions, she exposes the paradoxes within globalization, political economies, visual culture, and the status of art production.

Bernard Stiegler, [What Makes Life Worth Living: On Pharmacology](#). Translated by Daniel Ross. Published by Polity Press, 2013.

Returning to Marx's theory, Stiegler argues that consumerism marks a new stage in the history of proletarianization. It is no longer just labour that is exploited, pushed below the limits of subsistence, but the desire that is characteristic of human spirit. The cure to this malaise is to be found in what Stiegler calls a 'pharmacology of the spirit'. Here, pharmacology has nothing to do with the chemical supplements developed by the pharmaceutical industry. The pharmakon, defined as both cure and poison, refers to the technical objects through which we open ourselves to new futures, and thereby create the spirit that makes us human. By reference to a range of figures, from Socrates, Simondon and Derrida to the child psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott, Stiegler shows that technics are both the cause of our suffering and also what makes life worth living.

Timothy Stott, [Play and Participation in Contemporary Arts Practices](#). Published by Routledge, 2017. (copy available in the gallery)

This book engages debates in current art criticism concerning the turn toward participatory works of art. In particular, it analyzes ludic participation, in which play and games are used organizationally so that participants actively engage with or complete the work of art through their play.

United States Senate. [Project MKUltra, the CIA's Program of Research in Behavioral Modification](#): Joint Hearing Before the Select Committee on Intelligence, 95th Cong., 1st sess., 1977.

The 172-page transcript detailed how the CIA subjected unwitting U.S. and Canadian citizens to psychoactive drugs, electroshock, hypnosis, and psychological torture between 1953 and 1973.

Norbet Wiener. [Cybernetics: Or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine](#). Published by MIT Press, 1948.

With the influential book Cybernetics, first published in 1948, Norbert Wiener laid the theoretical foundations for the multidisciplinary field of cybernetics, the study of

controlling the flow of information in systems with feedback loops, be they biological, mechanical, cognitive, or social. At the core of Wiener's theory is the message (information), sent and responded to (feedback); the functionality of a machine, organism, or society depends on the quality of messages. Information corrupted by noise prevents homeostasis, or equilibrium.

William C. Seitz, [The Responsive Eye](#). Exhibition catalogue published by The Museum of Modern Art, 1965.

"The Responsive Eye" exhibition was curated by William C. Seitz, an early scholar of Abstract Expressionism who was progressive in his understanding of optical systems used by surrealists, impressionists, neo-impressionists, and also the Bauhaus. Seitz selected 102 artists who were quite literally researching how the eye responds to experiences with foundational elements of art such as color, pattern and light in time and space. That these artists came from 19 countries and varying political and cultural beliefs (many of them from fields such as design, architecture, science, sociology and psychology) revealed an international curiosity and focus on the phenomenology of perception. ([Summary by Carsten Nicolai for Flash Art.](#))

Alfred North Whitehead. [Adventures of Ideas](#). Published by Cambridge University Press, 1939.

Adventures of Ideas was Whitehead's last big philosophical book and the most rewarding one for the general reader. It offered penetrating, balanced reflections on the parts played by brute forces and by general ideas about humanity, God, and the universe in shaping the course of Western civilization. Whitehead emphasized the impulse of life toward newness and the absolute need for societies stable enough to nourish adventure that is fruitful rather than anarchic. In this book he also summarized his metaphysics and used it to elucidate the nature of beauty, truth, art, adventure, and peace.

D. W. Winnicott, [Playing and Reality](#). Published by Routledge, 1989.

A transitional object is a special item like a soft blanket or favorite stuffed toy that helps an infant move from total dependence on a caregiver toward emotional independence. Introduced by pediatrician and psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott in 1951, it serves as a bridge between internal fantasy and external reality.

🕒 Suggested Viewings 🕒

[CHAOS: The Manson Murders \(2025\)](#), directed by Errol Morris. Netflix trailer (YouTube).

Untangles a web of conspiracy involving the CIA, LSD, Jack Ruby, the Manson Family, and Vincent Bugliosi, casting doubt on the official story of the 1960s' most infamous killing spree.

[The Conversation \(1974\)](#), directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Original theatrical trailer (YouTube).

Surveillance expert Harry Caul (Gene Hackman) is hired by a mysterious client's

brusque aide (Harrison Ford) to tail a young couple, Mark (Frederic Forrest) and Ann (Cindy Williams). Tracking the pair through San Francisco's Union Square, Caul and his associate Stan (John Cazale) manage to record a cryptic conversation between them. Tormented by memories of a previous case that ended badly, Caul becomes obsessed with the resulting tape, trying to determine if the couple are in danger.

The Matrix (1999), directed by Lana and Lilly Wachowski. Original theatrical trailer (YouTube).

Neo believes that Morpheus, an elusive figure considered to be the most dangerous man alive, can answer his question -- What is the Matrix? Neo is contacted by Trinity, a beautiful stranger who leads him into an underworld where he meets Morpheus. They fight a brutal battle for their lives against a cadre of viciously intelligent secret agents. It is a truth that could cost Neo something more precious than his life.

Three Days of the Condor (1975), directed by Sydney Pollack. Original theatrical trailer (YouTube).

On a seemingly ordinary day, Joe Turner (Robert Redford), a quiet CIA codebreaker, walks into his workplace and finds that all of his coworkers have been murdered. Horrified, Joe flees the scene and tries to tell his supervisors about the tragedy. Unfortunately, he soon learns that CIA higher-ups were involved in the murders. With no one to trust, and a merciless hit man (Max von Sydow) close on his tail, Joe must somehow survive long enough to figure out why his own agency wants him dead.

The Parallax View (1974), directed by Alan J. Pakula. Original theatrical trailer (YouTube).

After a presidential candidate is assassinated, political reporter Joe Frady begins to suspect that the mysterious Parallax Corporation may be involved. As he investigates, others who share his suspicions start turning up dead, including his editor, Bill Rintels. Eventually, Frady uncovers a conspiracy bigger than anyone expected and must race to prevent the corporation's next big hit as this political thriller plays out in an explosive game of cat and mouse.

THX 1138 (1971), directed by George Lucas. Original theatrical trailer (YouTube).

In the future, mankind lives in vast underground cities and free will is outlawed by means of mandatory medication that controls human emotion. But when THX 1138 (Robert Duvall) and LUH 3417 (Maggie McOmie) stop taking their meds, they wake up to the bleak reality of their own existence and fall in love with each other in the process. But love is also illegal in this Orwellian dystopia, and the act of making love has made both of them outlaws on the run from an army of robotic police.

Videodrome (1983), directed by David Cronenberg. Original theatrical trailer (YouTube).

As the president of a trashy TV channel, Max Renn is desperate for new programming to attract viewers. When he happens upon "Videodrome," a TV show dedicated to gratuitous torture and punishment, Max sees a potential hit and broadcasts the show on his channel. However, after his girlfriend auditions for the show and never returns, Max investigates the truth behind Videodrome and discovers that the graphic violence may not be as fake as he thought.

Gestalt Psychology – Principles of Perception, Learning the Social Sciences (YouTube)

Demonstrates basic principles like figure ground, proximity, continuity, and closure. “Gestalt psychology is important because it laid the foundation for many areas in modern psychology, including cognitive psychology, visual design, and human perception research.”

IMDB: Films Dealing with Mind Control and Human Experimentation

A list of films- some really good, some really bad- that explicitly or indirectly deal with mind control, human experimentation, psychological abuse and manipulation either at the hands of an individual, an institution, a cult or a government.

SOCIOLOGY – Theodor Adorno, The School of Life (YouTube)

Theodor Adorno was a thinker who worried about what people get up to in their leisure time. He called Walt Disney the most dangerous man in America – and was very against TV...

“Learning to Interact: Cybernetics and Play,” Timothy Stott. History and Theory of New Media Lecture Series, Berkeley Center for New Media Arts. 2018.

Timothy Stott, Lecturer in Art History and Visual Culture at the Dublin School of Creative Arts, considers the shared history of play and cybernetics, where a generation of users were trained to the behavioural and cognitive repertoires required by interactive technologies, and which correlated modes of sociability, learning and governance that have become norms in the ongoing ‘ludification’ of culture.