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THE NEW WEIRD: INDEPENDENT CINEMA
AS AN ECOSOPHICAL RESPONSE
TO CLIMATE CHANGE

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I think all artists experienced a metamorphosis during the first few years after the invasion of Ukraine. We asked ourselves what could we do? How can we react? What is happening to us? Some took weapons in their arms, but I believe storytelling is a weapon – a tool to tell stories of the people around us, and to show the world what is really happening here.

—Iryna Tsilyk. Director:

The Earth is Blue as an Orange (2020) Interview with Marshall (2023)

Screen media has held a mirror toward world events since its inception, with filmmakers occupying a unique position to directly represent, infer, and speculate on all aspects of human life. In a world that Simon Cottle describes as ‘increasingly defined by global crises’ (2009, p. 473), and where these disasters are themselves epistemologically constituted through media (2014, pp. 1–2), film and television production presents a powerful and compelling interpretation of complex events. Recent cinema has mediated everything from the challenges to democracy and economics of late capitalism to conflict, acts of terrorism, asymmetrical warfare, the global impact of climate change, COVID-19 and its preceding pandemics, and the displacement of people around the world as a consequence of these events. Nothing is outside of the scope of the screen, and the impact of this work is amplified through digital distribution, reaching global audiences quickly through emergent internet technologies,

in addition to the longer established streaming services, cinema releases, and broadcasters. Common themes within the telling of stories of the world-in-crisis include reimagined representations of the future and the past, and the manner with which the recent pace of political and technological change has disrupted identity within gender and sexuality and in relation to race, mental health, class, and local, regional, national, and international senses of belonging.

This chapter borrows terms defined by Argentine filmmakers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino to consider the changing nature of socio-political commentary beyond what they described as the ‘first’ and ‘second cinema’, where they distinguished mainstream entertainment driven by profit from a more political-engaged filmmaking (1970). Through their filmed work and their writing Solanas and Getino argued in the 1970s for a ‘third cinema’ that motivated its viewers to not just receive film passively, but to incite their audiences to be active in their response. Their work has been followed by the conventions of a ‘fourth cinema’ of activism, made by and concerning indigenous peoples (Barclay, 2003). More recently, a ‘fifth cinema’ has emerged – born of the stories of refugees and displaced peoples, a hybrid cinema orientated around the movement of people and made distinctive in its unstable and fragmented form often shot on the move on mobile phones and other handheld devices (Kaur and Grassilli, 2019, pp. 1–3).

Each of these frameworks offers tools that describe how film’s narrative storytelling has reflected, mediated, and served as a critique of global crises, in addition to engendering awareness, and sparking debate and political action in its audiences. This chapter focuses on the contemporary moment, and specifically on the representation of just one of these crises – climate change. This result of human action and industrialisation has been the catalyst for conflict, disease, starvation, draught, and the displacement of people globally, in addition to fuelling the fires of destabilisation of political and economic power globally.

Through defining and distinguishing the terms *ecocritical*, *ecocinema*, *ecological cinema*, and the *ecosophical*, the chapter articulates the manner with which these different positions demonstrate an alienation and unease of humans and their relation to the natural world, and solutions to that. Selected case studies illustrate how screen media production can synthesise these ideas to represent the impact of human activity on the world’s environment and as stories that can stimulate discourse, and ultimately political action and response.

Cinema and the communication of the climate crisis

As a medium cinema has long offered innovative ways of aiding the understanding and re-evaluation of existential threats to humanity, our sense of self, and our relationship to what Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Seán Cubitt describe as the ‘first nature’, that of the natural environment. They detail how the ontological separation of nature as separate and secondary to the drivers of human civilisation, has reduced women, enslaved and colonised peoples, animals, and despoiled environments to the same level of raw materials to be exploited, highlighting the ongoing and expansive political relevance of *ecocritical* thinking (2023). Ecocritical perspectives then, explore the connection between cultural production and the environment, and how both are shaped by ecological concerns.

Centred in film and television, this study uses examples drawn from television, and both studio and independent film production, though it focuses more on the latter. Here I argue that – as in the desire to instigate change through the third cinema – independent voices have demonstrated similar agility and dynamism in their commentary of the complexity of climate change and the creation of new modes of seeing and of representation, and that this in part is because of their freedom from the conventions engendered by the structural constraints of the studio system or broadcasting.

The communication of a world-in-crisis through cultural production in screen media has only been accelerated and contemporarised by changes in the development, production, acquisition, and distribution of screen stories driven by the launch and expansion of streaming services including Netflix, Amazon, Disney+, and AppleTV. The impact of such technologies in the ecology of making, distribution, and consumption presents a further crisis in what Rust, Monani, and Cubitt refer to as the ruin of the ‘second nature’, distinguishing the natural world from the virtual spaces that emerged following the digitisation of creation, production, exhibition, consumption, and that now drive global discussion (2023).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s filmmakers and activists argued for a ‘Third Cinema’, suggesting that audiences should not just reflect on the social and political issues presented to them through the moving image and the manner that cinema could contribute to the discourse, but that this cinema should motivate those audiences to become participants in change. Solanas and Getino stated that: ‘The active role of knowledge is expressed not only in

the active leap from sensory to rational knowledge, but, and what is even more important, in the leap from rational knowledge to revolutionary practice . . . The practice of the transformation of the world' (1970). Two decades later, and again prompted by his practice, the Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay argued for a 'fourth cinema' that advanced these ideas, arguing that indigenous filmmaking sat outside of what had previously been defined. In distinguishing his work from that which preceded it, he stated: 'I am not in First Cinema. The cinema of America. The cinema of the international mass market. I am not in Second Cinema either; the art house cinema for the cinema buffs of the modern nation state. And I am not in Third Cinema also. I am not living in a Third World national state' (2003, p. 8). Barclay argued for three main tenets that set this work apart; (1) indigenous self-representation, (2) an assertion of cultural narratives and representation, and (3) of collaborative filmmaking practice within the communities portrayed, 'outside of the national orthodoxy' (2003). Memorably, Barclay described this cinematic view as one taken from the shore, noting the misrepresentation that came from an ethnographic position taken from the ship's deck of the coloniser and invader (2003, p. 7).

As in the third cinema, Barclay's ideas are active in their criticality of colonialism though not through the prism of regional or national identity, rather the specific lens of 'Indigenous geographies, cosmologies, temporalities, histories, and cultural practices' (Shamash, 2017, p. 133). Salma Monani and Joni Adamson have noted the potentiality of the fourth cinema to cast light on the implications of unsettling Western notions of linear progress presented by industrialisation, demonstrating that this anthropocentric gaze can only show the narrowness and lack of consideration of the impact of such technologies on the planet that has led humanity to the climate crisis (2018, p. 15). Aline Freire de Carvalho Frey builds upon Barclay's work to describe an 'eco-forth cinema', highlighting the natural alignment of environmental crises with the experience of the many indigenous communities who have been impacted by 'air pollution, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and global warming' (2018, pp. ii–16). Frey observes that: 'Indigenous peoples are key players in climate change debates not only due to their traditional knowledges and discourses on sustainability, but because they are survivors of a preceding type of unanticipated eco-territorial displacement, namely colonialism' (2018, pp. ii–16). This cinema, situated around the first-hand and often extreme experiences of the impact of climate change on these communities, presents a subjective immediacy far more powerful than the objective, data-dump approach typified by documentaries including *An Inconvenient Truth* (Guggenheim, 2006), or the

world-ending spectacle of Hollywood narrative blockbusters such as *The Day After Tomorrow* (Emmerich, 2004), that reportedly inspired it.

Ecocinema and its discontents

The idea that documentary and narrative filmmakers use story, character, and visual and sonic representation as a trojan horse for presenting socio-political ideas is not new, and there is a long history of the relationship between humans and climate change in cinema. *Ecocinema*, defined as films where climate change forms the main theme of a text, can be traced back to the earliest days of film. In the 1950s, decades before Al Gore encouraged his audience to consider purchasing a hybrid car, the narrator of *The Unchained Goddess* observed that: 'Due to our releases in factories and automobiles every year of more than six billion tons of carbon dioxide, which helps the air absorb heat from the sun, our atmosphere may be getting warmer' (Carlson and Hurtz, 1958). The theme of educating audiences through documentary with a call to action is a perennial of the film festival circuit. Acclaimed documentary films here, for example, include the post-Katrina film *Trouble the Water* (Lessin and Deal, 2008), *Chasing Ice* (Orlowski, 2012) where marine photographer James Balog bore witness to glacier calving, and *A Year in a Field* (Morris, 2023), which considered the impact of capitalism on the environment from the perspective of a 4,000-year-old standing stone in Cornwall.

Of course, ecocinema is not restricted to the documentary genre, but includes countless cinematic representations of an imagined past, present, and future in narrative films such as *Silent Running* (Trumbull, 1972) and *Soylent Green* (Fleischer, 1973), and *Wall-E* (Stanton, 2008). *Blade Runner 2049* (Villeneuve, 2017) is a studio-financed story of biologically sentient lifeforms, so-called 'replicants', and their consideration of what it is to be human. Their crisis of identity plays out in a dystopic setting characterised by the human impact on the world following a catastrophic global economic and environmental crash. Axel Goodbody badges such films as part of an awkward subgenre 'Cli-Fi' – novels and films centred in disaster narratives orientated around climate change. He describes a form of event cinema that illustrates four key problems of the representation of the complexities of climate change in fictional storytelling – the need to (1) present scientific knowledge, (2) give the scale of the challenge meaning, (3) present natural and human agency, (4) and avoid closure (2019).

Adrian Ivakhiv identifies several different themes in cinema that is centred in ecology (2008). He highlights the ‘constraints and potentials’ of representing the natural world through the wildlife film, or nature documentary, of narrative films where environmental themes form an explicit part of the narrative, and the presentation of a spectacular ecological sublime or ecodystopia, often framed through the science-fiction genre (2008, p. 23) or often what Stacey Alaimo has memorably described as ‘monstrous natures’ (2001). This theme of the unknowability of nature, and the allegorical power of its corruption, has been extended into a full-length study by Robin L. Murray and Joseph Heumann that explored films from *Godzilla* (Honda, 1954) to *The Toxic Avenger* (Herz and Weil, 1984).

Indeed, ideas of a natural world-in-crisis have been presented in various shades in both independent and studio cinema. *Snowpiercer* (Joon-ho, 2013), *Annihilation* (Garland, 2018), *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* (Ejiofor, 2019), *In the Earth* (Wheatley, 2021), and *Don’t Look Up* (McKay, 2021) all consider the impact of human activity within a world-in-crisis, and the impact of this activity on global identities, and the sense of belonging, community, nationhood, and our place in the world. This is directly represented in the actions of characters within each film, or through the encouragement of the audience to consider their relationship with the story through the prism of subjective experience.

One of the challenges of the cinematic representation of ecological themes is that there is no single set of cohesive critical or philosophical practices that sum up environmentalism as a discipline. Adam Rosadiuk suggests that ‘the point of view of eco-philosophy is barely occupied’ (2018, p. 7) and argues that this lack in a unified message of the ecocritical movement has impeded top-down political and systemic change. This paradox, of a widely understood crisis, but a lack of understanding of how individuals can effect a change demonstrates that importance for cultural production – along with scientific reporting and other media – to continue to explore and communicate the political, economic, and moral impact of climate change, cannot be understated. According to Eileen Culloty and Pat Brereton audiences are less likely to change behaviour when simply provided with climate change information, instead arguing that attitude and behaviour change ‘requires engagement with a broader set of ideas about non-scientific spheres’ (2017, p. 139) and this can sometimes best be framed through story.

Cinema has long presented an array of perspectives on the challenges of the contemporaneous human experience, though critics such as Nadia Bozak

note that the production and consumption of the very form of cinema itself can be determined to be hypocritical. Both the petrochemically derived celluloid and power-hungry, rare earth digesting and easily expended digital image, she argues, are intrinsically linked to the transformation of the earth's limited resources to moving image. The cinematic image, she says, 'can be thought of as fossilised light (2011, pp. 12–13). This observation is acknowledged by industrial bodies. According to the most recent report by Albert, which supports the film and TV industry to reduce the environmental impacts of production, one hour of on-screen TV production in the UK is responsible for an average of 4.4 tonnes of CO₂ emissions, the majority of which are produced by transportation. In a dramatic illustration of this the 2021 report showed an unusually large reduction in emissions, acknowledging the impact on production-related travel due to the global COVID pandemic in 2020 (Albert, 2021; Sustainable Production Alliance, 2021, 2022). Bozak observes that many filmmakers are distinctly aware of this dichotomy, noting that 'the carbon neutral film is overtly self-conscious of its cinematic relationship with the biophysical world' (2011, p. 190)

This observation has caused some ecocritical filmmakers to extend their practice from the purely representational to an ethical consideration of not just their narratives but their modes of making. In their means of production and distribution, filmmakers – explicitly or implicitly – are connecting with ideas of *ecosophy*. The idea of the *ecosophical* was formed through Arne Næss' ideas in the early 1970s of a *deep ecology* that argued for a radical change in humanity's relationship with the environment, switching from one that values nature for its usefulness to humans, to one of inherent value – the human-in-nature, rather than above it (Devall, 1980). These ideas were further developed by Félix Guattari to argue for an *ecosophical* position; a holistic view of the relationship between living beings that advocated for sustainable modes of practices in harmony with the wider natural environment.

These ideas extended beyond a strictly environmentalist position into wider life, where ideas of identity and subjectivity are seen as an emergent and developing practice of emancipation of human activity within the natural environment (Levesque, 2016). Guattari described this as 'the context of the new "deal" of the relation between capital and human activity [. . .] that come under an incorporeal value system at the root of the new productive assemblages (2000, p. 49). John Tinnell argues that: 'To think *ecosophically* is to rethink philosophy in our contemporary moment defined by the convergence of nature and culture, ecological crises, globalisation, and the Internet' (2011).

In its application to filmmaking, as in the third cinema, this position is one of practical action and of revolution rather than evolution. Tinnel cites Guattari's consideration of ecological crisis as an existential one that called for a radical re-evaluation of modes of practice that may not align with one's identity, one that required practitioners to consider their work as operating in a 'post-media' era, where transversal connections could extend ecosophical solutions from filmmaking practice to everyday life (2011, pp. 37–39).

From this position, Andrew Ross argues that in addition to attending to the representation of ecological ideas there is also a need to attend to the ecology of image-making itself, and the distribution of such work (in Ivakhiv, 2008). Anuj Vaidya articulates that ecocinema should step beyond discourse and be practiced as a methodology in and of itself, 'working through techniques to reduce the carbon footprint of production in a practice that considered the challenges of off grid filmmaking before abandoning traditional filmmaking in its entirety in favour of a performed work' (2020, p. 48). Though extreme, these ideas transcend the idea of ecocinema as a *genre* to that of a truly *ecological cinema* where the very modes of filmmaking consider the climate emergency not just in the narrative of the film but through the consideration and execution of the development, production, and distribution of the work.

Towards an *Ecosophical* cinema

While the story presented in *Blade Runner 2049* certainly situates the film as ecocinema, the carbon impact and industrial means of making a studio blockbuster with an eye-watering \$150m+ budget excludes it from claiming to be ecological cinema and challenges any claims to be ecosophically minded. Studio-originated ecocinema primarily subscribes to the 'Cli-Fi' model where its stories are framed by scale, presenting the world-in-crisis as an overwhelming catastrophic spectacle where individuals have little ability to prevent the impending collapse. In the narratives found more commonly in independent film, stories are more typically expressed through an individual or small group, highlighting an individual's agency and ability to act, to counter or survive the impending end of times. Examples *In the Earth* (Wheatley, 2021), *Enys Men* (Jenkin, 2022), and *The End We Start From* (Belo, 2024), all feature a single protagonist or small group working out their place in the world and form the case studies for building a case here for ecosophical cinema, and the shift to an ecological cinema outside of experimental film practice articulated by Ross and Vaidya.

The independent feature film *Enys Men* presents a worldview that has been described by its makers as 'ecosophical'. The film is predominantly situated in the past, with the events in the film largely taking place on an island in the UK during the days leading up to 1 May 1973. Writer/director Mark Jenkin explains, 'The film is about the impact an individual has on the environment in this particular place in 1973. The main character is observing a flower that grows on an island off the coast of Cornwall and, through observing this flower, she's able to make observations about the impact we're having on the planet' (Coates, 2023). As the story progresses this character, The Volunteer, notes lichen growing on one of the petals of the flowers and, after coming into contact with it, this appears to have a physical effect on her body where lichen begins to grow from a scar on her torso. As the flowers change, so The Volunteer's experience of the island also changes. Time on the island is shown to slip through allusions to the past and the future, of events occurring both before and after her life in 1973. As Jenkin notes: 'In *Enys Men* we explore the horror of human intervention in the natural world and how very little things can knock everything out of balance' (Film4 2021). Producer Denzil Monk suggests that *Enys Men* brings an individual sense of responsibility to the audience precisely through the specificity of the Volunteer's experience. He argues that the film asks who 'will investigate the great area when it comes to the survival of the planet: whose responsibility is it? What can an individual really do?' (Monk in Stevens, 2022).

The filmmakers present this world as a critique of the present, in its consideration of the industrial past of the island – represented by the film's miners and the paraphernalia of mining in the mise-en-scene – and the impact on nature, and by showing this mining activity as present, past, and future through three temporal positions. These positions are (1) the industrial landscape from an eighteenth-century perspective, (2) the same landscape but this time from a post-industrial 1973 framed by the seminal climate collapse text *A Blueprint for Survival* (Goldsmith and Allen, 1972) that *The Volunteer* reads by candlelight before bed each night, and, finally, (3) the present day. The choice of The Volunteer's reading in 1973 is fortuitous, in that the essays within the text ruminate on industrialisation itself and the long-term impacts of that practice, before speculating on the impact of that industrialisation in the future. The director explains that the book represents: 'all different points of view, but all coalescing around this idea that basically we've got to pay attention to what we're doing, the way we're living and the impact that has on the environment' (in Judah, 2023). Tarah Judah suggests that in these moments 'of

temporal distortion and environmental histrionics', *The Volunteer* considers these implications through the confrontation with 'her temporal selves [. . .] establishing a steady routine that might just be the blueprint for the survival of human community and society at large' (Judah, 2023). Indeed, the routine of *The Volunteer* is repeated in the film: wake, observe, note, contemplate, self-reflect, read, sleep.

In addition to the further connotations of the *The Volunteer's* evening reading, many of the props in the film have a narrative significance beyond their immediate function. The petrol generator that powers the cottage *The Volunteer* occupies presents a break from the natural world she surveys as part of her work. Jenkin explains that when the generator is turned off at the end of each day *The Volunteer* would 'go upstairs [. . .], back to a natural world, where it was candlelight' (Weir, 2023). Running short of fuel, eventually the generator falls silent – this sole provider of power to the cottage presenting a potential danger in the subsequent lack of the ability to generate heat, hot water, and electric light. Douglas Weir reads a further significance. 'When that generator stops,' he says, 'you're suddenly alert to something changing, that something's [. . .] going wrong' (2023). The exploitation of the earth, represented in the film by the miners and mining, is made manifest in the generator as a signifier of the world's reliance on petrochemicals. The experience of *The Volunteer* takes a turn as the generator runs out of fuel. The world doesn't end but pivots to foreground the natural world. Throughout the film, the industrial sounds of human-made objects – the generator, a VHF and AM radio, a kettle, a clock – are all contrasted by the sounds and images of the natural world that are shown in cut moments – the movement or stillness of the flora and fauna of the island, the impact of waves and wind. Towards the end of the film *The Volunteer*, in addition to slipping the moorings of her subjective reality, appears to exist in each of the temporal dimensions before transmogrifying into the island's standing stone to become part of the landscape itself. The film considers what connects individuals to the land around them; its flora and fauna together with an industrial past that both haunts and makes visible the impact of human activity on the landscape. Each offers an existential concern with an individual's experience of time, history, grief, memory, and memorialisation.

At the time of the film's production, tourism dominated the economy of Cornwall supporting one in five jobs in the region and projected to grow (Local Government Association, 2019). Although presenting the industrial heritage of Cornwall, one primarily of extraction from the land through mining, the critic Luke Morris noted that the film's temporal play resituated Cornwall to

show ‘the slow severing of our relationship with nature through tourism – to bring us back to a time where the world was unspoiled’ (2023). Morris speaks to the urgency of acknowledging and reengaging with a neglected natural environment. He argues: ‘By reconnecting with the landscape, as this lone woman does, we can reclaim elements of a forgotten and collapsed culture’ (2023) sanitised and simplified through the process of tourism and the heritage industries.

Ultimately, the temporal confusion at the centre of *Enys Men* mirrors the impact of technologies and industrialisation in muddling our sense of self, creating confusion with our sense of the spaces around us, our relationship with the natural and built environment, our place in the world, and our responsibilities towards each of these places. The frustration of the filmmaker with these concerns is expressed in an interview, Jenkin responding to a question about the thematic heart of the film – the abstract complexities presented by climate change. He says: ‘The real problem is: what do we do? How do people engage and make change? I don’t know how that happens, because we’re in a state of having to live minute by minute. And although the climate catastrophe gets closer and closer, it’s quite an abstract concept’ (in Judah, 2023).

Towards an *ecological* cinema: Climate change and the new weird

Olivier Dorlin contrasted *ecocinema*, defined as films where climate is the main theme, with an *ecological cinema*, one in which climate forms both the narrative driver and where ‘sustainability is taken into account not only as a theme, but also within the film production process’ (2019). The filmmakers extended these ecosophical concerns of the narrative to the ecological, considering their carbon footprint when making the film and the production company Bosena stating in their mission that they are ‘Ecosophically minded’ (Bosena, n.d.; C Fylm, 2023). Compared to Albert’s emissions per hour of television, film is typically much more – ‘Small films typically produce 391 metric tons of CO₂. *Enys Men*, which comes in at 91 minutes, produced just 4.5 tons’ (Barradale, 2023). The film used electric rather than diesel generators that were charged overnight using solar panels on the accommodation the crew stayed within. This was accompanied with a small local crew shooting on location primarily in a 10-mile radius of the director’s home. Producer Denzil Monk explains ‘What’s important for us is to have that integrity, so we’re not just telling stories about these things, but we’re thinking about the impact that making process has on

the people involved, and the people around the planet, and more than human environments around it' (in Barradale, 2023). Bozak notes that through, recognising intrinsic connection between the 'energy economy and image economy', this opens up a 'bold new critical terrain', and potentially a revolutionary one (2011, p. 190). As Simon Levesque observes, as 'environmental degradation lessens our quality of life and the sustainability of our communities, ecosophy might help reform values and practices' (2016, p. 511).

Jenkin's previous feature film, *Bait* (2019) was tagged part of the 'new weird Britain' movement by the critic Ian Mantgani in *Sight and Sound* (2019). Here Mantgani adds a national specificity to the 'new weird' tag used by M. John Harrison in his 2002 introduction to China Mieville's novella *The Tain*, where he described a genre-bending trait, originating in science fiction and horror, which subverts conventions to create a discomfiting narrative (in Weinstock, 2016, p. 196). M. Keith Booker and Isra Daraiseh classify Ben Wheatley's eco-horror *In the Earth* and Alex Garland's complex folk horror *Men* (2022) as operating in similar spaces, where each film expresses a 'complex dialogue surrounding the relationships between humans and nature'. In this case, these fictional spaces making sense of the COVID-19 pandemic (2023). Unlike *Enys Men*'s explicit climate change narrative, *In the Earth* primarily makes use of the pandemic to frame an ongoing ecological disaster using a forest setting and a mycorrhizal network to provide a visual representation of complex networks and interrelationships within any given ecosystem. This fictional reflection of events occurs in the world at the time of the film's release to indicate a society out of step with nature, as Booker and Daraiseh note, represents an all too real planet that has become 'increasingly inhospitable to humans' (2023).

Conclusion

In *Annihilation*, *Enys Men*, *In the Earth*, and the recent flood narrative of *The End We Start From*, critics noted how the filmmakers have made use of the tropes and conventions of film form more commonly utilised in horror, to articulate their thoughts as to the existential challenges presented by a world-in-crisis. These may be fantastical worlds represented on the screen, but they can help extrapolate our place and response to our impact on the world around us when we leave the cinema. What is the impact of our industrial past, and how does it haunt us through poisoned earth, biological mutation, and the

socio-economic impacts of increasingly scarce resources? While those in the Global North may well feel an understanding and empathy of the impact of climate change in the Global South, how is that inaction considered when reframed through floods, famine, and disease that are shown to impact more familiar cities and communities.

Dawn Keetley notes the most important conflict in the folk horror genre involves humans and their relationship to their environment, explaining that: 'In folk horror, things don't just happen *in* a (passive) landscape; things happen *because* of the landscape. The landscape does things; it has efficacy' (2015). At the heart of ecosophical thinking is that we too, whatever our mode of expression, have efficacy, and that we should not just reflect these beliefs in our making, but in the industrial means we utilise in the processes of that making and beyond that, to our wider, lived experience.

At its heart, cinema reflects a veritable palimpsest of meanings, memory, and hauntology and is made only more powerful to the contemporary audiences who can recognise how their own life experiences and place *inside* of the natural world can appear to mirror these fictional worlds. It is the distinctiveness of cinema, and particularly the specificity of independent cinema, apprehends and makes sense of climate change and a world-in-crisis more generally, and even possibly individual and collective forms of response.

Climate change has proven challenging to narrativise in a manner which has resulted in public mobilisation and political action, but there is a powerful argument that it is precisely the mechanisms with which cinema uses convention of genre to package climate change that can aid understanding and communication of wider messaging of the interconnectivity of life on earth, our impact upon it through our actions, and the consequences for communities around the world. These devices can assist in the multifaceted challenge of clearly communicating the existential nature of human activity and its impact on the environment.

Cinema has proven itself able to challenge perceptions of colonialisation, industrialisation, capitalism, and the fourth industrial age of emergent technologies. Cinematic stories situated in climate change narratives are impactful with audiences when they encourage a reflexive consideration of the present, and our place within it. At its best, the on-screen representation of our world-in-crisis not only contributes to discourse and discussion, but is a catalyst for action – personal, political, economic, creative – beyond the cinema and out into the world itself.

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