

Alexander Kang

Within the Rectangle¹
(Stage #1)

Preface

Everything that one ever wants to know about cinema is all contained within the *rectangle* – the *frame*. Doubt. Question everything that is not in the frame. Submit. Give in to all those that occur within it. No society, no consciousness, no reality, no politics can change the world of, and within, the rectangle. When viewing cinema, and about cinema, one must first and foremost surrender to the eye of the camera. Approaching it in terms of acting, directing, editing, writing, etc. are all secondary. Camera carries out a *vision*; all the others are components – *ideas*.

Actors should be free; editors should be free, for images are what end up on screen; images are the emotions on screen. The director must operate the camera hand-held himself, so he can carry out his vision without making any compromise. While filming, actors should not have a single clue as to how the images will look. Once the filming is done, the editor has no choice but to work with what has been captured. Mounting the camera places the director's *communication* to importance. Giving the director the camera to operate with his own hands places his *vision* as importance that is the most significant.

Close-Up

The most significant power that camera possesses is its ability to isolate its subject, which makes *close-up* the most powerful shot in cinema. And amongst all the close-ups, that of a *human face* is the most powerful one. Outside cinema, when a person approaches us closely to the point in which his/her face is the only image in our sight, our first natural inclination is to dodge that person's gaze, for our social mask (i.e. persona) brings itself to life without hesitation. Simply put, we live in *fear* – fear of being judged; fear of exposing ourselves to others; *fear of believing in ourselves*. Camera, however, allows us to face another being without any of those fears, for what we encounter is an image that does not make judgments regarding our own individual being. When a close-up of a face appears in cinema, we do not look away; we do not put on our persona in order to defend ourselves – we are *fearless*.

As fearless audience members of cinema, we get to explore our *being* while the film is playing. This is to say that when watching a film, we cease to disbelieve ourselves as we do in our social lives and begin to fully manifest our being. This is *not* to say that the actions of the actors on screen are our manifested desires. Rather, it means that by

¹ Words on these pages are fully dedicated to cinema. Mentions of theatre sprang from discoveries through comparisons. Words here may seem to put down theatre a bit, but they are just words. Language speaks.

closely examining a close-up of a human face on screen, we lose our fear of exposing ourselves to the human that we are seeing on screen. As a result, cinema allows us to *re-cognize* with our being. To mirror is not the function of a camera. Its function rather is to plunge ourselves straight to our being.

The Fourth Wall

In theatre when an actor breaks the fourth wall, the persona of the audience members creep in, placing them in a discomforting situation. This is because the audience members in theatre are humanly conscious of the other audience members and the actor around them. An audience member wishes that he can stare at the actor up close, but when the opportunity is given to him by the actor's breaking of the fourth wall, he becomes conscious of other audience members around him and fears exposing his self to others. In theatre, audience members can never isolate the actor. When an actor breaks the fourth wall and stands right in front of an audience, the eyes of other audience members turn to view their dynamics – making another play within a play. On the other hand, when the fourth wall is broken in cinema, the audience members are still fearless as ever, and each audience member isolates the actor individually. Thus, theatre *can* engage with the fear of the audience by generating a sub-play within the main play whereas cinema *always* is connected with the audience members' exploration of their own being. *When the fourth wall is broken, theatre can only connect directly with a single audience whereas cinema connects with the entire audience individually.*

Acting

Ultimately, the dynamics of the rectangle are that constitute cinema, and one's acting on screen is as good as that of a cup.

Emotion

Emotion on screen depends on the *composition* within the rectangle. No matter how great an actor is, camera can simply deny his emotion. An actor puts in 400% of effort into his acting, while the camera is shooting his foot.

Spirituality

Stage is holy, camera is god.