



DOSSIÊ - FRENCH CINEMATOGRAPHY: FROM THE LUMIÈRES & MÉLIÈS TO VR & AI

Archiving the Past, Painting the Present: Representations of Diversity and Feminism in *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*

Archivando el pasado, pintando el presente: representaciones de la diversidad y el feminismo en el Retrato de una Dama en Llamas

Arquivando o passado, pintando o presente: representações da diversidade e do feminismo no Portrait of a Lady on Fire

Xueyan Cheng¹

orcid.org/0009-0006-9871-3253

xueyan.cheng@u.nus.edu

Recebido em: 20 maio 2023.

Aprovado em: 19 jun. 2023.

Publicado em: 03 nov. 2023.

Abstract: This paper focuses on the representations of diversity and feminism in the French film *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (*Portrait de la jeune fille en feu*, 2019), directed by Céline Sciamma. Set in the 18th century, this film addresses numerous contemporary issues through a feminist lens. This paper views *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* as a visual archive in the history of feminist and queer cinema, creating dialogues between the past and present. Concurrently, using Céline Sciamma as an entry point, the paper also explores the female authorship in the 21st-century French cinema.

Keywords: representation; feminism; Céline Sciamma.

Resumen: Este artículo se centra en las representaciones de la diversidad y el feminismo en la película francesa *Retrato de una dama en llamas* (*Portrait de la jeune fille en feu*, 2019), dirigida por Céline Sciamma. Ambientada en el siglo 18, esta película aborda numerosos temas contemporáneos a través de una lente feminista. Este artículo ve *Retrato de una dama en llamas* como un archivo visual en la historia del cine feminista y queer, creando diálogos entre el pasado y el presente. Al mismo tiempo, utilizando a Céline Sciamma como punto de entrada, el artículo también explora la autoría femenina en el cine francés del siglo 21.

Palabras clave: representación; feminismo; Céline Sciamma.

Resumo: Este artigo focaliza as representações da diversidade e do feminismo no filme francês *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (*Portrait de la jeune fille en feu*, 2019), dirigido por Céline Sciamma. Ambientado no século 18, o filme aborda inúmeras questões contemporâneas através de uma lente feminista. O texto considera *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* como um arquivo visual na história do cinema feminista e queer, criando diálogos entre o passado e o presente. Ao mesmo tempo, usando Céline Sciamma como ponto de entrada, o material também explora a autoria feminina no cinema francês do século 21.

Palavras-chave: representação; feminismo; Céline Sciamma.

Introduction

In the span of the last three years, a pandemic-induced global lockdown has prevailed. There was a prolonged period during which theaters were closed, making a trip to the cinema a potential health risk. As a consequence, the meanings of cinema as a cultural product, a social construct, an archive, and a form of representation have been both deconstructed and reconstructed. Within the purview of this alte-



Artigo está licenciado sob forma de uma licença
[Creative Commons Atribuição 4.0 Internacional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

¹ National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore.

red landscape, it is imperative to reevaluate the construction of cinematic culture, cinephile ideologies, representations of diversity, and societal reflections related to cinema.

Drawing upon my personal experiences and recollections as a cinephile, the last film I engaged with before the lockdown was the French feature *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (*Portrait de la jeune fille en feu*, 2019; hereafter referred to as *Portrait*), directed by Céline Sciamma. This film is regarded as one of the most influential art-house films in recent years. The film's significance is further underscored by its success at the 72nd Cannes Film Festival, where it was bestowed with both the Queer Palm and Best Screenplay awards. On the one hand, the poignant and poetic love story between two young women transports audiences back to 18th-century pre-revolutionary France. On the other hand, it also addresses contemporary issues such as the heteronormative order, patriarchal dominance, imbalanced power relations, and marginalized females. There was a specific moment while watching the film when I felt the past and present intertwined.

For numerous my friends living in Europe, *Portrait* was also the last film they saw in a cinema before the COVID-19 lockdown. The act of engaging with *Portrait* has consequently become a significant element of our collective cinephilic memory. In the present post-pandemic epoch, it is even more significant to rethink the meanings of diversity, queerness, feminism, and gender identities. In this context, the impact and implications of *Portrait* transcend the confines of the screen, the scope of cinema, the categorization of lesbian themes, and even the temporal boundaries of the 18th century. It creates a potent discourse bridging the past and the present. This paper explores the representations of diversity and feminism in *Portrait*. It focuses on the observation and representation of identities, the visibility of lesbian, and female authorship in the present. The paper views *Portrait* as a visual archive in the history of feminist and queer cinema, cre-

ating dialogues between the past and present. Concurrently, using Céline Sciamma as an entry point, the paper also explores female authorship in 21st-century cinema.

Portrait of a Lady

Portrait is a film about visuality, observation and representation. Although it is set in the 18th century France, through its aesthetic styles and topics it addresses, it truly is a 2019th century film, as the director Céline Sciamma proposed. On the one hand, in an era where 'queer becomes a matter of how things appear, how they gather, how they perform, to create the edges of spaces and worlds' (Ahmed, 2006, p. 167), Sciamma creates new ways to visualize and explore queer possibilities. On the other hand, *Portrait* is beyond a queer or lesbian film, since Sciamma also embraces fluidity in her representations of women, references to various arts forms, criticism of society's marginalization, invisibilization and silencing of women throughout history, as well as in her own work of archivization (Bacholle, 2023). I argue that depicting the relationships between the observer and observed, *Portrait* itself is a film about representations. It represents the identities of the two female protagonists, as well as the historical voicelessness of female artists and invisibility of lesbian identities.

Portrait begins with close-up shots of canvases and hands from young females that alternately occupy the frame, one supplanting the other. The sound of fingertips pretending to sketch on the page is audible before any lines take shape; the facial impression starts as a spectral form, devoid of any imprint. It is only after the charcoal leaves its trace that we discern the figure represented in these numerous sketches: Marianne (Noémie Merlant). She is instructing the students to paint a portrait of her. 'Take time to look at me,' she says. Then, suddenly, with the camera moving aside and zooming in, the audiences' attentions fall on another painting: a portrait of a young lady on fire.

Figure 1 – Marianne and students look at the portrait of a lady on fire



Source: *Portrait de la jeune fille en feu* [*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*] (2019).

As the film unfolds, a long flashback begins. Marianne recalls her relationship with the young noblewoman Héloïse (Adèle Haenel), which happened in a remote coastal mansion in Brittany. Called back from a convent school due to the suicide of her sister, Héloïse is informed by her mother, the countess, that she is to replace her sister in a pre-arranged marriage with a nobleman from Milan whom she has never met before. Her portrait will be presented to this man in lieu of a first meeting. Rebelling against her mother's schemes for her future, Héloïse staunchly refuses to pose for the portrait. Consequently, Marianne is employed under the pretense of being a companion, with the covert task of painting the portrait secretly. Once the portrait is finished, Marianne first reveals it to Héloïse. However, Héloïse is disappointed because she finds little similarity between her own image and the one depicted in the painting. More importantly, she feels the sense of betrayal, the feeling that someone she loves lies to her. Before the countess has the opportunity to see it, Marianne decides to destroy the painting. Following this, Héloïse agrees to sit and pose for her portrait.

During that period, Héloïse's mother departs for Italy, leaving Héloïse and Marianne alone with Sophie, the house's young servant. As the pair spend an increasing amount of time together, their connection deepens, eventually blossoming into love. With the departure of Héloïse's mother, a prominent figure of patriarchy in the narrative, class divisions disappear. The three females establish a small homo-society, having the freedom to converse, read, and play cards with each other. Moreover, when Sophie wishes to end an unplanned pregnancy, Marianne and Héloïse attempt to assist her. When they are unable to help, it's through a larger network of women, whom they encounter at a female-led bonfire, that they find an individual capable of performing an abortion. However, the blossoming romance between the two women is abruptly interrupted with the return of Héloïse's mother. Moving back to the present, Marianne reveals that she had seen Héloïse two more times, though Héloïse didn't recognize her.

The film ends with Marianne recalling the last time she saw Héloïse, at a concert. Seated in distinct galleries on opposing sides of the theater, Héloïse is unaware of Marianne's presence. As

the orchestra strikes the first notes of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*², specifically the *Summer* Presto movement, audiences can observe Héloïse through Marianne's eyes. The long shot focuses on Héloïse's face, with her joy gradually giving way to tears of regret. Héloïse, who has been sheltered for most of her life, yearns for the experience of music. She says that the anticipation of witnessing a full orchestra performance is one of the scant motivations that could lure her towards marriage. Eventually, she has the freedom to witness orchestra performance, but she loses the choice of love. This ending resonates with the previous scene that Marianne explains the richness of music to Héloïse through playing a few measures from *Summer* on the harpsichord³. In a society where young lesbians coming of age are unaware of the existence of LGBTQ+ individuals, Marianne and Héloïse discover themselves in each other, in their lovers' bodies and gazes. In an era where females are often voiceless, Céline Sciamma empowers her characters with the freedom to explore their identities and express their voices. They are unlike Héloïse's nameless mother, who is known only as the countess, the mother, but not as an individual in her own right. They are themselves, at least during that brief period in Brittany when they are together, observing each other, embracing one another, and exploring themselves, all while resisting the heavy, visible, and palpable expectations and burdens of a patriarchal society.

Observation of Identity and Visibility of Queerness

Portrait is the 44-years-old Céline Sciamma's fourth film, first period film, as well as her first film to feature adult characters after her 'coming-of-

-age' trilogy⁴. Being regarded as an example of a cinema of feminist embodiment and materiality (Johnston, 2022), Sciamma's work directly challenges the paradigm adopted by pre-millennial films by women that 'rarely question heterosexuality as a desirable goal' (Tarr; Rollet, 2001, p. 51). Sciamma's first feature, *Water Lilies* (*Naissance des pieuvres*, 2007, hereafter *Naissance*) is a coming-of-age story, with parallel lesbian and straight narratives. In this film, Sciamma is interested not in maintaining the sexual binary but rather exploring 'its intransigent social demands and contradictions' (Potter, 2023, p. 187). Her second feature, *Tomboy* (2011) tells a coming-of-age story of a teenager exploring transgender identities. Her third feature, *Girlhood* (*Bande de Filles*, 2014) not only centers a young black girl in the Parisian suburbs but also paints a broader portrait of girlhood in the 21st century, addressing issues like class and race. Her fifth feature, *Petite Maman* (2021), tells a story of an eight-years-old girl who travels through time and space to meet her mother, who is in the same age with her in that period. It is regarded as 'the fullest expression yet of a selfnarrating tendency that close analysis reveals informs her earlier films as well' (Harrod, 2023, p. 212). Sciamma's oeuvre always focuses on the day-to-day realities and experiences of characters who are marginalized no matter in gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or social class. To that extent, Sciamma's works show the power of representations.

Hall defines representation as 'using language and signs to say something meaningful about, or to represent the world meaningfully to other people' (1989, p. 68). Hall points out the significance of representation, proposing that the production of identity is 'never complete, always in process, and

² *The Four Seasons* by Antonio Vivaldi is a set of four violin concertos, each representing a different season: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Vivaldi composed this work in the early 18th century, and it is one of his most famous compositions, often considered a cornerstone of the Baroque music era.

³ Sciamma (2019) explains the reason of choosing Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* in an interview with *Film Comments*. She says, 'I wanted the film not to have a score, which was kind of scary because making a love story without a score is pretty challenging. But I wanted the audience to be in the same position as the characters regarding the arts and their unavailability—the frustration of that, and how art is so important in our lives, and where we can find beauty. So when music appears, I wanted it to be striking and to get that feeling of how precious it is. And I went for Vivaldi because I wanted music that everybody knew, I wanted a hit, so that the audience connects and will listen to it again—it's Vivaldi, but it's also the memory of Vivaldi. The movie talks a lot about the importance of art in our lives because it comforts us, and also how love brings us to love art. That final shot has all these layers.'

⁴ The trilogy includes *Water Lilies* (2007), *Tomboy* (2011), and *Girlhood* (2014).

constituted within, not outside, representation' (Hall, 1989, p. 68). Owens regards representation as 'the founding act of power and culture' (1992, p. 91). Sciamma's films can represent characters' marginalized identities, both in terms of gender and social status.

Portrait is a film about representation, about representing and being represented. When exploring the queerness in artworks and films, Gopinath (2018, p. 14) concludes the relationships between artworks, artists, and viewers, proposing that 'queerness of artistic works resides in multiple resources'. The first resource is from the work itself, which produces a certain way of seeing queerness, an 'alternative vision brings to the fore the unruly embodiments and desires'. The second resource is from the artists. Gopinath points out that 'the queerness of the work derives from a specific spectatorial dynamic between the artist and the historical archive' (2018, p. 14). The third

resource is from the viewers, with each viewer coming to the work 'with viewer's own situated spectatorial gaze' (2018, p. 14).

In *Portrait*, the identity of queerness is explored and represented through two layers of the artwork-artist-viewer relationships. In the first layer, the artwork is the portrait, Marianne is the artist, and the viewer can be both Marianne and Héloïse. In the second layer, the artwork is the film, with filmmaker Sciamma (for whom Haenel was a previous lover) as the artist, and both Sciamma and the audience serving as viewers. These two layers are interconnected from the outset. In the title scene, a hesitant hand glides over the blank canvas- this is Marianne's hand. She serves as Sciamma's proxy, making the scene both introspective and inclusive for the audience. It invites viewers to reevaluate the affection between the two women, as well as the ways in which they observe each other and explore their identities.

Figure 2 – A hesitant hand glides over the blank canvas in the title scene



Source: *Portrait de la jeune fille en feu* [*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*] (2019).

The task of 'secretly painting' provides a credible reason for Marianne's close observation of Héloïse. In the opening scene, Marianne is being observed by her students. However, as the film unfolds, Marianne mostly becomes the observer, painting and watching Héloïse. The audience plays the role of spectators, watching Marianne while she watches. The film exhibits the fluidity of observation: Marianne is observing Héloïse,

but she is also observed by her students, the audiences, and Héloïse herself. The boundary between the 'observer' and the 'observed' becomes blurred and deconstructed, as the 'observer' can, in turn, be 'observed'. This shifting dynamic between observer and observed reflects the varying positions of Marianne and Héloïse within different contexts. Midway through the film, around the 63-minute mark, when Héloïse is posing

for Marianne, a dialogue ensues between them⁵:

'I cannot paint your smile. I painted it, but it faded away.' Marianne says, frowning.

'Anger can always conquer everything.'

'It is true for you. I don't want to hurt you.'

'You didn't hurt me.'

'I've seen it. When you are emotionally moved, your hands move like that.'

'Really?' Héloïse smiles, lightly biting her lip.

'Yes.' Marianne stares at Héloïse's movements carefully and says, 'When you feel embarrassed, you bite your lip.' Then Héloïse bites her lip lightly again.

'When you feel angry, you stop blinking.' Marianne observes. In response, Héloïse fixes a wide-eyed stare on Marianne.

'You know all of that?' Héloïse asks rhetorically.

'Please forgive me. I don't want to be in the same position like you.' Marianne says.

'We are in the same position, totally same position.' Héloïse answers. Then Héloïse asks Marianne to stand next to her, staring at the artist carefully. Then Héloïse asks Marianne to look at the canvas.

If place is considered as 'a stage and practice of power' (Rentschler; Mitchell, 2016, p. 1), then the painting room serves as a stage that showcases the power dynamics between Marianne and Héloïse.

Figure 3 – Asked by Héloïse, Marianne looks at the canvas



Source: *Portrait de la jeune fille en feu* [*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*] (2019).

'If you are looking at me, then who am I looking at?' Héloïse asks rhetorically again. Then Marianne bows her head and touches her forehead.

'When you don't know what to say, you bow your head and touch your forehead.' Héloïse says, staring at Marianne. 'When you lost control, you frown.' Then the two protagonists look at each other.

'When you are nervously frightened, you breathe through your mouth.' Before the atmosphere becomes ambiguous, Marianne goes back to her position as the artist.

This scene represents an inversion of the traditional and typical artist-muse dynamics. *Portrait*

challenges traditional notions of interpersonal erotic relations not only through its portrayal of lesbian characters and relationships, but also by subverting the conventional artist-muse dynamics. Different from the 'male gaze' proposed by Mulvey (1975) which illustrates the unequal power distribution between genders in society, where women are often objectified in artworks by heterosexual males. Instead, *Portrait* embodies a 'female gaze'—a gaze of desire, possession, existence, and exploration.

Then, 93 minutes into the film, in nearly the

⁵ I translate the dialogues to English.

same positions, Marianne kisses Héloïse. This occurs after their first intimate sexual scene, which, as Potter proposes, 'foregrounds the fantasy of sex as an autonomous agency which secondarily produces manifold effects of sexuality' (2023, p. 186). The fleeting intimate first sex scene subtly acknowledges the impact of the historical depiction of lesbian desire, particularly

in its invisibility and unattainability. However, also it adeptly harnesses and redirects this invisibility, transforming it into a potent erotic and social force that permeates the film's narrative environment through its tactile textures. What follows is the kiss – a kiss that conveys a sense of denouement more than eroticism.

Figure 4 – Marianne kisses Héloïse during painting



Source: *Portrait de la jeune fille en feu* [*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*] (2019).

As Bradbury-Rance (2022) proposes, in *Portrait*, 'looks' become evidences of desire. This is a manifestation of the first layer of observation of queerness mentioned earlier. Marianne paints Héloïse, while simultaneously, Héloïse also observes Marianne looking at her. This results in a shared authorship. The authorship of the story is shared between Sciamma and her characters, while the authorship of the portrait is shared between Marianne and Héloïse. They are not only observing each other, but also observing their own identities through each other.

A Lady's Portrait: Self Representation and Female Authorship

During her film research, Sciamma was thrilled to discover an authentic wave of female artistic enthusiasm in the latter half of the 18th century (Bacholle, 2023)⁶. However, she was also saddened by the disappearance of these women, as well as the erasure of their names in art history. Marianne was inspired by all the female artists at that time, with particular references to Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun⁷ and Adélaïde Labille-Guiard⁸ (Bacholle, 2023). In the end of the film, Marianne uses

⁶ The original resource is from 'véritable ébullition artistique féminine,' translated by Bacholle. Available at: <https://www.allocine.fr/fifilm/fifichiefifilm-265621/secrets-tournage>. Accessed on: May 10, 2023.

⁷ Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755–1842) was a prominent French painter, recognized as one of the most famous female artists of the 18th century. Her artistic style is generally associated with the Rococo and early Neoclassical movements. Vigée Le Brun is renowned for her portraits of French nobility, most notably of Marie Antoinette, the Queen of France before the French Revolution. Her life and career spanned a period of significant social and political change, and despite the turbulent times, she was able to establish a successful international career. Having produced around 660 portraits and 200 landscapes, she was one of the few women admitted to the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture (the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture) in the late 18th century. However, like many female artists of her time, she was largely overlooked in art historical narratives until the late 20th and early 21st centuries, when there was renewed interest in her life and work.

⁸ Adélaïde Labille-Guiard (1749–1803) was a French miniaturist and portrait painter during the 18th century. She is best known for her work during the time of Louis XVI, and she became one of the official artists of the French Revolution. Along with her contemporary Éli-

her father's name to organize her art exhibition, which represents the voicelessness of female artists in the 18th century. With the idea of finding a contemporary artist, not a copyist, Sciamma finds painter H el ene Delmaire to create the original artwork of *Portrait* (Mercer, 2020)⁹. Through this way, *Portrait* fosters a dialogue between the 18th and 21st centuries' female artists. It gives voice and power to female artists who were previously silenced.

This parallels Sciamma's own experience as a female filmmaker in the 21st century. According to observations by Tarr (2012), between 2007 and 2010, a period during which Sciamma entered the film industry and completed her first feature *Water Lilies (Naissance des pieuvres)*, women directed only 21.5% of the films made in France. However, the landscape has changed significantly over the past decade. Since the release of *Portrait*, Sciamma has firmly established herself among the most celebrated female filmmakers in history. She carries forward the critical thinking and aesthetic styles from the fellow French filmmakers such as Agn es Varda and Claire Denis, and has become an integral part of contemporary arthouse cinema outside of Hollywood, along with other female auteurs such as Jane Campion, Sally Potter, Lucrecia Martel, and Julia Ducournau. On May 27th, 2023, French director Justine Triet became the third female director to win the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or for the film *Anatomy of a Fall (Anatomie d'une chute)*¹⁰. As female filmmakers continue to gain recognition, it is crucial to reassess the significance of female authorship in today's global cinema industry.

Sciamma's female authorship is evident in her queer aesthetics and self-representations. As Harrod (2023) suggests, Sciamma's filmmaking practices can be seen as both queer and feminist acts. On the one hand, in an era where 'lesbian cinema-in its queer form – has never been more

mobile and dynamic' (Bradbury-Rance, 2019, p. 143). Sciamma continually explores the interactions among women, as well as the female solidarity that transcends racial and class boundaries, through 'a foregrounding of embodiment, corporeality and sensuousness' (Lindner, 2018, p. 195). She constructs a complex queer network, making the previous invisible lesbian identities visible. On the other hand, Sciamma's oeuvre is also marked by self-representations. She is Marianne herself, a female artist observing her former lover. She is also the little girl, Nelly, in *Petite Maman*, transcending the boundaries of time and space to experience her mother's childhood. To this extent, Sciamma's female authorship can be viewed as a reimagined and reconstructed form of authorship that realizes the fusion of expressions of queerness, self-exploration, and feminism.

Conclusion

In Sciamma's films, we encounter teenage girls exploring their sexual orientations, a child grappling with transgender identity, young women of color navigating the transition into adulthood, a young mother engulfed in the sorrow of loss, and a young woman daring to love, despite her impending arranged marriage. In her narratives, these marginalized women possess the ability and bravery to rebel, to love, and to live. *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* is not just a portrait of H elo ise, but also a visual archive of the history of feminism and queerness, as well as a portrait of present-day female artists. This fire is the fire of love, anger, and of the past, present, and future.

References

- AHMED, S. **Cultural politics of emotion**. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014.
- BACHOLLE, M. For a fluid approach to C eline Sciamma's *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*. **French Cultural Studies**, [S. l.], v. 34, n. 2, p. 147-160, 2023.

sabeth Vig ee Le Brun, she was accepted into the Royal Academy in 1783. This was a significant achievement because at the time the Academy had a rule limiting the number of female members to four. She was also the first female artist to receive permission to set up a studio for her students at the Louvre.

⁹ The behind-the-scene painting ideas and processes can be found here: <https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/7084-the-brush-behind-the-film-how-painter-hlne-delmaire-created-our-portrait-of-a-lady-on-fire-cover>. Accessed on: **May 10, 2023**.

¹⁰ Jane Campion won Palme d'Or in 1993 for *The Piano*. Julia Ducournau won Palme d'Or in 2021 for *Titane*.

BANDE de filles [Girlhood]. Dir.: Céline Sciamma. France: Hold Up Films: Lilies Films: Arte France Cinéma, 2014.

BRADBURY-RANCE, C. **Lesbian cinema after queer theory**. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019.

BRADBURY-RANCE, C. Lesbian Legibility and Queer Legacy in Céline Sciamma's Portrait de la jeune fille en feu/Portrait of a Lady on Fire. **French Screen Studies**, [S. l.], v. 23, n. 2-3, p. 172-184, 2023.

GARCIA, M.; SCIAMMA, C. Deconstructing the Filmmaker's Gaze. **Cineaste**, [S. l.], v. 45, n. 1, p. 8-11, 2019.

GOPINATH, G. **Unruly visions**: The aesthetic practices of queer Diáspora. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.

HALL, S. Cultural identity and cinematic representation. **Framework**: The Journal of Cinema and Media, [S. l.], n. 36, p. 68-81, 1989.

HALL, S. **Questions of cultural identity**. London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 1996.

HARROD, M. Staging the generic self: Céline Sciamma's autofictional praxis. **French Screen Studies**, [S. l.], v. 23, n. 2-3, p. 212-230, 2023.

JOHNSTON, C. The queer circulation of objects in the films of Céline Sciamma. **French Screen Studies**, [S. l.], v. 22, n. 4, p. 287-303, 2022.

LINDNER, K. **Film Bodies**. Queer Feminist Encounters with Gender and Sexuality in Cinema. London: I. B. Tauris, 2018.

MERCER, B. The Brush Behind the Film: How Painter H el ene Delmaire Created Our Portrait of a Lady on Fire Cover. In: **The Criterion Collection**, [S. l.], Sep. 2, 2022. Available at: <https://www.criterion.com/current/post-5/7084-the-brush-behind-the-film-how-painter-hlne-delmaire-created-our-portrait-of-a-lady-on-fire-cover>. Accessed on: May 10, 2023.

MULVEY, L. Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. **Screen**, [S. l.], v. 16, n. 3, p. 6-18, 1975.

NAISSANCE des pieuvres [Waterlilies]. Dir.: Céline Sciamma. France: Balthazar Productions, 2007. France: Balthazar Productions, 2007.

OWENS, C. **Beyond recognition**: Representation, power, and culture. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

PETITE Maman. Dir.: Céline Sciamma. France: Lilies Films: Canal+: Cine+: France 3 Cin ema, 2021.

PORTRAIT de la jeune fille en feu [Portrait of a Lady on Fire]. Dir.: Céline Sciamma. France: Lilies Films, 2019.

POTTER, S. Sex scene and unseen: Portrait de la jeune fille en feu (C eline Sciamma, 2019). **French Screen Studies**, [S. l.], v. 23, n. 2-3, p. 185-197, 2023.

RENTSCHLER, C.; MITCHELL, C. Introduction: The significance of place in girlhood studies. **Girlhood and the Politics of Place**. New York: Berghahn Books, 2016.

TARR, C. Introduction: Women's Film-Making in France 2000-2010. **Studies in French Cinema**, [S. l.], v. 12, n. 3, p. 189-200, 2012.

TARR, C.; ROLLET, B. **Cinema and the Second Sex**: Women's Filmmaking in France in the 1980s and 1990s. London: A&C Black, 2001.

TOMBOY. Dir.: Céline Sciamma. France: Hold up Films 2011.

Xueyan Cheng

Double masters' degree in Global Media and Communications from London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), in London, United Kingdom and University of Southern California (USC), in Los Angeles, USA. Ph.D. student of Cultural Studies in Asia in the Department of Communications and New Media in National University of Singapore (NUS), in Singapore. Researcher of contemporary Chinese cinema and popular culture, transnational cinema, and Asian cinema. Film critic.

Mailing address

Xueyan Cheng

National University of Singapore

Communications and New Media (CNM)

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

National University of Singapore

Blk AS6, 11 Computing Drive

117416

Singapore

Os textos deste artigo foram revisados pela SK Revis es Acad micas e submetidos para valida  o da autora antes da publica  o.