film-making. His narrative categories – *amour fou* and imitation scenario – refer to the enclosed spatial word of the protagonists and cover sex addict variations and elements of self-discovery. Interestingly, it is Frey’s textual analysis that finally helps to highlight the difference between porn and art film that, besides its narrative-aesthetic value and the very argument of film-makers to create art and not porn, resides in stylistic variations. When discussing certain sexually explicit scenes from *9 songs* (Michael Winterbottom, 2005) for instance, Frey demonstrates how hard-core porn differs from Winterbottom’s film in terms of shot scale and camera movements. To reduce the representation of sex in the above-mentioned genre and art film productions to simple textual-stylistic forms is the book’s most controversial, yet most original statement. Despite his very convincing arguments however, it still remains unclear whether representing subversive images or hard-core sex on screen derives from the very aim of contributors to promote their films, or is it indeed a pure artistic approach to reality? Or, as *Extreme Cinema: The Transgressive Rhetoric of Today’s Art Film Culture* alludes to, can it be both? Whatever the case, Frey’s well researched and precise discursive analysis on extreme cinema laid the first stone to further industrial and aesthetic investigations.

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**Screen Stories: Lewes Goes to the Pictures**

RUTH THOMSON, 2017

Ringmer, Lewes History Group

pp. 96, illus., bibliography, £8.99 (paper)

Much is owed to the work of local history societies in capturing marginalised historical narratives. The niche local histories they champion add a richness to broader accounts of nation, identity and experience. These offerings are not only important to the cultural life of the area covered, they also document material that may be useful for historians researching a wide range of topics. The Lewes History Group, established in 2009, has contributed to research on British cinema-going by producing *Screen Stories*, an account of the cinemas, exhibitors and audiences of the town of Lewes in East Sussex, from the opening of the Cinema de Luxe in 1913 to the opening of the new state-of-art, three-screen, purpose-built Depot in 2017.

The publication is the result of two years of archival research and the collection of a significant amount of local interviews. A range of aspects of the cinematic experience is covered, from architectural planning to special programming. The anecdotal style of the oral commentaries is mixed with a broader cultural exploration of the role that cinema played in the community life of Lewes. The book covers a range of diverse happenings, from the improvisation of pianists attempting to keep up with the changing emotional register of silent films in the Cinema de
Luxe to the patronage of the Rolling Stones of the Odeon in the 1960s. Interviews with projectionists also capture the wonderful physicality of handling film.

With its biographical details of cinema owners and amateur cine-enthusiasts, the book highlights the significance of private archives in reconstructing local history and reminds us of the importance of preservation. The birth of Lewes’ Film Society in the 1970s (and its various incarnations since then) is charted against the backdrop of the demise of the town’s traditional cinema spaces. The society was supported with great enthusiasm and sought to keep film culture alive in the area by organising screenings and events. Also covered is the more recently established Lewes Junior Film Club, which continues to organise exciting ‘extra-cinematic’ activities alongside screenings to ensure the ongoing development of a range of young cinephiles in the town. Pointing to the opening of the Depot cinema in 2017, Ruth Thomson’s outlook for the future provision of film culture in Lewes is optimistic, harking back to the assertion of one of the founders of Lewes Film Society, that ‘Lewes was a small town but it had a hunger for film’ (p. 82).

Aimed at the general public rather than academics, this book will no doubt offer great pleasure to the residents of Lewes and the surrounding area, but it also provides an illuminating narrative to researchers of the British cinema experience more generally. Richly illustrated with glossy digital reproductions of photographs, press cuttings, advertisements, letters, telegrams, cinema programmes and other ephemera, it may also provide a useful guide for academics seeking to present information to the general public in an easily accessible format. This entertaining snapshot of Lewes will strike a chord with anyone interested in what Richard Dyer so poetically defined as ‘vast assemblies of strangers gathered together in the dark to see flickering, rapidly changing, fabulous images that they know are being seen in identical form across the world’ (in Hill and Church Gibson, 1998, p. 8).

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Words on Screen
MICHEL CHION (Trans. CLAUDIA GORBMAN), 2017
New York, Columbia University Press
pp. xvii + 260, illus., glossary, bibliography, and index, $90 (cloth), $30 (paper)

With Words on Screen, Michel Chion demonstrates anew his attentive eye and ear for the study of film. Well known to a wider media studies audience for his innovative analyses of sound in film (as demonstrated by his monographs The Voice in the Cinema; Film: A Sound Art; and Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen), Chion now explores new territory with this wide-ranging study of everything the cinema gives audiences to read on screen. Chion presents an extensive list of diegetic and non-diegetic text that we find in film: he considers credits, titles, subtitles, intertitles,