When George Miller set out to film *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015), the long-awaited fourth installment in his post-apocalyptic franchise, the plan was to return to the location that had become synonymous with the second film about the titular "road warrior": Broken Hill in far west New South Wales, Australia. Indeed, such had been the success of the earlier Mad Max films, that a museum dedicated especially to *Mad Max 2* (Miller, 1981) was opened in 2010 in nearby Silverton, and today remains a mecca for fans of the series. Broken Hill as depicted in Miller's earlier film appears as one might expect of an isolated mining outpost in a remote desert landscape—hot and arid, with dazzling sunlight beating down on highways that vanish over distant horizons—and was now set to make its return to the screen.

But it wasn't to be. While filming was slated to commence in 2011, an unseasonal rainfall for the region and across central Australia meant that the dry and forbidding plains had been transformed into a vastly different landscape. "What was meant to be flat, red earth is now a flower garden," Miller reported at the time. "And the great salt lakes which you can drive across are now full of pelicans and fish." Given the sudden greening of the desert environment, production on the film—which thematizes explicitly resource shortages, especially of water—was forced to shift to Namibia where, as Miller noted, "the desert is desert" (Hassan 2011). The particular problem for the shoot was posed by the unexpected appearance of native flora and fauna—the blossoming wildflowers, the bird and marine life—but was also one of color; while the blue sky and desert light might have remained the same, the backdrop changed from red to green, a bridge too far perhaps even for the post-production wizardry of the color grading team.

These concerns for the accuracy of the color palette, and the contrasts in landscape between Australia and Namibia, must also be considered against the original intentions for the film. Upon its release, Miller revealed that he had wanted to shoot the film in black-and-white, which would have given us "the best version of this movie," and perhaps obviated the need to relocate production in the first place. However, Miller informed his audience at a Q&A, such were the vagaries of the market that he had been forced to wait for the home entertainment release to realize his dream; a desaturated "Black & Chrome" edition of *Fury Road* that provides "an illuminating counterpoint" to the work as exhibited theatrically. In this version, the director informs us, "some scenes in particular play a lot better, and some, there's information we got from the colour that's missing" (Lyne [Shackleton] 2016). Whatever the preferred version of the work, the differences are instructive: green, red, black and white (and "chrome") all become points of comparison on the color spectrum that organized the production, and continue to inform the exhibition and interpretation of Miller's film.

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Beyond this single case study, color (and its absence) in cinema might be explored fruitfully as a means of understanding a wide array of films, and approaches to filmmaking. The six contributors to this issue of *Comparative Cinema* consider in particular how attention to the comparative dimensions of color might provide us with a structuring principle for interpreting work across more than a century of film history. In her opening article, Sarah Street develops a sustained reading of two iterations of *Black Narcissus*: the mid-century Powell and Pressburger classic, and the recent, striking BBC/FX adaptation from Charlotte Bruus Christensen. In "The Exaggerated Colors of *Black Narcissus* (1947 and 2020)," Street explores the "figural" elements involved in these two realizations of Rumer Godden's popular novel, analyzing how color in excess works as an "in-between" technology that gestures towards, among other things, "the waning of empire and dawn of the postcolonial era."

From this exploration of works featuring quite vibrant color palettes, we turn to an article focused on the veritable absence of color in the shadows and dark spaces of two recent films. Although, as Edson Costa Júnior argues in his "Memories from the Darkness in the Films of Pedro Costa and Affonso Ûchoa," black might actually be considered a color given the way it is deployed quite deliberately in Costa's *In Vanda's Room* (*No quarto da Vanda*, 2000) and *Horse Money* (*Cavalo dinheiro*, 2014) and in Ûchoa's *Seven Years in May* (*Sete Anos em Maio*, 2019). More particularly, Costa demonstrates how the color black—especially in nighttime sequences—coincides with the sudden resurfacing of traumatic memories, and in doing so converts the otherwise realist world of the film "into a place that welcomes the coexistence of multiple temporalities."

Outer space is often conceived of as a vast black expanse, but it is consistently represented in an array of vivid colors. In "The True Colors of 'False' Color: Representing Data Chromatically in NASA Films," C.E. Harris explores how scientific visualizations have employed particular color schemes in an attempt to convey the "reality" of a range of celestial objects. Considering the suspicion in which images of the galaxy have been held since the 1960s, and analyzing a number of recent films made by NASA, Harris explores the tensions between the indexical status of such images and the digital application of color which is often criticized as a merely "decorative" element in their composition. How might color "deploy the powers of the false to reveal otherwise invisible truths" about our solar system?

A fascination with the stakes of realism also animates Andrew Philip, in his article "True Colors: Chromaticity, Realism and Technological Honesty." As a filmmaker, Philip takes as his point of departure his own film, *We Tattooed Your Mother* (2021), and explores some of his decisions as a practitioner in the color grading of the work. Through

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the lens of Karen Barad's concept of "agential realism," Philip understands the technological apparatus as forming an integral part in the production of cinematic realism, and proposes that a certain shift between color and black-and-white in the post-production of his documentary can help to focalize this theory.

While either color or monochrome are often chosen to the exclusion of the other in shooting a film, there are a great number of examples that incorporate both. While in evidence in the past few decades in films like *Schindler's List* (Steven Spielberg, 1993) or *Pleasantville* (Gary Ross, 1998), and in the new waves of the 1950s and 1960s as for example in *Cléo from 5 to 7* (*Cléo de 5 à 7*, Agnès Varda, 1962), this is in fact a tradition that has its roots in silent cinema, as Olivia Kristina Stutz elaborates in her article "The Hybrid Color Film: Multiplicity of Space, Time, and Matter." With a focus on hybrid color films of the 1920s, and in particular on *The King of Kings* (Cecil B. DeMille, 1927), Stutz reads this phenomenon as an example of the "simultaneity of the non-simultaneous," whereby the co-presence of black-and-white with various applied color processes in a film presents "a vivid challenge to the linear model of classical color film historiography."

Finally, in "The Politics of Nostalgia: Colorization, Spectatorship and the Archive," Liz Watkins examines the associated trend—not completely new but today very much in vogue—of colorizing black and white film images from bygone eras. Focusing on the most prominent recent example of this phenomenon, Peter Jackson's *They Shall Not Grow Old* (2018), Watkins explores the contentious nature of colorization, especially where its value as a commemorative tool appears to gloss over the specificities of older film technologies and exhibition practices. While the resurgence in colorization—and in "upscaling" and "speed correction"—often seems to run roughshod over the past in the name of greater accessibility, the distinct chromatic scheme in Jackson's film in particular raises important questions about the ethics of reconstructing the history of Empire in "natural color."

Across the various approaches to color from the silent cinema of Hollywood, right through to the colorization of century-old images today, this issue of *Comparative Cinema* spans the breadth of film history in an effort to understand the comparative value of color on screen.

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