

Sergei Eisenstein. Mimesis. Spectatorship. Face. Typage. "Strike" (film).

This essay explores the question of (inter)faces as a problem of mimetic form in the work of Sergei Eisenstein. While Eisenstein's early theory of attractions emphasizes the production of audience effects through "motor imitation," his later writings appear to depart from this model for sake of a notion of "ex-stasis" that would transport the spectator out of her or his current state. These two sides of Eisenstein's thought are brought together here in the concept of "plasmatic mimesis," which is explored through the figure of the face in a number of his theoretical texts and his first film *Strike* (1925). By taking up the device most associated with the face in Eisenstein – typage – and reading a specific instance in *Strike*'s superimposition of animal and human faces, this essay ultimately aims to decenter the face as a privileged site for mimesis-as-mirroring in cinema and audio-visual media. Thinking the face through concept of "plasmatic mimesis" makes it into one form among others but in doing so it frees the face to assume the principle Eisenstein calls "formal ecstasy": the capacity of all form not simply to mimic but to ex-statically stand beside and beyond itself.

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