

# Aesthetic Investigations

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## Casting Allusions

*Author*

JASON HOLT

*Affiliation*

ACADIA UNIVERSITY,  
CANADA

**Abstract:** The modest philosophical literature on allusion focuses on descriptive issues concerning literary examples, and thus tends to neglect both allusions in other media and normative concerns about allusions in general. In this paper I will help fill both gaps through an analysis of three different cases of what I call *casting* allusions, which depend on the audience's recognition that a certain cast member was also in the cast of a different work. These cases vary greatly in aesthetic merit, and this is best explained via two dimensions of allusive value: richness (given the medium) and dynamic engagement. All else being equal, an allusion will be more aesthetically pleasing when it relies on a wider variety of medium-relevant input types or prompts less passive, more evolving audience response. Such an account finds further support in elaborate cinematic examples, such as the tapestry of allusions to Bruce Lee in the *Kill Bill* films.

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Among the things we often appreciate in rewarding encounters with artworks are connections to other works. For instance, we may appreciate how one work is similar to another in its quality or style. Sometimes more specific connections can be discerned, as when one work makes reference to another, as *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* liberally refers to and otherwise draws on *Hamlet* (ostensibly occurring in the same fictional realm). Although most artworks are not so richly and dependently referential as the Stoppard play or film, such links are not uncommon in our encounters with art. Less direct, often subtler references include allusions, and although most works

containing allusions may be appreciated independently of allusiveness (unlike the Stoppard case), certainly those with the requisite taste may find just the right allusion to add significantly to their interpretation, or failing that, to add spice to the savoured work.

Here I examine what I call casting allusions, which occur in various theatrical media like film and television, and which, given extant scholarship on allusions, harbour a certain philosophical significance. A casting allusion, roughly, occurs when one uses a particular performer to refer obliquely to the performer having played another specific role in another work. Whereas most philosophical treatments of allusion concern verbal (indeed literary) examples almost exclusively and focus on descriptive questions about what makes something an allusion rather than what makes an allusion good or aesthetically rewarding, I am concerned here with allusions in visual and theatrical media such as television and film as well as normative issues bearing on allusive quality more generally (i.e. why some allusions are better, more rewarding, than others). Thus I hope to redress the marginalisation of these issues in extant scholarship.

I will begin by examining three case studies of casting allusions from eighties television (in *The A-Team*, *Cheers*, and *Magnum P.I.*, respectively), then identifying certain features that plausibly account for differences in their aesthetic value. I argue that it is two specific features of allusion that account for these differences in aesthetic value: richness (given the medium) and dynamic engagement. On my account, all else being equal, an allusion will be more aesthetically pleasing when it relies on a wider variety of medium-relevant inputs or prompts a less passive and more evolving audience response. I will then test this account against related cinematic cases: an apparent counterexample from Orson Welles's film *The Magnificent Ambersons*, and the tapestry of allusions to Bruce Lee in Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* films. I assume that some allusions are better than others and that they often enhance a work's artistic merit and aesthetic rewards. This does not imply that allusions are somehow necessary for artistic merit or always improve works in which they appear; some allusions, even good ones, may distract us from other and potentially more significant features of works. My concern is more locally with differences in the aesthetic value of casting allusions considered in themselves and plausibly, if not necessarily, enhancing our overall appreciation of the works in which they appear.

## I.

William Irwin characterises allusion as 'a reference that is indirect in the sense that it calls for associations that go beyond mere substitution of a referent'.<sup>1</sup> Suppose we compress this into the formula *reference by association*.<sup>2</sup> In elaborating on this position, Irwin makes it clear that one important distinction between allusions and other sorts of intertextuality is that for allusions the

writer's intention is required, whereas other kinds of intertextual significance may be ascribed by the reader irrespective of the author's intent. Thus 'the gloomy Dane' refers to Hamlet but is not an allusion since the definite description constitutes, in Irwin's terminology, mere substitution of a referent, though the phrase may be used to allude to the play in which that character appears, so long as the user of the phrase has the right intention to make this reference. Likewise, I may find Jean-Paul Sartre's description in *Nausea* of clawed sea creatures to evoke T.S. Eliot's *Prufrock*: 'I should have been a pair of ragged claws / Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.' However, this intertextual significance cannot count as an allusion unless Sartre himself had intended such reference (and it is not clear either way).

The importance of intention is also reflected in Göran Hermerén's theory of allusions, which comprises the following necessary and sufficient conditions: 'The artist intended to make beholders think of the earlier work by giving his work certain features. (2) As a matter of fact, beholders contemplating his work make associations with that earlier work. (3) These beholders recognise that this is what the artist (among other things) intended to achieve.'<sup>3</sup> Similarly, most philosophers in addressing allusion focus on descriptive rather than normative issues and literary (or simply verbal) rather than exclusively or inclusively visual examples, media, and art forms.<sup>4</sup> One exception to the former trend is Irwin, who in another work focuses on understanding as an ingredient in the aesthetic pleasure taken in allusions.<sup>5</sup> An exception to the latter is Noël Carroll, who focuses on types of allusion relevant to film interpretation: 'Allusion, as I am using it, is an umbrella term covering a mixed lot of practices including quotations, the memorialisation of past genres, the reworking of past genres, homages, and the recreation of 'classic' scenes, shots, plot motifs, lines of dialogue, themes, gestures, and so forth from film history.'<sup>6</sup> Here, my interest in normative issues is more in concert with Irwin than Carroll, whereas my interest in allusions in film and television is more in concert with Carroll than Irwin. That is, I share Irwin's interest in what makes some allusions good (i.e. aesthetically rewarding) and Carroll's interest in allusions in media such as film.

As references by association, allusions usually work by means of what David Hume would call resemblance or contiguity. Thus by writing 'To seem or not to seem' I might allude to Hamlet's famous soliloquy, whereas by quoting the actual line I may allude to the play containing it, to the character of Hamlet, or whatnot. When I speak of casting allusions I have in mind cases where we are invited to recognise a certain performer as the same performer who appears in another specific work. (This is numerical rather than qualitative identity, yet a high degree of qualitative resemblance that facilitates recognition is usually also present.) In the series finale of the television program *The Larry Sanders Show*, for instance, the character Larry Sanders performs a late-night talk show monologue in which he speaks of trying to produce good television, though he admits 'nine times out of ten you get *The*

*Ropers*'. He then looks offscreen at sidekick Hank Kingsley (Jeffrey Tambor, who also starred in *The Ropers*, as we are invited to recognise). In a segment later in the episode, guest Sean Penn mentions to host Larry (Garry Shandling) that the cast of his film *Hurlyburly* includes 'Garry Shandling'. Although this is also a casting reference, it is not a proper casting allusion, since it is too direct. Both cases stand in contrast to the viewer merely recognising a certain performer from another work, as this often happens without any referential intention whatsoever.

Where casting is motivated by a wish to draw on the general screen persona of an established performer rather than a specific role, this practice, which is entirely commonplace, falls outside the class of casting allusions. When Robert Mitchum and Gregory Peck were cast in the original *Cape Fear* (1962), for instance, no doubt producers wanted to draw on the stars' established screen personas.<sup>7</sup> This was *not* a casting allusion, however, since no *specific* earlier work was obliquely referenced. By contrast, in Scorsese's remake of *Cape Fear* (1991), Mitchum and Peck appearing in cameo roles *did* constitute casting allusions to the original film. Where casting is based partly on the desire to draw significance from a performer's specific earlier role or work, the casting may be viewed as the means of alluding rather than the object of allusion.<sup>8</sup> In such cases it is the other work that is alluded to, not the performer; rather, the allusion to that work is *through* the performer shared with the work in question.

Casting allusions are types of references deliberately inserted into works by their creators rather than connections made independently by audiences, and in this way constitute one among a variety of intertextual connections broadly, including such audience-made (i.e. not discovered) connections as well as different types of allusions and other, more direct, less allusive references. Unlike standard literary allusions, in which intention can be attributed to a single creator, casting allusions often involve more diversified creative intentions, owing simply to the nature of the art form. Some combination of writer, director (including casting director), and producer intentions will typically be involved. For instance, if a certain actor is attached to a work (as in the Tambor case above), this may prompt a writer to include a casting reference, which when okayed by the producer, say, yields the allusion. Or perhaps the director instructs the set-designer to include a certain element that evokes a specific performer's earlier role. This is, again, merely a reflection of how creative intentions in such collaborative media tend to be more dispersed than they are in more individual, less collaborative art forms.

## II.

By 'casting allusion' then I mean reference by association to the fact that a certain performer in one work also performed in a different specific work. The specific cases I will discuss all come from television programs produced in the

1980s. That they come from this decade and medium, and involve allusions to film and handsome leading men, are happy accidents. These examples happen to describe a strikingly wide range of the potential aesthetic value of casting allusions – from a cheap joke in one case to an exquisite invitation to forensic fandom in another – and their accidental similarities add parallel structure to the subsequent analysis. To avoid the impression of overrating or stacking the deck in favour of TV allusions, I will test the subsequently abducted hypotheses against particular relevant and effective film allusions.

My first case comes from the action series *The A-Team* (‘Steel’: Season 2, Episode 11, original airdate 29 November 1983, also used in subsequent opening credit sequences). In this scene, Templeton Peck, a.k.a. Face (Dirk Benedict), notices a costumed passerby, which causes him to do a double-take. The costume is that of a Cylon, an artificial being from the feature film and TV series *Battlestar Galactica*. Here we are invited to recall that Benedict also starred as the playboy pilot character Starbuck.<sup>9</sup> It is as if Face is fazed, momentarily, because the actor playing him recognises that an encounter with a Cylon is out of place and belongs to an entirely different milieu, a separate fictional world, in which he himself also belongs.

My second case comes from the pilot of the long-running popular sitcom *Cheers* (‘Give Me a Ring Sometime’: Season 1, Episode 1, original airdate 30 September 1982). The gang at the bar discusses the eminent question of what counts as ‘the sweatiest movie ever made’. Among the suggested contenders are *Rocky II*, *Ben-Hur*, *Alien*, and *Cool Hand Luke*. When Cliff (John Ratzenberger) chimes in with his suggestion, *Body Heat*, Lawrence Kasdan’s allusion-rich love letter to film noir, the camera cuts to Sam (Ted Danson), unnecessarily it turns out, for Danson appears to register no reaction.<sup>10</sup> The allusion here, subtler than the *A-Team* example, is to the fact that Danson had a breakout supporting role in *Body Heat*.

My third case comes from the signature Tom Selleck vehicle *Magnum P.I.* (‘All Thieves on Deck’: Season 6, Episode 14, original airdate 30 January 1986). A group including Magnum (Selleck) and T.C. (Roger E. Mosely) discuss the classic film *The Maltese Falcon*, and his sheer enthusiasm for the film prompts T.C. to list prominent members of the cast: ‘Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, Sydney Greenstreet, Peter Lorre, Bart – ,’ but Magnum interrupts, ‘That’s enough, T.C.’ Although T.C. stops short of reciting the entire cast list, he does manage to mention all the major performers – or does he? He begins presumably to say ‘Bart[on MacLean],’ although for true *Falcon* fans this would be an incongruous choice, since MacLean played a minor character. Indeed, if anyone was to be mentioned fifth, it obviously should have been Elisha Cook, Jr., who played Wilmer in *The Maltese Falcon*, and who also played a recurring role as retired crime boss Icepick on *Magnum P.I.* (plus two other appearances on the show, one as *Falcon*’s Wilmer). In other words, we are invited to recognise that Elisha Cook, Jr. was *not* on T.C.’s list but could and should have been: an allusion by omission.

Despite their marked differences in quality, one of the commonalities in these cases of casting allusions suggests a fruitful extension of Richard Wollheim's notion of twofoldness.<sup>11</sup> For Wollheim, paintings characteristically exhibit a twofoldness in that we see the arrangement of paint on the canvas and see in the painting whatever it depicts. This is analogous to film, where we see (images of) actors on screen and see in the film various characters and events. In film, this may be problematised by stars who outshine their roles or by character actors who disappear into theirs. Nonetheless, twofoldness remains. In casting allusions, however, we appreciate not the twofoldness of this performer/this role but the *threefoldness* of this performer/this role/*that* role. This stresses a performer-based intertextual continuity among works easier to achieve with stars but more subtly and effectively achieved with character actors like Elisha Cook, Jr.

### III.

The cases above were chosen, again, because they exhibit markedly different levels of aesthetic quality. (I speak of aesthetic rather than artistic quality here as a convenience and to stress the experiential aspect of enjoying these allusions, taking our aesthetic experience as a defeasible indicator of their aesthetic or artistic value.) As I judge them, the *A-Team* case is effective as essentially a sight gag, though it ranks aesthetically well below the *Cheers* case, which ranks well below the highly rewarding *Magnum* case, the best part of an otherwise mediocre episode. Again, I am focusing on the aesthetic value of the casting allusions themselves rather than the works that contain them. These value judgments may be challenged, of course, though I suggest a cursory examination of the cases would not sustain the plausibility of this tack. At any rate, I will continue on the assumption that these relative evaluations hold.

Taking this ranking for granted, we may seek to know what it is about these casting allusions that accounts for their differences in aesthetic value. I will assume that seeking such an explanation is coherent and that aesthetic judgment does not reduce to mere personal preference or involve some logically simple property incapable of explanation. Here also we should beware of superficial explanations. It would be a mistake, for instance, to think that differences in aesthetic value among the specific casting allusions (*A-Team* case < *Cheers* case < *Magnum* case) derives simply from the overall aesthetic quality of the series themselves (*A-Team* < *Cheers* < *Magnum P.I.*) or from the aesthetic value of the objects of those casting allusions (*Battlestar Galactica* < *Body Heat* < *The Maltese Falcon*). The aesthetic value of an allusion need not correspond in any way to the aesthetic value of the overall work or of the allusive object. The film *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* contains silly sight gag references to *Hamlet* (e.g. a spring-loaded skull), but



this in no way compromises the aesthetic value of the film much less the Shakespeare play it plays on.

One part of the explanation involves the different elements or input types involved in these media. If we look at the cases pairwise, recall that the *A-Team* case, as a sight gag, is an entirely visual allusion: the visual image of an actor/role (Benedict/Face) juxtaposed with a visual image from another work (Cylon). In the *Cheers* case, however, we have juxtaposed a piece of dialogue ('*Body Heat*') with a visual image of an actor/role (Danson/Sam). Film and television are visual media, of course, but not exclusively so, with audio as well as visual inputs, verbal as well as non-verbal. Both the *A-Team* and *Cheers* cases involve visual input, but unlike the former, the latter involves, and indeed relies on, audio/verbal input as well. Since the latter is assumed to be the aesthetically superior case, what this suggests is that one dimension of allusive value in such media is relying on more than one type of input (e.g. visual and auditory).

Turning now to the *Cheers* and *Magnum* cases, we should note first that in contrast to the *A-Team* case, both rely on audio/verbal as well as visual/non-verbal input, the *Cheers* case in mentioning the title of a film in which Danson performed, the *Magnum* case in failing to mention Cook in a cast list that should include him. Like the *A-Team* case, though, both cases include visual elements, in the *Cheers* case the image of Danson/Sam, and in the *Magnum* case – Cook does not appear in the episode – the remembered image of Cook/Icepick. Involving memory is a difference here, but the more important complementary difference is that where the *Cheers* case is a simple juxtaposition of verbal and visual cues ('*Body Heat*' with Danson/Sam), the *Magnum* case is more complex and, for an alert fan, more engaging. As soon as T.C. begins listing *Falcon* cast members, a fan likely recalls that *Magnum*'s Cook/Icepick was also *Falcon*'s Cook/Wilmer, and comes to expect or wonder whether Cook will also be mentioned, a tension briefly sustained and disappointed only to be rewarded when one appreciates the reference as *omissive*. This may be seen as illustrating how aesthetically rewarding allusions often involve the audience in an active, evolving process of negotiation between more or less automatic responses and rather active, cognitively focused attempts at interpretation. A second dimension of allusive quality, then, is engaging the audience in a complexity-borne dynamic process.

I summarise the argument as follows. If the aesthetic value of these *A-Team*, *Cheers*, and *Magnum P.I.* casting allusions is as I have assumed, the best explanation of such value distinctions is that the aesthetic appeal of casting allusions, and also perhaps of allusions generally, depends on two identifiable factors: the presence of two or more input types (as with the *Cheers* and *Magnum* cases, unlike the relatively inferior *A-Team* case), and the engagement of viewers in a dynamic process (as with the *Magnum* case, unlike the relatively inferior *Cheers* and *A-Team* cases). The presence of such

allusions, especially the better ones, although certainly not necessary (a work lacking such references is not necessarily aesthetically inferior), will tend to aesthetically enhance works in which they appear.

Are there other dimensions of allusive quality apart from these, apart from richness (here, relying on two or more medium-relevant input types) and a dynamic process? Perhaps, although the two dimensions proposed alone suffice to account for the relevant explananda. Another question is whether this account may be generalised to allusions in other media such as literature, and what this may suggest about aesthetic reward generally. On the latter point we have confirmation of the truism that aesthetic reward for an audience requires that they be engaged by the work in the right way. More interesting perhaps is the possibility that rewarding allusions generally, even in literature, involve not only engaging the audience in a dynamic process, but also perhaps may be even more rewarding when relying not on diverse input types (visual and verbal, say), but rather diverse *descriptions* (visual and verbal, say) normally associated with such input types. Although exploring such extensions of my account is potentially fruitful, the more pressing matter is testing the account itself.

#### IV.

On my account, all else being equal, an allusion will be more aesthetically satisfying when it is richer in terms of relying on medium-relevant input types or engages the audience in more active, evolving processes of interpretation and response (an interplay between a subject's deliberate efforts to interpret and their automatic responses to what they are interpreting).<sup>12</sup> I should stress again that the presence of either or both factors is strongly suggestive rather than a guarantee of aesthetic value. I turn now to testing this account against two particularly effective cases of allusions in cinema: an apparent counterexample from Orson Welles's *The Magnificent Ambersons*, and the tapestry of allusions to Bruce Lee in Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* films.

Consider first the following scene from *The Magnificent Ambersons*. George (Tim Holt) escorts Lucy (Anne Baxter) on a walk down the street, one of several such scenes in the film, which together suggest the passage of time and cultural change. They pass a movie theater whose marquee announces 'Jack Holt in *Explosion*' (a real actor, but apparently a fictive film). There is a casting element here, though not quite a casting allusion as I define it. Juxtaposing the image of George/Tim Holt with the 'Jack Holt' marquee alludes to the fact that Welles's lead Tim Holt is the son of movie star Jack Holt. The plot parallel is significant. *The Magnificent Ambersons* is about the decline of a prominent southern family, about how the younger generation is burdened by the challenge of living up to the grandeur of preceding generations. The parallel is that when *Ambersons* was made, Jack Holt had already enjoyed a long career as a star of westerns, while his son Tim was near the beginning of



his career, and thus faced a burdensome challenge similar to that faced by his character George. Unlike fictional George's failure, however, actual Tim went on to a fine career, also starring in westerns, and in some ways surpassed his father.

Especially given the situational character/actor parallel, this allusion discernibly enriches our appreciation of the film, although of course one may appreciate the film without noticing the subtle allusion. But if we say this about the case, it seems to stand as a counterexample to my account. Recall that, on my account, the *Cheers* case is superior to the *A-Team* case precisely because it, unlike the latter, relies on a juxtaposition of auditory ('*Body Heat*') with visual (Danson/Sam) cues, but in the *Ambersons* case, like the *A-Team* case, it seems we just have a juxtaposition of visual (Tim Holt/George) with visual (Jack Holt marquee) cues. It seems either that my account is wrong or that the *Ambersons* case is essentially a sight gag – which it is not. Notice, however, that in the *A-Team* case we have a juxtaposition of visual *images* (Benedict/Face, Cylon), where in the *Ambersons* case we have rather a juxtaposition of visually *accessed* visual (Holt/George) and verbal ('Jack Holt') cues. In other words, then, we still meet the two-inputs criterion (here with non-verbal and verbal cues, although both are accessed visually). Arguably the same might apply even if the movie marquee had a (meta-visual) photograph of Jack Holt rather than the name 'Jack Holt'. Alternatively, we might accept that the allusion *would* have been merely a sight gag were it not for the fact that through the actor/character situational parallel it also meets the second dimension of allusive quality: engaging the audience in a dynamic process.<sup>13</sup>

Another potential counterexample may be seen in Tarantino's *Kill Bill: Vol. 1*. In a fight scene so elaborate and extended as to delight us in its ridiculousness, The Bride (Uma Thurman) sports a distinctively black-striped yellow jumpsuit that closely resembles the one worn by Bruce Lee in *Game of Death*. There is no doubt that Tarantino intends this as a Bruce Lee allusion, and it may seem a counterexample to my account in that it is a visual allusion only, and so should be ranked close to the *A-Team* case; yet it seems we should not relegate the jumpsuit allusion to so lowly a status. It seems better than that, although on its own it does not seem to prompt the kind of dynamic involvement that the *Ambersons* case does. Part of the reason may be that the yellow jumpsuit, as associated with a decidedly masculine genre (martial arts movies) and star, has been transposed into a feminist revenge story. Another part may be that the jumpsuit allusion to Lee is only one among a symphony of postmodern touches typical of Tarantino's work, with the appeal coming from the combination rather than any individual note.

Aside from the feminist slant, however, perhaps the jumpsuit allusion on its own has only minimal aesthetic value. In fact, the reason we are tempted to see it as more significant and more rewarding, I suggest, is that it is only one thread in a tapestry of allusions to Bruce Lee in the *Kill Bill* films.

In an earlier scene, before The Bride appears in the signature jumpsuit, the soundtrack blares Al Hirt's musical theme from the television series *The Green Hornet*, in which Bruce Lee played sidekick Kato – and indeed in the extended fight scene later on, many of the anonymous masked men slaughtered by The Bride resemble the crime-fighting Kato character. There is also a casting element. The eponymous Bill in *Kill Bill* is played by David Carradine, who became a star in the series *Kung Fu* as Kwai Chang Caine, a role for which Bruce Lee was considered but passed over. There is some speculation that Lee also should have received creative credit for the show, having unsuccessfully pitched to executives a series with the same premise.<sup>14</sup> Either way, martial arts fans are liable to understand Carradine as having occupied Lee's rightful place. This impression is only strengthened by the fact that Lee cowrote (with James Coburn) the story for a film called *Circle of Iron*; Lee died before it was produced ('Bruce Lee's spirit lives in Circle of Iron' reads the tagline), and when it was finally made, who did they hire for the leading role that had been intended for Lee? None other than David Carradine, whose *Kill Bill* character name furthermore evokes Lee's character name 'Billy Lo' from *Game of Death*, the one with the yellow jumpsuit.

Although we can read these references individually as little in-jokes – some visual, some auditory, some verbal – the more charitable reading is to take each as part of a grand tapestry of allusions to Bruce Lee. In an important sense, then, this 'grand allusion' has a variety of visual elements (yellow jumpsuit, Kato mask), and musical (*Green Hornet* theme), casting (Carradine), and verbal ('Bill') elements as well. (I do not claim these are the only allusions to Lee in the *Kill Bill* films, only that these are those I have noticed, nor do I think I have done anything more than scratch the surface of intertextual references in these films.) Since the tapestry of allusions relies on these various input types, the overall aesthetic effect is more powerful than merely aggregating each individual element. Indeed, if we add one historical note to this analysis, we will generate a whole extra layer of interpretation for the *Kill Bill* films.

The historical note is that Bruce Lee died during the production of *Game of Death*, with the result that completing the film required stand-ins for Lee; when we see the signature yellow jumpsuit, we are invited to think of it as Billy/Lee even when worn by a stand-in, as happens in a number of scenes, as if the stand-in were 'channeling' Lee in a partly posthumous performance. We may also read *Kill Bill*'s Bride as similarly intended to 'embody' the deceased star. Why is this interpretively relevant? Recall that Carradine was allusively positioned as occupying Bruce Lee's 'rightful' place in *Kung Fu* and *Circle of Iron*. The arc of the *Kill Bill* films is The Bride's quest for revenge against Bill, her attempted murderer who left her for dead and kidnapped from her womb her unborn child. We are tempted, then, to read *Kill Bill* as an allegory of Bruce Lee's revenge: The Bride/Lee seeks vengeance for Bill/Carradine having 'left them for dead' and then co-opting the role of

parent/star of *The Bride's*/Lee's child/brainchild. (I do not mean to suggest that this interpretation is somehow the key to the entire *Kill Bill* double feature, or even that it is the most important interpretive element. Alongside *The Bride's* literal revenge, however, I think my allegorical reading identifies an interpretive layer with a notable aesthetic appeal.)

V.

Both the apparent counterexample of the *Ambersons* allusion to Holt's ancestry and the tapestry of Bruce Lee allusions in the *Kill Bill* films, support rather than undermine my two part account of the aesthetic value of casting allusions.

My conclusions then are the following: (1) theories of allusion should address non-literary types and normative issues; (2) casting allusions exhibit a broad and fruitful range of allusive quality; (3) one dimension of allusive quality is *richness* (given the medium); (4) a second dimension is engaging viewers in a (complexity-borne) *dynamic process*.

I have not addressed in any detail, or at all, certain related but less immediately pertinent issues, such as the extent to which my account may or may not generalise to allusion in other art forms, for instance whether the two-or-more inputs dimension may be sensibly transposed to art forms that are limited to one input type: literature and music, for instance. No doubt the second dimension, engaging the audience in a dynamic process, probably will generalise and is probably true of many elements that contribute to a work's aesthetic efficacy. Another issue is how cognitive reflection and emotional response figure in such processes, although both seem to be present to a significant degree in appreciative audience response. Also worth exploring is how casting allusions in some cases may enhance, yet in others may distract and so potentially detract from, one's overall appreciation of a work. As such issues lie afield of the present work, I leave off by deferring them for another occasion.<sup>15</sup>

jason.holt@acadiau.ca

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NOTES

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Irwin 2001, 289.</li> <li>2. Following Holt 2015, 14.</li> <li>3. Hermerén 1992, 211.</li> <li>4. See for example Perri 1978, Ross 1981, Hermerén 1992, Leddy 1992, Irwin 2001, and Holt 2015.</li> <li>5. Irwin 2002.</li> <li>6. Carroll 1998, 214.</li> <li>7. I thank an anonymous reviewer for this ex-</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ample.</li> <li>8. I call this Type 2 (allusion through) rather than Type 1 (allusion to). See Holt 2015, 15.</li> <li>9. A critically acclaimed reboot ran 2005–2009. In this reboot, the playboy character Starbuck is recast as a woman (Katee Sackhoff).</li> <li>10. On the distinction between such neo-noir and classic film noir, see Holt 2006.</li> </ol> |
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11. Wollheim 1980, 213.
12. A complete account of such interplay would take us beyond the scope of the present paper. Suffice it to write, the notion of various kinds of such interplay seems phenomenologically plausible.
13. Another Welles casting allusion is found in Harry Lime's (Welles) 'cuckoo clock' speech in *The Third Man*, which explicitly references the Borgias, and thus invites us to recognise that in *Prince of Foxes*, also released in 1949, Welles plays Cesare Bor-
- gia.
14. This is dramatised in *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story* 1993.
15. Thanks to two anonymous reviewers for helpful comments. Earlier versions were presented at two conferences: the Atlantic Region Philosophers' conference at Saint Francis Xavier University and the Popular Culture and World Politics conference at Acadia University. Thanks to conference-goers who gave useful feedback.

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