THOMAS LAMARRE
(McGill University)

THE MEDIA REGION:
TRANSNATIONAL ADAPTATION AS
SUBJECTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Thomas Lamarre teaches in East Asian Studies and Communications Studies at McGill University. He is an author of books dealing with the history of media, thought, and material culture, with projects ranging from the communication networks of 9th century Japan (Uncovering Heian Japan: An archaeology of Sensation and Inscription, 2000), to silent cinema and the global imaginary (Shadows on the Screen: Tanazaki Jun’ichiro on Cinema and Oriental Aesthetics, 2005), animation technologies (The Anime Machine: A Media Theory of Animation, 2009) and on television and new media (The Anime Ecology: A Genealogy of Television, Animation, and Game Media, 2018).

In the course of adaptation across media forms and platforms, a series that initially appears ‘excessively obvious’ (Bordwell) may transform into something ‘excessively enigmatic’ (Elsaesser). Tracking the serialization of Hana yori dango or Hanadan across manga, music, animation, and cinema in the 1990s, Lamarre will explore how a relatively straightforward manga series turns into something like a puzzle or a mind game. While the study of production (creative industries) and narration (patterns of storytelling) sheds some light on the formal features of this transformation, Lamarre argues that transmedial serialization is best seen in terms of the formation of a social technology or subjective technology. It transforms interpretative practices into game-like procedures, or rules of the game. Looking at transmedial serialization as subjective technology also allows for a better understanding of the power formations that coalesce around it in the context of transnational serialization. This is especially important in the case of Hanadan in the 2000s. Hanadan has been touted as the most remade series in the East Asia region, with Japanese, Taiwanese, Chinese, Korean, Phillipine, and Indian versions. As such, this series offers insight in the emergence of new ways of understanding “Asia” as a media region.

5-6:30PM
FRIDAY, JAN 25

MOSHER ALUMNI HOUSE, ALUMNI HALL

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