

**Panel 23**  
**Film and Intermedial Encounters**

**Maintaining the Aura of Film: Sofia Coppola as Female Auteur**

*Anthea Lau Jinghui*  
*Nanyang Technological University*

Ephemeral in nature, visual and aural images construct an aura around the body of work of American movie director Sofia Coppola. The concept of the aura, as theorised by Walter Benjamin, explains it appears most present in an original work of art that presents its existence as subject to and testament of the history of time. If a work of art is considered unique due to the appearance of distance between the spectator and the tradition the work of art represents, then filmic production shatters the potential of an auratic presence. By constructing a space and time for the film to be stitched together—as opposed to being invented in that particular space and time—a film reduces this gulf. Sofia Coppola represents a new era of filmmaking that revives the idea of auratic art. She creates specific films with an interior meaning for girlhood, utilising feminine aesthetics on a scale so unprecedented that she reclaims them. Her films often recenter the adolescent girl against the backdrop of her privilege instead of the politics and historical context of its time, inviting us to reconsider the responsibility of filmmakers to articulate an aesthetics of girlhood and frivolousness. This paper seeks to demonstrate her role as an auteur and how she constructs an aura around her filmography on girls and girlhood. To discuss her entire filmography, however, is beyond the scope of the paper, and I will focus on *Lost in Translation*, drawing critical connections to other films where significant.

**Biography**

Anthea Lau Jinghui is a recent graduate from Nanyang Technological University with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in English Literature and minoring in Modern Languages. Her research interests lie at the intersection of self-publishing, transcription, and the female experience of reading.