



When understood as components of physical and social landscape, media display a distinct and decisive set of qualities. First, more than tools for recording, storing, and transmitting information, they appear as resources for negotiating with reality and with others within a particular situation. Second, more than individual devices performing specific functions, they appear as infrastructures that underpin the space and “innervate” it, as Walter Benjamin would have said. Third, more than entities that are part of a territory, they become the territory — the playground, or even the battleground, where the mediation is made possible.

The notion of mediascape, that I borrow from Arjun Appadurai and I redefine as the specialized environment that promotes or facilitates mediation between individuals and with reality, can provide a useful conceptual framework for such an amalgamation of physical and social landscape and technical devices. The lecture will present some theoretical questions tied to an environmental consideration of media and will discuss some potential case-studies, including the movie theatre, the highway, the city, but also the waste dump where obsolete technologies are discharged.

Francesco Casetti is the Thomas E. Donnelly Professor of Humanities and Film and Media Studies at Yale. He had previously taught in Italy as a full professor at the Catholic University of Milan, at the University of Trieste, and served as President of the Italian Scholarly Society of Film and Media Studies. He also taught as a visiting professor at Paris 3 La Sorbonne Nouvelle, at the University of Iowa, and at Harvard. In 2000, he was awarded the “Chair of Italian Culture” from UC Berkeley for his distinguished contribution to the field.

Casetti is the author of numerous books on semiotics, spectatorship, and film and media theories, including *Inside the Gaze: The Film and Its Spectator* (Indiana UP, 1998), *Theories of Cinema, 1945-1995* (Texas UP, 1999), and *Eye of the Century: Film, Experience, Modernity* (Columbia UP, 2008). His latest monograph, *The Lumière Galaxy: 7 Key Words for the Cinema to Come* (Columbia UP, 2015), received the prestigious Limina Prize for the Best International Film Studies Book. His current research focuses on the early film theories, with a particular regard for the cinephobic stances in the first half of the 20th century, and on a genealogy of screen that underlines its environmental aspects and its propensity to become a component of our current “mediascapes.”

