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| Title            | Between realities: investigating temporal relations between stillness and movement in contemporary artists' lens-based imagery |
| Author(s)        | Duggan, Nora   |
| Publication Date | 2017-02-23   |
| Item record      | <a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10379/6353">http://hdl.handle.net/10379/6353</a>  |

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**Between Realities: *Investigating Temporal Relations between Stillness and Movement in Contemporary Artists' Lens-based Imagery***

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February 2017

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## **ABSTRACT**

Temporal registers of stillness and movement in lens-based imagery, traditionally defined under the terms of photography and film, are in many ways two faces of the same coin, one representing time as a frozen moment and the other as the passing present. Contemporary imaging techniques allow the two faces to overlap, contort and distort beyond recognition, suggesting that the original function of the two-faced coin is rendered obsolete. This art practice-based research proposes that the coincidence of stillness and movement in contemporary imagery, while emphasizing rather than erasing their singular functions, can produce distinctively unique relations between the media that extend their potential for temporal inquiry.

The following research investigates the coin in the process of a toss, when both media are equally in play. Taking the Quadrangle building of NUI Galway, Ireland, as a point of departure for a new body of research material, I compiled an archive of digital photographs and videos over the course of a twelve month period. These images were subsequently used to construct a twenty-minute video installation titled *Quad* (2013) that served as an essential working case study at the mid-point of the research project. The images slide from stasis to motion and back again thus creating visual rhythms that often provide no discernible separation point between the two temporal states of stillness and movement.

My findings contend that the final iteration of my practical research contributes significantly to a growing body of artistic works that utilize contemporary media imaging techniques to produce temporal rhythms of exchange between stillness and movement. Furthermore, these works seek to establish a notably contemplative encounter between the imagery and the spectator. Three related videos, *Presence*, *Return* and *Landing*, form one gallery installation titled *Between Realities* (2016). The videos negotiate a shared space in which the opposing rhythms of stillness and movement are refracted through one another, and out of which unexpected temporal relations can surface.

## **DECLARATION**

I certify that this thesis that I now submit for examination for the award of PhD is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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Word count: 49,120.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Firstly, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my primary supervisor, Dr. Conn Holohan, and my additional supervisors Professor Rod Stoneman and Professor Timothy Emlyn Jones, for their excellent insights and guidance throughout this research project.

I would also like to thank the researchers and staff of the Digital Arts and Humanities PhD Program, and their counterparts at the Huston School of Film and Digital Media, NUI Galway, for all their kind support and encouragement.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my friends and family. While not wishing to diminish the support offered by all, a few warrant notable attention. To Mo, I would not have survived without your patient ear and numerous lunch treats. To my husband Istvan, thank you for not divorcing me. And to my mother Phil, thank you for all your support and encouragement over the course of my artistic endeavours. You are inspiring!

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **0.1 Overview**

My art practice serves as the primary research methodology for this thesis. Three final video works titled *Presence*, *Return*, and *Landing* form one gallery installation titled *Between Realities* (2016). Documentary footage of the exhibited work is provided on the USB flash drive included with this written thesis, and plays an integral role in the research. I therefore request that this documentation be viewed prior to any reading of the written text. The works engage complex sets of visual and auditory rhythms that form relations between stillness and movement, and ultimately between the imagery and the spectator. It must also be noted that the experience of viewing the installation on a computer screen is radically different to the gallery experience. With that in mind, please make allowances for a necessary compromise.

The temporal registers of stillness and movement were traditionally defined under the terms of photography and film in lens-based imagery. In many ways they were two faces of the same coin, the former representing a frozen moment from the past and the latter the passing present. Digital technology allows the two faces to overlap, contort and distort beyond recognition. Some would say that this renders the original function of the coin obsolete. This art practice-based research proposes that the coincidence of stillness and movement in contemporary imagery can produce distinctively unique relations between the two temporal rhythms that emphasize rather than erase their differences. As such, traditional definitions implied by the temporal registers of photographic and cinematic media remain active, but their coincidence gestures towards another temporal dimension that cannot be represented by either media individually, and any singular reading proves inadequate. In other words, the thesis investigates the coin in mid-toss, when both temporal registers negotiate a shared space. One rhythm interacts with the other, forming relations that take advantage of oppositions between stasis and motion.

I contend that when stillness and movement coincide, the resulting imagery seek to access a non-chronological and specifically contemplative expression of time in which

the past and the present coexist. The term contemplative defines a process of prolonged thought. In the context of this thesis, however, it serves to determine process of prolonged *creative* thought that the imagery under consideration seeks to initiate. Following the theory of the cinematic image put forward by Gilles Deleuze in his book *Cinema 2, The Time-Image* (1989), I will argue that these works do not function primarily as representations of time or place. Rather, they emphasize relations between the image, time and creative thought. Various structures are applied to the works that call on the spectator to actively participate in making meaning. In other words, the images seek to elicit a contemplative engagement with and in time. When addressing the notion that time can be measured as immobile points of movement, Henri Bergson states, ‘A movement could not alight on an immobility for it would then coincide with it, which would be contradictory’ (*The Creative Mind* 213). In many ways, my research seeks to visualize this contradiction and investigate the consequences.

This thesis first outlines how my art practice highlighted an ongoing curiosity about the coincidence of stillness and movement. It will then address the practical research undertaken during my doctoral studies. The practice is equally informed by artworks that engage with both photography and film, and theoretical discourses that address the media’s distinct, yet closely linked, relationships to time. Taking the form of a literature review, both contexts will be addressed below in order to trace the foundations of a relationship that continues to be challenged by contemporary technology as extended forms of shared inquiry between the two media evolve. The photographs, films and artworks that I examine are frequently described as pensive or contemplative. I contend that this description is due to their temporal structures. These investigations will begin by outlining the historical context of the photographic image under these terms, followed by a similar examination of the cinematic image, and finally address instances when both media overlap.

The introduction concludes with summaries of the three chapters to follow. Chapter one outlines a theoretical framework to support the notion of contemplative

spectatorship. The term contemplation implies prolonged thoughtful engagement, but what process of thought is implied in this context? Drawing from Bergson's distinction between intellectual and intuitive knowledge, and followed by Jacques Rancière's call for a reinvestigation into established structures of knowledge production, and the image as a site for pensive thought in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009), I examine the circumstances under which interactions between the opposing temporal rhythms of stillness and movement can promote creative thought. In terms of the relationship between the image, time and thought, I will then investigate Deleuze's application of Bergson's theory of duration to cinematic imagery, and argue that Bergson's theory of intuition can also be applied to images that address time directly. In so doing, I will establish the circumstances by which an image can be said to invite contemplative inquiry. The following two chapters turn towards the images themselves. Chapter two investigates the meaning and function of what Deleuze terms 'aberrant movement' (*Cinema 2* 35), and the role it plays in my art practice as research. According to Deleuze, cinematic movement is inherently aberrant, or abnormal to use another term, because it deviates from normal movement in the physical world and can therefore force us to think the world anew by presenting us with alternative temporal structures. As a result, it becomes possible to re-imagine time. Following from an examination of the role aberrant movement plays in historical and contemporary moving image practices, I will investigate instances of aberrant movement in my work, and determine how its exposure can produce direct images of time. The third chapter focuses on the cinematic interval, that is, the point between two frames, shots, or sequences. The interval is frequently concealed from the spectator. However, when extended, it can expose the point at which stillness and movement collide. It can also emphasize aberrant movement so that its affects are accentuated and extended.

## **0.2 Methodology – Art Practice-based Research**

Having worked with the medium of stained glass for fifteen years, I returned to full time art education in 2007 and was intuitively drawn to the immediacy of digital photography, video, and post-production techniques. I began to investigate the DIT

(Dublin Institute of Technology) college building of Portland Row through these media, and was particularly intent on capturing traces of light moving across the building's interior surfaces. I soon realized that I was attempting to visualize the movement of time. This proved an elusive subject, and translating its immaterial form into visible imagery is a challenge that I considered neither photography nor video alone managed to capture adequately. It led me to consider whether elements of both are required, an interaction between the two temporal rhythms of stillness and movement. Photography produced frozen moments but lacked the ability to record the dance of light and shade. Video footage captured a certain form of movement, but did not necessarily produce imagery that called for a form of pensive reflection that the actual event invited the spectator to engage with. Animating stilled images and slowing video footage showed more promise, and layering one over another with varying degrees of transparency allowed me to construct imagery with a similar play between stillness and movement that the event itself contained. This working process was familiar to me because glass painting involves a similar process of layering that either allows light to pass through the glass sheet or holds light on its surface. In retrospect, I can interpret this as allowing, halting, or combining stillness and movement within one frame. In fact, my interest in visualising reflected light reached further back, as is evident from an early painting I made at the age of ten (see fig. 1).



Fig. I, *Highfield Painting*, poster paint on paper, 21x27cm (circa 1981)

Thirty odd years later, my artistic curiosity remains focused on just such events. The comparisons between the image *Highfield Painting* above and *Highfield Dawn* below, produced in 2009, are striking (see fig. 2).

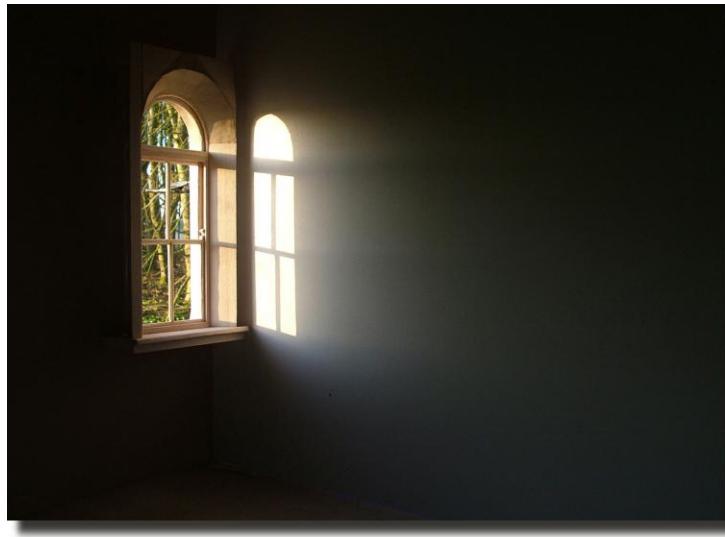


Fig. 2, *Highfield Dawn*, digital photograph (2009)

It could be said that an artist has one primary subject of inquiry that she will reiterate over the course of her practice. However, to identify recurrence is one thing, but to understand why it reoccurs is quite another, and I believe an interrogation of one's practice in order to expose underlying inquiries lies at the heart of art as research. In my case, my work has always been addressing the complex nature of time, whether I realized it or not.

Working with digital media as a form of temporal inquiry required a sustained investigation into the historical and theoretical relationship already established between photography and film practices. It is then possible to question how contemporary works compare to, or deviate from, their analogue counterparts. What was lost and/or gained through the digital turn? The first year of my doctorate was focused primarily on such theoretical inquiry. Although I continued to make work, I believe these early experiments are best described as theoretical illustrations rather than concrete artworks in their own right. One initial difficulty was locating an

appropriate site of inquiry as point of departure for a new body of work. As my focus is temporal inquiry, I first decided to investigate the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, London, which houses the Prime Meridian Line and therefore claims to be ‘the centre of world time’. However, as W. G. Sebald argues in his book *Austerlitz* (2002), it perhaps refers more to a human construction of measured time rather than the nature of time itself (141). On visiting the site, I did record a series of images for artistic exploration that I hoped might lead to further engagement with The Royal Observatory. However, its consideration highlighted that my artistic research for this doctoral project required a location that could be accessed on a daily basis. Fortunately, a chance encounter with reflected light in a corridor of the Quadrangle building at NUI Galway (see fig. 3) in September of 2012 set my practical research on a more productive course.

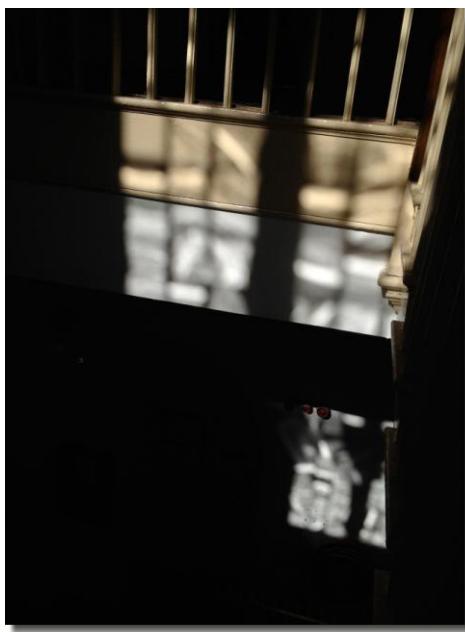


Fig. 3, Stairway, Quadrangle Building, digital photograph (2012)

Taking this Quadrangle building as a starting point, I compiled an archive of digital photographs and videos over twelve months. The images, both still and moving, served as my primary artistic research that I used as source material to experiment with various techniques for combining two or more temporal rhythms, and resulted in

the construction of a twenty-minute single channel video projection titled *Quad* that was exhibited at the University Gallery, NUI Galway in October 2013 (see Appendix II for documentation). *Quad* is a single channel HD video projection comprised of seven image-sequences that are separated by extended interstices in the form of empty frames. Each sequence was constructed using a series of semi-transparent layers so that the stilled temporal rhythm of one image would blend seamlessly with the moving rhythms of another underlying image, and this process often determined which images were collaged together. My main focus at this point was on the interaction between the rhythms in each sequence, and the rate of change from one sequence to the next.

As a practice based researcher, it is difficult to gain the necessary distance from our work-in-progress in order to determine how and why decisions are made during the working process. Providing an interval of time to elapse between the artistic process of making *Quad* and approaching it as a generative research case study proved essential as it allowed me to reflect on the work and draw out the most valid conceptual terms under which to re-examine it. With *Quad* I had, at the very least, produced an artwork-in-progress that was suggesting various possible research trajectories. For instance, the interstices between each sequence were initially included to avoid inadvertently building any narrative associations between linked images by allowing an interval of time to pass between sequences. However, the interstices proved more significant than I initially realized, and pointed towards the cinematic interval as a pertinent practical and conceptual line of inquiry. Their presence between image-sequences not only avoided narrative associations, they allowed for reflective thought. Furthermore, as I dissolved a preceding sequence into the extended interstice, these pauses became images in their own right and, as will be discussed in more detail in chapter two, contributed to the contemplative quality produced by the interactions between the image-sequences and the interstices.

The images in *Quad* slide from stasis to motion and back again, creating visual rhythms that often provide no discernible separation point between the two temporal states. Likewise, the subtle ambient soundtrack emphasizes the intangible nature of

temporal passing. The soundtrack creates an additional layer of sonic relations between the recorded sounds and the actual sounds surrounding the spectator. I considered carefully whether to include sound at all. It is a strong emotive medium that can easily overpower the visual rhythms. However, I decided sound layers, while acting as non-visual linking mechanisms between one image and the next, also added to the ephemeral nature of the work. Therefore, if handled with a light touch, perhaps these sonic rhythms could interact with the visual rhythms in a productive manner.

As a singular work, *Quad* succeeded in emphasizing the temporal rhythms of stillness and movement. However, it also succeeded in highlighting that these oppositions also emphasize related oppositions such as those between presence and absence that the interaction between the image-sequences and the interstices engaged. Additionally, focusing on reflected light highlighted the relationship between interior and exterior movements. As such, *Quad* served more like a visual equivalent of a literature review in that it exposed relevant fields of inquiry for further investigation. I then examined each sequence for evidence of how each one addressed these oppositions, and realized that some addressed specific oppositions more directly than others. For instance, the sequence pictured in fig. 4 below highlights the presence and absence of a physical object whereas many of the sequences that originally surrounded it in *Quad* are more focused on the movement of light reflections around interior architectural surfaces.



Fig 4, still from *Quad* (2013)

Two more sequences include exterior landscapes with no apparent relation to the

interior building, and suggest seasonal oppositions that emphasize cyclical forms of temporal inquiry. It became clear that these various oppositions required focused attention and as such, perhaps breaking *Quad* into a series of independent, yet related, works, might achieve better results. Additionally, if exhibited alongside each other, perhaps their varying durations could form unexpected relations.

These additional oppositions that surfaced raised questions in terms of how meaning is produced in imagery with coinciding yet opposing relations, and directed my theoretical investigations towards such inquiry. What kind of oppositions do still images set in motion? How are these oppositions effected when movement is introduced? Do the relations between the oppositions produce contemplative thought? While continuing to experiment with my practical research, I investigated theoretical approaches that address such questions to photographic, cinematic and contemporary imagery.

### **0.3 The Photographic**

In his essay ‘The Ontology of the Photographic Image’ (1967), André Bazin argues that the photographic image provided a more accurate representation of reality than any media preceding it due to its objectivity. Consequently, Bazin argues that photography had a dramatic effect on our relationship to images; ‘In spite of any objections our critical spirit may offer, we are forced to accept as real the existence of the object reproduced, actually *re*-presented, set before us, that is to say, in time and space’ (13, 14) (emphasis in the original). This indexical link to reality was also significant to Roland Barthes. In his search for the essence of photography in *Camera Lucida* (1981), he suggests a 'specific photograph, in effect, is never distinguished from its referent' (5). In fact, he argues that the photograph cannot exist without its referent;

It is as if the Photograph always carries its referent with itself, both affected by the same amorous or funereal immobility, at the very heart of the moving world....Whatever it grants to vision and whatever its manner, a photograph is always invisible: it is not it that we see... In short, the referent adheres (6).

In her book *On Photography* (1977), Susan Sontag argues that although there is indeed unprecedented objectivity in the photographic image, the photographer's hand, or more specifically, subjectivity, is often present in the image whether we recognize it or not. She points to the work of photographers including Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans commissioned by the Farm Security Administration in the USA during the great depression, and argues that the images chosen for publication were selected in order to achieve a very specific and subjective interpretation. Sontag states;

In deciding how a picture should look, in preferring one exposure to another, photographers are always imposing standards on their subjects. Although there is a sense in which the camera does indeed capture reality, not just interpret it, photographs are as much an interpretation of the world as paintings and drawings are (6,7).

However, in addressing this point, Bazin argues that although the photographer's hand might be evident, the significant role played by the camera in capturing an image with a mechanical eye distinguishes the medium from those preceding it (13). Following such theoretical discourses, then, one could conclude that the primary goal of photography is to represent the subject photographed and evidence its existence at a specific place and time. In my case, I am less concerned with picturing 'reality' as a fixed moment in time and space. My primary goal is to construct images that imply invisible realities beyond the photographic frame, and that are made apparent by the interaction between the actual imagery captured through the lens and the thought process of implication that this activates in the mind of the spectator. Probing Bazin and Barthes further, it became clear that neither theorist was content to limit their fascination with the medium to its representational capabilities alone.

Bazin considers that the inherently objective nature of photography extends our ability to connect with the world through images. He maintains that the photographic image does not simply record nature, but produces an affect similar to those produced by natural phenomena (13). It thus produces a non-human encounter with nature that would otherwise be unavailable to us. For instance, he argues that photography's

ability to freeze natural movement 'embalms time, rescuing it simply from its proper corruption' (14). In other words, photography preserves its image, emancipating it from the constant flow of time in the natural world. As such, its stillness produces a temporal anomaly that he suggests creates a new image of the world rather than merely recording an image of something that already exists (15). Moreover, he credits the surrealists with appropriating and manipulating photographic objectivity in order to produce works in which distinctions between the real and the imaginary are abandoned (15). In these works, Bazin suggests that the surrealists can make visible a natural hallucinogenic reality that exists between fact and fiction.

Returning to the inherent stillness of photography, Barthes identifies 'that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph: the return of the dead' (*Camera Lucida* 9). Echoing Barthes, Sontag describes photographs as 'those ghostly traces' (9). She states;

All photographs are *memento mori*. To take a photograph is to participate in another person's (or thing's) mortality, vulnerability, mutability. Precisely by slicing out this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time's relentless melt' (15) (emphasis in the original).

This indicates a kind of temporal double exposure experienced by the spectator, in that the return of the deceased from the past into the present precipitates her own inevitable future demise. As such, the objectivity of the image produces a subjective response in that the spectator sees her own death echoed in the image, her future anterior. Barthes carries this point further when he argues that some photographs produce a pensive viewing experience. The term pensive implies a thoughtful but somewhat melancholic process that he suggests is triggered by what he terms a photographic *punctum* (*Camera Lucida* 27).

According to Barthes, photographs that purposely reveal the photographer's intentions cannot achieve this pensive state, and are confined to what he terms a '*studium*' (26) of interest. The *studium* relates to a photograph's functional role as a representation

and/or signification that *informs* rather than *affects* him. In contrast, photographs that retain his fascination include some unintentional detail that overrides the *studium* by causing an affective reaction. These photographs contain what he terms a *punctum* that he describes as 'that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)' (27). The camera records this detail precisely because it does not think, it does not have an intended political goal, and it does not add or eliminate any detail set before it. Barthes' theory of the *punctum* sets in motion an oscillation between the necessary objective quality of the camera and a corresponding subjective response by the spectator that I have noted above in relation to Sontag's observations. Barthes states that the *punctum* can produce latency (53), in that a detail can imply the presence of something that the photograph does not actually contain. He further maintains that one might only become aware of the *punctum* when one's eyes are shut, for it is then that the image can 'speak in silence' (55). As such, Barthes suggests that the photograph can animate, not through containing movement, but through activating it in the spectator's reflective response. He states 'it animates me, and I animate it' (20). Here, again, the photograph is described as an affective (55) rather than a representative encounter. When Barthes attempts to identify the 'affect' (21) that photography impresses on him as a spectator, he states that he wanted to explore it 'not as a question ... but as a wound: I see, I feel, hence I notice, I observe, and I think' (21). Again, this implies a subjective and reflective, rather than an objective and immediate, response from the spectator. It also suggests a notable visual rather than textual interpretation of the image in relation to the *punctum*, and Barthes implies as much when he states, 'What I can name cannot really prick me' (51).

Could it be argued that the *punctum* activates an image from the spectator's archive of memories, and in so doing draws her own past into the present? Not according to Barthes, who states categorically 'The Photograph does not call up the past (nothing Proustian in a photograph)' (82). Barthes suggests the reverse occurs when he states, 'Motionless, the Photograph flows back from presentation to retention' (90). This argument goes some way towards explaining my dissatisfaction with photographic images in early attempts to capture temporal events. If the photograph is confined to a

temporal flow from the present to the past, it can only partially accomplish what I require, namely an image comprised of multi-directional temporal relations. It must be noted, however, that although Barthes suggests the photograph does not draw the past into the present, he does imply that the photograph can draw the spectator's memories into the present: When discussing a family portrait by James Van der Zee, Barthes suggests that, upon reflection, the *punctum* turned out to be a necklace that reminded him of one his aunt had owned. This memory was re-activated for Barthes through a process of reflection, and therefore suggests more complex relations at play between the present and the past in photographic imagery. Another difficulty in following Barthes lies in the aleatoric character of the *punctum*. Although he suggests the *punctum* can produce pensiveness, he also points out that this is often a result of chance rather than intention. This raises the question; how can one produce images that set a reflective thought process in motion when Barthes suggests this is out of the practitioner's hands?

Barthes also identifies a second photographic *punctum* that he relates directly to time, and that again refers to photography's link with death. Rather than emerging from a detail, this *punctum* involves the 'vertigo of time defeated' (97) that the oppositions '*This will be* and *this has been*' (96, emphasis in the original) set in motion, particularly, but not exclusively, in photographs depicting persons since deceased.

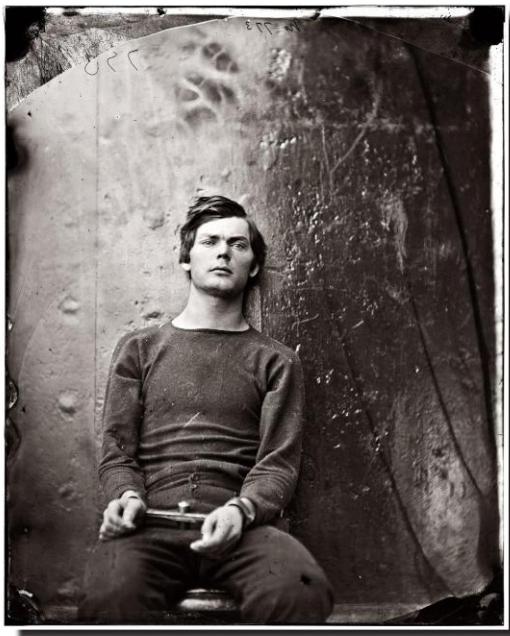


Fig. 5, Alexander Gardner *Lewis Payne* (1865)

Referring to Alexander Gardner's photograph *Portrait of Lewis Payne* (1865), taken after Payne was condemned to death (see fig. 5), Barthes states:

The Photograph is handsome, as is the boy: that is the *studium*. But the *punctum* is: *he is going to die*. I read at the same time: *This will be* and *this has been*; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is the stake (96).

Both Barthes and Sontag indicate that the temporal relationship between the past, present and future, implied by the term ‘anterior future’ referred to by Barthes above, is set in motion by photography’s ability to make the dead visible, and results in a certain melancholic pensiveness. However, my artwork seeks to engage a contemplative rather than pensive thought process. The distinction might at first seem minor as both terms imply reflective thought. Contemplation, however, does not necessarily imply melancholy. Bazin’s claim that photography can produce an unprecedented image of the world is less tied to the return of the dead and more open in terms of the direction thought might take. Jacques Rancière’s essay “The Pensive Image” in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009) picks up this point. Rancière proposes

an alternative approach to how pensiveness could be produced that is useful to consider in terms of applying the theoretical concepts to art practice. Furthermore, although Rancière uses the term *pensive*, he broadens the meaning of the term in such a way that leads me to believe that the term *contemplative* more accurately describes the thought process he proposes.

Rancière first challenges Barthes' distinction between the *studium* and *punctum* as it relates to pensiveness. While Barthes argues that in order for the *punctum* to affect him, he must first 'dismiss all knowledge, all culture ... refuse to inherit anything from another eye than my own' (*Camera Lucida* 51), Rancière points out that in order for the photograph of Lewis Payne to have such an effect, the spectator must rely on prior knowledge, for instance she must be aware of Payne's conviction (112). Furthermore, Rancière argues that although Barthes' theory of the *punctum* implies that the photograph can contain surplus thoughts, it leads these thoughts in one direction only: towards the affect of death (112).

Rancière argues that to describe people as *pensive* is to imply that they are 'full of thoughts' but not necessarily actively thinking them (107). Addressing the notion of a *pensive* image, he first points out that an image does not think, and argues that it can only be described as such if it contains 'unthought thought' in that the image contains thoughts that cannot be accounted for by the practitioner nor are they indicated by the content of the photograph. In contrast to Barthes, he does not limit the production of such thoughts to accidental details. Rather, Rancière argues that pensiveness is the result of 'several forms of inderminacy' (114). In other words, the image contains contradictory layers of meaning. For instance, he identifies three such indeterminate forms in the photograph of Lewis Payne: whether or not its aesthetic composition was intentional; the difficulty in locating the image in time due to potential contradictions between the image's dated texture on one hand and the figure's posture and gaze that appear contemporary on the other; and finally our inability to determine the figure's attitude to his circumstances (114). According to Rancière, these indeterminacies cause a circulatory response between the practitioner, the image, and the spectator that

is set in motion by opposing relations between ‘the intentional and the unintentional, the known and the unknown, the expressed and unexpressed, the present and the past’ (114, 115).

Rancière further argues that this pensiveness marks an historical transition ‘from a representative regime of expression to an aesthetic regime’ (120) that have implications for the relationship between the image and thought. He proposes that under the representative regime, the image directed thought in one of two ways; either it was determined directly by the expressions and attitudes of the figures represented, or indirectly by figures that substitute one expression for another as when, for example, an eagle expresses majesty or a lion expresses courage (121). Neither function is made redundant under the aesthetic regime. Rather, they both exist simultaneously so that two or more meanings are combined in one image. Consequently, thought is given no clear direction to take. In other words, Rancière’s pensive image could be compared to a road map that provides the spectator with many paths, all equally valid. The paths intersect at various points forming a kind of maze with no clearly defined entry or exit routes. As such, the spectator is forced to pause. No longer clearly directed by the image, she must think for herself.

Moving away from portraiture and towards reflections on a photograph that is perhaps more directly comparable to my art practice in that it also focuses on an architectural detail, Rancière addresses similar forms of indeterminacy apparent in Walker Evans photograph *Kitchen Wall, Alabama Farmstead* (1936). Rancière suggests that it is precisely because the spectator does not know whether the scene was deliberately or arbitrarily staged, and whether the photographer sought to record a specific lifestyle or create a semi-abstract aesthetic composition (118) that allows the image to be described as pensive. Rancière’s call for pensiveness through ‘several forms of indeterminacy’ in one image can also be applied to potential relations between the coincidence of stillness and movement, and will be explored later in this chapter.

Although both Barthes and Rancière propose that the image can produce a pensive response, their definitions of pensiveness appear to differ. Barthes implies that

pensiveness describes reflective thought produced by accidental details that activate past memories whereas Rancière implies that pensiveness produces new thoughts by opposing two or more indeterminate responses in one image. Furthermore, Rancière argues that a pensive image produces thought that ‘has an effect on the person who views it without her linking it to a determinate object’ (107). However, both propositions agree that the image calls for a certain suspension of activity, a pause if you will, and it is in this pause that thoughts are produced rather than directed. The term pensive carries with it aspects of the melancholic that may be appropriate if the photograph is primarily tied to death. Rancière implies a much more fertile interaction between the present and the past through various forms of indeterminacy, and it is for this reason that I consider the term contemplative more appropriate than pensive. Contemplation describes an act of prolonged thought without suggesting the same melancholic tendency.

Hiroshi Sugimoto’s *Theaters* series of photographs provides an interesting case study in terms of supporting Rancière’s notion of opposing forms of indeterminacy in images that address the movement of time through stillness. Time appears to be trapped, rather than stilled, in these photographs. They respond to a question Sugimoto posed to himself in 1978: ‘Suppose you shoot a whole movie in a single frame?’ (“Theaters”) With this in mind, he brought a large format camera into a New York movie theater and left the camera shutter open for the entire duration of the screening, thus exposing the celluloid film to approximately two hours of movement.



Fig. 6, Hiroshi Sugimoto, *UA Playhouse, NYC (1978)*

In Sugimoto's photograph *UA Playhouse, NYC* (1978) (see fig. 6), the viewer's attention is drawn to a rectangle of light that appears to bleed out of its frame and illuminate the surrounding architectural details that normally remain in darkness. On one level, the series could now be considered a useful historical archive of movie theatre interiors. On another level, however, the spectator's attention is constantly drawn to the empty screen that acts like a vessel containing the duration of the film. If related to Rancière's proposition of forms of indeterminacy, the *Theaters* series produce pensiveness because the spectator is confronted by two images at once; 'the image as a duplicate of a thing and the image conceived as artistic operation' (108). Sugimoto's theater series are a doubly pertinent example, as the artistic operation involved in exposing duration simultaneously erases the images contained in the screened movie and captures a 'duplicate' of the surrounding architecture. In this sense, their evidentiary value is a consequence of their primary concern as an artistic exploration of time through photography.

By emptying the screen of normal cinematic markers such as narrative and movement Sugimoto produces a still image from the one element remaining; time. John Yau suggests that in Sugimoto's images 'time is both non-existent and circular' ("Time Halted"). Yau argues that in contrast to Barthes' notion of the dual function of the *punctum* to separate the past "This has been" from the future "This will be" Sugimoto's images compress time. His use of a long exposure imposes an uncanny 'unreal' impression on the resulting prints in which, to quote Yau, 'the viewer is floating in a world of halted time'. Although the long exposure results in capturing surrounding architectural details, it is the distinctively luminous quality of light bleeding from the empty rectangular cinema screen that invites reflection on its cause.

The theories investigated so far address the spectator's subjective response to an objective image, in that the camera, due to its indifference to what is set before it, allows the spectator to re-imagine reality through a non-human lens. It has been argued that contemporary digital imagery challenge, and possibly undermine, previous

claims that photography is essentially objective. For instance, the ease by which images can be digitally manipulated could result in the removal of accidental details that are so vital to Barthes's *punctum*. At what point does the photograph itself become another form of subjective interpretation, rather than a mechanical reproduction at a remove from human intervention? In contemporary image culture, can spectators be certain that 'that-has-been' (Barthes *Camera Lucida* 12) or that the image 'is the object itself' (Bazin 14)?

Miriam Hansen suggests that digital imagery engages post-production technology more than ever before, thereby severing the indexical link between the image and its referent. She argues that 'traditional models of representation have given way to the reign of simulation' (viii). Likewise, Lev Manovich argues that the period of cinematic history which tied its imagery to representations of reality was an exception, and claims that cinema now 'becomes a particular branch of painting – painting in time' (192). However, Tom Gunning suggests that the truth claim of photography and its supposed alignment with indexicality require further interrogation, arguing that digital images call into question previous assumptions made for lens-based media ("What's the Point of the Index" 24). Firstly, he addresses the notion that an index resembles the object it represents by pointing out that this is not necessarily the case. For example, in the case of analogue photography the index is captured by a chemical reaction to light rather than the picture produced. Therefore, he argues that the 'numerical data produced by a digital camera and the image of traditional chemical photography are both indexically determined by objects outside the camera' (25).

Echoing Sontag's argument above, Gunning also points out that any truth claim in relation to analogue photography must first disregard the processes of production; 'The mediation of lens, film stock, exposure rate, type of shutter, processes of developing and of printing become magically whisked away if one considers the photograph as a direct imprint of reality' (25). With this in mind, the differences between analogue and digital photography must be considered relative rather than absolute (26). Furthermore, although post-production software such as Photoshop

provides the means to construct digital imagery with no corresponding referent, Gunning questions whether it is ever the intention of digital practitioners to *create* an image rather than *transform* it. He suggests that even photographs that at first appear to reject truth claims ‘actually strive to present a contradiction, an oxymoron, an impossible presence, invoking photographic reference even while contradicting it’ (32). Following Rancière, it could be argued that digital imagery activate additional forms of indeterminacy between what was recorded and what was simulated that, in turn, affect a pensive response.

Both Rancière and Gunning imply that it is futile to deny photography’s indexical link because this would erase its significant contribution to the image’s potential impact. In any case, that is not my intention. Rather, my goal is to prioritize the image’s ability to address temporal anomalies such as those that Rancière identifies in Gardner’s *Portrait of Lewis Payne* and Sugimoto strives to capture in his *Theater* series. What, then, can movement contribute to my images? Barthes maintains that the cinema cannot elicit a pensive response because its images move at such speed one is denied the opportunity to reflect on them (*Camera Lucida* 55).

It is worth noting here that Barthes may have been referring primarily to mainstream cinema that for the most part prioritized narrative concerns, whereas much avant-garde and experimental film practices explored alternative temporal rhythms through moving imagery. If, as Rancière proposes, an image’s ability to produce pensiveness derives from forms of indeterminacy, can various coinciding rhythms of movement then be described under such terms? If so, perhaps the addition of subtle movement laid over stillness severs the melancholic photographic associations and leads to a thought process better described as contemplative rather than pensive. The following section outlines the development of such works both within and on the periphery of cinema.

#### 0.4 The Cinematic

While proposing that photography’s ability to produce an objective image of reality makes it ‘the most important event in the history of plastic arts’ (16), Bazin also argues

that cinema superseded photography as a means to capture an objective image of reality due to the addition of movement. He states, 'Now, for the first time, the image of things is likewise the image of their duration, change mummified as it were' (14, 15). Sontag at first appears to agree with Bazin on this point, although she suggests it is not the absence of movement that indicates the photograph's limitations, but its lack of narrative. She states;

Strictly speaking, one never understands anything from a photograph... In contrast to the amorous relation, which is based on how something looks, understanding is based on how it functions. And functioning takes place in time, and must be explained in time. Only that which narrates can make us understand (23).

Sontag's statement above implies that cinematic imagery's narrative capabilities are its most powerful function. The filmmaker and writer Andrey Tarkovsky, however, states that cinema's primary function lies in its ability to express rhythms of time (113). These two standpoints highlight two distinctive approaches to the moving image from its inception; those practitioners and theorists who focused on its potential for narration, and those who explored its temporal and/or material form as a medium for artistic expression. Cinema has become associated with narrative through the dominance of the Hollywood film industry. However, narrative is only one of many modes of expression that moving imagery engages. Practitioners seeking to produce direct expressions of time have also turned to cinema since the media's inception. Narrative and avant-garde cinematic practices do not, therefore, necessarily follow conflicting paths. They continue to evolve in parallel to one another and constantly inform and influence one another. Peter Wollen calls for this dual relationship to be acknowledged when he states that no theorist or avant-garde practitioner can ignore Hollywood. He argues that something new can only emerge when the systems set in place by this dominant industry are challenged (118). Echoing Wollen, Maeve Connolly argues that to define an artwork as cinematic 'necessarily invokes pre-existing notions and expectations about cinema, which are likely to be historically as

well as culturally specific' (9). A case in point can be identified in Chris Marker's conception of his seminal avant-garde film *La Jetée* (1962).

As a boy, Marker attempted to make a movie by gluing together images of his cat drawn onto tracing paper interspersed with captions between each drawing. For Marker, his experiment succeeded in transforming his cat into a character comparable to those in Hollywood movies of the time such as *Ben-Hur* (1959). His friend disagreed, pointing out that 'movies are supposed to move, stupid ... Nobody can do a movie with still images' (175). As Marker states, 'Thirty years passed. Then I made *La Jetée*' (175, 176). This seminal avant-garde science fiction film's twenty nine minutes comprises almost entirely of still images, and is examined in detail in chapter two of this thesis. In its turn, *La Jetée* inspired Terry Gilliam's Hollywood movie *Twelve Monkeys* (1995) (Orlow 177) and continues to influence many subsequent filmmakers and artists, myself included, who experiment with the medium at its most basic level. *La Jetée* evidences that Connolly's argument can be reversed and still hold true: Hollywood filmmakers often look to the avant-garde for new modes of expression that can enhance narrative cinema, and perhaps at times even pause narrative in order to allow for less directed spectator responses.

These correlations come into sharp focus when considering the notion that moving imagery can seek to promote pensive or contemplative responses. The filmmaker Steve McQueen first established a noted art practice focused on experimental moving imagery that now feeds into his recent narrative cinematic works. He frequently includes images that can be described as contemplative due to their unusually long duration. McQueen's first feature length film *Hunger* (2008), for example, includes a number of long takes that might at first appear to contribute little to the narrative content. For example, in a shot of a porter cleaning a corridor the static camera holds the spectator's attention for two minutes and thirty seconds, which is an unusually long duration for a single shot in narrative cinema. The movie includes various comparable shots of details such as falling snow, a close-up of a fly on wire, and a dripping tap, that contain a distinctively photographic quality that serves to pause

narrative flow. In fact, I would go so far as to say that *Hunger*'s narrative is driven as much by its visual aesthetics and temporal rhythms as by its notably sparse dialogue. One could surmise that McQueen was drawing as much from avant-garde film histories as he is from Hollywood.

Likewise, my practical research draws its influences from a diverse range of images including avant-garde and narrative cinema, photography, and painting. I may not want my images to reach a given understanding, but that does not mean I reject the visual language systems that evolved through Hollywood cinema. Therefore, it is appropriate to acknowledge the history and techniques developed through these language systems, and explore how they can be implemented and expanded when striving to produce a contemporary image that invites a contemplative response.

According to Bazin, the language of cinema developed primarily through montage techniques that were set in place by the end of the 1920s (26). Bazin defines montage as 'the creation of a sense or meaning not objectively contained in the images themselves but derived exclusively from their juxtaposition' (25). To a large degree these conventions remain popular to this day and include techniques such as shot-reverse-shot, the 180 degree rule and continuity editing. However, Bazin argues that montage was not the only language on offer, and he turns to such filmmakers as Robert Flaherty and Eric von Stroheim for evidence of a cinematic language that did not rely on montage alone. For instance, in *Nanook of the North* (1922) Bazin points out that Flaherty held his camera on the fisherman and thereby represented the actual time passing rather than relying on montage to imply it. Bazin states that for Flaherty 'the length of the hunt is the very substance of the image, its true object' (27). Flaherty's attention to uneventful moments implies a very different engagement with the medium of film to that of many of his contemporaries such as, for example, D.W. Griffith, whose main concern was telling a story by linking all the necessary decisive moments of action together in order to build a narrative. Through montage, spectators are carried along by the story as it unfolds whereas in *Nanook of the North* spectators are carried along by those banal moments of inactive passing time, and therefore have

ample time to consider their thoughts in response to the imagery. Thus, time, rather than narrative, becomes the event unfolding through the imagery, and it is in this sense that Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* exposes a relationship between the image, time and thought.

Looking back further, Tom Gunning also maintains that narrative was not necessarily the primary concern of the first moving pictures in his essay titled "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde" (1986) (63). Although his primary investigation in this seminal text relates to the cinema as spectacle, developing as it did from theatrical playhouses, he also highlights the media's expressive forms that were not fully explored through narrative cinema, and argues that this form of cinema 'does not disappear with the dominance of narrative, but rather goes underground, both in certain avant-garde practices and as a component of narrative films' (68). David Campany also recognizes the influence of early cinema on contemporary practice. He credits Raymond Bellour with identifying a notable 'Lumière drive' in contemporary film and video art, 'with its preference for the long take, simple apparatus and almost forensic attention to duration and movement' ("Photography and the Wind"). However, the Lumières Brother's attention to duration and movement was in celebration of the accelerated speed of the industrial age. For instance, their habit of purposely starting a projection with a stilled frame and then setting it in motion evidences this celebration by signaling cinema's progressive ability to produce movement. Contemporary artists, in contrast, often engage with the long take as a reaction against continued acceleration and media saturation. According to Campany, by the 1950s the world became 'dominated by the ideologies of mainstream cinema, television, lifestyle culture, saturation advertising and mass distraction'. At the same time, avant-garde and experimental filmmakers began to produce works that exposed its material form.

In the 1950s avant-garde filmmakers such as Stan Brakhage and Peter Kubelka chose to celebrate the materiality of film as an expressive art form. Following closely, their contemporaries, such as the artist Andy Warhol and the filmmaker Michael Snow,

were less concerned with exposing film's physicality. Rather they sought to experiment with its ability to construct structures of time. P. Adams Sitney was the first to title such works 'structural' because of the preoccupation with structure, form and duration that these avant-garde practitioners exhibited. According to Sitney structural films were defined by the use of one or more of four primary characteristics; a fixed camera position, the flicker effect, loop printing and 'rephotography', the latter being a term describing re-recording an image of a particular site at a different time (348). Sitney points to Andy Warhol as the precursor of the American structural film movement, producing works such as *Empire* (1964), in which Warhol disregards directed content in favour of extended duration. In contrast to contemporaries such as Brakhage and Peter Kubelka, who maintained that the practitioner must control the creative expression of every frame of the film, Warhol was boldly indifferent to such concerns, and preferred instead to set the camera rolling and walk away (349).

Warhol's filming process is reminiscent of the Lumiere's means of recording their 'actualities', and therefore supports Gunning's claim that certain avenues explored by early cinema practitioners continued to be investigated by avant-garde filmmakers. Furthermore, with no narrative structure or controlled artistic expression imposed, the duration of the shot becomes the focus of attention in Warhol's first films like *Sleep* (1963) and *Empire*. Sitney proposes that this emphasis on duration makes structural films 'a cinema of the mind rather than the eye' (348) in that by presenting such a proliferation of inactive time, the films actively engage the spectator in the experience of viewing and perceiving (351). In other words, Warhol's work influenced others to emphasize duration rather than content. For example, Michael Snow's 22-minute silent film *One Second in Montreal* (1969) comprises of thirty still photographs that represent potential sites for a public monument. Snow appropriated the images to produce visual temporal rhythms by varying the length of each image. The first fifteen images gradually increase in length, while the second fifteen decrease, creating what Sitney describes as a 'crescendo-diminuendo of duration' (356). Notable also, Snow engages both photography and film in this work, suggesting that their opposing temporal rhythms contribute to the push and pull of duration that Sitney praises.

However, this preoccupation with duration was not exclusively the remit of avant-garde filmmakers at this point in time. According to Gilles Deleuze, Italian neorealist films of the 1950s also marked a shift in the cinematic image from images determined by movement to those determined by time. Although he does not address avant-garde cinema directly, his focus on the relationship between the image and time is comparable. Sitney claimed that ‘Warhol broke the most severe theoretical taboo when he made films that challenged the viewer’s ability to endure emptiness or sameness’ (351), namely, engaging spectators in imagery that encouraged ontological thought (352). A decade later, Deleuze proposes an ontology of the cinematic image that focuses on this relationship between the image, time and thought. Deleuze bases his theory of the cinematic time-image predominantly on images that interrupt narrative continuity due to irrational links between shots. This might appear relevant only to a point in relation to my research because my works do not intentionally engage specific narratives. However, the cinematic images that Deleuze addresses in forming his theory of the time-image frequently use varying temporal rhythms, including interactions between stillness and movement, as a means to suspend narrative continuity and open the image up to alternative interpretative explorations. As such, his cinematic theory provides useful insights into my practical research, and indeed, avant-garde practices in general.

## 0.5 Duration

The majority of film scholars in the latter half of the twentieth century approached cinema through semiotic or psychoanalytical theories. For the most part, they proposed a cinematic language that was examined through various signs and meanings in narrative cinema and focused primarily on its representational qualities. In contrast, Gilles Deleuze proposes a philosophy of cinema in the 1980's that focused less on its ability to represent reality and more on relations between the image, time and thought (*Cinema 2 1*). In fact, Amy Herzog argues that Deleuze's cinematic theory destabilizes the very idea of representation because it replaces signs and associations with ‘acts of creation and images of thought’ (“Images of Thought”). In order to achieve this,

Deleuze draws on Henri Bergson's theory of *durée* that argues against a distinction being made between an object and its representation (*Matter and Memory* xi).

Bergson's theory of duration, or *durée*, proposes that the universe is made up of an ever-accumulating and interacting series of vibrations. These vibrations contract to form objects in space and dilate to move through time. He has difficulties with the label 'time' because of its association with theories proposing that time can be reduced to divisible units and measured along a linear path, and argues that such proposals effectively spatialize time. While acknowledging that such an understanding of time is useful to comprehend our world on a day to day basis, Bergson considers this interpretation of duration deceiving, and maintains that pure duration is indivisible, and cannot be measured as immobile units in space. Similarly, movement is likewise indivisible for the same reasons. As such, movement cannot be represented in the manner that the two prevalent theories of idealism and realism proposed.

Bergson therefore refused to distinguish between an object's existence and its appearance. He regarded the idealist proposal that reality exists entirely in our consciousness, and the opposing realist notion that reality exists entirely outside our consciousness, to be excessive in that they were too far removed from our actual experience of the world. In order to challenge these theories, Bergson proposes that all matter be regarded as a series of images. By 'image' he means 'a certain existence which is more than that which the idealists calls a *representation*, but less than that which the realists calls a *thing*, - an existence placed half-way between the 'thing' and the 'representation' (*M&M* xi, xii). Both idealism and realism regard mental images as representations of reality whereas Bergson argues that actual images and virtual (mental) images are all images in the world. Instead of distinguishing between an object's presence in reality and its subjective representation, he proposes that an object exists both as an actual *and* a corresponding virtual image. He also maintains that these actual and virtual matter-images are mobile, and therefore can be described as movement-images. Following Bergson, Deleuze argues that the cinematic image need not be regarded as a mere representation of an existing movement-image, rather it

exists as another movement-image in the world, and likewise produces a corresponding virtual image.

Bergson was primarily concerned with movement as it occurs in the natural world. He pointed to the cinematic image as an example of a failed attempt to represent movement because it necessarily reduces movement to a series of static images. Deleuze, however, maintains that cinema has an exceptional ability to produce what he terms ‘aberrant movement’, described as ‘abnormal’ (*Cinema* 2 35), meaning that cinema produces types of movement that deviate from our normal experience of movement in the world.

Deleuze splits the history of cinematic imagery into two categories: the movement-image and the time-image. Drawing again from Bergson, he then subcategorizes the movement-image into three classifications: the perception-image, the affection-image and the action-image. Bergson maintained that we interact with surrounding images by a process of perception, affection and action that for practical purposes are normally governed by predetermined ‘sensori-motor’ (64) associations. By sensori-motor he means that our senses perceive and are affected by interaction with other images, and these cause appropriate motor reactions. Deleuze argues that the movement-image of classical cinema (pre-World War Two), while powerful in its own right, focused on developing narrative techniques that represented the same ‘sensory motor schemata’ (2) in that perception is necessarily followed by an appropriate action. In modern cinema (post WW2 cinema) however, Deleuze recognizes the emergence of images that interrupt the sensory-motor schemata so that perception can find no associative action and the spectator is therefore suspended at the affection stage.

When this occurs, Deleuze argues that we come into contact with ‘a little bit of time in its pure state’ (16), or as Bergson describes it, with duration. Deleuze refers to such an image as a time-image, established by the emergence of ‘a pure optical or sound situation’ that is notably unconcerned with narrative progression. In European cinema, primarily Italian neorealism, the time-image was made manifest by ‘any-space[s]-

'whatever' (5), that is images that are disconnected, or focus on every day banality, or 'emptied spaces that might be seen as having absorbed characters and actions' (5). Deleuze suggests that the post-war landscape was partly responsible because humanity was forced to confront alien scenes of empty ruins left behind. He describes these spaces as 'deserted but inhabited, disused warehouses, waste-ground, cities in the course of demolition or reconstruction' (xi). These time-images can be subjective, in that they can relate to memories or dreams, or objective, in that they emphasize formal structures. Either way, instead of following associative links governed by their sensory-motor schema, spectators find themselves confronted by 'a principle of indeterminacy, of indiscernibility' (7) in which the line between what is real and what is imaginary, and likewise what is physical and mental, dissolves. Deleuze compares a time-image that reaches this point of indiscernibility to an image produced by a crystal (67) because it is likewise no longer possible to distinguish between the actual image of the crystal and its virtual reflections. As with Bergson's theory that actual images in the passing present and their corresponding virtual images in the past are indiscernible and indivisible, Deleuze maintains that the time-image can 'make visible, relationships of time which cannot be seen in the represented object and do not allow themselves to be reduced to the present.' (xii)

Furthermore, Deleuze argues that when the time-image reaches this point of indiscernibility, it calls for irrational rather than rational associations, and it is through these irrational associations that creative thought is produced. While Bazin maintained that these irrational associations allowed Italian neorealist filmmakers such as Rossellini to produce a 'new form of reality' (1) by representing reality through the objective view of the camera, Deleuze poses the question:

Is it not rather at the level of the 'mental', in terms of thought? If all the movement images, perceptions, actions and affects underwent such an upheaval, was this not first of all because a new element burst on the scene which was to prevent perception being extended into action in order to put it in contact with thought?' (1)

In other words, Deleuze argues that the cinematic time-image challenges the very notion of the image as a representation of reality, or perhaps more accurately, suggests that it is not confined to this role.

Deleuze credits the Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu as ‘the first to develop pure optical and sounds situations’ (13). As with neo-realism, Deleuze points to Ozu’s use of empty landscapes, but in Ozu’s work he recognizes another image better described as a ‘still life’ (16). When comparing the two, Deleuze states that an empty space ‘owes its importance above all to the absence of a possible content, whilst the still life is defined by the presence and composition of objects which are wrapped up in themselves or become their own container’ (16). In terms of my practical research, this distinction is likewise at play. However, my images seek to bridge the divide between the two by capturing moments when they interact. Deleuze addresses one such image in Ozu’s *Late Spring* (1949): that of a vase included between a shot of the character of the daughter smiling and another as she begins to cry. Deleuze suggests that the image of the vase (see fig. 7) contains the change from happiness to melancholy while remaining unchanged itself, and thereby exposes the spectator to ‘a direct time-image, which gives what changes the unchanging form in which the change is produced’ (16). As such, Deleuze can state that ‘Ozu’s still lifes endure, have a duration, over ten seconds of the vase’ (16). However, this image’s duration is not entirely its only distinction.

The shot of the vase is not completely still, it does contain movement, or more precisely, off-frame exterior movement reflected on the surface of an interior wall behind the vase. As such, this image plays with the notion of presence and absence by portraying both the reflected movement of exterior objects and the stillness of the vase in one image. Could it be argued then that the relations between stillness and movement in this image produce a particularly contemplative time-image by drawing the stilled pensive quality of photography that Barthes and Rancière identified into the cinematic moving image? Deleuze acknowledges as much when he states that Ozu’s images are ‘instances of pure contemplation’ (15). Interpreted in this manner, it is

possible that the coincidence of stillness and movement play a more significant role than previously posited in relation to this image of the vase. As such, the image will be reinvestigated throughout this thesis.

The recognition of a potential contemplative state located somewhere between stillness and movement in Ozu's images lead us to examine Paul Schrader and Richard B. Pilgrim's writings on Ozu's cinema. Both texts relate the contemplative quality in his images to the Japanese concept of *ma*.



Fig. 7, Yasujiro Ozu, still from *Late Spring* (1949)

### 0.6 *Ma*

In Ozu's *Late Spring* the image of the vase is followed by a sequence located in the Japanese Rock Garden of Ryoanji that is designed to evoke a sense of *ma* (Iimura). Pilgrim (1995) defines the Japanese term *ma* as the interval between spatial or temporal objects and events (56). For example, the space between walls in a room can be described as an instance of *ma*, but *ma* can also refer to the pause between two musical notes. Pilgrim further argues that *ma* carries relational implications, in that it can describe figures standing 'within, among, or in relationship to others', indicating that the term incorporates both objective and subjective meanings. As Pilgrim states, '*ma* is not only "something" within objective, descriptive reality but also signifies particular modes of experience' (56). He argues that, in *ma*'s subjective meaning, distinctions between time and space collapse. As such; 'although *ma* may be

objectively located as intervals in space and time, ultimately it transcends this and expresses a deeper level' (57). For Pilgrim, this transcendence suggests a 'religio-aesthetic' paradigm (57). However, in relation to Ozu's contemplative images, it could be argued that they are not necessarily confined to transcendental encounters of a religious nature, rather they expose relations between time and thought in a more general sense. When applying the concept of *ma* to Ozu's cinematic imagery, Pilgrim suggests that the intervals expose 'imaginative or emotional "negative spaces" that dissolve the narrative, cause/effect world being presented' (61). As addressed above, Deleuze describes Ozu's images in very similar terms. However, he argues that such images are not necessarily transcendental in nature (*Cinema 2* 17). Drawing from his larger body of philosophical theory written in collaboration with Felix Guattari, Deleuze challenges ontological concepts based on the notion of a beyond, or outside, of this world. Rather, he believes in the creation of philosophical concepts that are immanent to this world. As such, he argues that the 'pure optical situations' produced by Ozu's images do not require a call for transcendence (17), rather their contemplative quality 'bring the emancipated senses into direct relation with time and thought' (17). In the case of Ozu's imagery, then, *ma* can be understood as an interval that intentionally breaks from narrative continuity in order to expose underlying temporal rhythms. Seigow Matsuoka describes *ma* as 'a characteristic Japanese "aesthetic of stillness and motion"' (quoted in Pilgrim 68). If reinterpreted through Deleuze then, *ma* serves as a useful term under which to investigate the coincidence of stillness and movement.

There are numerous instances in cinema when the latent presence of photography is exposed, and conversely, when photography draws from cinema. In such cases, the opposing temporal rhythms of stillness and movement are somewhat aligned in that they rely on one to emphasize the other, and in so doing create a zone of indeterminacy between the past and the present in terms of locating the works temporally. The next section will trace the history of such encounters, question the purpose of engaging both temporalities simultaneously, and discuss how such instances are further explored in contemporary moving image practices.

## 0.7 Photography and Cinema Collide

In *Photography and Cinema* (2008) David Campany points to the Lumière Brother's recording of *Arrivee des congressistes à Neuville-sur-Saône* (1895) at a meeting of the French Congress of Photographic Societies in Lyon, France, as a seminal moment in the relationship between photography and film. While demonstrating the Lumière's first movie camera, Louis Lumière filmed the group of photographers as they walked in line down a quayside gangway. One of the members, Jules Janssen, stops to take a photograph of Louis as he passes. Whether Janssen actually took a photograph, or merely pretended to do so, is unknown because no print exists on record to date. Campany questions whether the gesture of filming a still photographer "in action" (7) was an affirmation of photography and cinema's similarities, or a confirmation of their differences (8). He identifies *Film und Foto* (1929) in Stuttgart as possibly the first exhibition to show both media side by side, and suggests one aim of the exhibition was 'to highlight how central the photographic sensibility was to the development of avant-garde film, a trend that continued for several decades' (9, 10).

Although photography and cinema remain active as individual media, digital technologies have caused some functions to overlap. In *Photography and Fetish* (1985), Christian Metz pointed out historical differences in their mode of display in that a photograph was originally primarily presented as a physical paper print whereas the cinematic image was projected, enlarged, and accompanied by sounds and movements. He also points to differences in their social usage that resulted in 'the kinship between film and collectivity, photography and privacy' (82). We can now encounter both still and moving images on the same viewing devices, and many of these devices are used to capture and disseminate both still and moving images in private and public arenas. However, the two media's opposing temporal rhythms constitute an abiding difference, and have led many artists to explore the potentials for temporal inquiry when one medium confronts the other. For example, the cinematic freeze-frame alludes to photography's frozen moment, and has been employed extensively throughout the history of cinema as evident in, for example, Truffaut's *The 400 Blows* (1959) and Antonioni's *Blow-Up* (1966). In his essay "The Pensive

*Spectator*" (1984), Raymond Bellour argues that the presence of a photograph in cinema can interrupt the film's temporal flow so that the spectator is suddenly made aware of her presence as a spectator (120). As a result, Bellour claims:

Creating a distance, another time, the photograph permits me to reflect on cinema. Permits me, that is, to reflect that I am at the cinema. In short, the presence of the photo permits me to invest more freely in what I am seeing. It helps me to close my eyes, yet keep them wide open (120).

Here, Bellour refutes Barthes' claim that pensiveness is not possible at the cinema because the images move too quickly. Bellour argues that the presence of a photograph on screen carries its distinctive temporal rhythm into cinematic movement. As such, he suggests the photograph on screen serves to remind us that it is time rather than movement that defines cinema. Furthermore, Bellour considers the freeze frame, or 'photogram' to use his term, even more affecting in that the image resonates with two temporal rhythms without allowing them to become confused; the stilled rhythm of the image on screen and the actual rhythm of time passing that the paused image makes the spectator aware of. As a result, Bellour concludes that the freeze-frame can 'make the spectator of cinema, this hurried spectator, a pensive one as well' (123). Again, photographic pensiveness is called upon here. But there must be a distinction between photographic and cinematic pensiveness. The former is associated with a physical object whereas the latter is a projected image that no matter how long it remains still, always contains an expectation of change to come.

D. N. Rodowick proposes that Chris Marker's 29-minute seminal avant-garde film *La Jetée* epitomizes the shift from a Deleuzian movement-image to a time-image. He states that by removing movement from the images, time can no longer be measured by movement, and therefore is released from chronological order 'where present, past, and future are aligned on a continuum' (4). As a result, he suggests that time 'no longer derives from movement: "aberrant" or eccentric movement derives from time.' (5) This unraveling of chronological time suggests to Rodowick, echoing Deleuze, that the images in *La Jetée* are 'like so many facets of a shattered crystal' (5). Rodowick

highlights Deleuze's term 'aberrant movement' here, and the significant contribution that it plays in producing an image of time. Chapter two focuses on this aberrant movement, investigating in particular the role it plays in producing images that emphasize interactions between stillness and movement.

Echoing Bellour in her book *Death 24x a Second* (2006), Laura Mulvey points to a sequence in Dziga Vertov's film *Man With a Movie Camera* (1929), when the flow of movement is interrupted by a freeze-frame. Mulvey states, 'While movement tends to assert the presence of a continuous 'now', stillness brings a resonance of 'then' to the surface' (13). *Man With A Movie Camera* (1929) produces a veritable feast of varying temporal rhythms that will also be addressed in chapter two. However, while Bellour noted that the freeze-frame presents 'a time the spectator cannot control' (122), Mulvey notes that new digital technologies allow the contemporary spectator to control the unfolding of images (191). These mechanisms of delay provide the spectator with the ability to pause a moving image, and are of particular significance to Mulvey. She states that cinematic stillness, 'a projected film's best kept secret' (22), can now be accessed and easily revealed at the simple touch of a button, carrying with it not only the suggestion of the still frame, but also of the stillness of photography (22). Carrying this further, she states that cinema's medium specificity dissolves and cross-media intertextual relations begin to emerge (18). Furthermore, she suggests that narrative cinema loses its power to hold the spectator's full attention when the image is paused. Hence, there is potential for a cinematic *punctum* to reveal itself in the stillness of the freeze-frame that was previously hidden by the forward drive of narrative (183).

As cinema ages, Mulvey points out that it can now reflect on its own history, a history that 'brings back to life, in perfect fossil form, anyone it has ever recorded, from great star to fleeting extra' (18). Mulvey attributes this development to new technologies, but limits their abilities to the extent that they can reveal new ways of perceiving the internal world of cinema rather than perceiving the world itself (181). However, if one considers cinematic imagery as a valid form of artistic expression, surely it holds more

potential than merely reflecting on itself and its internal histories. It must be noted that Mulvey is addressing a form of spectatorship that, for the most part, is confined to personal viewing experiences. Her call for ‘new modes of spectatorship’ (27), while insightful in terms of changing paradigms in cinematic spectatorship, are less relevant when addressing museum and gallery modes of spectatorship, when pausing a moving image artwork is seldom an option. However, gallery exhibition allows for multiple screenings, changes in scale and modes of display, that themselves offer new ways of presenting moving imagery. Mulvey states that revealing an internal world of cinema affects ‘shifts of consciousness between temporalities’ (184). Perhaps, then, contemporary artistic moving imagery can affect further shifts in consciousness between temporalities that are not confined to the internal world of cinema.

Rancière also remarks on the role that a suspension of ‘narrative logic’ plays in producing pensiveness. Following from his earlier comments on photography where he identifies an aesthetic regime of expression (120), he then extends his parameters to include moving imagery, and points to the works of the filmmaker and artist Abbas Kiarostami as good examples, which Rancière describes as ‘poised between cinema, photography and poetry’ (124). It is the set of exchanges between these media that Rancière argues produces pensiveness. He states:

The pensiveness of the image is not then the privilege of photographic or pictorial silence. This silence is itself a certain type of figurativeness, a certain tension between regimes of expression which is also a set of exchanges between the powers of different media (125).

In terms of the coincidence of stillness and movement, then, one can propose that their opposing temporal rhythms form relations that rely on, rather than negate, their differences. As an example of such in contemporary art practice, David Green argues that works by the artist David Claerbout present a conjuncture, rather than a conflation, of photography and film (21).

### 0.7.1 David Claerbout

Through digital manipulation, Claerbout's video projection titled *Vietnam, 1967, near Duc Pho (reconstruction after Hiromishi Mine)* (2001) (see fig. 8) combines a historical photograph of an exploding fighter plane with a contemporary moving image of the same location depicted in the photograph.



Fig. 8, David Claerbout, still from *Vietnam, 1967, near Duc Pho (Reconstruction after Hiromishi Mine)* (2001)

In this work, still and moving imagery cease to exist independently, and become media of simulation rather than representation. Claerbout constructs such imagery by literally re-writing the digital binary code that is the image. As such, his work presents a temporal encounter that is unique to digital media. It is difficult to define it as a representation because the opposing rhythms resist locating the image in time. On the other hand, the archival photograph is historically specific and the location exists so it cannot be defined entirely as a digital simulation. Green argues that the temptation to approach this work as a hybrid form, 'in which electronic media and digital imaging have (eroded) the boundaries between mediums' needs to be resisted (21). He suggests that in Claerbout's work the opposite occurs: 'What one actually experiences or indeed what one sees in this work is not a conflation of photography and film but a conjuncture of the two mediums in which neither loses its specificity' (21). Likewise, Ji-hoon Kim suggests;

It is the in-between of the actual and the virtual, of representation and simulation, and of past and present, that makes Claerbout's works confusing yet poignant... Claerbout's "dual articulation" of cinematic and photographic forms encapsulates the ways in which digital technologies cause the two to confront one another within their limits yet liberated them from their material substrate ("David Claerbout's Digital Pensive Images").

As soon as one attempts to approach the work as a photographic representation of the past, the subtle movement of the landscape interrupts that reading. Conversely, neither does it belong entirely to the present because the stillness of the fighter plane is literally written into the moving landscape. Although referring to historical representation, the image layers two times onto the same plane, with one medium inscribing its meaning onto the other.

The freeze frame is not unique in establishing links between coinciding temporal rhythms. For instance, back projection works by layering one image onto another. Traditionally designed as a cost-cutting measure, back projection allowed for the inclusion of external landscapes while avoiding the need for expensive location shooting. Although early cinematic examples might seem comically obvious to contemporary spectators, the process set in place a working process that now informs CGI (computer generated imaging) techniques that we have come to expect and accept. In fact, these early examples perhaps display the inherently aberrant nature of the technique better than contemporary images can, and have informed significant works by contemporary artists such as Mark Lewis. Lewis takes advantage of back projection in various works including *Rear Projection (Molly Parker)* (2007) that comprises of an image of a woman recorded in front of a blue screen and subsequently superimposed on a back-projected image of a small cabin.

### 0.7.2 Mark Lewis

Lewis frequently makes use of another image that can be linked to both the coincidence of stillness and movement and the production of contemplation: the long take. As Campany points out, holding the camera on one scene for an extended period creates a slow, ‘even glacial tempo’ (2013), that counters Hollywood spectacle and television. He notes that Lewis’s works are silent, single takes that can literally be described as moving pictures. Christine Ross notes that Lewis’s works involve ‘a fragile equilibrium between the stillness and the movement of the image, between the continuity and the discontinuity of the frames’ (119). Referring to Deleuze’s theory of the time-image, she argues that Lewis’s use of the long take exemplifies a temporal turn in contemporary art that might acknowledge some level of indiscernibility between the past, present and future, but ultimately is a ‘regime of historicity in which the temporal category of the present is thickened by its proximity to the past and to the future’ (19). Rather than positing, as Deleuze does, that the past, present and future coexist, Ross argues that in contemporary moving image artworks the present is extended to embody the past and the future, thus challenging modernity’s progressive drive forward. In Lewis’s case, this is made all the more apparent by emphasizing the failed promise of modernism in works such as *North Circular* (2000) (see fig. 9) that focuses on a now redundant modernist office block.



Fig. 9, Mark Lewis, Still from *North Circular* (2000)

This work embodies not only the past and future of modernist architecture, but also references the histories of aesthetics. It begins with a two-minute static view of the building and its surrounds and then the camera slowly moves towards the building itself focusing on three boys, one of which is playing with a spinning top. Campany points out the allusion to Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin's *Portrait of the Son of M. Godefroy, Jeweller, Watching a Top Spin* (1738). Campany states that Lewis 'is interested in the possibility of an overlap between the hypnotic potential of cinema's single take and the pictorial tradition of art as it evolved in the gallery setting' ("In the Light of the Lumieres"). The boy's attention to the actions of the spinning top on the table also brings to mind the final scene in Tarkovsky's 1979 film *Stalker* when the boy appears to telepathically move the drinking glasses off a table as the camera moves in to a close-up of the boy's, apparently unaffected, face.

The use of the long take in contemporary art led Open Gallery, London, to claim a new form of contemporary video art titled 'video painting'. In her essay titled 'Intending Objects and signs "Which Have no Meaning": Art, Intercorporeality, and Ethics', Jorella Andrews notes that this new genre is characterized by a static camera that films and presents whatever unfolds without editing the footage. As such, she argues that its non-narrative structure demonstrates 'a refusal to inject meaning or offer explanation, and extreme openness to incident' (37). Rather than addressing modernity's temporalization of history as Ross does, Andrew argues that the single take used in this form can elicit the 'implicit power of the impersonal, anonymous, and objective' (34) in that they display a notable indifference to human interests, agendas or ideas (36). Andrews draws comparisons between these video paintings and a preceding work by Rosalind Nashashibi (35). Her 4-minute analogue film titled *Stone and Table* (1994-2000) (see fig. 10) focuses on the affect of light and shade over two inanimate objects that are then disturbed by a human shadow moving through the frame.

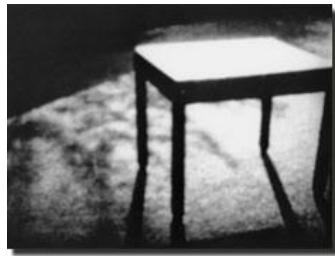


Fig. 10, still from *Stone and Table* (2004)

Drawing from Heidegger, in particular his essay *The Age of World Pictures* (1977), Andrews proposes that;

by focusing attention on the lifeworlds of objects, and on *intercorporeality* instead of *intersubjectivity*, a powerful sense of agency is opened up that does not appear to be immediately directed to, or in the service of, purely human concerns....the aesthetics associated with these works call into question the anthropocentric assumptions that habitually undergird everyday life, thought, and action' (39, 40).

This emphasis on the agency of objects, indifferent to human concerns that Andrews suggests questions our role in the world, highlights my attention to such inanimate objects, particularly in Presence. By drawing attention to the rock of Quartz that slowly disappears, am I focusing on its duration as an object in the world? Its duration is significantly longer than the duration of any human life span. Furthermore, my avoidance of human figures in my imagery could be a means by which to focus attention on architectural sites at moments when their temporal rhythms are temporarily unaffected by human movements. Perhaps the events that draw my attention are those that highlight temporal realities constantly surrounding us but indifferent to our presence. Certainly, anyone moving through a scene that I am recording renders it unusable. Sounds, however, indicating the presence of off-screen human movement, contribute significantly. In fact, my soundtrack comprises of ambient everyday noises that add another temporal rhythm by implication rather than material presence.

These investigations raise many possible lines of inquiry. However, three recur throughout, and therefore serve as appropriate titles under which to interrogate my practical research: the notion of contemplative spectatorship, and in particular how imagery might expose the relationship between the image, time and thought; aberrant movement and its role in the production of opposing temporal rhythms; and the interval as a means to emphasize and extend the relations between rhythms.

## 0.8 Chapter Summaries

### 0.8.1 Chapter One – The Contemplative Spectator

This chapter focuses on the relationship between the spectator and imagery that emphasises temporal rhythms. It questions whether such imagery seeks to elicit a particular mode of thought, and identify what this might be. Firstly, how does the spectator engage with images that are deliberately devoid of narrative continuity? Secondly, does such ambiguity prompt the spectator to produce meaning? Starting from Bergson's hypothesis that there are two ways to produce knowledge, namely by the intellect or by intuition, I investigate whether interactions between stillness and movement can be regarded as a means by which imagery might elicit an intuitive response that is affectively contemplative in nature. Following from this, I address Jacques Rancière's proposal that the spectator mediates the image through her own archive of accumulated knowledge, thereby creating new meanings in the process. He posits that this process involves both passive and active engagement. In contrast, Rushton argues that Deleuze calls for implicit passivity, implying that as spectators we must 'forget ourselves' in order to be open to 'other ways of experiencing and knowing' (53). Echoing Bergson, Deleuze proposes that it is only by relinquishing the self that one can truly engage with external temporal rhythms. If this can be achieved, knowledge can be created rather than represented. It is my contention that the focus on temporal rhythms in my imagery seeks to prompt the spectator to contemplation that in turn, promotes the production of intuitive rather than intellectual knowledge.

### **0.8.2 Chapter Two – Aberrant Movement**

Deleuze (1989) describes aberrant movement as ‘abnormal’ (35) and proposes that cinematic movement is fundamentally aberrant because it produces ‘not only speeded up, slowed down and reversed sequences, but the non-distancing of the moving body ... constant changes in scale and proportion... and false continuities of movement’ (35). It also produces the freeze-frame, and the long take, both of which are particularly relevant to my practice, as is the extended cross-dissolve and the empty frame. This chapter will address the characteristics of such movements and examine why I utilize them. It will also investigate the use of aberrant movement in similar non-narrative cinematic images, primarily those produced by avant-garde, experimental and art practices that directly address notions of non-chronological time. Considering that Deleuze’s proposition relies on narrative break-down, does aberrant movement play as crucial a role in such works as it does in the production of a time-image?

### **0.8.3 Chapter Three – The Interval**

My work could be described as comprising a series of layered intervals in flux, in that the images almost always involve some rate of change, and slide over, behind and around each other in order to emphasize these variations. However, stillness is also marked, not least by interstices in the form of blank leader (empty frames of footage). The significance of the emptiness contained in these blank frames will be examined in detail. This chapter will also question whether stillness and movement produce different forms of interval that distinguish between observation and participation. If this is the case, can exposing the interval be used as a structural strategy for engaging the spectator as an active participant in the production of meaning? Consequently, can two temporal rhythms with two distinctly different treatments of the interval produce an image that calls for both photographic observation and cinematic participation? Furthermore, do digital technologies provide the means to negotiate the interval in a manner that produces additional temporal arrangements? With these questions in mind, I will identify the various intervallic forms in my work, locate similar uses of the interval in moving imagery, and discuss the theoretical concerns that arise from

emphasizing their presence. Furthermore, questioning the role of the empty frames leads to possible similarities between my approach and that posited by the Japanese concepts of *ma* (interval) and *mu* (emptiness). These terms have been beneficial to my understanding of the interval as a site of active contemplation in cinematic imagery. Under such terms, the interval can be approached both as a structural location and as an underlying aesthetic philosophy, and may explain why I am instinctively drawn to foregrounding this location in my working process.

Different modes of display can have implications for the spectator in terms of temporal and spatial awareness. Gallery exhibition, for instance, does not necessarily obtain the same immersive experience as cinema screenings. However, it can offer opportunities to display various projections and temporal rhythms simultaneously. Taking the concept of *ma* into account when considering an exhibition venue, it is possible to integrate the space between projections as further temporal and spatial intervals that affect the spectator's encounter with the imagery. When readdressing *Quad* (2013) as a working case study, such considerations partly informed the restructuring of the practical research from its first iteration in 2013 as one single channel projection to its 2016 iteration as three related works, *Presence*, *Return*, and *Landing* that together form one installation for gallery exhibition titled *Between Realities*. The varying dimensions and space between the works then become as relevant as the images themselves. Furthermore, the videos vary in duration, therefore the possible interactions between their rhythms are extended. Sound has a particularly notable impact on the spectator's potential immersion in one image. Even if she were to position herself in front of a particular video, the ambient sounds from the other two videos invade her experience. Therefore, although separated in a physical sense, the works continue to connect, and create unexpected temporal and spatial rhythms between each other. The following three chapters will address how the concepts of contemplative spectatorship, aberrant movement, and the cinematic interval inform, and are informed by, my practical research that attempts to make visible what Campany terms 'that non-existent state between movement and stillness' ("Photography and the Wind").

## CHAPTER ONE – THE CONTEMPLATIVE SPECTATOR

### 1.1 Overview

In his essay titled “Toward a General Theory of Film Spectatorship”, Todd Oakley provides a useful study of cognitive processes of spectatorship that are typically produced by narrative cinema. According to Oakley, film spectators make sense of cinematic imagery by applying ‘the same cognitive processes for perceiving, conceiving, analogizing, deducing, explaining, and deliberating about the real world.’ (Oakley). My interest, however, lies in moving image works that deviate from the normal rules applied to narrative cinema, that is, when characters and movements calling for narrative reconstruction are deliberately interrupted or absent. This chapter addresses the consequences for the spectator in terms of her interaction with such works. In particular, it questions the nature of the thought process that occurs when the spectator encounters interactions between stillness and movement. Are the cognitive processes that Oakley lists above applicable when narrative continuity is not the primary goal of such works? If not, what kind of thought process can take their place?

In the course of my investigations I repeatedly encountered two terms used to describe the thought process that occurs in response to moving imagery that engage stilled or slowed temporal rhythms, namely pensiveness and contemplation. Both terms define a process of prolonged thought, but pensiveness also carries melancholic associations. The use of the term pensive thus implies that to apply stillness to moving imagery is to associate the imagery with what Barthes describes as photography’s link to death (*Camera Lucida* 9). However, stillness incorporated into moving imagery differs from that in a photographic image. It is a temporary state of stasis that relies on technical mechanisms of display. These modes of display suggest that there is change to come. Does the implied expectation of movement, whether it arrives or not, affect the spectator’s engagement with stilled and/or slowed temporal rhythms in moving imagery? While acknowledging the historical link between cinematic and photographic stillness, it is my contention that interactions between stillness and movement in moving imagery can imply more complex relationships at play between

the present and the past than this historical link indicates. How, then, can distinguishing between photographic and cinematic stillness inform our understanding of the thought processes that can occur when the spectator encounters stillness in moving imagery?

As stated above, the term ‘pensive’ is most frequently used to describe spectator responses to such encounters. However, pensiveness suggests an affiliation between stilled and slowed rhythms in moving imagery and photography’s temporal registration of a fixed and immutable past. Such interpretations of cinematic stillness contradict my hypothesis that interactions between stillness and movement in my imagery imply corresponding interactions between the present and the past that highlights their very mutability. Therefore, this chapter will first address why I consider the term ‘contemplative’ more applicable to the spectator response my imagery seeks to elicit. Following from this, I will interrogate this response further by examining whether Bergson’s theory of intuition can inform a concept of contemplative spectatorship, or whether Jacques Rancière’s pensive image is more applicable. Finally, I will examine how Deleuze’s application of Bergson’s theory of duration directly to cinematic imagery informs the hypothesis that my imagery can elicit a form of spectatorship best described as contemplative.

## **1.2 From Pensiveness to Contemplation**

In order to address the appropriateness of the term contemplative it is necessary to reiterate certain points in relation to the freeze-frame addressed in the introduction. As one of the most conspicuous images to address the relationship between stilled and moving imagery, Raymond Bellour is among those who claim the freeze-frame elicits a pensive response from the spectator. Bellour regards the freeze-frame’s stillness as a representation of a fixed past drawn into the spectator’s moving present, arguing that its extended duration allows for prolonged thought. As such, he argues that when a photograph is presented in the cinema, the resulting image refutes Barthes’ claim that the cinematic spectator does not have time to reflect on, and thereby add to, the image (“The Pensive Spectator” 119). However, Bellour’s call for a ‘pensive spectator’

suggests that he echoes Barthes' belief in photography's melancholic inclinations. Thus when Bellour draws on the term pensive he implies an inherent link between the stillness of the freeze-frame and photography's association with death. In my work, however, the melancholic tendencies associated with the term pensive tend to dissolve when stillness is interposed with movement. Stillness is thus portrayed as labile, not exactly still, rather patiently anticipating movement to come. Such renderings of stillness thus run somewhat contrary to Bellour's accessing of a fixed past through the freeze-frame in cinematic imagery.

As has been noted, Jacques Rancière also uses the term pensive to describe images that call for thoughtful inquiry on the part of the spectator. He describes a pensive spectator as one who is 'full of thoughts' while simultaneously 'encroached upon by a certain passivity' suggesting that one can be full of thoughts without necessarily actively engaging with them (107). According to Rancière, the spectator is called to pensiveness when faced with an image that presents two opposing functions. The image thus presents a 'zone of indeterminacy' (107) between these functions. In the case of the photograph, this was addressed in the introduction through Rancière's examination of Alexander Gardner's photograph of Lewis Payne. Rancière argues that it is impossible for the spectator to arrive at one definitive reading of the image because of three indeterminacies contained within the photograph. The first indeterminacy involves the image's composition, the second its temporal inconsistencies, and the third the character's somewhat inexpressive facial expression. According to Rancière, Gardner's image produces pensiveness because none of these functions are definitive, and therefore the spectator is faced with 'the impossibility of making two images coincide' (115). These zones of indeterminacy can also be applied to moving imagery, and Rancière claims that they are particularly evident when the latent presence of one medium is exposed through another. For example, Rancière points to the artist and filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami's work, stating that his images are 'poised between cinema, photography and poetry' (124). Rancière further argues that such indeterminacies in lens-based imagery bridge a divide between two regimes of expression: a representative regime and an aesthetic regime (120). He argues that in

the representative regime the image was predominantly composed of action that related either directly or indirectly to a story (120). The thoughts produced by the image were therefore associated with a represented narrative. In the shift to modernity he recognises the image's 'emancipation from a unifying logic of action' (121) typified by the new status given to artistic autonomy. In terms of lens-based imagery, Rancière argues that both regimes exist simultaneously. The spectator is thus faced with two possible readings at once and therefore finds herself somewhat suspended in thought. Following Rancière then, the layering of stillness and movement in my images could be regarded as a means by which to carry the latent presence of photography into the cinematic image, thereby creating a zone of indeterminacy between two temporal states. However, this indeterminacy still appears to be based on the notion that stillness typically represents a fixed past and movement a moving present. My use of stillness, however, seeks to imply that the past is unfixed, mutable, and interactive.

Echoing Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze argues that the true nature of time involves constant interactions between the past and the present. As discussed in the introduction, Bergson proposes that the world comprises of actual images of matter and corresponding virtual images in memory, and that all these images, both actual and virtual, constantly interact. The true nature of time, referred to as duration or *durée*, comprises of these interactions between actual matter-images and virtual memory-images. Thus the past cannot be regarded as a series of fixed points along a linear path because it comprises of ever-changing elements in the continuous and accumulating whole of duration. Deleuze applies this theory to cinematic imagery, arguing that cinema creates new images in the world that, in turn, create corresponding virtual images that exist along with all other images. Following from this, Deleuze does not regard stillness in cinematic imagery as a photographic representation of a fixed past. In fact, he argues: 'At the point where the cinematic image most directly confronts the photo, it also becomes most radically distinct from it' (*Cinema 2* 16). He further argues that cinematic imagery can reveal complex temporal structures in which 'sheets of past coexist in non-chronological order' (xii). For instance, he describes the

cinematic ‘still life’ as ‘a direct time-image, which gives what changes the unchanging form in which the change is produced’ (16). In other words, cinematic stillness exposes duration as a whole that changes constantly. New images form within duration by relations between the cinematic image and corresponding virtual images it produces. This notion of stillness as a temporary magnifier of virtual movement allows me to interpret my own use of stilled layers as containers of latent motion rather than terminal stasis, thus severing any presumed relation between cinematic stillness and photographic melancholic associations. Therefore, when seeking to define the spectator response that such renderings of stilled and slowed movements might elicit, I propose that the term contemplative, rather than pensive, is more applicable. Contemplation can be defined as an act of prolonged thought without associating that thought process with a fixed past.

Gawan Fagard notes that filmmakers such as Andrey Tarkovsky, Bela Tarr, and Pedro Costa, and contemporary artists including David Claerbout and Mark Lewis ‘have claimed the concept of contemplation as an essential part of the cinematic experience’ (Fagard). What, then, is implied by a ‘concept of contemplation’, and why might it be considered essential to the spectator experience of engaging with works produced by the practitioners listed above? These filmmakers frequently include images of stilled or banal movements that play no apparent role in narrative progression. Referring to such imagery in the films of Yasujiro Ozu as ‘instances of pure contemplation’ (15), Deleuze claims that they ‘bring the emancipated senses into direct relation with time and thought’ (17). How does such a direct relation with time affect thought? Moreover, when Deleuze refers to spectators as ‘emancipated’, what is he implying their senses are freed from? Before examining in detail Rancière and Deleuze’s somewhat conflicting positions in relation to spectator responses to temporal anomalies in imagery, I will first address observations in direct response to my working case study, *Quad* (2013), that lead me to question the nature of the thought process my images might elicit.

At various screenings of *Quad* since 2013 (see appendix II for screening details), some spectators noted that the stilled and slowed temporal rhythms in the imagery caused their own physical rhythms to decelerate in response. For example, following a screening of *Quad*, the artists Alice Maher and Ceara Conway both commented that they became aware of their heart rates slowing down (Lodestar School of Art 2014). My artworks are intentionally designed to produce pause for thought, however I was previously unaware of the physical response they can elicit. Does the physical action of a slowing bodily rhythm, occurring in response to the rhythms in the imagery, impact on the corresponding mental activity that takes place in the spectator? In discussing the possibility of creating new knowledge, Henri Bergson argues that there are two philosophical methods of thought for producing knowledge, namely the intellect and intuition (*The Creative Mind*). In distinguishing between the two, Bergson maintains that the former approaches reality from a position of immobility whereas the latter begins from mobility. In other words, he argues that the intellect analyses the object from various external and immobile points of view, whereas intuition recognizes the fundamental internal mobile nature of the object. This internal nature, according to Bergson, is the object's virtual existence in duration, its temporal rhythm. If Bergson's distinction is applied to spectator responses to *Quad*, it can be surmised that Maher and Conway did not merely observe or analyse the imagery from an outside point of view, but may have experienced something of the imagery's internal rhythms. This noted interaction could imply an intuitive response on their behalf, and thus, Bergson's proposition on the nature of thought deserves closer examination.

### **1.3 Bergson – Intuition**

As outlined above, in an essay titled ‘Introduction to Metaphysics’ in *The Creative Mind*, Bergson argues that the intellect moves around an object in order to understand it from an outside point of view. In contrast, intuition involves entering into the object in order to grasp what is singular to it alone. He states:

We call intuition here the *sympathy* by which one is transported into the interior of an object in order to coincide with what there is unique and consequently inexpressible in it. Analysis, on the contrary, is the operation which reduces the object to elements already known, that is, common to that object and to others (190) (emphasis in the original).

Bergson's reference to a unique and inexpressible aspect of an object can be understood here as the object's internal vibration in duration. This can be evidenced by outlining how these distinctions between intellectual and intuitive knowledge are implicated in Bergson's theory of duration.

As addressed in the introduction, Bergson proposes that all matter in the world exists as images. These images are mobile, contract to form external matter in space, and protract to form internal vibrations in duration. He refers to these internal vibrations as virtual images, in that they exist as thoughts. Duration, or *durée* as he terms it, refers to the true nature of time as a multiplicity of accumulating and interacting virtual images. He therefore distinguishes between an object's spatial and durational existence by proposing that every object exists as two images: an actual image in space and a corresponding virtual image in duration.

There are two pertinent distinctions that Bergson recognizes between intellectual and intuitive thought. Firstly, in order to access reality, our consciousness induces a sensori-motor process whereby the perception of an image prompts an appropriate action to follow. Bergson maintains that the intellect is our habitual manner of producing knowledge through this sensori-motor process. He notes, however, that intelligence is 'far from being a disinterested work' in that it typically focuses on resolving a particular agenda (209). When we perceive an object using our intellect, our perception notes only those aspects of the object that are of practical interest and edits out unnecessary details. For example, if I encounter a horse grazing in a field, my intellect focuses on perceptive data that informs possible actions to follow. If I approach the animal, will it run away or attack? How far away is the nearest fence, and how long will it take me to reach it? My perception, then, does not form an entire

image of the encounter, and frequently inclines towards accessing an object's spatial presence relative to my physical presence. However, Bergson further maintains that our knowledge of an object is not limited to the immediate data received by perception. Our consciousness is simultaneously flooded by images from memory that inform the perceived data. Without the intervention of memory, he maintains that our perception of the world would be limited to the present. Human consciousness therefore allows for a delay between perception and action, namely affection.

Described by Bergson in his book *Matter and Memory* as 'an invitation to act, with at the same time leave to wait and even do nothing' (2), affection allows one to consider various possible reactions. The human body acts as what Bergson refers to as a 'zone of indetermination' (23) between perception and action. Intelligence makes use of preexisting memory-images in the form of concepts in order to determine the appropriate action to follow. In the case of the encounter with the horse for example, my proceeding action is determined by previous conceptual knowledge of comparable encounters. Bergson maintains, however, that by applying concepts to things, the action to follow is *predetermined*, and argues; 'All knowledge properly so-called is, therefore, turned in a certain direction or taken from a certain point of view' (*The Creative Mind* 209). Intuition, on the other hand, is the method by which one can access 'disinterested knowledge' (210) that is of no immediate practical use to perception. One could say that it is only by disregarding habitual survival instincts, and situating oneself in the place of the horse, that one can reach an absolute knowledge of the encounter with animal. Bergson acknowledges that redirecting thought from the intellect to intuition is difficult precisely because habitual thought cannot make use of 'ready-made conceptions' (206). He states:

To think consists ordinarily in going from concepts to things, and not from things to concepts. To know a reality in the ordinary meaning of the word "to know," is to take ready-made concepts, apportion them, and combine them until one obtains a practical equivalent of the real (208, 209).

Intuition, on the other hand, is the method by which one can grasp the singularity of the object, and this singular aspect cannot be reached if one is focused on directing knowledge of the object towards a practical purpose. The significance of the relationship between perception, affection and action will be readdressed below when examining Deleuze's application of Bergson's theory to cinematic imagery.

The second distinction that Berson highlights in terms of the relationship between intellectual and intuitive thought processes is that the intellect analyses the object from various points of view by reducing it to a series of immobile sections. According to Bergson, it is impossible to reach an absolute understanding of reality by approaching it from immobility. He argues that just as a true understanding of movement can never be reached by comparing one immobile section of movement to another (necessarily altering it in the process), a true knowledge of an object can never be reached using the same methodology.

Intuition reverses the intellectual method by first sensing the object's internal, unique and mobile vibration in duration. Furthermore, intuition is also the method by which the subject's own internal vibration coincides with the object's vibration. These vibrations are unique to both the object and the subject, so that their interaction is likewise a unique encounter that cannot be informed by pre-existing concepts. Thus, intuition is a method of thought for *creating* new knowledge that can subsequently be compared to existing concepts. Bergson argues that one will never create new thoughts by comparing an already existing concept to another. As he puts it; 'from intuition one can pass on to analysis, but not from analysis to intuition' (213).

Following Bergson, the methodology of this art practice-based research project could be described as an intuitive process. I first produce artwork that, while acting as my primary source of research, does not seek to resolve any practical purpose other than to present hypothetical temporal anomalies. As a researcher, I then examine how the work relates to existing theoretical discourses. However, as Bergson highlights, can anything unique to the research itself be identified if this examination is confined to preexisting concepts? Directing the investigation towards the spectator highlights that

the artworks themselves do not contain new knowledge *per se*. Rather, new knowledge can be produced if the spectator engages in an intuitive interaction with the imagery. The temporal anomalies presented by the work serve to disrupt her habitual intellectual process of thought. As her own rhythm interacts with those in the imagery, she can emerge from the encounter having experienced durational rhythms that do not conform definitively to any previous encounters or fit pre-existing concepts. Bergson insists that new thought is only created through intuition precisely because the knowledge it produces pertains to that particular object and the subject's interaction with it. This encounter is therefore unique and creative. Following Bergson, then, I can argue that the interactions between temporal rhythms in my imagery are not only designed to stimulate prolonged thought, but are attempting to stimulate intuitive thought. If so, contemplative spectatorship becomes a method by which it is possible to create philosophical concepts of time deriving from an encounter with the artwork.

Taking one image from *Quad* (see fig. 11) as a working case study, I can surmise that when confronted by the inanimate object resting on the bench, the spectator might initially be inclined to observe and analyze the image. However, its seemingly inactive state triggers a sense of impatience in the spectator. As the object then begins to disappear, it is no longer a concrete entity represented in space, but becomes an event occurring in time. Consequently, the spectator's engagement with the image might change, because typical cognitive analysis proves useless when the object begins to act in such an unnatural manner.



Fig. 11, still from *Quad* (2013)

To illustrate such a process, Bergson uses the example of watching sugar dissolve in water. He argues that the spectator is drawn into the temporal rhythm produced by the dissolving sugar, and is therefore faced with another unique rhythm that exists alongside her own. According to Bergson, such an encounter reveals true duration because two opposing temporal rhythms are coinciding and interacting. He states that the time it takes for the sugar to dissolve ‘coincides with my impatience, that is to say, with a certain portion of my own duration, which I cannot protract or contract as I like’ (*Creative Evolution* 10). In other words, Bergson suggests that the impatience one feels, when forced to interact with another temporal rhythm moving at a slower rate than one’s own, is a lived experience of duration *as it really is*, rather than as we are normally inclined to experience it. The encounter also highlights that multiple temporal rhythms exist simultaneously that affect us, but are not necessarily ours to control.

By way of relating Bergson’s illustration to moving imagery, John Mullarkey compares the impatience one feels when waiting for sugar to dissolve in coffee to a spectator’s resistance to slow temporal rhythms in cinematic imagery. He states:

Such a feeling, a pathos, is undeniably uncomfortable, a form of suffering as we integrate, or refract, our dominant *durée* with that of another ... Just as the

sugar-in-coffee is a material endosmosis – an exchange, a montage, a refraction – so is our effective engagement with that process. We dissolve into the film’s duration just as it mixes itself with ours, emerging as an object for us as this happens (192).

Following Mullarkey, then, it could be posited that the object in *Quad* initially makes the spectator aware of her own dominant temporal rhythm while simultaneously inviting her to relinquish this rhythm in order to enter into its singular rhythm as it slowly fades from view. The spectator is then faced with what appears to be a freeze-frame, except the memory of the object’s presence prevents the image from descending entirely into an immobile state. This fragile state is again interrupted when the object’s reflection begins to disappear. When it fades entirely, the image returns a third time to stillness. In this sense, the image is never a fixed entity. Rather the various rhythms interact to form a changing whole.

The push and pull between opposing temporal rhythms could be interpreted as an attempt to visualize Bergson’s duration as a continuously accumulating and mutable series of vibrations. The image in fig. 11 above unites multiple temporal rhythms in a manner akin to what Bergson describes as the ‘multiple unity’ of duration (*The Creative Mind* 197). However, interpreted as such, my image remains a mere illustration of Bergson’s theory. On the other hand, if the spectator’s rhythm alters to experience the rhythms in *Quad*, the imagery can then be considered the means by which she can shift from an intellectual to an intuitive thought process. As noted above, Bergson describes intuition as the philosophical method of seeking out that which is unique in the object. The spectator experiences stillness as the most contracted degree of movement, and movement as a protracted degree of stillness. As such, their differences are not denied, but become rhythmic differences of degree rather than differences in kind. As Bergson states; ‘if two opposing concepts within an object are considered through intuition, one grasps at the same time how this thesis and antithesis are opposed and how they are reconciled’ (208). The conceptual oppositions between stillness and movement dissolve, as does the distinction between

subject and object. In other words, their rhythmic differences are parts of a whole, changing duration. The emphasis on coinciding rhythms in my imagery, then, could constitute a means by which the spectator becomes an intuitive philosopher.

Examining the relation between the image and thought from a different perspective, Jacques Rancière argues that pensive thought occurs when a ‘zone of indeterminacy’ (107) is presented. However, unlike Bergson’s ‘zone of indetermination,’ referred to above as the location and mediation of the body among matter-images, Rancière argues that pensive thought occurs when the spectator is faced with a zone of indeterminacy contained within the image. He describes pensiveness as a state that is ‘encroached upon by a certain passivity’ (107).

Furthermore, and as outlined in the introduction, Rancière recognizes a shift in the expressive function of images ‘from a representative regime of expression to an aesthetic regime’ (120). He defines the former regime as ‘classical mimesis’ (121) whereby the spectator’s thoughts were determined by the image in one of two ways: either directly by the expression of figures in the image, or indirectly by a metaphorical figure that took the place of an expression outside the image. In the aesthetic regime of expression, on the other hand, the image contains two or more expressions without prioritizing one in particular. The image thus presents a zone of indeterminacy that forces the spectator to pensive thought. Rancière sees this as a question of narrative suspension (122), and describes pensiveness as that which occurs when represented action is interrupted. He states that pensive thought ‘On the one hand, ... extends the action that has come to a halt. But on the other hand, it puts every conclusion in suspense’ (123). Rancière’s hypothesis poses an interesting question in terms of the interactions between stillness and movement in my imagery. Do the opposing temporal rhythms create a zone of indeterminacy that forces the spectator to question whether the image is referring to the past or the present, or to potential interactions between both?

#### **1.4 Jacques Rancière – The Emancipated Spectator**

When addressing the notion of a pensive spectator in *The Emancipated Spectator* (2007), Rancière does not distinguish between intellectual and intuitive thought, rather he argues that the spectator can be described as pensive when she is caught between passivity and activity. She finds herself in this position when faced with an image whose meaning is unclear due to contradictory information contained with it. The spectator therefore not only experiences an image as a passive viewer, but interprets its meaning by relating that image to all the other images and signs she has previously encountered (8). He thereby argues that the pensive spectator is both observer and participant in an intellectual process that the images set in motion. In order to understand how Rancière constructs such a premise, it is useful to first address his position in regard to the validity of the existing knowledge that every spectator brings to an encounter. He thus challenges theoretical discourses based on the premise that knowledge is primarily conceived by the artist and subsequently communicated to the spectator.

Referring to his previous work in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991), Rancière first denies the traditional logic of pedagogical hierarchy by questioning the notion that the schoolmaster is the holder of knowledge, and must pass down this knowledge to the ignorant student. Such a premise creates a distance between the bearer and the receiver of knowledge, but also between what is known and what is worth knowing, thereby presupposing an ‘inequality of intelligence’ (9). Comparing this position to the traditional relationship between a theatrical performance and the audience, Rancière argues that the relationship also assumes total ignorance on the part of the spectator when in fact every member of the audience has already accumulated a unique body of empirical knowledge (8, 9). To counter the institutional tradition, Rancière calls for the need for an ‘ignorant schoolmaster’ who points students towards various things and signs to make of what they will, and return having formulated their own knowledge by comparing these things to all the other things and signs they have experienced. As such, the act of producing knowledge breaks down traditional institutional hierarchies that are based on fixed positions (11).

Rancière's theory of the ignorant schoolmaster is a useful way to approach moving image artworks as open encounters that not only invite, but also rely on the spectator's interaction with the imagery in order to create meaning. This point of view is supported by the artist Abbas Kiarostami when he argues that the spectator is an active participant in the creative process rather than that process being confined to the practitioner's initial thoughts when making the imagery. He calls for just such an interactive process of exchange when he states:

The viewer must be enticed into reflection on himself and the surrounding world. The combination of the viewer's and the filmmaker's mind creates a film which will be more durable, original and fruitful than a film which merely aims at telling a story and impressing the viewer (*10 on Ten*).

Thus, Kiarostami's films never become fixed entities based on one dominant narrative path to be followed. Rather, they are fluid entities that recompose meaning with every viewing encounter. The films present just enough to entice the spectator into active participation, but not enough to determine what that participation will manifest. Rather than directing her thoughts back to those of the practitioner, the images set the scene for potential interactions to take place.

Likewise, when the experimental filmmaker and scholar Malcolm Le Grice considers the relationship he strives to attain with the spectator, he states that the theoretical framework he bases this relationship on is that the artworks would not merely illustrate his thought process as a maker. In a presentation to iMAL students in 2013, Le Grice states:

I like the idea that the work is like something you throw into a pond, and it ripples out, and the ripples belong to the people watching it. They construct the meaning in presence, a presence that leads to their future, a future that exists in the public and cultural space. It is not about trying to decode what it was that I was thinking or even my psychology ("Spectator, Presence and Encounter").

This call for active participation in the creative process is not unprecedented. Drawing on Serge Daney, Bellour notes that when faced with ‘immobile images’ in films by Fellini and Godard the cinematic spectator became aware of her ‘virtual activity’ (“Battle of the Images”). Both Bellour and Rancière (120) thus agree that a moving image can be described as pensive when its activity is suspended. In other words, when the image no longer functions as a narrative tool it becomes a site for pensive thought.

According to Rancière, activity is replaced by thought, ‘but the thought itself has passed into an immobile motion, similar to the radical indifference of the sea’s waves’ (120). This calls to mind the final scene in François Truffaut’s *The 400 Blows* (1959) when the image freezes as the protagonist turns to face the camera while surrounded by the ocean in the background. Just as the image becomes immobile, the spectator is released from the film’s narrative and forced to consider her thoughts.

Rancière uses the term ‘unthought thought’ when addressing the relationship between the image and thought. He points out that it is not the image itself that thinks, but rather the spectator, and argues that the image ‘contains unthought thought, a thought that cannot be attributed to the intention of the person who produces it and which has an effect on the person who views it without her linking it to a determinate object’ (107). In this sense, Truffaut’s frozen shot precipitates thoughts that are not necessarily determined by the scene itself. Rancière therefore emphasizes the necessity for a break in the link between the practitioner’s intention and the spectator’s reception of the image. He maintains that it is this unthought thought that elicits a pensive response when several forms of indeterminacies coincide in one image. Following Rancière, then, it could be argued that my works instigate pensive thought as a direct consequence of the indeterminate temporal state that the coinciding rhythms of stillness and movement imply.

This proposition can be applied to the first two minutes of a sequence in *Quad* (see fig. 12) that depicts a wall, skirting board and floor. The stillness of the architecture in the image is transformed by flickering light reflections over its surface. My interest in

such encounters is bound up in the particular kind of event presented here; the light reflects exterior movements on interior still surfaces and thereby depicts an event that is both still and moving at the same time. Rancière maintains that to speak of a pensive image is to speak of ‘a zone of indeterminacy between thought and non-thought, activity and passivity, but also between art and non-art’ (107). Under these terms, it could be surmised that the image produces pensive thought by presenting zones of indeterminacy between the passive stillness of the architecture and the active movement of light reflections, and also between the camera’s objective record and my artistic framing of the event.



Fig. 12, still from *Quad* (2013)

On further reflection, I can determine another zone of indeterminacy potentially produced by this sequence (see fig. 12). After the first two minutes, the image is then layered with an image of ocean waves, as if to imply that the external world was sweeping in on a tide from under the skirting board. The spectator is therefore called on to oscillate between the real and imaginary. My use of digital imaging techniques indicates a third zone of indeterminacy at play in this image; that between representation and simulation.

## 1.5 Digital Indeterminacies

Emerging manipulation technologies facilitate the seamless integration of recorded footage with digitally constructed details. Manovich proposes that digital imagery can be described as hybrid simulations more aligned to painting than analogue lens-based imagery (192). This suggests that representational functions traditionally assigned to analogue photographs and films are no longer valid. However, although it is true that digital software can create images with no indexical link to reality, there are many more images, my own included, that still contain representational details captured from reality and therefore indexical functions could remain relevant. In fact, Gunning questions whether contemporary digital practitioners intend to *create* an image rather than *transform* it. He suggests that they perhaps ‘actually strive to present a contradiction, an oxymoron, an impossible presence, invoking photographic reference even while contradicting it’ (“What’s the Point of an Index?” 32). The same image in *Quad* discussed above (see fig. 12) includes just such a contradiction. Considered separately, the two layers in fig. 12 depict two images representing distinctly different times and places. However, when combined in this manner they form a contradiction that invites the spectator to re-imagine reality. Following Rancière, one could argue that the spectator first encounters a representation of reality, but as the waves appear, she is forced to rethink the encounter. When two times and places coincide, the image becomes a zone of indeterminacy from which the spectator participates in creating a new interpretation of reality. Thus, new meanings can emerge when representation coincides with simulation through digital manipulation. If considered under the terms of Rancière’s proposition above, one can argue that the convergence of represented and constructed details creates a zone of indeterminacy within the image in *Quad* that seeks to generate a pensive response. However, by applying Rancière’s hypothesis in this manner, the implied relationship between the past and the present remains one based on the opposing functions of photographic stillness representing a fixed past and cinematic movement representing a moving present.

On the other hand, Gilles Deleuze argues that cinematic images cannot be defined as representations. Rather than comprising of images that represent reality, he maintains

that cinema creates new images that exist as independent entities in reality. Thus cinema has the potential to transform, rather than represent, reality. At an early stage of my research I became aware that, although taking a particular site as a point of departure, I wanted to avoid including any distinctive features that represent the site directly so that the spectator might engage primarily with the temporal rhythms of stillness and movement. The interactions between these rhythms seek to visualise corresponding multiple vibrations interacting in a changing whole of duration, which returns us to Bergson. By applying Bergson's theory of duration to cinematic imagery, Deleuze argues that the 'time-image' of modern cinema produces intervals of delay that interrupt the continuity of classic narrative cinema. When confronted by these intervals, the spectator is faced with uncertainty, and in such cases, it can be argued that the typical cognitive thought processes noted by Oakley at the beginning of this chapter no longer suffice.

In terms of the relationship between the image and thought, both Deleuze and Rancière refer to the term 'unthought thought'. However, unlike Rancière who maintains that the image contains unthought thought due to various indeterminate image functions, Deleuze argues that unthought thought is contained within the cinematic interval. As shall be examined in detail in chapter three, Deleuze argues that exposing the cinematic interval can produce an image of time, or perhaps more accurately, an image of duration as understood through Bergson. Deleuze maintains that the extended length given to the interval produces 'a direct time-image' (16) that allows the spectator to interact with the image in duration rather than being led by movements through space. Consequently, the spectator must use a different mode of thought to interact with the imagery. Could it be argued, then, that this different mode of thought is initiated by an intuitive response?

### **1.6 Gilles Deleuze – Images of Time**

According to Deleuze, cinema's automated movements differ from movements in material reality. Cinema can also produce abnormal movements, such as reversed, accelerated, slowed or stilled rates. He refers to such movements as 'aberrant', a term

that will be addressed in detail in the following chapter. He therefore challenges the notion that the cinematic image can be defined as representational, and states ‘the movement-image is not analogical in the sense of resemblance: it does not resemble an object that it would represent ... The movement-image is the object; the thing itself caught in movement as continuous function’ (26). Following Bergson’s thesis that all objects in the world exist as both external (actual) images in space and internal (virtual) images in time, Deleuze regards cinematic images as yet another set of images in the world that produce a corresponding set of virtual images in the spectator’s mind. The classical cinema of the early 1900’s developed montage techniques that Deleuze suggests normalized these aberrant movement-images. Realigned into an order that our ‘sensory-motor schema’ understands, the movement-image of classical cinema linked perception, affection and action, therefore it follows that the movement-image is always inclined towards action. As we have seen, Bergson uses the same schema to describe the intellectual process, suggesting that there could be an implicit implication that Deleuze’s movement-image of classical cinema engages the same intellectual thought process used to comprehend our everyday surroundings. Deleuze then argues that modern cinema from the 1940’s onwards produces images that interrupt the sensory motor schema. As a result, Deleuze states ‘perceptions and actions ceased to be linked together, and spaces are now neither coordinated nor filled’ (39). The spectator finds herself confronted instead by an image that extends an interval between perception and action. This is what Deleuze refers to as the ‘affection-image’. He describes affection as ‘what occupies the interval, what occupies it without filling it in or filling it up’ (*Cinema 1* 67). Affect, in this circumstance, can be understood as both a sense experience and the thought process that is precipitated by a perceptual sensation with no predetermined action to follow. The affection-image can extend this sensation over the duration of the cinematic shot or sequence, thereby extending the thought process that affection precipitates. The first example of an affection-image that Deleuze identifies is that of the facial close-up in narrative cinema. He describes it as such because when the spectator encounters it, she is pulled out of the flow of the story, and engages instead

with the facial expression of the character. But Deleuze identifies another type of affection-image that relates to my practice more directly, one which is emptied of characters and movement. He recognises such images first in the films of Ozu, and refers to them as ‘pure optical situations’ that ‘reveal connections of a new type, which are no longer sensory-motor’ (*Cinema 2* 17). This new type of connection, according to Deleuze, refers to cinema’s ability to produce a direct image of time as duration.

These images introduce new rhythmic systems because the intervals of delay produced by the affection-image appear as images in their own right, whose functional role is no longer that of a linking mechanism. The affection image presents what Deleuze refers to as an ‘any-space-whatever’, and constitutes a ‘zone of indiscernibility’ comparable to Bergson’s ‘zone of indeterminacy’ referred to above. Applying the same hypothesis to cinema, Deleuze maintains that the spectator is no longer sure how to react when faced with such an image. Drawing from Bergson, the spectator in this context can be defined as the ‘zone of indeterminacy’ within the multiple images in duration. Deleuze compares the image that precipitates this encounter to a crystal because the crystal simultaneously reflects and refracts an image so that one is unsure whether a particular image contained within it exists as a reflection of an actual image or a refraction of itself. In the case of the cinematic image that suspends the spectator in affection, Deleuze maintains that she is unsure whether the image she encounters exists as an actual image on screen or a virtual image in her memory. Deleuze argues that at this point the actual and the virtual refract each other, and produce a ‘crystal-image’. In terms of thought, this type of time-image exposes what Deleuze terms the ‘unthought, the unsummonable, the inexplicable, the undecidable, the incommensurable. The outside or the obverse of the images has replaced the whole, at the same time as the interstice [interval] ... has replaced association’ (206). Consequently, the spectator is forced to interact in a manner that is unfamiliar to her.

Rudolf Bernet points out that unthought thought can only be encountered when the subject is faced with an outside force that prevents her from thinking habitually. He states that unthought thought is not a matter of subjective choice. Rather, it ‘belongs to

the response to a pressing demand or command that has its origin in the event of the encounter with a mystery that remarkably transcends our subjective means of comprehension' (Bernet 221). In the cinematic time-image, this is an encounter with duration as understood through Bergson. The state of uncertainty a time-image presents serves to liberate the spectator from forming rational associations. The spectator is therefore forced to think new thoughts, and these thoughts are triggered by affective sensations in duration rather than logical associations. As such, by applying Bergson's distinction between two forms of thought, one could surmise that the cinematic time-image replaces intellectual analysis with intuition.

Deleuze's attention to affect and the affection-image suggests an affiliation with phenomenological approaches to cinematic imagery. Although there is a phenomenological aspect to Deleuze's theory, Bernet notes distinct differences in terms of their interpretations of affect and its role in an intuitive thought process. Addressing this issue will clarify why I believe Deleuze's interpretation better informs the spectator response my works seek to elicit.

### **1.7 Affect**

Bernet points out that analytical philosophy traditionally focused on conceptual thought processes based on logic, whereas phenomenological philosophy is primarily concerned with a different form of knowledge produced by perception through the sensation of an embodied affect (221). He highlights, however, the fundamental differences between a phenomenological understanding of intuition, put forward by Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Bergson's interpretation that is echoed by Deleuze and his collaborator Felix Guattari in their book *What is Philosophy?* (1991). Following a phenomenological approach, intuitive thought is produced by an embodied perception of, for instance, an object. Perceptual knowledge is thus prioritized over conceptual knowledge. As Bernet puts it; 'for Husserl conceptual knowledge is founded on a preconceptual (usually perceptual) experience that is already a kind of knowledge' (228). In other words, the role of perceptual sensations, in the form of affects, is the primary concern of a phenomenological

approach to intuition, whereas Bergson, on the other hand, insists on the primacy of memory. It is in recognizing this relationship between perception and memory images that allows Bergson to argue for interactions between the present and the past. He states:

Inner duration is the continuous life of a memory which prolongs the past into the present, whether the present distinctly contains the ever-growing image of the past, or whether, by its continual changing quality, it attests rather the increasingly heavy burden dragged along behind one the older one grows. Without the survival of the past in the present there would be no duration but only instantaneity (211).

Deleuze echoes Bergson when he states ‘there is no present which is not haunted by a past and a future, by a past which is not reducible to a former present, by a future which does not consist of a present to come’ (*Cinema* 2 36). This is not to suggest that phenomenology disregards the role of memory, rather that it regards knowledge produced by affective sensations as primary. Bergson, on the other hand, focuses on the coincidence of perceptual sensations and memory images.

When applied to cinema, phenomenological spectatorship regards intuition as a process that responds to affective embodied experiences. These experiences produce knowledge directly through the senses of vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Laura U Marks applies a phenomenological approach to moving imagery in her book *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (2000). Marks distinguishes between ‘haptic’ and ‘optical’ visuality (2). According to Marks, cinematic images that invite haptic vision include facial close-ups. As noted above, Deleuze also points to close-ups in reference to the affection-image. The haptic imagery that Marks highlights is frequently intentionally grainy, blurred, or otherwise distorted, holding the spectator’s attention on her immediate response to surface textures rather than representational details. My works also often focus on close-up architectural details, and seek to disrupt concrete spatial or representational readings by drawing attention to moments when these still surfaces are interrupted by

movement. However, although my work apparently induces embodied experiences, such as affected heart rates noted above that could be described as haptic, these encounters are intended to provide intervals for prolonged thought rather than prioritize the immediate physical perceptual sensation. Furthermore, the coinciding rhythms in my work seek to engage the spectator in an encounter that implies a past and a present that likewise coincide, thus shifting the emphasis towards the duration of the encounter, rather than an immediate perceptual sensation. Following this train of thought, then, one could describe the spectator's encounter with my imagery as an interaction between multiple vibrations in duration, rather than the affect one vibration has on another.

Bernet further argues that by prioritizing perceptual knowledge, phenomenological interpretations of intuition can be problematic in terms of their relationship to creative, thought-provoking conceptual philosophy if conceptual thought in this model only affirms an already formulated perceptual knowledge (230). He suggests that Deleuze, echoing Bergson, manages to bridge the divide between perceptual and conceptual knowledge by allowing one to proceed from the other. Affection, then, not only takes the embodied sensation into account, it instigates an intuitive thought process that first relinquishes the spectator's subjectivity for that of the image, and subsequently allows her to consider a broader field of conceptual inquiry. Drawing on Deleuze's expanded philosophical discourses will demonstrate how my work might elicit such an intuitive response.

In developing their premise for creative conceptual thinking in *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari propose that a virtual 'plane of immanence' (49) must first be determined in order to pose interesting philosophical questions. This plane exists in duration, and comprises of disparate images from the fundamentally chaotic nature of the world. Philosophical concepts can be created when one interacts with the plane of immanence. Bernet notes that if the plane of immanence exists in duration as understood through Bergson, where 'the meaning of all parts depends on the meaning of an intuitively apprehended totality instead of this totality resulting from the

summation of independent elements' (236), then the meaning of concepts drawn from the plane of immanence likewise depends on an intuitive understanding of the entire plane, rather than on an intellectual understanding of each individual concept.

Following Deleuze, it could be surmised that my works constitute a 'plane of immanence', described by Bernet as 'the problem itself that unfolds its own field of investigation and that prompts the need for the creation of new concepts.' In other words, the role of the imagery is to invite the spectator to pose questions deriving from her interactions with the images, rather than the imagery articulating or representing predetermined questions. Interpreted under these terms, the images could be said to contain the 'unthought thought' that Deleuze refers to, that is, the potential for the spectator to make connections that the intellect, driven by practical concerns, will never make. In this sense, then, the spectator's encounter with the imagery becomes the site in which new knowledge can be created. This interpretation is supported by Simon O'Sullivan who applies Deleuze's concept of affect directly to the field of contemporary art (*Art Encounters* 38). O'Sullivan argues that art is 'a bundle of affects, or, as Deleuze and Guattari would say, a *bloc of sensations*, waiting to be reactivated by a spectator or participant' (43). O'Sullivan draws on Deleuze and Guattari's *What is Philosophy?* and Deleuze's writings on the works of the artist Francis Bacon to propose that affect can be defined as 'the effect another body (for example an art object) has upon my own body, and upon my body's duration' (41). For the spectator, then, art is not only an object, but an encounter with affects, that, in themselves, do not produce knowledge, but are, according to O'Sullivan, "dark precursors" of our conceptual system, precursors that subsist alongside the production of knowledge' (42). Affects, then, can be understood as sensations that drive all practical knowledge to the side as the spectator encounters something unfamiliar. In terms of moving imagery that engage stilled or prolonged subtle movements, it could be posited that the spectator is afforded the opportunity to contemplate on the memory images that are provoked by the unique encounter. If no apparent resolution is reached in terms of the meaning of the encounter, such unfamiliar thoughts can remain in the mind of the spectator in an unresolved state, perplexing but unwavering. This, I

believe, is what defines a truly thoughtful spectator, and a form of spectatorship that lasting artworks strive to achieve.

### **1.7 Summary**

This chapter first looked at Bergson and Deleuze's interpretation of intuition to examine the particular spectator experience my practical research and comparable works seek to achieve. Taking as its point of departure Bergson's distinction between intellectual and intuitive processes of knowledge production, I speculated that slow temporal rhythms in moving imagery might elicit an intuitive rather than intellectual response from the spectator. Both Bergson and Deleuze describe intuition as the primary method of thought used when responding to artworks. In this sense, the artworks themselves act to facilitate the process by presenting imagery that disrupt the spectator's typical, intellectual, manner of comprehending her surroundings.

O'Sullivan argues that an artwork is an 'object of an encounter that is fundamentally different from an object of recognition' (1). In distinguishing between the two, O'Sullivan echoes Bergson and Deleuze when he recognizes two different forms of knowledge production. He states that an object of recognition reconfirms our knowledge by re-presenting the world to us as we already understand it to exist. In contrast, an object of an encounter disrupts our knowledge by challenging our understanding of the world. According to O'Sullivan, this disruption affords the spectator an opportunity to see and think the world differently. In fact, he maintains that when the spectator is faced with an object of an encounter she is 'forced to thought' (1). In other words, she is forced to create new thoughts rather than being led by existing thoughts. In the case of cinematic imagery, then, such an encounter has the potential to produce new thoughts when various signs and associations provided in the imagery no longer play by the same rules that we are typically accustomed to.

Following Bergson, a contemplative spectator could also be described as an intuitive philosopher that seeks out that which is unique in the image viewed. In the case of cinematic imagery, Deleuze maintains that a productive relationship between the image and thought derives from a time-image. The time-image allows the spectator to

experience the true nature of time, namely duration, by interrupting the sensory motor schema linking perception, affection and action. Suspended between perception and action, the spectator finds herself faced with affective sensations that are contained in this interval of delay. Consequently, she is forced to think anew, or intuitively rather than intellectually. With that said, the two forms of thought deriving from intuition and the intellect are not mutually exclusive. Deleuze draws on Bergson's theory of intuition to argue that thoughts produced through affective sensations can subsequently be conceptualised through intellectual thought.

By engaging with the coinciding rhythms of stillness and movement in my images, the spectator is invited to experience a unity of multiple temporal rhythms akin to what Bergson describes as the 'multiple unity' of duration as experienced through intuition. By focusing on the movement of light reflections falling on architectural spaces and objects, the images' temporal rhythms, rather than their spatial presence, are highlighted. In doing so, the images call on the spectator to relinquish her own spatial awareness, so that her temporal rhythm comes into contact with, and interacts with, the unfamiliar rhythms contained in the images. Drawing on Bergson's theory of duration and Deleuze's application of duration to the cinematic image, I propose that the interactions between stillness and movement in my images have the potential to engage the spectator in an intuitive thought process that draws equally from the past and the present. When images are emptied of characters and easily associative actions they become more pliable in terms of registering meaning. To put it another way, the images don't create meaning as such, rather they provide a point of departure and return for the spectator. It is the spectator that can create new thoughts and develop concepts based on these new thoughts.

As to whether my imagery reach beyond representational functionality entirely, or make use of a certain contradiction between representation and expression in order to elicit a contemplative response as Rancière suggests, that is perhaps a matter best left up to the intuitive response of the individual spectator. This conclusion best supports any claims that the spectator is ultimately the maker of meaning.

In terms of how my images can seek to elicit such contemplative spectatorship, my investigations thus far highlight two specific requirements: the promotion of aberrant movement as a means to prioritize temporal rhythms, and the location of the interval as a site for the direct presentation of time within cinematic imagery. The following two chapters will thus examine how each term is implicated in my practice.

## CHAPTER TWO - ABERRANT MOVEMENT

### 2.1 Overview

If normal movement subordinates the time of which it gives us an indirect representation, aberrant movement speaks up for an anteriority of time that it presents to us directly, on the basis of the disproportion of scales, the dissipation of centres and the false continuity of the images themselves.

(Deleuze *Cinema 2* 36)

Gilles Deleuze describes cinematic movement that deviates from the typical behaviour of movement in the physical world as abnormal, or aberrant movement. He further argues that aberrant movement can produce direct images of time because it exposes temporal rather than spatial movement. For instance, the cinematic image has the ability to slow, accelerate, or reverse the flow of movement. Cinema can also produce images with irregular scale proportions and juxtapose two disparate movements. He maintains that as cinema developed montage techniques were designed that aligned the movement from one shot to another. However, he argues that although facilitating the development of narrative cinema, the medium's potential to realize direct images of time through aberrant movement was consequently obscured by these continuity editing techniques of montage. This chapter first addresses Deleuze's distinction between 'normal' movement in what he terms the 'movement-image' of pre WW2 classical cinema, and the promotion of 'aberrant' movement in the 'time-image' of post WW2 modern cinema. Deleuze recognizes the emergence of direct images of time through such a promotion of aberrant movement by Italian neo-realist filmmakers of the 1950's, with a few notable predecessors including Yasujiro Ozu in Japan, Jean Renoir in France and Orson Wells in the USA.

Aberrant cinematic movement can produce different kinds of time-images. For instance, Deleuze is primarily concerned with instances when aberrant movement disrupts narrative continuity and thus reveals images of time, understood here through Bergson as duration. In the context of this research project, however, I am particularly interested in examining instances when the sequential flow of cinematic time is de-

stabilized through interactions between temporal rhythms. If it can be shown that opposing temporal rhythms expose aberrant movement that, in turn, accesses time directly, it is then possible to claim that the interactions between stillness and movement in my practical research can produce contemporary time-images. Furthermore, if the stilled and extended expressions of time produced by my works can be classified as notably contemplative, it can also be posited that aberrant movement plays a significant role in seeking to elicit the intuitive spectator response that the previous chapter argued for.

As noted above, Deleuze primarily focuses on the emergence of a time-image in the context of narrative cinema. However, his claim that aberrant movement ‘is the phantom which has always haunted the cinema’ (40) suggests that aberrant movement might have been exposed by other genres of cinema produced concurrently with classical and modern cinema. If so, did such practices produce direct images of time? In terms of notable interactions between stillness and movement, Laura Mulvey points to Dziga Vertov’s seminal avant-garde film *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), stating, ‘another temporal dimension suddenly emerged’ (13) when the movement carrying the film forward is interrupted by a freeze-frame. The stillness of the freeze-frame could be described as decidedly aberrant in the context of moving image works. Mulvey’s observations suggest that its use in *Man With a Movie Camera* is a particularly poignant example of aberrant movement’s ability to highlight temporal anomalies through juxtaposing movement with stillness. On the other hand, Chris Marker reverses the relationship between stillness and movement some forty years later in *La Jetée* (1962) when his extensive use of the freeze frame is interrupted by a temporary return to cinematic movement. An examination of these two films leads me to question whether aberrant movement’s ability to produce direct images of time is based less on narrative disruption, but rather relies on one temporal rhythm temporarily disrupting an opposing rhythm.

Along with the freeze-frame, focusing on filmic rhythms also highlights the role the long take plays in accessing images of time. As Markos Hadjioannou points out,

Deleuze frequently references filmic instances when ‘idle periods’ of time are emphasized (“Into Great Stillness”). In this context, Ozu’s use of the long take to produce what Deleuze terms his ‘pure optical and sound situations’ (*Cinema 2* 13) are particularly relevant. Now echoed in contemporary practice, certain filmmakers’ engagement with the long take led Jonathon Romney to call for a new genre of filmmaking termed ‘slow cinema’ (*In Search of Lost Time*). He argues that a growing number of films produced since the year 2000 can be characterized by ‘an intensified sense of temporality’. Emerging digital technologies now allow for longer recording durations that have been explored in such films as Alexander Sokurov’s *Russian Ark* (2002). This proclivity towards exposing inactive longevity in certain genres of contemporary film and art practice indicates that while some might consider digital imagery to sever the historical indexical relationship between the image and time, new temporal relationships are forming that extend the media’s potential to produce contemplative images of time. However, on further investigation, it can also be argued that a Deleuzian time-image was never dependant on this indexical link. By focusing on rhythmic exchanges within historical and contemporary moving image works, I will argue that the production of direct images of time is expanded rather than confined by the transition from analogue to digital media. A comparative examination of three contemporary moving image works by the artists Tacita Dean, Fiona Tan and David Claerbout provides a relevant case study. While Dean rallies against the obsolescence of analogue film, Tan’s digital video suggests that attempting to produce contemplative images of time is not confined by technological advancements. Both artists address the relationship between the image and time through extensive use of the long take. Can the long take be described as aberrant under the terms set out by Deleuze? Is the long take particularly useful when attempting to invite the kind of contemplative response that the previous chapter argues my practical research seeks to elicit? Is this propensity towards contemplative rhythms strengthened by the digital turn? David Claerbout uses specifically digital techniques that I will argue produce contemporary aberrant movements focused on rhythmic exchanges between stillness

and movement, thereby expanding moving imagery's ability to produce direct images of time.

This chapter thus hopes to demonstrate how the rhythmic exchanges between stillness and movement in my practical research produce an image of time as a complex series of interactions between the past and the present. Could it be that the coincidence of these opposing rhythms achieve what Deleuze suggests *cinéma vérité* and direct cinema strove to achieve: 'a before and an after as they coexist with the image, as they are inseparable from the image' (*Cinema* 2 36).

As indicated above, in order to examine these issues further it is first necessary to define how Deleuze differentiates between 'normal' and 'aberrant' movement, and the role he regards each to play in the shift from the movement-image of classical cinema to the time-image of modern cinema.

## 2.2 Deleuze - Cinematic Movement

The titles of Deleuze's two books on cinema, *Cinema 1, The Movement-Image* (1986) and *Cinema 2, The Time-image* (1989) can be somewhat misleading in that they could imply that he turns from addressing cinematic movement in the first text, to addressing time in the second. In fact both books address movement. However, Deleuze distinguishes between two distinctly different renderings of movement and their consequences in terms of how cinema addresses time. He states, 'a direct presentation of time does not imply the halting of movement, but rather the promotion of aberrant movement' (*Cinema* 2 35). It is important to note at the outset that Deleuze does not infer the movement-image of classical cinema is inferior to the time-image of modern cinema. Rather he argues that the former is primarily concerned with movement directed towards action whereas the latter emphasizes movement that interrupts action and consequently exposes an underlying relationship between the image, time and thought. I use the term underlying here because Deleuze maintains that the movement-image 'seems to be in itself a profoundly aberrant and abnormal movement' (35), evidenced by speeded up, slowed or reversed sequences, figures moving without appearing to distance themselves from the camera, changes in scale and proportion,

and false continuities of movement between shots. What, then, is Deleuze referring to when he describes the movement-image of classical cinema as ‘normal’?

According to Deleuze, cinema comprises a series of individual shots with no inherent predisposition to form cohesive associations. As cinema evolved, however, montage techniques were developed that linked movement between shots, meaning shots were designed to produce a coordinated movement from one shot to another thereby creating a seemingly continuous movement that flows from the beginning to the end of a film. Deleuze argues that such movement ‘fulfils conditions of normality’ (35) that can be defined by ‘the existence of centres: centres of the revolution of movement itself, of equilibrium of forces, of gravity of moving bodies, and of observation for the viewer able to recognize or perceive the moving body, and to assign movement’ (35). In other words cinematic movements, even those that can be considered individually to act in an unusual manner, are designed to link sequentially so that we can understand them to be governed by the forces of gravity. It therefore allows our sensori-motor schema to determine that a perceived movement will be followed by a corresponding action. For example, if a figure moves through one shot from left to right, our sensori-motor schema expects the same figure to enter the next shot from the left also. Although successful in achieving narrative continuity, Deleuze argues that by realigning movement between images in this manner, classical cinema produces images that relinquish time to the measure of movement, and thereby sacrifice cinema’s ability to produce a direct image of time. He states that in such cases:

The shot must therefore already be a potential montage, and the movement-image, a matrix or cell of time. From this point of view, time depends on movement itself and belongs to it: it may be defined, in the style of ancient philosophers, as the number of movement’ (34).

In other words, it is the coordination between the shot and montage in classical cinema that designates time as the measure or number of movement. Deleuze therefore refers to the classical cinematic image as a ‘movement-image’ because it focuses on aligning movement between shots in order to produce a seemingly continuous movement

through montage. He further argues that by designing movement to behave in this manner, classical cinema consequently portrays the passing of time as a simple succession or ‘chain of presents’ (36) that are selected and coordinated so that they create a stabilized past as they pass on. However, following Bergson, Deleuze insists that no such clear and stable present or past exists, rather ‘each present coexists with a past and a future without which it would not itself pass on’ (36). This characterization of cinema as a chain of passing presents is what led Bergson to argue that the cinematic image was incapable of accessing time as duration: an ever-accumulating series of interacting vibrations between the present and the past. However, in contrast to Bergson’s position regarding the cinematic image, Deleuze argues that if the coordination between cinematic shots is interrupted by a shot whose movement ‘avoids centring’, in that it does not align with previous movements, the causal link between perception and action is likewise de-stabilized. In such cases, Deleuze recognizes the promotion of an underlying aberrant cinematic movement for the purposeful intention of de-stabilizing the very notion of time as a succession of passing presents. As was noted above, Deleuze refers to aberrant movement as the haunting phantom of cinema, and then suggests ‘it took modern cinema to give a body to this phantom’ (40). So how did modern cinema achieve this?

Deleuze first recognizes the purposeful promotion of cinematic aberrant moment in the production of direct images of time in the films by the Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu. Deleuze pays particular attention to Ozu’s ‘pure optical and sound situations’ (13) comprising shots of ‘empty landscapes’ on the one hand and ‘still lifes’ on the other (16). While distinguishing between the two in terms of their emphasis on either ‘the absence of a possible content’ in the former, or ‘the presence and composition of objects which … become their own container’ (16) in the latter, both shots produce direct images of time. The time-image produced here is particularly relevant to my research on two counts: Firstly, as addressed in the introduction when discussing the image of the vase in *Late Spring* (1949) (see fig. 7), Ozu’s shots frequently involve interactions between stillness and movement within the image. In terms of their potential standing as aberrant movement, Deleuze points out

that Ozu's attention to these long takes grant the banality of daily life a significance that is not afforded to it by classical montage. Classical cinema typically edits out periods of inactivity in favour of active or decisive moments. Ozu, on the other hand, celebrates this otherwise lost time, and by so doing, his image produces what Deleuze describes as 'a direct time-image' (16). He further argues that Ozu's shots, emptied of movement directed towards action, undermine sensory-motor connections to such an extent that they 'reach the absolute, as instances of pure contemplation' (15). How, then, is this so?

Instead of being driven by action, the time-image here accentuates halted action, and results in an image that is suspended in space, but extended in time. The image then reaches what Deleuze describes as 'a point of indiscernibility' (79) between the actual image on screen and its virtual equivalent, and becomes what he terms a 'crystal-image' (79). He states:

the crystal constantly exchanges the two distinct images which constitute it, the actual image of the present which passes and the virtual image of the past which is preserved: distinct and yet indiscernible, and all the more indiscernible because distinct, because we do not know which is one and which is the other' (79).

Put simply, the crystal-image exposes the actual image in the present and its corresponding virtual image in the past simultaneously.

In the movement-image of classical cinema the shot acts as a section of movement in space, and montage as the whole movement in time. In the time-image of modern cinema, on the other hand, this distinction between shot and montage breaks down when montage is 'already in the image' (40). In other words, the time-image no longer relies on montage to express a movement *of* time, rather the image itself expresses a movement *in* time. To put it another way, time no longer flows as movement from one shot to the next through the linking mechanisms of montage, it is expressed from within the shot itself. For example, Deleuze points to the opening scene in Orson Welles' film *Mr Arkadin* (1955) to highlight how the character of the inspector

'literally emerges from time rather than coming from another place' (37). In this case aberrant movement can be defined as the character's movement from the background to the foreground of the frame rather than moving through space. Turning to an example from my own practice, the video titled *Return* includes an image of a stilled wall surface out of which another image of cherry blossoms fluttering in the breeze appears to emerge. Here again movement is introduced from within the frame rather than as a linking mechanism between frames. Yet even before the cherry blossom appears, the initial stillness of the wall image can be described as aberrant. Cinematic images typically contain some degree of movement so perhaps the most aberrant of cinematic movements occurs when stillness is introduced in the form of a freeze-frame. Then again, the movement of the cherry blossom could also be described as aberrant in terms of its purposeful focus on a seemingly inactive moment. Before examining *Return* in more detail, then, it is useful at this point to examine whether the two devices at play here, namely the freeze-frame and the long take, can be considered aberrant in their own right.

### 2.3 The Freeze-frame

Both Mulvey and Bellour argue that the freeze-frame challenges our reading of the temporal states of stasis and motion in relation to the past and present. Mulvey states, 'In their stillness, the repeated images belong to the photograph, to the moment of registration, but in their sequence they signify poignantly the indivisibility of these individual moments from a larger whole, an integral part of a shift into movement' (15). In other words, the freeze-frame may suggest stillness, but it can never return us entirely to the 'then' of photographic time. Referring to the presence of a photograph in movies as a 'photogram', Bellour suggests it serves to remind us that movement does not define cinema: 'Rather, it is time: the concatenation, the unfolding of images in time, a time the spectator cannot control' ("The Pensive Spectator" 122). As was noted above, Deleuze states that the direct time-image is 'a phantom which has always haunted the cinema, but it took modern cinema to give a body to this phantom' (*Cinema 2* 40). Stillness could also be described as a phantom of analogue cinema,

with the movement of film through a projector working to conceal each individual frame. What, then, happens to the image when this secret is revealed?

Returning again to the final sequence in *The 400 Blows* (see fig. 13), Truffaut makes pertinent use of the freeze frame when the film's protagonist Antoine (Jean-Pierre Léaud) stops running, and turns to stare directly into the camera. By allowing Antoine to address the audience directly, Truffaut removes the spectator from the diegetic time of the film and propels her back into an awareness of her time of viewing. This, in itself, could be described as aberrant in the context of narrative cinema. With Antoine's direct address, Truffaut reaches back into the history of cinematic imagery when this cinematic technique was frequently applied. As Gunning states, early filmmakers were 'willing to rupture a self-enclosed fictional world for a chance to solicit the attention of the spectator' ("The Cinema of Attractions"). What is Truffaut's reason for allowing his character to do this? Could it be that he wants his image to be carried forward into the future by allowing Antoine to be thrown into the present of the spectator? I suggest that the freeze-frame in *The 400 Blows* creates a dual aberrant state: the first is produced by Antoine's direct address that ruptures the self-enclosed fictional world of the film, and the second through the abrupt shift from movement to stillness. Deleuze states that the time-image 'is virtual, in opposition to the actuality of the movement-image' (*Cinema 2* 40). Although the title 'Fin' then appears on screen, the aberrant state of stillness combined with Antoine's direct address produces an image that denies the possibility of the spectator reaching any final resolution. The image therefore remains active as a virtual image in the mind of the spectator.



Fig. 13, François Truffaut, still from *The 400 Blows* (1959)

Truffaut's final sequence reaches a point where the past, present and future coexist in one stilled image. One can only be reminded of Deleuze's call for an image that can 'achieve a before and an after as they coexist with the image' (36). In Truffaut's image, time no longer operates chronologically but runs in many directions at once.

The freeze-frame, then, has a unique ability to focus on the movement of time because movement through space is halted entirely. As Bellour points out, it can draw attention to two temporal rhythms running concurrently. Perhaps this is the reason avant-garde filmmakers were drawn to it. Two notable avant-garde works stand out when considering the freeze-frame as an aberrant movement: Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) and Chris Marker's *La Jetée*.

### **2.3.1 *Man With A Movie Camera***

As the intertitles that open *Man With a Movie Camera* indicate, Dziga Vertov sought to develop a new visual language through cinema that was to distinguish itself, 'on the basis of its complete separation from the language of theatre and literature'. Although the film is loosely based on a day in the life of a city, it provides little narrative structure and concentrates instead on allowing the camera to record the various paces of city life. The film therefore lends itself well to an investigation of the interaction between visual rhythms in moving imagery.

While developing her theory of 'delayed cinema' in *Death 24 x a Second* (2006), Mulvey highlights a sequence in *Man With a Movie Camera* that begins with a horse and carriage traveling along a city street (13) (see fig. 14).



Fig. 14, Dziga Vertov, still from *Man With a Movie Camera* (1929)

Vertov then temporarily interrupts the flow of movement with a freeze-frame of the horse. The freeze-frame is a cinematic image that can be classified as aberrant due to the abnormal state of stillness that it embodies within a medium largely identified through movement. As Mulvey states;

This accumulation of movement had carried forward the movement of the film and of time itself, so when the image froze, another temporal dimension suddenly emerged. While movement tends to assert the presence of a continuous 'now', stillness brings a resonance of 'then' to the surface. Here, Vertov manages to switch these registers with a single image' (13).

The continuous 'now' that Mulvey refers to in this quote echoes Deleuze's reservations addressed above regarding the relationship between time and the movement-image of classical cinema. When Vertov introduces the aberrant state of stillness with the use of a freeze-frame the spectator's engagement with a series of passing presents is temporarily disrupted. Mulvey draws our attention to this sequence precisely because it challenges the notion that cinema comprises a series of passing presents, and indicates that far more complex relations between the present and the past are at play here. According to Mulvey, while stillness might reference the photographic past, Vertov's image of the horse manages to switch registers because it simultaneously propels the spectator out of cinematic movement and into an awareness of her present experience of spectatorship. Mulvey is supported by Bellour

on this point. As addressed in the introduction, he states that when a freeze-frame is introduced in the cinema;

..the presence of the photograph bursts forth, while other means exploited by mise-en-scene to work against time tend to vanish. The photo thus becomes a stop within a stop, a freeze-frame within a freeze-frame; between it and the film from which it emerges, two kinds of time blend together, always and inextricable, but without being confused ("The Pensive Image" 121).

The freeze-frame temporarily empties the image of movement and therefore time cannot be regarded as the measure of movement in space. At the same time, the image contains duration, and a certain expectation of movement to come. Thus, the freeze-frame suggests the possibility of a future change to come, whereas the photograph, as Barthes pointed out, always points back to the past. The stillness of freeze-frame can thus be compared to Deleuze's description of Ozu's empty spaces as 'absent of a *possible* content' (*Cinema 2* 16, emphasis added). Perhaps it is the temporary suspension of cinematic movement that highlights its own illusion. Then again, perhaps the freeze-frame highlights the illusion of stillness, a temporal state that does not exist in physical reality. In this sense, the freeze-frame can be considered a powerful aberrant state that has a unique ability to draw temporal relations in the image to the fore.

With that said, although stillness can be defined as aberrant when presented in the form of a freeze-frame, it does not necessarily follow that its use automatically produces a direct image of time. Rather, it is Vertov's interruption of movement that propels the stilled image into another temporal dimension. Chris Marker's film *La Jetée* reverses this relation between stillness and movement. However, in this case one could argue that the freeze-frame quickly becomes normalized, in that one becomes familiar with the unusually slow temporal rhythm established by one freeze-frame following another. In this case, a return to movement causes the rhythmic interruption. This reversal of the status of movement in *La Jetée* raises an important issue in

relation to the shifting nature of aberrant states: What can in one instance be considered abnormal, can become quite normal in another.

### 2.3.2 *La Jetée*

As noted in the introduction, Chris Marker's childhood inclination to make a movie using a series of still images raises a fundamental question concerning what constitutes the essence of the medium, and is played out significantly in his 29 minute film *La Jetée*. Standing out from Marker's oeuvre as his only work of fiction, *La Jetée* is described by Uriel Orlow as a 'balancing act on the thin line between photography and film' (177). In contrast to Vertov's *Man With a Movie Camera* where motion is interrupted by stasis, Marker reverses the process. *La Jetée* comprises a series of 419 photographic stills opening with an image of the jetty at Orly airport (see fig. 15).



Fig. 15, Chris Marker, still from *La Jetée* (1962)

Although the scene is clearly presented in photographic terms, distinctive cinematic elements are concurrently at play here. Marker uses opening titles, zooms, fades, dissolves, and a soundtrack. The key cinematic attribute that appears to be absent is movement within the image itself. D. N. Rodowick addresses this absence directly when he states, 'Time no longer derives from movement: "aberrant" or eccentric

movement derives from time' (5). The aberrant state that Rodowick refers to here is, in fact, stillness. Rodowick recognizes that such a shift has philosophical consequences;

Movement, drained from the image and divorced from the representation of action, has relinquished its role as the measure of time. In *La Jetée*, the image of time is no longer reduced to the thread of chronology where present, past, and future are aligned on a continuum (4).

Referring to Deleuze's 'crystal-image', Rodowick compares the unraveling of chronological time in *La Jetée* to 'so many facets of a shattered crystal' (4). Likewise, Orlow points out that the images in *La Jetée* produce time through their relations to other images rather than through movement (181). However, one must also take into account that when viewing *La Jetée*, the spectator soon becomes familiar with its visual rhythm. In this sense, it can be argued that what at first appears aberrant very soon becomes normalized through the consistency of the rhythm.

Ironically, it is when Marker reintroduces movement that the most poignant reflection on temporal relations between stillness and movement occurs in *La Jetée*. Towards the end of the seventeenth minute (see fig. 16), quite literally with the blink of an eye, the stills are animated. The return to movement disrupts the visual rhythm now established by one freeze-frame following another. In this circumstance, that which is usually considered 'normal' in cinematic imagery appears abnormal, or aberrant.



Fig. 16, Chris Marker, still from *La Jetée* (1962)

Bellour argues that the use of the freeze-frame in a movie creates 'a distance, another time... Permits me, that is, to reflect that I am at the cinema' ("The Pensive Image" 120). In *La Jetée*, however, it is the shift from stillness to movement that instigates this reflection. With his subtle cross-over from stasis to motion, so subtle in fact one could be left wondering if it happened at all, Marker succeeds in making a film whereby 24 frames a second becomes the exception, becomes 'aberrant', and stilled images the rule. Alternatively, one could argue that the aberrant state that produces a direct image of time in both *La Jetée* and *Man With a Movie Camera* is better defined by instances when one rhythm is interrupted by another. Perhaps this is when, as Deleuze argues, 'movement is no longer simply aberrant, aberration is now valid in itself and designates time as its direct cause' (*Cinema 2* 39).

Regardless of their differences, both works addressed here produce direct images of time by juxtaposing the opposing temporal states of stasis and motion. In the case of the long take, this distinction between stasis and motion is less explicit. However, the image's extended duration allow internal rhythms of exchange between stillness and movement to come the fore. Under what circumstances, then, can it be considered aberrant and used as a means by which to produce a direct image of time? Why is a cinematic presentation of time passing at a rhythm most consistent with the rhythm of time passing in the physical world so challenging for the spectator?

## 2.4 The long Take

Matthew Flanagan points out that average shot lengths 'have steadily decreased in American cinema in the last two decades' (*Towards an Aesthetic of Slow*), varying from between five and nine seconds in the 1970's to less than two seconds in the 2004 film *The Bourne Supremacy*. Paul Greengrass's fast paced editing template is now prolific within the action-movie genre, and this is perhaps not surprising when the viewing experience of such imagery is, at the very least, exhilarating. With that said, contemporary filmmakers have also produced many works that take advantage of

much slower temporal rhythms. As noted earlier, the growing number of such films led Jonathan Romney to identify a new genre of filmmaking that he terms ‘slow cinema’ in a 2010 edition of *Sight and Sound*. Romney argues that slow cinema could be an alternative form of escapism from our digital environment:

We understandably thirst for abstraction at a time when immediacy and simultaneity – culminating in the multiple-strand captioning of television news screens, or the instant feedback on Twitter – are tyrannical demands, forcing our aesthetic sensibility to seek ways of slowing itself down (*In Search of Lost Time*).

In terms of the long take, this statement could imply that, although not necessarily aberrant under the terms set out by Deleuze above, it has become so in comparison to the accelerated rhythms now surrounding us in our digital landscape. Flanagan identifies a similar category of cinema that he states is driven by ‘an aesthetic of slow’ (*Towards an Aesthetic of Slow*). He states that a distinctively stilled and contemplative narrative form of cinema has evolved over the past twenty or so years that defies the fast paced mainstream American cinema, and has, ‘begun to signify a unique type of reflective art where form and temporality are never less than emphatically present, and a diminution of pace serves to displace the dominant momentum of narrative causality’.

Flanagan goes on to argue that the singular traits of the long take, such as emphasizing the shot in extended detail, can now challenge the role of montage as the primary mode of formal presentation within moving imagery. However, this form of filmmaking is not necessarily a contemporary phenomenon. One can trace a history of works that show a proclivity for engaging slow rhythms, from Robert Flaherty’s 1922 film *Nanook of the North*, to Ozu’s work addressed above from the nineteen thirties, forties and fifties, to Andy Warhol’s experimental moving image works in the sixties, and Andrey Tarkovsky’s films from the seventies. Perhaps, then, an ‘aesthetic of slow’ is not merely a reaction to the fast paces of much contemporary cinema, but is an

inherited form of filmmaking that continues to focus on slower rhythms in an attempt to elicit contemplative responses from the spectator.

Tarkovsky himself notes that his engagement with the medium of film begins at the shooting stage, stating that montage ‘brings together shots which are already filled with time, and organizes the unified, living structure inherent in the film’ (114). He frequently exposes this sense of internal time in the shot by extending its duration through extensive use of the long take. For example, he notes that his film *Mirror* (1975) comprises of approximately two hundred shots when the average film of the same length normally comprises of five hundred shots (117). Furthermore, he maintains that the power of the film image is to be found in its ‘rhythm, expressing the course of time within the frame’ (113). He states ‘the time that pulsates through the blood vessels of the film, making it alive, is of varying rhythmic pressure’ (114).

Tarkovsky’s notable focus on various rhythmic exchanges in order to express time within the image is echoed in moving image works by a number of contemporary artists, and will be considered below in relation to works by the artists Tacita Dean, Fiona Tan and David Claerbout.

A comparative study of rhythmic exchanges in works by these three artists also raises a contentious issue regarding medium specificity. Is producing direct images of time through moving imagery affected by the transition from analogue film to digital media? Babette Mangolte addresses this point directly in her essay “Afterward: A Matter of Time” (2002). On one hand, she looks forward to the opportunities afforded by new technologies. On the other hand, she laments the absence of the flicker effect, or ‘heartbeat’ (264), created by the movement of analogue film frames through a projector. She further argues that ‘time is inscribed on the emulsion grain’ of film whose entropic changes from one frame to the next reinforces the changing nature of passing time (264). In contrast, she points out that in the algorithm of digital imagery ‘only what changes in the shot is renewed’. Consequently, she states: ‘When you dig into these bit-size slots to see what is there, you find bits of time memory one on top of the other without chronology’ (264). Following Deleuze, however, one can argue

that an ability to present a number of temporal registers within one image indicates that digital imagery can be a proficient means by which to express time as inherently non-chronological.

The decision to investigate these particular artists was in part made because all three engage slowed and/or stilled rhythms to invite contemplative inquiry. However, their technical approaches differ, and therefore their works provide a relevant case study in terms of whether the transition from analogue to digital imagery affects the cinematic image's potential to address temporal concerns. By focusing on works by Dean, Tan and Claerbout, I will argue that cinema's ability to produce direct images of time is not defined by a physical inscription on analogue film. Rather, duration is expressed through rhythmic exchanges between stillness and movement. Furthermore, digital imagery can produce new forms of aberrant movement that extend rather than inhibit contemporary moving imagery's ability to access time directly.

#### **2.4.1 Tacita Dean - *Presentation Sisters* (2005)**

If I had to point to one work that triggered my interest in the coincidence of stillness and movement in lens-based imagery, it would have to be *Presentation Sisters* (2005) by Tacita Dean. The film was included in Dean's solo exhibition at the Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane in 2007. *Presentation Sisters* (see fig. 17) comprises a series of long takes, located at the Presentation Sisters' convent in Cork, Ireland, and focuses attention on slow rhythms of movement that resonate from one image to the next as the film progresses. In contrast to juxtaposing stillness and movement, as in the cases of *Man With a Movie Camera* and *La Jetée*, the interactions between stillness and movement primarily occur here within each extended shot rather than between two juxtaposed shots. The 60 minute film thereby invites the spectator to observe and consider the aesthetic qualities of each individual shot in detail before engaging with the next shot.



Fig. 17, Tacita Dean, still from *Presentation Sisters* (2005)

*Presentation Sisters* is not driven by any obvious narrative, rather it celebrates an 'aesthetic of slowness' that Romney recognizes in slow cinema. He suggests that such work is primarily concerned with 'a certain rarefied intensity in the artistic gaze... Slow, poetic, contemplative - cinema that downplays event in favour of mood, evocativeness and an intensified sense of temporality' (*In Search of Lost Time*). Similarly, Ira Jaffe argues that such slowed rhythms can prompt the spectator, 'to probe what it means to be available, as well as vulnerable, to time' (7).

Taking Tarkovsky's observations above into account, I can surmise that Dean allowed the rhythms of movement occurring in the building at the time of shooting to determine the duration of each of the subsequent long takes. Furthermore, the rhythms of time appear to seep from one image to the next so that the cut between the images hardly registers. According to Tarkovsky, the editing process can give expression to internal rhythms, and 'joining them together engenders that unique rhythmic design which is the author's sense of time, called into being as a newly formed entity' (121). If this rhythm is successful, he maintains that the spectator 'either falls into your rhythm (your world), and becomes your ally, or else he does not, in which case no contact is made' (120). Returning to Bergson's distinction between intellectual and intuitive thought processes, it can be argued that Dean's images invite the spectator to coincide with the temporal rhythms at play by extending the gap between perception and action, and thereby suspending her in the affection stage. By so doing, the spectator can engage with the rhythmic interactions and thereby gain a deeper understanding of the encounter as a unique occurrence. Certainly, I sensed something

in *Presentation Sisters* that I could not explain logically but remained active in my mind, and the traces of which are now manifesting in my own art practice.

Comparisons can also be drawn between the long takes in *Presentation Sisters* and Ozu's empty images. Deleuze states that these images undermine sensory-motor connections by insisting on accentuating idle periods of time. Unlike the crystal-image of time in neo-realism, they do not interrupt the continuity of Ozu's narrative, rather they are the narrative, and thus link 'the cosmic to the everyday, the durable to the changing, one single and identical time as the unchanging form of that which changes' (*Cinema 2* 17). Similarly, the intensity of Dean's gaze replaces narrative moments of action with *interactions* between the stilled architecture of the convent and the everyday movement of both its occupants and changing light conditions. The convent building could be described as 'the unchanging form' of time and the everyday movement as 'that which changes'.

Dean is notably dedicated to the medium of analogue film, and many of her works, *Presentation Sisters* included, seek to capture places at their point of obsolescence. Hence her use of analogue film is all the more poignant as the medium itself becomes obsolete. As Ross states: 'Dean's filmworks are mourning and melancholy attachments to what is disappearing but still highly valuable, to what is obsolete but still vital: not only the objects to which the analogue image refers but the very materiality of the analogue image' (171). Although this is no doubt a significant factor in her work, it does not fully explain the ability of the work to produce direct images of time. Focusing on the rhythmic interactions evident in *Presentation Sisters* indicates that the complexity of temporal relations at play between stillness and movement also contribute significantly. Thus, I contend that the 'rarified intensity' of Dean's artistic gaze goes beyond technical specificity.

Turning our attention to a work that is captured digitally might highlight more prominently that direct images of time are not necessarily the purview of analogue technology. Rather, they can be produced by rhythmic exchanges that traverse technological boundaries. Furthermore, when these exchanges balance on the line

between stillness and movement they produce images that, as noted above, prompt Flanagan to highlight a distinctively contemplative nature. Fiona Tan's 2008 HD gallery installation titled *Island* exemplifies just such temporal relations at play in digital video.

#### **2.4.2 Fiona Tan - *Island* (2008)**

Tan's twelve-minute black and white film installation titled *Island* comprises of a series of long takes with a stilled camera, and is located on the Island of Gotland, Sweden. The opening shot captures a section of the island from a distance. With an expanse of water in the foreground and a sky-scape filling more than two thirds of the frame, the land appears to slice through the horizon line in silhouetted stillness that is in stark contrast to the movement of the waves and clouds. The next shot moves us closer to the island on which we can now identify a line of trees, and the third shot places us on the island, with a single tree positioned between the spectator and the previously fore-grounded water and sky-scape. This third shot reverses the play between stillness and movement (see fig. 18): The tree is now shivering in the breeze while the background appears stationary in comparison.

Although the film includes a voiceover narration it cannot be described as narrative in nature. As Louise Hornby argues:

the initial shots of landscape and trees in *Island* are not only still but untethered by the subsequent narrative voice-over (spoken by Heathcote Williams), which presents the story of an unidentified and unseen woman who has come to the island “to think,” an act of contemplation that is opened up by the stilled space within the images of landscape (49).

The disconnection between the sounds and the imagery here create an event that could be described as aberrant: a cinematic construction not usually occurring in our surrounding world. Combined with the use of long takes, Hornby suggests that the spectator can ‘bracket narrative time in favour of duration’ (68). Hornby also notes

that Tan's use of stillness through long takes exhibits her intentional blurring of the boundaries between photography and film (50).



Fig. 18, Fiona Tan, still from *Island* (2008)

Up to this point the ambient soundtrack included waves, wind and birdsong but with the fourth long take, the voiceover narration begins with the words, ‘At dawn, the light arrives swiftly, pulling open the day’, and then introduces an unnamed female protagonist who appears to be visiting this island while remembering a previous experience of another site. Alternatively, the possibility that both the present location and the remembered one are the same island at different times is also implied. Such open-ended interpretations allow for distinctly different temporalities to be at play in the work simultaneously.

As if to emphasize temporal ambiguity, the images then move from slow, steady long takes through a series of freeze-frames descending from five seconds to one second in duration as the sound-scape fades out. Up to this point, all the images are captured using a static camera. Suddenly, the rhythm changes again to footage now captured with a hand-held camera appearing to stumble through tall grasses as the voice-over tells us ‘Today she can find no peace of mind’. This transition from static to moving camera movements creates a much more subjective viewpoint. Sounds of anguished whispers are followed by the words ‘this place cannot contain her unease’ as if to

imply that drawing the past into the present can be a painful, almost intolerable experience. The images then return to a final series of static long takes. The flurried rhythm has lapsed back into stilled quietness, indicating that the protagonist has found some form of reconciliation.

The narrator finishes with a distinctly photographic notion (Hornby 66): ‘When she leaves, she will fold up this place and put it in her pocket for safe-keeping’. The work thus sets up a constantly shifting rhythmic exchange between stillness and movement that reflects the protagonist’s apparent unease when attempting to reconcile the past with the present. As such, the work implies a similar unease with the notion that the past can ever be fixed by photographic stillness. This push and pull between two opposing temporal registers suggests that Tan finds neither photographic stillness nor filmic movement alone capable of expressing the complexities of time, rather it takes interactions between both.

Unlike Dean’s *Presentation Sisters*, Tan’s *Island* is explored through the use of HD video. Although producing a decidedly more contemporary aesthetic, her use of digital imaging techniques do not diminish the potential afforded by interactions between stillness and movement to produce images of time. One could argue, however, that her black and white images insinuate historical photographic and filmic traces into the digital experience. As such, Tan’s *Island* could be described as comprising of a hybrid combination of aesthetic strategies in which photographic, filmic and digital registers of time coincide.

With that said, *Island*’s engagement with stasis and motion does not differ from those in *Presentation Sisters* to the extent that one can pinpoint unique aberrant movements emerging through digital imaging techniques. The contemporary artist David Claerbout discussed in the introduction, on the other hand, constructs works that combine stillness and movement by literally re-writing the digital binary code into one composite image. As such, his works deserve further investigation in terms of how they might produce new forms of aberrant movement that seek to promote contemporary images of time.

### 2.4.3 David Claerbout Revisited

In the case of *Man with a Movie Camera* and *La Jetée* I have argued that images of time emerged when one aberrant rhythm interrupts another. *Presentation Sisters* and *Island*, on the other hand, initially emphasize rhythmic exchanges between stillness and movement within an image of a long take, and subsequently extend these exchanges through montage. David Claerbout's digital constructions carry this internal exchange to another level of intensity. For example, in his work titled *Vietnam, 1967, near Duc Pho (reconstruction after Hiromishi Mine)* (2001) addressed in the introduction (see fig. 8), Claerbout takes advantage of digital manipulation techniques to produce an image that combines a stilled archival image of an exploding fighter plane with a contemporary moving image of the same site. One could call it a contemporary form of 'rephotography', a technique that involves the re-recording of a particular site at different times, and referred to in the introduction when Sitney identifies it as one of four characteristics evident in structural films of the 1960's. Claerbout's work evidences a decidedly contemporary digital structure when he literally writes the stillness of a freeze-frame into a long take, thereby producing an image in which the two temporal registers of stillness and movement exist both independently *and* as a composite unit.

The immobility of the fighter plane makes the moving background appear aberrant. Conversely, the background movement emphasizes the aberrant stillness of the plane. Yet both temporal registers are vital as it is their opposing rhythms that create the necessary tension required to produce a direct image of time. As noted by Tarkovsky, this rhythm expresses the artist's distinctive sense of time from within the frame.

Returning to a point raised in the introduction, Kim argues that Claerbout's "dual articulation" of cinematic and photographic registers evidences the ability of digital technologies to force a confrontation between the two media while simultaneously liberating them from their material substrates. It could also be argued, however, that this liberation from the material substrates of cinematic and photographic articulations of time means that stillness and movement no longer confront one another as opposing

temporal registers in a digital image. Rather, they become two facets of one articulation that expresses complex rhythmic interactions whereby the temporal categories of past, present and future cease to exist independently within the image. In Deleuzian terms, Claerbout's work could then be described as reaching the status of a crystal-image in that the 'most fundamental operation of time' is made visible when time 'has to split the present in two heterogeneous directions, one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past' (*Cinema* 2 79). Claerbout's image achieves this when it sends us in two directions at once; the stillness 'falls into the past' while the movement 'is launched towards the future' (79).

Claerbout's work *The Algiers' Sections of a Happy Moment* (2008) (see fig. 19) utilizes digital compositing techniques to create another yet another rendering of time: that of a photographic 'decisive moment' extended in time. The work comprises a series of what at first appear to be freeze-frames taken from video footage. On closer inspection, however, it becomes apparent that each frame captures the same photographic moment from different viewpoints.



Fig. 19, David Claerbout, still from *The Algiers' Sections of a Happy Moment* (2008)

Similar in construction to the bullet-time technique made famous by the Wachowski Brothers' 1999 film *The Matrix*, Claerbout's work draws the spectator into an extended photographic frozen moment. Certain comparisons can be drawn between

this work and Marker's use of the freeze-frame in *La Jetée* when, as noted by Orlow, the images produce time through their relations to other images rather than through movement (181). In terms of determining whether the aberrant state of stillness in the freeze-frame produces an image of time, I argued that its consistent use in *La Jetée* effectively normalizes it, and the spectator is very soon subsumed in the narrative. However, in Claerbout's work, this probability is deterred by the realization that each successive image is the same moment in time. In *The Algiers Sections of a Happy Moment*, it is the juxtaposition of viewpoints that allows photographic stillness to endure as over a thirty-seven minute duration. The work thus presents both an unchanging form and a succession of changing states.

Taking a very different approach and structure, Claerbout's video titled *Bordeaux Piece* (2004) also emphasizes how aberrant movement can be considered a relative term. *Bordeaux Piece* is an almost 14 hour long video projection located at a modernist house surrounded by a forested landscape. The video first appears to be a looped projection of a ten-minute narrative scene, whereas in fact the scene was played out repeatedly from 5.30am to 10pm. Here, Claerbout is toying with the popular practice of looped playback in art gallery settings. Shadows slowly move around the building, so slowly that their progress is not noticeable on first viewing the work. The significance of the looped narrative is thus slowly subordinated as the changing light conditions, and subtle traces of passing time become the primary focus of the work. Claerbout himself describes the narrative content in *Bordeaux Piece* as 'a motif lending rhythm to the real issue...which is to give form to duration by means of natural light' (Parasol unit). In *Bordeaux Piece* the repeated narrative becomes photographic in nature, frozen by repetition, while the movement in the background pushes the image forward. He stated that he considered looped playback synonymous with unchanging time, and digital technology had given him the means by which to avoid such an interpretation. This play between stillness and movement makes Claerbout's works poignant contemporary images of time, and make him one of the leading proponents of this ongoing conversation between the mediation of

photographic and filmic registers of time reflected through digital media. How, then, are these rhythms of exchange played out in my practical research?

### **2.5 Between Realities**

Tarkovsky notes that the task of the artist is to produce images that express her own, distinctive sense of time. In my case, instinct consistently points me towards imagining a sense of time that exists somewhere between stillness and movement. My single channel video projection *Quad* comprises of early research studies seeking to realize just such an artistic expression. What role does aberrant movement play in this work? It could be argued that the search itself involves pushing each temporal register to the point where it begins to act in an aberrant manner, thus becoming something other than itself. Elizabeth Grosz defines the Bergsonian/Deleuzian concept of becoming as ‘the operation of self-differentiation, the elaboration of a difference within a thing, a quality or a system that emerges or actualizes only in duration’ (“Bergson, Deleuze and the Becoming of Unbecoming” 4). She then defines duration as ‘the “field” in which difference plays itself out’ (4). Under these terms, my practice seeks to create an image that is the field within which the rhythmic exchanges between stillness and movement produce a unique expression of time.

Both the freeze-frame and the long take are utilized in my video titled *Return* (see fig. 20). The video begins by presenting a still image of a stone surface, and then slowly shifts to a long take of a cherry blossom tree. It therefore provides a suitable case study to consider the purposeful promotion of aberrant movement in my practical research. Applying these aberrant movements to the task of accessing time proved difficult. The decision to work with the two images was initially made for purely aesthetic reasons. For instance, similar colours and textures implied that one image could merge with the other in an apparently seamless fashion, and thereby highlight their opposing temporal rhythms.



Fig. 20, still from *Return* (2016)

With that said, it was not my intention to force the movement of the second image on top of the stillness of the first, but to allow the image to slowly shift from one state to the other in a manner that allowed these opposing rhythms to interact without negating their differences. The rate of transition from stillness to movement thus became the determining factor in activating relations between the two rhythms. If the transition occurred too quickly, the images searched for narrative connectivity through the objects they represented. I could achieve this through making use of a cinematic editing technique known as a cross-dissolve, whereby one image fades into view while overlapping another that simultaneously fades out. Just as with the freeze-frame, then, its behaviour can be described as aberrant movement. Conventionally, the cross-dissolve is used to imply that a period of time has elapsed between two shots. However, used in a non-narrative context, and extending its duration to the extent that I do causes quite a different impression. Rather than implying elapsed time, the two temporal registers formed relations that took precedence over representational or narrative concerns.

The prolonged cross-dissolve thus extends a ‘point of indiscernibility’ that allows what Deleuze describes as a ‘mutual image’ (*Cinema 2* 79) of the crystal to emerge. Deleuze states that the crystal:

... exchanges the two distinct images which constitute it, the actual image of the present which passes and the virtual image of the past which is preserved: distinct and yet indiscernible, and all the more indiscernible because distinct, because we do not know which is one and which is the other (79).

In the case of *Return*, then, the slow transition from one temporal rhythm to the other emphasizes the point at which the two temporal rhythms are ‘distinct and yet indiscernible’. Furthermore, it is difficult to determine the point at which the stone wall fades away entirely. As such, its trace remains virtually inscribed on the image of the cherry blossom after the stone disappears.

The movement of the cherry blossom highlights the stillness of the wall just as that stillness emphasizes the movement slowly emerging through it. Together, the two temporal states create one image whose movement emerges from within the frame in a manner that can be compared to the movement in the opening image of Welles’ *Mr Arkadin* addressed above. However, in terms of *Return*’s sustained emphasis on rhythmic interactions between stillness and movement, comparisons can be drawn more readily with the works discussed above: when the opposing rhythms of stillness and movement coincide, they become differences of degree rather than in kind and thus produce a direct image of time from within one composite image. But what interpretation of time is implied here? Drawing on Tarkovsky’s notes compels me to question what distinctive sense of time am I intending to express through the imagery?

As outlined in the introduction, I decided that the Observatory at Greenwich, London, might be a useful site to visit when searching for an answer to this question in the first year of my PhD research. The Observatory brought the artificial nature of clock time into sharp focus for me. The meridian line was exposed as a human construction for measuring the passing of time through mathematical means. Indeed, the site was constructed by a human desire to control time. After this visit I understood more fully why I frequently refer to a passage in W. G. Sebald’s *Austerlitz*:

Time, said Austerlitz in the observation room in Greenwich, was by far the most artificial of all our inventions and in being bound to the planet turning on

its own axis was no less arbitrary than would be, say, a calculation based on the growth of trees or the duration required for a piece of limestone to disintegrate ... (141,142).

Returning to his passage after my visit, it begged the question: what would a calculation of time based on the growth of trees or a disintegrating piece of limestone look like? A sequence from my first practical research study *Quad*, now restructured as a stand-alone video work titled *Presence*, seeks to visualize such a calculation.

As with *Return* discussed above, the cross-dissolve was utilized extensively in the making of *Presence*. The five-minute HD video comprises an image of a stone object sitting on a workbench. The object then begins to fade from view while its reflection remains visible. The reflection thus appears to be unaffected by the action of the object, as if it were detached from it and exists independently. Imagining it as such, this work could also be described as a Deleuzian crystal-image, in that the fading stone falls into the past while its reflection takes on the characteristics of a corresponding virtual image activated in the present.

Turning the camera on the a stairway in the Quadrangle building at NUI Galway provided another rich source of material with which to explore a distinct sense of time that was now manifesting as fundamentally ephemeral. The sequences produced from this footage were initially dispersed throughout *Quad*, but have since been reconstructed as a video titled *Landing* (see fig. 21). In this work I focus on interactions between moving light reflections and the stilled architectural surfaces they land on. The reflections themselves reflect the movement of clouds passing over the sun, and the movement of leaves on trees outside the building. Thus, the image emphasizes a series of rhythmic interactions that are occurring elsewhere.

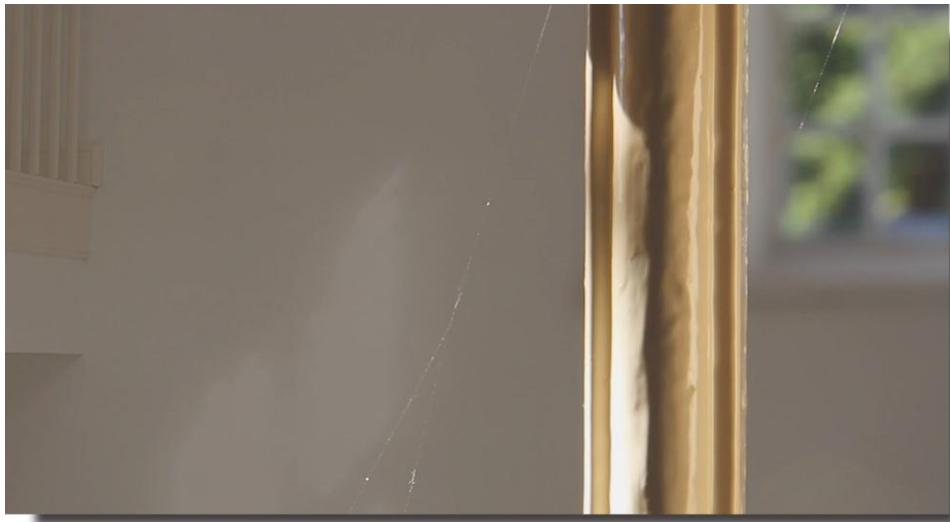


Fig. 21, still from *Landing* (2016)

Tarkovsky notes that in order to evoke a sense of time through rhythm, one must attend to the ‘time-pressures’ (121) occurring naturally in the event recorded. He states: ‘Just as from the quivering of a reed you can tell what sort of current, what pressure there is in a river, in the same way we know the movement of time from the flow of the life-process reproduced in the shot’ (120). The opening image in *Landing* focuses on the appearance and disappearance of light reflections and slowly fades to the slightest movement of a cobweb as if to imply that the reflected light caused the cobweb to quiver. The image thus makes use of rhythmic exchanges occurring both within and outside of the frame. The initial recording resulted from a sustained investigation into how and when light moves around the building, and patiently waiting for weather conditions to produce rhythmic exchanges between wind, sunshine and clouds. The final image, however, intervenes by layering one image over another so that further exchanges occur. More frequently than not, such interventions fail during the editing process. The artistic challenge lies in finding images whose rhythms form a seemingly natural cohesion so that one is not subordinated by the other. When achieved, however, the image embodies rhythmic exchanges that make visible an otherwise invisible entity.

## 2.6 Summary

Although the freeze-frame, the long take, and the cross-dissolve can be described as aberrant, Deleuze notes that simply presenting aberrant movement does not automatically produce time-images. The works discussed in this chapter might at first appear to present two apparently opposing registers of time at once: the photographic and the cinematic. If considered under such terms, they remain images of two times running concurrently. According to Deleuze, however, duration is not two times, but one entity that changes through constant rhythms of exchange between the present and the past. Perhaps this explains then my initial frustration when attempting to produce direct images of time using a single register. Although both stillness and movement can constitute an aberrant state, neither produces a direct image of time without interacting with the other. However, when both rhythms coincide in one image, their differences are exposed as differences of degree rather than in kind. The image does not expose two times running concurrently, but a single duration comprising multiple rhythms of exchange. As argued in the previous chapter, when an image presents both rhythms without denying their differences it can constitute a means by which to invite an intuitive response from the spectator. The relationship between the image and spectator thus has the potential to become a creative and contemplative encounter, but only when, as Tarkovsky notes, the spectator is willing to fall into the rhythms expressed in the image (120).

The purposeful promotion of aberrant movement by means of rhythmic interactions between stillness and movement also exposes the cinematic interval, and highlights its role in accessing images of duration. The following chapter therefore focuses on the interval as a pertinent site of inquiry. It examines in more detail how images emptied of movement directed towards action might activate thoughtful inquiry. It also expands on how the Japanese terms *ma* and *mu* outlined in the introduction became significant conceptual frameworks for my practical research.

## **CHAPTER THREE - THE INTERVAL**

### **3.1 Overview**

Rather than outlining the role of the cinematic interval as it traditionally functions to link discontinuous segments of footage within cinema in general, this chapter specifically addresses the role the interval plays in my art practice within the context of this research project. As such, I am particularly interested in examining the interval as the site between frames where stillness and movement collide, and instances when the interval can be located within an image. Following from investigations addressed in the previous two chapters, where such intervals of delay were identified as playing a pivotal role in exposing direct images of time, I also examine the use of various coinciding intervallic systems within my practical research. Furthermore, the interval is examined not only as a relevant structural location but also as a conceptual framework underlying the intended purpose of the works to invite contemplative spectatorship.

The cinematic interval became a significant site of artistic inquiry for my art practice in 2008 when I faced technical challenges that arose in attempts to capture dawn light reflections on an interior wall. These challenges will be addressed in detail below, but beforehand it is of note that the event itself also drew me into a contemplative state that left me somewhat lost in time. The stilled architecture affected by the moving light reflections left me unsure as to whether I was drawing on past memories or experiencing an entirely new event. In this sense, the encounter with the reflections caused a kind of temporal interstice in my daily activity. Similarly, I habitually reflect on thoughts by turning from my computer screen to gaze out an adjoining window. I observe the various movements of natural objects in the view, while noting that man-made architectural features remain still. The window also appears to serve as a buffer between exterior movements caused by natural elements and interior stillness. It is almost as if time is passing on outside, but remaining still inside, as if one were peering at the present from inside a photograph. As discussed in the previous chapter, such occasions pose compelling questions in terms of the sense of time expressed

through them: Does the viewer draw the external movement into stilled space? Alternatively, is the movement drawn in by its own reflection on interior surfaces, rather than actually occurring as a physical presence? Was I merely observing the passing present, or was I an active participant? Is it possible to be both simultaneously? These intervals of time require the internal space to be emptied of activity. What, then, does the emptiness contained in the cinematic interval contribute to moving imagery when it is exposed?

Such reflections led me to consider how I might translate such an experience through my artwork. I initially videoed the event but found the footage could not support the subtle dispersion and movement of natural light reflections. In searching for alternative solutions, I photographed the same scene every thirty-seconds over a ten-minute period, and subsequently animated the stills with cross-dissolves placed over each interval, and the results were far more satisfactory. Why was my construction of the event more acceptable to me than a direct video recording? Perhaps, without being aware of it then, I was developing techniques that mirrored the temporal relations I sensed were at play in the event itself, namely that the interaction between the moving light and the stilled architecture reflected a concept of time that also involves constant mediation between the past and the present. I subsequently recognized that the singular affect of the scene necessitated the coincidence of stillness and movement. Instead of presenting one temporal rhythm at a time, the images required two simultaneous rhythms, one based on stillness, and the other on movement. To do this, I was foregrounding the interval in order to draw attention to the interaction between stillness and movement at the core of cinematic imagery.

In fact, on closer investigation, I believe my images could be described as a series of layered intervals in flux. The video works are constructed by layering images with varying temporal rhythms that slide over, behind and around each other in order to emphasize these variations. In addition to layering captured footage, I also began to include intervals in the form of blank leader (empty frames). At first I thought of these intervals as useful pauses between images. However, their significance grew during

the working process. Could exposing the interval be used as a structural strategy for encouraging the spectator to reflect on her thoughts produced by the experience of viewing the images, thus making her an active participant in the production of meaning? With these questions in mind, this chapter will locate the various forms of interval in my work, compare these to similar uses of the interval in moving imagery, and discuss the theoretical concerns that arise from emphasizing its presence. This will be followed by an investigation into new possibilities for foregrounding the interval through the use of contemporary imaging techniques. I will then discuss how researching the affect of Yasujiro Ozu's 'empty shots' led me to the Japanese concepts of *ma* (interval) and *mu* (emptiness). These concepts have informed my understanding of how the interval can be considered a site of active contemplation in my practice. Under such terms, the interval can be approached as both a structural location and as an underlying aesthetic philosophy, and may explain why I am instinctively drawn to foregrounding this location in my working process.

### **3.2 Locating the Interval**

The cinematic interval was initially determined by the material nature of analogue technology, and under such a system the first interval to be considered significant was located at the point where two frames meet. When projected at 24 frames a second, the minute differences between these frames are undetectable to the human eye, resulting in the appearance of one fluid movement. In this sense, one could suggest that change occurs in the interval. Perhaps more significantly for my purposes, the first temporal relation between stillness and movement in cinematic imagery is located at this point between two frames. I can intervene by repeating one frame, thereby creating what appears as a freeze-frame. Although still visible on a physical filmstrip or my editing timeline, the interval between duplicated frames does not affect any apparent change to the image for the spectator. As discussed in the previous chapter, the freeze-frame thus creates an unusual tension in cinematic imagery when time appears to be suspended. Alternatively, the projection rate of cinematic imagery can be slowed to such an extent that the stillness embedded in each frame is made visible, and the interval between one image and the next is exposed. As noted in the introduction,

Douglas Gordon slows down the projection speed of Alfred Hitchcock's thriller *Psycho* (1960) to approximately two frames per second in his 1993 art installation titled *24 Hour Psycho* (see fig. 22). This one temporal intervention transforms the entire meaning of the image: Rather than being carried along by narrative suspense, the spectator is made aware of every minute change between frames that typically occurs undetected in the cinematic interval. Changing the temporal rhythm to this extent thus exposes the constant interaction between stillness and movement that lies behind cinematic imagery.

Interestingly, when Gordon's projection reaches an interval between shots, involving both spatial and temporal changes, the narrative function of the film is less affected by his intervention. In fact, I suggest that when this occurs, the spectator is immediately reminded of Hitchcock's original intent. Perhaps this is because a sudden change from one space to another interrupts the rhythm set in play by the subtlety of cross-dissolving images with little or no difference between them. Why, then, is exposing the interval between frames more effective in highlighting temporal interactions?



Fig. 22, Douglas Gordon, still from *24 Hour Psycho* (1993)

Following Deleuze, I propose that when the interval between frames of the same spatial location is exposed it highlights the ability of the medium to express time as change rather than movement. Furthermore, when slowed to such an extent as *24 hour Psycho*, this conjunction between the photographic and cinematic located in the

interval is made visible. The site of the interval thus registers a point at which stillness can become movement, and movement can be stilled. As discussed in Chapter One, the spectator can be forced to thought when faced with such an indertminate encounter.

Mulvey points out that Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho* also highlights alternative viewing experiences that have been made possible due to technological developments. Can it be argued then that digital technologies allow the interval to be highlighted and explored as a site of contemplation in cinematic imagery more readily than their analogue predecessors allowed for?

### 3.3 Digital Intervention

Electronic video and digital technology have significantly empowered the individual spectator's experience of moving imagery by allowing her to freeze, reverse, or repeat chosen sections at will, thereby interrupting the original rhythm of montage traditionally imposed by the filmmaker. In effect, the spectator can now create new and entirely subjective rhythms by adding intervals of delay at will. As already pointed out, cinematic imagery was problematic for Barthes because he considered the rapid rate of movement not conjucive to pensive reflection. It could be argued that the ability to pause playback now makes reflective thought possible, thus shifting the spectator's relation to the image from that of passive immersion to active participation. However, taking the discussion of Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho* above into account, intervening with the temporal flow of moving imagery has significant implications for producing meaning when an interval is exposed in a work.

Changing the temporal rhythm also changes the relations between one image and the next, and consequently how we interact with that image. Victor Burgin argues that the results of such viewing noted by Mulvey above can be problematic:

For example, the author of a recent article on interactive cinema writes: 'The unique participatory experience that interactive cinema can offer ... lets anyone take a seat in the much-coveted director's chair and create the film that

they want to see.' (Wong 2008). This is somewhat equivalent to saying that if you give someone a dictionary and a manual of grammar, they can write their own novel – certainly they can, but the literary quality of the outcome will be uncertain ("Interactive Cinema").

Although not relevant to the majority of gallery installations, Burgin's point serves to highlight the significant contribution that the interval plays in creating rhythms in moving imagery, and on what can be emphasised when the interval is exposed. Perhaps I am drawn to this point simply because it allows me to extend the moment at which stillness meets movement, thereby producing both temporal rhythms simultaneously. For instance, as with Gordon's work, the interval between two images is very apparent if I simply cut from one image to another, whereas adding an extended cross-fade allows both images to temporarily coincide. In fact, in such cases, one could argue that one image does not really move to another, rather one image changes into another, and this change does not occur at a specific point, but over time. In other words, change does not occur in the interval *between* one image and another, rather it occurs *among* two images.

My tendency to layer shots rather than juxtapose them is in part an attempt to avoid any narrative link between the images. It also avoids sequential linear trajectories, in that the layering process is more of a lateral, rather than a horizontal, assembly system. When I do cut from one image to another I almost always place a cross-fade over the interval, or extend its duration with the use of a blank screen. These intervals are also designed to create a continuous loop, so that unlike conventional cinema, the work is made specifically for gallery display. This, in itself, creates a cyclical temporal experience. Burgin suggests that such projections in art galleries are 'closer to those of painting than to cinema; the relation to a gallery work is one of repetition, or more accurately reprise, and the ideal viewer is one who accumulates her or his knowledge of the work, as it were, in "layers", much as a painting is created' ("Interactive Cinema").

As a practitioner, I can identify with Burgin's point here. When observing a potential scene, or capturing or editing a work, I am constantly aware that I am not only forming a structure, but that my working process might also be translated. Artists' working processes, my own included, often involve an iterative practice involving periods of engagement followed by an interval away from the work, followed by return. Perhaps the intervals are exposed and expanded to express something of this working process. Furthermore, the layering process allows me to shift the position of the interval over time in a manner more aligned to collage than montage. As a result, time often appears to simultaneously expand and contract in a way that does not conform to measured, sequential time. Burgin describes his own work as 'uncinematic'. He states:

The form of organization of materials in the type of work I have called "uncinematic" is also paratactical.... Gaps, absences and silences are integral to paratactical organization. Places where "nothing happens"- where you may close your eyes, follow individual trains of associations – are fundamental to what I think of as the "uncinematic" ("Interactive Cinema").

These techniques are not necessarily unique to contemporary practice, although the ease by which one can experiment with such techniques through digital media makes exploring the interval more accessible. There are, however, other cases whereby digital technology has allowed new intervallic images to emerge. For example, the recording technique developed to capture Alexander Sokurov's film *Russian Ark* (2002) (see fig. 23) eliminates the necessity for the cinematic interval in its traditional function.

As the technique of montage developed, filmmakers learned to link discontinuous spatial and temporal segments of film together in order to form a continuous narrative flow seemingly unimpaired by the interval between individual shots or sequences. Digital video does not have the same limitations, so that the interval does not necessarily function in the same manner in contemporary moving imagery. Sokurov's *Russian Ark* contains no montage in the traditional sense. The entire ninety-

six minutes was shot in one single take with a digital camera by the cinematographer Tilman Büttner. One might imagine that such a process would lack certain requirements necessary for bending time and space to the will of the filmmaker that montage facilitates. Sokurov, however, sidesteps the necessity for montage, and by extension, the interval between shots, in a film that still manages to maneuver temporal and spatial boundaries with exceptional agility.



Fig. 23, Alexander Sokurov, still from *Russian Ark* (2002)

Sokurov's success is, in part, due to digital technology's ability to record lengthy continuous takes. Of course this ability does not render the cinematic interval obsolete by any means, but it does, perhaps by its very absence in *Russian Ark*, highlight its shifting position in relation to contemporary moving imagery. In relation to narrative cinema, montage remains the most efficient method of linking discontinuous spatial and temporal segments together so that they form a continuous whole. But in cases where this is not the intention, what does the interval contribute?

The interval can thus be difficult to locate in digital technology. Editing software appropriated its interface from analogue traditions for ease of transition. The visual

interface allows me to interact with the digital footage as if it were a film-strip. As a result, I can zoom in on a segment of footage and easily locate the interval between frames. However, as noted in the previous chapter, digital code does not behave in the same manner as analogue film. If the footage comprises of components that do not change, that are still, the data remains the same over time until a change occurs, and only then does the digital code change. For instance if I record an image that includes a moving object framed by a stilled background, the code will only change at the points where movement occurs. In effect, change does not occur in digital video on a frame by frame basis, but on the basis of stasis and motion, and no clearly identifiable interval divides the two temporal states. This is what makes digital technology so malleable in terms of expressing two or more temporal registers simultaneously, as evidenced in David Claerbout's digital constructions.

Claerbout's fellow Belgian artist Hans Op de Beeck also takes advantage of this characteristic to rewrite the digital code so that details within a still image move, or conversely, details remain still while the surrounding details move. Both artists intentionally prioritize the temporal relations between stillness and movement in the imagery. Op de Beeck's *Sea of Tranquility* (2010) includes a still image of a chef, with only the smoke from his cigarette in motion (see fig. 24). The prolonged passive position of the chef produces a shot that is best described as an interval in that its intensity is created not by narrative concerns, but by the affect of emphasising two temporal registers in one image.

Op de Beeck also constructs images entirely within post production software programs that merely give the impression they exist in reality. Selina Ting suggests;

The artist [Op de Beeck] sometimes calls his works "proposals"; they are irrefutably fictional, constructed and staged, leaving it up to the viewer whether to take the work seriously, as a sort of parallel reality, or immediately to put it into perspective, as no more than a visual construct (Interview: Op de Beeck).

Ting's observation that Op de Beeck's images allude to a 'parallel reality' is of note.

The emphasis on the coincidence of stilled and moving components in these works point to a new kind of interval in contemporary imagery that expresses two opposing temporal registers within the image itself, rather than confining its location to the point between two frames or shots. Here, also, moving details serve to emphasize the emptiness created by the stillness surrounding them in the image.

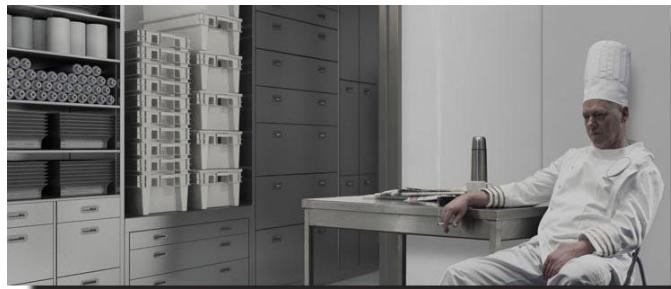


Fig. 24, Hans Op de Beeck, still from *Sea of Tranquility* (2010)

Christine Ross claims that one of the central temporal investigations of contemporary art brings time and history together by constructing imagery containing various temporal rhythms in a way that ‘suspends the forwardness of the moving image’ (5). For instance, she argues that the distinctive intermediality of the long take evidences a ‘presentifying regime of historicity’ (128). Following Deleuze only so far, Ross argues that:

The temporal turn’s challenge is to keep Deleuze’s insight that the time-image deploys “time as everything” while historicizing that insight; while transforming it to connect it to worldly, interested times. Whereas, indeed, the three temporal categories “tend *ultimately* to become confused by slipping into the same point of indiscernibility,” the temporal turn refuses to produce a time-image that embraces an ultimate confusion’ (27) (emphasis in the original).

For example, in investigating the intermedial relationships at play in Mark Lewis’s moving image works discussed in the introduction, Ross states that he brings together the photographic, the pictorial and the filmic so that they appear to ‘coexist in a movement/stillness tension to prevent the incessant disappearance of the filmic images

into the past' (128). The same could be said about Op de Beeck's image addressed above in that the movement of smoke curling from the chef's cigarette holds the spectator in a suspended present. Ross draws on William James's term "specious present" (141) that she argues 'underscores the complexity of the present, which is made both of instantaneity *and* duration' (141, emphasis in the original). As such, she suggests 'the experienced present takes its "specious" quality from its deployment as an interval; an instant with duration' (141). Such images are not without precedent; there are cases when particular cinematic shots combine temporalities in such a way that they could be considered similar suspensions. As discussed in relation to aberrant movement, if attention is drawn to seemingly uneventful moments in narrative cinema, often taking the form of a long take depicting a landscape or a still life, it can point to a director's interest in presenting the passing of time as an event in itself. Such circumstances could be described as intervals that make use of shots emptied of action to promote contemplation. In terms of my practical research, then, what does the emptiness contained in the interval contribute?

### 3.4 Emptiness in *Quad*

In the first iteration of my practical research as a twenty-minute single channel video titled *Quad*, I included interstices initially as a strategy to avoid any inclination by the viewer to form narrative connections so that the temporal rhythms in the images would be emphasized. As I edited the video, however, unexpected rhythms formed between the images and the interstices. I varied the rate at which one image slipped into or out of the empty frame, depending on how they interacted during the fade. In these instances, the rhythms were formed by relations between presence and absence rather than relations between stillness and movement. I then decided to bleed the ambient soundtrack from one image into the empty frame, and begin the soundtrack from the proceeding before it appeared. Furthermore, the colour of the empty frame was determined by the dominant background colour in the image preceding it, and the image following it was determined by the colour of that empty frame. In this sense, the significance of the empty frame grew stronger during the working process, and what

was originally intended to act as a break between two images became another image in its own right.

In fact, I can identify specific locations in my imagery where the rate and rhythm of an image's dissolve was determined by the affect they had on the empty frame rather than how the emptiness affected them. For example, one image in *Quad* comprises a close-up of a framed photograph of the surface of the moon (see fig. 25).

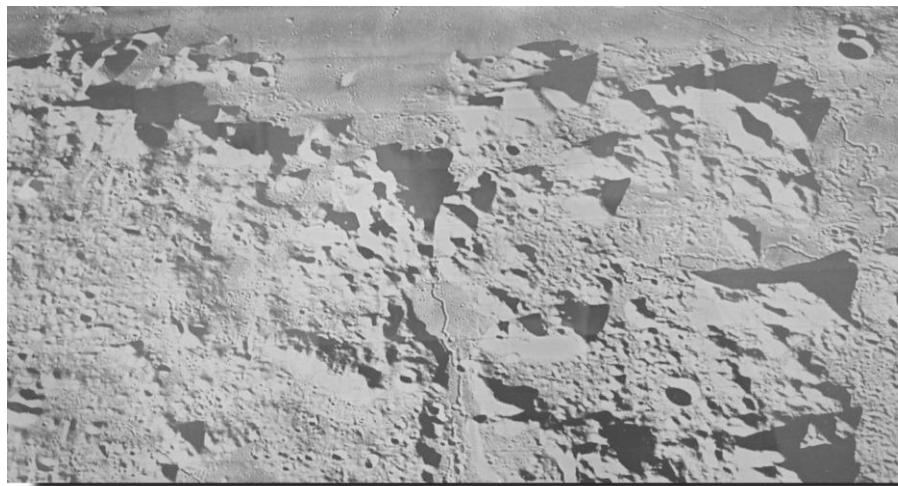


Fig. 25, still from *Quad* (2013)

The rate of its dissolve into a white interstice becomes less about what the image represents, and more about its slow descent into emptiness. It is difficult to locate the exact point at which the moon-surface image disappears and the interstice appears. One could argue that the rate at which the interstice appears and the moon-surface disappears heightens the viewer's sensitivity to emptiness rather than form. Furthermore, the dissolving image could draw the viewer into the emptiness in the sense that she is a part of it, rather than confronted by it. This is an important distinction that I believe my work has always strived to express, and through this research, has discovered a theoretical grounding for such expression in Bergson's notion of intuition.

My approach to the notion of emptiness was somewhat clarified when viewing Anish Kapoor's sculptural installation *Memory* (2008) at the Guggenheim gallery in New

York. The sculpture could be viewed from several locations in the gallery, but one view in particular stands out in my mind. It comprised of a rectangular hole cut from a gallery wall that adjoined the gallery holding the sculpture so that the interior of its hollow form was exposed. It produced the strongest black I have experienced. This black was formed of emptiness, that for some viewers evoked fear, but I was struck by my desire to climb into the frame, to be within this emptiness that I imagined to be unconfined by the rules of gravity. Of course this is a very subjective response. However, when I include an empty frame in my work, I believe that I am approaching the notion of emptiness from a viewpoint that perhaps conforms more to Eastern than Western interpretations. Indeed, my examination of Ozu's empty images as notably contemplative intervals led me to consider the Japanese concepts of *ma* (interval) and *mu* (emptiness) in relation to my work. These concepts allow for the possibility that one can be a participant in the emptiness contained in the interval, rather than merely an observer on the periphery.

These terms also provide useful conceptual approaches to the cinematic interval, particularly in terms of what it might contain. In relation to the notion of 'parallel realities', for example, Richard Pilgrim notes that *ma* has been described as evoking 'a sense of standing in the midst of or between reality rather than over against reality "out there"' (67). This concept of the interval echoes Bergson's approach to intuition as 'the *sympathy* by which one is transported into the interior of an object in order to coincide with what there is unique and consequently inexpressible in it' (*The Creative Mind* 190). As such, it is possible to draw comparisons between *ma* and Deleuze's application of Bergson when proposing a cinematic time-image.

### **3.5 Ma and Mu**

'I live in the interstice, delivered from any fulfilled meaning' (Barthes *Empire of Signs* 9).

Barthes dedicates a page to the Japanese symbol for the word *mu* in his book *Empire of Signs* (1982). As he points out, Japanese words often embody expressions rather than literal descriptions and perhaps this is why these words are used when referring to

various Japanese aesthetic traditions, from Noh drama, to haiku poetry, tea ceremonies, and the cinematic interval. In terms of their relevance to the over-riding inquiry driving this research, Seigow Matsuoka's claim that *ma* is essentially an "aesthetic of stillness and movement" (qtd. in Pilgrim 68) suggests that the concepts can provide a useful framework under which to examine my treatment of the interval in my practice.

Pilgrim describes the Japanese word *ma* as 'an "interval" between two (or more) spatial or temporal things and events' (56). He further explains that *ma* can also refer to a gap, opening, space between, or time between. For example, a room is said to contain *ma*, as it refers to the space between walls, and likewise the pause between notes or sounds (56). In some circumstances, Pilgrim states that *ma* can also take on relational implications, in that it can describe people standing 'within, among, or in relationship to others' (56) Following from this, Pilgrim states that *ma* has both objective and subjective meanings; 'that is, *ma* is not only "something" within objective, descriptive reality but also signifies particular modes of experience' (56). Pilgrim argues that in its subjective meaning *ma* can frame what he terms a 'relgio-aesthetic paradigm' (58) in which distinctions between time and space collapse. As such, he concludes;

although *ma* may be objectively located as intervals in space and time, ultimately it transcends this and expresses a deeper level. Indeed, it takes us to a boundary situation at the edge of thinking and the edge of all processes of locating things by naming and distinguishing' (57).

The Japanese word *mu*, meaning emptiness, is also significant here because it relates to the emptiness contained in the interval. Kathe Geist states, 'In terms of art, *mu* is the emptiness that gives heightened meaning to form, the silence that heightens the meaning of sound' (234). Perhaps more significantly, however, under the terms of *mu* this statement can also be reversed; form can give heightened meaning to emptiness, and sound can heighten the meaning of silence. In relation to the cinematic interval, then, the images on either side of it can be considered no more relevant to the meaning

of an artwork than the interval between them. I can identify significant parallels between my use of emptied intervals in *Quad* discussed above and the notion of the emptiness contained in the interval when examined under the terms of *ma* and *mu*.

The darkness that Kapoor's sculptural form addressed above produces from the emptiness contained within it is also notable when considering the cinematic interval reinterpreted through Eastern philosophy. In his 1933 essay titled *In Praise of Shadows* the Japanese writer Jun'ichirō Tanizaki discusses differing approaches to darkness in Eastern and Western cultures. Tanizaki states;

An empty space is marked off with plain walls, so that the light drawn into it forms dim shadows within emptiness. There is nothing more. And yet, when we gaze into the darkness that gathers behind the crossbeam, around the flower vase, beneath the shelves, though we know perfectly well it is mere shadow, we are overcome with the feeling that in this small corner of the atmosphere there reigns complete and utter silence; that here in the darkness immutable tranquility holds sway... Were the shadows to be banished from its corners, the alcove would in that instant revert to mere void (32, 33).

In the quote shown above Tanizaki celebrated the 'immutable tranquility' that darkness can elicit when the stillness of an alcove interacts with the slightest movement of 'dim shadows'. Furthermore, he argued that much was lost from Japanese aesthetics when Western technological developments such as electric light were introduced in Japan. His suggests that Eastern aesthetics developed, in part, due to an inevitable acceptance of darkened spaces. In contrast, Western culture sought to eradicate darkness, to shine light into every corner and therefore banish darkness to recesses as if there was something to be feared by it. Perhaps this suggests that the cinematic interval is also approached from different directions in the East and West. In relation to film, Pilgrim and Schrader refer to the work of the Japanese director Yasujiro Ozu directly under the terms *ma* and *mu*. Although discussed in detail throughout this thesis, Ozu's images will thus be addressed here in terms of evidencing instances of *ma* and *mu* in cinematic practice.

### 3.6 Yasujiro Ozu

Paul Schrader suggests that ‘silence and emptiness are active ingredients in Ozu’s films’ (28). Geist describes them as “containers” that allow ‘the gravity of the emotion to sink in and give[s] us time to respond to it’ (234). As such, Ozu’s shots could be described as intervals for contemplation. Schrader refers to intervals as ‘codas’, and suggests, ‘In Western art, one naturally assume[s] that the codas are inserted to give weight to the paragraphs, but for Ozu, as for Zen, it is precisely the opposite: dialogue gives meaning to the silence, the action to the still life’ (29). Schrader also suggests that in engaging with *mu*, Ozu’s images do not distinguish between the past and the present as Western cultures do, rather they present us with an ‘infinitely expanded present’ (29). As such, Ozu’s images hold something of the ‘specious present’ that Ross refers to in relation to the temporal turn in contemporary art.

For Deleuze, the significance of Ozu’s intervallic shots lies in their stillness which he argues points to the fact that although time changes, it also endures. He states, ‘Time is the full, that is, the unalterable form filled by change’ (17). The concept of *ma* put forward by Pilgrim relates directly to Deleuze’s point here. Pilgrim quotes Komparu’s description of the influence of *ma* in relation to Noh drama;

Nowadays space is often described as positive or negative. Negative space is enclosed and fixed, and positive space is the space taken up [or occupied] by people or things that define a negative space by their presence. Both kinds of space exist in Noh: negative space (*ma*) is the stillness and emptiness just before or after a unit of performance, positive space is produced by stage properties and by the dramatic activities of performers.... The two kinds of space are connected by time.... While there may be empty, or “negative” time, there will never be unsubstantial, uncreative or uncreated time (Pilgrim; 59).

As has been noted, Deleuze points to the well documented scene of a vase in Ozu’s *Late Spring* (1949) (see fig. 7). The interval normally indicates the point at which change occurs. When it is manipulated in such a way that movement is suspended, does this also suspend change? In Ozu’s shot change occurs in the interval

'between the daughter's half smile and the beginning of her tears' (*Cinema 2* 16) However, as noted earlier, Deleuze also makes a distinction between cinematic and photographic stillness when he points out that the stillness of the freeze frame is 'radically distinct' from that of the photograph (16). Change occurs in the interval of time given to this still life rather than as movement in the visible field. Deleuze states, 'There is becoming, change, tears.....Ozu's still lives endure, hold a duration, over ten seconds of the vase: this duration of the vase is precisely the representation of that which endures, through the succession of changing states' (16). Similarly, Isozaki maintains that 'MA is the way of sensing the moment of movement... MA is the expectant stillness of the moment attending this kind of change' (qtd. in Pilgrim 69).

Similarly, Deleuze argues that Ozu's image of the vase might be emptied of movement, but holds a duration. We do not see change occur in the shot, rather we sense it in the duration of time held by stillness. Therefore, as Deleuze maintains, Ozu's still lifes break sensory-motor links and thereby activate relations between time and thought (*Cinema 2* 17). He further argues that such intervallic shots, 'might be seen as having absorbed characters and actions' (5). In a notable comparison, Pilgrim suggests that the meaning of *ma* is to be found in the interval, here understood as 'creative/substantial negative spaces, imaginative spaces, or emotional spaces that the positive spaces, narrative sequences, or forms of an art help create but into which they dissolve' (61). Thus, connections can be made between the concept of *ma* and Deleuze's time-image through Ozu's treatment of the interval. In relation to Ozu, Deleuze states:

As for the empty spaces, without characters or movement, they are interiors emptied of their occupants, deserted exteriors or landscapes in nature. In Ozu they take on an autonomy which they do not immediately possess even in neo-realism, which accords them an apparent value which is relative (in relation to the story) or consequential (once the action is done with). They reach the absolute, as instances of pure contemplation, and immediately bring about the

identity of the mental and the physical, the real and the imaginary, the subject and the object, the world and the I' (15).

The consequential value that Deleuze affords to Ozu's images highlights the relevance of inactive moments in intervallic shots; narrative functions are laid aside and temporal rhythms preside. As was noted in relation to the shot of the vase, it engages with the two temporal rhythms of stillness and movement. Similar shots can be identified throughout Ozu's films. For instance, Bordwell and Thompson point to a scene from *Record of a Tenement Gentleman* (1947) that presents us with a stilled shot of an urban landscape in which 'many items compete for our attention. But the moment that a scrap of newspaper flaps, it immediately attracts the eye because it is the only motion in the frame' (145). Another example can be identified in a scene from *Tokyo Story* (1953) that includes a still shot of a village nestled in the surrounding landscape. The stillness is then interrupted by a passing train. The train cuts through the silent stillness of the landscape as if to awaken us from a frozen moment. There is a sense that the village may be far from the hustle of contemporary city life but that which might appear to remain in the past will be transformed by the present. In these examples, instead of the interval linking two moving images, stillness and movement are presented simultaneously. Furthermore, the movement of the train highlights, and is highlighted by, the stillness of the surrounding landscape.

Schrader argues that the presence of *ma* in Ozu's images points to his interest in traditional Japanese aesthetics. Bordwell, however, argues that Ozu was more concerned with portraying contemporary Japanese family life. Pilgrim suggests that '*ma* seems to operate at, cross, and even deconstruct a number of boundaries' including bridging 'the boundaries between the traditional and contemporary arts' (57). Perhaps, then, Ozu was not only juxtaposing, but layering stillness and movement in order to set up temporal relations that could bridge boundaries between the past and the present.

Referring to Japanese cinema, Deleuze states: 'In every day banality, the action-image and even the movement-image tend to disappear in favour of pure optical situations,

but these reveal connections of a new type, which are no longer sensory-motor and which bring the emancipated senses into direct relation with time and thought' (*Cinema* 2 17). Under such terms, could the emptiness contained in the interval produce an image 'wherein new potentialities of subjectivity emerge', to borrow a phrase from Rodowick (141), and result in a direct image of time? Deleuze's 'crystal-image' involves a constant mediation between the past and the present that makes visible 'the perpetual foundation of time, non chronological time' (*Cinema* 2 79). Following from this Rodowick argues if Deleuze's claim that the crystalline regime produces an increased sensitivity to time is justified, 'this means that the interval suspends the spectator in a state of uncertainty. Every interval becomes what probability physics calls a "bifurcation point," where it is impossible to know or predict in advance which direction change will take.' (*Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* 15).

### 3.7 Abbas Kiarostami

In his film *Five: Dedicated to Yasujiro Ozu* (2003), Abbas Kiarostami seeks to confront the viewer with an image that challenges any notion of resolution through action. The digital film comprises of five long shots located at the Caspian Sea, each presented as a single take. Each of the five shots could be described as intervals in themselves, separated by a fade in and out of black leader. This structure constructs an entire movie from relations between the various interval systems. It could be suggested that he holds his image on a temporal precipice, never allowing narrative action to re- territorialize the image. In so doing, he manages to portray a very unspecific and ambiguous image of reality that also conveys the indifference to human time that Jorella Andrews identifies in 'video painting' (37), that is, a notable indifference to ascribing meaning, and an aleatoric attitude to video capture.



Fig. 26, Abbas Kiarostami, still from *Five: Dedicated to Yasujiro Ozu* (2003)

Kiarostami (2010) admits that he even finds it difficult to choose a title for his films. Returning to his attitude to the spectator experience he hopes to elicit, he states: 'I look for a title that does not define the film for the audience or direct them and lets the audience build their own film based on their experience or even their momentary need, based on an open film, or a half-made film' ("Abbas Kiarostami on the Making of Five").

At first, each of the five episodes that comprise the film appear somewhat empty, but the longer the image is held on a single view the more the frame begins to fill with all the hidden detail often merely present to hang a narrative canvas from. When narrative is not applied, this detail becomes significant in itself. It is a form of minimalism found in the paintings of Rothko or Agnes Martin. Furthermore, although the figures sometimes move through the frame, this does not result in any significant change occurring. The viewer engages with non-action images, a piece of driftwood, walkers on a promenade, a pack of dogs (see fig. 26), a march of ducks, a night reflection of the moon on the surface of the water. With nothing to propel the spectator to anticipate action, they are suspended in time, with little to distract them from their own thoughts. Kiarostami encourages these thoughts. Discussing the making of *Five*, he states:

In my opinion, sitting in a cinema seat has accustomed the audience to a

mental laziness. Every member of the audience in their life, and in every situation, can understand the simple, or sometimes complicated occurrences around them. Curiosity and intelligence are the two important factors that feed the human imagination and result in a self-understanding and the telling of a story that belongs to that person ("Abbas Kiarostami on the Making of *Five*").

That is not to say the image has no affect, but rather than guide the spectator along a predetermined line, it serves more as a subtle suggestion as to where one might start from, or guides one back from straying too far. Where one might go, in what direction, or at what speed, are left for the individual spectator to decide. One is drawn into the time Kiarostami has given to the image as it occurs in front of the camera lens. The viewer is carried along less by action than by duration, or, as Deleuze states, by 'that which endures, through the succession of changing states' (*Cinema 2* 16). Although the dogs are simply lingering on the beach, as time passes one becomes drawn in by their subtle movements. Although one's own thoughts might wander, the image on screen provides a point of return. The temporal movement of the animals can be distinguished from that of the waves, the light, the moon; all pass at their own pace and yet seem to belong entirely to the whole image on screen. Kiarostami's comment on the third episode, *Dogs*, implies such a relationship when he explains that it is not merely about the dogs, but 'about the relationship between the sky and the earth, the sky and the sea, which, after a while, unite to form one space' ("Abbas Kiarostami on the Making of *Five*"). *Five* has been described as transcendental. However, I maintain that, following Deleuze, there is no need to call on transcendence (17). Rather, Kiarostami's images in *Five* call for contemplative thought immanent to this world.

### **3.8 Landing**

Returning to examine how instances of *ma* can be identified in my own art practice, it is interesting to note, as Pilgrim points out, the Chinese character depicting the term *ma* comprises of two elements, one meaning gate or door, and the second meaning sun or moon (58). This character for *ma* is reflected in my focus on the architectural feature of the window as both an object and an experience. In the image of a window

sill in *Landing* (see fig. 27), for example, the space between the window and the sill are linked by tiny dust particles moving though rays of light.

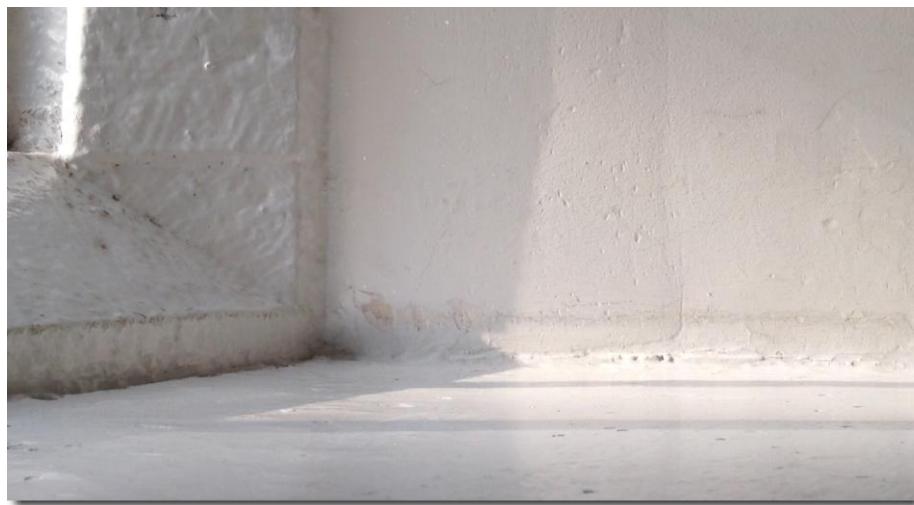


Fig. 27, still form *Landing* (2016)

It could be suggested that I am constructing an image that emphasizes the link between its temporal and spatial forms. What is of particular interest to me is not that that light passes from one space to another, from outside to inside, but the time that is signified as the event occurs. As the light passes along the interior surfaces it does not change the position of objects in the room, but at the same time it utterly transforms them, it reveals and conceals details as it travels. It is the act of time passing. To observe this event, the viewer must be physically still and mentally active. So there is a natural relation formed between the layered stillness and slowed movement in the image and the physical stasis required of the viewer.

### 3.9 Summary

In the case of my work, there is a sustained engagement with various intervallic systems that I have sought to highlight here. By layering one image over another, or cross-fading one into another, I seek to avoid any easily identifiable continuity between the images, rather their relations are formed among their varying temporal rhythms. Similarly, my use of an extended blank screen allows for these rhythms to

include emptiness as a potential active site of contemplation that can, as Barthes suggests, deliver the images from any fulfilled meaning. The Japanese concepts of *ma* and *mu* discussed here provide a conceptual framework for supporting such an interpretation of the interval. As Deleuze states: ‘The cut, or interstice, between two series of images no longer forms part of either of the two series: it is the equivalent of an irrational cut, which determines the non-commensurable relations between images.’ (*Cinema 2* 205, 206) My investigations here highlight the relevance of emphasising the emptiness contained in the intervals that overlap my work, and why I was instinctively attracted to the site of the cinematic interval at such an early stage when exploring moving imagery in my art practice.

## CONCLUSION

### 4.1 Overview

My research questions whether contemporary lens-based technologies, both moving and still, that now blur the boundaries between photography and cinema, can provide the means to re-imagine our concepts of time. It has been noted that photographic stillness references the past while cinematic movement refers to the passing present (Turim 15). However, I contend that their interaction within a range of lens-based imagery found in contemporary art practice can produce distinctively new and creatively productive relations between the two media. These, through the imagery they generate, can serve as vehicles for visualizing current concepts of time.

The primary objective of my doctoral research has been to produce a body of imaging work that activates interactions between the temporal rhythms of stillness and movement in order to seek a contemplative response. In this work, I was less concerned with picturing ‘reality’ as a fixed moment in time and space, and more interested in constructing a range of imagery that implies a potential invisible reality beyond the photographic frame made apparent by the interaction between the actual imagery captured through the lens and the thought process of implication this activates in the mind of the spectator. To clarify my creative strategy I explored a number of theoretical propositions and critical discourses that probed the relationship between the image, time and thought, such as Henri Bergson’s book titled *The Creative Mind* (1968), Raymond Bellour’s essay “The Pensive Spectator” (1984), and Gilles Deleuze’s second book on cinema, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1989).

My practice led line of inquiry developed from my observations of the play of reflected light moving across interior architectural surfaces. It struck me that such events – in this case the temporal sequence of reflected light from the sun playing upon the internal surfaces of a university cloister - involve a constant mediation between stillness and movement, and affect a contemplative state in which one becomes lost in time. Attempting to capture these spatio-temporal relations in the image content of my work, I began to layer still and moving imagery in order to

construct a composite image wherein the photographic past and the cinematic present appear simultaneously active. Deleuze maintains that the cinematic 'time-image' can expose the relationships between the image, time and thought. The coincidence of stillness and movement within the composite image produced in this project make visible relationships of time and space that also imply a constant mediation between the past and the present. I contend, therefore, that such instances constitute a means by which direct images of time can be located in contemporary artists' moving imagery through rhythms of exchange between varying temporal registers rather than through narrative interruption.

I completed an MA in fine art (Art in the Digital World) at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin in 2011. At this point my work comprised primarily of video based moving imagery, a specific 'language system' that calls for both technical and critical proficiency. I was searching for a visual language that denotes rather than narrates, one that addresses, as Raymond Bellour puts it, a pensive spectator. My arts practice was already research based and concerned with investigating specific architectural sites with my camera as a point of departure for a new body of work. For example, my MA Graduation Exhibition at NCAD included a video titled *Marshes* (2011) that uses the site of Marshes Library but focuses primarily on the sound of a chiming clock and the light pervading the space (see fig. 28).



Fig. 28, Still from *Marshes* (2011), HD video, 5 min.s

The work aspired to relinquish representational notions of place in favour of temporal inquiry. The subject of time is, of course, very much a philosophical warren. It is simple enough to enter this conceptual domain but can be difficult to navigate. I felt somewhat ill equipped to advance my work without the benefit of critical and contextual support such as might be on offer from a structured programme of doctoral study. The Huston School of Film & Digital Media in Galway offers a programme of doctoral practice-based research through the DAH (Digital Arts and Humanities) PhD program. This was to provide an ideal creative and critical environment in which I could conduct a sustained investigation into relations between stillness and movement within cinematic language, while pursued primarily through my own imaging process rather than as a philosophical project.

#### **4.2 Beginning the Process**

The practice-based research process is much like donning two hats. Wearing my researcher hat, I had a lot of theoretical catching up to do in terms of film studies, and the first eighteen months at the Huston primarily involved reading, writing, rereading, and rewriting my research proposal. Switching to my artist hat, it was important to me that my practice served as the primary source informing my research. Unfortunately, the works I initially produced in Galway could at best be described as illustrations of theoretical concepts rather than concrete artworks in their own right. At the beginning of my second academic year as a PhD student, however, I chanced upon an interesting play of light on a stairway in the historical Quadrangle building of NUI Galway (see fig. 2).

Taking this site as a starting point, I compiled an archive of digital photographs and videos over twelve months. These were subsequently used to construct a 20-minute video installation titled *Quad* (2013). *Quad* is a single channel HD video projection comprised of seven image-sequences that are separated by extended interstices in the form of empty frames. Each sequence was constructed using a series of semi-transparent layers so that the stilled temporal rhythm of one image could blend seamlessly with the moving rhythms of another underlying image, and this process

often determined which images were collaged together. My main focus was on the interaction between the rhythms in each sequence, and the rate of change from one sequence to the next.

With *Quad I* had, at the very least, produced an artwork-in-progress that was suggesting various possible research trajectories. For instance, the interstices between each sequence were initially included to avoid inadvertently building any narrative associations between linked images, as they would allow for an interval of time to pass between sequences. However, as was to become apparent, the interstices proved more significant than I initially realized. Their presence between image-sequences not only allowed for reflective thought, they became image-sequences in their own right. Such observations also allowed me to revisit theoretical concepts of the relationship between the image and time with my project *Quad* specifically in mind as a working case study.

### 4.3 Practice versus Theory

Creative arts doctoral research often seems to involve a balancing act between practice and theory and this raises the question that continued to evade resolution for much of my research process: where is the original contribution to knowledge located? One might assume that in practice based research the artworks contain this golden nugget, and in terms of my own research project, I believe that the practice outcomes, both the artworks and their documentation, must incorporate the insights gained from the research process. If that is not the case the work remains illustrative, or indeed functions purely as an art object without facilitating an epistemic outcome. At present, doctoral research employing practice methods is subject to the expectation that this knowledge contribution should be capable of being explicated primarily via a written text (usually a dissertation of up to 50,000 words that accompanies a body of present creative work). One can surmise that such a ‘translation’ from the visual to the textual could serve to undermine the claims of artists that visual language can serve as a legitimate form of expression of knowledge production. Negotiating these polarities, theory-practice, text-artwork, elaborated thesis-produced artwork, determines the

tortuous methodological path that many practice-based researchers find themselves following. In my case, it boiled down to a question of confidence in an iterative research process comprised of both creative and reflective moments that began in earnest with the production of *Quad*.

As artists, it is often difficult to critically distance ourselves from our own working processes in order to determine how and why we make creative decisions and to evaluate these. Intuition plays a significant role in such decision making, and as such, can evade textual capture in rational discourse. As doctoral researchers, however, it is imperative that we carry out a systematic investigation within which distinctive and answerable research questions are posed, framed within an art process, and specifically addressed by the artworks we produce. Additionally, it has to be acknowledged that there is a ‘time-management’ issue at stake here. The sheer volume of theoretical texts that one could consult when addressing a subject such as time, at times seemed overwhelming and engaging with this philosophical inquiry threatened to lead to the marginalization of my practice. Having *Quad* to refer back to as an example of successful practice allowed me to be selective in my reading and gave me the confidence to concern myself with only those theories that I deemed relevant to the work I planned to produce. In this sense my research was ‘practice led’.

That being said, my initial confidence was soon dissipated as my field of inquiry soon began to expand again. Such is the nature of the PhD beast. It transpired that I could compare aspects of the *Quad* project to almost any theory of the time-image relationship I came across. My first written draft of the opening chapters of my dissertation read like a maze, frantically sketching a myriad of potential avenues to explore but providing no obvious entry or exit points for the researcher. On reflection, my practice work itself seemed to present similar problems of chaos. The visual rhythms achieved in the imagery of *Quad* proved successful enough, sliding from stasis to motion and back again with no discernible separation point between the two temporal states. However, I was not satisfied with the seemingly random order of the sequences. While some sequences emphasized reflected light on and around a

stairway, others addressed seasonal changes at adjacent exterior locations, and yet another focused on the dissolution of a specific object, namely a rock sitting on a wooden bench. The spectator is introduced via the images to various temporal anomalies rather than drawn in by any one in particular. Such concerns led me to consider restructuring the sequences as a series of related works rather than remaining one single channel projection. This decision was further supported by the direction my theoretical research was taking.

An investigation into the Deleuzian term ‘aberrant movement’ highlighted the significance of interactions between stillness and movement within cinematic imagery. The interstices separating each sequence in *Quad* highlighted that the cinematic interval, conventionally defined as the point at which two frames or shots meet, might also provide a particularly relevant line of theoretical inquiry in terms of the how varying treatments of the interval could effect the overall piece, and subsequently, the experience of the spectator. On closer investigation, my works could be described as a series of layered intervals in flux, and this emphasis on the interval raised pertinent questions. What does the emptiness contained in the interstices contribute? What is its meaning within the work? Could extending, and thereby exposing the cinematic interval in this manner be used as a structural strategy for inviting the spectator to contemplative engagement? The answers to these questions, in fact the crux of my research, was hidden somewhere in these concepts of aberrant movement and the interval, but it was difficult to define their specific relationship to my practice.

I then discovered two Japanese terms, *ma* (interval) and *mu* (emptiness) while investigating the use of slowed temporal rhythms in cinematic images. Roy Daly describes Jim Jarmusch’s films under these terms, noting that Jarmusch takes advantage of extended interstices to break narrative continuity and thus allow time for reflective thought (*Ma, Mu and the Inerstice*). The ubiquity of such slowed rhythms in contemporary moving image art practice suggested that these terms could bridge a gap now apparent between the three different strands of research: my programme of practice; a consideration of related film and art practices; and the contextualization of

my practice in reference to theoretical discourse. Up to this point these three vectors were running parallel to one another without quite overlapping.

#### **4.4 Ma – Invitation to Contemplation**

When capturing images in the Quadrangle building, I focused my attention on small details rather than descriptive features in order to concentrate on gathering an archive of rhythms rather than representations. This process was often a delicate game of subtraction that involved avoiding details that might immediately identify the site. As such, I could argue that my work balances between mimesis and abstraction. Jonathan Lee Chenette describes *ma* as ‘the art of non-expression’ (*The Concept of Ma*). He points out that although the Japanese composer Takemitsu was greatly influenced by Western compositional styles:

Yet his aesthetic approach to space and time in his music often results in arrangements of sounds that have more in common with the intentionally non-expressive rocks of Ryoan-ji than with the purposeful arrangements of most Western music. For Takemitsu, sounds take on meaning only through the action of the listener, not through the composer or the performer (*The Concept of Ma*).

Chenette is referring here to the Zen garden of Ryoan-ji in Kyoto that comprises of a rectangular walled garden with fifteen rocks placed in a seemingly random manner, and surrounded by a bed of small pebbles, with benches for visitors situated along one side of the garden. This garden was the subject of the Japanese artist Takahiko Iimura’s experimental film *Ma Space/Time in the Garden of Ryoan-ji* (1989) (see fig. 29) that Le Grice states ‘uses slow horizontal tracking shots and zooms (viewed from beside not tracking three dimensionally between the rocks) as an analogue for time in the spatial experience’ (82).



Fig. 29, Takahiko Iimura, still from *Ma Space/Time in the Garden of Ryoan-ji* (1989)

This film also displays the ‘non-expressive’ quality that Chenette refers to in relation to Takemitsu’s compositions. Iimura explains that when making this film, he was interested in exploring Bergson’s concept of *durée* that he believes to be closer to the concept of time in the East, ‘which regards time as duration rather than a divisible unit’ (*A Note for “Ma”*). Iimura echoes Bergson when he suggests *ma* can be interpreted as ‘an in-divisible state of time and space’. Furthermore, he states:

I thought of not merely realizing the concept of “MA”, but also of experiencing a real “MA” through viewing the film. In other words, not to illustrate the film as an explanation of the text as a usual art instructional film, but viewing the film becomes as an actual experience of “MA”.

This attitude supports my own approach to the practical artistic component of this research, as does Iimura’s construction. He uses long, slow tracking shots of the garden that he explains ‘move against immovable objects’ that produce an image whereby ‘one cannot easily judge just by looking at the picture whether the shot is moving or still’. Furthermore, Iimura trails his camera over the garden as if forming a portrait of it much like I do when recording architectural spaces. Likewise, his use of sound blends with the surrounding architecture. Chenette argues that the inexpressive quality of the images allow the musical sounds in the work to, ‘become like the rocks of a Japanese rock garden, telling the listener nothing, but inviting, through the empty spaces they define, actions from the listener that fill them with meaning.’ (*The Concept of Ma*) In other words, meaning is created in the intervals.

Drawing on Rancière's argument in *The Emancipated Spectator*, I argued that for contemplative spectatorship to be supported the practitioner must concede the position of authority in relation to the meaning of a work, rather she is setting the scene for a shared form of participation to occur. The concept of *ma* evolved in a Japanese cultural tradition that Noel Burch argues is characterized by 'polysemy and intertextuality' (44). Burch points out that the Japanese culture 'in various ways, totally contests the myth of the closed text and the concomitant notion of originality' (47). Pilgrim recognizes that *ma* has been referred to as an "imaginary space" and states, 'In this sense it is negative space/time "filled" by the imagination more than by some thing' (59).

To recognize an instance of *ma* in moving imagery is to acknowledge the presence of an active emptiness that is both implied by the image and experienced by the spectator. The notion of empty frames or sequences, that is, sections of footage in which action is suspended have for the most part been considered an avant-garde practice in cinema. In Japanese cinema, however, such suspension of action through slow, rhythmic imagery can be identified in mainstream cinema, and perhaps signifies cultural differences in interpreting the very function of emptiness. For instance, the term *ma* indicates a space/time that is 'filled with emptiness' rather than absent of action. Could it be that this state of *ma* is filled by the contemplations of the spectator who is engaged in active thought? This question led me to consider *ma* in relation to Deleuze's time-image, particularly in circumstances when temporal rhythms coincide. As I have noted in the previous chapter, the use of freeze-frames or long takes can result in the spectator being made aware of her own presence. Such encounters also involve extended periods of waiting. Martin Esslin suggests that the subject of Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* (1953) is the act waiting itself. Esslin remarks,

it is in the act of waiting that we experience the flow of time in its purest, most evident form. If we are active, we tend to forget the passage of time, we *pass* the time, but if we are merely passively waiting, we are confronted with the action of time itself" (50, emphasis in the original).

Esslin is referring to theatre spectatorship, however, as addressed earlier in relation to Rancière's theory of the emancipated spectator, I believe that both forms of spectatorship engage with both observation and participation. Following Esslin, one could argue that if an image is filled with action the spectator has no time to consider her own thoughts in relation to that image and therefore can be considered passive. When confronted by an image containing little or no action the spectator might initially experience impatience, as suggested by Mullarkey when discussing Bergson's intuitive thought process in relation to my imagery in Chapter One. However, as she waits she will become more virtually active, particularly, according to Deleuze and Rancière, when the image comprises of oppositional relations. Given the opportunity, these relations can influence the rhythm of her singular thought process. In this sense, waiting is a powerful viewing experience that has the potential to lead to active contemplation.

The stilled state that *ma* implies is significant in that it is never held at a remove from movement because there is always the expectation of change to come. The stilled frame thereby creates a tension between stasis and motion that is formed by their potential coexistence. It is in this sense that I can argue the existence of movement in my imagery even when they appear to be still, that is the existence of the possibility of movement. For instance, the movement in my video titled *Presence* (2013) is contained within the change from presence to absence as the object slowly disappears. Such imagery can transfer the production of action from the image to the spectator because the act of waiting can align her thought process with the temporal rhythms in the image, just as Bergson's example of sugar dissolving in water serves to illustrate. Under the terms of the Japanese concept of *ma* the absence of movement is understood to *fill* the emptiness. It does not imply that movement does not exist, rather that it has not yet arrived. In cinematic terms, it could be described as implied off-frame movement. What is of note when following the concept of *ma* is that the act of waiting is considered to be an insightful and productive activity in itself.

#### **4.5 From *Quad* (2013) to *Between Realities* (2016)**

The coinciding temporal relations at play between stillness and movement in *Quad* (2013) invited the spectator to make associations by drawing on her own accumulation of knowledge. In this way, following Deleuze, unexpected relations could be formed between the images and their corresponding images produced by the spectator through thought. Recognizing a connection between my practice and the Japanese concept of *ma*, described by Chenette as an “invitation to contemplation”, highlighted that oppositions such as stillness and movement, presence and absence, and interior and exterior relations can function as a means to encourage contemplative spectatorship. Coinciding stillness and movement could also be described as the presence and/or absence of movement.



Fig. 30, still from *Quad* (2013)

With the significance of these dualities in mind, I reinvestigated the sequences included in *Quad* in terms of their individual mediations of these oppositions. I also needed to address the growing suspicion that the installation could be improved if particular sequences were relocated. For instance, the sequences titled *Trees* (see fig. 30) and *Cherryblossom* are both constructed from exterior footage, and refer primarily to the somewhat cyclical nature of time. In doing so, however, they establish a notable self-containment that I now believe hinders their interaction with surrounding rhythms of images located in internal spaces. Similarly, I realized that the sequence originally

titled *Quartz* does not necessarily directly reference, or for that matter require contact with, the surrounding imagery in *Quad*. In order to challenge its self reliance as a concrete work in its own right, I showed *Quartz* as a single looped projection in a group exhibition titled *Materiality* curated by Tom O'Dea in May of 2015 (see Appendix III for documentation). This allowed me to examine the strength of the work to form relations with surrounding works. I believe on this point it contributed successfully, but its form of display as a projection was questionable, and will be addressed in more detail below. Its relational success in a group exhibition however, strengthened my resolve to reconstruct the installation as three separate but related works.

The first work, now titled *Return*, emphasizes the cyclical nature of time and comprises of the two sequences *Trees* and *Cherryblossom*. Their shorter durations and looped format allow the spectator to engage with additional temporal rhythms in the same gallery space, setting in motion relations between two projections with varying durations.

*Quartz* now exists as a single looped video on a screen display, and is re-titled *Presence*. This work highlights the opposition between presence and absence. According to Deleuze the empty spaces in neorealist films (referred to as ‘any-spaces-whatever’) led to a suspension in the cause and effect chain of image associations that narrative continuity relied upon. This compares with the same presence/absence dichotomy that the concept of *ma* contains. As Pilgrim states in relation to the gaps in the Japanese language, described as ‘emotional spaces called *ma*’, the cause/effect narrative order ‘continually dissolves or deconstructs into these spaces.’ (60) Confronted by this, the spectator is made aware of her presence in relation to the image, and is challenged to interact with the image through thought. Additionally, I believe this sequence differs from the others because it focuses on the becoming absent of a specific object. Projection provides an additional surface layer that proves useful when temporary intervention is intended. It is also quite ephemeral and this quality is appropriate for my images that engage the fleeting nature of light. In the

case of *Presence*, however, the object requires a physical presence in order to emphasize its final dissolution. I believe its absence is more tactile if displayed on a monitor (see Appendix V for documentation).

Finally, a third projection, now titled *Landing*, highlights the oppositional interior /exterior relations. The images in *Landing* are primarily captured on the stairs and landing that are architectural structures designed to be passed through. Emptied of their function, they contain a temporary stillness that can be interrupted at any moment. This temporary state is emphasized by the sounds of out-of-frame movement in the background, indicating a potential presence just passed or just to come. In fact even movement that appears to be present, captured through focusing on shadows and reflections, is occurring elsewhere. As such, *Landing* could be described as an empty place, its stillness emphasized by the surrounding temporalities it contains. Similarly, Pilgrim describes that *ma* implies ‘a blank space/time where nothing is done, and that *ma* is the core of the expression, where the true interest lies’ (59).

In terms of the exhibition gallery itself, it could be argued that by exhibiting the installation in the University Gallery located in the same Quadrangle building that was the focus of my practical investigations, another layer of meaning is automatically added to the work relating to the singular identity of the site itself. Although I do not deny that the poetics of such an encounter appeals to my broader field of artistic investigations, it must also be clarified that, as stated throughout, the primary intention of this research project was not to emphasise the specific spatial characteristics of a given site. Rather, the works seek to focus on the singular duration that the coincidence of stillness and movement contained within the imagery itself, rather than its referent, can make visible. In this sense, associations to site specificity dissipate allowing temporal relations to surface. With that said, I was fortunate to have access to this gallery throughout the research project, and this allowed me to experiment with many possible iterations of the installation as the work progressed. The final installation construction was therefore decided on the basis of the gallery space rather than its location within the Quadrangle building.

#### 4.6 Summary

*Between Realities* serves as the conceptual title for the installation as a whole. The oppositions between the interior and exterior spaces, the presence and absence of material structures, and the stillness and movement of their temporal rhythms are integral to the play between the photographic and the cinematic that this research inquiry primarily addresses. In their various manifestations, the images seek to position the spectator inside photographic stillness as it is reactivated in the present. The coinciding temporal rhythms allow the spectator to engage with the aesthetics of the image at leisure, placing her initially as an observer. The coinciding movements, as Mark B. N. Hansen, following Metz, argues, call for active participation (51). I believe that the emphasis placed on oppositions between stillness and movement (through various mediating rhythms) in these images can be described as opposing regimes of expression as put forward by Rancière. As a result, the spectator is held in kind of ‘between’ state that the concept of *ma* contains. Pilgrim argues, albeit following a religio-aesthetic paradigm, that *ma* is experienced in a mysterious place that is ‘created as a third place between all other places ... beyond all distinctions, boundaries, orders, and descriptive constructs’ (71). However, rather than appearing at the point of narrative rupture, Pilgrim suggests that experiencing the ‘formless energy that comes and goes’ in an instance of *ma* derives from its ‘aesthetics of stillness and movement’ (68). I believe that this formless energy that comes and goes is identified by Deleuze in Ozu’s image of the vase in *Late Spring* (1949) as ‘a little time in its pure state’ (*Cinema 2* 16). As such, identifying an instance of *ma* in my imagery can lead to them being considered a specific form of Deleuzian time-image that can also be said to contain *ma* within its intervals. This singular temporal ambiguity results from the coincidence of stillness and movement. Furthermore, such images involve the same oppositional relations that Rancière suggests hold the spectator between passivity and activity. This allows the spectator to engage in both observation and participation simultaneously, thus activating the potential for contemplative thought.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX I: Greenwich Research Trip Documentation



Greenwich Park, with the Royal Observatory in the distance.



The original Meridian Marker that defined the Greenwich Meridian established in 1750.



The Greenwich Meridian line, established in 1850.



The clockmaker John Harrison's H1 (chronometer above) and H4 chronometer (below) are arguably the most significant time-keeping inventions, as they allowed navigators to locate their longitude positions at sea for the first time.

## APPENDIX II: *Quad* (2013) Exhibition Documentation



**Nora Duggan *Quad* (2013)**

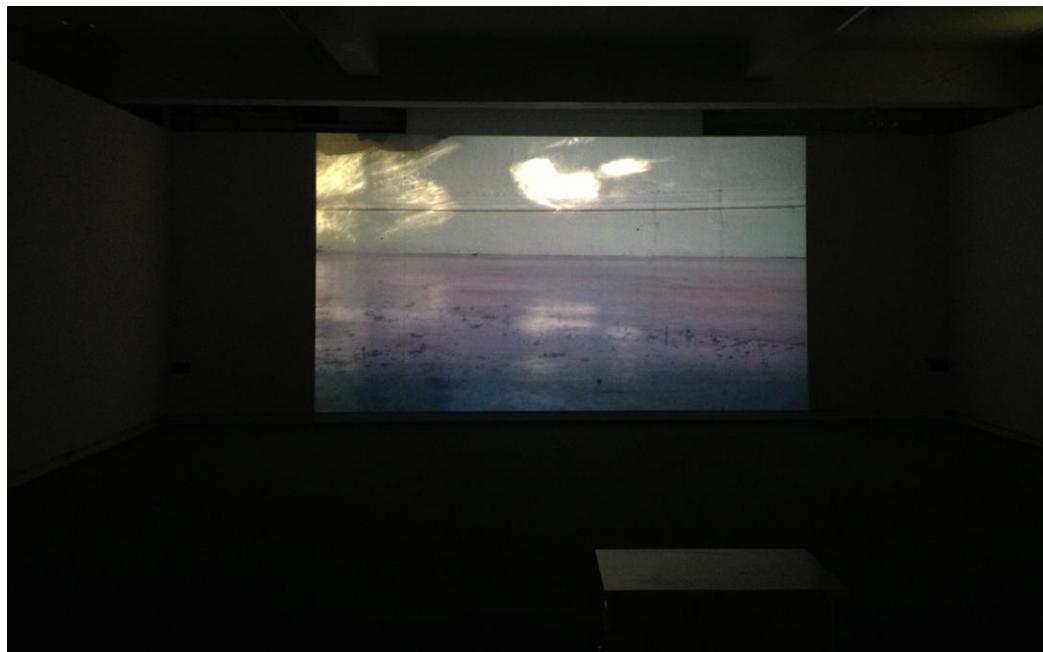
**22 minute single channel video projection, looped**

The temporal relations between stillness and movement constantly drive Nora Duggan's art practice. Taking the original Quadrangle building of NUI Galway as her subject, Nora compiled a series of digital photographs and videos over the past year, recording the movement of light in and around the building and its surrounds. These images are then reconfigured, manipulated, cut and collaged together in order to investigate the ambiguous nature of time.

As she reaches the mid-point of her practice-based PhD at the Huston School of Film & Digital Media, NUI Galway, Nora looks to Quad for evidence of how her research has progressed to date, but also to inform her future direction. The work questions how our experience of time can be informed/influenced/reflected through combined stillness and movement in digital imagery. Here, linear and chronological time are abandoned, and replaced by the possibilities suggested when time is understood as a multitude of simultaneous temporal relations that expand and contract, existing not merely as past, present and future but as future pasts, present futures, and so on...

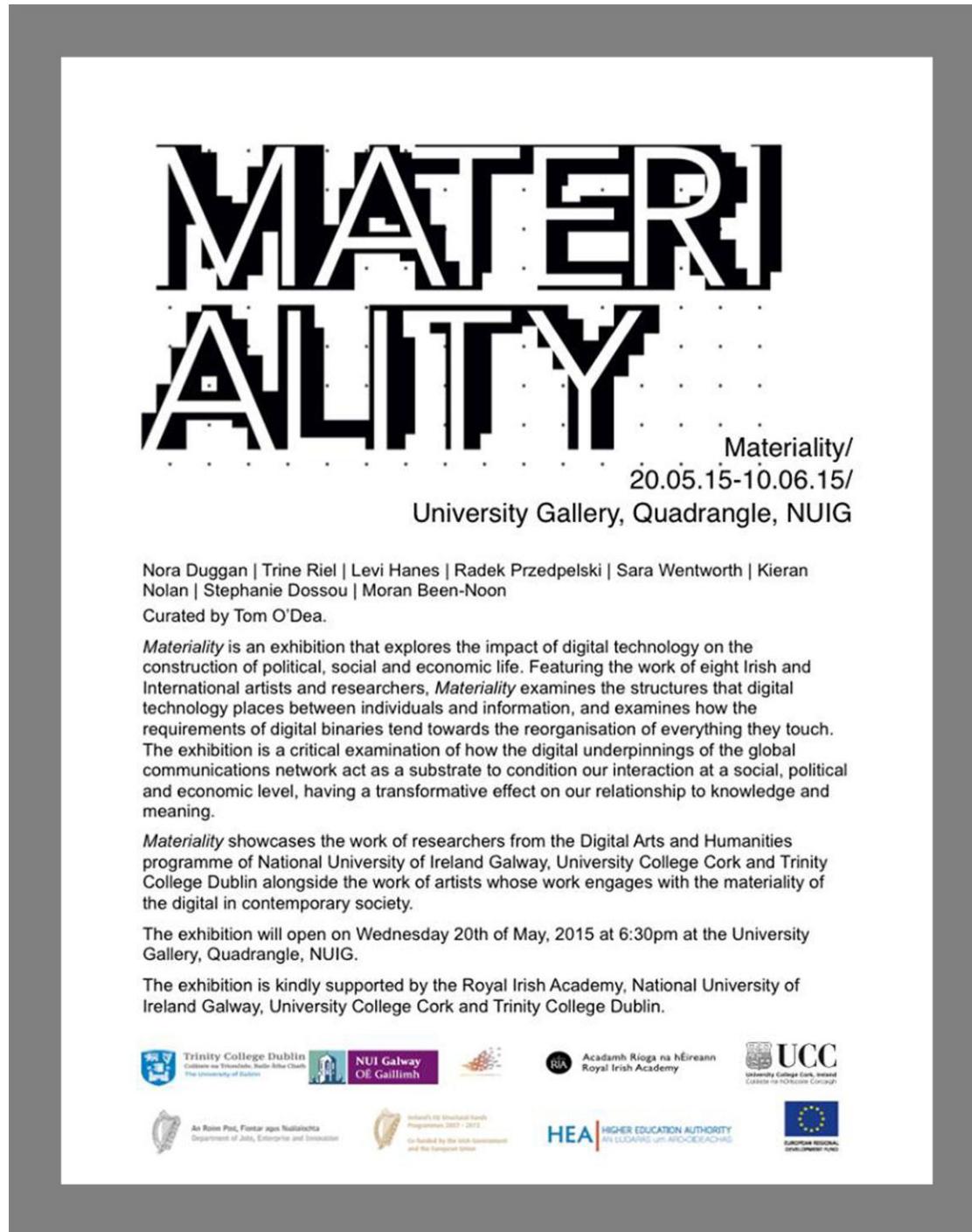


Press Poster for *Quad* Exhibition, October 2013.

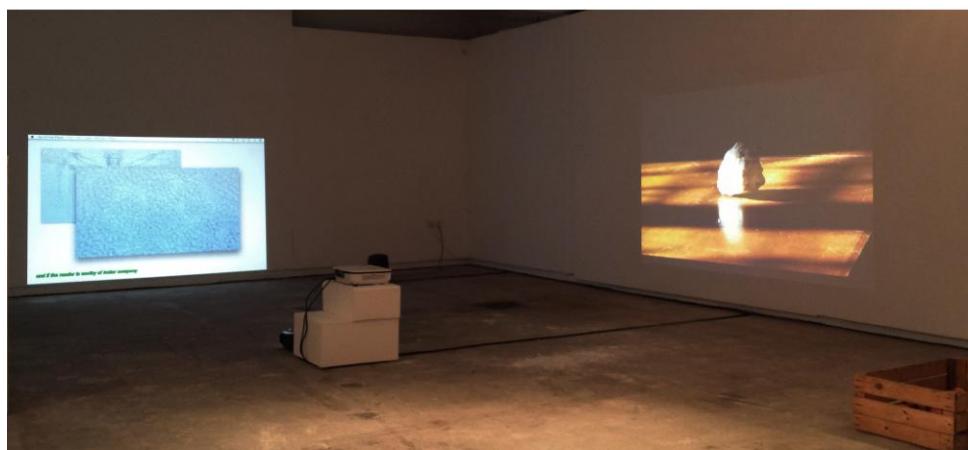


*Quad* Exhibition Photographic documentation

## APPENDIX III: *Materiality* Exhibition Documentation



Press Poster, *Materiality* Exhibition (2015)



*Materiality* exhibition photographic documentation.

#### **APPENDIX IV: *Between Realities* Gallery Event (2015) Documentation**

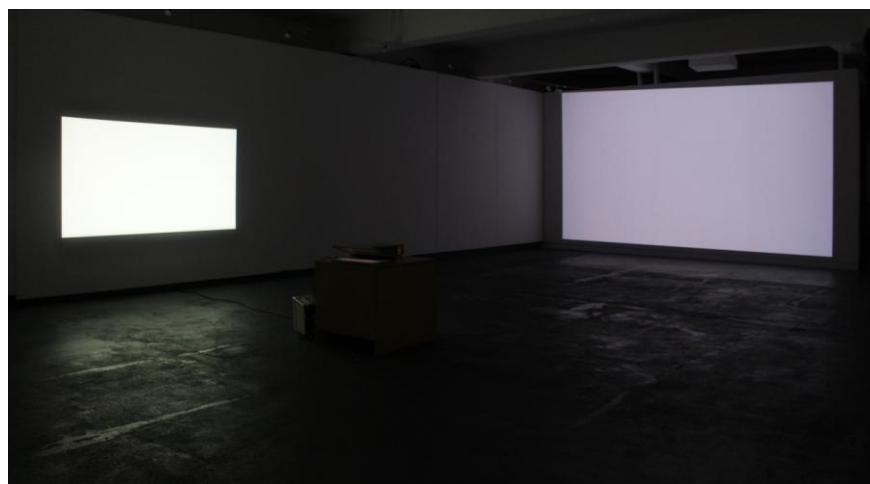
This event was designed to gather the written and practical research together in one space. Taking advantage of the large gallery room, I played around with various projection options at the back of the space. In the front, I pinned large sheets of paper to the walls, and wrote summaries of my thesis chapters on them. This allowed me to consider the shape of the written thesis was taking, and relate its content directly to the practical research.

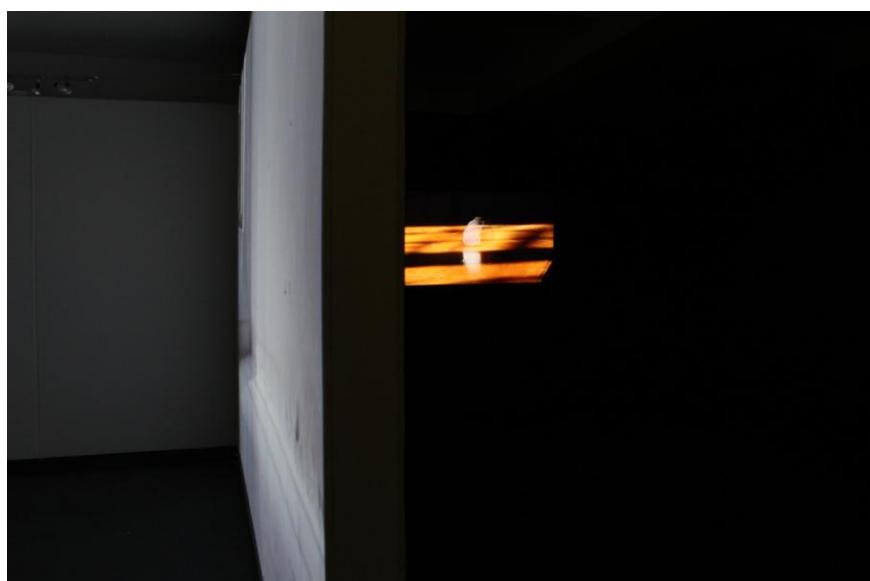
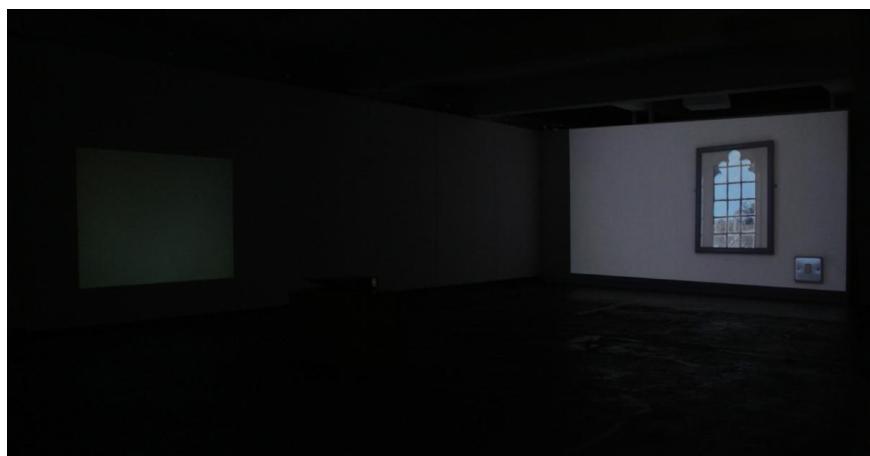


## **APPENDIX V: *BETWEEN REALITIES* EXHIBITION (2016)**

The final exhibition was installed in the University Gallery in August 2016 for the purpose of documentation. A short video titled Between Realities Exhib Doc is included on the flash drive accompanying this thesis, and is also available to view on vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/noraduggan/betweenrealitiesdoc>

Photographic documentation:





## APPENDIX VI: SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2015 ‘**The Quad, NUI Galway, as a Site for Temporal Inquiry in Practice-based Research**’ presented at ECRF (European Cinema Research Forum) conference 2015: *Space and Place in European Cinema*, NUI Galway, 7 – 8 July 2015.
- ‘**Between Realities: investigating temporal relations between stillness and movement in practice-based research**’ presented at the *Huston Postgraduate Seminar*, Huston School of Film & Digital Media, NUI Galway, 29 - 30 April 2015.
- ‘**Between Realities: investigating temporal relations between stillness and movement in digital imagery**’ presented at *Mind the Gap! A National Workshop on Practice-based PhD Research in Creative Media and Visual Arts*. NCAD, Dublin, Ireland, 17 April 2015.
- 2014 Screening of *Quad* (2013/14) at The Journal of Media Practice and MeCCSA Practice Network Symposium *Image, Movement, Story*, hosted by The Practice as Research Group, Roehampton University London, UK, 14 June 2014.
- ‘**Quad: A Working Model of Practice as Research**’ presented at *Creating Cultures* Postgraduate Conference in Culture, Media, and the Creative Industries, King’s College London, UK, 12 - 13 June 2014.
- ‘**Quad: A Working Model of Practice as Research**’ at the 2014 Irish Screen Studies Seminar, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, 9-10 May 2014.
- 2013 ‘**Investigating liminality in digital imagery where stillness and movement coincide**’ at *The PhD and The Studio: Sharing The Experience: What does it mean to do a PhD in Studio Art?* Burren College of Art, Ballyvaughan, Co. Clare, Ireland, 3 April, 2013.