

INVENTION

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PROFESSOR MARK LEWIS

## Mark Lewis

Born in Hamilton, Ontario in 1958, Mark Lewis lives and works primarily in London, UK. His film and digital moving image works are frequently depictions of everyday life and they make subtle and often accidental allusion to the wider tradition of photography and painting. Recent films like *Man* (2012), *Smoker at Spitalfields* (2012) and *City Road 24 March* (2012) make direct reference to the pictorial exploration of the everyday through the use of cinematographic techniques. In his film *Black Mirror at the National Gallery* (2011) the interaction between the museum space, the mirror and the cinematic camera becomes a collaborative exercise for observation and composition making.

Mark Lewis is co-founder and co-director of Afterall, a publication and research organisation based at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. In 2009 he represented Canada at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Venice Biennale with his exhibition *Cold Morning*. Solo exhibitions include Van Abbe-museum (Eindhoven, 2013), Vancouver Art Gallery (Canada, 2008), Ps1 (New York, 2006), Forte Di Bard (Italy, 2011), Museo D'Arte Provincia di Nuoro (Italy, 2009), Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto, 2010), Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Vienna, 2008), FACT (Liverpool, 2006), BFI Southbank (London, 2006) and forthcoming at the Musée du Louvre, Paris (2014). His work has been included in recent group shows at K21 Kunstsammlung (Dusseldorf), Palais De Beaux Arts (Brussels), Beirut Art Centre (Beirut), Museo d'Arte di Lugano (Switzerland), Vancouver Art Gallery (Canada), Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography (Japan), Centre Pompidou (Paris) and forthcoming at the 31<sup>st</sup> Bienal de São Paulo.

## Laura Mulvey

Laura Mulvey has been writing about film and film theory since the mid-1970s. She has published *Visual and Other Pleasures* (1989, new updated edition 2009), *Fetishism and Curiosity* (1996 new edition 2013), *Citizen Kane* (1996 new edition 2012), *Death Twenty-four Times a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (2006). In the late 1970s and early 1980s, she co-directed six films with Peter Wollen including *Riddles of the Sphinx* (1978; dvd release 2013) and *Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti* (1980). In 1994, she co-directed with artist/filmmaker Mark Lewis *Disgraced Monuments* (Channel 4) with whom she has also made *23 August 2008* (2013). She is Professor of Film and Media Studies at Birkbeck College, University of London and Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image.

## INVENTION

## PROFESSOR MARK LEWIS

in conversation

with Laura Mulvey

University of the Arts London  
Professorial Platform 2014





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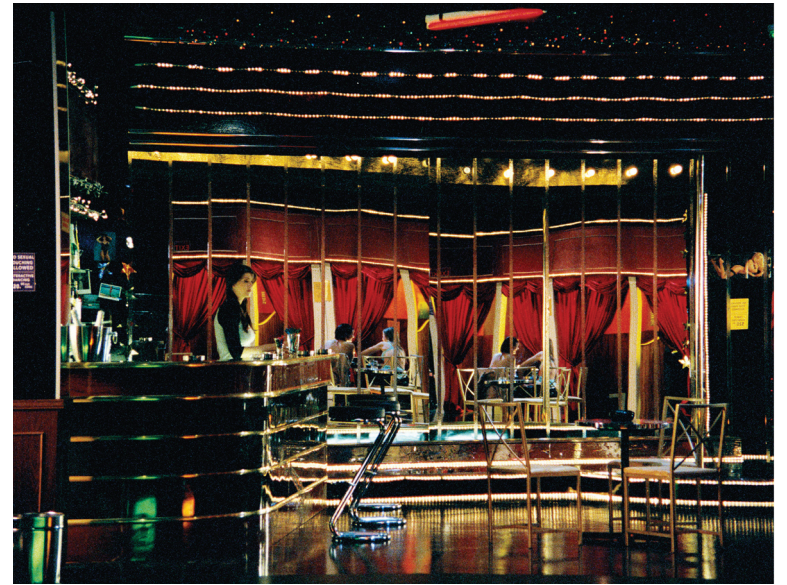


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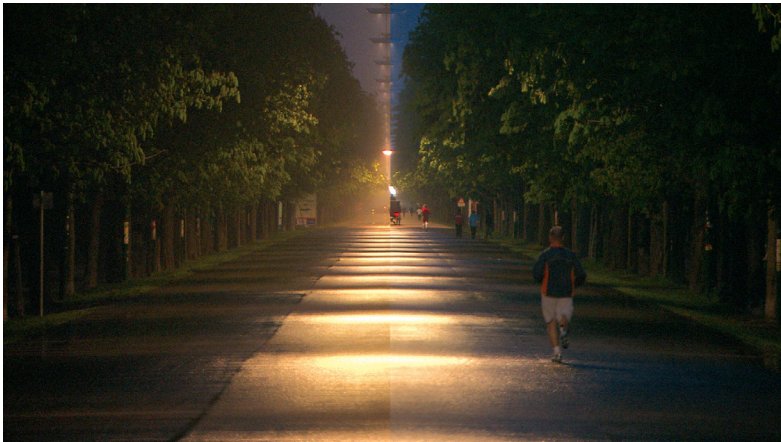
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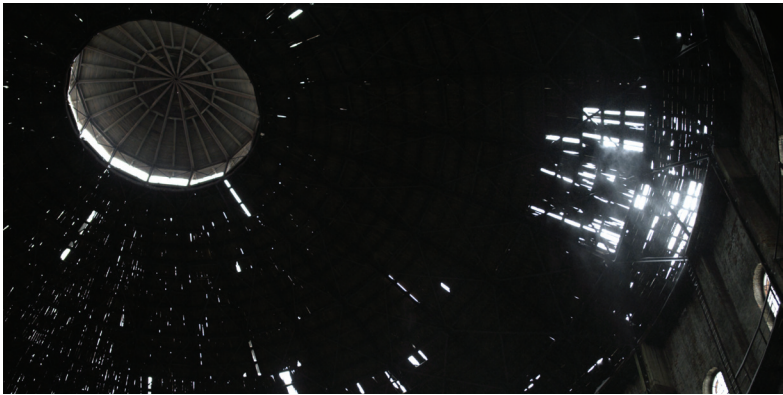


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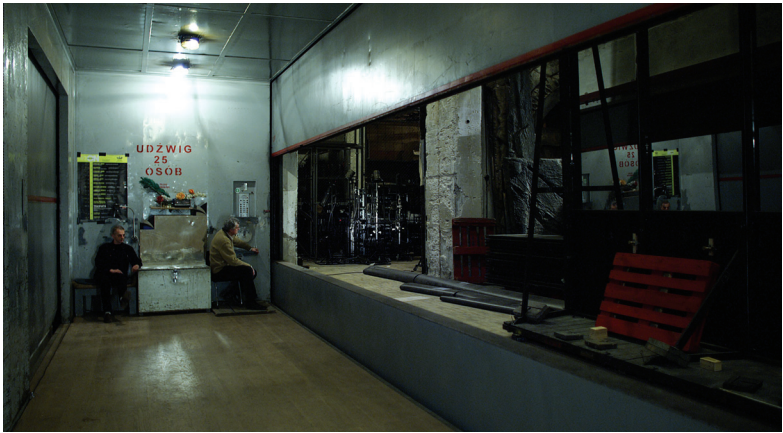


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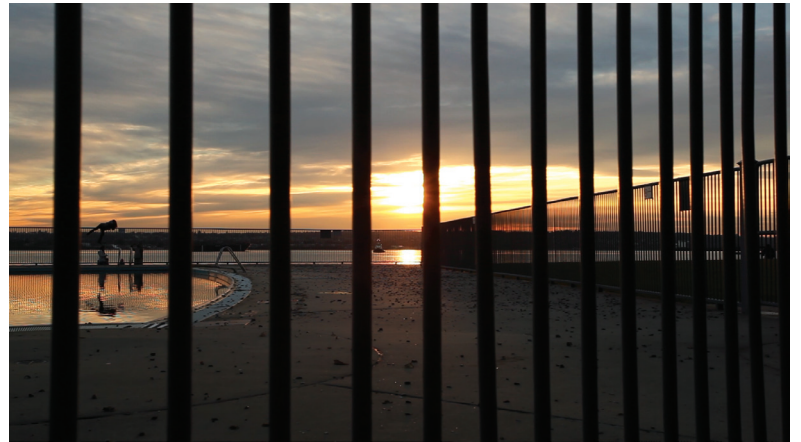


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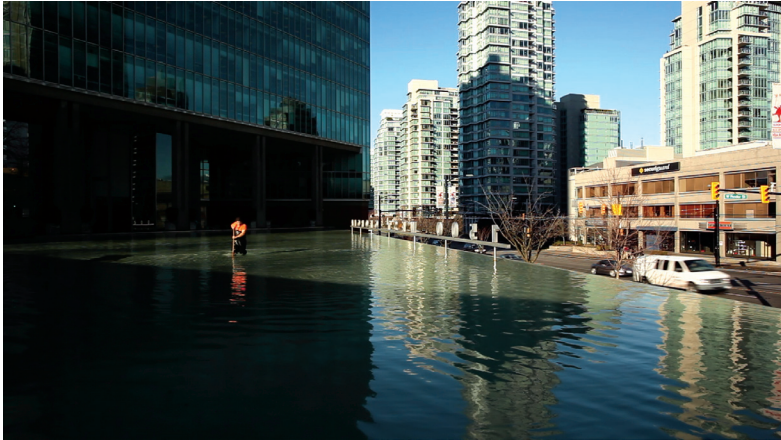




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## FILMS

1. *Disgraced Monuments*, 1993. 16mm transferred to dvd, 48' (w. sound).  
Co-written and directed with Laura Mulvey

2. *Two Impossible Films*, 1995. 35mm cinemascope transferred to dvd and colour print, 28'26" (w. sound)

3. *A Sense of the End*, 1996. Super 16mm transferred to DVD, 14'40"

4. *Upside Down Touch Of Evil*, 1997. 35mm transferred to dvd, 4'32" (w. sound)

5. *The Pitch*, 1998. 35mm transferred to 2K, 3'59"

6. *Centrale*, 1999. 35mm transferred to 2k, 4'

7. *After (made for TV)*, 1999. 35mm and super 16mm transferred to DVD, 16'24" (w.sound)

8. *North Circular*, 2000. 35mm cinemascope transferred to 2K, 4'

9. *Peeping Tom*, 2000. 35mm transferred to dvd, 5'31"

10. *Smithfield*, 2000. 35mm transferred to 2k, 4'12"

11. *Algonquin Park, September*, 2001. Super 35mm transferred to 2K, 2'43"

12. *Windfarm*, 2001. 35mm transferred to DVD, 4'

13. *Jay's Garden, Malibu*, 2001. 35mm transferred to dvd, 5'15"

14. *Tenement Yard, Heygate Estate*, 2002. Super 35mm transferred to dvd, 4'

15. *Children's Games, Heygate Estate*, 2002. Super 35mm transferred to 2K, 7'27"

16. *Algonquin Park, Early March*, 2002. Super 35mm transferred to 2K, 4'6"

17. *Lawson Estate*, 2003. Super 16mm transferred to 2K, 4'18"

18. *Harper Road*, 2003. 35mm transferred to 2K, 4'10"

19. *Brass Rail*, 2003. Super 35mm transferred to 2k, 3'53"

20. *Airport*, 2003. Super 35mm transferred to DVD, 10'59"

21. *Churchyard Row*, 2003. Super 35mm transferred to 2K, 3'51"

22. *Off Leash, High Park*, 2004. Super 35mm transferred to 2K, 4'12"

23. *Queensway: Pan and Zoom*, 2005. Super 35mm transferred to 2K, 3'5"

24. *Northumberland*, 2005. Super 16mm transferred to 2K, 4'37"

25. *Gladwell's Picture Window*, 2005. Super 16mm transferred to 2K, 2'59"

26. *Rush Hour, Morning and Evening, Cheapside*, 2005. Super 35mm transferred to 2k, 4'34"

27. *Downtown: Tilt, Zoom and Pan*, 2005. Super 35mm, transferred to 2K, 4'28"

28. *Spadina: Reverse Dolly, Zoom, Nude*, 2006. 35mm transferred to 2K, 2'53"

29. *Golden Rod*, 2006. 35mm transferred to DVD, 2'30"

30. *Rear Projection (Molly Parker)*, 2006. 35mm transferred to 2K, 3'54"

31. *122 Leadenhall Street*, Mark Lewis, 2007. 35mm transferred to 2K, 4'14"

32. *Isosceles*, 2007. Super 35mm transferred to 2K, 3'20"

33. *Cinema Museum*, 2008. Super 16mm transferred to 2K, 38' (w. sound)

34. *The Fight*, 2008. High Definition, 5'27"

35. *Bricklayers Arms*, 2008. 4k transferred to 2K, 4'36"

36. *5262 Washington Boulevard*, 2008. 35mm transferred to 2K, 1'45"

37. *Prater Hauptallee, Dawn and Dusk*, 2008. High Definition, 18'11"

38. *Backstory*, 2009. 35mm and 4K transferred to 2K, 39'

39. *TD Centre, 54th Floor*, 2009. 35mm transferred to 2K, 6'18"

40. *Cold Morning*, 2009. High Definition, 7'35"

41. *Nathan Phillips Square, A Winters Night, Skating*, 2009. 35mm and 4K transferred to 2K, 4'

42. *Hendon F.C.*, 2009. 4K transferred to 2K, 4'

43. *Forte!*, 2010. 4K transferred to 2K, 6'

44. *Mid Day Mid Summer, Yonge and Dundas*, 2010, 4K transferred to 2K, 6'16"

45. *Willesden Laundrette; Reverse Dolly, Pan Right, Friday Prayers*, 2010. 4K transferred to 2K, 4'40"

46. *Pull Focus: Gasometer*, 2010. 4K transferred to 2K, 2'10"

47. *Pond Scum, Five Lines*, 2010. High Definition, 3'10"

48. *Cigarette Smoker at the Cafe Grazyinka Warsaw*, 2010. 4K transferred to 2K, 4'46"

49. *From Third Beach 1*, 2010. 35mm transferred to 2K, 3'41"

50. *Pond Scum, One line*, 2010. High Definition, 1'23"

51. *From Third Beach 2*, 2011. 35mm transferred to 2K, 3'40"

52. *Penguins at Somerset House*, 2011. 4K transferred to 2K, 2'03"

53. *The Moving Image*, 2011. 4K transferred to 2K, 1'27"

54. *Little Tree*, 2011. 4K transferred to 2K, 4'48"

55. *Walworth Road (Rosa Miguel, age 32, August 22, 2009)*, 2011. 4K transferred to 2K, 7'31"

56. *Outside the National Gallery*, 2011. 4K transferred to 2K, 6'

57. *Beirut*, 2011. High Definition, 8'11"

58. *Black Mirror at the National Gallery*, 2011. 4K transferred to 2K, 7'21"

59. *Windy Day*, 2012. 35mm transferred to 2K, 1'58"
60. *Volcano Tree*, 2012. High Definition, 1'46". In collaboration with Roger Larry
61. *Mad Man and the Tree*, 2012. High Definition, 1'58". In collaboration with Roger Larry
62. *Oak and the Tree*, 2012. High Definition, 2'47". In collaboration with Roger Larry
63. *Man*, 2012, 5K transferred to 2K, 6'57"
64. *1500 West Georgia*, 2012. High Definition, 3'25"
65. *Sunset*, Mark Lewis, 2012. High Definition, 2'06"
66. *Flock of Seagulls*, 2012. High Definition, 0'33"
67. *Smoker at Spitalfields*, 2012. 5K transferred to 2K, 8'58"
68. *City Road 24 March 2012*, 2012. 5K transferred to 2K, 4'30"
69. *City Road 04 May 2012*, 2012. 5K transferred to 2K, 4'03"
70. *Tree Stump Bus Stop*, 2013. 5K transferred to 2K, 3'33"
71. *Derek Jawgeer*, 2013. 5k transferred 2K, 7'39"
72. *One Mile*, 2013. 5k transferred to 2K, 9'02"
73. *Brown's Point*, 2013. High Definition, 5'47"
74. *August 23rd 2008*, 2013. 5k transferred to 2k, 22'38". Co-directed with Laura Mulvey and Faysal Abdullah
75. *360 degrees on the Border between North and South Korea*, 2013. 5k transferred to 2K, 4'53"
76. *Cheorwon County*, 2014. 5K transferred to 2K, 9'37"
77. *Above and Below between North and South*, 2014. 5k transferred to 2K, 13'15"
78. *Melvin's Shed*, 2014. High Definition, 2'02"
79. *Wells Toilet*, 2014. High Definition, 2'34"
80. *Dog Shop*, 2014. 5k transferred to 2K, 12'18"

## INVENTION

Imagine that you are in a large room, a kind of music hall or auditorium with seats arranged to face a small white screen in front of you. All around you people, just like you, sit and talk amongst themselves as they wait in anticipation of something that is about to happen. The lights in the room start to dim and projected in front of you is a small black and white picture of the sea taken from the shore. There is a jetty jutting out from the right of the image, at the end of which stand two women and some children. It's nothing very dramatic, in fact quite the contrary: it's an ordinary and everyday scene like those depicted in paintings and photographs that you may have seen many times before. Some moments pass and just as you are beginning to grow bored of this maritime image projected in front of you, you suddenly notice a strange 'rumbling' in the picture, a kind of internal torque that destroys the image's stillness. Quite inexplicably the image in front of you has started to transform itself and what was once a frozen image of a typical scene is now a cascade of movement and life: From the right foreground a rowing boat, with two men at the oars and another at the tiller, heads out towards the open ocean. For about fifty seconds the boat moves steadily and without incident. And then, just as it leaves the 'protection' of the jetty, a large wave hits the side of the boat and the men rowing and the women on the jetty are suddenly stricken with alarm. And then, just as abruptly, the film ends.

Imagine, then, what it would have been like to see a picture move for the first time. It would have been an extraordinary, profound, and uncanny experience. For if all pictures you have seen before could be understood as attempting to depict movement and change without moving at all, then what you have just seen is surely the realisation of this secret promise. It might even feel to you as if the whole of history of picture making up until this moment has just been a series of dry runs, preparing you for this most remarkable of experiences. And having now seen a picture move, means that every picture you will see from now on, whether a painting, a photograph or a drawing, will be measured against this most extraordinary experience of seeing one move. And contrary to popular belief, when films like *A Train Arriving at the Station* were first shown, audiences did not leap from their seats. Theatre owners most likely invented these now apocryphal stories in order to generate publicity for their film programs, and in this respect the presentation of early film was similar to fairground attractions and employed similar tactics. But there is another revolution here, one that is perhaps even more important than the first. For when the wave hits the side of the boat and throws the performance of rowers and onlookers into chaos, what you have also just experienced is the appearance of the unfathomable real, an unscripted moving picture of the world of contingency. It will be the first time that you will have seen a representation of an accidental and completely arbitrary event, an event that overwhelms the performance of the actors. Certainly you have seen actors before performing in the



theatre, you might even have seen them row a boat across a stage. But what you will have never seen before is the moving representation of something completely unscripted. At the very beginning of film then, you are witnessing the 'unpredictable' as it emerges from the background of the image to occupy the foreground. Man here becomes 'equal to the moving leaves and the blowing dust.'

Imagine now that you are walking down a busy modern city street. It's a windy day and you are holding your coat close to your body while you struggle to keep your hat from blowing off your head. You are moving fast towards your destination, keen to get inside and away from the inclement weather. Then out of the corner of your eye you see three men gathered around a plain looking black box mounted upon three legs. One of the men is turning a crank on the side of the box while his head has disappeared under a dark cloth, just like the many photographers you have seen taking pictures since you were a child. But the turning crank puzzles you and then all of a sudden you realise that this box is in fact a motion picture camera and that a movie is being made. You have seen illustrations of these machines in magazines and newspapers and perhaps you have even seen one for sale in a department store. But this is the first time that you have actually seen one being used in the street. You realise that what the motion picture camera is now 'seeing' must include a moving picture of *you*. You smile a little bashfully and tilt your head and peer curiously at the machine, wondering how your moving image might look as seen from somewhere else. In fact so distracted are you by this thought that you completely forget about the wind and you let go of your hat which is then immediately swept away across the street. At that moment not only are you startled by the fact that your body is a subject for a film that is being made but you also realise that this self consciousness has unwittingly produced a moment of physical comedy to be remembered and understood, perhaps long after your own death.

Imagine, in other words, what it must have felt like to realise, for the very first time, that there could be a moving picture of yourself, completely free from your corporeal body, and that could be set loose into the future, to repeat realistically, for ever, your gestures and likeness that would have long since disappeared. You will, of course, already have seen images of yourself in photographs, with the latter's strange stillness making you look as if you were trapped in some momentary pasts. But it must have been a shocking and confusing moment to think of yourself as a moving image with all your individual gestures, ticks and peculiar motions and looking as if the time you were living in could last forever. Moreover it would have been a moment of charming self-reflection and wonder, relatively free of narcissism. However, once you know that there can be a moving picture of yourself in the world, your every action will increasingly present you with some cause for self-reflection, even concern. For not only do you start to be aware of what you might look like to others, but this seismic event also catapults your sense of yourself into an increasingly schizophrenic self-consciousness.

Obviously this change in consciousness takes place over time and through repeated exposure to films being made of you, or of other people like you. But the point here is that the pure naïve joy of suddenly recognising that a moving image of you might or will exist – well this can only really ever happen once. The next time it happens you might think to prepare yourself a little for the event, especially after you witness other people in films as they too develop a certain narcissistic recognition of the camera's gaze.

What I have just described represents three important modern revolutions in consciousness set into play by the invention of the cinematic moving picture: seeing a picture move; seeing the moving representation of something random and contingent; and imagining yourself as a moving picture. And at the very moment of film's obsolescence, these three moments present us with an increasing urgent sense of curiosity: what did it *feel/ like* to begin this journey of a revolutionary change of consciousness? And after more than 100 years of film history, what are the implications of this as film rapidly disappears and new material forms and new ways of looking at and experiencing moving images emerge?

It seems important and timely to consider the beginnings of film and moving image consciousness *now* as it is obvious that there has been a loss of some sense of exceptionality attached to the very idea of the moving image. Moving pictures are ubiquitous and have become our everyday landscape against and through which we live our lives. We barely notice them anymore, rather we *expect* moving pictures everywhere; and certainly the cinema is no longer the place where innovation and invention is startling audiences in the way that it once did in the past. Moreover the long forecast supersession of film by digital technologies (and the dissolution of the long standing difference between film and video) is finally upon us. We can now imagine a near future where the mechanical movement of cameras, film and projectors will be the object of specialisation, nostalgia and curiosity. It would be easy to conclude that the innovation and invention now available even on our mobile phones today is more advanced and at least as extraordinary as three hours of *Avatar* or two and half hours of *Inception*. And certainly the effect of cinema's latest fetishization of 3D image technology is only a pale imitation of what was set into play by the first animation of simple two-dimensional images. It's hard now to even conceive of a moment when the sight of an image springing to life was something profoundly unnerving and even changed human consciousness forever, yet it *did do* this and little more than 100 years ago!

When the Lumière Brothers initially set up their little auditorium to show their films, they optimistically put out 100 chairs in front of the screen. After extensive leafleting and other publicity only about thirty people turned up for the very first screening. By the next day, however, the queues of people waiting their turn to see the new moving images stretched across three city blocks and continued to do so for weeks to

come. Interestingly cinema's novelty period, the period immediately after its invention and when anything and everything seemed possible, lasted barely a few years. But during film's early period there was a veritable frenzy of inventive activity, fuelled by curiosity, entrepreneurial imagination and the general sense that the world might just be about to change forever.

The paradigm of the cinematic illusion – bringing the illusion of movement through time and place to a fixed viewer who does not move – is complete. Which is to say that it has no more invention left in it with regards to special effect, illusion and surprise. We are now increasingly mobile viewers and it is the places we go, the spaces we inhabit, and the fantasies we project that increasingly determine and generate images, stories and events. Think, for instance, how so many of the new mobile phone applications combine use of the phone's camera with the location of its owner to generate specific moving images and content. Movement through time and space is increasingly a topographic rather than spectacular experience and we are, I think, experiencing today a radical shift and change in our relationship to images and the representation of the present, every bit as conceptually challenging and revolutionary as the introduction of moving images once was, and perhaps even more so.

Of course as we are currently living inside of this revolution<sup>1</sup>, we cannot yet know the extent to that it will have changed us. But we certainly can sense that rapid and permanent change is upon us. Perhaps by trying to imagine and recreate that originary moment when moving pictures and the cinema first emerged and did change everyone's lives forever is a way to grasp and figure today's radical transformations with regards to the making, viewing and experiencing images. The past in this sense can become an allegory of the present.

The original transformation of consciousness achieved through the introduction of the moving picture, continued with other cinematic inventions. Ones that for instance allowed you to watch the world run backwards, in slow-motion and upside down, or to see an animated face in huge close-up, large, radiant and star-like. But in many respects these revolutions were made possible by the three phenomenal experiences described above. Much of what follows – the cinematic special effects employed with greater and greater verisimilitude to wow audiences as reality or fantasy; the fascination with celebrity and the desire for all of us to be, for fifteen minutes, moving pictures of consequence, to live, as it were, inside our own films – can be understood as attempts, often beautiful and unnerving, to return to the fantastic modernity of when film and cinema were first invented; as if to give us the opportunity to experience *again* the wonder and shock of seeing a picture move, of witnessing, also for the first time, the moving representation of an unpredictable and contingent world, and to have the startling realisation/ imagination that a moving likeness of our selves can and will exist in the world without us.

I want now to pursue something quite speculative. But it has occurred to me that this speculative idea has become an important back-story for much of my recent work, and it does also seem to contradict, or at least suggest a slightly different take on what I have just been describing: what might have happened when the projected moving picture was first invented. Because before moving pictures were invented there were, of course, moving images.

Imagine then that images that moved, prior to their startling appearance as moving pictures in Edison's machines or as Lumières projections, that these were already a fundamental and highly visible part of the experience of everyday and particularly everyday modern life. They were everywhere and an essential part of the latter's spectacular montage. Even a simple stroll through the city was an opportunity for magic encounters with moving images reflected in shiny metal, stone and glass surfaces, or in the dizzying shadow plays of rushing pedestrian life – a ballet of the future that appeared all around you like films not yet invented. This ubiquity, the sense that moving images are born of and at the same time helping to produce the fabric of our emerging modern subjectivity, means moving images, prior to the invention of film, were already an indivisible part of everyday life. Thus the embedded, already existing moving images are a glimpse, through or via movement, of the imagined coming modernity. It's not that they depict the future *per se*. After all they are temporally coterminous with the people and things that produce them. Rather it is the experience of them in your midst (and with the beginnings of the modern architectural city this experience is all the more forcefully felt), their embeddedness amongst other (modern) shapes and forms, and their contribution to a sense of urban montage that produces a quintessential modern urban mosaic, defying and undoing classical composition and complicating the latter's attendant temporality.

As you moved through this montaged landscape, different moving image surfaces would recede or grow, or perspectively transform and so on. Over your shoulder, or looking up, or just beneath you, moving image reflections cast different points of view of a scene now massively decentered – each different perspective producing an apparent temporal dislocation (Baudelaire's fleeting, fugitive figure existing both inside and outside the space that you are in), and all of them coming together to create the city as a living, moving cubist composition. And this is not to mention the *camera obscura* effect, produced by light pouring through small holes into darkened spaces and enabling 'out of frame' off-centered upside down, projected moving images. It is these oblique, decentered glances at moving images, glances undertaken while moving through the city's compositions, that enable you to imagine that what you are seeing reflected in the flat surfaces of the city does not yet exist in the corporeal dimension, or indeed has already passed. And it is this rupturing of the classical sense of pictorial composition by these embedded specular

images that allows, I believe, the action/depiction temporality to be transformed and even suspended.<sup>2</sup>

Importantly, even when you found a likeness of yourself – ‘your own reflection’ – inside of some of these moving images, there was never any confusion in this respect, no suspension of disbelief, no theatrical-ideological mechanism to imbricate you, like the cinema will later do, as the subject of that moving image. These moving images were simply there all around you, an integral part of the inhabited landscape. What you saw, what you experienced simply appeared there; what these moving images ‘included’ (their putative content so to speak) did not produce a performance for you, did not require of, or impose upon you a passive subjectivity.

In parallel with this explosion of moving images in the city there was also the new experience of automated travel. Trains in particular, as we know, gave viewers the opportunity to watch landscapes rush past their windows, farmed and animated in a way that the cinema would soon appreciate. Max Ophul’s *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (1948), brilliantly demonstrates how the cinema ‘stole’ part of its effect from this 19<sup>th</sup> century experience: in the famous scene where Lisa and Stephan sit inside a mechanical panorama disguised as a train, not only is the general historical relationship and transformation of moving image to moving picture underlined, but perhaps this scene also wittily suggests that the cinematic technique of rear projection that dominated studio film for many years might have been a kind of self reflective, unconscious homage to that history.

At the end of the nineteenth century, with the introduction of, first the arcades for kineoscopes and other such similar apparatuses, and then the makeshift projection rooms that later evolved into what we now call cinemas, moving images became increasingly separate, objectified and eventually commodified as moving pictures. In other words their experience was extracted from life and became regulated as an experience onto itself, no longer embedded essentially in modernity’s everyday life of flux and montage. The moving image became a compartmentalized, specialized and autonomous form, experienced specially. Certainly the desire to see such a moving image come to life in its autonomous form is produced in part by the fascination with, and ubiquity of the moving image in its naturally embedded form. But what the autonomous versions borrow from and eventually leave behind – their sources in the street, so to speak – these become progressively less important, less arresting and presumably were eventually judged to be weaker and less spectacular than their cinematic progeny. Why watch an image of the world going by reflected in a darkened window when you can pay good money to see a simulation with added dramatic effect?

While it is only possible to speculate, would not the very early spectator of film/cinema, someone who had just watched an urban Lumière film depicting something fantastic and ordinary at the same time, wouldn’t that same citizen emerge from the make-shift projection

room and want to, or in fact be forced to *compare*? To compare the difference and/or similarity between what he or she had just seen and the reflections of moving images that surround him or her everywhere as she or he walks home through the city. And would not that same spectator, already familiar with naturally occurring *camera obscura* projections, ponder a little about how a projected moving image can be right way up as well as upside down? Or at the very least marvel at the complicated optics of this effect? And over time as the cinema progressively abandons the simple presentation of appearances and moves towards the evocation of performance and narrative, it would not be surprising if the street versions of moving images began to seem a little lacking and without the apparent charm or humor of film projections.

We should also briefly note here the cinema’s rapid evolution from simple continuous single shots (Lumières) to more ‘complex’ forms involving cuts and edits. This development could be considered being an attempt to transliterate the montage effect of naturally occurring moving images into the new autonomous cinematic form. But a spatially complex inhabitation, whereby both viewer and moving image are transformed through space and time, is here reduced to the traditional temporality of classical forms: a follows b follows c. And of course, people like Moholy-Nagy and other artists, and later the exponents of *expanded cinema* understood the reduction that was at stake here and attempted via installation to recreate the radical experience of the reflected moving image in situ. I think there are many reasons why this latter ‘corrective’ is and has been largely unsatisfactory from an aesthetic point of view; not least of which is that by trying (whether consciously or not) to recreate ‘the real’ of the city experience of moving images, these different artistic installations fetishize a kind of idealized notion of interactivity rather than the effect of the moving image itself.

If we can assume for a moment that something of what I have just described is the case, then it is possible to conceive that in the run up to 1895 and subsequently in the massive expansion of the cinematic experience there was an unexpected diminishment of possibility and imagination – something that if not exactly undermining the magic and invention of the projected moving picture, at least gives the measure of what the latter’s achievement actually takes away from life, denudes it even, as it learns how to theatrically depict, invent and present aspects of that very same life. It could be that what we are pondering here is a unique and unrepeatable dialectic or contradiction. Consider, for instance, the entirely different set of circumstances surrounding the invention of photography some fifty years earlier. It is clear that photography introduced something absolutely new to the visual realm and to consciousness: the stilled/frozen indexical image of life that had, strictly speaking, never been seen before – all images seen and made before this invention had at best only been an approximation of that effect, and as a consequence were only theoretical<sup>3</sup>. So individual photographs do not take from or borrow something that already exists

before the invention of photography per se. And unlike the 'invention' of the moving picture, with photography, there is no displacement of spectatorship from one place to another (from 'the street' to the gallery – what a spectator observes from these different places are completely different things), no transformation of a pre-existing form from appearance to performance, and no progressive abandonment of curiosity and interest in an 'original' experience in favor of a commodified version of the same.

Today with the gradual demise of *the cinema* as the dominant form of the moving image, we are witnessing the emergence and growing importance of newer forms – what are now referred to as 'expanded' or 'multiple platforms' that inhabit, and have increasingly become an essential part of our experience of public spaces. Whether it's the presence of moving image billboards or of mobile phones (that have become literally mobile film screens), or iPads and laptop computers, we now have the beginnings of a fabricated urban montage that, on face value at least, would seem to be every bit as intense and ubiquitous as that of the natural moving image world from which the original cinematic images took their cue. I would like to argue that today's moving image landscape is the re-embedding into the experience of everyday life of the specialized moving image form (the cinema) that was itself previously lifted out of and copied from that very same experience. In other words, the cinematic moving image in its classical idiom as a fetishized form shaped by, and born from the phenomenological flux of everyday life is today returned to the latter, once removed, as a series of moving image surfaces that are, however, generally detached from the very subjects and forms that might have produced them.

And while none of us can be absolutely certain what the full implications of this latest *moving image turn* are, it does seem that there is a further weakening of the exceptionality of the moving image. Put bluntly: through saturation and loss of indexicality it has become increasingly invisible. It may look modern, but it looks modern in the way that the cinema itself might imagine the modern – a dramatic caricature rather than a radical emersion. The dissolving of the cinematic experience into topographical and architectural encounters feels less like a return to the magic of, and fascination with the moving image before the invention of cinema, but rather a continuation of the disappearance of the same. The great paradox of this apparent invisibility is that the city has increasingly become a symphony of flat reflective surfaces. But as is evidenced by the many contemporary advertisements and publicity films that feature this reflective city as a generic place for imagined projections, it would be possible to conclude that in one regard what we are seeing is the extension of the cinematic paradigm into the public domain, one that brings foreign and disconnected forms to bear on our experience of it.

So what is to be done? Well for this artist it might simply be to try and reimagine the moving image experience of the pre-cinematic age

where the streets and city landscape more generally were opportunities for experiencing the wonder of image animation; and if this is possible, to parse and re-take from this re-imagination the magic contained in the animated ghosts of our future. Strictly speaking it is not just reflections and shadows that produce the moving image as an integral part of this pre-cinematic everyday life. For architecture itself and the framing devices of buildings and windows, and the way in which our mobility through and around these can animate and bring the city to life, these prepare the subject for the experience of an autonomous moving image. Benjamin and Baudelaire before him knew this, as did Borromini who perhaps can be said to have started everything off in so far as his buildings understood how simply a subject inhabiting and moving through an architectural form could achieve a radical animation.

I suppose that my argument is getting dangerously close to a series of similes and that in the end these threaten to be simply tautological; chief amongst them being that the moving image is like life itself, is in fact from life – mobile, fleeting, fugitive – an evanescent present that slips inexorably into the past while all the while suggesting an unknowable future. And it is this very simile that has often been the reason why some have excluded the moving image's fetishized autonomous practice (film) from ever being a properly modern art form.

A final thought. What if these new extended platforms, rather than only bringing content and form constructed elsewhere into the public domain (content and form still very much imbued with the cinematic impulse to dramatize and edit), what if they were instead embedded there as they were *before*, before the emergence of the moving image in its autonomous cinematic form? Moving images of where we are when we are there, only seen differently – perspective and points of view shifts, doubling, splitting, 'out of frame', and so on. It's not as if there are not already enough existing (surveillance) cameras installed to provide streams for such experiments. I want to be careful not to be too instrumental here – who knows how such a montage would work today. But I am fascinated by the idea that there could easily be an app on your iPad or iPhone that could give you live moving image feeds of where you are at the very moment you are where you are, but from different perspectives, from above, below or behind; or that could be a few frames out of sync; or that could combine moving images of where you are now with moving images of where you just have left behind, or indeed where you are, split seconds from now, about to be. It might make the experience of the public sphere more engaging, stranger, new again and certainly it would insert into our daily lives some aspect of the surveillance culture/architecture that is central to the inhabitation of the contemporary city (those images are *there* with us, we just don't often see them in real time). Most of all it might remind us of how the future was once written on the very surfaces of our everyday life and, of course still is.



## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> So many important paradigmatic shifts seems to be occurring simultaneously at the moment: film to digital media; print to screen reading; television to digital streaming and downloading; and content-wise, the steady erosion, for better or worse, of the idea of exceptionality and its replacement with stories of everyday ordinariness and banality (reality programming and the cult of celebrity for instance).

<sup>2</sup> It's worth recalling, I think, that 'the mirror' becomes an important motif in early modern painting (Jan Van Eyck and others), as a way of depicting off centered and often hidden or impossible to see (via simple classical perspectival composition) people and scenes.

<sup>3</sup> The relationship of photography and painting is critically well mapped. But if we consider for a second that one of the extraordinary achievements and ambitions of painting was to learn how to depict time and movement without either moving or taking up time, then painting can hardly be considered to be the theory of the frozen image.

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