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Exploration of cinematic conventions within a contemporary gallery space

Masters by Research – Contemporary Arts
2010

By
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Supervisor
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I'm an eye. A mechanical eye. I, the machine, show you a world the only way I can see it. I free myself for today and forever from human immobility. I'm in constant movement. I approach and pull away from objects. I creep under them. I move alongside a running horse's mouth. I fall and rise with the falling and rising bodies. This is I, the machine, manoeuvring in the chaotic movements, recording one movement after another in the most complex combinations.

Freed from the boundaries of time and space, I co-ordinate any and all points of the universe, wherever I want them to be. My way leads towards the creation of a fresh perception of the world. Thus I explain in a new way the world unknown to you.

Vertov, D (1923)

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Foreword

The research explores conventions of cinema, in regards to mechanical technologies including super 8mm cine film, projections and the camera and projection equipment used. The research stemmed from an interest I have in defunct and redundant technologies especially when juxtaposed with current cinematic technologies. The research explores the relationship between cinematic conventions and the use of cinematic projections such as super 8mm projectors and digital projectors within the contemporary gallery space. The research will involve an analysis of my own practice while looking at the work of other artists that have and do experiment with projections that include the use of cinema equipment. My practice includes film and video, installation and photography that lead onto practice – led research. My MA by Research Contemporary Art is a 50 – 50 submission based on 50% Thesis and 50% practice. The thesis is an anthological approach to finding a relationship between theory and practice with a view to becoming in depth in further study that I undertake.

Introduction

The intention of this research is to explore the use of film and video as well as digital projections within the cinema and the gallery. To compare and contrast patterns and connation's between respective intentions and their corresponding technologies. The use of cinema and cinematic conventions within a gallery is perhaps pertinent when looking at the current trends of cinema culture over the last 40 years, as the gallery is host to more and more film and video projections from artists as well as films from commercial companies.

Cinema attendance has been on a downward spiral, only recently enhanced with 3D films hitting cinema screens across the UK. It was reported "UK cinema attendance reached it's highest since 2002 at 173.5 million [...] according to a report by the UK Film Council" (Periscope Post, 2010). However as popular as 3D films seems to be, it has been suggested that the very 3D films responsible for increasing the market may well be about to kill the current cinema attendance, with ticket costs to 3D films being raised along with extra charges for 3D glasses (Henderson, 2010). Although possibly a positive in regards to increased cinema attendance, the current trend seems to overlook smaller picture houses and independent cinemas. In a document by the 'Independent Cinema Office', it states, "with attendance levels as low as 20,000 to 30,000 per screen [...] it is difficult to be profitable" (Independent Cinema Office). However the cinema and gallery can both have success when hosted within the same venue and location. An example of this joint venture is 'Corner house, Manchester', which consists of commercial films as well as artist screenings housed within a contemporary art gallery. Both the cinema and the gallery are separate venues. Having this multi function aspect

allows both cinemagoers and gallery visitors to overlap in terms of attendance. With smaller cinemas struggling with decreasing attendance, many audiences are seeking the larger multi screen cinemas that offer 3D films, for example the step towards the gallery increases as 'Independent Cinema Office' found out, "A diverse range of part-time cinemas operate successfully within arts centre's, libraries and other public facilities" (Independent Cinema Office), almost bridging the gap between the cinema and the gallery.

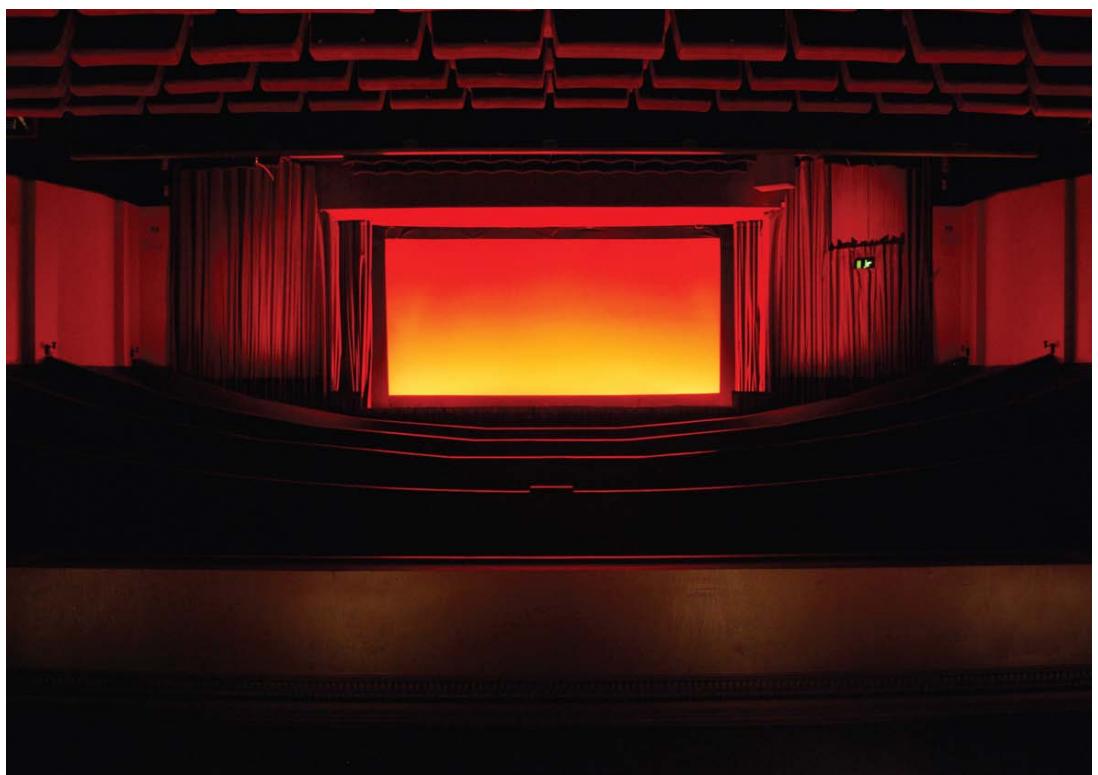


Fig. 1 'The Picture House Series' (2009 -) Gemma Mountain

Within this image, I have aimed to explore the relationship between the seen and the unseen. In order to convey this I have flipped the image horizontally to create questions about the relationship between cinematic technologies and how they are displayed within a gallery, in regards to their mechanical technologies.

The purpose of this thesis with regards to my own work is to inform my film and video work in respect of film and video art legacies. One of the main influences within my work is of Dziga Vertov's 'Man with a movie camera, 1927', the film inspired me to experiment with the filmic medium itself as well as to question the use of cinematic projections within the gallery. Often creating technological installations and sculptures that convey the relationship between physical film and digital technologies, by introducing defunct technology into the gallery to allow a contemporary approach to many redundant technologies.



Fig. 2 'Cottage Road Picture House' (2009) Gemma Mountain

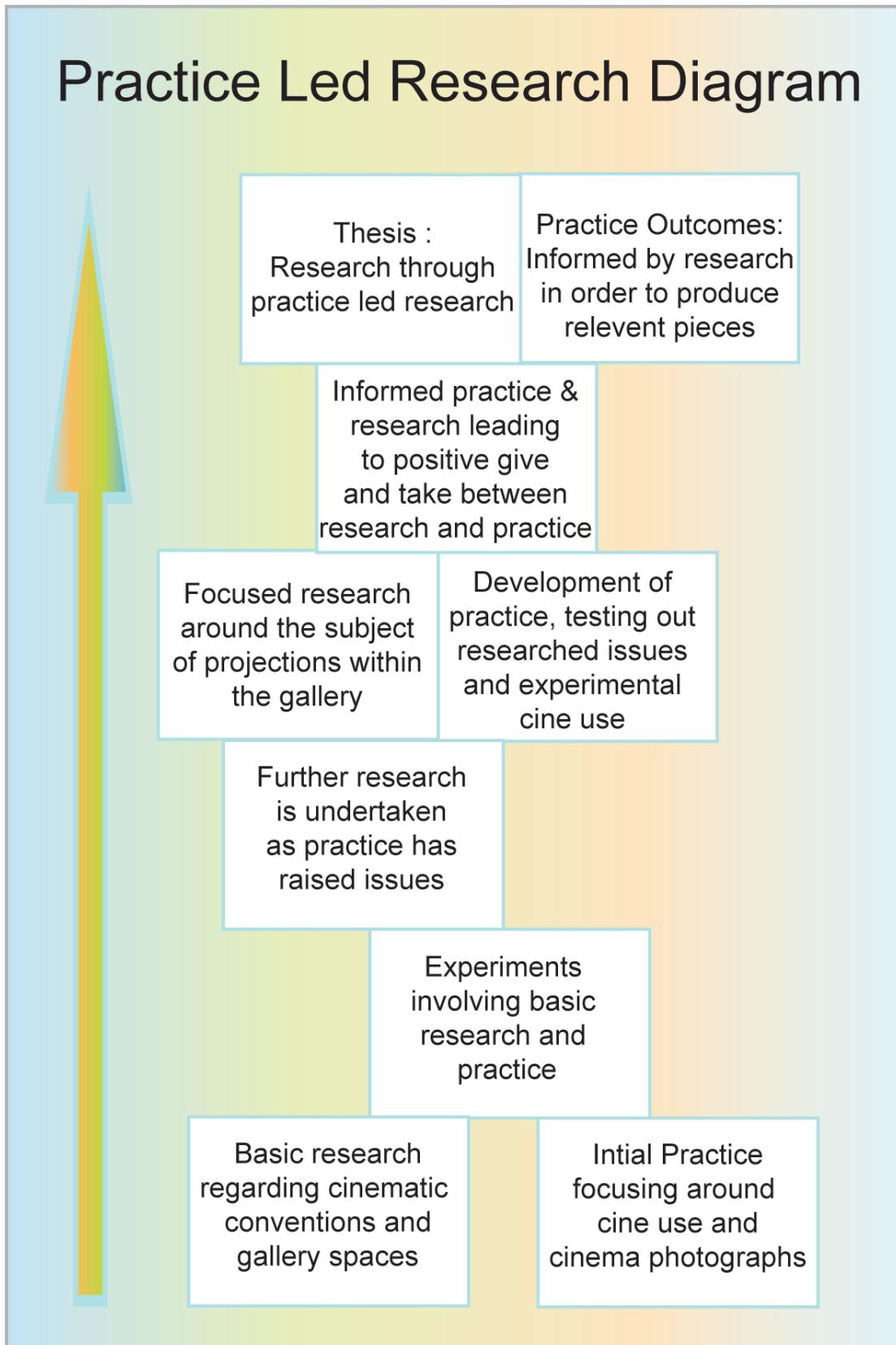
The black and white aspect of this experimental photograph relates to Hiroshi Sugimoto's series 'Theaters' (1978). The effect is very similar but the aspect of this photograph is the strong regimental fixtures', such as the seating and layout of the structure. The blank screen draws the audience in as the depth of shade adds contrast and tension.



Fig. 3 'Cottage Road Picture House' (2009) Gemma Mountain

This image explores the natural setting of cinema in regards to traditional colours and layout. Unaltered lighting enhances the atmosphere and tension that cinema holds. By photographing when the curtains are closed almost withholds the viewer from seeing the bigger picture. The curtains become a physical barrier that separates the viewer from the cinema. By exhibiting within a gallery, I am able to withhold atmosphere and expectations.

In order to illustrate the relationship between theory and practice, I have included a diagram.



As shown, I use theory and practice as they both research lead from one to the other, often talking leads from the other in order to progress. Each one is entwined in the other. For example, when researching Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's 'Paradise Institute', I became interested in the use of cinema itself within the work, rather than just elements of cinema being used. I began to use the structure of cinema via my photographs while using still photographs within my video work, in order to question the relationship between what is seen as cinematic and what holds status within a gallery.

With regards to cinema equipment, there is an increasing amount of used equipment on the current market, that allows video and film artists to experiment with broader ranges of cinema equipment, such as 35mm cameras, 16mm projectors as well as 8mm and super 8mm cameras and projectors. Therefore making it easier and more accessible to create new pieces of work to exhibit within a gallery. Counter to this positive is the negative that celluloid film manufacturers stopped producing film as early as 2005, when 'Agfaphoto' filed for bankruptcy, once the leader in the film photography (Allen, 2010). This meant that the market became flooded with out of date film stock.

The crossover between film, video and photography is something that shows through my practice, as the link between them is the use of frames within photography, film and video. Within my practice I view photographs as pieces of a film or video that has had the motion removed, whereas film and video are created from a series of still frames set to motion. I have included examples as this on the next page.

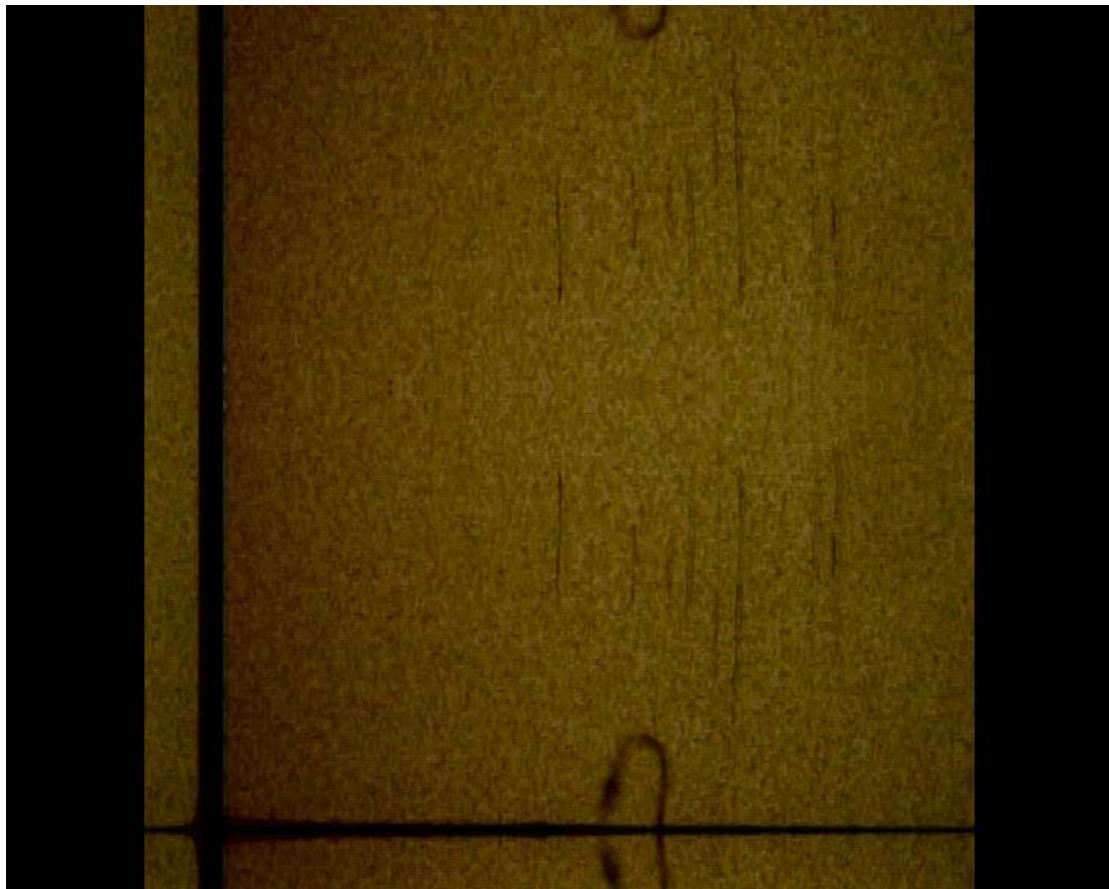


Fig. 4 Cine 3 Experimental film and video still, (2010) Gemma Mountain

The offset effect in this video adds intrigue and dimensions. The 3D quality should almost be an example of how this piece would be shown within a gallery, the gallery floor adding another screen, questioning the strength of the video. The offset of the video links back to old style film screenings, the off centre approach to the screen.

Within my work each film or video still is just as important in conveying cinematic conventions as individual photographs that I have taken.

Now there is decreased availability of film, it changes how future generations will view this redundant medium as Jennifer Allen (2010) suggests that artists using older mediums to create work will be seen as “heirloom”(s) rather than their intended meaning being allowed to remain. By referring to older mediums and equipment such as analogue technologies and physical film media like super 8mm, 16mm and 35mm as ‘heirlooms’, Allen (2010) allows

older mediums and equipment to be held as important artefacts' for future generations. However for the future generations the older mediums and equipment may be seen as redundant or defunct but still hold important status as technological inventions that have changed the art world and allowed artists like myself to product interesting and unique pieces of work.

On the topic of nostalgia, I am aware that my practice and research may arouse nostalgic connotations but my research and practice are not intended to convey any nostalgic notions. Nostalgia within my practice would allow the work to be overseen and portrayed as 'old – fashioned' and redundant. This is something that I wish to avoid.

This is where the old versus new, defunct versus current technology argument stands strong; the death of celluloid technology is something that the current world is responsible for, the digitalisation of the genre has rendered analogue equipment and consumables out - dated in this current technological world.

Allen (2010, p19) mentions "...digitalisation brings photography closer to cinema", this may be true but in doing so the versatility of celluloid has been lost to digitalisation. Digitalisation within the cinema industry allows the industry to ensure a future for picture possibilities houses and multi screen cinemas. Whereas for artists digitalization has opened up other but by using out – dated technology, artists can research and experiment with the view to create new outcomes

The role of cinemas and galleries in regards to projections, are also brought into question regarding the relationship between the two, allowing for a more thorough look into the effects projections have on cinemagoers as well as

gallery visitors. The two audiences may be the same, in regards to gallery visitors frequenting the cinema and cinemagoers visiting an art gallery. The setting of a film or video projections and installations, whether in a cinema or gallery is one that affects the audience as well as the artist or director. The setting for various projections instils different connotations and atmosphere. Cinema instils expectation and atmosphere while galleries impose a higher status for projections, often questioning related issues or current affairs. Cinema can sometimes be used as a get away whereas the gallery is a mirror for current issues and topics.



Fig. 5 Example of a Home Cinema Space



Fig. 6 Example of a Traditional Cinema

However sometimes galleries rush audiences through exhibitions conscious of attendance figures. Robert Storr (2010, p15) states, "...the contemporary museum is a machine for 'slipping glimpses'", which allow the visitors to be rushed though the 'museum experience'. Storr (2010) is referring to the lack of engagement with the work, allowing visitors to experience 'slipping glimpses'.

Within some galleries that don't restrict attendance on larger exhibits, viewers have to fight to view the work, as they feel pressured to move along. Viewers may choose to purchase accompanying media, yet their experience of this media is limited to the home environment, the atmosphere lost. Storr (2010) explores the notion of solitude within the crowd when he states,

The temptation is to cast oneself adrift on the tide of the masses so as to make a desert island of oneself in their midst. The challenge is discovering if one is detached enough, artful enough, to actually convert multitude into solitude. (Storr, 2010, p15)

Storr refers to solitude within the masses as almost unachievable, however cinemagoers often experience this, as cinema experience is a solitary experience, it just so happens that there are other viewers watching at the same time. The problem lies within the gallery; often projections and film installations are created within pre – made cubes that are constructed inside the main gallery space. This is due to obvious constraints between each gallery, however cinema has set conditions in which to project. There are also a multitude of large projection spaces within galleries, i.e. the Tate galleries.

Placement of projections and artefacts raise awareness, dependant on whether in a cinema or gallery. Displaying cinematic artefacts within a gallery increases the status of the object, especially if exhibiting redundant or defunct technology. The use of cinematic equipment within a gallery environment allows viewers to interpret the use of defunct technology in its own way while also being encouraged to understand the defunct technology in their current use within the gallery. Artist Elizabeth McAlpine uses cinema related technology as part of her work. McAlpine's exhibitions heighten the viewer's awareness when presented with cinematic artefacts within the gallery, allowing for nostalgic values to be overlooked in order to present another meaning entirely.

One element that allows cinematic equipment to be exhibited in a gallery is centred on the individual artists' use of the technology or their use of the filmic medium rather than its use within the cinema industry. One example of an

artists individual use of cinema equipment is the Spanish filmmaker come artist, Jose Val Del Omer, who was a “believer in cinema” inspired by new horizons that he formulated in the term PLAT [...] “Picto-Luminic-Audio-Tactile” art” (Val Del Omer cited by Bonet, no date).

My own work focuses on the medium of film and photography rather than the content. I approach each piece from an objective point of view with no pre-defined narratives, allowing for the cinematic equipment to create its own mark upon the medium. In one of my photographic series, ‘The Picture House Series’ (2009 -), I created a neutral atmosphere in which to photograph. I photographed the cinemas ‘as seen’ with no interventions from extra lighting, filters or other photographic interruptions. Postproduction was limited to flipping the image upside down, allowing for me to question the structure of cinema through the medium of digital photography. By using current and redundant technology to create the work, I am able to experiment with techniques both inside and outside the gallery format.

Abstraction is one option that I’ve been experimenting with, taking away the viewers immediate ability to recognize ‘The Picture House Series’ as cinemas. Forcing the viewer to question what they see as shapes and components rather than allowing them to group together the shapes into cinema. Requesting that all the elements be considered individually of there environments.



Fig. 7 'The Picture House Series' (2009 -) Gemma Mountain

This image evokes atmospheric tension; the shadowed bottom of the image allows the viewer to feel unsettled, almost edgy. This image holds weight both visually and physically, the plush colours depress emotion and the structure adds to the energy of this image.

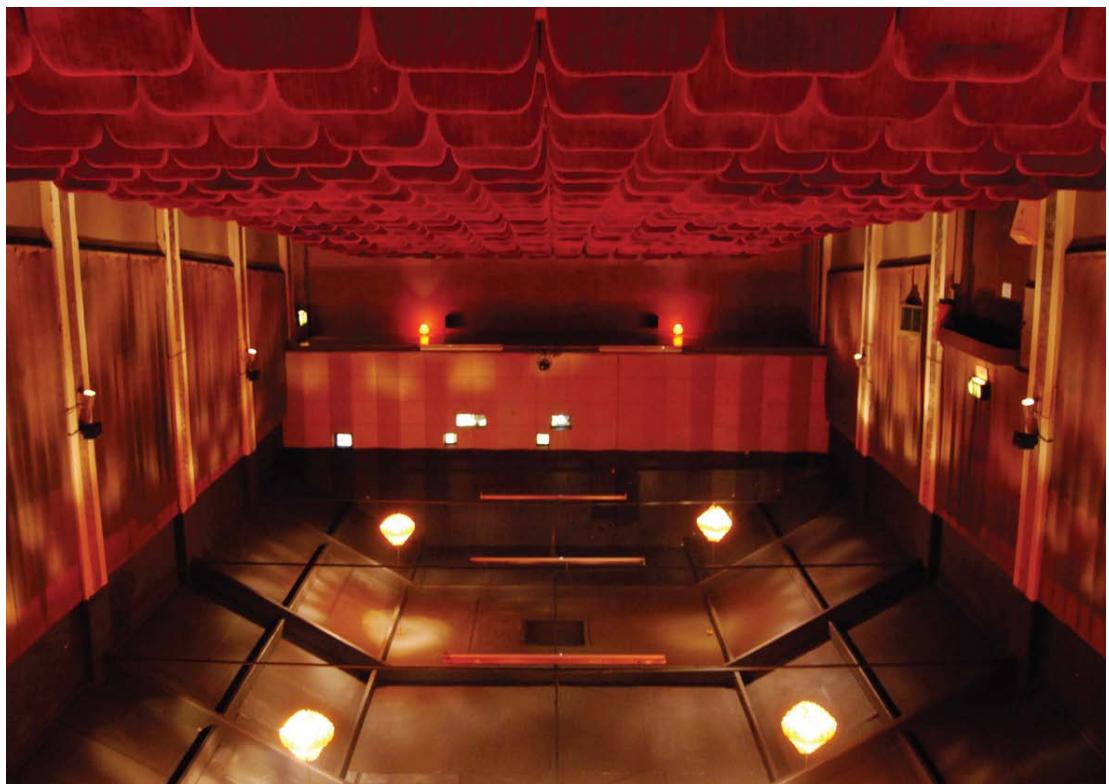


Fig. 8 'The Picture House Series' (2009 -) Gemma Mountain

The structure of this image focuses on the physicality of cinema environment. The regimented placement of the seating that leads to the projection box adds depth of field.

Whether redundant technology is used in installations, projections, performance art or sculpture, the output is different. Some artists preferring to disguise the projector while others embrace the projector. British artist, Elizabeth McAlpine explores her installations and film art, the notion of embracing the projector. McAlpine uses multiple projectors within her work to create a technical sculpture that warrants just as much attention as the context of the films themselves. By using the projectors as part of the visible piece it allows the films to have more of a physical presence within the gallery space. McAlpine's piece '98m'(2005) explores layered footage as well as the repetition of found footage.



Fig. 9 '98m' (the height of the campanile, San Marco, Venice) (2005) Elizabeth McAlpine

McAlpine's use of multiple projectors allows for the notion of cinematic film to be separated and forced from the structures of cinema and expanded cinema. I find a similarity between my own work and McAlpine's use of projectors, especially when used in sculptural terms. Within my work the projector is as much a part of the work as the outcome is. By removing or recasting projectors away from cinema, the projector acquires status within a gallery, becoming one with the work.

A number of artists in the last forty years have taken a step back from cinematic technology and surrounded themselves within the cinematic environment. Hiroshi Sugimoto produced a series of work under the title 'Theaters' (1978), the photographs span decades in American movie theatres and drive-in shows. Focusing instead on the beauty of the projection space rather than the film being shown. This is not to say that Sugimoto didn't experiment with the filmic medium, rather the opposite, he chose to understand how motion captures a link to still photography and vice versa. Sugimoto explored motion through photography, using full-length films by capturing the entire film in one exposure in order to create many of his pieces including the 'Theater' (1978) series. Sugimoto describes this project positively when he states:

I'm a habitual self-interlocutor. Around the time I started photographing at the Natural History Museum, one evening I had a near-hallucinatory vision. The question-and-answer session that led up to this vision went something like this: *Suppose you shoot a whole movie in a single frame?* And the answer: *You get a shining screen.* Immediately I sprang into action, experimenting toward realizing this vision. Dressed up as a tourist, I walked into a cheap cinema in the East Village with a large-format camera. As soon as the movie started, I fixed the shutter at a wide-open aperture, and two hours later when the movie finished, I clicked the shutter closed. That evening, I developed the film, and the vision exploded behind my eyes. (Sugimoto, 1978)

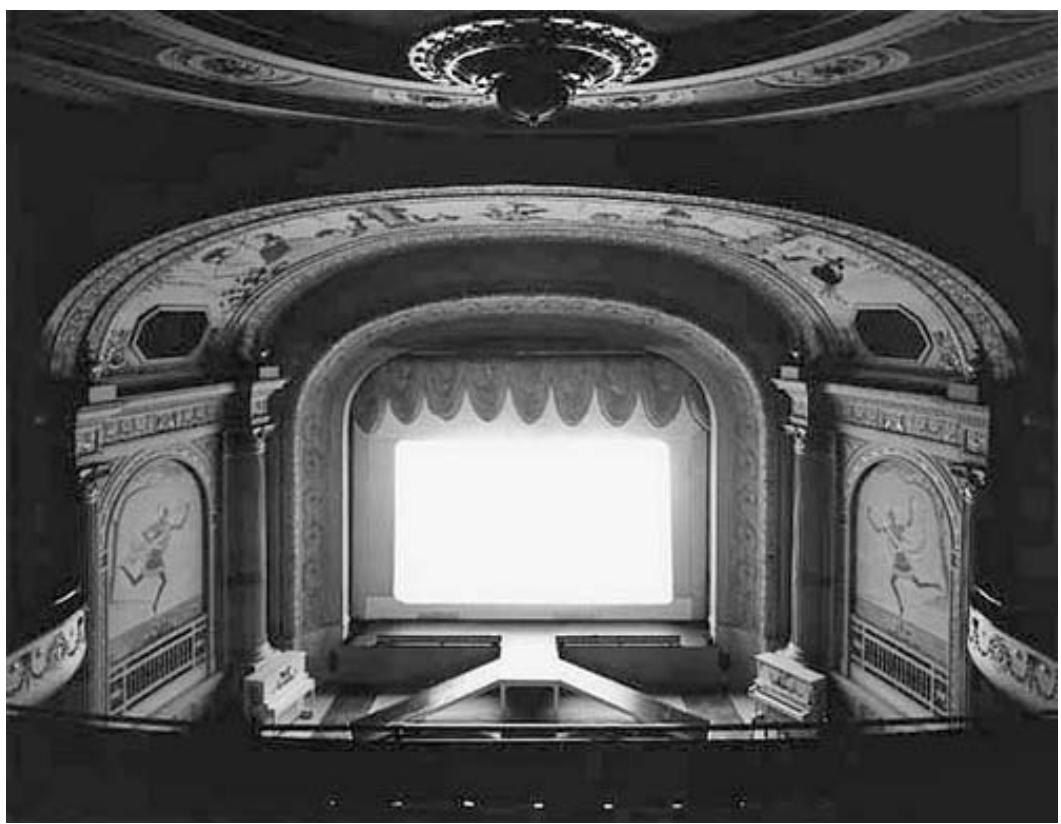


Fig. 10 & 11 'Theaters' (1978) Hiroshi Sugimoto

My work concentrates on the mechanical processes, the structures they form linked to appropriate theories, ranging from literary theories to more artistic led theories. Some of the theories concerned include ‘Structuralist Film’ and ‘Structuralist and Materialist Film’ movement that focus on the “...representational content to a meditation on the filmic medium itself” and to “unveil the little capitalist nestling deep within film’s physical medium” (Perry, 2009, pp1-4). By referring to a capitalist it heightens film celluloid as wealth and knowledge is suggested as well as noting the financial interest that is gained as often as celluloid is used. The physical medium of film holds status as Structuralist theorists regard celluloid as more important than the content of film.

As Peter Gidal suggests the theory ‘...sought to create film that was ‘a record of its own making’’ (Perry, 2009, pp1-4). Structuralist films focus on the use of codes and signs in order to convey meaning, often following similar modes of enquiry as literary theories. There are many variations on the phrase ‘film as film’, these include mark making, found footage and processing. ‘Film as Film’ is relevant within my own practice as the cine and digital work I produce allows for true aesthetics of the filmic medium to be uncovered. Currently, processing of the cine footage, as been where most of my experimenting has taken place with a view to exploring more tactile elements of film. The film database ‘Luxonline’ archives the experiments that Avant-Garde filmmakers have explored.

The filmmaking Avant-Garde have always has been interested in the possibilities of film beyond its ability to record images through the eye of the camera. (Luxonline, 2005)

Many artists such as Guy Sherwin use the medium not the content of the film. His piece ‘Academy’ uses the numbered leader to create a film in its own right. (Luxonline, 2005) The point Sherwin is making shows no content rather than creating a film with content. Sherwin chooses to slow film manufacture and processing of the leader tape, often over lapping the film with similar imagery. The significance of the concept ‘no content’ within my own work, relates back to Structuralist views that the medium is the message. I do not input any pre-determined notions or concepts upon my work, the work is ‘a record of its own making’. The qualities of film and video need to be understood and experimented with before any content can be added or put upon the medium. This is where minimalism enters the discussion, as without knowing it, my work falls into the remit of minimalist art, no disruption or complexity just the medium.





Fig. 12 & 13 At The Academy (1974) Guy Sherwin

I've conducted primary and secondary study on how artists and myself invite the use of cinematic conventions within their practice as well as documenting cinema. Primary, meaning how I use the architecture of cinema and secondary referring to how artists use cinematic mediums, for example; found footage, mark making and projections within their practice. Although not essentially an artist that works with cinema, Candida Höfers' photographs capture large – scale interiors, empty of inhabitants and completely objective approach to cinema.



Fig. 14 Teatro Nacional de São Carlos Lisboa I (2005) Candida Höfer

Höfers' images often feature an essence of cinematic conventions with the grand imposing architecture and atmosphere of which cinema is known. One series of work 'Architecture of Absence' (2006), "...achieve images with extreme clarity and legibility while the camera maintains an observant distance, never getting too close to its subject" (Architecture of Absence, 2006). By researching the work of Höfer, I am able to expand my knowledge of photography in regard to cinematic elements and notions, such as the grand expanse and detail that Höfer captures within her work.

Even artist films and videos on DVD may suffer a similar fate as general conventional films; often the feature 'chapter selection' allows the film or video to be viewed out of order. Many artists now have their own work on DVD,

which is available to the public, for example art enthusiasts can take home a DVD of Chris Welsby and William Raban among others. Websites such as the British Film Institute stock DVDs by many artists, even more conventional websites such as Play.com and Amazon now stock a large collection of artist DVDs. Many filmmakers, such as David Lynch disapprove of chapter selections within their DVDs. Lynch argued for this feature to be removed entirely from his DVDs as, Matthew Clayfield (2005) states:

His films, he has said, are to be watched in their entirety, experience as wholes; i.e. that the post-cinematic technology is to be a mere means of distribution, not an artistic tool in and of itself, limited by its arbitrary conformity to the cinematic mode of transmittal. (Clayfield, 2005)

It is important to remember the audience's experience of cinema and gallery projections when taken away and viewed on DVD, to how it differs from watching a film or video in a cinema or gallery. A DVD of a feature film allows the audience to view the film sequence out of sync, "...out of predefined chronological order" (Clayfield, 2005), thanks to the scene selection feature on the DVD. Christopher Nolan's 'Memento' feature film plays with exactly these notions in the DVD extras (Nolan, 2000). Although Lynch's approach is extreme, moving the chapter selection feature means that Lynch still isn't in control of his work, as the home audience still have the option to stop, rewind, fast forward or pause, altering his vision of the work.

The notion of change is especially valid here, as within art the change has already taken place, with all other options exhausted. The 'chapter selection' feature causes mayhem with the artist's true intended purpose of the work. The issue differs slightly when in regards to film and video projection, as the

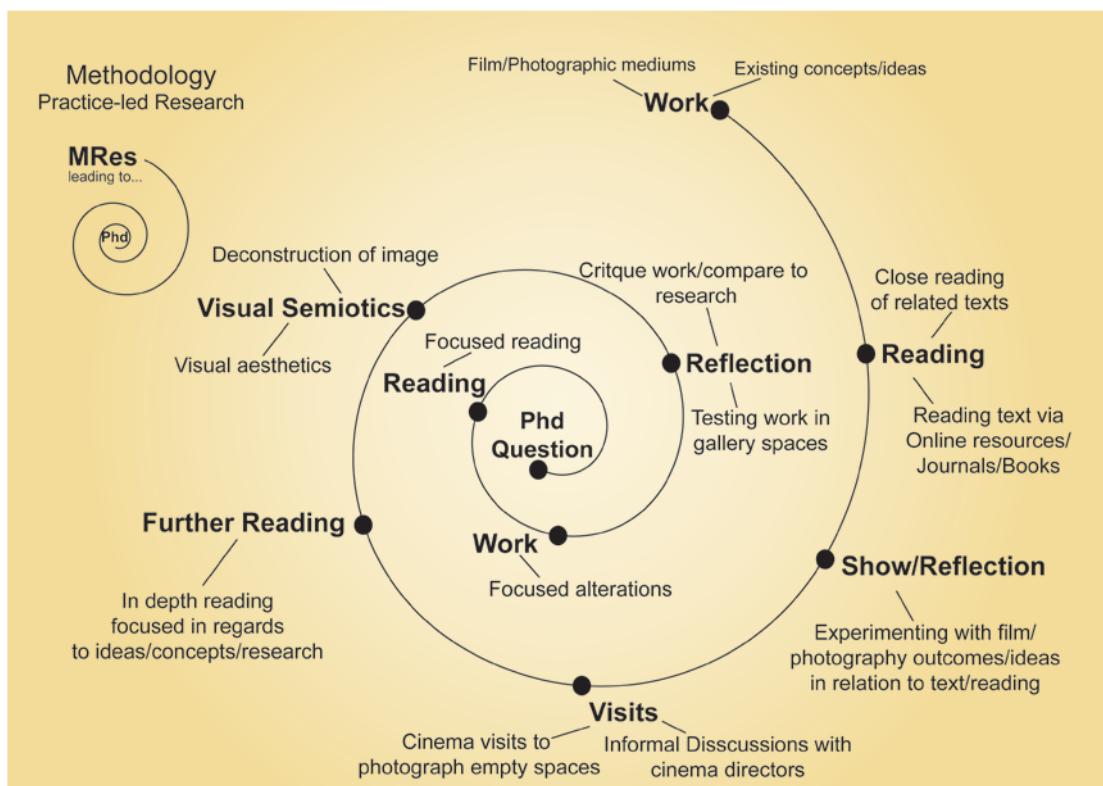
artist and gallery remains in total control of the order in which the work is to be seen. Yet even with projections the audience may not be able to physically rewind or stop the projection, but they may choose to dip in and out of the projection, allowing them to mentally rearrange the work in their own minds. They are however ‘passively’ receiving the film without the ability to rewind, stop and pause. Of course this notion isn’t limited to just gallery visitors but also cinemagoers who may decide to leave half way through a screening.

This research follows cinematic conventions in chronological order from the birth of the Avant-Garde through to its cross over into installation and performance art as well as video art including analogue and digital technologies. Entwined within are links to the use of technology and, to the audience’s experience of cinema in the gallery. Looking more at the artistic side of cinema and cinematic equipment rather than just the audiences experience. The role of artists within these contexts is increasingly relevant, as the choices they make often reflect the current atmosphere inside the art world but also outside of it in today’s climate.

In the case of mainstream filmmaker David Lynch, he is certain that the use of film is not the way forward as he states, “I’m NEVER going to go back to film...film is a beautiful medium, so beautiful, but it’s a dinosaur...you die the death. It’s unreal slow and you die. I don’t want to die” (Lynch, 2007, cited by Miller 2009, pp5-8). Lynch has said that working with DV video is preferable to old film equipment, which is cumbersome (Lynch, 2007).

Although Lynch's statement is personal it reflects the feelings of some artists and filmmakers, as film manufacturers are seizing production, just as defunct technology is making a come back. "In 2009, Polaroid ceased the production of Instant Polaroid film, and Kodak discontinued Kodachrome film" (Allen, 2010, p19). Has of recently Polaroid production had been ceased but in 2010 a company called 'The Impossible Project' took over the Polaroid laboratory and began producing Polaroid film stock again (The Impossible Project, 2010).

I have continued to systematically explore existing theories such as Structuralism and deconstruction that I have previously researched in relation to my work. Structuralism theories that relate to cinema and gallery projections have been explored with the help of photographic and filmic visuals, in order to anchor my research in both the text and the image.



Chapter 1

Cinema is dead?

Throughout the history of cinema and motion capture, artists have experimented within the medium of film. When the first moving pictures originated in 1780, it was artists that helped to influence this as modern art at the time pushed into cinema, many were fascinated with vision and visuals, in regards to the art and science aspect from the turn of the century (Rees, 1999). However the term ‘moving image’ is a “...crucial paradox, for in film the images does not move – film consists of a series of static frames on celluloid” (Rees, 1999, pp.15-17). My interest in celluloid and Polaroid mediums allows me to step away from my pieces, to allow the medium to convey its own message by reducing my physical involvement with the medium, I can not edit or erase as easily as with digital technologies. The popularity of cinema allowed artists to use the filmic medium as paint as they tried to put “...paintings in motion” (Rees, 1999, p.20). The French art critic, Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) drew a line between the new Cubist paintings and the ‘new physics’ – cinema as motion capture (Rees, 1999). By comparing Cubist paintings to motion capture, the relationship is revealed as Cubist paintings convey frames that are similar to motion capture frames or stills. When viewing Cubist paintings I look upon them as a film that have been broken into stills and overlapped.

However, between 1909 to the mid 1920s movements such as Futurism, Constructivism, and Dadaism discussed artists making films directly (Rees, 1999, p.19). Even before 1909, different movements experimented with different elements of capturing cinematic techniques such as the Bauhaus movement, which focused on light play. Moholy Nagy’s piece ‘Space Modulator’ (1922) creates an essence of cinematic atmosphere by way of the

use of light, but also by using mechanical processes to create the desired effects. Mechanical processes within my practice are extremely important in creating the final output in regards to my pre-determined notions. I refer to mechanical processes with regard to cine film; telecine process (converting cine film into a digital format) and digital editing of the image and footage, as well as the process of motion capture and still photography.

Although different movements focused on different techniques, technological experiments came from the “Cubist revolution pioneered by Braque and Picasso” (Rees, 1999, p.19). During the Cubist movement artists considered making films themselves, this became known as the avant-garde, in film theory.

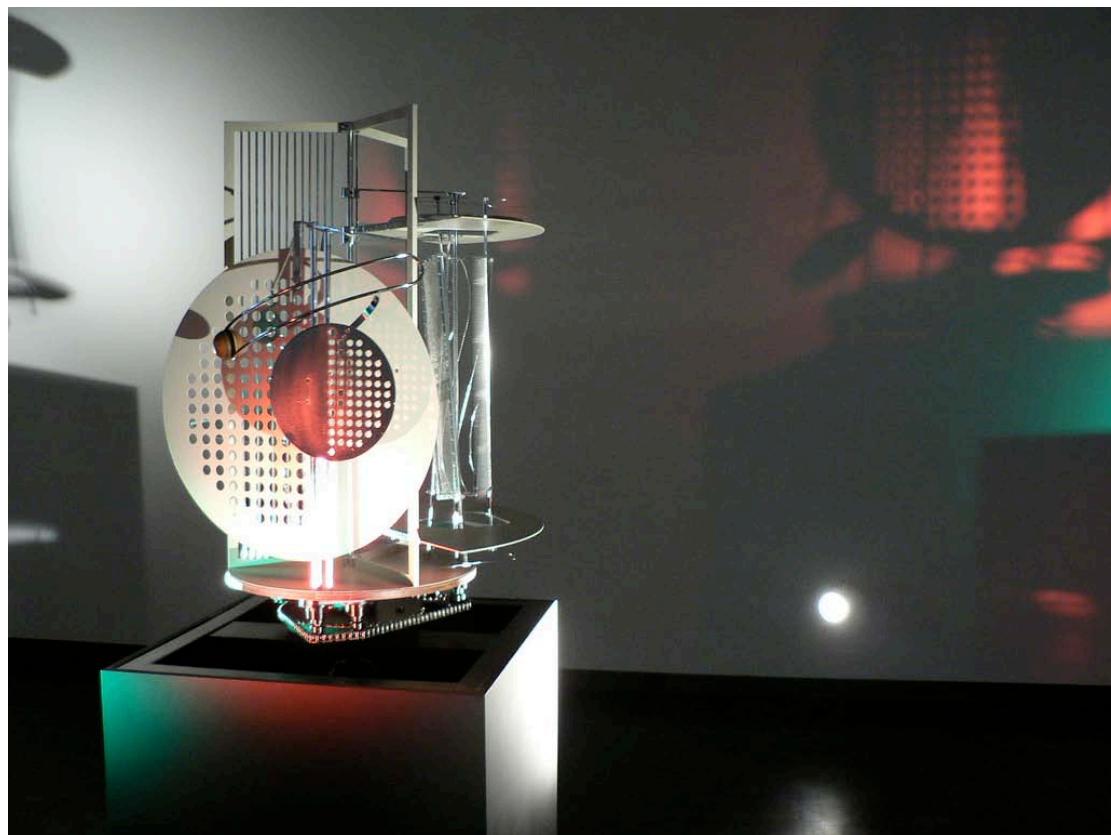


Fig.15 Space Modulator (1922) Moholy Nagy

In 1929 Dziga Vertov created ‘Man with a Movie Camera’, focusing on as he called it the ‘kino-glaz’, an objective cinematic eye. “Vertov [...] includes images of the filmstrip being edited and manipulated, (by his wife, Yelizaveta Svilova), emphasizing the sense of film making as both a mechanical process and a collective enterprise” (Thompson, 2005). Like ‘Man with a Movie Camera’ an important branch of the avant-garde was the era of silent movies as around this time sound was seen as being commercial.

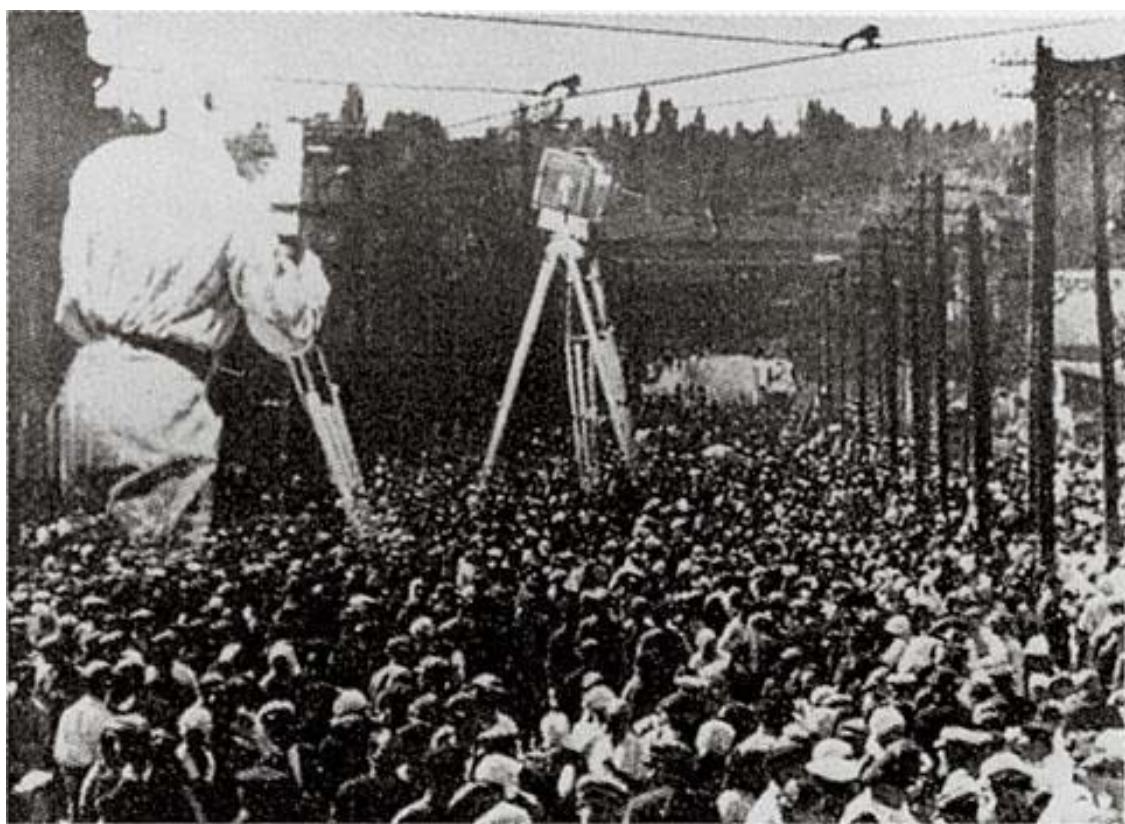


Fig.16 *Man With A Movie Camera* (1928) Dziga Vertov

I realise that Walter Benjamin’s research into and around cinema can be connected to my research but the notions of time and space which feature throughout his work is something that I will explore at a different time.

Towards the 1940s, avant-garde cinema shifted into documentary making. As John Grierson suggested that the avant-gardes shift into documentary became "...fusions between experimental film and factual cinema" (Grierson cited by Rees, 1999, p.52) Although many artists led the creative development of experimental films, some artists also started using camera-operators and basic crews, this in the industry become known as First Choice, whereas Second Choice allowed artists to have direct authorship without basic crews. The US avant-garde movement of the 1940s and 1950s is best known for using First Choice authorship by hiring professional crews. By using basic crews the vision of the artist or filmmaker is compromised as a filtering system has occurred allowing for outsider input. This input, be it in the form of camera position or perspective dilutes the artist and filmmaker's original ideas regarding the film. The filtering system became a technological version of 'Chinese whispers'; the artists and filmmakers became just another name in the long list of end credits. Having multiple people work on one person's idea automatically changes the relationship between the artist and the film, and any original notions that the artist and filmmaker originally desired to be shown. The personality and creative tendencies of the artist and filmmaker became muted by the input of others, often referring to authorship, as a change can appear when technology and new cinema practices are involved.

In the example of Douglas Gordan's appropriation of Alfred Hitchcocks 'Psycho' (1960), Gordan stretched the original movie to fill 24 hours, titled '24 Hour Psycho' (1993). This extended version altered Hitchcock's intended notions of the film, viewers would no longer cower away, as the cinematic techniques involved in ensuring the thriller remained thrilling had been

exposed. Gordan's 24 hour version also ensured that it was impossible to view the entire movie, it becomes disjointed and fragmented. The opposite of what Hitchcock intended the movie to be. In regards to authorship, Gordan has diluted the original to the point of extinction, proving the changes to Hitchcock's authorship of 'Psycho' have removed all traces of cinematic techniques that enabled the movie to function.



Fig.17 24 Hour Psycho (1993)
Douglas Gordon



Fig.18 Psycho (1960) Alfred Hitchcock

To put this example into context, in regards to cinematic environments and gallery spaces, it is easy to distinguish between art film and commercial films, especially when referring to 'Psycho' (1960). Gordan's '24 Hour Psycho' (1993) doesn't hold any of the cinematic values that the original has. The film is intended not to be seen in its entirety, allowing for viewers to become aware of their own presence in time and space.

The issue of authorship draws comparisons to Roland Barthes's 'Death of the Author' (1967), "...the essential meaning of a work depends on the impressions of the reader, rather than the "passions" or "tastes" of the writer; a "text's unity lies not in its origins", or its creator, "but in its destinations", or it's audience" (M, Sufi, 2008). In reality this theory questions the effects of authorship in the art world, in one respect the artwork is very much for the audience just as literary texts are, but the difference here is that when disconnected from authorship the "passions" of the audience or the audience could ultimately overshadow intentions of the artist. An artist could become disconnected from their artworks authorship by other artists, critics and viewers intentions overshadowing the artists own. Often by misrepresentation of the artists own intention for the piece.

Envisaging an art without artwork, without authorship and without spectatorship has an immediate consequence: art ceases to be visible as such. (Birrell, 2008)

In regards to authorship, I understand the above quote to suggest that as soon as an artist creates a piece of work it immediately becomes the viewers. For art to be art the artist needs viewers to critique, praise or condemn the pieces, the piece only becomes a stated artwork when it is cast into a sea of viewers. Within my work authorship and spectatorship are interchangeable entities, as I think of the concept and the mechanical technologies (even when the technology is operated by myself) create the piece I become a spectator to my own work. I become a bystander in regard to my own work, I have no hold over the outcomes from the technological experiments, and the mechanical processes are disconnected from my intentions and notions.

However for artworks to be understood and experienced the work has to be exposed within the public domain, it is here that impressions are formed and notions analyzed. In one sense, it is important to have direct authorship of the artwork to be able to apply intended concepts but often this changes when entered into the public arena. Between cinema and gallery projections, the author loses his or her voice, this happens more within galleries as it allows concentration time, a reflective atmosphere that allows the audience to think for themselves. Whereas in cinemas, authorship remains virtually intact as the audience are being shown rather than being asked to explore the work.

Between the 1970s and 1980s most colleges and institutions added filmmaking to the classes already taught using traditional media. Before the release of video technologies, artists tended to use 8mm or 16mm film to create their pieces. Around the mid 1960s the ‘Handheld Video Camera’ (portable) was born, before this video was only used for commercial use because of the sheer size and cost of the camera equipment. Original commercial use video cameras cost around \$75,000 a piece, ensuring that many artists and filmmakers continued using film instead of video, as explained here:

Prior to the introduction of the ‘Sony Portapak’, “moving image” technology was only available to the consumer (or the artist for that matter) by way of eight or 16mm film, but did not provide the instant playback that videotape technologies offered. (Stein, 2010)

Many artists decided to use video instead of film when video technologies became more accessible to the general public. Malcolm Le Grice, an artist turned critic, switched in the mid 1980s to video, this marked a distinct change in his approach (Payne, 2005). Early films of his included ‘Berlin Horse’, which used found footage of ‘The Burning Barn’ by Hepworth in 1900, Le Grice altered this footage before recapturing the footage into what is shown today.



Fig.19 *Berlin Horse* (1970) Malcolm Le Grice

As Simon Payne (2005) states though “...most of his videos draw on observations from a video diary”. Le Grice’s views with regard to cinema allowed for the cinema to become a medium, including “...relationships between the filmmaking, projecting and viewing processes” (Williemen, 2003-

2010). Cinema became more interactive as a medium, more pliable and tangible in regard to experiments. Narratives between the processes allowed alteration and expansion to take place, cinema became a medium to question with its use on the art world. Within my practice the relationship between filmmaking and projecting is key to the pieces overall success, the mechanical process informs the viewer of the processed of technology.

From the early 1990s to the present day, there has been a revival of artists that are using film instead of (or alongside) video technologies. Many are capturing the nostalgic values of film while others view it as a better product within the medium of video and filmmaking. As Michael A Hofstein (2003) states "...a digital image does not contain as much detail as a 35mm image due to the technical term 'compression'". A digital image including those of video often loses the magic of the medium itself, no noise grains appear or pieces of trapped fluff cling to the lens as in traditional film stock. The images below show examples of filming using cine film (Rewind, 2010) and the use of modern technology i.e. a camcorder (Camera, 2008-9)

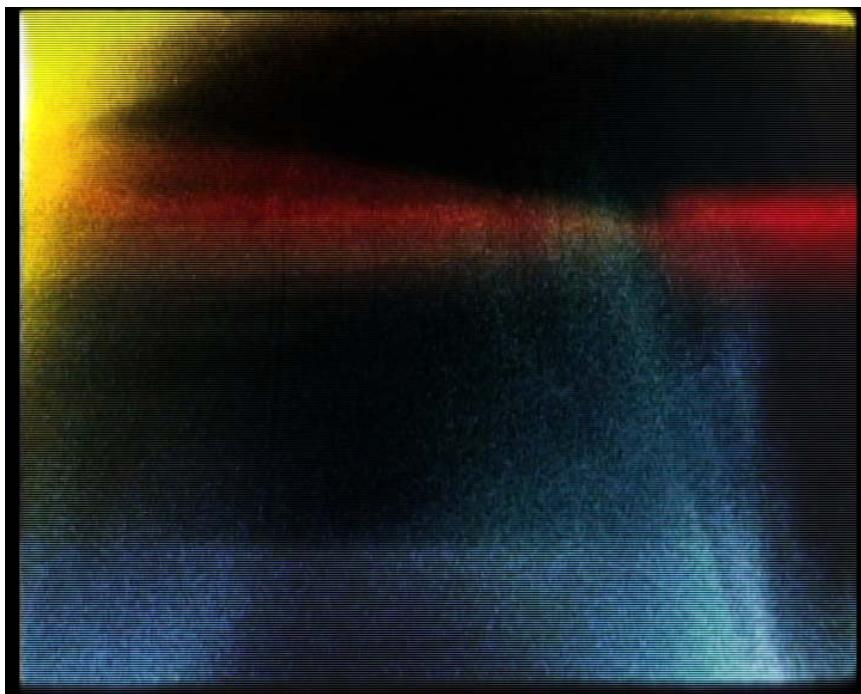


Fig.20 Rewind (2010) Gemma Mountain

This image was taken from an edited cine film of mine, the footage focuses on the transition period between the reels when spliced. The colours shown are in contrast to what was actually been captured. I decided to omit this still as the abstract minimalist aspect allows relationships between traditional conventions of cinema and the contemporary aspect of abstract cine footage to merge and interact.

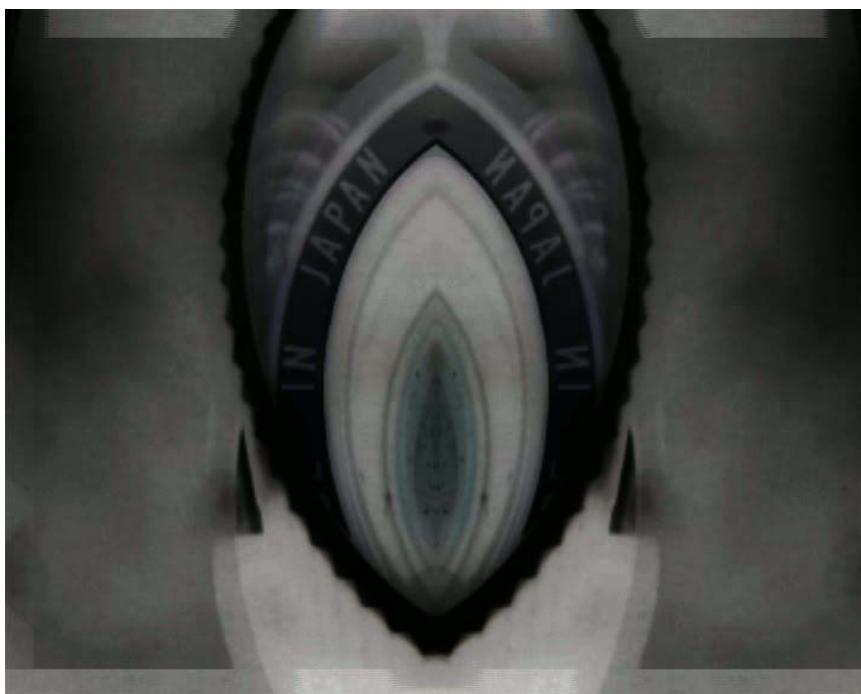


Fig.21 Camera (2008-9) Gemma Mountain

The intention of this image was to question the relationship between the camera and the projector, almost morphing the two together as one. The shades and tones within this image occurred as I neutralised the colours to add intrigue and depth of field.

Digital images and footage are clear and uncluttered and often dull in their presentation. There are no noisy projectors or whirring reels loaded with film, just a quiet beam of light bouncing off white walls.

Artist Elizabeth McAlpine displays the projectors and film proudly within her work, allowing for contemplation between the audience as well as the piece itself. The use of the projector in film installations isn't a new idea; in the early 1900s it became known as 'Kinematic' (Townsend, 2009). 'Kinema' as Chris Townsend (2009) states is

...in sharp contrast to cinema, is not simply an unrolling of space on screen but a traversal of space by the embodied spectator as an event: it is haptic where the dominant convention has evolved around a principle of intangibility, of both image and ideology. (Townsend, 2009)

Aside from how artists relate to cinema, there is also an important secondary aspect to look upon, this being how audiences interact with cinema and the cinematic medium. Just as artists have had to relate to ever-moving advances in modern technology, not just in the mechanical sense, but also in regard to how the work is viewed, the audience are now in control of some of this technology as well. There is no longer the rush to watch the latest blockbusters or film and video exhibits as within weeks they are free to watch the films or videos in the comfort of their own surroundings, via DVDs or digital downloads. This however alters the intentions and notions of the artist/director allowing the work to be shown out of context. However it must be stated that blockbusters and film and video exhibitions are completely different in regard to commercial availability of the media projects.

The film director, Peter Greenaway argues that television has killed cinema, as the same experiences can be achieved at home. This suggestion is incorrect on many levels not just from the view of the audience's experience. Greenaway states "...cinema died on the 31st September 1983 when the zapper, or the remote control, was introduced into the living rooms of the world" (Greenaway, 2003). Watching a video on your laptop or television isn't going to generate the same atmosphere and tension as the cinematic cinema environment. Cinematic atmosphere is something that cinema offers that must be held onto, otherwise it will die out altogether, whether it be the architectural significances of the building themselves or the social experience that is created inside this environment.

Greenaway suggests that cinema is changing into new technology because of the "...cheapness, swiftness and greater ease of handling" (Greenaway, 2003), which may well be true but once again the atmosphere, and the architecture of cinema spaces will be lost. Gone will be the days of projectors feeding through reels of film when all you will need is a 'modern' projector that runs on new technology, you will no longer have 'a room with a view' (projection box) but just a stand. This I feel will dissolve the physicality of film, removing it as a medium into a format.

Relating back to projections within gallery spaces, the use of new technology makes it easier to change and adapt to different themes of exhibits. Let's not forget that many artists are looking upon the past to find their inspiration, with the use of traditional "cumbersome"(Greenaway, 2003) projectors and cinematic equipment to capture something new, as today when nothing is new, it is the past that moves technology forward.

Television may have a greater appeal to audiences that can stay at home and relax but Greenaway (2003) suggests that it has "...won the battle for the moving image experience", is completely wrong, as stated before it would be a comfy choice to stay at home but to say that it carried the same 'experience' is unbalanced. Television doesn't allow for social viewings or views to be shared, it cannot portray a film in the same way that cinema can. The sheer scale and setting, the feeling of participation as part of a group differs from the solitary watching of television. Cinemas are places where people from all areas of society can come together in sharing a positive experience. Multi screened projections are important when interacting with the audience but within cinema this is hard to do whereas in a gallery space, more options are created. Charles Baudelaire explores this further when he stated in '*Les Foules*' (*The Crowds*, 1869):

It is not given to everyone to bathe in the multitude: to take pleasure in the crowd is an art. Multitude, solitude: equivalent and interchangeable terms for the active and fecund poet. He who does not know how to populate his solitude, does not know either how to be alone in a busy crowd. (Baudelaire, 1869 cited by Storr, 2010, p15)

Projections within gallery spaces aren't new ideas but the way in which they are displayed is something that artists are continuing to experiment with. Louise and Jane Wilson state "...we didn't want to have passive viewers sitting in one space staring transfixed at a single screen. That's a cinematic experience we're very familiar with" (Wilson(s) cited by Darke, 2000). Louise and Jane Wilson experiment with multi screen projections as a way of breaking away from the norm. It seems that even Greenaway relates to how artists should move forward and experiment with media as cited in the '*The Australian*' an online newspaper forum;

Every artist should use the technology of his or her own age”, he said. “All the painters that were worthwhile have always been extremely contemporary people; in the early 1990’s I nearly gave up cinema, thinking it was boring, moribund and dead. I still believe that, I really believe that ‘cinema’ is dead. And I think the laptop generation needs a damn sight more than the notions of cinema. (Greenaway cited by Cuttle, 2008)

Greenaway raises issues of using appropriate technologies of generation and time, believing that cinematic notions aren’t relevant today.

Summary

This chapter, Cinema is dead? Has looked at the historical relationship between cinema including motion capture and how artists have used technology and cinematic conventions to convey their ideas. Combined with this is the notion of authorship, especially regarding ideas around the artist’s intention and how that alters when production crews are involved. Included throughout is a look towards the technology of motion capture, moving from cine-based cameras to digital cameras and back to the revival of cine in today’s art environment. Finally the discussion of audiences and viewers interaction with cinema and the cinematic medium is focused upon, resulting in artists researching further into older technologies and mediums. Chapter 1 has enabled an in depth look into the background of film and video art in relation to cinema.

Chapter 2

(Cinematic) Projections

In the closed space of cinema there is no circulation, no movement, and no exchange...this model is broken apart by folding of the dark space of cinema into the white cube of the gallery. (ILes, 1964 – 1977 cited by Cohn, 2003)

Art galleries tend to use the notion of erasure as they prepare exhibits and shows, the exhibition is dismantled and walls repainted. The idea of deconstruction also allows for the gallery to be emptied, almost cleansed of its past and present, ready for its future. Although the terms erasure and deconstruction refer to mainly literary interpretations, there are links that can be made between the filmic mediums used in the gallery. Whereas in cinema it's almost the opposite or reversed effect, as the blank film is cleansed ready to construct with the surface of the film. As the empty gallery and the film records, one remains static as the other remains kinetic (in motion). It is the process of technical movement or the application of what's to come in terms of the gallery exhibition that draws the audiences' attention. Within my work I tend to choose blank film as I feel that the qualities that are already ingrained within the filmic medium need exploring before any other content is added. The qualities featured within the filmic medium include their different processing techniques as well as the physical properties that hold surface textures. I take the filmic medium, as it is, no alteration, if a mark is made in the capturing or processing of the film, then it stays as part of the film. The material records itself and onto itself.

In an article by Maria Walsh (2003) titled, 'Cinema in the Gallery: Discontinuity and Potential Space in Salla Tykka's Trilogy', the notion of Christopher Jean Royoux's (1999) 'Cinema of Exhibition' is mentioned in association to narrative but one of the interesting points of this notion is that it is described

“...participation in the construction of a narrative that makes the viewer the infinite ‘subject’ of the work”.



Fig.22 *Lasso* (2000) Salla Tykka

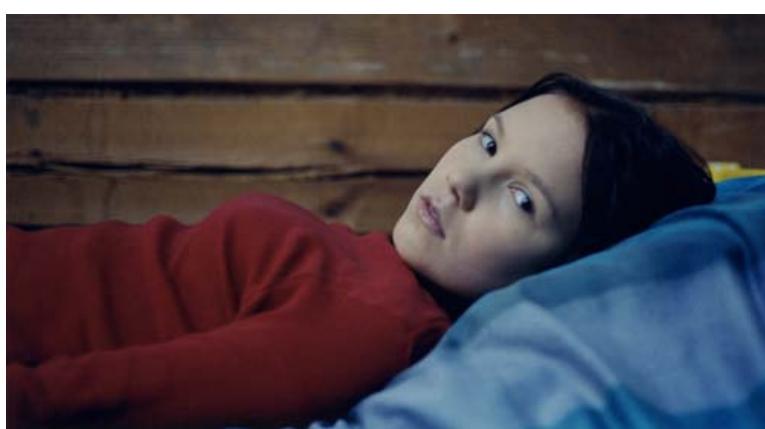


Fig.23 *Thriller* (2001) Salla Tykka



Fig.24 *Cave* (2003) Salla Tykka

The work becomes less about the piece or subject and more about the audience as if they are reflections of one another. As Royoux claims in ‘Cinema of Exhibition’ makes it possible to use art, as a bridge between artist and the audience to allow for thought to be structured.

In the article ‘The Subject in Expanded Cinema’ Jackie Hatfield (2004) discusses the notion of the ‘...significance of technological experiment’ within experimental film and video. An important area within my research is what are the technological experiments in art and what are the mechanical processes.

Hatfield (2004) mentions that artists have explored ‘...technology, narrative, image, spectacle, and fore-grounded the artist or audience’. The audience’s presence within this statement is an important one as within the world of film and video art it is often suggested that the medium becomes a reflection of the viewer as it highlights the audience as the subject. Cinematic machines don’t need to rely on outside content, as the machines in cinema are never questioned, it is the filmic content that is focused on. The movement and the process of the cinematic machines allow us to interpret them, independently of content.

Within the article, ‘The subject in expanded cinema’ (2004) Hatfield talks about Jean Louis Baudry’s text ‘Apparatus, Cinematic Apparatus, Selected Writings’ (1970-1975) in relation to the cinema mechanism. Interestingly Baudry’s interest lies within the subject (audience) and the projection in a dark place, stating that the audience “...are prisoners of the projection, shackled to the screen, tied” (1970-1975). Although Baudry is referring to cinema

projections it is an interesting observation to make as in comparison projections within a gallery setting allow the audience freedom as they are allowed to wander in and out. As some films and videos are looped it allows the audience to dip in and out at their leisure. Whereas within the cinema setting each member of the audience is given a seat, a specific place to watch the projection from, allowing for them to feel that they are as Baudry states “shackled to the screen” (1970-1975).

Could it also be the way in which the auditoriums are set up, for instance in cinemas they have permanent seating, but within the gallery setting it is much more flexible and temporary, allowing for different modes of thinking as well as visual displays. Within the cinema environment, the audience has accepted that they will be there for two or maybe three hours, whereas in the gallery environment the audience are almost ushered onwards through the gallery as artefacts are spread out unless the exhibit is a projection or screening. In cinema, the content is brought to the audience whereas in the gallery setting audiences have the choice to move onto another exhibit without watching the projection in its entirety, long unless it is a special film or video event. Viewing films within cinema allows for a concentrated viewing whereas projections, film and video installations allow for more of a transitional viewing.

Unlike Baudry who was interested in the audience and the image, the relationship between the audience and the projection setting is just as relevant. The setting determines the audiences' attention, not only the content of the film and video projections. Although Baudry was interested in the subject (audience) and the image he states that “...cinematic signifiers and approaches should not be exclusively oriented around the ‘technique and the

content" they should include "...the position of the subject facing the image" (1970-1975).

One of the areas of research that I've explored is the position of the camera when taking the photograph. By reflecting the photographs back towards the audience this shows that the viewer no longer remains anonymous within the cinematic environment. Also when displayed within a gallery the viewers have a chance to reflect back upon their own presence within film.

Interestingly Roland Barthes (1967) argues that the viewer (audience) is anonymous within the cinematic projection. Barthes' notion is suited to the cinema environment but not within the gallery setting, as within galleries the viewer enables the piece of work and/or projections to be understood by means of interactivity within the work(s).

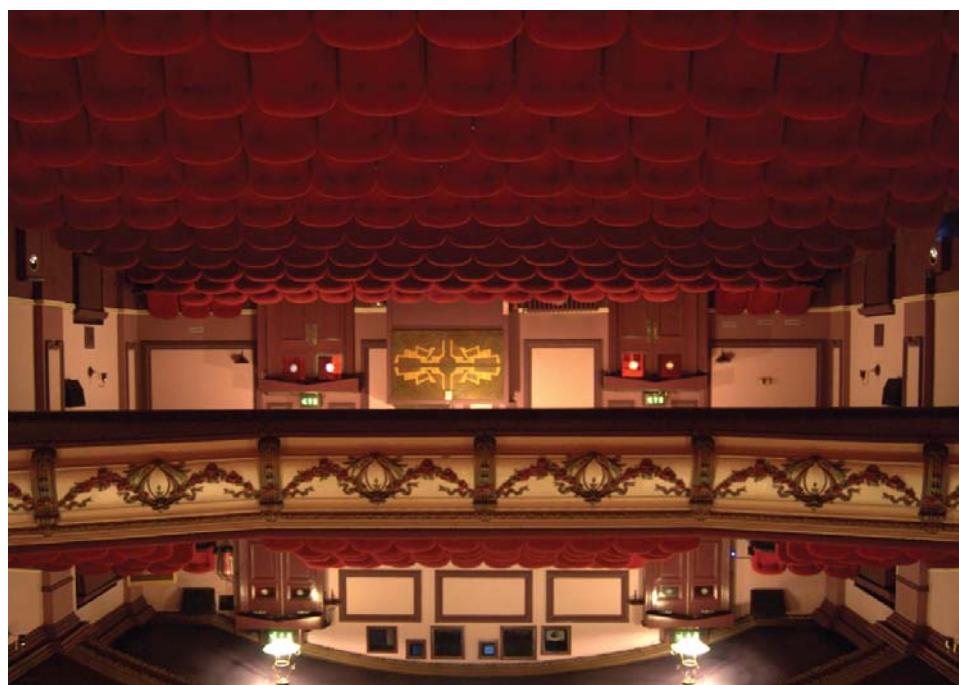


Fig.25 Hyde Park Picture House (2009) Gemma Mountain

I decided that I wanted to experiment looking back towards the audience, questioning the relationship the viewed and the viewer. I also wanted to experiment with reflecting the attention back onto the audience, almost referring to structuralism beliefs of the camera recording itself.

Hatfield (2004) discusses the darkness of the projection setting as "...unlike a video monitor" that allows audiences to view in daytime and night times, the projection forces the audiences' attention to the screen. "Expanding moving-image" allows the artist to move away from the cinema and to experiment with the setting as well as the audience's experience of the projections, films and videos.

Carolee Schneeman (cited by Hatfield, 2004) stated,

I've always thought that I'm creating a sensory arena...we must deal directly with the audience itself as performers. (Schneeman cited by Hatfield, 2004)

Schneeman experimented with motion technology allowing for the audience to become involved with performance. Using projections and settings that broke with the traditional notion of cinema, Schneeman created interactive art and allowed the audience the freedom to access parts of the projections they wanted to, instead of being shown a set piece.



Fig.26 *More Wrong Things* (2001) Carolee Schneemann

Within Hatfield's (2004) own work she says, "The process is both in it's making and reception, the technology and the subject are its material".

In terms of cinema (commercial), the notion of 'real-time' is hidden, as cinema is an illusion of time. The acting, production and filming have all been pre-created, nothing in cinema is in 'real-time', perhaps only the projection event. For the audience members the reality is the film being projected, their first viewing is their reality, their 'real-time'.

The techniques of film have been primarily developed to 'manipulate' a recorded (picture and sound) 'reality', into structures and events which never happened in anything like the terms which the language tells us they happened, whilst presenting the result as a 'representation' of reality. (Le Grice, 1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005)

Malcolm Le Grice (1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005) states that "Andy Warhol worked to overcome this issue of unreality within cinema, he chose to show the audience white flare (the take up tape), background noise and other projection interference". Using blank film passed through a projector and recording the outcome allows the mechanics of the projector to be shown for what it is. Effectively recording and projecting reality to the audience, they see in real-time what happens to the film as the projector projects it.



Fig.23 *Empire* (1964) Andy Warhol

Peter Gidal, works with a 'shallow' camera time/space – shallow space in that the camera is either static or its movements are limited and formal, the arena for filming (frequently a room interior) is directly relatable to the space in which the film is to be seen. (Le Grice, 1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005)

Interestingly Gidal exploits the audience's perception of the projection and the setting as he tries to bridge the gap between reality and an illusion of reality, by filming in the space where the film would be shown. It is quite a clever use of un-real time, in terms of the audience's misconception.

Although equivalence is important between the camera and the projection, it is also important to realize the relationship these both have in terms of constructing a scene that is true to the audience, allowing them to feel connected to the projection as well as the events on screen. Malcolm Le Grice (1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005) states that in early cinema, "...the same piece

of equipment was often used as camera, printer and projector". Reusing or converting the equipment to suit many needs is attractive as it allows for deconstruction of the machines themselves as well as the notions that surround them. In this sense it is very similar to the ideas that AND (Abandon Normal Devices) (Perry, 2009) have in bringing the projections outside. Abandon Normal Devices (AND) is a festival across the Northwest of England that creates a space where audiences can experience cinema and media art away from galleries and onto the streets.

These early cameras allow the same things to happen, they are portable which means any number of films can be chosen to be shown to a variety of audiences, whether outside or in. As these cameras were for public use, it allowed the ordinary man to become a filmmaker, showing their wares to a wider audience. Although effective in terms of convenience and cost, certain elements would have been lost, for instance, cinematic conventions including setting, scale and atmosphere showing that these amateurs couldn't hold the same ground as filmmakers of this time. These films would be just snap shots of their lives only relevant to themselves.

Physical aspects of the medium, the reality of the celluloid, emulsion, sprockets, the nature and capabilities of the machinery to become the basis of experience and content. (Le Grice, 1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005)



Fig.28 Film in which there appear sprocket hole, edge lettering, dirt particles, etc (1966) George Landow

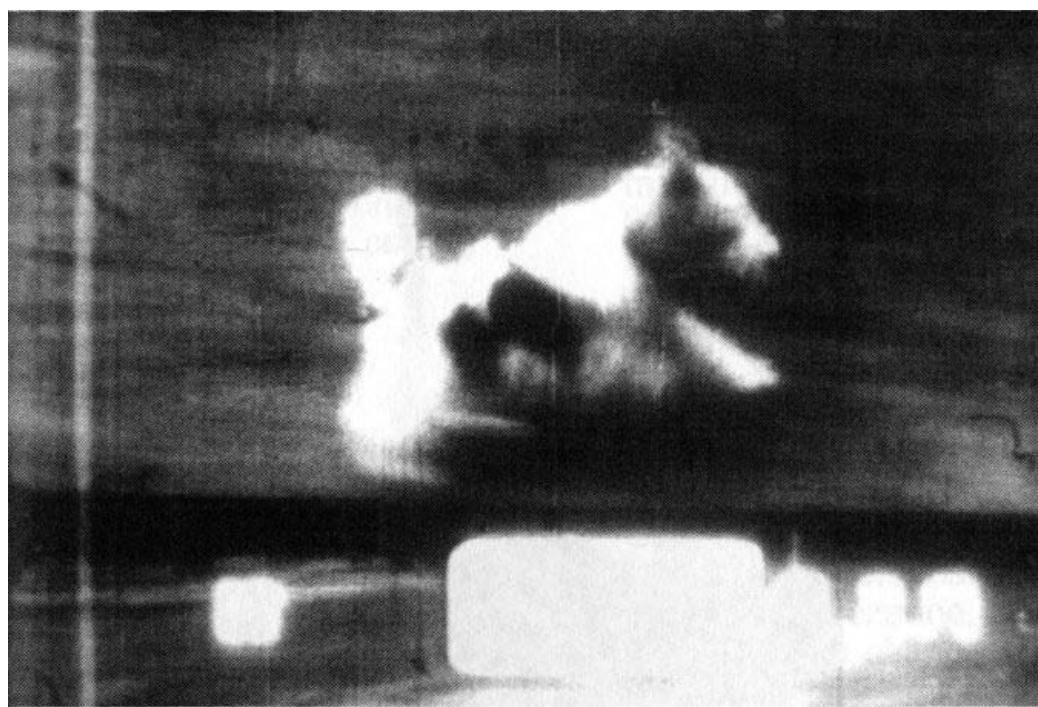


Fig.29 Little dog for roger (1972) Malcolm Le Grice

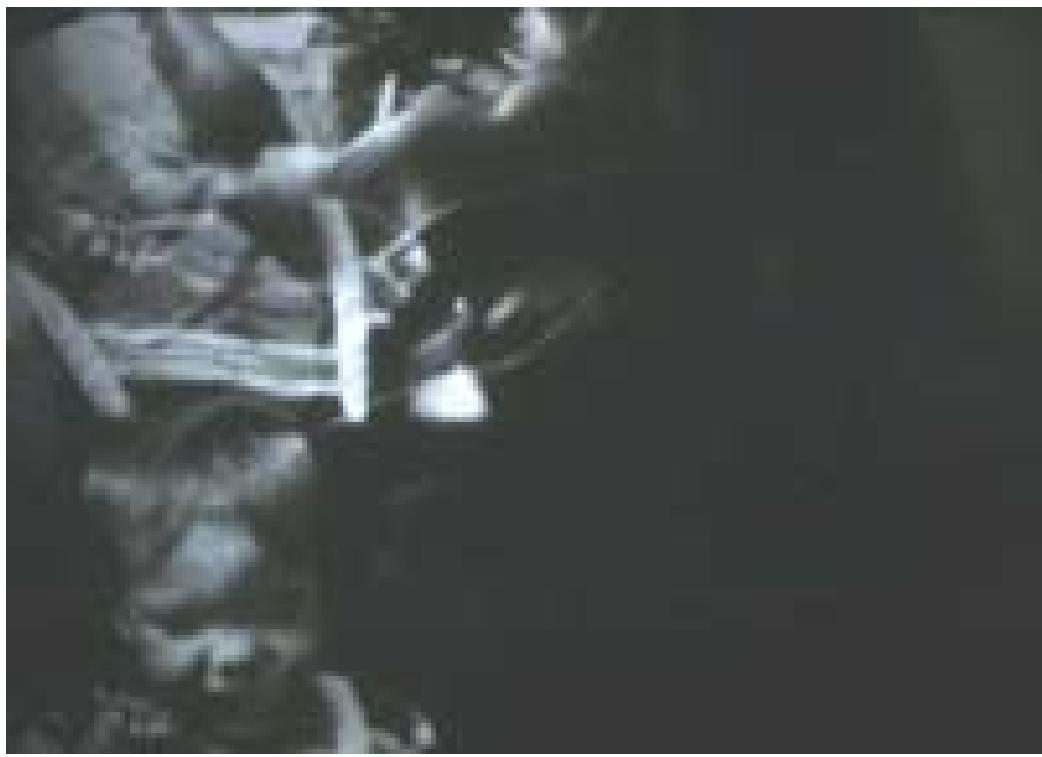


Fig.30 *Roh Film* (1968) Birgit and Wilhelm Hein

George Landow's 1966 film, '*Film in which there appear sprocket holes, edge lettering, dirt particles, etc*' (Le Grice, 1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005) referred to the film 'material' as content (celluloid), allowing a relationship to be drawn between the technology and the medium of film. Le Grice's own film '*little dog for roger*' 1967 explored the possibility of projecting different width films through projectors to be able to look at the 'content' produced, content that came direct from the machines, the machines interpretation of the filmic content. Birgit and Wilhelm Hein's film '*Roh Film*' 1968 looked at the projected image on the screen and how that feeds back through the projector by re-filming the content which is on the screen and projecting it again. Allowing the film and projector to determine the 'content' of the piece allowing for the real time and space to be shown with each other, to highlight the medium of film and allow it to speak its own language. Re-capturing the film content also

brings abstraction into film by repetitively recording over and erasing previous content until only faint hints of the original are left. This is where abstraction leads to minimalism or at least a minimalist output. While dealing with the projection, film and processing of film, the audience is still an important element to be considered. In the works of Beverley and Tony Conrad's "The viewers own behaviour is the content" (Le Grice, 1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005).

Between 1966-1968 Paul Sharits, an American avant-garde 'experimental' filmmaker, artist, and Professor of media studies before his death in 1993 stated that:

...he was concerned with the development of a new concept of cinema, with its base in the sensory and conceptual mechanisms of the audience, and the physical realities of the material and equipment of film production and projection. (Le Grice, 1972 cited on Luxonline, 2005)

Fundamentally, the audience's experience is the reason the films were made. Also experimenting with the "...physical realities of the material" allows for changes and advantages to be made within film art, if cubist painters in the late 19th and early 20th centuries didn't try new techniques there wouldn't be some of the greatest masterpieces that we have today such as 'Nude descending a stair case no.2' (1912) by Marcel Duchamp. If artists didn't experiment, the genre of art would become stagnant, just the content would change. Although developments in technology are being made it doesn't mean the artist won't continue to create work with more traditional methods and equipment. Cinema audiences are more savvy these days so they expect that latest technology to be used, but what differs in film and video art is that the work isn't critiqued on how 'up-to-date' the production or process of it was,

it becomes about the content and the relationship between time and space, setting and scale, although not all art focuses on the material or medium but the message it conveys.

Summary

In summary, Chapter 2 – Cinematic (Projections) takes an over view of how artists including myself experiment with the filmic medium such as processing, altering and technological interactions, in so much that the physical film is the content. This in regard to ‘kinema’ is in contrast to cinema, as ‘kinema’ involves the whole experience of cinema in regard to the space that surrounds the screen as well as the projection. ‘Kinema’ is better explained as a technological Installation movement of art that uses technology and site specific constraints around cinema. The audiences are regarded as another element in which projection spaces and the work can almost be regarded as one. However Barthes argues that the viewer is anonymous within the cinematic projection. That cinema projections and ‘kinema’ are two different genres that follow different constraints and procedures. For me, ‘kinema’ is directly linked to artist’s experimentation of the physicality of film and video.

Chapter 3

Mechanics of Seenary

A gallery is constructed along laws as rigorous as those for building a medieval church. The outside world must not come in, so windows are usually sealed off. Walls are painted white. The ceiling becomes the source of light. The wooden floor is polished so that you click along clinically, or carpeted so that you pad soundlessly, resting the feet while the eyes have at the wall. The art is free, as the saying used to go, "to take on its own life. (O'Doherty, 1999, p.15)

Although this statement describes the construction of some art galleries such as the Saatchi Gallery in London, it is important to note that the same could be said about cinemas and picture houses. As a viewer you are sealed away from the outside world as well as the person in the next seat. The screen becomes a holding area for film and video projections and screenings, while everything else pales into insignificance. The only contact with the outside world is shown in the form of the artwork or film that is being presented within the space. Whether in a gallery setting or a cinema, the environment is created to be inconspicuous so as to only highlight the work on show, not allowing for any interruptions. Within the cinema environment the film doesn't have any interference as the viewers are seated in tiers as not to even interfere with each other's view. Whereas the gallery allows movement, obstruction and interference of the works themselves, even the whiteness of the walls reflect back upon the pieces of work on show. Within the white cube of the gallery even the artworks begin to clutter up the space, so instantly interference is gained, whether intended or not.

The ideal gallery subtracts from the artwork all cues that interfere with the fact that it is "art". The work is isolated from everything that would detract from its own evaluation of itself. This gives the space a presence possessed by other spaces where conventions are preserved through the repetition of a closed system of values. (O'Doherty, 1999, p14)

When Brian O'Doherty talks about the "...repetition of a closed system of values" it can be useful even when describing cinema settings, as their "system of values" relates to the environment being used primarily as a projection setting. Whereas it is harder to define in the gallery setting what the "closed system of values" are when the environment changes on a monthly basis from hanging paintings to building installations to projecting video art. Just as O'Doherty says the environment is possessed by the events that happen within.

Within my practice I experiment with the unseen or hidden aspects of film and video, I look for the flaws and impurities such as grain, noise and scratches. Then I make them the focus of my work, exploring all aspects of capturing, projecting and processing. I look for technological involvement within or upon my film and video pieces.

Besides the mode of production itself, we can distinguish three main patterns in precarious aesthetics, namely transcoding, flickering and blurring. (Bourriaud, 2009)

Precarious aesthetics relate to film and video art as many of the patterns are interchangeable between processes involving technological productions and editing. Even the choices of words (transcoding, flickering and blurring) are technological terms that refer to analogue and digital effects plus editing features of digital software, post filming. It is also easier to capture these terms in relation to technological equipment, although flickering and blurring have been experimented with successfully by many artists including paintings by Gerhard Richter (Singer, 1965) and Chuck Close (Self-Portrait, 2007).



Fig.31 *Sanger (Singer)* (1965) Gerhard Richter

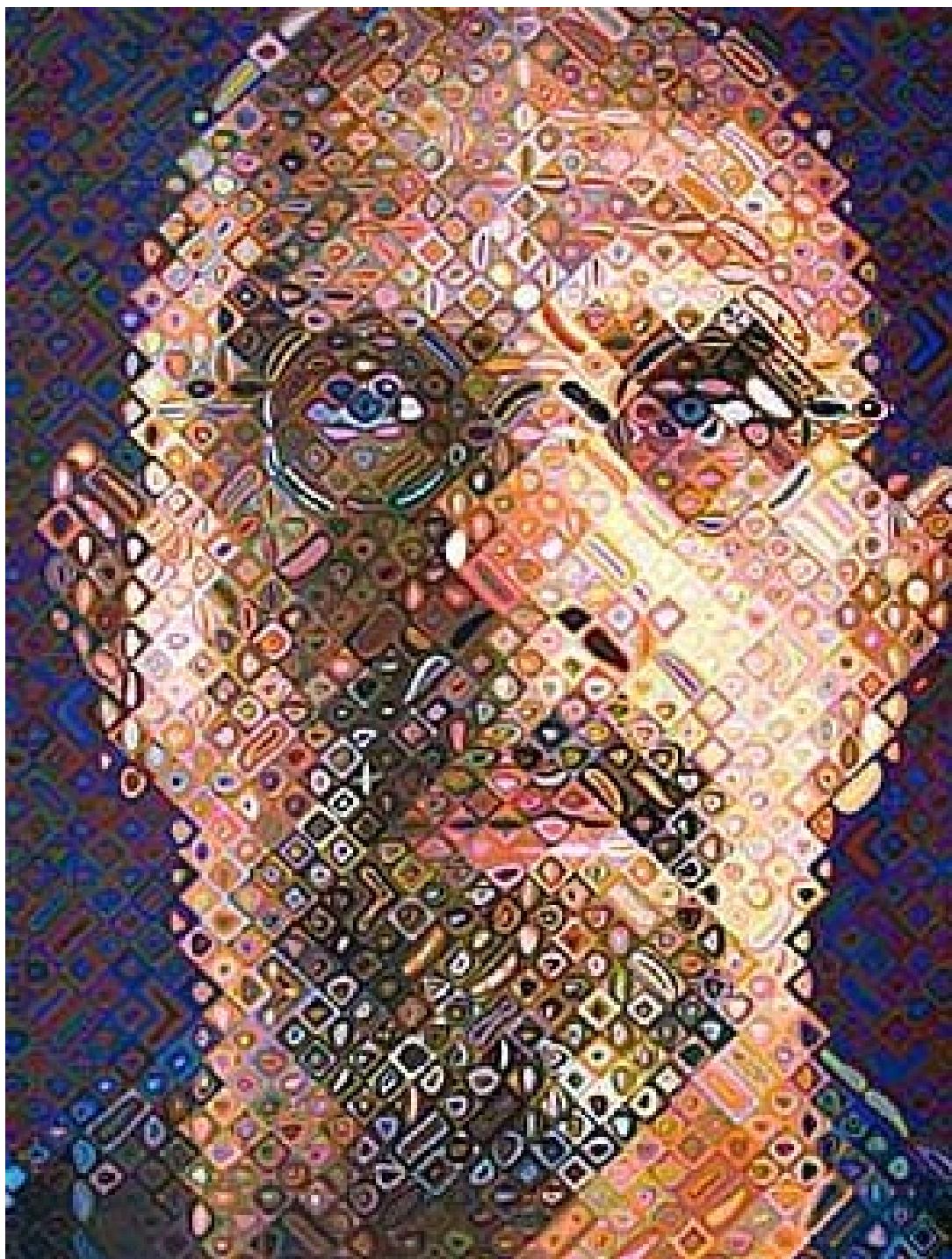


Fig.32 *Self – Portrait* (2007) Chuck Close

Abstraction in regards to the patterns of precarious aesthetics is relevant to my practice, as I find that the outcomes created using mechanical technologies lend themselves to the notions of abstraction.

...complex interplay between the site and space of the auditorium, the experience of the ‘film programme’ as a distinct temporal entity and the processes of remembering through which cinema acquires meaning. (Connolly, 2009, p18)

This statement is interesting as it applies the phrase ‘temporal entity’ in regard to film or video projections within galleries. As it shows that video art and projections in regard to time-based mediums have yet to be fully established within a gallery environment, they are still seen as temporary pieces of artwork against the more permanent genres such as painting and drawing. To look upon video art, projection and artists’ cinema as temporary is to enable doubt, coupled with the possibility of replacement, not to be confused with the revolution of the above genres.

The other relevant points seems to be that films and videos within a cinematic environment acquire a lasting impression that enables the audience to remember the films and videos a lot more than film and video projections in gallery environments. But to say that cinema based movies ‘acquire meaning’ against those within a gallery seems misunderstood, after all isn’t it ultimately the audience’s experiences of the film and video in either environment that allows for a permanent memory of the film and video.

Understandably the cinematic environments creates a sense of grandeur and occasion that gallery environments, especially when it concerns film and video projections and installations find it harder to recreate with the white walls of the gallery. This is where the content and exhibiting of the pieces comes into play, it all relies on the impact that it conveys to the audience for it to instil meaning or not. Alternatively by using Jonathan Walley’s explanation of the term ‘Para cinema’, which refers to the use of “...cinematic properties outside

the standard film apparatus" (Walley, 2003 cited by Connolly, 2009, p.21), it allows the use of film and video projection and installation to be opened wider than cinema and gallery environments. By creating an opportunity to expand upon the existing film apparatuses, allowing ultimately an increase in the use of experimental film in today's contemporary art world.

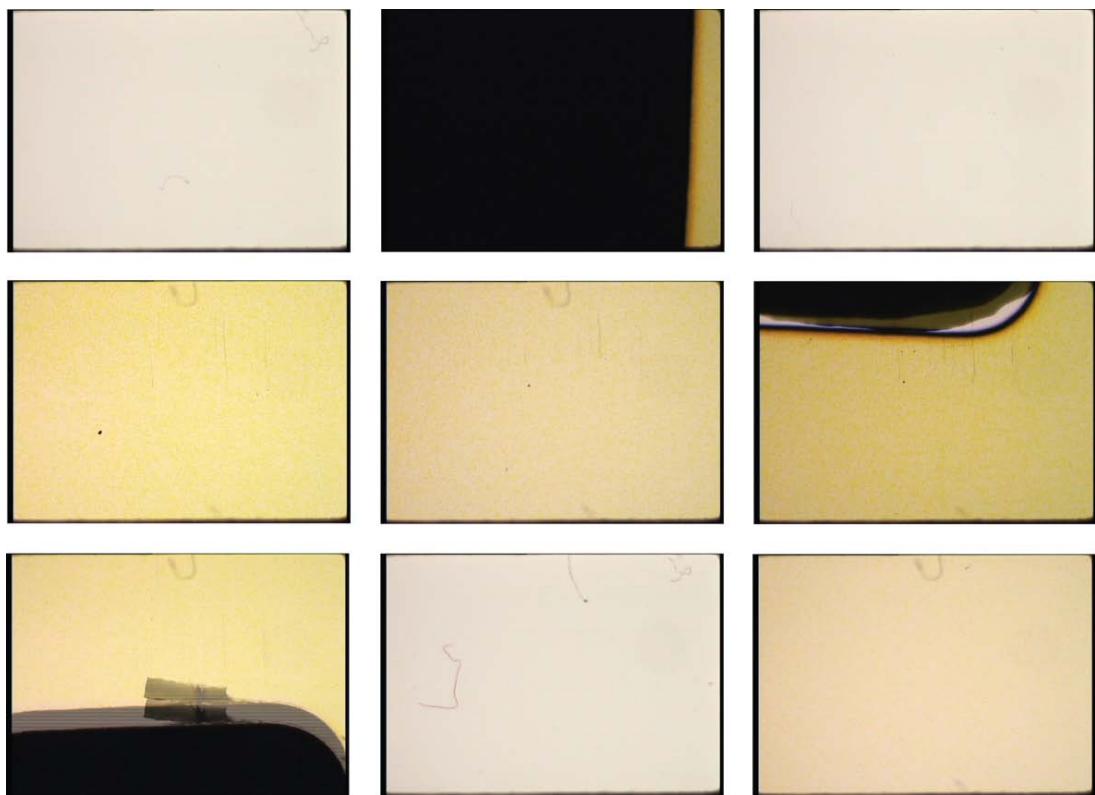


Fig. 33 *Triptych End Reel* (2010) Gemma Mountain

These images represent nine canvas stretched prints of cine footage that I captured while photographing cinemas. The shapes and patterns relate to the end of the reels of film, where the film has been spliced together. The effect intended looks at the interaction between the stills and the footage, about how the stills may have been overlooked had I not scrolled through the footage, each still at a time.

AUTOPSY OF CINEMA

The sense of grandeur is lost from moviegoers' minds,
the feeling of anticipation as the music starts,
the lights dim and curtains reveal the tort screen,
The sense of being the only person or one of the first few to view the film.
that unique sense of belonging that only cinemas achieve,
the comfy seating,
the plush carpet under foot
and the mountain of popcorn that tumbles from the tub as eager hands dive in.
The occasional solitary chuckle that escapes from the stranger sat next to you,
as straws slurp at the carbonated liquid inside the cups.
Gasps and ohhs echo around the room,
muffled by the luxurious soft furnishings that cling to walls,
dressed in yesteryears grandeur that's cracked and flaked.
Recent modifications slowly eat away the elegant charm of memories past.
The cracked chipboard conceals the décor of our fore fathers,
lost in between wood chip paper that smoothers everything in sight.
The screen goes blank and the lights come on,
sounds of footsteps and wrappers dance around the room,
ice cream tubs distributed it's on with the show.
The murmurs die down as attention is grasped once again.
Exit signs flicker in the restored darkness as people wonder back to their seats,
all is quiet as modern day warfare explodes upon the screen.
Reels are spinning through the 1950's machines back onto the take up reel,
to await they're next showing.
The whirring and clicking reflects the distant heartbeat of the ticking grandfather clock.
another thirty minutes to go and then all will be calm,
the theatre empties with the stragglers watching the credits roll,
as exit doors swing shut the artificial lighting blinks into life,
as rows and rows of seats stare back,
waiting expectantly for there next guests to arrive.
The curtains swish closed again,
protecting the screen so it's ready to shine again one day.

(Mountain, 2010)

Gallery projections have limited seating (unless the projection is within an interactive installation) and limited space. More often than not gallery projections will feature a cube shaped box that viewers are asked to enter if they wish to view the exhibit. In “The Paradise Institute”, (2002) by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, there is a sense of capturing the past while still focusing on modern advances in cinema and technology.



Fig.34 *The Paradise Institute* (2002) Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller

The use of scale is used for illusion within the piece, as well as common sounds that are linked to the atmosphere of cinema and their connotations. Cardiff and Miller chose to recreate a cinema inside the gallery rather than just to project their footage, interestingly it blurs the line between cinema and gallery dramatically. The placement of the piece allows the work to be seen as a whole, with the intention of dispersing the mystery of cinema environments. Juxtaposing the exterior of the piece with the interior in regard to the

atmosphere of cinema. Artists are using new and old media and technologies as part of their practice, often using film and video installations as well as photographic mediums. By using these mediums artists are "...blurring the boundaries between spaces of theatrical exhibition and museum or gallery spaces" (Beckman & Ma, 2008, p7)

With the suggested demise of cinemas, are galleries becoming a substitute for film projections, as many galleries new and old are becoming increasingly interested in showing films whether they are classics or modern day blockbusters for example The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery at The University of Leeds hosts projection events and film screenings. The increase seems almost as if it is a ploy to increase attendance within galleries, making them more open to families and youths. With this increase came many issues when these consumers enter the exhibition side of the galleries looking to view projections either as part of installations or performance art or just simply as projections as the arrangement is very different to cinema.

Many artists have experimented with cinematic technologies and also the theoretical ideologies behind cinema and experimental artists cinema over the years. In the case of the artist turned critic, Peter Gidal, his experimental films, explore how the gallery environment relates to films and how these are structurally different from how cinema is constructed. In a review by Ian White (2005), Gidal's works can be explored further as White expands:

...the works themselves attempt to defy, structurally, any received notions about how, traditionally, "cinema" might operate, and by doing so question also the ways in which cinema is described, inscribed, "read" by standard interpretative practices. (White, 2005)

Interestingly the methods of capturing the films still relied on older and defunct modes of technology. Fundamentally using cinematic technology and equipment to distance and defy traditional cinema valves.

To seem contradictory, the content of Gidal's films refuse to comply with commercial and traditional cinema films, instead experimenting with the unseen, the unwanted structures and aspects of film that would otherwise have been left to collect dust on the editor's floor. In the words of Wheeler Winston Dixon (2003-2010), "Gidal's own works are also interrogations into the formalist aspect of film, with an emphasis on grain, duration, tempo and editing structures".

Regimes of image production are the focus of Sean Snyder's *Optics.Compression.Propaganda.* – a series of ongoing experiments with the malleability of images and the mechanics of their production. (Birrell, 2008)

Unlike Snyder who is interested in the mechanics of the image, I focus on the mechanics themselves; their production is the final outcome within my work, as I chose to allow the medium to record itself. My work explores the relationship between the physicality of film and video mediums in regard to cinematic technology.

Critic Dana Stevens stated that "Every advance in technology has had the effect of isolating consumers of culture from one another: movies took us away from live actors, video took us away from other filmgoers, and now i-things are depriving us even of our fellow couch potatoes" (Stevens (no date) cited by Miller, 2008). Stevens' highlights the lose of the audience in regard to cinema, she explains that with each new technological advancement we are moving away from each other, into our own private worlds.

Summary

'Mechanics of Seenary' takes an overview into gallery and cinema environments including the use of projections in both. Entwined into this notion are experimental film and video artists work and that of Bourriauds 'Precarious Constructions' (2009). Precariousness within film and video is where my own practice is situated, as many of the concepts of flickering, blurring and transcoding overlaps into my own approach to film making. Together with precarious constructions is abstraction where the work is allowed to remain open ended, were the focus can remain on the physicality's of the filmic medium. The filmic works produced are neither pure artefacts nor cinematic masterpieces, which is problematic when shown. This is overcome as many galleries now offer film screenings and or have dedicated venues for both exhibitions and projections.

Chapter 4

The image has the last word

If cinema projections are dying out, why is the interest in traditional processes and techniques growing in relation to projections within the gallery space. One of the main reasons that old technologies are growing popular is because the old technology is giving new results in both cinema and digital art. If cinema is 'dead and buried' as Peter Greenaway (2003) suggests then why is there passion and creative thinking to save it, to place it on a pedestal where everyone can bask in its glory, often these reflect nostalgic connotations'.

"Kirby's [Lynn Marie] work is directed in part at deconstructing the theatrical space"(Cohn, 2008). As Terri Cohn states Kirby chooses to deconstruct theatrical space, this is partly achieved with the choices of work exhibited; Kirby's chosen medium is film and sound. She explores the relationship between film and digital video as the medium for her themes and ideas.

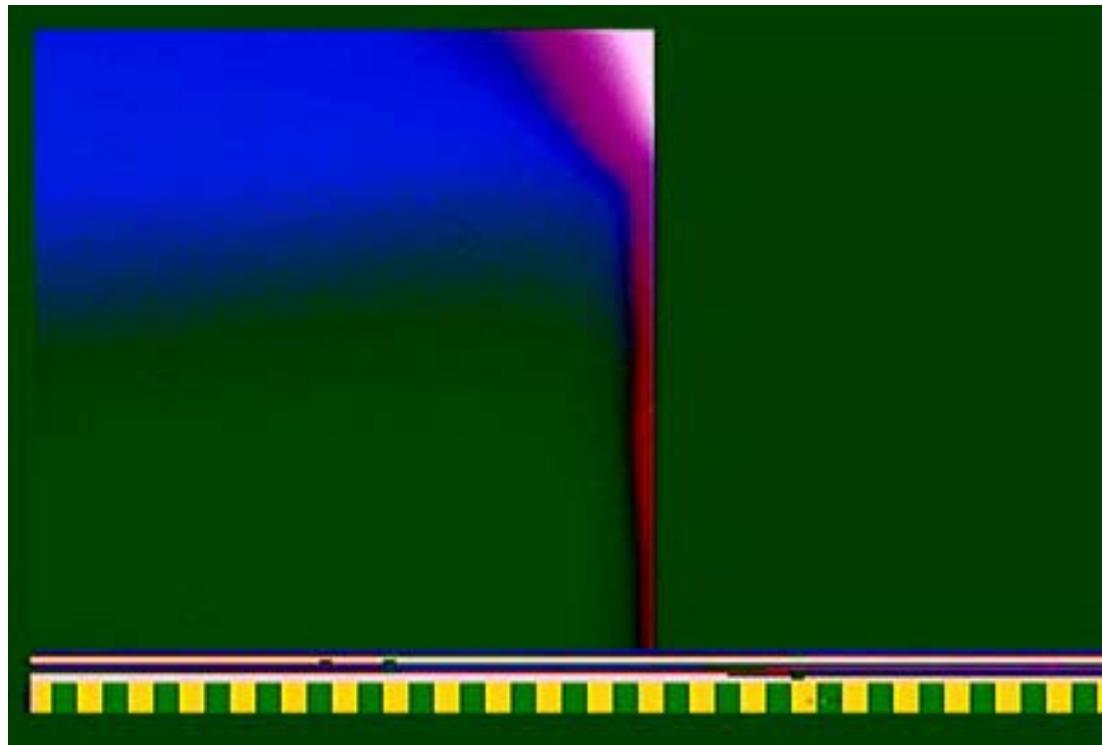


Fig.35 *Jacaranda Tree Chalon Road Exposure: Brazilian Export* (2004) Lynn Marie Kirby

Greenaway (2003) seems to have a desire to destruct cinema rather than build upon it, saying that "...most cinema is illustrated text" and that it undermines our intelligence as humans is a ridiculous notion that is founded on one mans opinion. To a certain extent cinema follows text, in every aspect of the entertainment industry there is a script behind it, it all depends on how it is conveyed. A film or video installation involves the workings of cinema, the equipment visible whereas cinema focuses wholly on the content of the film or video without distractions. Greenaway suggests that cinema is managed by text where the visual comes second to the text. Within cinema structure is needed, the basic bones of the story, which is to be told, the image builds upon the text, often creating visual metaphors. One of the films that exploit the image not the text is 'Into The Wild' (2007) directed by Sean Penn, a simple yet unbelievably moving story of what can be achieved by cinema and cinematic techniques.



Fig.36 Into the Wild, Film Poster (2007) Paramount Vantage

The emotional feeling that it stirs could not be achieved on a television or even a play. Although visually moving the film is still structured through text, text within cinema allows flow and direction. As Derrida stated "...the image always has the last word".

One other topic of interest is the use of frames within cinema; Greenaway suggests that it gives the audience a window effect,

...a surveillance through a window frame out into a parallel universe connected to that which the audience physically experiences as it sits in the cinema. (Greenaway, 2003)

Frames may not be natural but this is how cinema operates. There has to be frames, they start with the camera viewfinder as the filmmaker selects their shot. Greenaway (2003) believes that cinema should be handed back to the "cinema-makers", so in the sense of the frame, cinema has always been made by "cinema-makers" for they position the shot, they create the atmosphere, and they bring the creative insight and talent. So for Greenaway to dismiss cinema as un-developed and un-inventive as well as being made by studios just to make a profit, his argument about the use of frames doesn't relate to how artists experiment with or using cinematic equipment that has evolved into the gallery to create contemporary moving image art works. Even our eyes frame and priorities objects that we see, so by adding a frame in which to view through isn't all that different, paintings and photographs visualize this extremely well. Whereas Catherine Fowler focuses her attention on multiple frames within the gallery:

She argues, critical analysis of the gallery film has tended to be split between attention to the 'inside' of the frame (the frame) and the 'outside' of the frame (the gallery or the space around the screen) at the expense of any

investigation of the 'continuum between in-frame and out-of-frame' (Connelly, 2009, p23)

Her analysis sparks the question of setting when projecting or showing film and video art within galleries and cinemas. To separate the two 'frames' (the artwork and setting) is to erase the reflective space that is needed to allow the artwork to breathe and the viewer to contemplate the meaning of the artwork. The artwork needs space to breathe, to allow contemplation time for the viewers within the gallery. To take away the gallery space, removes the neutral setting, the work becomes ungrounded, and the gallery status gets removed. Within the cinema setting the 'outside' of the frame builds expectations and excitement before the film is revealed (the frame).

Within my work the balance between the 'frame' and 'outside' the frame is conveyed through the medium and equipment I choose to use. The inside 'frame' is often created using cinema's 'outside' frame, then exhibited within the galleries 'outside' frame to allow for a reflective and creative atmosphere. By this I am referring to cinemas 'outside' frame as the architecture surrounding the projection or screening. I am juxtaposing photographs and videos of cinemas 'outside' frame (auditorium environment) within a gallery in order to question the relationship between the content and the setting. By removing the cinema projection it is possible to create artwork using the projection settings. By combining cinema photographs within a gallery, the viewer now has time to explore the cinematic surroundings that are often taken for granted. Allowing the focus to remain cast upon the cinematic equipment instead of the content of said equipment. As throughout the history of motion capture and film and video technologies, many artists have used the

medium to convey their ideas and notions as with any other artistic media. However Marshall McLuhan proposed, "...that a medium itself, not the content it carries, should be the focus of study" (McLuhan, 1964). This is the main aim within my artistic work, to concentrate on the medium not the message it conveys. In order to avoid interpretations created by the medium, I focus on the medium, with no input from myself as an artist. Whatever message appears through the medium is its own message, therefore ensuring that the medium is the message. Although the message is still valid within my work, I choose to allow the medium to produce its own message by way of the output it creates. To allow the medium to exist on its own, it is essential to become objective and distant to the meaning while the medium (in my case, cinematic equipment) stamps its own personality upon the artwork created. Of course I am not alone in my use of defunct, cinematic and contemporary technology, many artists have used and continue to use this medium even today. Just one example is Tacita Dean, who is fascinated with filmic media.

Tacita Dean's fascination with the material of celluloid (in Kodak) also has the potential to illuminate the industrial context and history of film production. In practice, however, her work tends to direct attention away from these issues and towards the aesthetic qualities of film. (Connelly, 2009, p213)

Although Dean doesn't use this medium as a statement regarding cinematic conventions it is still important to understand the weight of history that film carries with it. It is almost impossible to produce a piece of artwork using filmic medium and not have historical or nostalgic connotation's attached to it.



Fig.37 *Palast* (2004) Tacita Dean

The way in which the pieces are viewed allows the viewer to dictate the meaning and intention of the work, whether in nostalgic terms or more creative artistic terms. Brian O'Doherty approaches this issue by arguing "...as modernism gets older, context becomes content. In a peculiar reversal, the object introduced into the gallery 'frames' the gallery and its law" (O'Doherty, 1999, p15). Although referring to the gallery, it is interesting to note that this is how cinema is created and defined.

Greenaway (2003) suggests that to capture "cinema-making" the camera needs to be removed, the camera is there to document, to capture a certain moment in time so that it can be shared over and over again. Eisenstein suggested that Walt Disney was the only true filmmaker because he started with a blank screen and worked his way up (Greenaway, 2001).

What is interesting about ‘Structuralist Film’ is how it focused on the medium but achieved this by not actually using the medium in the content of the film or in any narrative that accompanied it. This could be achieved by simply installing an installation of the technological pieces of equipment involved or by just showing the medium of film itself. By reducing the narrative it allows a less structural approach than standard cinematic films that follow a literature-based structure. By experimenting with the medium, the true quality of the media is exposed, whether it is by using the technological equipment or the filmic medium itself. This is where ‘Structuralist film’ expanded into another area, this being ‘structural and materialist film’ most notably used by Peter Gidal in *Structural Film Anthology*, 1976, which created “...a record of its own making”. Within my own work I have abstracted the filmic medium to the point of obscuring the visual paralleled by using an audio narrative in order to bring the attention back to the technology.

By exploring the notions of ‘Structuralist Film’ within my film and video work, I am able to focus wholly on the medium making sure that when faced with the visual, the work is also paralleled with the audio of the chosen medium. Always allowing the medium to refer back upon itself, with no alternation from myself. I create film and video pieces that gradually remove and erase itself until there is only an abstract combination of stills and footage. The repetitive nature of film and video mediums insist that a deconstructive objective is implied in order to allow the medium to be the message.

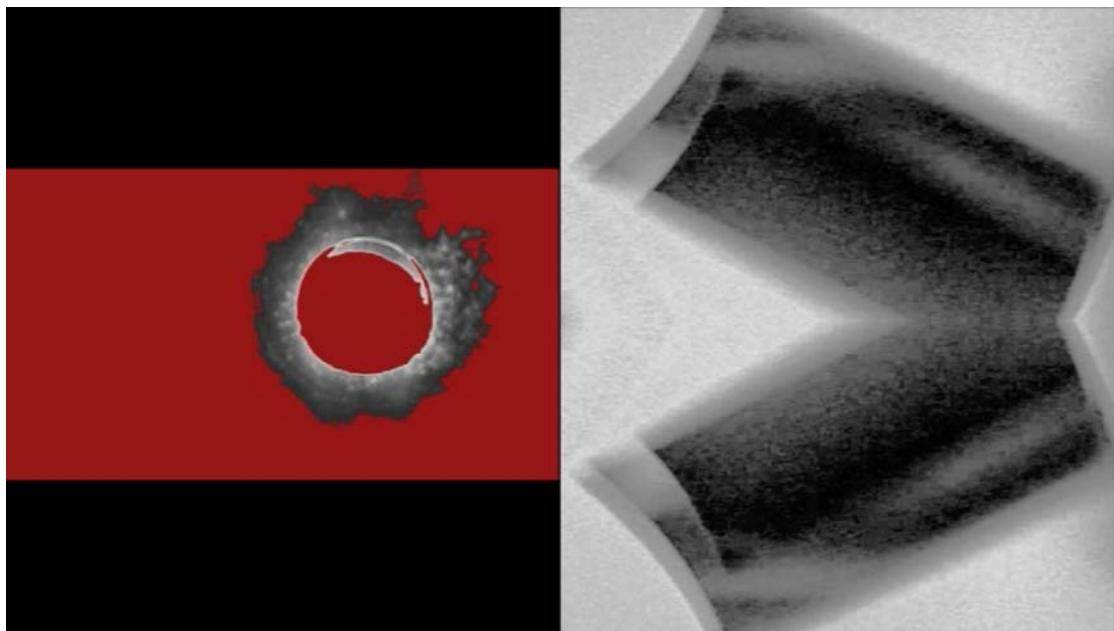


Fig.38 *Sound of Footage* (2009) Gemma Mountain

'Sound of Footage (2009) represents a video of mine that focused on the reel and projected image at the same time. This footage is of one of the first to feature sound as I prefer to focus on the visual.

Where the structure before involved portraying the medium without the use of the medium in the content of the film as well as not using a descriptive narrative, 'Structural and Materialist film' pushed beyond that by involving the medium, quite literally within the work created. It produced a record of filmic time itself that followed the technology, through capturing of the content, to the projecting of the processed film. Although the content maybe meaningless if you are considering the film in a cinema or gallery you are required to ponder instead of being distracted by the ordinary.

The film itself allows us to explore our own ideas of what we are viewing rather than being force-fed a rehearsed script. Plus by showing the technological equipment along with the film it attracts the viewer to reflect upon their own involvement with the filmic medium, be it now in the present or

as nostalgic reminders. Runa Islam's past exhibition 'C I N E M A T O G R A P H Y', 2007, connected to the history of motion capture control by filming in Harry Harrison's workshop, a pioneer of camera-motion control. By using the workshop the film highlighted "filmmaking paraphernalia" which again reflects back onto the medium.

Wade Guyton is an American artist that works with the notion of abstraction through mechanical processes; Guyton uses standard inkjet printers to record the process of printing.

As for Wade Guyton, he leaves it to mechanical reproduction techniques to generate form variables that he introduces in his work. (Bourriaud, 2009)

Within my work, the mechanical techniques are extremely important not just with the medium I use but also in regards to the concept and meaning of the pieces. Like Wade Guyton, I too allow the mechanics of technology to create their own notions on the pieces, rather than creating the content myself. To be able to step backwards from my work allows an objective viewing, were I can become a viewer and receive the work as it is intended.

"A crucial form for early British Conceptual Art is the self-reflective loop: art which examines its own workings and only secondarily reveals the world" (Prince, 2009, pp25-26). Within my practice this statement is key, as to produce art work I believe you first need to examine the equipment itself, including how the object or chosen medium performs mechanically. Only then can artwork be created that is distanced from the equipment itself. My work relies on the mechanical processes to create the medium not the message. The above quote sits well within the gallery space but it is almost the reversed

effect when discussing cinemas, as often the viewer is shown the ‘world’ and hidden from view is the mechanical processes behind it. The genre of art allows for experiments to happen without the need to hide any of the mechanical elements.

There is beauty in the blank screen, that unwritten chapter that dominates the space, the mechanical beauty of the machine and process where no actors or objects need be recorded or projected to warrant a place in cinema. Cinema is about cinema; it’s about exploring the limitations and boundaries of the genre, creating new ways to be seen and shown.

Summary

The image has the last word takes an analytic look into the use of cinematic techniques and how more and more artists are turning to older mediums to achieve new results. As well as the older mediums being used, there is an increase into what I refer to as, technological sculptures, simply this means that the mechanics (i.e. the projectors) remain visible within the film or video installation. By making the mechanics visible within the piece of work, a larger gap opens away from cinema itself. For in cinema the frames focus on the screen yet in the gallery the frame refers to the surroundings of the projection. As within most of my own practice, I record or capture the medium, as it is, making sure that nostalgia isn’t involved. Structuralist film theory recognizes the process of experimental film as ‘a record of its own making’, this suits the use of cinematic techniques and concepts within both the art world as well as my own practice.

Chapter 5

Into the Art World

Certain works

...raise questions about the choice and arrangement of the gallery space and the motivation for manipulating the time of the projection, which determine the engaged dialogue between the projected image and its recipient surface. (Cohn, 2003)

Many artists have and continue to experiment with the arrangement of the gallery space, often in relation to time, there is a thin boundary between real time and projection time. Even within my own work this boundary becomes blurred as the projection event sits in real time but the film is pre-recorded, instilling a false sense of time to the viewer. This aspect of time within my work isn't a main element as it is for some artists.



Fig.39 *The Miller and the Sweep* (1984) Rob Gauthrop and Jo Millett

"Rob Gawthrop was especially prolific in the late 1970s in films about time structures, image degeneration and the physical manipulation of the filmstrip." (Rees, 1999, p93) As with Gawthrop's own work regarding image degeneration and manipulation, often to do with the content that is conveyed rather than any predetermined ideas surrounding cinema and cinematic conventions. The manipulation of the filmic medium within my work is centered on the cinematic equipment and how it stamps its own personality onto the medium. The end product becomes the relationship between the filmic medium and the cinematic equipment such as Super 8mm, 35mm as well as digital cameras and camcorders used to capture or project the medium. Regarding the phrase 'stamps its own personality', I am referring to the flaws within the equipment, the graininess, the specks of dirt, and the particles of fluff that float across the screen. My work records these flaws as a form of capturing the medium, allowing the equipment to be shown without outside interference.

When discussing video and film projection within the gallery there are two ways in which to display projections, either within the 'black cube' or a 'white cube' gallery environment. However there are also more site specific projections and screenings outside of the gallery.

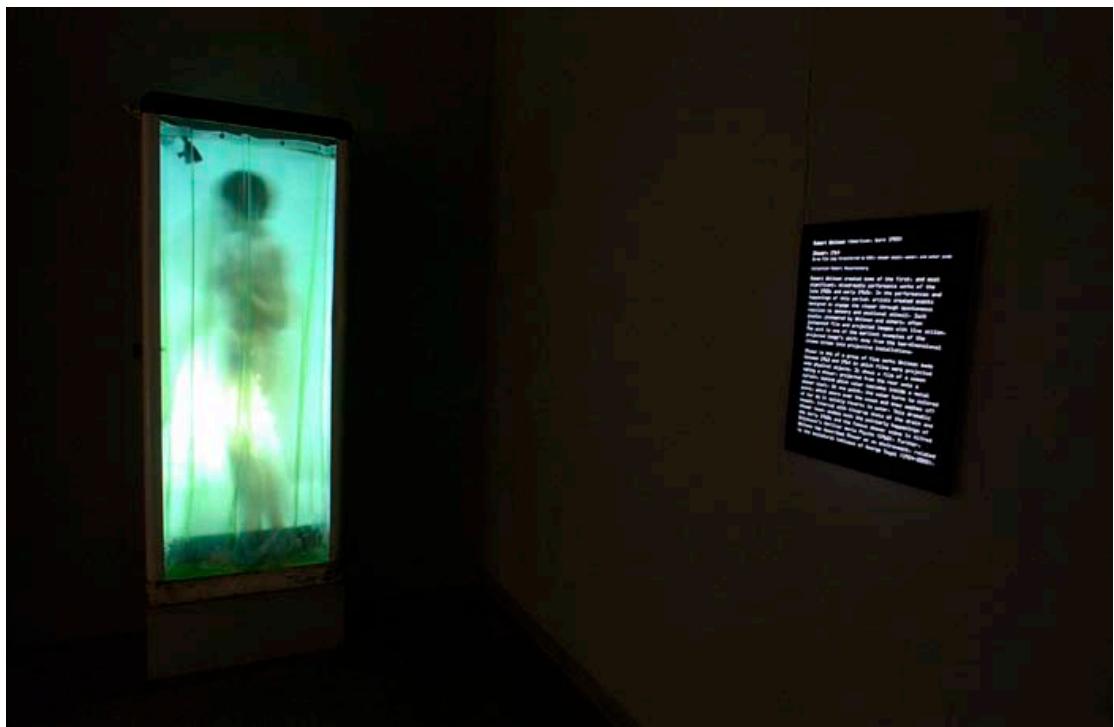


Fig.40 *Black Cube Space*



Fig.41 *White Cube Space*

...phantom views in the ‘black cube’ and fully visible ones in the ‘white cube’
(Storr, 2010)

This statement suggests that if projections are shown in a traditional ‘black cube’ environment then viewers become replaced by the darkness, where they remain hidden, unable to consider upon the works exhibited. Whereas in the ‘white cube’ the viewers are exposed and able to reflect upon the work exhibited. Interestingly in terms of using cinematic equipment as part of the exhibit, the ‘white cube’ allows the viewer to be shown the parts of the projection that usually remains hidden, the projector itself.



Fig.42 Degree Show installation (2009) Gemma Mountain

My degree show Installation explored the relationship between the old and the new in regards to technology.

Within my work I have also experimented using multiple projectors, the image above shows my degree show installation. The installation fits into the notion of the white cube where viewers and the equipment are visible.

Stephanie Schulte Strathaus emphasizes that many artists were first attracted to the moving image in the 1960s in order 'to create a counter culture to commercial movie theaters'. (Strathaus, 2004 cited by Connolly, 2009, p.18)

The idea of creating a 'counter culture to commercial movie theaters' became increasing popular with artists as commercial films were created to include subliminal messages for the masses, whether including consumer products or inter-film advertisements. Whereas many artist films concentrated on the production, allowing the audience to experience and enjoy the film without the pressure of product placements, as they are not commercial. Avant-Garde entices the audiences with experimental moving images situated within a gallery, where ideas and thoughts can be shared. The plain gallery walls leave space for reflection instead of traditional movie theatres, which include plush furnishings that engulf any thoughts or passing judgments from the audience.

For me the physical qualities involved with video and cinematic film are equally as important as the film and video and projection event themselves. The choice to choose to exhibit the equipment of film and video as well as the film and video itself, involves a balanced act of exhibiting the content (exposing the message) and relating the relationship that is formed between the equipment and the material. Exploring the medium and the message and the relationship between.

...interested in both the physical construction of 'a cinematic kind of space', in museums, galleries and other art world spaces, and the immaterial processes and strategies involved in the staging of these spaces as cinematic. (Connolly, 2009, p.165)

Within my work the physical presence of the projectors isn't linked to a notion of the past, no nostalgic elements are consciously expressed. Although I am aware that to completely separate the two would evidently push the two notions together, to have one without the other would also separate the past from the present, one of the main lines of inquiry within my work. The relationship between past technologies whilst using modern technology to convey these notions of film and video history allows the viewer to ultimately make up their own opinions of the work. Often to rebel against pre-determined notions allows viewers to interact with the work rather than to feel like a spectator.

Andrew Sunley Smith's [...] '*Drive Out Cinema*', domestic objects are spot-lit as they are dragged by an unseen automobile along unlit single-track roads, their resultant disfiguration and destruction a visceral metaphor of the violence of economic and geographic dispossession and displacement. (Birrell, 2008)

Sunley Smith's use of cinematic conventions within his piece '*Drive out Cinema*' (2008) highlights that throughout all types of contemporary media, the techniques created for cinema are still as relevant today as they have ever been. By using cinema to convey his ideas about technology, Sunley Smiths outdoor exhibition combines the current technologies with those of yesteryear. Almost showing the progress that cinema technology has made.

The construction of cinematic spaces in un-cinematic places is something that allows the viewer to become more aware of other forms of artistic media.



Fig.43 Dublin Drive-in, (2006)

In the above example of an artist group, the artists chose to hold a drive-in movie event showing films collectively called '12 angry films' showcasing experimental and artist's films regarding the justice system in Dublin (Jones, 2006). The artist group chose the medium of film to broadcast and highlight their point; by using cinema the group are able to reach a wider audience.

For me the term 'cinematic' becomes attached to a projection as soon as it is used. It is near impossible to create a film or video piece or installation without linking or at least featuring the cinematic. A projection within a gallery is ultimately different to a cinema space as there is no permanent fixtures and fittings, no placement specific to cinema, almost as if every intention has been made to exclude or separate the gallery space from cinema. Within my work, the construction of cinema is important as I choose to allow the cinematic equipment to stamp their mechanical processes and personality to the film or

video medium. So the decision to allow the equipment a visible place within my work allows for alternative notions to be shown. Notions that involve technological sculptures as part of the final outcome: showing the audience the hidden aspects of cinema and filmmaking. I look upon the work as technological sculptures from the past to the present, hoping to create experimental films or videos that will be understood in the future.

Retro-Tech explores the tension between primitive and advanced^{1.27} technologies and encourages a longer historical perspective on the 21st century love of the latest and greatest technology. (SSC Newsdesk, 2010)



Fig.44 Aerial Mobile (1998) Tim Hawkinson, Retro-Tech Exhibition Image (2010)

Interestingly this exhibition at the San Jose Museum of Art explores the craft of technology but also explores the relationship between the past and present of technology and how people react to the technology. Looking closer at artists that use technology, Darren Banks,

...incorporates found and made film footage into sculpture and installation to explore his ideas about horror, the domestic, science fiction, defunct technologies, creation, and the unknown. He conflates high and low culture exploring his own perception of sculpture and its relation to film and meaning. (Coleman, 2010)



Fig.45 Where Everything Is (2010) Darren Banks

Similar to Darren Banks, my work uses technological sculptures but in relation to the medium, not as pure statements themselves.

Summary

This chapter looks at the relationship between the films themselves and the gallery. The films in question are film and video pieces about the physicality of the medium. As well as the content of the work, the way in which a projection is shown is also important; for example, it could be a single projection or multiple screens. This chapter also looked at projection spaces inside and outside the gallery and how references to cinema are included.

Conclusion

Film makers stumble when attempting to manufacture static art; visual artists trip over cinematic landmines when crossing into film. (Fogle, 1996)

The difference between static art and cinematic landmines within my practice are explored through the medium of the work such as film, video and photography. I don't set out to make either static or motion pieces of work; the medium decides the best format to use. The cinematic landmines in this case are the technologies around cinema such as projectors, super 8mm film and the cameras themselves. I allow the medium to represent the cinematic, by doing so I can maintain that this is where nostalgia starts and ends. The aesthetics of cinema and digital practice is where my practice lies.

My work involves the notions of looking at the mechanics of cinema in relation to projections in a gallery space. I am deconstructing the machines of cinema, to allow me to explore its presence and purpose. To look at the suggestion literally 'art which examines it's own workings' (Gidal, 1976) could be explained within my work as examining the actual mechanical relationship of the machines of cinemas. Whereas I'm trying to move away from the literal by posing the question, what are we looking at?

I find that within my work the notion of the machine is primary to the content of the work. That we must understand the process before we can undertake the journey. Find out what went before, before we look to the future, not necessarily in an historical or nostalgic way but to understand the foundations of the medium.

Rather than a representation of the world, it is an image of representation itself, signalling both an exhaustion with functional picture-making (that it, the lens turned outwards and openly absorbing the world) and a fresh acknowledgement and assertion of it's potential. (Prince, 2009, pp25-26)

This statement is very fitting to my work, as I've mentioned, my work focuses on the cinematic machines and their process instead of the content. By focusing on the medium of film using both analogue and digital formats, I am able to fully explore the possibilities of the medium, rather than relying on the outside world to create content. Within my work I am aiming to start from the beginning of the filmic medium, adding and erasing when and where I feel necessary to do so. The base topic revolving around cinema: both in its use of film and also the setting of cinema i.e. the architecture.

Both John Hilliard and Darren Almond experiment with "...an image of representation itself" (Prince, 2009, pp25-26) within their work. Hilliard's piece '*Camera recording its own condition*', focuses on the camera itself, the camera becomes the content. Whereas in Almond's work the camera is positioned static, photographing outwards but within a set area, recording daytime to night-time. Interestingly Mark Prince (2009) states that "Hilliard proceeds from the humbled position that no image is reliable, and he can only beg in one step back, with the medium which produces the image, and make an image of that production". Almost documenting the unseen and often overlooked.

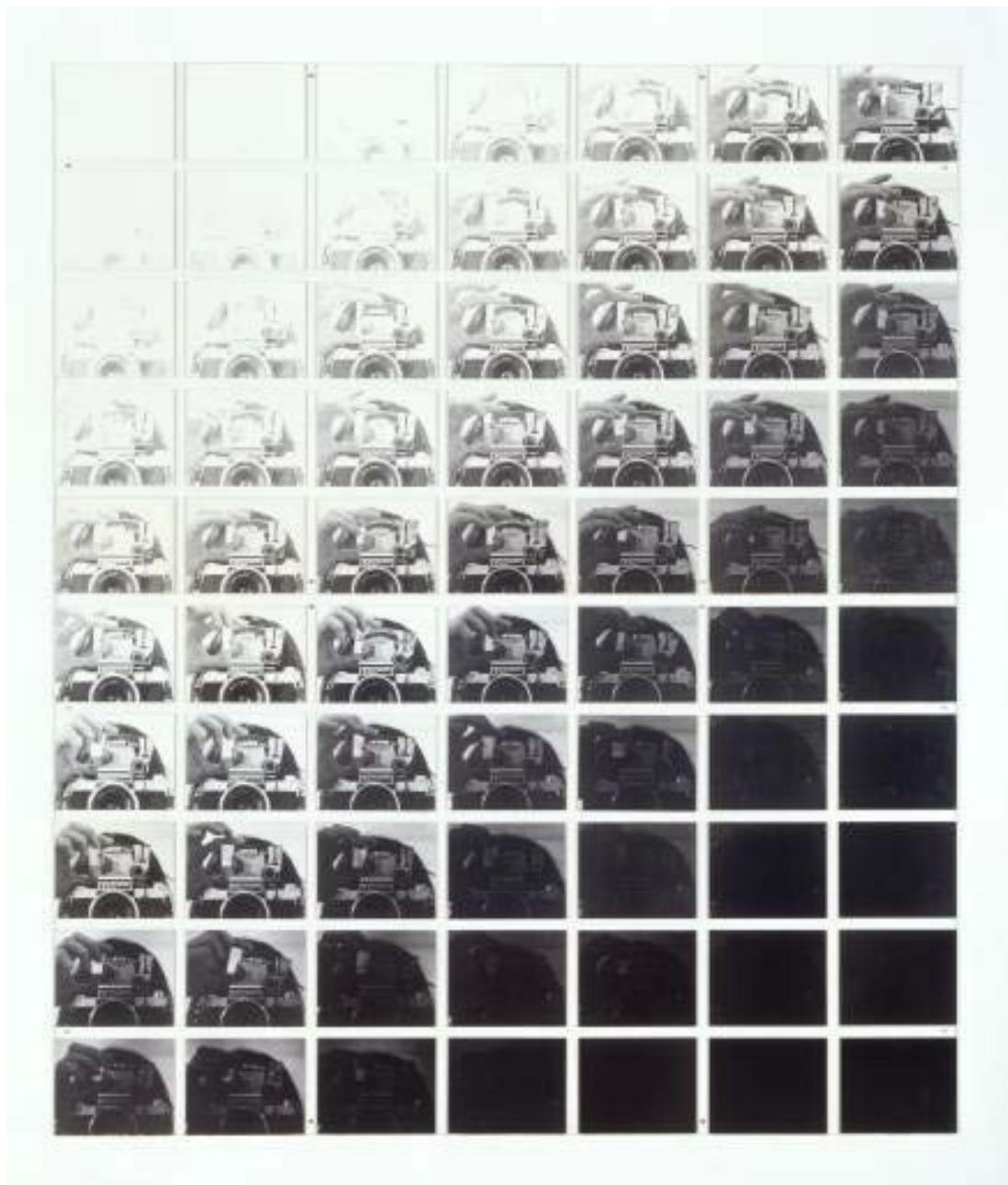


Fig. 46 *Camera recording its own condition* (1971) John Hilliard

"Locating the content in the realm in which it would be perceived, as a material presence rather than an abstract allusion". (Prince, 2009, pp25-26)

This allows me to draw parallels between my work, "...locating the content in the realm in which it would be perceived" could be understood as locating the cinematic back into the cinema or most likely locating the cinematic into the gallery, juxtaposing the ideas of display as well as medium. So if we believe

this statement then to display cinematic work in a gallery and gallery work in a cinema becomes an “abstract allusion”. By “locating the content in the realm in which it would be perceived” (Prince, 2009, pp25-26), we are already applying, a meaning upon the objects, the artefacts. I feel that by doing this the audience is left looking in rather than being involved with the work, engaged with it. By juxtaposing the content within different realms it would allow different outcomes and opinions to be formed, allowing for more questions to be raised.

‘Structuralist film’ has been something that I myself have engaged with but unlike ‘Structuralist films’ that exist, I’ve abstracted the filmic medium to a point of obscuring the film but used an audio narrative to bring the attention back to the technology. Within some of my film work where audio narratives have been included, I have experimented with the authentic sounds surrounding cinema, such as noise from the projector reels as well as the numbered leader theme, Asteroid (1968, by British arranger Pete Moore) for Pearl and Dean advertisements.

By exploring Structuralist film theory, I have experimented with the original cine footage to create abstracted versions of cinema details. (After Lights)

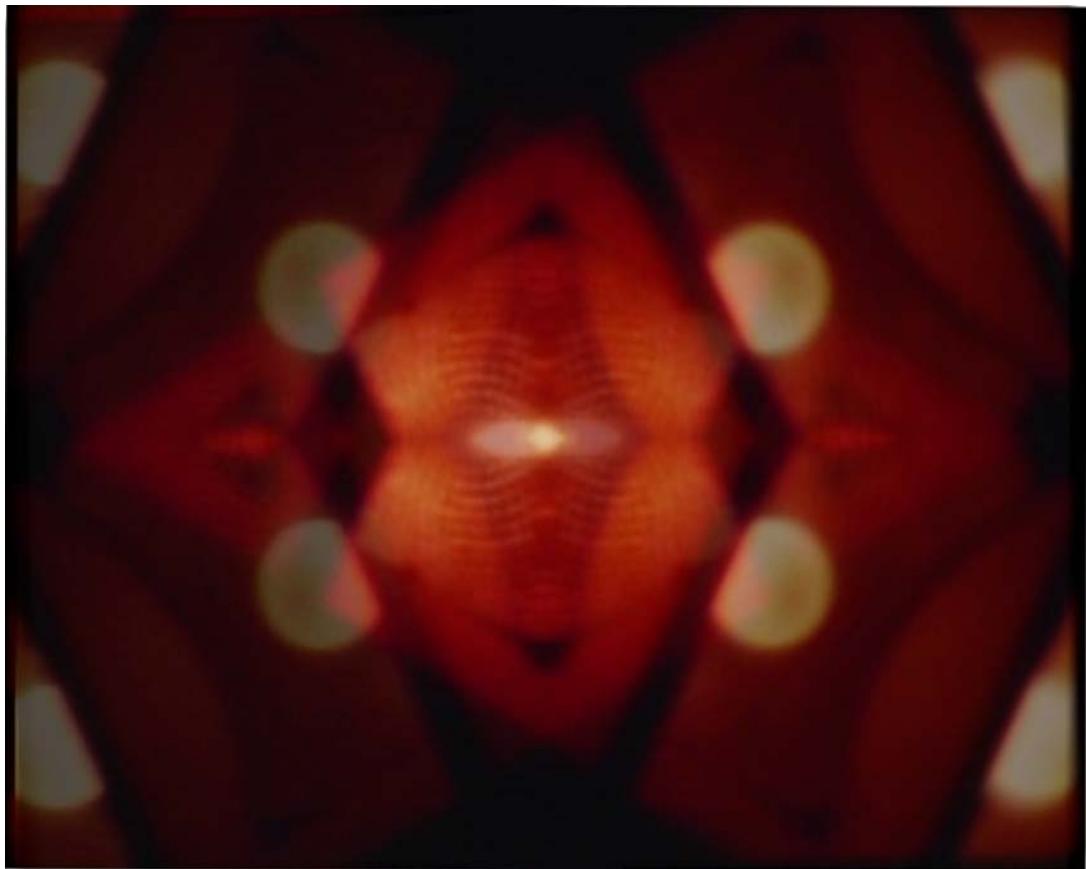


Fig.47 After Lights, Film still (2010) Gemma Mountain

This image is from one of my video pieces also called 'After Lights', it captures close up views of cinema stage lights surrounding the screen. I used post-editing software to create visually engaging imagery. The detail and quality of the image refers back to cine camera technology, in that the picture is blurred and the haziness adds depth of field.

The environment of a projection is relevant in terms of the films or videos that are being projected. The gallery environment is the preferred place when projecting experimental and avant-garde films and videos, as the atmosphere allows for reflective thought to be undertaken within a creative environment. However within cinema the films projected warrant a captive audience, to ensure continuity and clarification. Experimental film and video need space to breathe, to consider the meanings and notions that are to be understood.

Throughout this thesis I have experimented with using the cinematic environment to create photographs that correspond to the history of cinema

as well as to convey cinematic relations within the gallery. By using these images within the gallery environment, there is a bridge that connects cinema and gallery spaces, to enable a positive relationship to unfold. By opening up the conversation between cinema and gallery settings, a middle ground is created that allows experiments to be undertaken. The middle ground is the progression of experimental film and video and it's crossover from commercial use to artist use, into gallery spaces. It became this century's popular culture, the relationship between high art and contemporary culture in today's ever changing climate. While video art is now on even ground when compared with painting and drawing. Today's young artists are more media savvy and open to new experiments within their own practice. Within my early practice, experimenting with photography and film based media was seen as unskilled when compared to painting and drawing. However I often regard myself as the same as a painter or drawer but instead of using brushes and pencils, I choose to use cameras both still and motion, and the medium of film and video as my canvas.

The one problem I see when displaying technological artefacts within the gallery space is that, although artists use technology it's able to reach a wider range of viewers, but it also runs the risk of becoming obsolete, defunct, just another passing chapter within technology and art. If the public think that they understand the medium of film and video then the genre of video art as well as photography runs the risk of being losing the status and charm that has been created around the subject.

Defunct technologies and materials are increasingly popular because of the different effects that can be gained, but also there still requires skill and

craftsmanship to produce the required results. I personally feel that cinematic conventions when used are a positive way of remembering cinema, to reflect back upon our pasts. It has been proven that even when new technologies have become available many artists including myself have preferred older more cumbersome technologies. Within my work, I don't look for the perfect or the complete, it's much more about the journey and the route less travelled. This is especially true for my film and video pieces; the marks made by the equipment only enhance the final product. The relationship between the pieces and the gallery space, works as one of two things, firstly; defunct, older and cinematic equipment becomes promoted when placed into the gallery, where it acquires status. Secondly it allows a wider audience to view and appreciate the technology and the outcome produced.

Nachtraglichkeit is a Freudian term used to describe spectatorial paradigms from Freud's work on traumatic neuroses and the abandoned seduction theory. Afterwardsness is Laplanche's reworking of Nachtraglichkeit theory in relation to cinema and is relevant as each share temporality issues. Paul Sutton (2004) explores how spectatorship remakes the film as "...spectators carry a remade and remembered 'film' with them". Spectators always chose to remember their favourite moments and often when re-telling the scene, they embellish it with their own fantasy recollections.

This relates to my work as the spectator is very much involved with the work, it could be said that often within film and video pieces by artists, the spectator influences the overall outcome of the piece but they don't necessarily change it. Be it in their choice of seating within an installation or their position in which to view the piece. Often though it's the passerby quality that interests the

artist, as unlike cinema where the spectator chooses to view the entire film, art installations, especially film and video pieces almost accept that the spectator will glance at the work then walk on. This questions Laplanche's reworking of the Freudian term *Nachtraglichkeit* as without the whole picture i.e. film and video spectators of art related pieces often re-invent the whole piece as they focus on the minute or two of footage they saw that interested them. It allows them to create and recreate the film or video in anyway they chose.

Within cinema though this can happen, there are invisible boundaries and guidelines that spectators follow, for example the film they remember will be increasingly similar to the film they saw as they have been exposed to a longer version as well as the structure that has been put in place by the writers, directors, post production, actors, music even down to the cinema staff that ensures there is a current theme throughout the film such as pace and time not to mention linear narrative structures. So whichever scene the spectator remembers will in some way allow for this structure to be seen.

Following a Laplanchian model, one might surmise that the cinematic spectator develops a cinematic unconscious on the basis of the "repression" of the message received via the screen. (Sutton, 2004, pp385-405)

Within artist films and videos they often force this upon the spectators as to show that with suggestion the message can be remembered. Within my work though it is important that my film and video work remains abstract, often obscure to allow the spectators to interact with the images they see. Often many artists look for an answer within their own work or the work of others; I prefer to look for the question.

Forward movement in life is achieved through a backward movement in memory, but one that is more than a simple regression. In place of the blocked nostalgia or nausea of the perpetual return, the past is transformed in such processes as “working through” and “deferred action”. This is [...] performance that is iterative and interrogative – a repetition that is initiatory, in stating a differential history that will not return to the power of the same. (Burgin, 1996 cited by Sutton, 2004, pp385-405)

To conclude one of the main research questions ‘What separates viewing film/video in a cinema to viewing them in a gallery setting?’ I believe that what separates projections within the cinema and the gallery is how the film and videos are received, in regard to the content and presentation of the projection. Projections within a cinema environment require focused attention with little being asked of the viewer, whereas with the gallery projections of film or video they require creative questions to be asked of the piece or installations on display. Cinema projections create a passive viewer that just absorbs the information without question or complaint unlike the gallery viewer that is made to question the context, positioning, message, and meaning of the piece(s) and installations as these allow viewers to interpret the artwork however they may wish. Viewing film and video projections whether in a cinema or a gallery depends on the cinematic equipment and whether any of the mechanical elements are on show. I believe cinematic conventions can be achieved within the gallery with the use of the cinematic equipment i.e. projectors. Within my work and research I have found that projections including cinematic equipments work within the gallery environment, especially when focusing the content back onto the equipment itself, as I do in my work.

I hope to progress onto PhD in order to further focus and progress my work and research to a point of conclusion. I will focus my work on the details and

explore the connections to cinemas and galleries by way of exhibiting and research.

“I'm an eye. A mechanical eye” (Vertov, D (1923)

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