

A close-up, high-angle shot of a sandy surface, likely a beach. Several footprints are visible, showing distinct tread patterns from different types of shoes. The sand is a light tan color with some darker, wet-looking patches. The footprints are scattered across the frame, with some being more prominent than others. The overall texture of the sand is grainy and uneven.

THE POSTPRODUCTION OF PRESENCE:
A DIRECTOR'S NOTEBOOK

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Immobilité was shot and produced in Cornwall, United Kingdom, during the summer of 2007.

Postproduction took place in Paris, Kailua, Boulder, Brooklyn, and Austin between September 2007 and April 2009.

Early indications of what *Immobilité* would eventually become were first introduced as part of my keynote presentation at the “Disrupting Narratives” symposium at the Tate Modern on July 13, 2007. I am grateful to Kate Southworth and Kelli Dipple for inviting me to present some of my early thoughts on remixology, hybrid processes, and post-production art at this very special event.

The first-ever private screening of *Immobilité* took place on January 31, 2009 in New York City at the Norwood art club. The artist would like to offer his gracious thanks to Chris Vroom and Illya Szilak for sponsoring this event.

The initial exhibition of *Immobilité* opened inside The Project Room for New Media curated by Nina Colosi at the Chelsea Art Museum on April 7, 2009 and was on view until May 9, 2009.



Prologue:

Manifesto for Mobile Phone Art Film Production

First, it's not a film per se.

There is no film; there is only captured and manipulated data.

The so-called mobile phone video recording device is the selected apparatus chosen by the artist as the mechanism to capture and manipulate the data.

This captured and manipulated data then becomes the source material the artist samples from to begin shaping a work of postproduction art.

The work of postproduction art created by the artist need not mimic the processes associated with filmmaking but may resonate with what we might call the cinematographic impulse.

The work of postproduction art may just as well appropriate or otherwise inhabit the formal tendencies of literature, philosophy, video art, improvisational dance and theater, or any other useful art form that captures and manipulates data.

Any formal art experiment that captures and manipulates data is postproduction art.

For the interdisciplinary artist who creates hybrid works of postproduction art, composing a new work with a so-called mobile phone as their primary data capturing apparatus is an aesthetic decision.

Each aesthetic decision made by the artist while composing their work of postproduction art is filtered into the ongoing process of rendering their aesthetic vision into the world (itself an ongoing work of postproduction art).

This rendering process enables the artist to envision the visionary potential of their work of postproduction art.

Envisioning innovative works of postproduction art can only take place through an unconscious process of selectively capturing, sampling, filtering, reconfiguring, and rendering the chosen source material.

Source material is everywhere and postproduction artists are always searching for data rich in its postproduction potential.

By embodying the chosen source material as an ongoing act of natural selection, the artist becomes a medium that acts on whatever ground is available and in so doing is in a constant state of flux, an aesthetic state where the postproduction of presence can manifest itself as a biological force in nature.

The aesthetic question then facing the artist becomes "What source material are we selecting and how are we postproducing it?"

The follow-up philosophical question has a different focus: "Why are we always in postproduction and what is the intrinsic value of this kind of creative activity?"

Having said all of this, we must be clear: this prosthetic-aesthetic you hold in your hand when selectively capturing data for future postproduction is not a mobile phone and therefore there can be no such thing as a mobile phone art film production.



Camera as Prosthesis

The art of letter writing is dying with email. But what is born out of the ruins of the older print-centric, epistolary form is another user-friendly form of writing that is still not valued as much as it should be.

My emails influence my blogs that then influence my art-writing project development. Emails are more than just source material. They are the socially infused life-blood of the nomadic net artist who unconsciously triggers the next version of whatever conceptual persona they wish to inhabit while composing.

An email from an artist-writer friend who recently saw a private preview of the entire 75-minute *Immobilité* partly reads:

One question I have is about your experience of camera as prosthesis. I have found especially with the Flip that seeing through that lens is a form of virtual touch (since the camera is hand held and so small-- rather than sight, it is like a strange form of blindness in fact -- I wonder if, in a more virtual universe, the production of images becomes a substitute for touch.

To which I respond (in part):

Following up on "camera as prosthesis" I guess the question is what role does proprioception play in all of this? What I found when making *Immobilité* is that you have to move at the interface of cinematography, choreography and what Gregory Ulmer refers to as *choragraphy* (but what I imagine to be the inventive process of developing a more intuitive space of *inner choreography*).

It's hard to map out via email but imagine

cinematography as the writing of movement

choreography as the writing of dance

choragraphy as the writing of *intuition while inventing*

Once you bring a portable if not semi-wearable "camera as prosthesis" into the mix, where you go in blind and hold your eyes in the palm of your hand, then you can begin to enact what dancers refer to as structured improvisation, capturing data as you slide between proprioception and movement-vision. I steal this last insight from Brian Massumi. Massumi refers to movement-vision as "an *included disjunction*," an "opening onto a space of transformation in which a de-objectified movement fuses with a de-subjectified observer. This larger processuality, this real movement, includes the perspective from which it is seen."

[...]

Your sense of "virtual touch" is right on. This is what I felt not only while using the camera but also while "painting" the scenes. It's weird, I never considered myself in any way connected to the history of painting until I began using video cameras and the mobile phone video camera solidified my deep connection, albeit from a totally different angle. If you look at the last scene of *Immobilité* with the double rainbow you will see the frame "flick" with minute touches as if using the rainbow image as a palette to bring more color into the scene (it's the camera trying to focus its movement-vision but only materializes because of the virtual touch intuited by the body).

Massumi writes: "Affects are *virtual synthetic perspectives*" and maybe what we are finding is that with these miniaturized apparatuses at hand, we are able to locate new potentials in the body as it moves.

These new potentials in the body as it moves are aesthetic in nature (*aesthetics in/of nature*). How long will it be before we see the artist as digital body-image always already prehending the postproduction of presence?

The virtual eyes of the postproduction artist touch rather than see and in touching feel their way into visionary experience.

Style / Form

Kathy Acker writes:

I never liked the idea of originality, and so my whole life I've always written by taking other texts, inhabiting them in some way so that I can do something with them.

Which suddenly brings to mind Duchamp and what he said when lecturing on "The Creative Act" in Houston in 1957:

If we give the attributes of a medium to the artist, we must then deny him the state of consciousness on the esthetic plane about what he is doing or why he is doing it. All his decisions in the artistic execution of the work rest with pure intuition and cannot be translated into a self-analysis, spoken or written, or even thought out.

Which I would then improvisationally remix via textual inhabitation as:

If we are all artist-mediums, we must then accept the fact that we are all in perpetual postproduction and that our aesthetic fitness relies on our ability to trigger novelty out of our unconscious creative potential. All of the decisions we make while performing our ongoing work of post-production art rest with pure intuition and are envisioned as part of the creative act.

What differentiates one creative actor from another?

Could it be *style*?

Godard:

To me style is just the outside of content, and content the inside of style, like the outside and inside of the human body. Both go together, they can't be separated.

What does it take to become an upside-down, inside-out (wo[mb])man where, as Robert Creeley suggests, "Form is never more than an extension of content"?

A person with curly hair, seen from behind, is holding a smartphone up to take a photograph of a coastal landscape. The person is standing on a grassy cliff edge. The landscape features a dark, rocky coastline meeting the sea under a vast, dramatic sky filled with large, white and grey clouds. The sun is visible through a break in the clouds, creating a bright glow and long, horizontal light streaks across the sky. The overall mood is contemplative and artistic.

A Spatial Practice

It is June 1, 2007.

The so-called beginning of “production”; but what does it mean to be in production when one is always already in postproduction. One thing is clear: this work will continue my recent investigations into the *postproduction of presence*.

Upon arriving in Cornwall, the location for *Immobilité*, I am reminded that I am approaching the wild country at “Earth’s end” not as an escape or getaway location to hide from Reality, but as an alternative fictional universe full of creative potential that I, as an artist-medium, am ready to unconsciously trigger via new narrative configurations that will trace the physiological, emotional, and experiential qualities of bringing my body into this space.

“Every story is a travel story -- a spatial practice.”

-- Michel de Certeau

I.

For many years now, I have been investigating the concept of *walkology* that I imagine as a cross between Thoreau-styled woods-walking and Situationist *dérive*.

Issues of walkology, drift, roaming interiority, proprioception, inner choreography, and using scenic resources to generate philosophical imagery (don't ask, don't tell) are central to the early "treatment" of *Immobilitéé*.

Some of my scatternotes (off the cuff):

Mobility versus immobility.

Fluid movement of the body unconsciously generating new processural imagery versus stagnant inability to dream or creatively visualize the next scenic development.

Yet is the binary I am suggesting really as black and white as I am making it?

For example: mobility *versus* immobility. The cinematic versus the photographic.

Is it really true that a cinematic approach to "making" relates more to lucid dreaming and a photographic approach is more a *memento mori* or an attempt to preserve a life captured before its inevitable death?

It would seem that these distinctions no longer hold.

The cinematic and photographic are embedded in each other and are swallowed whole by the *high-definition videographic*.

Not to mention emerging, mutant offspring of all of the above, such as the *mobile videographic*.

Mobile cinema would no longer pit mobility against immobility but would cleverly mesh the blend therein.

The mobile cinematography in John Cassavetes *Faces* is an early precursor of this camera-as-prosthesis formalism that evolves out of advanced inner choreography.

Chris Marker's *Le Jette* approaches this "blend" in a totally different way, and presents itself as a kind of nightmare "still-life" in search of its cinematic other.

Technologically (mediumistically), Marker's film is premised as immobility.

Narratively, though, it's something else: a movement into the "unreal" nature of quite literally becoming nature, of imagining nature as a virtual image coming (before going).

The theme of all art-house mobile cinema, pre and post mobile phone data capturing, is one of making an appearance.

A guest appearance.

Or maybe I mean a ghost appearance (a disappearance of one medium as it [intersubjectively] passes into another).

It was my first day in Cornwall. Walking out of the front door of my new house in Falmouth, without even knowing whether I was coming or going, I moved toward the ocean and in so doing, I caught a trail.

While walking, I thought: "Walking triggers memories that soon turn into memoir that then gets remixed into pseudo-autobiography (fiction). The persona playing 'me' in this ongoing story is 'not-me' but at least I still feel comfortable in the role."

I remember thinking, "Naturally (creatively), I will transfer this state of *being becoming something else* to the other actors who will hopefully experience something similar without even rehearsing for it."

II.

It is hard to tell if the trail I am on is simply part of a trek through my wooded neighborhood, a drift into the University College Falmouth campus across the street from my house, or some secret path to a cliff that looks over a beach and out to a vast sea.

The difference between these various locations no longer matters. It could be here; it could be there. It could be WAY OVER there (on the edge of a precipice sensing the beyond).

The important thing right now is that I am moving in it.

And I as move in it, I continue to capture more data, more source material for the story that awaits its own imminent arrival.

III.

In fact, my immediate location can be situated in all of these words and image markers that facilitate the improvisational development of a memory script (*mutating codework*) that instructs the Director on how to behave (perform) while making (while “making do”).

Suddenly, I am at once morphing into a simultaneous and continuous fusion of movements that is part search for grounded reality, part intentional disorientation, and part environmentally induced autohallucination.

“If I am not making this up, then who or what is?”

(That is the foreign film talking -- I am just taking notation).

The quest: to turn *intersubjective dérive* into *co-poiesis*.

(Bracha Ettinger: “I have named matrixial borderspace the psychic sphere which is trans-subjective on a sub-subjective partial level. A mental matrixial encounter-event transgresses individual psychic boundaries even if and when its awareness arises in the field of the separate individual subject, and it evades communication even if and when it operates inside an intersubjective

relational field. Subjectivity here is a transgressive encounter between ‘I’ (as partial-subject) and uncognized yet intimate ‘non-I’ (as partial-subject or partial-object). Co-poietic transformational potentiality evolves along aesthetic and ethical unconscious paths: strings and threads, and produces a particular kind of knowledge. Unconscious transmission and reattunement as well as resonant copoietic knowledge don’t depend on verbal communication, intentional organization or inter-subjective relationships. Aesthetical and ethical processes are impregnated by matrixial copoiesis.”)

To use a mobile phone, a cluster of walking talking thinking dreaming bodies, and an imaginary nature to capture what was once cinematic but has now become the dreamworld of international culture giving birth to multiple, (re) mixed realities – this is the core aspect detailing the psychic sphere where a deep interior shot awaits its moment of capturing.

To know that this is possible is to open oneself up to potential foreign relations.

Atom Egoyan: “Every film is a foreign film . . .”

IV.

Soon I will walk to the ends of the Earth and port myself to another space.



The Postproduction of Space (The Three Henri-mix)

I

Image Rhythms, Embodied
(After Henri Lefebvre)

A rhythm invests places, but is itself not a place: it is not a thing, nor an aggregation of things, nor yet a simple flow. It embodies its own law, its own regularity, which it derives from space -- from its own space -- and from a relationship between space and time.

What we live are rhythms -- rhythms experienced subjectively.

Into and out of body experiences.

Every rhythm expresses the body's inventiveness.

The body reveals it, deploys it.

Rhythms in all their multiplicity interpenetrate one another while postproducing the "nature" one is becoming while imagining.

This imagining or becoming-nature feels like entering virtuality and the rhythms that layer and multiply in a virtual imagining of nature (while living) are distilled into creative desire.

These imaginings (potential distillations into creative desire) are not captured on film, or video, or via some live web cam ideally situated by a positioning agent in a remote location.

They are captured by the living *remixologist* who postproduces the present by

syncing the rhythms of their body with an ongoing spatial practice that inter-subjectively jams with the primary social network that has somehow manifested itself as co-responsible for the (post-)production.

These imaginings are then able to materialize as emergent forms of art.

II

Postproducing Bodies (of Work)
(After Henri Bergson)

How could recollection arise after everything is over?

Is it true that *perception per se* consists of a cinematographic process wherein we take snapshots from the passage of time and string them on a becoming that is at once abstract, uniform, and invisible, situated at the back of the apparatus of knowledge?

Does the "streaming togetherness" of instantaneous sections that can freeze into elongated pseudo-photographic moments in postproduction position the work of time-based media in a state of aesthetic paralysis?

Or is that time-based image that now embodies a duration of its own really taking place in a body-brain-apparatus achievement that we hallucinate into the fluid (moving) picture frame?

Creating the impression of a continuity of movement is one thing.

Remixologically synthesizing a sequence of image events in perpetual post-production is another.

In the first instance, one is merely living with their eyes wide shut.

In the other, one is engaged in the revolution (practice) of everyday life (as a projection of interior shots, meta-tagged with experiential potential).

The durational drift of the remixologist's bodily rhythms postproduces an intuitively generated lifeform that can be translated into a time-based media

fiction [narrative event].

This time-based media fiction unfolds in time while duplicating itself in the virtual.

What You See Is What You Forget.

The postproduced image and its body double.

III

Feeling the Infinite
(After Henri Michaux)

One does not have to be a neurosurgeon to talk of brain waves.

Could a hypersensitive psychogeologist imagine landscapes as image waves?

What does it mean to get caught in the undercurrent of undulations that postulate an intoxication of autohallucinations, the kind of “time-trip” that a long solstice day can (post)produce just by letting the body simply be?

Living deep inside the day that never ends, one uses all their sense data to echo impressions of rushing, violent, nervous excitations.

Not violence for violence’s sake, but poltergeist violence, an expelling of the demons that circulate in the (post)productive body as it latches on to an in and out state of presence we call the infinite, an infinity on the march, an enfolding infinity that never ends, an infinitization from which no finite can escape, situated as an oscillating tense-trigger where even the simple act of seeing, of looking at a landscape, can transform the world.

If the rhythm is precipitous, the infinite will fragment.

If the rhythm is circuitous, the infinite will loop in on itself and become eternal.

If the rhythm is alone with its anxiety coupled with patience, the infinite will

render into vision a compassion for living.

These rhythms and immaterial visions of drifting through landscapes prolong everything, endlessly.

In what at first feels like a wave of ecstasy, there is revealed something even more elaborate: a bowl of vibrations.

“The bowl of vibrations is what he took, is what is possessing him now.”

He could be she, or both of them, together, “an image coming” -- a double embodying, a flux-like, braided persona riding an irresistible wave.

The restless stirring of the creative pulsations electrify the (post)producing bodies as they crash into the swelling sea of future uncertainty.

Waves heaving up on all sides now, someone yells “Humanity, overboard!”

Another big one approaches, breaks, and still there are more images coming.

“Ecstasy and only ecstasy opens up what is absolutely unmixed.”

Now the remiXologist enters its purest state of



Remixology, Hybridized Processes, and Postproduction Art: A Counternarrative

(This is a remixed excerpt from a loose transcript of my keynote address at the “Disrupting Narratives” symposium held at the Tate Modern on July 13, 2007. I wrote the outline to the presentation while *Immobilité* was in production in nearby Cornwall.)

What *is* remixology?

What *is* postproduction art?

What *is* hactivism?

What *is* net art?

What *is* a disrupting narrative?

Or: as my friend Mike Leggett, who was the first person who saw the “Disrupting Narrative” poster when it first came back from the printer in Falmouth, recalled in an email a few days later after he had arrived back to his home in Sydney:

“Will I be able to see ‘Invisible Fictions’?

Somehow he had remixologically postproduced or hacked into our symposium theme and rather spontaneously transformed our event into an invisible fiction, one he was hoping he could *see*.

When I emailed him back, I answered him in the definitive: “Yes, Mike, you *can* see invisible fictions. How can you *not*?”

It goes without saying that this invisible fiction that Mike wants to see, that we are all continually remixing as part of a sequence of event-occasions we experience while embodying our practice of everyday life in acts of post-productivity, is being versioned here at the Tate today, as we stream our symposium live over the web to those who want to tune in

(tune in - yes - -- and if you like -- turn on,
-- but please don’t drop out,
-- not just yet
-- the day is long).

For those who are watching us watch ourselves, we, the people (to coin a phrase), face to face, in real life, are collectively postproducing an event that takes on many different forms, one that is experientially tagged with different meanings for each of us as we engage with the phenomenological “universe of technical images” (to borrow a term from Vilém Flusser).

Flusser, in *Toward A Philosophy of Photography* writes:

“The task of the philosophy of photography is to question photographers about freedom, to probe their practice in pursuit of freedom.”

Here, the photographer is not just someone who uses a camera to take pictures, but is a kind of fictional philosopher who is using emerging media apparatuses to expand the concept of writing.

To probe one’s practice in pursuit of freedom seems a rather lofty ideal given our supposedly post-ideological environment, *oui*?

But then he (Flusser) goes on to write that “one can outwit the camera’s rigidity,” “one can smuggle human intentions into its program,” “one can force the camera to create the unpredictable, the improbable, the informative,” and “one can show contempt for the camera” by turning away from it as a thing and focusing instead, on information. In other words, freedom (for Flusser) is “the strategy of playing against the camera.”

As a postproduction artist sampling from the methodologies of art-house European auteurs to create new forms of narrative, I too am compelled to probe the deconditioned mind as a mine of creative potential all in the name

of freedom.

I have just shown you a very rough edit of the opening to a commissioned prototype I am developing in conjunction with the Tate Modern called *Immobilité*. The exact title is “Foreign Film (*Immobilité*)” which is the second feature-length foreign film in my *Foreign Film Series*. The first, *My Autoerotic Muse*, was shot in HDV and is itself now in the final stages of postproduction.

I too (a kind of fictional philosopher proposing this electronic figure I call *the remixologist*) am in the final stages of postproduction. But those final stages are never really final, or at least they don’t feel that way as I push myself further into the Infinite, that unidentifiable space of mind where the unconscious projections of near future events always keep me on the cusp of what it is I am in the process of creating while experiencing this *all-over-sense* of “being in perpetual postproduction” even as my remixological methods smudge together with what I used to think of as simply being *in production*...

It makes me wonder if we are always already in a state of “unfinish” (to remix Duchamp’s phrase) and leaves me feeling as though my creative process is operating on the edge of forever in the realm of the *borderless otherzone*.

This is literally what goes through my mind as I use my mobile phone to capture the data that surrounds me so that I can then, later, bring it back into the postproduction studio and further manipulate this disrupting storyworld my collaborators and I find ourselves acting in when participating in this interrelational aesthetic we call our lives.

Perhaps this is what it feels like to *become* an artist-medium, to provoke a new tremor or an unexpected shock to the body that opens up another space of experience.

“Every film is a foreign film,” writes Atom Egoyan in the introduction to his anthology *Subtitles*.

As you can see in just that small glimpse into the altered universe of technical images captured in Cornwall that I have just shared with you, I too am finding the subtitles useful as a space for remixological postproduction. Those words you were reading come from a variety of sources. There are so many working their way into the narrative that I can’t think of them all. There’s Laurence

Sterne, Kathy Acker, Henri Michaux, an anonymous blogger.

For me, remixologically inhabiting language by hyperimprovisationally jamming with the source material so that I can manipulate the experience of the text to tell my own pseudo-autobiographical story, is what it means to proactively engage in a hactivist, postproduction process that informs whatever interdisciplinary or hybridized practice I may be forming at any given time.

But whose pseudo-autobiographical story is it, really?

Mine?

Remixologically postproducing the source material that I select so as to create a pseudo-autobiographical version of myself as who?

Professor Amerika? Franz Kafka? Mr. Early Net Art? How about -- VJ Persona?

VJ Persona is a morphing, composited figure, a caricature, a persona I invented while touring internationally as a live audio-visual performance artist, i.e. a VJ [visual jockey]. I write about it in my last book of spontaneous theories -- *META/DATA: A Digital Poetics* -- published by MIT Press as part of the Leonardo Book Series. In the section of the book titled *Distributed Fictions*, there is a story I title *The Random Life of VJ Persona: A Mobile Medium in the Form a Fiction*:

When his friend (met in a café and always willing to help out whenever he could) suddenly appeared, Maker Faker excused himself from the dialogue with Professor Scan and went into the Anthology Film Archives theater. He saw Maya Deren’s deep mesh of afternoon dreams and realized that he wanted to become the human equivalent of a moving image filled with transient matter and memory. Although he didn’t know it at the time, he wanted to become a stylized, performative gesture in the marketplace of actions and ideas, a key figure in the ever-morphing artificial intelligentsia who would transmit his mutating political action inside the flux of experientially tagged media stimuli: he wanted to become VJ Persona.

But he was many other people too. In fact, Maker Faker was a variation on another free-flowing character he referred to only as M/F. M/F was his nongender-specific loverman-loverwoman who would slide their body down the slash that tried to differentiate between the sexes —sliding down the slash and slicing into the persona where one could close their eyes (“bad for the eyes”) and let it bleed. If the acid rain was going to take over, he might as well hallucinate an orgy of equipotentiality.

Out would seep this strange new blood language made of randomly generated images that appeared as though they were being processed in realtime, although to the acute observer it was obvious that M/F operated not in realtime but, as already mentioned in the various theory loops throughout, fake time —or *unrealtime*. Fake time was different than the overdetermined false consciousness of time. In fact, fake time was designated as an antidote to anything remotely resembling such a false consciousness. To fake time, you had to make time, and in making time, you could live on the edge of existence while obliterating time. But that’s another subject for another book, another make-time experience still in its prehallucinatory stage of incubation.

M/F was a foreign agent living inside any random body, a viral awakening that kept reproducing a strong desire to become nothing that matters but that still manifested itself in the visual art world as a moving image filled with transient substance and possibly even market value.

Talk about invisible fictions.

But what does this have to do with the story? What does it have to do with *your* story?

And, by the way, what *is* your story?

Every story is a travel story, a spatial practice. The deep interior shot, remixed via an inner choreography that invents its own proprioceptive movement through the environment while embedding the “camera” into one’s body as a kind of aesthetic prosthetic, resets the terms of engagement.

Now it’s the co-poiesis of the intersubjective players that fill the screen with space.

The images we are watching are relatively simple in nature. They are not made with customized VJ software but rather postproduced as an editorialized sampling and remixing of what has already been initially edited *in-camera* while improvising the image movement. That is, it looks the same way I saw it as I was capturing it with my mobile phone but that has now been innovatively cut and pasted to aesthetically tweak the experience of narrative re-vision.

I say “as I was capturing it with my mobile phone” but do I really mean my camera? My hand-held eyes? Actually, it’s my camera, and my phone, and my network connection, and my lifeline to my social field of potential. What do you call that sort of thing? A multi-media appendage? A digital crutch? A prosthetic aesthetic?

In many ways *Immobilité* is an experiment in light, virtual paint, and color, all shot (I feel like saying performed) on my mobile. I say it was made via “in camera editing” which is not really editing at all, it’s just working with the camera as a fluid prosthetic-aesthetic, what in *META/DATA* I would call a *thoughtographical apparatus* or expanded writing instrument, although in this case the writing is no longer alphabetic per se but more like *mobile image écriture*, so that even as I work against the *camera as camera* (to bring in Flusser again), I cannot help but take in whatever source material the gorgeous Cornish beachside has to offer. This is something we Cornish artists have to deal with all of the time, that is, yes -- we can work *against* the apparatus as apparatus, but can we ever really work against the light? The pastoral? The wild nature that informs the very rhythms of our postproducing bodies?

It should be noted that all of the imagery that appears in the final cut of *Immobilité* is, in fact, postproduced with no “after effects” and results primarily from experimental hand-held techniques and a clever editing style.

For those of you who already know this sort of thing, it won’t surprise you to find out that I shot many of the “flickering image” scenes as one long take using my body (and particularly my hands, my *wrist-action*) to get the basic effect, and once I downloaded it as “source” on to my computer, I just put

in some in and out points on the video editor, and then decided to use this *mobile image écriture* as a kind of in and out state of presence, although when I say played with “this mobile image écriture as a kind of in and out state of presence,” I don’t mean me, Mark Amerika, was playing with his in-and-out state of presence, that’s something we all do naturally. It’s part of our wild nature. No, I mean it was the not-me, i.e. the one who unconsciously postproduces whatever source material has been selected and are *affectively embodying in their imagination as part of an ongoing, remixological practice that flickers through in and out states of presence*.

How else are we to make things? Unless we just want to hand it all over to the machine and be done with it. Our only recourse is to *body-image*. And so we communicate with each other, *body-image to body-image*. The fact that I use trendy techno-gadgets to pass my eyes to you is just an indication of my own set of preferences while engaging in co-poiesis.

Playing this way opens me up to alternative fictional universes populated by various versions of what I refer to as the “not-me.” In an attempt to reclaim the generative aspects of unconscious, metamediumistic behavior, I occasionally tap into the creative potential of this “not-me” persona in the *META/DATA* book. I quote Henri Michaux who, for example, says “There isn’t one me. There aren’t ten mes. There is no me. ME is only a position of equilibrium. An average of ‘mes’, a movement in the crowd.”

This sense of the not-me follows my practice wherever I happen to be and totally infects -- like a virus -- my postproduction processes whether I am writing experimental novels, creating elaborate, interactive works of net art, hovering over the cameras when directing my foreign films, and especially when performing live VJ sets.

So, in closing, Mike, if you’re still watching in Sydney, and anyone else whose surveillance is glomming on to our event at the Tate over the Web today, thanks for postproducing this collaborative event with all of us insiders, for being-postproduced yourself, even as you knowingly resist this logic of “being-postproduced” by proactively making things happen on your own terms, through your own remixological filters.

This is inevitable.

It ends up that we make things even when we don’t necessarily have to or want to.

In “The Practice of Everyday Life,” Michel de Certeau reveals the hidden movements beneath the surface of the Production-Consumption pair, suggesting that far from being purely passive, the consumer engages in a set of processes comparable to an almost clandestine, “silent” production [to use his words].

This morning, I have been tracing my pseudo-autobiographical narrative for everyone here in the Starr auditorium at the Tate Modern as well as everyone who is watching this live over the Web (not to mention the vast majority of viewers who will see this much later, as part of an archive, as part of -- what? Would you call it art history? *Whose* art history?).

Whoever experiences this, you know you cannot just simply be my passive audience. Somehow, your body won’t let that happen. The body turns on, and in turning on, turns remixological, and in turning remixological, transforms you into a kind of electronic performer, an alchemist, or what eventually becomes a postproduction medium.



Trance Ritual Transfigured in Time

“... mobilize the body into a hypnotic state of psychic awareness.”

Or so the story goes.

One version of *Immobilité* uses the quote above (that I just wrote today) to tap into the unconscious relationship between images, bodies, landscapes, generative rhythms, and movement.

There is a deep interior movement or what I now refer to as an *inner choreography* that becomes para-ritualistic for practicing remixologists who are optimally situating their bodies to convert experiential matter into muscle memory that triggers emergent forms of fictional (literary) presence.

Cinematic precursors of this inventive approach toward inner choreography include, among others, Maya Deren. Deren embodied not just the trajectory of what we still sometimes call “the woman’s movement” but perhaps more importantly, *woman’s movement itself*, expressed as a choreographed trance narrative space transfigured in time, one that conducts deep interior investigations into rhythmanalysis and bodily harmolodics.

Trance narrative rhythm is transmitted *body-image to body-image* as part of larger intersubjective process of transgression. Bracha Ettinger writes of this radical intersubjective space as one of co-poiesis:

Copoiesis is the aesthetical and ethical creative potentiality of border-linking and of metamorphic weaving. The psychic cross-imprinting of events and the exchange of traces of mutually (but not symmetrically) subjectivizing agencies, occurring via/in a shared psychic borderspace where two or several becoming-subjectivities meet and borderlink by strings and through weaving of threads, and create singular trans-subjective webs of copoiesis composed of and by transformations along psychic strings stretched between the two or several participants of

each encounter-event. Thus, a matrixial borderspace is a mutating copoietic net where co-creativity might occur.

In *Immobilité*, this psychic border crossing and intersubjective blurring takes place among the mobile images as they circulate in the matrix of mutating flows and remix (with/in) each other. As an attempt to “act out” fluid narrative performance while tracing the deconditioned mind as fictive agency immersed in the perpetual postproduction of presence, the physiological energy of the collaborative artist-mediums emerge in trance narrative space as a kind of mysterious resonance:

‘I’ meets a ‘non-I,’ ‘I’ meets another ‘non-I.’ This ‘non-I’ meets another ‘I.’ Each encounter creates its own psychic resonance field, and each resonance field is with and in other fields of resonance. Thus, each matrixial cluster is a web of meeting of one with-in the other, where each one -- and each other -- belongs to several such clusters. The matrixial web is thus the body-psyche-time-space of the intimate even though it is a web of several, and it is from the onset transgressive. Transgressive and intimate -- even when the encounter is between, with, and in two subjects, the encounter is not symbiotic. Transgressive and intimate -- even if the encounter is between three subjects, inside this sphere triangulation is not Oedipalizing. Com-passionate matrixial empathy is not oedipalizing, yet difference is being swerved there already.

The body-psyche-time-space of the artist-medium intimately attaches itself to the trance narrative-in-process. These “psychic connections” play an important role in the history of the woman’s movement and, as Tony Conrad writes:

The structure of time-based forms, such as media, theater, literature, and lecturing, offer a more complex basis for engaging unconscious processes. Temporal extension admits the possibility that we might be able to manipulate the economy of desire through exchanges between eroticism and trance. [...]

I have alluded to the fact that in the late nineteenth century trance was an empowering system for numbers of American women, among whom suffragists were a significant influence. At mid-century Spiritualist meetings, as Ann Braude describes them:

Men called the meetings to order, forcefully presiding over gatherings that could number in the thousands. They addressed audiences in a “normal: state.... In contrast, the women at the podium were unconscious. Trance mediums were understood to be passive vehicles, whose physical faculties were used by spirits to express the sentiments of these unseen intelligences. Mediums presented not their own views but those of the spirits who spoke through them.... The essential passivity of women was asserted in a public arena, displayed before thousands of witnesses...

Because the trance was viewed as enabling women to speak who were otherwise unqualified to do so, the claim of entrancement became a convention used to support women’s right and ability to ascend the public platform.

The quote above is from “Renovating ‘Culture’: Rhythm, Reorientation, and Neoformalist Agency,” where he explores “the organizational principles of (what the 20th century called) ‘formal’ structures in art, on the one hand, and the communicative / psychological processes involved with (what the 20th century called) ‘trance’ on the other.”

In *Immobilité*, there is a mysterious resonance with the use of the disappearing (and re-appearing) artist/actor as a medium transfiguring time through mobile ritual.

Free Radical (Free Spirit)

Ornette Coleman, the inventor of “harmolodics,” says in a summer 2007 interview in *The Guardian*:

I didn’t know you had to learn to play to play. I thought you had to play to play. I still think that.

This relationship between the player and the playing, of playing to play in an unlearned way but one that develops over time and takes into account the durational aspects of play, repetition, looping, eternal returns, and (a)synchronicity, resonates with the first-ever entry to my *Professor VJ* blog in January 2006 where I quote Miles Davis saying:

“Sometimes you have to play a long time to be able to play like yourself.”

These very simple yet profound sound bites from the maestros of audio infidelity, suggest that there exists a deep interior narrative that we all proactively script while playing out our lives in the NOW. To play as such is to *write ourselves into the environment* the way any instrument asserts itself into a space of creative potential.

This jazzlife standard relates to filmmaking as well. For a role-playing persona who is meant to play themselves as a fictional presence in front of the camera, *playing to play* means being who you are without thinking about it. It means entering another state of (un)reality that has you unconsciously generating your next move. As Coleman says in the interview:

Do you need to have a note to have an idea? Do you have to think to make a mistake? Is life a sound?

In the making of *Immobilité*, we ask: “Do you need to script reality from the outside-in in order to make an “indie film” or can we hyperimprovisationally



play multiple roles in unscripted realities as a way to mobilize our thoughts outside the movie industry system?" Mobilizing our thoughts as an intersubjective collaboration between the various participants is all about mutating the coded behaviors of the performers as they intuitively cohere into a *radical co-poiesis* that is deeply connected to a shared inner choreography, one that plays into the concept of unconsciously syncing the intersubjective psychic processes that occur while in postproduction.)

You can see the traces of a potential mobile cinema emerge in a work like Dziga Vertov's *Man With A Movie Camera* and then, even more so, especially in relation to the literalization of the co-poiesis metaphor indicating a *carrying across* of radical intersubjectivity, in the works of John Cassavetes (cf. his films *Shadows* and *Faces*).

The in-betweenness of things (material waves, intersubjective border crossing, inter-facial value) carried across in a metaphorical jam session between the interactive participants -- this is the jazzlife standard that one must bring to improvisational mobile cinema if they (as a collaborative network of pollination agents) hope to playfully create work that is (literally / metaphorically / chora-graphically) in/of their time.

During one of our Big Days Out (i.e. "on location" a couple of weeks ago), the small cast and crew working on *Immobilité* intersubjectively jammed in multiple, unscripted realities and out of this experience began to emerge a work that was "making itself."

But the work is never really finished. It is in a state of perpetual "unfinish" and leads to more dialogue directly from the source:

Director: Have you read this quote?

Young Actress: No.

Director: It's Godard.

(Director shows Young Actress quote from his new book where Godard is quoted as saying, "To me style is just the outside of content, and content the inside of style, like the outside and inside of the human body. Both go together, they can't be separated.")

Young Actress: Yes, but this is something I am not sure ...

Director: What?

Young Actress: I am focused on the content. I don't know about the style.

Director: Yes, that makes sense. You are still focusing on the content because you are still filling yourself up with the experience.

Young Actress: Yes.

Director: But this is about duration. You are focusing on the content because you are now aware of all of the experience there is to experience.

(Director gestures as if to suggest acceleration is in process.)

Young Actress: Yes.

(Silence)

Young Actress: So I don't know about the style.

Director: But the style will come. While experiencing the content over the duration, a style emerges and then eventually co-exists with the content. One becomes inseparable from the other.

Young Actress: Yes, this is what I think.

CUT TO SLEEP SCENE.

And yet Ornette insists that “harmolodics” as he envisions it is not about a style at all:

Music is not a style. Music is ideas. In any normal style, you have to play certain notes in certain places. You play in that style only and try to make people believe that style is more important than other styles. Which removes you from the idea. With harmolodics you go directly to the idea.

The key difference here is that music is not a style. This relates to my concept of *meta/data* in that it's not just the *meta* nor the *data* that matters, that is, it's not so much about the raw data itself nor the way you “tag the content,” but the way you experientially compose the work from scratch (no preordained style attached) remixologically inhabiting the source material you need in order to *postproduce the present*. Conducting a remix of select source material is going *meta with the data*. What Ornette calls an idea I might call “sense data” and the way we stylize it over time is not a singular achievement but one that resonates (through muscle memory?) with our experiential past (and by past, I mean *a mobile trajectory through a now-history that is in a state of perpetual “unfinish”*).

“The idea is the highest quality of expression,” says Ornette. “It is immortal.”





Another Kind of Persona

Given how much my work plays with the concept of *persona*, it should come as no surprise that *Immobilité* is partly influenced by Ingmar Bergman's classic film *Persona*. During production, Bergman passed away at the age of 89:

The idea for "Persona" came to him after seeing his friend Andersson sunning next to Ullmann, a Norwegian actress who became Mr. Bergman's companion and muse for many years. Struck by the resemblance of the two actresses, Mr. Bergman decided "it would be wonderful to write something about two people who lose their identities in each other."

This idea of "two people who lose their identities in each other" is not exactly what happens in *Immobilité*, and there is actually an invisible, third persona that infects the narrative's movement. Also, there is more to Bergman's *Persona* narrative than "losing identity" and in *Immobilité*, what at first looks like "losing sight of oneself" becomes part of a longer process where one actually finds oneself (albeit as an hauntological flux persona, that is, a simultaneous and continuous fusion of *becoming* marked by what one has already become and the intersubjective processes they engage themselves in while performing co-poiesis. This then leads to the creative theory of being in perpetual and collaborative postproduction where the *postproduction of presence as a measure of ones aesthetic potential* is intimately connected to the trance narrative space they share with other body-images in the networked space of flows).

These kinds of "persona transformations" that trigger new developments in the body-psyche-time-space of the intimate artist-medium are manifested in almost all of my creative works no matter what "media" I happen to be working in. In my second novel, *Sexual Blood*, the protagonist Mal (short for Maldoror but also Male), is identified on the first page as a figure that wants to "become woman." In my net art work *GRAMMATRON*, Cynthia becomes Ms.

A and Abe Golam becomes too many others to even begin listing them all here. The cast of personas in *PHON:E:ME* (referred to as sonoluminescent characters) are quick-change artists whose personalities seep into one another. Perhaps only interesting to me but something I will mention anyway, especially in relation to *Immobilité*, is the fact that I only viewed *Persona* after having created these prior artworks.

Instead of multiple personality disorder in the traditional psychological interpretation of that term, a lot of the figures that appear in my artworks explore (and do not suffer from) Multiple Persona Becoming. Is it dangerous? This is what Bergman, in some of his films, investigated -- and so am I. (These investigations are not limited to the art-house European cinema of 40-50 years ago either. Charlie Kaufman's "Synecdoche, New York" traverses this terrain as well.)

Bergman's "ascetic visuals, intense close-ups and limited dialogue" are hard not to be influenced by if you are at all interested in developing a more philosophically rendered and truly independent narrative art beyond cinema (and beyond "independent filmmaking" per se).

He once said:

The people in my films are exactly like myself [...] Mostly they're body, with a little hollow for the soul.

Of course, the emotional dramas he directed betray these rare self-interpretations and point toward a deeper interior conflict that sometimes only an image can portray. For real body personas minus the theatrical drama, we could turn to obliteration, especially the early nouveau roman work of my teacher, the late Alain Robbe-Grillet. In addition to teaching me the "new novel," Robbe-Grillet also spent a semester teaching me its cinematic complement, "new cinema, featuring the films of Luis Bunuel as well as his own films like *L'Immortelle*, where he investigated the imaginary "body persona" as hallucinated by *L'Invisible*.



Directorial Eclipse

It just so happens that the same day during *Immobilitéé*'s production that Ingmar Bergman died, the Italian film artist Michelangelo Antonioni passed away too. According to the *New York Times*:

In a generation of rule-breakers, Mr. Antonioni was one of the most subversive and venerated. He challenged moviegoers with an intense focus on intentionally vague characters and a disdain for such mainstream conventions as plot, pacing and clarity. He would raise questions and never answer them, have his characters act in self-destructive ways and fail to explain why, and hold his shots so long that the actors sometimes slipped out of character.

Creating a work of moving visual art today, one that is umbilically connect to the life-lines thrown out by Bergman and Antonioni, requires a different set of rule-breaking actions and subversive intentions, though some of their initial ones still resonate in my ongoing trilogy of feature-length foreign films. Most obvious for those who have been working with me on these new works would be “a disdain for such mainstream conventions as plot, pacing and clarity,” “raising questions and never answering them” and “holding shots so long that the actors sometimes slip out of character.”

But slipping out of character is perhaps not the same thing in Antonioni's universe as it might be for the new media / mobile phone visual artist who takes on the forms of art-house cinema but then applies a social networking (Web 2.0) logic to them. Or so this is what is happening in both of my films to date, *My Autoerotic Muse* and *Immobilitéé*. Slipping out of character is more difficult because we are now operating under the premise that there is no character to slip out of to begin with. Character is bogus (as is plot). Unfortunately, these conventions are still driving many of the new media researcher's agendas as they try to “program” reconfigurable and interactive narratives for the soap-opera, plot driven devices associated with mainstream narrative.

As I point out in *META/DATA*, the best way to subvert narrative is via the narrative itself, not these esoteric programming or database driven machine stories. Who has time for that? At a certain point, all that the collaborators who worked together to produce what we still call a “film” would be doing in these programming environments is creating a library of assets for others to play with. The goal? To empower the user to make their own “versions of the moment.” These comments are not meant to ridicule the intensive art / technology / computer science research that is investigating alternative “ways of telling,” but the issue that is bound to come up time and time again is “What about the experiential quality of the language itself?” -- and in this case, the artist generated language being referred to is not just words on a page or scenes of a film shot from a standard screenplay or script, but an interdisciplinary, collaborative, hybridized, multi-media language that is generated from a team of performer / personas who use their collective behaviors (that take place in asynchronous realtime) as source material for the work that is eventually postproduced.

Perhaps a better model for post-film versioning of narratives would be the mash-up or what I call remixologically inhabiting the language of narrative *potential*.

There are sticking points to all of this:

- Who is the Director and why?
- Is a Director necessary? (Is the Bergman/Antonioni artist-figure a relic of the past, or can it morph into something else in 2.0 webspace and beyond?)
- Given access to a library of artist-created assets and customized software programs, is the “remixologist-in-the-making” anything more than a bored culture vulture looking for the next new hit of potentially interactive entertainment? [My sense is that they are *much* more, although why would they want to remix an interactive narrative being driven by plots and rules associated with most database narratives? Do you think they would rather mash-up (remixologically inhabit) a narrative space that's already been composed by a co-conspirator by putting their own “spin” on it?]

- Even if it were true that a “remixologist-in-the-making” is nothing but a cutting-edge *researcher cum consumer* (a post-beta tester driving the competitive market and using open source culture to sculpt a postproduction practice into being), so what?

- Who writes the “action scripts”? (This question is asked at the opening of my net art work FILMTEXT [markamerika.com/filmtext] too)

- Is the author/auteur really “dead” and if so, who/what takes their place? The amateur? The social network? The programmer? The open source ideologists?

- Why interactivity, and why now?

Over the past few weeks, I have been informally surveying various new media artists, computer programmers, literary writers, “communications” theorists, and art appreciators of all genders, races, sexual orientation, and ages, having conversations about their relationships to different kinds of cultural objects, media/mediums, experiences, and events, and I am ready to report my findings in a very informal way. What I have found out is that, in general:

- They prefer reading a book to going to a museum or gallery
- They like surfing the web for new developments in net art and the like but spend very little time engaging with the work, especially if it requires a major time investment
- They like going to live A/V [audio-visual] events/happenings that experiment with image/sound/text but prefer it to happen in more of a social setting that they can network in, i.e. immerse themselves in the performance via persona-participation instead of being seated before a performance as in a concert scenario
- They love art-house cinema (differences on what they love or like or dislike abound)
- They say that Youtube is better than TV (but rarely articulate why beyond the “user gets to select what they watch when” model)

- They say their mobile phone is great for texting, talking, taking pix, and maybe emailing if they have access, but are still not sold on the PDA as a major display device for “interactive” anything although this may change somewhat in a post-iPhone portable media landscape (although they don’t hold out much hope and who can blame them?)

All of this feeds back into the practice-based art research agenda of my *Foreign Film Series* and what I keep coming back to over and over again is that Bergman’s major trilogy and most especially *Persona* as well as Antonioni’s trilogy and most especially *L’Eclisse* are much more significant in the development of emergent forms of moving visual art in new media culture than any database configuration I have ever looked at or interacted with. This includes anything even remotely considered user-generated interactivity.

This brings up an interesting question that I will not have a readymade answer for: “Who is the audience for my *Foreign Film Series* and how will it be delivered?”

Is it the same audience that came in droves for the net art trilogy (GRAMMATRON, PHON:E:ME, and FILMTEXT)? The audience that bought and read (or will buy and read) my novels (*The Kafka Chronicles*, *Sexual Blood*, and *29 Inches*)? The audience that is curious how live A/V and especially VJ performance may or may not effect post-cinematic work of moving visual art? A totally other audience hooked on art-house films but looking beyond the current “indie” model? Those interested in writing’s revenge on the Society of the Spectacle? None/all of the above?

There is no definitive answer. But as a pataphysician who openly creates imaginary solutions for problems that don’t really exist, I have a formula I am looking at:

Antonioni/Bergman “alienation” persona effects / long close-ups / plotlessness / lack of clarity + alternative rhythm/pacing + Youtube aesthetic + access to image/sounds/text assets for “versioning” mashups + endless blog ranting and playlisting for more “artist-generated contextualizing source material” = *Immobilité*

This is all subject to change.



Still

I am still researching all of the newly available data on Antonioni and Bergman now that they have both died on the same day right in the midst of our production. A lot is being written, way too much to track it all at once, but gems do appear and resonate with current themes or methodologies running parallel to the *Foreign Film Series* of artworks. For instance, Antonioni talking to Roger Ebert way back in 1969:

Until the film is edited, I have no idea myself what it will be about. And perhaps not even then. Perhaps the film will only be a mood, or a statement about a style of life. Perhaps it has no plot at all, in the way you use the word. I depart from the script constantly. I may film scenes I had no intention of filming; things suggest themselves on location, and we improvise. I try not to think about it too much. Then, in the cutting room, I take the film and start to put it together, and only then do I begin to get an idea of what it is about.

From the perspective of an artist-medium always on the verge of unconsciously triggering their next creative move, this is only way to make art.

It is often during the creation of new material works that I wonder what is being created intentionally and what is being created intuitively. Is it possible to create work as a simultaneous and continuous fusion of intuition and intentionality?

Going-on-ness



During the beginning of postproduction, I was invited to Seoul to share my work and deliver the keynote address at the “Buddhism and New Media” conference at Dongguk University. I left the St. Maur studio in Paris, passed through Boulder, and flew out to Seoul to immerse myself in South Korean urban culture. Here is an excerpt from the keynote paper, entitled “Artist, Medium, Instrument”:

How does a work suggest its ‘going-on-ness’, especially when you take into account issues of duration, Internet-era attention span, creative momentum, narrative, mixed reality, and interactivity?

Stan Brakhage spoke about “a magicwork that makes itself” - a creative force that is filtered through the unconscious and that can only happen once one has freed themselves of the weight of commercial success and other burdens that come with a life fettered with unnecessary attachments. Only then, says Brakhage, could an artist finally blaze the path that they intuitively know they have to make (I’m adding my own associative word-thoughts here now). Sampling more of his phrases from a local TV interview in Boulder, Colorado, we hear him frequently refer to the “buzzing of mind” and “vision of muse” that fills his head like bees in a beehive as the work gets created on its own terms without any interference. He was cautious enough to make clear that not every work will be a magicwork, and any artist who has stuck it out over decades of trial and error art-research practice knows this to be the case. Sometimes it just comes out, sometimes not. And when the creative momentum one experiences while making a specific work is lost, you are never really sure if you will get it back. These are the risks one takes when developing their new material in a variety of media/mediums, especially when it’s time-based new media that they are porting their poetic vibes through.

The instrument needs constant tuning.

The beehive mind needs to buzz.

Some mystic needs to forget themselves.

The unconscious experience of the intuitive body becoming new media ...

Think of it as creating an active unconscious momentum, where the proprioceptive artist-medium “knows” where they are going without ever having been there before.

Or: imagine the artist-medium playing out their aesthetic potential via an innate body intuition, flushed with the illogic of sense (data), operating on autopilot.

The history of new media is the history of the world. For example, we can time-travel back to Germany in 1805, where we find a short essay written by Heinrich von Kleist, collected in his now out of print *An*

Abyss Deep Enough. The essay is entitled “On the Gradual Fabrication of Thoughts While Speaking,” where the author intuits the unconscious neural mechanism that triggers creative thought and writes: “For it is not we who know; it is rather a certain condition, in which we happen to be, that ‘knows.’”

The writing of movement while embodying praxis ...

To my surprise and delight, as a last second addition to the “Buddhism and New Media” conference, my keynote presentation had as its respondent, Jang Sun Woo who, it just so happens, is my favorite Korean film director and whose *Lies (Gojitmal)*, is one of my all-time favorite works of cinematic art. Our exchange was highlighted by a discussion that grew out of one section of my script:

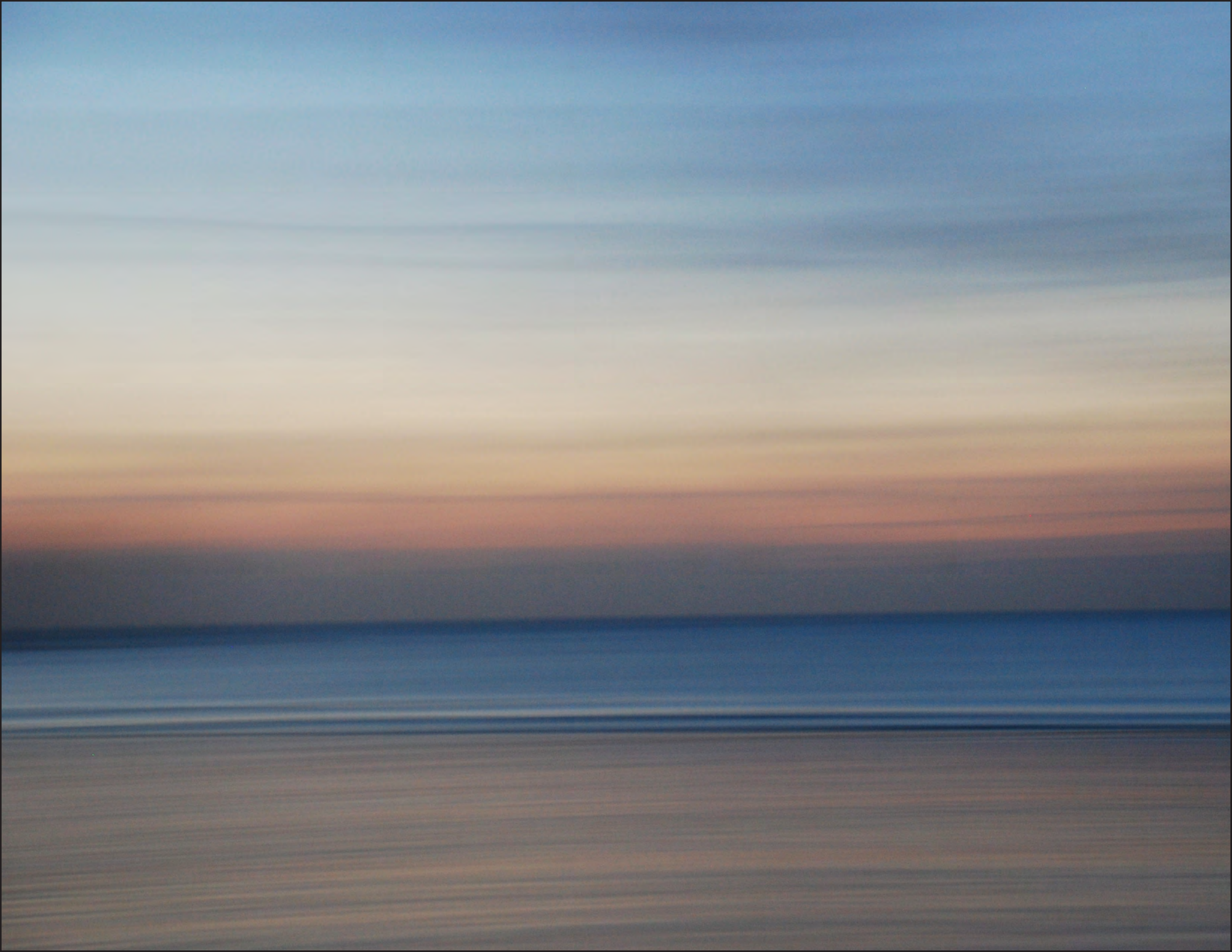
Each artist has to figure out their own unique creative path for themselves. There is no sure-fire way of constructing the “right” set of digital personas so that you can build your own one-person “art-making machine.” The ways are endless and yet the destiny seems to be the same.

(The notion of an “art-making machine” came from Eleanor Antin, who once said in a PBS interview: “I had a marvelous art-making machine -- my personas. I never knew where it would go.”)

Jang Sun Woo wanted to know, “What could we mean by the phrase ‘and yet the destiny seems to be the same’?”

A somewhat connected thought that did not truly address his question came out of my mouth: “The destination is not something you arrive at, but something you move in.”

The deep interior shot is fluid. Immersed in its given impermanence. Metamediumistic and triggered from unconscious creative potential. Totally fluxus. It cannot be described or summarized without cheapening its effect. It’s the opposite of “aboutness.” It’s like what they used to say in regards to some of the wilder forms of jazz: “If you have to ask what it is, then you’ll never know.”



Transient Appearances

Last night I was in the Kingdom of Shadows...

It is terrifying to see, but it is the movement of shadows, only shadows. Curses and ghosts, the evil spirits that have cast entire cities into eternal sleep -- come to mind -- and you feel as though Merlin's vicious trick is being enacted before you...

The above is from a review of the Lumière program at the Nizhni-Novgorod Fair on July 4, 1896, and is signed "I. M. Pacatus" -- a pseudonym for Maxim Gorky.

Gorky feels haunted by "[a] train of shadows" whose "[s]trange imaginings invade your mind and your consciousness begins to wane and grow dim..." Basically, he is falling into a cinematic trance and if he were capable back then of tapping into his creative potential as a remixologist, he would have used that trance state to autohallucinate (envision) another world (within our world). But how could he? Could anyone watching films for the first time in 1896 proactively envision an alternative reality that borrows from cinematic reel/realtime while anticipating the oncoming of digital culture's "asynchronous realtime"?

In the essay "(De)realizing Cinematic Time," Mary Anne Doane writes:

For the term "real time" can only take on meaning when there is the possibility of an "unreal time," the time, for instance, of an edited temporal flow, which is capable of reducing days to minutes, years to an hour.

In *Immobilité*, time is stretched, compressed, etherealized, and unrealized. At one point, we read about the "seven days of Saturday" and a solstice that never ends. Doane goes on to suggest that "[g]iven the viewer's heightened knowledge of the manipulability of the visual image -- its status as a simulacrum with no origin or referent -- time rather than space becomes

the residence of the real." It has "a much longer history, an examination of which can elucidate the embrace of the seemingly contradictory attributes of continuity and instantaneity by the concept of real time. It is a history which coincides with that of the intensification of capitalism and its investment in a commodification inseparable from the notion of innovation -- it is the pre-history of real time."

What Gorky saw as "a vicious trick" is not the result of some sleight of hand but rather the (de)realization of an emergent form of creative potential manifesting itself as cinema, one bound by its inseparable attachment to the apparatus forever linked to the commodification of time produced and postproduced. Does this mean that the postproduction artist, even one who unconsciously triggers their creative potential via an improvised play of image behaviors, is always already a commodity-in-the-making?

The contemporary remixologist, an artist-medium melding with the apparatus in asynchronous realtime, innovates / remixes / manipulates / commodifies, that is, they trade in images, the way jazz players intersubjectively jam with each other by trading licks. Every film is a foreign film, negotiating its value on the aesthetic currency market.

The process of envisioning, part image capturing, part hyperimprovisation, part trading/jamming, and part articulating a heretofore unimagined rhetorical drift running parallel to ones ongoing pseudo-autobiographical narrative, spurs the remixologist on so that they continually and instantaneously *play to play* using indeterminacy and fringe-flow sensation as the roots of a practiced methodology (this kind of autohallucinatory performance is the postproduction artist's version of "method acting").

The hyperimprovisational play improvised by the "method actors" drifts inside an embodied *durée* where the punctual present smudges with the *just-in-time* past. The just-in-time past is a space of time where you feel like you have "been there, done that" *while* remixing -- no longer able to distinguish between being-in-production and being-in-post. You're acting so fast, so methodically, in effect *becoming the body-image* in *rhythmanalysis*, that you turn into a kind of postproduction medium.

FIN