

Home of the Brave – Archaeology of the Moving Image

“The function of the image, as Gogol said, is to express life itself, not ideas or arguments about life. It does not signify life or symbolize it, but embodies it, expressing its uniqueness.”
Andrey Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*

Under the roof of the title *Home of the Brave*, Corner College evolves a series of rather heterogeneous events with lectures, talks, screenings, workshops, performative relations and experiments that de-automate our “experiences of vision” (Vertov), in a multivalent engagement with the aesthetics and politics of the moving image and its creative, analytical, critical and feminist power, rather than to represent certain concepts of trends or schools.

We, borrowing this “WE” from “WE: Variant of a Manifesto” by Dziga Vertov,¹ which is actually a collective persona of three: a director, a camera operator, and an editor, we, “a collectivity” of themes, problems and questions, we, with the magnitude and collectivity of the event, “on the wing of hypothesis” and analysis, we contemplate the moving image as a collection and composition of relations of movement and rest, we go with the rhythm of its movements to experience the moment of the direct image and concrete time: “Drawings in motion; Blueprints in motion; Plans for the future;” and beyond.

In this series we are inspired by Vertov who invented the molecularity of the movement and the molecular revolution of the everydayness of daily life, where in the silence of the moving image we can “hear” the noise of the tracing of machinic time with its manifold combinations of subjective dispositions in all its accelerations and decelerations, all variations and degrees of temporal perspectives, or modulations of instant moments of the substantive time of the event in the interval.

We speak here of substantive time, since “the *movement-image* and *flowing-matter* are strictly the same thing,” as Deleuze argues with Bergson in *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*. This is dissipative time, the wasted time of the invisible process, made in the relations in “the mobile section of a duration” (Deleuze). In Vertov’s notion of the kino-eye as a slow-motion eye eventually expanded to “kino-eye=cinema-analysis; kino-eye=the theory of the intervals” which is “the visual linkage of phenomena separated in time,” from montage to assemblage or alliance. The distortion of the linearity of time or refusal of one single time can be a means of giving a new rhythmical expression to daily life, from day to day modeling the time paths, the time that flows between the frames.

Editing brings different notions of time together. Because of that, one can say that the dialectics of montage is the dynamic system of time in the interval between action and reaction, as later conceptualized by Deleuze in-between Movement-Image and Time-Image, or in the interval between the two volumes. If the former is “the shot of the camera” or irreversible time, the latter is the fiction time of montage, following Vertov’s non-chronological intervals of the series that gives rhythm or singularities to the continuum of heterogeneous themes and events in-between the “high speed eye” and the “slow motion eye.” This is what Vertov called “the theory of relativity on the screen” or “the theory of the interval,” the translation of the image from one movement to the other.

The *movement-image* is a composition in the interval in combination between perception, action, affection. When the moving image has been digitalized, its translation is no longer the succession of

¹ Dziga Vertov is a collective pseudonym of David Kaufman, Mikhail Kaufman and Elizaveta Svilova.

movements in the interval of Vertov, or in the mobile hinge or plasticity of time. Deleuze re-translates these to disjunctions and separations of time in the interval, where time flowing between two poles or two systems of time (irreversible/dissipative, and reversible/non-dissipative) multiplies. This process is imperceptible on the screen of the projection of the moving image, but we find talking about it an emancipation of the threshold of perceptions.

In the current conditions of production of images where new forms of exploitation, cultivation and circulation from one mobile device to the other demand endless re-translation from digital to analog and back, signifying the extreme mobility in which value is counted as transferability, the moving image becomes partial and extra-artistic, which means the art of the moving image is that of amateur artists and of the virtuoso multitude or very skilled audiences.

The image with its digitalization gains more continuum and can no longer be isolated as a certain cinematographic concept. In *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Gilles Deleuze introduces the reversible *time-image*, where movements run in reverse. The *time-image* commands the false movement or fictitious movement of inverted or convoluted time, which produces concrete time, one static *time-image* that has changed and reversed its dynamics and reaction in the interval to the combination of the three varieties: affect, concept and percept. Here we follow closely how the *time-image* was conceptualized by Deleuze.

With this series, we aim to empower the pedagogical lineage of transversal short lines that connect frame to frame and moves them. We will rely on the educational force inherent in the moving image itself, as it opens up towards as process of unlearning or estrangement of our habitus and de-automated perceptions whose device is defamiliarization as a *téchne* that changes the “extra-artistic” to artistic (Viktor Shklovsky), which lies in the method of the dialectics of the montage. Defamiliarization is a device used to deform not the image, but the events and movements in the process of their visual representation. Defamiliarization is a device, and its material is the event – not the narrative, which is the experience of the movement.

There is a similarity between defamiliarization, which is a displacement or forced movement of the alienating and inorganic forces, and the operation of ungrounding the groundless and grounding the event, in the Deleuzian concept of cinema, in which the moving image is no longer a matter of montage but requires specific blocks of movement, or particular blocks of time and space, not in the narrative but in the event, since the moving image is a composition of movements that depends on time and the event, which is a poetic function of the surface. The time operations in the composition of the image are poetic functions of refusal or the selective being in the event, or the active selection of actions in the event as developed by the Soviet Futurists. They are an implicit auto-poetic algorithm driven by extra-human forces, incorporating randomness and chance (John Cage) to create a self-organizing pattern of singularization and divergence, which is a non-narrative pattern of individuation. This poetic refusal, let's call it the digital sublime, or the sublime of the dynamic and reactive, is the molecular image which produces the direct image and concrete time of irreversible struggle in complex molecular time that brings back collectivity as change, future and truth.

Paradoxically the truth of the moving image comes from this false *time-image*, as being convoluted in the event, which is the movement of inverted time that comes back towards us from the pure past in which the image is our contemporary, never after us, but confronts our becoming and anticipates our future, as an expression of the intuition that is able “to open up an intermediate position in between” (Vertov). The moving image is thus not historical material, but material for the future. We

look at the archeology of the moving image as the molecular self-cultivation of an extra-academic platform that lies outside the pathetic and patronizing effect of the big museums.

The series accentuates not the chronological history of the moving image, but its non-linear geographies, encounters for the audience, as well as new ontological futures of its poetic and scientific intensifications of affect, concept and percept in the artistic creation of the moving image. The aim is to explore the archaeology of the moving image, not as an archiving process, but as a genealogy and analysis that interrogate how the aesthetics and politics of the moving image exceed and transgress even its own limitations determined by its means of production and media technologies. The composition of the moving image and its invisible continuity of luminous flashing signs in the series of time or non-chronological or machinic unconscious, cross beyond existing languages into a non-semiotic 'natural encoding' within the bio matrix and its "descriptive science of reality," which is "a continuing transmission of the encoded forms from one substance to another" (Félix Guattari). They are part of new modes of encoding of non-signifying semiotics, signs without referential structure, signs that designate nothing, because their movement is their only referent.

The image is "a code which is able to 'digitalize' analogy," writes Deleuze in *Cinema 2*. Its possible modulations and crystallizations are without resemblance, infinite, an open and relational work of irreversible life. The image becomes a multidimensional relation between fiction and facts, situated not only between movement and space, but between movement and time, where the image stretches out into infinity, not only as memory but forming a present of the extra-propositional and sub-representative operatism, *demanding new forms of intuition and complexity*, as Andrey Tarkovsky wrote in his theory of cinema, *Sculpting in Time*: "The function of the image, as Gogol said, is to express life itself, not ideas or arguments about life. It does not signify life or symbolize it, but embodies it, expressing its uniqueness."

If the power of the cinematic concept of the image is the composition of time by means of montage in which the moving image was determined by the relation of play and stop and repeating the same operation over and over, till the moment when difference-in-itself as an autocatalytic loop of auto-affectations or affect-in-itself is able to occupy itself in the contemplating mind, affection is what occupies the interval (Deleuze). It can occur in the interval or the gap between the shot movement and the montage. Today the montage of the moving image with its play and stop can be replaced by the de-territorialization of the image's deployment in space, of its localization in the space, where the image can appear and disappear endlessly, restarting from the empty set. Thus play and stop are best replaced, rather, by appearance and disappearance.

What happens in this process with the interval of the delay, or slow time, that is at play and betrays clock time, or the time imposed by the synchronizing and simulating devices, as the image is transferred as data from one device to another and from one set defined by a system of coordinates that of a monitor? The multiplication of intervals leads to a multiplication of the points of resistance, and even a machinic unconscious, as in the "smaller and smaller intervals between more and more rapid movements" (Deleuze) an intelligence can appear in the empty space, like in the relation between the movements of microorganisms.

The image is no longer a matter of re-presentation of reality but operates in the real by re-producing or re-constructing itself as a (thermo) dynamic system of microphysics and micro-desires determined by its temporal asymmetries, matter or substances being asymmetric due to their different and complex time dimensions.

The series pursues to make space for new forms of artistic expression and practices of time-based art, where the image production and consumption in an art and extra-art context elicits new functions in which representation no longer exists, as the image itself becomes a collection of substances, digits, bits, crossing into the outside of the infinitely small or large, as the screen is “imbued” with a presentiment of groundlessness. If the moving images has lost its qualitative value as it has been understood, that is, its representative value, it has gained a new immeasurable quality, as all ungrounded quanta (data) are able to include irreducible difference within themselves, as Deleuze might say.

The main title of this series is appropriated from Laurie Anderson’s 1986 concert film or multimedia ‘talking opera,’ in which one can encounter a hallucinatory world of bizarre magnitudes of composed sequences or lengths, mobilizing all quantity and intensities of disconnected virtual raining drops that come down and go underground and then come back, as they are composing quantities. These dots of ungrounded or groundless smaller and larger pieces are the virtual impregnation of the real with thousands of specters.

Like the grin of the luminous cat at the exit, as the play with the empty set {}, that is able to fulfill itself from zero to draw a line of singularization by means of difference, a line of hidden geometric patterns figuring a pentagram that self-initiates ‘flows of becoming.’ This flow of becoming can only be actualized under the selection of the infinitely small, which cannot be distributed but only collected, since they are themselves collective, being a milieu, a mass, many, digits, and noise. This process is created by the fingers and the empty relational space between them, through which time can pass. The technology of this very particular hand comes directly from the event of the collection and selection of actions of movement and rest of the infinitely small that turn the fingers into branches of a growing electric palm tree with its own south or flickering neon curving lines of Egyptian hieroglyphs or Chinese writing, from where the uniqueness of the image gradually appears.

Text: Dimitrina Sevova in collaboration with Alan Roth