

***THE DIVINE HORSEMEN***  
AND  
***PEOPLE INBETWEEN***



**A STUDY OF  
THE  
SPACES BETWEEN  
MAGICAL TIME AND MECHANICAL MOTION**

*Divine Horsemen and People Inbetween:*  
**A Study of the Spaces Between  
Magical Time  
and  
Mechanical Motion**

Submitted by Jonathan Clementi-Smith to the University of Exeter  
as a thesis for the degree of  
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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature: .....

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There is no greater joy than that of feeling oneself a creator. The triumph of life is expressed by creation.

Art has no other object than to set aside the symbols of practical utility, the generalities that are conventionally and socially accepted, everything in fact which masks reality from us, in order to set us face to face with reality itself. - Henri Bergson.

The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend. - Henri Bergson.

The interaction of philosophy and art should create difference and divergence, rather than agreement and common sense. Philosophy has to do with creating concepts, while art has to do with creating new experiences. But the two can transform each other. The creation of cinema challenged philosophers to rethink the relation between time and the image; but new concepts in philosophy can provoke artists into recreating the boundaries of experience (Colebrook, 2002: 7).

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## ABSTRACT

This PhD “Film by Practice” sets out to question and explore the nature of film poetry. The poetry of the cinematic image is described by the filmmaker Jean Epstein as the “unveiling of the magic inherent in the visual object beyond the capacity of words to define” (Epstein, cited in Sitney, 1978: xxiii). This is a daunting task that the study interprets through the moving image with particular reference to the magical temporal art of trance possession, which is processed within the genre of experimental ethnographic documentary and intercultural film. This thesis is an experiment in form, taking the filmmaker Maya Deren’s notion of film as comprising of “narrative horizontals” and “poetic verticals” (Deren and Sitney, 1971: 178) explored through a practical investigation of movement and time in space both beyond and within the film frame, studied through the art installations *Divine Horsemen* (2005) and *People Inbetween* (2007). It is focused through a reading of Gilles Deleuze’s Bergsonian philosophies of cinema as “movement-images” and “time-images” (Deleuze, 1989: xvi, xvii), exhibited as multi-screened video art installations that evolve within the space and hence exist in a perpetual state of “becoming”. Whether this is the sounds and images that change depending on where they are viewed, or the narrative theme of the works as “becoming other”.

The themes of “in-betweenness” and the “mix” are investigated through these two video documentary artworks; first, by a third party restaging/remixing of the experimental ethnographic footage of Haitian Voodoo trance possession shot by Maya Deren, unfinished and posthumously released as *Divine Horsemen the Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1985); and second, diaspora and the intercultural are explored through the first person personal. Intercultural documentary and experimental ethnography filtered through me with specific reference to my own triangular ethnicity, being British, Sri Lankan, though classified as Dutch Burgher, a “lost white tribe” (Orizio, 2000: 2): a journey into racial “becoming” as an “in-between” belonging to a diasporic community.

## INTRODUCTION

In the first section of the thesis I will ground the methodology behind the creation of these two artworks and highlight the common areas of film theory that informed the process. My rationale is concerned with the creation of a unity between practice and theory - as a whole greater than the sum of its parts - expressed through the physical form of both installations. Revealed in a commonality and continuity between the structure of the artworks and the underlying film theory; investigating visual poetry as spatial events outside of the classic frame in *Divine Horsemen* (2005), and as transformational intervals of time within the expanded frame in *People Inbetween* (2007). This thesis focuses on common areas of reasoning between the theories of Henri Bergson concerning movement as sets of actions in space and time as durations of fundamental change (Bergson, 1911: 322-324), the film philosophies of Gilles Deleuze, expressed as movement-images and time-images (Deleuze, 1989: xv-xvii), and Maya Deren's notion of the "narrative horizontal" and the "poetic vertical".

This approach will attempt to highlight the fundamental conceptual shifts in cinematic thought between the seamless connections of the whole within a film that are expressed through the movement-image; creating an overall direct common sense of unity of form, point of view and meaning to the film: man as the centre of his universe. Moreover, the reversal of this within the time-image where film images are split apart, becoming de-linked shots that have to be re-linked in irrational ways with no logical common sense central point of view within the film as a whole: man decentred from the nature of the world.

In classic "movement-image" cinema time moves forward as sets of actions, hence the mind of the viewer is not challenged. The "shock of thought" in modern "time-image" cinema is the mind of the viewer being forced towards invention to create meaning out of the unlinked imagery on the screen. Hence, highlighting the brains methodology of perception between the logical unfolding of facts and intuitive understanding.

As both the brain and film work in automatic motion this forced leap to create inherent meaning within the "time-image" highlights a fundamental process at work

within the interval of the sensory-motor schema<sup>1</sup> between incoming perception and outgoing action, which is the hidden well to unveiling aspects of reality as well as revealing new perceptions of the world. The interval within the sensory-motor schema (SMS) has a direct relevance to the appreciation of art and the process of art creation, including the art form of the digital-image and new media. As proposed by Bergson and Deren, this is the methodology of intuition, of experience, of affection, as moments of durational change in time.

*Divine Horsemen* illustrated *being repetition*, hence exploring motion/mimesis as a re-staging of Deren's Haitian Voodoo ethnographic film, and thus is a remix. *People Inbetween*, by contrast, illustrated the notion of *becoming difference*, hence time as change experienced as a poetic journey through my own mixed race heritage.

The writing and the video installations reflect this "difference and repetition"<sup>2</sup> by attacking the same issue from varying points of view. As suggested by Deleuze in order to keep a durational (live) quality within philosophy "I make, remake, and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always de-centered center, from an always displaced periphery, which repeats and differentiates them" (Deleuze, 1977: xxi).

*Divine Horsemen* and *People Inbetween* explore paradoxical spaces; the first a remix of an existing work creating a new whole form, the unique within the (digital) copy. The second is a personal journey through my own mixed ethnicity but abstracted and ritualised; the duality of "me" as the ethnographic alien "other".

The thesis whilst addressing common theoretical issues within the video installations also sets out to examine whether artistic "aura" can exist in the digital remix as a form of creative mimesis. Encompassed within a search for the temporal durations expressed within the automatic motion of the mechanical (film) image that have inherent links to the automatic motion and mimesis of trance possession.

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<sup>1</sup> The mind/body link of the nervous system.

<sup>2</sup> "Difference and repetition", a term that is the backbone of Deleuze's philosophies, is the "power of beginning and beginning again" (Deleuze, 1994: 136). His concept of "becoming" is linked with this notion, hence difference and repetition, as discovery, as experimentation and a way to experience prime effects, the new as a mutation, a hybridity. It is the creative act of transformation that is in repetition. The difference is in the same as an act of durational becoming: evolution. Therefore, in his break from traditional philosophies, to re-think anew the very act of thinking over and over again.

In addition, early film theorists' allusion to movies as "magical" and "animistic" as a methodology to define the nature of cinema will also be analysed; hence the paradox of modern technology linked with pre-linguistic visual expression located within the temporal mechanics of the film image.

In chapter one, I analyse the video installation *Divine Horsemen* (2005). This specifically focuses on Deren's own art form and film theory in relation to the cosmology of Voodoo as a holistic act of equivalence between Deren, Voodoo, and my own art practice. Can the temporal magic of the Voodoo rites be revealed spatially within the movement of the image, processed through Deren's art form and film theories?

In chapter two, I analyse *People Inbetween* (2007) as an example of an intercultural film exploring diaspora expressed within the multi-screened form of "expanded cinema", described by Gene Youngblood as "not just expanded physically, through multiple screens or spatially within the environment, but as a way of visually expanding consciousness" (Youngblood, 1970: 47). I examine it poetically through my own racial fluidity as existing in-between two cultures, and so inherently always in a state of becoming the other within both.

In the conclusion, I discuss Bergson's philosophies of the durational creativity of the artist in relation to the theory informing both video installations and the multifaceted face of the digital-image. Hence, this is an analysis of the notion that within the intuitive expressions of the artist are the tools in which to unveil truthful perceptions of reality.

## THE METHODOLOGY OF THE ARTIST

The methodology of the artist as a creative act can be visualised as intuitive jumps between stepping stones of reasoning. I commence with two questions to explore and define the poetic nature of film as an art form expressed within these two video artworks:

- 1) Can the filmic visual poetry of the magical Voodoo trance rites shot by Maya Deren be revealed within a remix as a form of creative mimesis which highlights the nature of differences in repetition, restaged from her unfinished experimental ethnographic work?
  
- 2) Can the intercultural space of the in-between be unveiled within my own mixed race ethnicity, explored as an intimate personal journey - yet abstracted, decentred, made impersonal and fractured, through the removal of myself as the common link within the expanded frame of the artwork?

Hence to explore the poetic art of film posited by aspects of early film theory as being an almost magical act caught within automatic movement exhibiting trance like properties; trance possession being integral to both *Divine Horsemen*, and *People Inbetween*.

Sergei Eisenstein postulated in *Film Form* (1949), “art is nothing else but an artificial retrogression in the field of psychology towards forms of earlier thought-processes” (Eisenstein, 1949: 140), which a culture has historically passed through.<sup>3</sup> He equated this pre-logical pre-linguistic visual thinking with artistic practice, in which “flow the processes of sensual thought as equivalent to a habit logic”, manifested within primitive societies as shamanic or trance rituals, animism, and tribal customs. These intuitive emotional states or “sensual thoughts” proposed by Eisenstein turn out to be at the same time “precisely what we employ as artistic methods” (Eisenstein, 1949: 131).

Walter Benjamin also saw magic and ritual as the birthplace of art, and so in

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<sup>3</sup> However, this “sensual thinking” (wisdom custom) manifests itself within modern culture, as when a girl to whom you have been unfaithful tears up your photo thus destroying the wicked betrayer. She re-enacts the magical process of destroying the man by destroying his image (Eisenstein 1949: 143). Sensual thinking and logical reason may ebb and flow within a culture and are not necessarily tied to cultural progress (Eisenstein 1949: 143).

essence the birthplace of artistic “aura”, the unique expression of touching an object from a cultural distance. In *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1970), Benjamin talked of an artwork’s “aura” as the object’s unique quality, which originated in the ritual within the service of the cult and is expressed through tradition (Benjamin, 1970: 217). Artistic aura is investigated in relation to the digital copy.

Filmmakers such as Jean Epstein, when discussing the poetic art of cinema coined the phrase *photogénie*. To quote Epstein directly when asked, “What is *photogénie*? I would describe as photogenic any aspect of things, or souls, enhanced by filmic production... Cinema is a language, and like all languages, it is animistic.<sup>4</sup> These lives are like the life in charms and amulets, the ominous, tabooed objects of certain primitive religions” (Epstein, 1981: 23). I posit that *photogénie* has a direct relevance to Deren’s use of close-ups and slow-motion imagery of the Haitian Voodoo possessions, re-worked and re-staged within the video installation *Divine Horsemen* (2005).

In his article *Sorcery and the Cinema* (1927) Artaud saw “cinema as essentially the revealer of a whole occult life with which it puts us into direct contact... Raw cinema, as it is, in the abstract, exudes a little of this trance-like atmosphere” (Artaud, and Sitney, 1978: 50). I posit that raw cinema is an early example of Deleuze’s notion of the time-image with a direct relevance to the durational qualities of the trance possession rites filmed for the multi-screened installation *People Inbetween* (2007).

Sitney in *Avant-Garde Film* (1978), referred to Deren’s film art as circular spirals of dreamlike states, an expression of the mind not the subconscious, as “trance film” (Sitney, 1978: xxi). Sitney acknowledges the ritualistic elements within Deren’s film form, marked by their temporal constructs - the use of repetition and slow motion - thus he positions these elements as delinked temporal movements in space. This is therefore linked to poetic metaphor and hence has common elements within the trance possession rites. Trance being the common link between both the video installations *Divine*

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<sup>4</sup> Animism is the traditional belief that a spirit can exist within non-human others, such as stones, objects, creatures, etc. Alternatively, for a more enlightened reading, it describes the relationships and dialogues that can be had with non-human objects or beings. Portuguese colonial explorers in West Africa described this behaviour as *Fetisso*, a fetish, meaning that there is a direct relationship between animism and fetishism in Western thought; a link, which would in essence become essential to Sigmund Freud’s notion of the unconscious (Freud, 1918: 77-79). Hence, one culture’s religious aura may be described as an “others” cultural fetish.

*Horsemen*, and *People Inbetween*. Trance possession rites conjoined both video installations *Divine Horsemen* (2005), and *People Inbetween* (2007) thematically and conceptually. Because trance is the visual pivot in both film artworks, it symbolises both the physical spectacle and the transformational moment. This is the invisible durational mental (inner) *magic* within the mechanical physical (external) action, and as such is a poetic allegory of the photogenic temporal nature of film.

Artaud saw trance as a form of extreme metaphysical/physical realism. Trance describes the extreme actions of the self (the person in a trance state), which are systematically depersonalised as the body is taken over by an alien force from both outside and within. Artaud also describes trance as a form of subjective realism, of “constantly mirrored interplay”, passing from a “colour to a gesture, from cries to movements, which endlessly leads us along rough paths that are difficult for the mind, pitching us into uncertainty, that indescribably anxious state most suited to poetry” (Artaud, 1970: 45). The thesis attempts to address this dual state of the mind most suited to poetry, inherent in the differences between logical explainable reason and intuitively felt experiences, processed through the study of the mimetic art of trance, and the temporal durational qualities of the art of the film image.

These concepts - art as a pre-linguistic expression of sensual thought, film as having animistic qualities, “raw cinema as direct visceral experience” (Russell, 1999: 217), film as dreamlike states with trance like qualities - were challenging, particularly when related to one another. I searched for a form that would express this in the very structure of the video installations, with Deren’s art form and film theories in relation to her Haitian Voodoo film footage as the starting point. The underlying study addresses the relative relationships between time as fundamental change in kind, and matter as relational movements in space by degrees, exhibited within the film image – explainable logic, and sensual intuitive thought. Bergson states in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (1999), “From intuition one can pass to analysis, but not from analysis to intuition” (Bergson, 1999: 42). From this I commenced my intuitive journey through the creation of these video installations centred on an exploration of the automatic processes of trance possession and its relationship to poetic documentary film.

**The Artist Within The Document:  
A PARADOX OF FORM**

With the creation of the installations for the PhD Film by Practice there were essentially two major processes that conceptually clashed with each other; firstly, the creation of the two multi-screened video installations and their gallery exhibition, and secondly, the adaptation of these interactive temporal artworks into single-screen movies. Can these works be adapted and retain the *essence* of the multi-screened events? Within the writing and within the movie documentation of *Divine Horsemen* (2005) and *People Inbetween* (2007), I have tried to evoke an echo of the video artwork's original live screening, through mimesis as a form of difference and repetition: through the creation of a different, new work from the original video installation I have attempted to repeat the inner meaning of the original event in a new form, which is as an act of mimesis in its own right.

*Divine Horsemen* ran for fifty minutes, and within this video light sculpture, wherever the viewers chose to place themselves in the gallery space revealed a slightly different film within the reflections of the two video screens in the two-way mirror glass surrounding them.

*People Inbetween* ran in total for two hours. Within its "expanded cinema" performance, the visual and aural montage the viewer experienced was chosen by his/herself based on where he/she stood in relation to the screens and the audio speakers, which were set out across the three gallery spaces.

Due to this active participation by the spectators, each moment existed independently because the choices of the viewers moving through the spaces of the screens created a different live mix of these two video installations – all were dependent on their position in relation to the video screens. Therefore, the film experience for the viewer was durational and fluid. This durational, temporal fluidity was an essential part of the experience that had become tied to the linear movement of a single montage edit within the movie documentation of the video installations.

Both installations were designed to be experienced and passed through: the intention was that these should never be watched in a standardised entirety; similar to the

experience depicted in Douglas Gordon's film *24-Hour Psycho* (1993), where the viewer merely perceived and experienced parts of the installation. Mark Hansen, in his book *New Philosophy for New Media* (2006), described this extreme slowing down of the film to reveal every frame as comparable to Deleuze's time-image, an extreme opening out of the image to reveal the space "between-two-images" and thus a direct snapshot of time. *People Inbetween* and *Divine Horsemen* were created with the similar intention of investigating the nature of the frame.

The process by which this experience was developed is explored in the next chapters; these concern the creative act of translation, which was the two-way flow between the installation artwork, and the film theory informing it. Both were conceived with the aim of maintaining "the *aura* of the original (artwork) by transforming it, precisely so that its truth might be preserved", as Buck-Morss insightfully describes the act of mimesis (1977: 87).

Each stage of this, from installation artwork to word, and installation artwork to video documentation, questioned not the similarity of the act of mimesis involved in translating the video installations, but the energetic differences existent within the creative act of the copy: the difference in repetition. Therefore, the thesis and the video documents become incorporated within a critique highlighting mimesis as transformation. Indeed the flow of the creative process between video artwork, the movie documentation, and the film theory informing it signifies this mimetic transformation. As noted by Laura Marks, "the mimetic relationship between viewer and cinema easily describes the relationship between writing and cinema as well" (Marks, 2000: 7). The flow of the creative process between the video art installation, the movie documentation, and resulting theoretical discourse highlights this mimetic relationship. This documentation is a copy; it is the "echo from an original birth" (Shaw, 2008: 120), it is not the work itself. This emphasised a host of problems, for how can one experience the aura of a live, durational, fluid event by watching a documented copy of it? The question had extreme relevance to the filming of the trance possessions (both by Deren and myself) common to both artworks: how can one capture on film the aura of a magical live durational event that is inherently internal/metaphysical in which the possessed participants act out their inner transcendental states?

## Equivalence as a METHODOLOGY OF FORM

Deren believed that the sum of a film's parts should always add up to a greater value, an "emergent whole", which utilises a term from Gestalt<sup>5</sup> psychology (Deren, 1946: 24). Indeed, the artist unveils meaning through the conscious "creative manipulation of raw images to reveal what is hidden, making the invisible visible"<sup>6</sup> (Deren, 1946: 21), through experiencing and feeling, engaging in a methodology of intuition with the medium as opposed to informed logical analysis to unveil an other perception.

She then contended that the raw material of the artist was "reality", and the job of the artist was to fashion a map to perceive a deeper truth in reality through their endeavours; furthermore, the artist was to challenge the boundaries of consciousness and the human condition and create through art a "shared new experience" for the benefit and growth of humanity as a whole.

Deren uses the combined methodologies of logic and analysis - as a scientist - to create the form of her film art, but the experiential tools of intuition and feeling - as an artist/shaman - to reveal the hidden depths of the inner workings of the durational mind to explore the theme of her film art and connect with collective human states.

As science tries to understand the material nature of things, art should illuminate the spiritual (Deren, 1946: 8). Certainly Deren placed concrete experience before abstract knowledge – an artist's tools applied with scientific precision through intuition, in order to reveal within reality a "greater whole".

The methodology I used for creating the video installations would initially echo that of Deren's, I would be led by the experience of "intuitive knowledge" to explore the theme, but use the tools of "intellectual analysis" to create the form of the artwork. Indeed, the emotional and intellectual logic within the restaging of *Divine Horsemen* was heavily influenced by the notion of creating an artwork that "[was] more than the sum of its parts". *Divine Horsemen* was a remix of existing material; being Deren's films and

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<sup>5</sup> Hugo Münsterberg, the pioneer of Gestalt psychology, was fascinated with film as an "art of subjectivity", which could present an image of thought, "for him it reproduced aesthetically the spatial, and temporal categories that govern mental activity itself: perception, attention, memory, imagination, and emotion (Rodowick, 1997: 18).

<sup>6</sup> In Deren's case through her film art, to delve the metaphysical interpenetrated workings of the mind.

writings and the cosmology of the Voodoo rites she catalogued, as the parts that I had at my disposal.

In Deren's essay, *Creating Movies with a New Dimension: Time* (2005), she had assimilated ideas from Bergson's book *Creative Evolution* (1911) through the writings of T. E. Hulme: ideas of *élan vital* as the creative (durational) impulses of the artist being arbitral to the driving forces found in life, pushing and refining living matter towards evolutionary consciousness with man as the ultimate expression of this at this moment (Hulme, 1924: 203). This is evident from the following quote:

The desire to discover and to experience something new is responsible for growth and development in the individual, progress in civilization. And so it seems to me that a labour which results in something created, to add to the sum of the world, is infinitely more valuable (Deren, 2005: 138).

This affirms her belief in the artist's moral responsibility to consciously create new exciting forms of art for the betterment and development of mankind. Deren's film philosophies surrounding her art form have a direct correlation to the metaphysics of Bergson:

I am referring to the communication of concepts and ideas by means addressed to emotional and psychological perceptions rather than in terms of intellectual analysis. Is it not worth considering that reverence for "detachment" – whether scientific or scholarly – might be primarily a projection of the notion of a dualism between spirit and matter, or the brain and the body, the belief that physical, sensory – hence sensual! – experience is a lower form... Truth can only be apprehended when every cell of brain and body – the totality of a human being- is engaged in the pursuit, to exercise the fullness of those capabilities which make him human in the major sense, and that to be pre-occupied with the achievement of this end, whether by art, science or any other means, is to serve the greatest good (Deren, 1953: 9, 14).

Although there is no evidence that Deren was aware of the writings of Bergson - despite an apparent interest in metaphysics shown throughout her work - she was certainly inspired by the writings of T.E. Hume, particularly *Sensations* (1924).

Within his article, *The Philosophy of Intensive Manifolds*, in the book *Sensations* (1924), a collection of his major thoughts and writings, T. E. Hulme specifically critiques aspects of the metaphysics of Bergson, taken from his major works, *Time and Free Will* (1910), *Matter and Memory* (1912), and *Creative Evolution* (1911). This inspired many

of Deren's ethics around film as a creative art form. T. S. Eliot (particularly his poem *The Waste Land* (1922)) also assimilated many of Bergson's philosophies. As did Ezra Pound and the Imagist School of poetry which directly inspired Deren's film art form.

T. E. Hulme, in his book *Sensations* (1924), looked at aspects of Bergson's philosophies in relation to the workings of the mind. Reason being the unfolding "sets" of quantitative, explainable logic, while intuitions and abstract feelings being temporal qualitative "wholes", unexplainable but experiential. Bergson equates intellect with the rational mind and scientific analysis as a way of understanding, through breaking an issue down into its components to reveal a spatial picture or a schematic of it. This is referred to by Bergson as a "quantitative multiplicity" which Hulme for "the sake of convenience and contrast" (Hulme, 1924: 181) refers to as an "extensive manifold", an unfolding out of its pieces, logically, as in a diagram, or a formula. In contrast, but complementary to rational intellect, is intuition. Intuition is how we understand what cannot be dissected pictured or explained through a map of its parts, or through scientific analysis. Hulme calls this the "intensive manifold" and is referred to by Bergson as a "qualitative multiplicity". A whole whose "parts are so interrelated to each other that to unfold it results in its distortion". Therefore the whole is not the sum of its parts, and the "intensive manifold" (Bergson's "qualitative multiplicity") can only be comprehended by one's experience of it through a "methodology of intuition"; it cannot be analysed visualised or dissected. Hulme talked of the manifolds of self as our mind's faculties for understanding the world; he used the metaphor of a stream to illustrate the differences between explainable action and transformational thought:

If you think of mental life as a flowing stream, then ordinary intellectual knowledge is like looking at that stream from the outside: you get a clear and perfectly described picture. Imagine now that you are turned into a cross section of this flowing stream, that you have no sense of sight, that in fact your only sense is a sense of pressure. Then although you will have no clear picture or representation of the stream at all, you will in spite of that have a complete knowledge of it as a complex sense of varying forces pressing on you... This is what Bergson means by an intuition... composed not of separate things but of interpenetrating tendencies (Hulme, 1924: 188).

Fundamentally, the mind is a flux of "interpenetrating" qualitative elements in constant change, which cannot be unfolded or analysed separately. However, "the surface this

living self is covered over with a crust of clean-cut psychic states, which are separated one from the other, which can be analysed and described” (ibid: 185). This crystallisation into separate states has come about mainly for the purposes of action and communication in social life as the mind is geared towards action and not thought. “You thus, have two different selves at two different levels” (Hulme, 1924: 186): i.e. the outer self, the crystalline shell of action and communication, movement in space, i.e. the quantitative multiplicity, or extensive manifold, and then the inner self, a fluid flow of interpenetrable states, unexplainable in space but existing as change in time, i.e. the qualitative multiplicity, or intensive manifold. In a moment of tension, the fundamental inner self will break through cracks in the crystalline structure of the superficial outer self, disrupting the mind/body link of the nervous system. This could be likened to the trance-like state of possession, described by Artaud as “endlessly leading us along rough paths that are difficult for the mind, pitching us into uncertainty, that indescribably anxious state most suited to poetry” (Artaud, 1970: 45). It can be related to the process by which Bergson described the inner self of intuition breaking through cracks in the outer self, which is the structure of the mind’s rational analytical crystalline shell, revealing moments of clarity, and unexplainable insight; the resulting fissures and cracks exposing the essences of reality beyond the words of logical explanation. Ultimately, Artaud and Deren saw the role of the artist as inextricably bound with the production of such fissures and cracks, in order to reveal in reality a larger truth through a methodology of intuition.

Intuition is rather an act, or a series of acts, of direct participation in the immediacy of experience. It can be accomplished only by making an effort to detach oneself from the demands of action by “inverting” the normal attitude of consciousness and immersing oneself in the current of direct awareness... intuition places itself in mobility, or, what comes to the same thing, in duration (Bergson, 1999: 12, 41).

Corresponding to the two methods of the workings within the mind – that by “qualitatives” (intensives), and that by “quantitatives” (extensives), – there are two conceptions of reality; existing in space as sets of actions of matter movement, like watching a cinematographical image, and in *durée*, or duration, time as fundamental change, such as the creation of a painting (Hulme, 1924: 197).

Such is the contrivance of the cinematograph. And such is also that of our knowledge. Instead of attaching ourselves to the inner becoming of things, we place ourselves outside them in order to recompose their becoming artificially. We take snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality, and as these are characteristic of the reality, we have only to string them on a becoming, abstract, uniform and invisible, situated at the back of the apparatus of knowledge, in order to imitate what there is that is characteristic in this becoming itself. Perception, intellection, language so proceed in general. Whether we would think becoming, or express it, or even perceive it we hardly do anything else than set going a kind of cinematograph inside us. We may therefore sum up that the *mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind* (Bergson, 1911: 322, 323).

This example may seem to be a paradox of terms when arguing for the durational nature of the film image, however when analysing the kind of films that Bergson would have been exposed to around 1900, for example, films with no camera movement, no use of montage editing, and in fact no narrative at all, then film as immobile frames of static poses strung together to create movement in space becomes reasonable. Bergson undervalues the possibilities of film for revealing his philosophy of durations.

In Bergsonian terms, this example highlights our perceptions of reality as a “quantitative multiplicity”, existing as “closed sets” of movement through actions and reactions that are quantifiable in space (such as I raise a glass). However, as these closed movements are linked to the durational temporal change of the whole (through the minds interpenetrated forces and memory), as a “qualitative multiplicity”, even if it is by the thinnest of threads, a change in the positions of the “closed sets” transform the qualities of the whole, hence, it may be described as an “open whole” (I have to wait for the sugar in my glass to dissolve which frustrates me). In “closed sets” objects move in quantitative position to each other by degree, but “through these relations, the [open] whole transforms itself or changes in quality” and hence it transforms in kind (Deleuze, 1986: 10).

Deren’s notion of film as consisting of “narrative horizontals” and “poetic verticals” mirrors Bergson’s concept of reality as closed sets of movements in space and time as durational change. Deren was interested in film as a poetic “vertical plunge of imagery sharp like a scalpel, probing into the depths” (Nichols and Jackson, 2001: 67) of a narrative structure, and into the depths of the mind to find a moment of durational artistic illumination towards a perceptual revelation, revealing film as temporal moments that could only be felt as intuitions beyond a logical analysis. Deren’s “poetic vertical”

implies film imagery that is more concerned with “interior temporal experiences than exterior spatial actions” (ibid); poetic film as images of thought and metaphor, not action, which emphasises ideas, mood, and tone. All of Deren’s film artwork was an exploration of this inner temporal world, a “dive into the abyss” of the durational forces of the mind to divine an eternal cosmic truth.

A form which is mirrored in the cosmology of Voodoo (and within the act of trance possession), where the horizontal plane of the physical world meets the vertical plane of the spirit world, in the shape of the cross, symbolised by the religious metaphor of the cosmic mirror:

Sometimes they sing that the mirror breaks through rocks, for the mirror is an X-ray and its vision penetrates matter... and the metaphor for the mirror’s depth is the crossroads... the intersection of the horizontal plane, which is the mortal world, by the vertical plane, the metaphysical axis, which plunges into the mirror (Deren, 1953: 34, 35).

The vertical dimension comprehends “both the abyss below and the heavens above the earth, the dimension of durational infinity; the horizontal comprehends all men, all space and matter” (Deren, 1953: 37). Deren’s ideas of poetic verticals of time imagery (as temporal transformations revealing inner meanings) and of narrative horizontals (as movements of structured actions in reality) completely mirror the cosmology of Voodoo: the crossroads as the vertical plane of the spirit world and the horizontal plane of the real world within the mirror’s depth. There are echoes of both the philosophies of Bergson and of Deleuze within this notion of the “poetic vertical”, and the “narrative horizontal”.

For Deren, dramatic narrative or “horizontal” structure is concerned with the linkage of actions or events and, like an extensive manifold, is understood through its unfolding across space, while “vertical” poetic structure is an approach to experience, concerned with what a particular moment or situation means or how it feels, grasped over time... Gilles Deleuze from thirty-some years later can see in his Bergsonian analysis of the cinematic “movement-image” and the “time-image” a comparable distinction between “horizontal” and “vertical” filmic structures (Nichols and Jackson, 2001: 66).

I wanted the very form of the video artwork to physically and graphically represent Deren’s own theory of visual poetics as vertical plunges in film time - though separate from the film’s narrative horizontal movement in space - while maintaining an integrity of form within both the poetic and the narrative elements.

However, how could one go about creating this physical link between the form of the installation, Deren's film theories and the cosmology of Voodoo, while conceptually exploring Bergson's notion of duration and Deleuze's concept of movement and time images? I took inspiration from Deren's own journals that describe a similar issue that she faced while filming the Voodoo trance rites in Haiti:

I suddenly realized that the relationship between abstraction, poetry, mythology, and reality was a relationship of equivalence, rather than of application directly. Thus, in preserving the integrity of myth ideas on an abstract poetic level, I was making a statement, simultaneously, about reality on another level (Deren, cited in Jackson 2002: 147).<sup>7</sup>

Deren took this notion of equivalence from the writings of Sergei Eisenstein. Eisenstein, talking of his film form, adds that this is the expression of the "whole", i.e. the meaning of the underlying temporal form of the film, instead of the "part", i.e. the meaning in the movement/collision of the montage. However, as both are subject to the same basic condition, hence, "the equivalence, or the equal significance", there is a common identity and link to both the part and the whole, which results in their conceptual interchangeability (Eisenstein, 1949: 133). In essence, this creates "a part whole relationship, that is grasped intuitively" (Deren, 1946: 24) through the whole form of the film.

This seemed a reasonable starting point to reinterpret the film footage shot by the iconic filmmaker Deren. I used Deren's methodology as an act of equivalence between the film theories and the art form of Deren, the cosmology of Voodoo, the metaphysics of Bergson processed through Deleuze's film philosophies and my own artistic sensibilities to create my installation/film.

Thus by preserving the integrity of Deren's art form within the form of the installation, I would hope to reveal a deeper truth within the realities of the other components of the artwork.

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<sup>7</sup> This is an extract from Deren's journal written in 1947 and describes her first experiences of Voodoo, and the Haitian people. Taken from Jackson, Renata, *The Modernist Poetics and Experimental Film Practice of Maya Deren*.

## Gilles DELEUZE'S: BERGSONISMS

### Thought in the MOVEMENT-image

### Thought in the TIME-image

Deleuze broke from rigid linguistic references and preferred the semiotics of C. S. Peirce (who conceived a methodology of signs based on images and their combinations, rather than on structures that were inherently linguistic), and the philosophies of Bergson in order to allow movement and time, fluidity and becoming into his film philosophies as thought-image processes. “The Brain is the screen. I don’t believe that linguistics and psychoanalysis offer a great deal to cinema. On the contrary, the biology of the brain – molecular biology – does. Thought is molecular” (Deleuze, cited in Flaxman, 2000: 366).<sup>8</sup>

Ideas in film shift with social and cultural changes linked to technology, a form of “creative evolution” of the film-image – reacting and reactive with the shifting sands of history, philosophy, and art in society. Bergson called for a similar shift of thinking in ideas: thinking in time, seeing time as vibrations of change, based on the evolving face of science, in which time is separated from motion due to the second law of thermodynamics. Film theory and aspects of philosophy had not previously considered this notion of time as perpetual change in kind, compared to movement as actions by degrees.<sup>9</sup>

Time is not a constant; time corresponds to vibrations of durational transformation and fundamental change; it is the relations of the whole, in fact, it is the

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<sup>8</sup> An interview with Gilles Deleuze published in *Cahiers du cinema*, 380 (Feb. 1986: 25-32).

<sup>9</sup> In science and philosophy, time has been relegated. In classical philosophy, time was seen as a series of classic poses. In Newtonian science, in his concepts of space, this was a similar scenario except that motion could be sliced into actions or frames, “any-instants-whatever”, as movement in time was reduced to “sequences of instantaneous states”, which fundamentally refused to acknowledge time as durational change. The universe was seen as static and explainable. Zeno’s arrow states that, in theory movement is static, because with each point, or classic pose, the arrows beginning, zenith, and end, there is no movement (Bergson, 1911: 325-30), or at best is passing through points. Therefore, like movement, time could run backwards and forwards. The second law of thermodynamics proved that time can only run forwards, which is due to entropy. All matter moves from high to low entropy, that is it goes from order to less order; metal rusts, people age as their cells decay, the arrow of time can only run forwards. Motion in movement goes backwards and forwards by degrees. Motion in time is fundamental change in kind. Time is change. Movement is action. All in motion by degrees, and as time change in kind.

whole of relations, as matter is closed sets of movement in space. Such a notion represents a philosophical and scientific shift from the constants of the universe correlating to static movements of “being” – instead, all is a multifaceted decentred centre around the temporal fluxes of “becoming”.

Bergson thought that science and philosophy had failed to take time as change into account and was restricted by logical analysis as “closed sets”, which disregarded the un-analysable, interpenetrating, constantly evolving form of the “open whole”. Deleuze’s approach to cinema was predominantly Bergsonian and hinged on his concept of horizontal movement as sets of actions in space, and vertical change in time, as *durée*, duration, or enduring experienced within the mind/body’s sensory-motor schema. Bergson’s notion of *durée* “is central to Deleuze’s theory of time-image cinema, and depends on a person experiencing the passage of time” (Marks, 2000: 63).

In relation to *Divine Horsemen* and *People Inbetween*, I specifically analysed thought within the time-image, as well as thought within the movement-image, with reference to Bergson’s notion of the sensory-motor schema, the nervous system and its relevance to Deleuze’s theories of thought in the film-image. In particular, I focused on the importance of affection (feeling), and memory within this, as the delay between perceptions translated into actions within the interval of the sensory-motor links, between the mind, the body, and reality. It is within this interval, in the delay between perception and action that *durée* (time durations) exists and hence the possibility of the mind having an original thought separate from its mechanical actions.

Bergson saw the mind and the body as “interpenetrated” forms, not as separate entities, and questioned Western philosophy and psychiatry for the splitting of the mind and the body. His concept was for a middle ground, a common sense linking of mind and body, a concept existing between the philosophies of materialism and idealism, which had separated these two interrelated conceptually embodied processes. Materialism, the doctrine that consciousness and the mind exist solely due to the actions of matter and objects; idealism, like phenomenology is a philosophy in which all material objects and knowledge depend solely on the metaphysical workings of the mind:

Matter, in our view, is an aggregate of ‘images’. And by ‘image’ we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a *representation*, but less than

that which the realist calls a *thing*, - an existence placed half-way between the 'thing' and the 'representation'... image it is, but a self-existing image... All seems to take place as if, in this aggregate of images which I call the universe, nothing really new could happen except through the medium of certain particular images, the type of which is furnished me by my body... Yet, the brain is only an image among other images (Bergson, 1912: vii, viii, 3).

Bergson saw the infinite chaos of the universe as fluxes of light energy; a series of blocks of space-time where all reacted with each other on a "plane of immanence" made up of a-centred flowing matter movement that pervaded everything, like an "aggregate of images". Actual matter (objects/things) are "matter-images", which radiate out "virtual-images" from them (what our eyes perceive), like waves of transparent photographs in which the mind's consciousness as a "zone of indetermination" subtract images from as perceptions in the sensory-motor schema (the nervous system) as our common sense perceptions of the world translated into bodily actions. These "centres of indetermination" like image bodies which have an inherent gravity, attract the matter-images of light around them, with perception as a form of subtractive framing. Hence, we only perceive a single element or point of view from a matter-image and never the whole.

This is how we interact and react with the world, or more importantly, choose not to. "Our zone of indetermination plays in some sort, the part of the screen. They add nothing to what is there; they affect merely this: that the real action passes through, the virtual action remains" (Bergson, 1911: 32). This highlights Deleuze's notion that in cinema, "the Brain is the screen"; hence perception, our mind's function, works as a screen, which is inherently two dimensional and subtractive.

Our perceptions are then translated into bodily actions, as perception leads to action. Hence, our perceptions create spatial order out of durational chaos, which is translated into a kind of movement-image of the brain geared towards automated actions, and spatialising events. This becomes a shorthand common sense view of the world, allowing us to act without thinking, which may be a distortion of the true nature of reality, a form of transcendental automaton-action-optimism. In essence, the sensory-motor schema (mind/body link) is an automaton in a free flow of action, and reaction, movement without thought, a living movement-image. Perception though is contaminated, "made impure" by affection (feeling), which leads to thought within the

interval between incoming perception and outgoing action (Bergson, 1912: 57-60). Affection is a metaphysical action; hence affection occupies the interval between incoming perception and outgoing action or is, one might say, in the interval itself (Bogue, 2003: 37). Therefore, affection within the interval resides in the delay between incoming perception and outgoing action; this delay in the interval may lead to an original thought. Memory and affection (sensation, feelings) exist as an essential process of the interval in the sensory-motor link.

Bergson talks of memory as a “defocused image” (Bergson, 1912: 210), a durational flux in our brains that comes into focus, much like playing a film when activated by a perception towards an action, “perception is to prepare action” (ibid: 305). This is a form of durational tension, which is separated out and de-tensioned into images (ibid: 238). Memories are not stored as images they only become images when activated for a useful function by the sensory-motor schema. The past has not ceased to exist in the present; it has only ceased to be useful (ibid: 193).

Therefore, thought, through the present past of memory, is processed into either bodily action seamlessly in the interval between perception and action, or the breakdown of this seamless process in the interval, as no memory or logical action is apparent, forcing the mind to creatively think rather than mechanically act. Through an active use of affection as sensations and memories leading to intuitions and by delaying the automatic process of perception leading to action, the interval in the mind becomes a space for a new thought which is facilitated by intuition and affective feeling. This may be facilitated through the appreciation of art.

The time-image creates time that is no longer subservient to the seamless processes of movement and action by interrupting the organic flow of the interval within the sensory-motor link. This may be either a “closed set” or a temporal “open whole” as a visual metaphor. The time-image is felt as a pure duration of time change in which an outside thought has to be consciously created because there is no unity of a logical common sense meaning, whether this is as movement in space, or a metaphor in durational time. Deleuze highlights this quantitative difference as the organic structure of the seamless whole of movement, whether temporal or spatial, to the crystalline structure of “thought from the outside” as an opening to time outside of the whole set of images,

which presents a direct time-image. Hence, thought in movement and in time comes down to the organic spiral of a seamless action within the sensory-motor schema, or the breakdown of this as the truth of crystalline structures, mirroring, reflecting and refracting, in essence, truth in unforeseen new and evolving ways. Therefore, in cinema, the difference between thought in the movement-image and the time-image is within the interval, and the disruption of it within the narrative logic of the film, which in turn affects the viewer's sensory-motor schema and hence their perception.

Bergson distinguished between “closed sets”, and the “open whole” noting, “Movement naturally tends to form isolable systems, as contained actions in space, yet without completely severing connections to the whole of *durée*”, duration, time as fundamental change (Bogue, 2003: 41). In Deleuzian terminology, the “open whole” is the temporal relations between the shots of the montage within an entire film; meaning that beyond the montage as the links of the individual shots as movements linked in space, an open temporal meaning as a metaphor may be created. Therefore, the closed set is the relations of the movement in space between the actions, hence, within the film frame of the shot as an immobile cut, this is linked to the durational time of the open whole through the montage, the experience of all the shots combined, either within a sequence or the film in its entirety, and therefore an example of Eisenstein's notion of sensual thought.

I will now endeavour to explain Eisenstein's notions of “sensual thought” as the cusp between thought in the movement-image thought in the time-image, and the workings of memory within this. Within Eisenstein's theories of dialectical montage, the montage is a collision between two shots, and “from this collision of two given factors arises a concept” (Eisenstein, 1949: 37), hence a shock to create a thought. The first moment goes from the image to thought, “the percept to the concept” (Deleuze, 1989: 156). However, besides this movement from image to thought, there is also a complementary movement from thought to image as inner speech:

In contrast to the enunciated word, the construction of meaning in film works backward from the object, from the observed movement, to the comprehension of them to the construction of inner speech (Eisenstein, 1949: 130) ... the dialectic of works of art is built upon a most curious ‘dual-unity.’ It is both an impetuous progressive rise along the lines of the highest explicit steps of consciousness and a simultaneous penetration by

means of the structure of the form into the layers of profoundest sensual thinking (Eisenstein, 1949: 144).

Within this “dual-unity” between “the highest explicit steps of consciousness and a simultaneous penetration into the layers of profound sensual thinking” (Eisenstein, 1949: 144), Eisenstein implies that “sensual thinking” is through implication linked to an unconscious, pre-language expression; in other words, an affection or a feeling revealed in the underlying form.

Eisenstein describes “inner speech” as the unformulated flow and sequence of thinking formulated into uttered logical constructions (Eisenstein, 1949: 130). Inner speech is linked to sensual thinking as a stage of the “image-sensual structure”, having not been expressed by the logical formation of words. Eisenstein sees a direct correlation to “inner speech” and “sensual thinking” within the construction of form and composition in artworks. It is this “sensual thinking” that runs through the images of the collisions of the dialectical montage, at the temporal unconscious level to reveal a metaphor of meaning as “inner speech”. In Deleuzian terminology, an “open whole” is a temporal thread, an act of “equivalence” in the movement-image, existing as a feedback loop between the image, and the shock of thought, sensual thought and a temporal image as a metaphor. A “sensual thought” is a visual metaphor within the movement of the dialectic of the individual shots making up the sequences of the montage. Consisting of the “closed sets” of actions across space, Eisenstein’s dialectical montage and the “open wholes” as a temporal “sensual thought” of durational time change, which are intuitively grasped from the entire form of the montage. This creates an overall feeling or metaphor, a thin thread of visual meaning connecting the logic of the closed sets making up the dialectics of the montage, which is processed as a temporal “sensual thought”. Eisenstein referred to this as “intellectual cinema” in which he continually reminds us that intellectual cinema has as “a correlate sensory thought or emotional intelligence, and is worthless without it” (Eisenstein, cited in Deleuze, 1989: 159).

Eisenstein sums this up as “the essence is in shooting expressively. We must travel toward the ultimate-expressive and ultimate-affective form and use the limit of simple and economic form that expresses what we need, hence, by the path of planned analytical ascertaining of the secret nature of affective artistic form” (Eisenstein, 1949: 146).

An example of a “sensual thought” within Eisenstein’s theories of montage, highlighted in *Film Form* (1949), would be the shot of the “pince-nez” (eye glasses) of the drowned ship’s surgeon, from *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), hanging from the railings of the battleship. This scene holds far more emotional affective resonance than showing his drowned corpse, and “does so with a sensual-emotional increase in the intensity of the impression” (ibid: 132). The eyeglasses of the ship’s surgeon are associated with an earlier scene in the film where he inspects the rotten meat, saying that it is fit for human consumption. Both scenes highlight Eisenstein’s notion of sensual intuitions being fundamental to the creation of visual metaphor as a temporal thought within film.

In the thought of the time-image, the organic “open whole” of the movement-image is replaced by irrational links comprised of “fissures and gaps” (Deleuze, 1989: 167), as an alien outside force with no logical common sense sensory-motor bond, meaning is not a given, it is in a state of becoming and it has to be created in time. This is therefore a breakdown in the dialectical montage and the sensual metaphor of the open whole of Eisenstein’s intellectual cinema, which works like a loop from image to thought and thought to image as a unity between “inner speech” as “sensual thinking” and the sensory-motor schema.

Artaud saw the key to the cinematic image as fourth dimensional, durational time added to three-dimensional movement in space; a language of cinema not made from words but from pre-linguistic expression, the cinema of raw visceral images. Artaud’s conceptualisation of raw cinema exemplifies this, which is in direct opposition to Eisenstein’s notion of a whole. Artaud believed that cinema allows for an “impower of thought” through shock, as a “fissure, a crack, or a splitting” (Deleuze, 1989: 168, 169), which in essence is the power of the unthought in thought, the power and the shock of nothing as the spark of an original thought of something, the decentred space of the time-image, creating “the shock that am I not yet thinking” (ibid). The innermost reality for Artaud is the image that cracks and splits, creates a void of nothing in which we have the shock of nothing, and the fact that we are not yet thinking, an act of becoming which never quite comes; this is his theory of “raw cinema”. The “impower” of thought is the presence of an unthinkable thought, which would be both its source and its barrier, but as the mind cannot stand still, this fissure fills with an infinity of voices, the babble of

dislocated thought, which dispossesses and decentres the mind and the body. In essence, this is a similar process to trance possession. This fissure now holds the possibility of everything, of an original thought as a free act in the break of the sensory-motor schema, as affection de-linked from memory. Hence with no memory, thought may exist in an affective trance like state. Artaud himself compared this to the creativity of “automatic writing” (Deleuze, 1989: 165). It is with the notions of Artaud and the temporal associations of “raw cinema” where the possibilities of the “time-image” first come into direct play.

In aspects of modern cinema, time is no longer subservient to movement and space, the joining of shots as the intervals no longer seamless, but it is eccentric, dislocated, and aberrant, movement derived from time, hence, there is no reconciliation of an “open whole” and the part/whole relationship. The intervals between shots are separated instead of joined, as gaps and irrational<sup>10</sup> cuts of imagery with no obvious action or reaction, existing as decentred spaces with no inherent point of view. The seamless flow from image to action and action to image is broken. Hence, a pause is created in the flow of the interval of the sensory-motor link, creating a question of meaning outside of the rationale of the movie, which now has to be thought through. There is therefore the possibility of an original thought outside of the automatic workings of the mind. In the optical-time-image the viewer’s problem becomes “What is there to see in the image? (And not now) What are we going to see in the next image?” (Deleuze, 1989: 272). All images, sounds, movements and actions have a relativity, which may seem irrational and chaotic, yet due to this ambiguity, offer multiple perceptions and so are truer representations of the physical and philosophical state of the modern world, modern cinema, and the interpenetrated intensive workings of a durational mind.

The time-image disrupts the feedback loop in the interval as a moment of memory and affection between perception and bodily reaction, hence breaking the mechanical action; so the possibility of an original thought overcomes the barrier of the unknown or unexplainable, such as a Deleuzian “optical image” (Flaxman, 2000: 99-101). The pure

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<sup>10</sup> The use of irrational alludes to a mathematical term, which alludes to a number that exists between two other numbers but with no logical connection to either.

time-image, the “optical image”, or “opsign” creates the possibility for the viewer to have an un-manipulated thought, though also a potentiality to frustration and a lack of understanding, as it is lacking in the movement of meaning as a part/whole relation. Within thought in the time-image, the logic within the shot is favoured over the logic between shots; the spectator creates his own meaning within the linkage of these fragments of images: “To think across a gap is to make linkages across cuts that are non-rational” (Deleuze, 1989: 277). However, these shots evoke a feeling of pure time as change, as stated by Deleuze, “this is time, time itself, a little time in its pure state: a direct time-image, which gives what changes the unchanging form in which change is produced” (ibid: 17). Change is shown in space through the passage of time directly, not the movement of action.

### **Memory and the “Optical-Image”**

Within the durational workings of the optical image is the paradox of memory recollections. Bergson talks of two types of recollection. Firstly there is “automatic recollection” (Deleuze, 1989: 42), which places no stresses on the sensory-motor schema and is a part of the habitual movement-image. To use Deleuze’s example: I recognise my friend and we talk - the flow of the sensory-motor link is unbroken, uninterrupted. Image moves from perception to motion smoothly (ibid: 43). The second is “attentive recollection” (ibid) and is very different, as it has a direct relation to “optical images”, where the mind’s perception cannot be extended, so we focus on the image and the image alone, back and forward in a loop to try to create understanding (ibid: 44). As there is nowhere to go beyond this “optical image”, our perceptions are increasingly looped, and thus we focus on the image ever more, filling the gap with perception on top of perception. The “optical image” on the surface may seem thinner as action-movement is suspended, however by this very suspension we focus more deeply on the image. Indeed, as Bergson suggested “the optical image in attentive recognition does not extend into movement, but enters into relation with another image from the memory” (ibid: 45;

Bergson, 1912: 110-113); a recollection image as perception cannot move into an action-image, hence, the gap created in the sensory-motor schema fills up as image-perception and memory has no outcome in action. The “subjectivity of the optical image then takes on a new sense, which is no longer material but temporal, that which is added to matter not what distends it” (Bergson, 1912: 110-113). Hence, the power of the “optical image” is in the failure of this process, as when we cannot remember the sensory-motor links remain suspended. Therefore, as there is no link with either forward action, or recollection, it enters into a virtual relationship with itself. Hence, “the optical image is empowered further through either little memory, or and the failures of recognition” (Deleuze, 1989: 54-55). Within the panoramic spaces of *People Inbetween*, such as the Dutch Burgher Union and Borella cemetery, as optical images there were no associative memories or logical actions or meanings, hence, time becomes more focused, and the images demand more attention as they fall in on themselves.

An example of an optical time-image would be Ozu’s static shots of intervals of extended moments of inaction in *Tokyo Story* (1954). Pertinent examples can be found in the static shot of a factory against the sky repeated throughout the film, or the scene when Noriko has just taken a call at work informing her that her mother-in-law is very sick. The next shot is an extended static shot of construction work on a tower block; it has no relevance to the action of the story, it is a separate moment in time from the movement of the narrative of the film. However, these shots evoke a feeling of pure time as change and the relentless pace of life; as stated by Deleuze, “this is time, time itself, a little time in its pure state: a direct time-image, which gives what changes the unchanging form in which change is produced” (ibid: 17). In other words, change is shown through durational time, not action. The essence of the shot is to allow a moment separated from the linear pace of the narrative, which allows a space for reflection and thought. This is the crucial difference between the narrative action across movements in space and an experience of contemplation as a moment of durational time as fundamental change. Rodowick succinctly sums up the difference between thought within the movement-image and within the time-image in his book *Gilles Deleuze’s Time Machine* (1997) as:

Despite its variation and complexity, modern cinema finds an audiovisual regime characterized by three factors whose assumptions differ from Eisenstein’s dialectical

thought cinema. Thus the direct image of time requires “the obliteration of a whole or a totalization of images, in favour of an outside which is inserted between them; the erasure of the internal monologue as whole of the film, in favour of a free indirect discourse and vision; the erasure of the unity of man and the world in favour of a break which now leaves us with only a belief in this world” (Deleuze, cited in Rodowick, 1997: 187, 188).

In essence, the difference communicates the cultural and philosophical shift between the pre-Second World War ideologies of collective mass movements, a shift from films that communicated with the masses, and the post-Second World War loss of faith in collective ideology. This creates action cut from meaning in which an act of faith is needed to create irrational connections. The conscious act of faith in the time-image is an affective leap when the sensory-motor link is broken; hence, the faith in the time-image is the faith that man and the world still matters.

### **AFFECTION, the Interval and the DIGITAL-Image**

Affects are not actions or powers exerted, but *the powers to...* meaning, the ability to feel and have an original thought with the interval between perception; moving towards action. Affection deals in pure qualities, such as that which is illustrated by the close-up shot - which can affect the nature of all the other shots around it within the sequences of the montage inherent in the film scene. This may be the close-up of a face or it may be a close-up to reveal the face of an object (Deleuze, 1986: 98-100): “The affection-image is the close-up, and the close-up is the face” of things to reveal meaning (ibid: 87).

In the semiotics of C. S. Peirce this is “firstness”, something that only refers to itself, as a “quality or power, pure possibility; for instance, the red that we find identical to itself in the proposition. You have not put on your red dress” (ibid: 30). Peirce refers to three fundamental categories of consciousness, or firstness, secondness, and thirdness. Firstness is a conception as a quality, of being or existing independently of any other thing. Secondness is the concept of the relation; being relative to some other thing, and thirdness is the concept of synthesis or mediation; wherein the first and the second are brought into relation with one another.

Deleuze describes the affection-image as the inner meaning, feeling, or the face of things. He equated this to Epstein's notion of *photogénie*, in which Epstein described the photogenic as being in the inner meaning of objects, "their animistic tendencies"; the character that they reveal through investing objects with a face, and hence a centre of indetermination. Epstein alluded to the photogenic as the evanescent moments of powerful feelings that certain images provide; it is the "Face of beauty, it's a taste of things. I recognise it like a musical phrase" (Epstein, cited in Charney, 1995: 286).

Epstein comes closest to a definition of *photogénie* in a lecture given at the Vieux Columbian Theatre, *For A New Avant-Garde* (1924). "The 'Cinéma d'Art' now being born declares: The gesture creates the décor as it does everything else... In close-up, the eyelid with lashes that you count, is a set (*mise-en-scène*) remodelled by emotion at every instant... It is more than a character: it is a personality", a soul, this cinema is the "photography of the illusions of the heart" (Sitney and Epstein, 1978: 28). Epstein considers why the object, cinematically reproduced, can have associative qualities as like a cherished trinket, with all the same memories and emotions attached to it; he utilises an example of a banker waiting for a call. The telephone in close-up may no longer be a mere telephone:

You read: ruin, failure, misery, prison, suicide. And in another atmosphere, this same telephone will say: sickness, doctor, help, death, solitude, grief... a phenomenon of cinematic telepathy. From these close-ups, these faces, an extraordinary meaning is emitted. The soul is isolated by them, just as one isolates radium (Sitney and Epstein, 1978: 29).

Indeed, the "poetic vertical" of screen two within *Divine Horsemen* was a temporal poetic metaphor revealing the inner states, the inner meaning of the trance possession and hence was in part an example of an "affection-image" through its use of close-up details and the slow motion of the faces (both physical and metaphysical) of the possessed Haitians.

Bergson states in *Matter and Memory* (1912), "Our sensations (affections) are, then, to our perceptions that which the real action of our body is to its possible or virtual action" (Bergson, 1912: 58). Affection as the embodied perception of a future, or imagined event, a textual marker to the viewer's future response within the interval between perception and action; the process by which we play out all scenarios, with the

help of memory; a voluntary conscious response within the sensory-motor schema before committing to automated action. We invest the same affective values in the temporal, durational nature of the photogenic image; hence it has a quality of a potential future “becoming”, a force inherent in aspects of the “time-image”. Epstein saw *photogénie* as a temporal reality “where the past and the future collide” (Charney, 1995: 287).

Affection exists within the interval of the sensory-motor schema, between perception and action. In Bergsonian terms affection contaminates pure perceptions, and makes them dirty<sup>11</sup> (Bergson, 1912: 57-67). Affections are real qualities (qualitative multiplicities) that change in kind; perceptions are virtual quantities (quantitative multiplicities) that change by degree. Though Deleuze, in his concepts of the cinematic image, plays down this link, within *Cinema 1* (1986) he did place the “affection-image” between the “perception-image” and the “action-image”, which highlights Bergson’s notion of perception leading to affection and memory, which the brain processes as a delayed action, hence, a possible new thought within the sensory-motor schema. Therefore, intuition and affection are the link within the workings of the brain, where perception may be processed into an original thought towards an open future action. The “affective state, therefore, corresponds not only to the experience of the stimulus that has already taken place in the past but also, *and above all* to those that are preparing to happen or would like to occur” (Guerlac, citing Bergson, 2006: 53).

Deleuze underplayed Bergson’s notion of affection as the break in the interval between image perception and embodied action. Hence, perception and affection become changes in the image by degree. By contrast in *Matter and Memory* (1912), Bergson described the interval as “not merely a difference of degree that separates perception from affection, but a difference in kind” (Bergson, 1912: 57) and thus a “qualitative” durational force: affection as a time-image. Affection is a metaphysical response, which occupies the interval between incoming perception and outgoing action; or is, one might say, the interval itself (Bogue, 2003: 37), and hence affection and memory exhibit durational qualities. The time-image exists in the delay of the interval. Affection exists in the delay of the interval of the sensory-motor schema. When we watch this in a movie,

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<sup>11</sup> Hence, your feelings about a person an object or an idea change your perceptions of it.

the time-image delay affects a delay within ourselves, hence triggering an affective response within the sensory-motor links of the viewer, therefore creating an expanded perception or a new thought.

Deleuze, in both *Cinema 1* (1986) and *Cinema 2* (1989), took Bergson's philosophies of the world as movement-images within an aggregate of matter images, and weaved them into his philosophy of time and movement images. Yet in doing so, Deleuze removed the most important element: the affective nature of man: “[b]y rendering cinema homologous with the universal flux of images as such, Deleuze effectively imposes a purely formal understanding of cinematic framing, and thus suspends the crucial function accorded the living body in Bergson's metaphysics” (Hansen, 2006: 7). Hence the body as a “centre of indetermination” had to be placed back at the heart of both the time and the movement image – and therefore reclaiming the interval as embodied affection. The body as a sensory-motor link, a “centre of indetermination”, must be “re-embodied with the image, not disembodied in order to equate it to the function of the cinematic frame” (Hansen, 2006: 52). In relation to digital imagery this is highly pertinent as the frame may be multiple as with the video installations, *Divine Horsemen* and *People Inbetween*, or fluid by being cross-media platforms or interactive. This allows in a material sense, the body to become “the co-processor of digital information” (ibid: 11), with this conjoined unity revealing and unveiling the depth of human perception within the hidden temporal (durational) nature of affect. In the digital artwork, the viewer becomes “an active user... filtering information directly, and through this process, creating images” (ibid). The artist, through expanding the body's zone of indetermination with the artwork, places the embodied viewer-participant into the circuit with the information, “the installations and environments they create function as laboratories for the conversion of information into corporeally apprehensible images” (ibid). The environment as the frame, becomes a meeting of perceptions through affection, a shared flow, between embodied artwork and active viewer achieved through a merging of the frame with the perceptions of the viewer by breaking the hegemony of the frame through multiple expanded framing, or works that are interactive.

Deleuze in *Cinema 2* (1989) talked of the emergence of the digital-image and its consequences for the cinematic frame:

The electronic image, the numerical image coming into being, either had to transform cinema or to replace it... based on *new associations*. The new images no longer have an outside (out-of-field) any more than they are internalised in a whole... and first of all the privilege of the vertical and the horizontal which the position of the screen still displays, in favour of an omni-directional space which constantly varies its angles and co-ordinates... is worthless in itself if it is not put into the service of a powerful, obscure, condensed will to art, aspiring to deploy itself through involuntary movements which nonetheless do not restrict it. An original will to art has already been defined by us in the change affecting the intelligible content of cinema itself: the substitution of the time-image for the movement-image. So that electronic images will have to be based on still another will to art or on as yet unknown aspects of the time-image... and the shot itself is less like an eye than an overloaded brain endlessly absorbing information (Deleuze, 1989: 266)

As a way to understand Deleuze's notion that any part of the digital-image can become a link to the next image, it is fruitful to consider the work of Tamás Waliczky, which exemplifies this with the new media artwork, *focus* (1998). The digital image is created out of 99 layers, each layer available for investigation by the viewer, and when each layer of the image is explored "a new image yields in return" (Hansen 2006: 113).

This can also be related powerfully to the panoramic spaces in *People Inbetween* (2007), with the images of Borella cemetery, and the Dutch Burgher Union as digital depictions created out of up to 60 layers of separate imagery, each a frame in its own right, creating multiple links and intervals within the image itself.

## The progression of FORM from MOVEMENT to TIME

I now come to the artistic form of the video art works: *Divine Horsemen* (2005) was a “remix”, whilst *People Inbetween* (2007) explored the “mix” as an in-between space grounded by my own fragmented ethnicity. These two works can be visualised as flip sides of the same coin, one impersonal (*Divine Horsemen*, a restaging), and the other personal (*People Inbetween*, my ethnicity): these “dual multiplicities” extend to the very physical structure of each video installation. These documentary artworks are dual aspects of the impersonal and the personal subject, held together by the common thread of trance possession as the embodiment of this multiple impersonal/personal state. Trance is engaged with as a magical, filmic, ethnographic experience, the visual pivot between both the physical spectacle in space and the metaphysical, transcendental, magical moment in durational time.

This cuts to the quick of my journey through the paradox of the magical photogenic poetry of the image within the automatic mechanical process of film. The exploration of trance possession symbolised this, as an altered conscious state caught between the physical gesture of performance, articulated within the durational magical act, embodied within the aura of a ritual that is both intimate and distant (as magical ritual tends to be). This created a series of potentially paradoxical spaces – the “aura” of the unique copy – “*photogénie*” as the magical face of things in the mechanical film image – the intercultural “other” as “me”.

The technical construction of each video installation was designed to physically echo the theoretical concepts involved in the creation of the imagery. Therefore, the physical form of the video installation, *Divine Horsemen*, was a visual representation of Deren’s notion of the “poetic vertical”, the “narrative horizontal” and the crossroads, the place in Voodoo cosmology where the physical world of spatial actions and the metaphysical/spirit world of time durations meet. This was achieved through the expansion of the image physically beyond the frame, in the three-dimensional space of the gallery. The physical form of the video cross was created from the reflected light of the video imagery of the Voodoo ceremonies, within the reflections of the two-way

mirror glass surrounding and encapsulating it: an experiment to balance Deren's art form with the cosmology of Voodoo, by restaging her unfinished "Haitian footage" as an act of equivalence, which is reflected in both Deren's film theories and in the cosmology of Voodoo, perceived as a poetic metaphor, an affective "open whole". This was achieved through the creation of the optical illusion of a three-dimensional floating video "crossroads" that symbolised the meeting point of the physical (real world) and the metaphysical (spirit world), of *Les Invisibles* (Deren, 1953: 249). An expression of Deren's "poetic vertical" as a visual metaphor exploring a temporal moment in relation to the "narrative horizontal" led action of the story structure expressed spatially within the three-dimensional area of the gallery space.

In *Divine Horsemen the Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1953), Deren described the crossroads of Voodoo cosmology as the mirror's depth. This is the totality of the mortal world, the horizontal plane of the spatial, of physical reality cut by the spirit world of *Les Invisibles*, the vertical, durational, spiritual, metaphysical plane which plunges into the depths of the mirror and the depths of the soul (Deren, 1953: 35). Deren described the notion of the "poetic vertical" and the "narrative horizontal" as these parts within these wholes; the vertical being the temporal experience of a moment, a feeling in time, the lyric poetry, while the horizontal being the logical movements of action leading to reaction across space, inherently like narrative prose.

As noted by Annette Michelson, the "poetic vertical" and the "narrative horizontal" may be seen as Deren's means of "positing disjunctiveness against linearity". She further compares Deren's vertical investigation of poetry verses the horizontal attack of narrative as a similar methodology to the linguist "Roman Jakobson's distinction between the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes of language" (Michelson and Nichols, 2001: 187). The paradigmatic axis is comparable to metaphor as relations are made by similarity and substitution, involving permissible word substitutions based on qualitative similarities between the concepts that the words stand for. The syntagmatic axis is comparable to metonymy as that of the relations made by combination and context, as a succession of words, or linear combinations (Jackson and Nichols, 2001: 221).

Deren summed up her ideas of poetic structure by taking Aristotle's split of poetry into the epic and the lyric forms as a starting point. The epic poem is in essence a

narrative poem usually involving vast story structures, while lyric poems deal with personal first person moments exploring thoughts and feelings. However, this is slightly misleading in relation to Deren's poetic film form as she was essentially inspired by the imagist school of poetry, which sought to unveil within a poem the central poetic image designed to motivate the entire poem and pierce through to the reader. The poet should be a "neutral conduit" through which experience would pass for the service of the poem and the revelation of the reader, not the artist's personal feelings, which is evident in the lyric form.

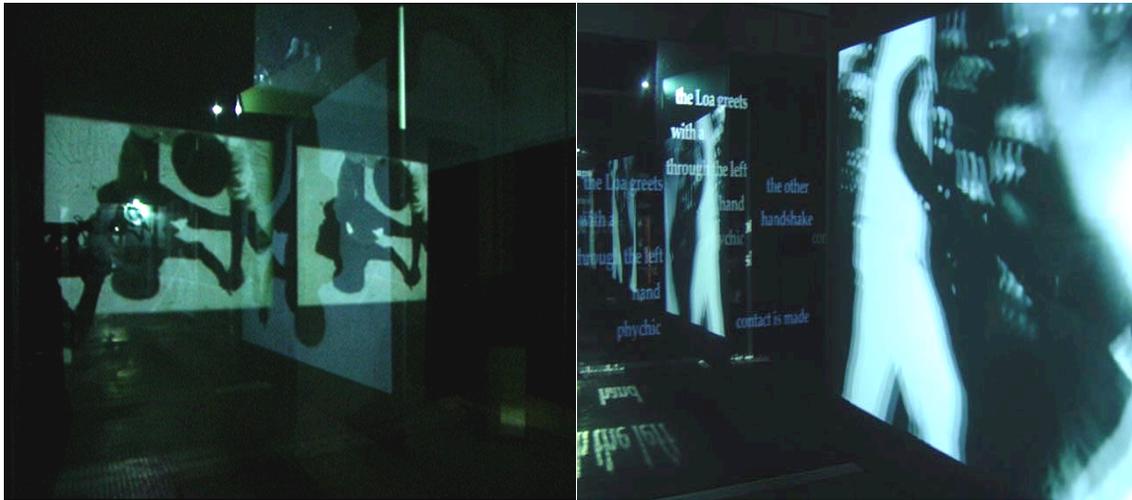
She discussed these ideas at the *Poetry and the Film* symposium held by *Cinema 16* in New York (1953). To illustrate her argument she used the plays of William Shakespeare. Shakespeare was able to mix both the dramatic and the poetic to enhance the narrative so that we see the dramatic action of the play move forward horizontally, but then within this, the characters have the ability, through metaphor and poetry to explore their situation within the moment separate from the action of the story, vertically, as a soliloquy:

In Shakespeare, you have the drama moving forward on a "horizontal" plane of development, of one circumstance – one action – leading to another, and this delineates the character. Every once in a while, however, he arrives at a point of the action where he wants to illuminate the meaning of this moment of drama, and, at that moment, he investigates it "vertically," if you will, so that you have a "horizontal" development with periodic "vertical" investigation, which are the poems, which are the monologues (Deren and Sitney, 1978: 174).

A poem, to my mind, creates visible or auditory forms from something that is invisible, which is the feeling, or the emotion, or the metaphysical content of the movement. Now it also may include action, but its attack is what I would call the "vertical" attack, and this may be a little clearer if you contrast it to what I would call the "horizontal" attack of drama, which is concerned with the development, let's say, within a very small situation from feeling to feeling (Deren and Sitney, 1978: 174).

Within Voodoo the central post and the crossroads joins both the world of the spirit, *Les Invisibles*, to its physical mirror image in reality. This is the point where the flow between both worlds and both states occur. It is also an anchor point around which all rites, dances, and trance possessions happen and revolve around. All actions, rituals and movements are mirrored and circled around this pivot. This highlights a ritual,

cosmological, and graphical link both to Deren's notion of the "poetic vertical" and the "narrative horizontal" as well as her own visual poetic film form of looped and mirrored shots, reversals and repetitions. I use this as a pivot within the video installation to physically represent the imagist notion of the central core image, or as Sitney referred to it, the "single-central-image" (Sitney, 1971: 188).



***Divine Horsemen* (2005): Light reflection of the Video Cross.**

The vertical and horizontal structures of the video screens in the installation are a perfect analogy of the cosmology of Voodoo when processed through Deren's own writings on the subject in *Divine Horsemen the Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1953).

A world within a cosmic mirror, peopled by the immortal reflections of all those who had ever confronted it, the mirrors depth is the cross-roads; the symbol of the cross. It is, above all, a figure for the intersection of the horizontal plane, which is the mortal world, by the vertical plane, the metaphysical axis, which plunges into the mirror" (Deren, 1953: 35).

Repetition is realised in the reflections of the mirror-glass, which wrap around the viewer so they too become a part of the (cosmic mirrors) reflection, a constant repeating of form and ritual; a holistic blending of Deren's art form and the cosmology of Voodoo. Hence the viewer and image, and in addition the viewer as a reflected image, become conjoined

with the artwork, which leads to an embodied affective blending of the “zones of indetermination” between the viewer, the expanded frame, and the art installation (see logbook page 16 for further analysis).

*Divine Horsemen* was the exploration of durational time as a poetic form, separate from but joined to the narrative movement of the story, processed through Deren’s theories of the poetic vertical through the outward physical expansion of the frame. The image was rebounded and reflected in on itself through the spatial increase in breadth within the enclosed environment of the mirror glass surrounding the video imagery creating filmstrips of video as lines of mimesis that disappeared into infinity. Therefore, thought within the movement-image was explored beyond *Divine Horsemen*’s frame but enclosed within its physical structure, as an affection-image bordering on a time-image. This was due to the physical structure of the video installation creating (Deleuzian) intervals as three-dimensional “fissures and gaps”. We might identify the “vertical axis as the axis of *durée* and the horizontal axis of pure perception, or movement without *durée*” (Bogue, 2003: 39). *Divine Horsemen* thus resonates with aspects of the “poetic vertical” in relation to the “narrative horizontal” expressed within the affection-image as a form of *photogénie*.

In *People Inbetween*, the expansion of the image was within the frame, existing in the 180-degree panoramic areas. Physically, this was a way to map out the whole environment of each space to reveal its physical presence within an interval of time. In addition, this was a conceptual study of Andre Bazin’s theories centring on depth of shot and the fact image as a way of unveiling other perceptions of reality within the extended length of the shot and the depth of the frame. In Deleuzian terms, the depth of the deep-focus image is not only spatial, but also temporal; this depth can become an experience in time (Jayamanne, 2001: 137), a moment of duration, “which means that the unbridled depth is of time and no longer of space” (Deleuze, 1989:108). Hence, due to the expanded panoramic frame and the depth within the imagery the space existed as a moment, or a Deleuzian interval of time separate from any unfolding action or reaction within it, therefore opening up the depth of the shot created a time-image as an “optical image” separate from narrative space (I explore this issue further in chapter two).



***People Inbetween* (2007): 180-degree panoramic video of the Dutch Burgher Union.**

The video panoramas were designed to reveal living aspects of my Dutch Burgher and Sri Lankan culture, exhibited 1:1 (life-size) to evoke the sense that the viewer could walk into these sensual intercultural spaces. *People Inbetween* (2007) was a ritual performance to find my place within the cultural fragments of my diasporic identity, distant yet intimate sensual spaces as gaps of time “becoming” within the interval. Expressed as the depth within the panoramas and the reanimated stills of the memory river, a moment of “in-betweenness” both in theme and form, as the panoramic video becomes almost stilled, and the photographs of the memory river are reanimated (moving). This was the poetic as an act of the performative, explored within the hybrid mix of myself as an experience of intercultural cinema; a ritualised journey through Dutch Burgher and Sri Lankan cultural spaces with “me” as the depersonalised “neutral conduit” to illuminate the decentred power inherent in these intimate yet distanced spaces existing in the interval between. All of the imagery, places, spaces, and people were linked to me through family or community, though by removing myself from the frame I removed the central point of view, hence creating a decentred centre space which inherently mirrors core aspects of the “time-image”.

These family links and memories were abstracted to create gaps, which can only be filled in with vague feelings of something lost within the physical spaces of the panoramic images. As a progression from the purely poetic nature of *Divine Horsemen*,

by injecting my own story within the poetry of *People Inbetween* I created a poetic, performative space, as summed up by Nichols:

The performative mode, in essence like the poetic mode questions the nature of knowledge, understanding and comprehension beyond just an understanding of the world through the factual. However, where this is usually expressed through form in the poetic mode, in the performative it is expressed through the subjectivity of human experience. (Nichols, 2000: 102, 130.)

The embodied diaspora of the fractured Dutch Burgher community is explored physically within the placement and nature of the film images and screens, both of which are found within the “depth of shot” of the 180-degree panoramic video spaces, and through the fragmenting of the video images and sounds across the entire extended space of the three galleries. *People Inbetween* is an “expanded cinema” experience, described by Gene Youngblood as “not just expanded physically, through multiple screens, or spatially within the environment, but as a way of visually expanding consciousness” (Youngblood, 1970: 47). I have tried to unveil and embody the consciousness of the Dutch Burgher community.

In *People Inbetween*, thought within the “time-image” was explored both within the internal structure of the frame, through the depth of focus within the panoramic images and also beyond the frame, through the intervals as fissures and gaps separating the multi-screened work across the three gallery spaces. These fragments of images had no obvious logical connection; intervals used as gaps between pure moments of time duration, with only memory or the frustration of the lack of it as the irrational and inconsistent re-linkages of the voids existing in-between the images and Burgher diaspora. They were designed to push the viewer into the reactive space of nothing, forcing them to create their own thoughts to divine a meaning, to inherently experience and affectively embody the direct feeling of being a diasporic person in-between two cultures. Third world and intercultural film philosophically exist in the interval, the gap of the time-image, or the transformational act of becoming inherent in the “genesign” (this is explored further in chapter two).

A key element within *People Inbetween* as a work of intercultural cinema is the crisis between “official history” (Marks, 2000: 60) and personal memory, making a

political act from a community, race, or identity. Intercultural film “uses experimental means to arouse collective memories. Perception in such works is not just an individual exploration, but socially and historically specific: it embodies a collective expression even as it is highly personal” (ibid: 62). Where no memory or no images exist, fissures and gaps are created, in essence, to try to fill in the blanks. “Such works actualize the experience of *durée* (durational time) by not permitting images to extend into action” (Marks, 2000: 63). Such moments as “optical images” are sundered from the recollection of action “being”; time moves and “becomes” but motion is halted until an image as a creative thought - not as a memory recollection - forms to push meaning forward.

The next section of this document is the study of the paradox of the unique (aura) within the copy, explored through the copy as an embodied act of mimesis, incorporating early film theorists’ infatuation with primitive and magical terminology to describe the unique cinematic temporal qualities of film.

This involved a reassessment of the terms “*photogénie*”, and “raw cinema”, using the analogy of the trance possession ritual. This was set within the greater study of the common theoretical issues involving the temporal durational magic of the automatic mechanical image. My underlying premise thus concerned the notion that by early film theorists’ comparison of the new art of the cinema to occult practices, animistic objects and trance was not as romantic or as esoteric as first seems, but in fact offered examples of “time-image” concepts within early cinema. Epstein’s “*photogénie*” and Artaud’s “raw cinema”, possible explanations of “time-images” and “optical images”, were direct examples of aspects of the philosophy of modern cinema manifesting itself; existing before the ultimate social and political shift in cinematic thought after the Second World War with film movements such as Italian Neo-Realism.

As well as directly analysing these descriptions and aspects of the time-image as cinema “magic”, I will explore this issue from a completely opposite perspective by comparing magic to cinema. I will be examining the automatic movement of trance possession as a form of cinematic thought through the philosophies of Deleuze and Bergson, as a durational, transformational form, a “time-image” art cinema before cinema.

I will be highlighting links between thought within the time and the movement image and the sensuality of mimesis as the intuitive act of feeling this. Deleuze and Bergson both commented that prior to perception into action, within the interval of the sensory-motor link, feelings are linked to memory as a methodology of intuition; this is explored as the possible key to an original thought, as a durational cinematic thought.

## AURA and the COPY

The work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility (Benjamin, 2003: 256).

As Walter Benjamin said, even the (most) perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one major element: its presence in time and space, its unique physical tactile existence. He refers to this as its “aura” – “that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art” (Benjamin, 1970: 215). The technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of the work’s tradition. Benjamin saw this as politically preferable. He proposed art for the masses, art that galvanised a proletariat into thinking politically; art aura transformed through the medium of film into “unconscious optics”. The proletariat would be able to process the shock of the new within modern life by film revealing more in reality through enriching our field of perception beyond what the human eye can see, as Freudian psychoanalysis had revealed a dimension of depth in human interaction and unconscious impulses (ibid: 290, 230). However, this is only one side of Benjamin’s philosophies, as part of his appeal was an ability to join disparate elements together in disjunctive analysis.

Aura in art is attached to tradition and cult value (originally in the service of ritual and magic); this is not necessarily linked to context. To explain this, Benjamin gives the example of an ancient statue of Venus; a venerated Goddess to the Greeks and yet an ominous idol to the clerics of the Middle Ages (ibid: 215). However, both very different cultures and contexts did not diminish the work’s unique “aura”. Therefore, “aura” is diminished within the unique artwork through its reproduction, its copy divorcing the work of art from its original human made form. Nevertheless, can aura exist within an artwork that by its very nature is mechanically reproduced, such as film, or more relevantly, digital video?

Certainly, the uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from it being embedded within the fabric of the time of its creation. However, this is “alive and extremely changeable” due to historical cultural shifts (ibid: 217). It exists in the intimate, appreciated within the apparition of the distance, “the unique phenomenon of a distance,

however close it may be” (ibid: 216).

Aura also relies largely on tactility: the brush strokes of a painting, the carved touch of a sculpture. Even the long exposure of early photography has aura that “emanates from the early photographs in the fleeting expression of a human face” (ibid: 219). Marks, in *The Skin of the Film* (2000), talks of a direct relationship between the unobtainable tactility of aura<sup>12</sup> and the sensuality of mimesis (Marks, 2000: 140): “Mimesis is an immanent way of being in the world, whereby the subject comes into being, not through abstraction from the world but compassionate involvement in it” (Marks, 2000: 141). Benjamin wrote that aura is the quality in an object that makes our relationship to it like a relationship with another human being:

Experience of the aura thus rests on the transportation of a response common in human relationships to the relationship between the inanimate or natural object and man. Just as the person that we look at, looks at us in turn. To perceive the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look at us in return (Benjamin, 1970, 184).

This quote highlights an undeniable link between Epstein’s notion of *photogénie* and aura in which the gaze between viewer and object evokes an affective response, a photogenic quality within the face of things as the inner meaning, an “affection-image” (Deleuze, 1986: 87). As Benjamin stated, “aura” is the distance, as a unique appearance, essentially the appearance of an affective face within art created through a human touch. This was explored within the mimesis and affection in the digital installation, *Divine Horsemen*.

In a mechanically produced work of art, where does this leave the artwork’s unique tactile resonance? Can “aura” as the unique “resonance and echo from an (artworks) original birth” (Shaw, 2008: 120) exist in the eternal copy of the mechanically reproduced, in the ones and zeros of the digital image? It should be noted that technical

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<sup>12</sup> The original meaning for the word aura was to describe an act of religious transcendence, a divine moment. Compared to the original use of the word ‘fetish’ to describe West African religious beliefs, such as animism and trance possession. Hence, one culture’s act of religious aura is an “other” cultures act of fetishism. The inherent difference is the perception of the “enlightened” coloniser to the “primitive” colonised (Marks, 2000: 87). Marx appropriated the term fetish to describe the abstracting process of capitalism converting life into easily digested visual signs to the detriment of sensuous knowledge, causing not only the modern individual’s alienation from the products of their labour but also from their very body and their senses.

reproduction has become an artistic process in its own right as exemplified by the repetitions of silkscreen prints by Andy Warhol; hence, “the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility” (Benjamin, 2003: 256). An artwork’s aura is the work’s transmissible quality, its material duration (Mieszkowski and Ferris, 2004: 40). However, in the digital age of the infinite copy of transmittable data, this may be its social idea, or its interactive nature as much as the artwork’s physical form. Therefore, its aura becomes a temporal affect, a mimetic duration. Indeed, as Mark Hansen postulated, as the “digital-image” within art and new media breaks the artwork from all trappings of its media, digital art’s shock value becomes relocated in the impact of the work “squarely in the domain of experience”. With the digital artwork creating a “renewed investment of the body as a kind of converter of the general form of framing into a rich, singular experience”, aura is an actualisation of digital data in “embodied experience” (Hansen, 2006: 3). Hansen used the term “embodiment” to mean embodied perception, as the function of the sensory-motor schema in which perception is translated - through mind and bodily interaction, affection and memory - to create a meaningful image as felt experience, beyond the associational logic governing perception; a merging of the “zones of indetermination” between the digital artwork and the active viewer.

As Benjamin noted, each shock and epoch in art has the ability to show a historical consciousness embedded within the political philosophies of the time through the tensions of a new art form, “creating fracture points within its reflection of its time” (Cohen and Ferris, 2004: 213), which allows for deeper insights within the age (see logbook, page 96 for further analysis).

But the “shifting cultural sands” of society and politics reveal themselves most readily within art revolutions through the tensions of disparate ideas of art and technology that can be illuminated within these fissures and cracks. Benjamin saw the paradox of magical aura and mechanical reproduction as a preparation for man to process the shocks of the modern world through the “unconscious optics” of the mechanical camera eye, to reveal - like a psychiatrist - hidden meaning, in order to make sense of a chaotic world. Film would function as a tool for processing the shock of the moment, the intangibility of constant change.

Catherine Russell stated:

“Benjamin’s formulation from the ‘Work of Art’ essay, cult value can be seen already transformed into exhibition value. And as Benjamin predicted, this transformation is also a shift from ritual function to a political function; what Rouch privileges in the Hauka performance of *Les maîtres fous* (1954), is the drama of anti-colonialism, not the magic of spirit possession” (Russell, 1999: 222).

However, each is one and the same, magical mimesis among the colonially oppressed is always a political act, as in the trance rites of Voodoo, as with the Hauka. Even the poetic intercultural exploration of my own diasporic heritage in *People Inbetween* is a political act, but one that tries to touch that which cannot be touched, my lost family, my lost ethnicity; hence the aura is embodied, tactile and affective, yet simultaneously political within the affective “face” of a lost community.

## MIMESIS: the Creative Act in the COPY

The Frankfurt school's reinvention of mimesis as a "problematic of difference" (otherness) and not of identity (sameness), opens the term up as a reactive space of difference and imitation, or "difference and repetition" and away from the traditional, and rather dismissive, Platonic description, to imitate. Plato and Aristotle start with a similar root to mimesis as art's inherent purpose to imitate and to copy nature, the truth of God's creation but diverge within the outcomes of this process. Plato sees art as a twice-removed copy of truth and therefore inherently suspect. Twice removed, because truth exists only in conceptual abstraction, hence the idea and form of an object or thing is more real and more truthful than its concrete physical substance. Art as an imitation of an already imperfect physical world is thus twice removed from truth and so inherently suspect. For Aristotle truth lies in existence rather than in abstract essences, and he instead described mimesis (imitation) as a creative process of selection, translation and transformation from one medium to another; an inherently exaggerated framing of the experience of reality to reveal an essence of it.

The Frankfurt School championed mimesis as a concrete foil to the increasing processes of abstraction stemming from the Enlightenment, culminating in the capitalist tendency to render complex meanings into easily consumable signs: a form of alienation of man from his sensual body as an act of control.

In his inaugural lecture to the Frankfurt School, Adorno talks of the necessity of reviving an "*ars inveniendi*" (an art of coming upon something, of invention) for contemporary philosophy, and the creative potential of mimesis as a possible way to achieve this. "The subject's fantasy actively arranged its elements, bringing them into various relationships until they crystallised in a way that made their truth cognitively accessible" (Buck-Morss, 1977: 86), like a constellation of ideas: a fantasy of subjectivity held together by the objectivity of fact to preserve the essence of the original by transforming it through creative invention.

Adorno was heavily influenced by Benjamin's thoughts concerning the "mimetic faculty"; both documented mimesis's origin in primitive magic, within the shaman's imitation of nature. However, when magic disintegrated, mimesis survived as a principle

of artistic representation. Benjamin noted that this shaman-like form had been preserved in children's games of imitation, while Adorno saw the "exact fantasy" as a performance, as an act of mimetic transformation. Buck-Morss insightfully summarises his approach as follows:

Literary translation and musical performance did not simply copy the original; they maintained the "aura" of the original by transforming it, precisely so that its truth might be preserved. To mime the original in a new modality thus required "exact fantasy". ... In Benjamin's case, translation provided the model for this theory of truth because it was simultaneously reception and spontaneity: the translator needs the model, the original, and his task is to produce a new version... the transformational character of the mimetic moment in Adorno's theoretical method must be taken literally. (Buck-Morss, 1977: 87-88).

Adorno's "exact fantasy" and Benjamin's "mimetic faculty" allowed the aura of a copied, yet transformed artwork to survive through the act of translation and performance, to keep the spontaneity and the essential nature of the work within an "other" form.

Mimesis is an embodied experience, a sympathetic relationship of expressive moments between the knower and the known. Mimesis is thus conceived as a form of subjective participation in which the subject transcends themselves towards things so as to release them in their otherness. "Through mimesis, a thing both withdraws and reconstitutes itself" (Cooke and Finke, 2008: 93): a truthful art form within the similarities of togetherness in diversity, a difference in repetition to release the inner meaning of a performance through a direct sensual communing.

*Divine Horsemen* is an example of a mimetic transformation to release the "inner meaning", the face of things as an "affection-image" (hence with qualities of photogénie) within the magical temporal ritual of the Voodoo rites (which in themselves are a mimetic, durational performance) and the aesthetic art form of Maya Deren; the transformation was channelled through the creation of a new form that mixes the essential complementing "inner logic" of both within its very structure. This was achieved through the creation of the video cross, and the infinite reflections of the Voodoo imagery in the opposing two-way mirror glass.

## MIMESIS and the OTHER

Taussig, in *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (1993), read Benjamin's notions of the mimetic faculty in relation to the colonial and post-colonial (intercultural) moment. Benjamin defined mimesis as the "compulsion to... *become* and behave like something else" (Benjamin, 1979: 160). This may be observed in animals in the natural world for the purpose of empathy and power; in ritual magic as a form of talisman or animism; and in trance possession as an act of control, which when analysed through Taussig's notion of "second contact" (the two-way street of colonial encounters between the colonised and the colonisers) becomes a form of acceptance, control, and political subversion by the colonised. Hence the act of mimesis, as in the "sense of mimicry may be seen as an effort to master, in a variety of performative modes, that which is other or different" (Jayamanne, 2001: 40), this is evident in the trance possession rites of the Hauka movement in Niger and their portrayal of colonial authority.

Taussig refers to a notion of mimesis as two layered: "a copying, or imitation, and a palpable sensuous connection between the very body of the perceiver and the perceived" (Taussig, 1993: 21). He calls it a "sensuous knowing, a sensuous Othering" (ibid: 68) and a bodily involvement of the perceiver in the image of the unknown other for the purpose of empathy and control (ibid: 21).

Pulling you this way and that, mimesis plays this trick of dancing between the very same and the very different... An impossible but necessary, indeed an everyday affair, mimesis registers both sameness and difference, of being like, and of being Other. (Taussig, 1993: 129)

An example of this sensation can be found in the Hauka movement. Started by the Songhay people of Niger, they would become possessed by the violent spirits of the French and British colonial administrators. The Songhay possessed would mimic the "white man" with bouts of violence, terror, parody and humour. This was seen as "an intolerable affront to French authority" (Taussig, 1993: 240). The members of the Hauka movement took the power of the (colonial) man who oppressed them and through physical parody acted him out to possess him. However, within this mimicking and caricaturing of *Europeanness* there is the disturbing force of body trance possession;

possession as the way to possess “white man’s” power, as an act to conquer the fear of the “other”, which is an essential quality of magic. It could be argued that this mimicry and mimesis allowed a release from the shock of foreign tyranny exerted by the power of the colonial oppressors.

Within Rouch’s film *Les maîtres fous / The Mad Masters* (1954), there is a sequence of a Hauka possession ritual that exemplifies the political power within the infinite nature of the sympathetic mimetic reflection. “A man possessed by a Hauka spirit stoops and breaks an egg over the sculpted figure of the governor’s... head, the egg cascades in white and yellow rivulets” as the film cuts to a military parade showing “the cascading yellow and white plumes of the white governor’s gorgeous hat as he reviews the black troops passing” (Taussig, 1993: 240).

As stated by Stan Brakhage in his article *From Metaphors on Vision* (1960) “primitive man had a greater understanding than we do that the object of fear must be objectified. The entire history of sympathetic erotic magic is one of possession of fear thru the beholding of it” (Brakhage, 2004: 200). Meaning, the mimesis of trance possession becomes an act of coming to terms with what is unknown and feared hence as a way to try and control it, understand it, or to possess it.

## TRANCE POSSESSION

Spirit possession may be broadly defined as any altered or unusual state of consciousness and allied behaviour that is indigenously understood in terms of the influence of an outside alien spirit, demon, or deity (Crapanzano, cited in Hutchinson and Schmidt, 2010: 4).<sup>13</sup>

There are many contradictions, prejudices, and misnomers around the practice of trance possession, with varying analyses depending on cultural history; within early interpretation of trance possession one can examine the seminal but inherently racist work by James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (1890). Frazer described the process as follows:

Certain persons are supposed to be possessed from time to time by a spirit or deity; while the possession lasts, their own personality lies in abeyance, the presence of the spirit is revealed by convulsive shiverings and shakings of the man's whole body, by wild gestures and excited looks, all of which are referred, not to man himself, but to the spirit that which has entered him; and in this abnormal state all his utterances are accepted as the voice of the god or spirit dwelling in him and speaking through him (Frazer, 1890: 93).

There is a misunderstanding prevalent within Frazer's work, which as a product of its time relates trance to some sort of "savagery" at opposition to "civilised man" (Frazer, 1890: 92). In order to understand trance, it is crucial to understand the motivations of the wider community in which it takes place. Trance possession is "a complex, subtle and supple phenomenon" (Huskinson and Schmidt, 2010: 7), and a "system or function of cultural communication" in which the "behaviour of spirits provides the substance of the public discourse on otherness" (ibid). Moreover, when taken away from the stereotypical view of anguish and pain, trance can also contain many examples of creativity and comedy, such as the healing rites of Urvedic demon exorcism in Sri Lanka.

The objectifying and acting out of metaphysical forces by the possessed enforced through the actions of the community witnessing the possession creates a gap (a fissure)

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<sup>13</sup> Crapanzano, V, *Spirit Possession: an overview*, L. Jones (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, (2005: 8687).

in which the person in a trance loses his/her ego, and is thrown into a state of becoming, of transformation. Deren referred to Haitian trance possession as the paradox of the “White Darkness” as she experienced this trance state for herself while participating in a Voodoo rite:

As sometimes in dreams, so here I can observe myself, can note with pleasure how the full hem of my white skirt plays with the rhythms, can watch, as if in a mirror, how the smile begins with a softening of the lips, spreads imperceptibly into a radiance which surely, is lovelier than any I have ever seen. It is when I turn... and see that the others are removed to a distance, withdrawn to a circle which is already watching, that I realise, like a shaft of terror struck through me, that it is no longer myself that I watch. Yet it *is* myself, for as that terror strikes, we two are made one again... Now there is only terror... within the very marrow of the bone, as slowly and richly as sap might mount the trunk of a tree. I say numbness but that is inaccurate... I must call it a white darkness, its whiteness a glory and its darkness, terror... No sooner do I settle into the succour of this support than my sense of self doubles again, as in a mirror, separates to both sides of an invisible threshold... The white darkness moves up the veins of my leg like a swift tide rising, rising; is a great force which I cannot sustain or contain, which, surely, will burst my skin. It is too much, too bright, too white for me; this is its darkness... I am sucked down and exploded upward at once. That is all (Deren, 1953: 259-260).

Within anthropology and religious studies, trance is seen as “community facilitating acts” (Huskinson and Schmidt, 2010: 1); however, within Western psychiatry it is often viewed as a disorder of the mind or a hysterical act. Bergson used the category of the time-image to describe a person whose sensory-motor system no longer functions, such as mental illness where there is a break with action and the mind and memory: “A sick person, someone who no longer knows how to orient himself, no longer knows to speak spontaneously, no longer has a goal or knows how to act” (Pisters, 2003: 72. Bergson, 1912: 225). With the time-image, the world is seen out of joint - “Subjectivity, then takes on a new sense, which is no longer motor or material, but temporal and spiritual: that which “is added” to matter, not what distends it; recollection-image, not movement-image (Deleuze, 1989: 47) - a moment in which the mind hunts for a recollection to make sense of an unknown alien image. Trance bends the possessed memories and their conscious states, revealing the intensive qualities of the temporal flux within the mind’s crystalline structures. Hulme comments that within these moments, deeper aspects of reality may be unveiled (Hulme, 1924: 147, 186). And as Benjamin postulates, “[t]he function of the artist is to pierce through here, and there, the veil placed between us, and

reality” (Benjamin, 1970: 217); hence trance is described as an inherently artistic form which is in the service of ritual and thus possessing of an “aura” (ibid).



*People Inbetween* (2007), 180-degree panoramic video, Urvedic demon exorcism.

### **Urvedic Demon Exorcism**

Bruce Kapferer, in *A Celebration of Demons* (1983), described Urvedic demon exorcism as a complex rite, “which goes to the heart of Sri Lankan social interaction, and Buddhist cosmology” (Kapferer, 1983: 243). Sinhalese exorcisms are artistic forms in which art is turned to the practical purpose of resolving human problems, involving music, dance, theatre, comedy, and acts of human endurance, such as fire eating. A dynamic is created between the patient, audience and the exorcist in order to cure demonic illnesses, and - in Buddhist terms - to restore balance and harmony to the patient.

As defined by Kapferer, “ritual is a multi-modal symbolic form”, the practice of which is marked off spatially and temporally, from and within the routine of everyday life, where “human beings commune, and establish relationships with the supernatural” (ibid: 245). These supernatural forces and the cosmic relations formed are embodiments and “objectifications of ideas”. It is this fluid mix of apartness and intimacy, embedded in the actions of the everyday life of the community that gives the ritual its emotional intensity. The ritual is a blend of normality and intense abnormality, continuously

referring to the culture in which real and illusory forces blend and flow. Urvedic demon exorcisms as transition rites are split into three stages: the evening, midnight, and morning watches. These three main phases of the exorcism involve the construction and destruction of the demonic forces controlling the patient and follow an arch of isolation and acceptance.

“Transition rites not only mark a change of identity but actively transform one identity into another” (Kapferer, 1983: 246); the “transitional process within the rite is achieved through the performance, both musical, and dramatic”. As Kapferer points out, the ordering, experience, and meaning within the ritual rites adhere to the structure of an artistic form, and evoke the same subjectivity, experience and emotion, hence with “aura” qualities.

Firstly the patient is separated from the everyday world, then placed in a “liminal world of the supernatural” in which the “forces of the divine and the demonic struggle, and are acted out by the exorcist and the dancers” (ibid: 245).

Within the ritual performance of the exorcism, the music and the dance have an organic live fluidity creating an oscillation of states, which is embodied by the patient in a durational state. Hence, the meaning in the performance is directly revealed in the experience of the music and the dance forms, which are all designed to drop the ego, the “I” and the “Me” from the patient and manifest their demonic nature. Embraced in the musical realm, the patient is further removed from the “paramount reality of everyday life in this fluidic state between the divine, and the demon” (Kapferer, 1983: 255). Kapferer likens this to a Bergsonian durational state, in which the polyphonic music becomes “movement in time” (ibid: 256), which “fluxes backwards and forwards” creating durational moments within the continuously altering rhythmic structure of the music as a lived experience of “originary” time as a “series of continuous vertical flows of instants and nows, forming a continuous lived in present”, a present, which is its past, and which is even now becoming its future (ibid: 257). He also states that this is “the flux which we are in, of originary time which becomes in objective time, a time in which we have” (ibid). The polyphonic drumming of the exorcism rites “demands the living of the reality that it creates” (ibid: 258). Each differing sound or rhythm is associated with a specific demon or deity.

Everything is designed to oscillate the patient from the banalness of normality, to a temporally experienced state in order to allow a gap, or crack in the interval of the sensory-motor schema. This durational time is a cosmological vertical time, which is incorporated into a horizontal structure of secular ordinary time within the more structured elements of the ritual.

The alternation between the different time structures in the exorcism is between the 'inner time' of the rite – the 'qualitative' movement of the time as process, creating experience and transformation within the patient - and an 'outer time', where movement as the passage through time receives objectification (Kapferer, 1983: 260).

Through this process the patient is re-anchored in the reality of the Buddhist cosmic order. The patient's awareness of self is removed and rebuilt back to an ordered state, through the objectification of their demonic presence, and then its removal. When the patient has restored their balance, the music and the dance become erratic and a parody of itself; the dancers breaking the flow of their steps, falling over, drummers playing wrong rhythms, all in order to halt the durational experience at the moment of deity to restore balance and order within the psyche of the patient, so his/her "being" is frozen in this cured state of "becoming" as comedy and everyday life is allowed to reclaim this space.

A synchronicity between the poetic form of the exorcism and the underlying narrative form are created, mirroring Bergson and Deleuze's notions of "closed sets" of montage as horizontal movement through space, and temporal durations as a vertical in time, containing the time image as breakdowns and transformations of the patient's sensory-motor schema. In essence, this process creates an oscillation between the common sense world of the sensory-motor schema and the breakdown of this in the liminal world of temporal durational time as an act of fundamental change: the patient is forced to mentally and physically experience and embody both.

This creates cracks and fissures in the patient's sensory-motor schema, forcing his/her psyche into a temporal space of nothing and everything, where the brain and the body have to question and creatively re-assemble his/her own being as a state of becoming. This is not an act of transition but a complete act of transformation. Fundamentally, the power of trance possession is in its automatic movement, as an embodied/spirit performance to create a shock to break and then transform the patient's

perceptions within the interval of the sensory-motor link, a similar ethos to the function of the irrational interval of the “time-image”. This taps directly into the durational aspect of the patient’s psyche, hence allowing a contracted moment of *durée*, and the possibility of fundamental change in kind.

### Trance as the TIME-IMAGE

As Deleuze noted in *Cinema 2, the time-image* (1989) while discussing thought in cinema, theatre remains attached to the body and the other arts are static: “It is only when movement becomes automatic that the artistic essence of the image is realized: *producing a shock to thought communicating vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral system directly*. This is because the cinematographic image itself *makes* movement” (Deleuze, 1989: 156). Hence the film image mirrors the automatic movements of visual thoughts inherent within the workings of the mind.

Trance as an art form is caught between theatre and cinema, because of its direct visceral engagement with the brain to create a psychic, durational movement; this inner “automatic movement” expressed outwardly and physically equates directly to the fundamental motivation of thought within the “time-image” as the decentred thought from the outside; the alien thought of becoming, of change and transformation. Trance possession is outside of the normal context of reality, just as the time-image is outside of the classic narrational context of a film.

To explain the undeniable link between magical trance possession and the “time-image” I will now come to the issue from the other side; not from early film theorists’ description of cinema using magical terminology, but using a direct analysis of magical trance possession as a form of pre-cinematic “time-image”, a meta-cinema:

The material universe, the plane of immanence, is the *mechanic assemblage of movement-images*. Here Bergson is startlingly ahead of his time: it is the universe as cinema in itself, a metacinema (Deleuze, 1986: 59).

In Deleuzian/Bergsonian terminology, the universe exists in a multi-layered flux on a “plane of immanence”, where time duration flows/vibrates in kind, and matter moves by degrees; everything is made from actual and virtual images of light energy that radiate out from objects, with which the mind/body interacts and subtracts images – photograph-like - as one sided perceptions. However, our perceptions are altered by being infected by our affections and memories. Trance possession, exemplified by the ritual of the Urvedic demon exorcism, embodies these forces of matter movement and durational vibrations of time intensities; the exorcist plays with these elements to alter the patient’s perceptions. The actual image state of the demonically possessed patient is virtually embodied through the art of the exorcism performance. When the patient’s virtual-image, created by the ritual, matches the desired actual-image, the rites are cut; this is achieved through the use of comic drama, which forces the patient out of his/her durational, liminal, time-world and back into the actual space of the real-world. The patient is thus virtually transformed into a new actual body-image, and order is restored.

The “time-image”, by placing people out of joint with the world, holds a little of this power. The “digital-image” of new media mirrors this trance state due to a fluidity of framing between the virtual-image of the artwork the actual-image of the world, and the affective communing between the (embodied) viewer and the (virtual) media.

This validates Artaud’s hypothesis that the act of trance possession is an artistic form “which endlessly leads us along rough paths that are difficult for the mind, pitching us into uncertainty, that indescribably anxious state most suited to poetry” (Artaud, 1970: 45). This sentiment is in essence linked to his notion of “raw cinema” as the expression of true cinema only existing in the “shock of nothing”, the “impoverishment of thought”, created through fissures and cracks, a void in which exists both “the possibility of all in nothing”, yet also the shock “of the fact that we are not yet thinking” (Bergson, 1911: 361).

However, as Bergson suggested “Philosophers have paid little attention to the idea of the nought (nothing). And yet it is often the hidden spring, the invisible mover of philosophical thinking” (ibid: 290). Nevertheless, what can be in this shock of nothing? Indeed, as Bergson postulated. “Nothing, if we try to see in it that of an annihilation of all things, is self-destructive and reduced to a mere word; and that if, on the contrary, it is truly an idea, then we find in it as much matter as in the idea of All” (ibid: 314).

Therefore, in the irrational interval - the fissure of nothing, the shock of the void - exists the possibility of nothing and everything, hence more than everything. For the patient in the Urvedic demon exorcism, this is the possibility of a complete transformation of personality, and in Artaud's "raw cinema", it is the possibility of an original thought in the shock of the image, as a little segment of durational time in a pure state (Deleuze, 1989: 17). The disruption of the interval of the sensory-motor schema is crucial and "by means of this interval, something extraordinary is produced or embodied: creative emotion. It is the genius of intuition in intelligence". (Deleuze, 1988: 112).

*Divine Horsemen* and *People Inbetween* are directly informed by the processes laid out within the introduction, firstly processed as the thought of "being the open whole", echoed in the photogenic nature of mimesis in *Divine Horsemen*, and secondly in *People Inbetween* as the thought of "becoming outside of the whole", in the interval of the "other". Within the following chapters, I discuss other elements of both artworks.

## CHAPTER ONE

### DIVINE HORSEMEN: A study of Voodoo and Maya Deren

*Divine Horsemen's* re-staging and remixing felt akin to an archaeological investigation. I dug up the artefacts of the motivations, theories, images, and sounds recorded and created by Maya Deren, and put them back together to work out why *Divine Horsemen, The Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1985) was never completed, and why it was finally being released in such an aberrant form to Deren's own film style. However, unlike the archaeologist I can re-animate the material in a variant form as a mimetic remix; my abilities go beyond a theoretical diagnosis of why the work was not finished. Therefore, I sought to try to resuscitate the inherent *sensual magic* of the raw footage. I will now discuss Deren's film, her reasons for making *Divine Horsemen*, and my motivations for re-staging it.



*Divine Horsemen* (2005). The psychic contact is made through the left hand.

After receiving a Guggenheim fellowship award in 1946, Deren recorded and participated in several Voodoo ceremonies in Haiti from 1947 to 1950, thus experiencing religious possession herself. The title of the video installation, *Divine Horsemen* (2005), alludes to the Voodoo initiate, who in a state of trance is ridden like a horse by the Loa (god) through the act of possession within the ritual.

The remixing of Deren's existing ethnographic footage, re-contextualised as an installation, sought to highlight and strengthen Deren's own visual poetic style, and to illuminate the cultural questions involved in a highly ritualised social event - thus attempting to place questions within the minds of the audience around their own perceptions of Voodoo. Through re-staging this footage I re-examined the work as an historical artefact, not just of traditional Voodoo practice but also as an insight into Deren's methodology and working methods.

Deren, as a Voodoo initiate, was able to record these ceremonies without undue influence on the environment around her. Many years after Deren's death, Teiji and Cherel Ito posthumously cut the film into the documentary existing today, released as *Divine Horsemen the Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1985). This documentary film ran counter to many of Deren's own ideas on film form, such as the use of voiceover, narration, and continuity editing. The avant-garde filmmaker, Adam P. Sitney, described Deren's art works as "trance films", as ritual journeys revealing other states of consciousness and using the temporal qualities of film. The restaging of *The Divine Horsemen* (2005) was undertaken to try to bring the work closer to Deren's own unique film style.

I started this investigation with a series of questions, such as where is the poetic metaphor of a Maya Deren film? Is it possible to unite Deren's unique film art style with the ritual form of the trance rites in order to create elements that complement each other as an emergent whole, allowing a space for the visual poetry of the raw footage and the Voodoo practice to radiate within the mimetic art of the video installation? However, the original question was why does this documentary not work in its original form?

Firstly, I looked for common traits within Deren's film style that would be the basis for my own interpretation.

In Deren's major works, such as *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) or *Ritual of Transfigured Time* (1947), a ritualistic physicality is used as a form of coded

depersonalised expression. Meaning is created through stylised dance and physical movement in which each gesture tells a story as a form of ritualised visual language. Deren saw film editing as a creative technique, creating unique qualities of time-space in order to produce or maintain tempo and a fluidity of the movement within the shot, whilst at the same time allowing unrelated differing spatial areas to be held together. Editing was a method of bringing time to space.

The mirror takes on specific resonances in *Messes of the Afternoon* (1943): there are mirrors for faces; Deren (the actor) is pursued by a black figure with a mirror face; she plunges a knife into her lover's face as his image turns into a mirror; bodies and actions are mirrored in repetition. Mirroring and the affection of the face as an image were highly important areas to the restaging of *Divine Horsemen*, which used temporal spaces mirrored and falling in on themselves in reflections of mimesis. In *A Study in Choreography for Camera* (1944), time and movement are sundered from narrative space and slowed down as the figures of the dancers are suspended in air, floating in time with no classic continuity, falling to earth in unlinked radically different spaces, but portrayed as a seamless fluid gesture. All of her films deal in the "temporal dimension" – whether this is conveyed in graphical tricks or joining faraway shots - such as in *At Land* (1944), where we see each of her steps fall in a different scene - or the durational temporal workings of the mind, a feature of *Messes of the Afternoon*. She saw film's fundamental contribution as "the transfiguration of temporal complexities" (Deren, cited in Sitney, 1978: xxii).

When discussing slow motion in her essay *Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality*, she referred to it "as a time microscope, but it has expressive uses as well as revelatory ones" (Deren, 2005: 121), which can add a "ritual weight to an action" and can create durational feelings in the mind. One could argue that this shares a similar premise to Deleuze's description of aspects of the affection-image (Deleuze, 1986: 98-100), and Epstein's notions of *photogénie* (Epstein, cited in Sitney, 1978: xxiii).

Deren saw most camera techniques - such as freeze frame, tricks in editing, reversal of images and creating negative images - as having dimensions of ritual. Many of the same elements were found within the raw footage of the Haitian Voodoo ceremonies. Deren, as a classicist, was interested in recombining ritual within a system:

With Deren, the narrative form orders the subconscious into a design; ritual is used to impose an ideal order on the arbitrary order of art and the chaotic order of the world. The interior event is presented as a matrix out of which a pattern is made, and this pattern of ritual elements is combined to form the overall structure (Sitney and Rowe, 1978: 111).<sup>14</sup>

She saw the images of the camera as “fragments of a permanent incorruptible memory” which the artist arranges at will: “[w]hether in the logic of ideas and emotions, the poetic mode, or a logic of events which is narrative”, the motion picture though “composed of spatial images, is primarily a time form” (Deren, 2005: 123).

Games, as ritual metaphors, play a large role in Deren’s films, as they did in the original concept for her Voodoo film. From a game of “statues” in *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (1945-46), to the symbolism of the chess pieces in *At Land* (1944), even in *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943), it could be argued that it is a game of “spot the difference”. All of these games are based on a repetition of form; the same motif can also be seen in her attempt to combine the Haitian footage, into a “fugue of cultures”, mixing the ritualised rites with children’s games. Deren used ritual in space to link repetitions of physical movements to temporal inner meanings. “Space becomes a social/visual construct, wrote Deren, a person is first in one place, and then another without traveling between” (Deren, cited in Franko and Nichols, 2001: 144). Deren spoke of the artist having a moral obligation to use the most modern art methods to create art forms that allowed man to find his place in the cosmos. A conscious use of ritual to illuminate the human condition comprehended within the greater whole of human culture; an attempt to restore a balance that Deren felt had been lost in Western society between body, mind and spirit. This was intimated by her almost Bergsonian sensibilities, expressed in the last passage of *An Anagram of Ideas on Art, Form and Film* (1946):

The history of art is the history of man and of his universe and of the moral relationship between them. Whatever the instrument, the artist sought to re-create the abstract, invisible forces and relationships of the cosmos, in the intimate, immediate forms of his art, where the problems might be experienced and perhaps be resolved in miniature. It is not presumptuous to suggest that cinema, as an art instrument especially capable of recreating relativistic relationships on a plane of intimate experience, is of profound importance (Deren, 1946: 52).

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<sup>14</sup> Carel Rowe, *Illuminating Lucifer*, Film Quarterly, Summer, 1974.

Deren was fascinated by the act of possession and the complete loss of ego, of the relativistic relationships on a plane of intimate experience within a communal spectacle, though as a modernist she was partly obsessed with “the primitive” as a theme (though she denied this), which was very popular within the art movements of the 1940s. In her article, *Religious Possession and Dancing* (1942) Deren showed her growing interest in possession, and in particular Haitian ritual, at least five years before she ever went to Haiti. She talks of trance as a socially staged form of hysteria:

In a possessed Haitian, the process is parallel, but remains distinct from hysteria by virtue of the social frame of reference. For although drum rhythms emancipate a system of ideas, that system is not the product of individual development; but is a culturally formalized system, so deeply rooted in the sub-conscious by long tradition that although it requires emotional emancipation from the inhibitions of the cortex, it manifests itself in socially prescribed terms (Nichols, Deren cited in Michelson, 2001: 40).<sup>15</sup>

However hysteria is an individual act of metaphysical outpouring, whereas the trance possessions are the depersonalised act of a metaphysical, shared (communal) traditional ritual, used to work through issues or problems within the community.

Deren, as an artist, saw herself as a member of a tribe, so linked to the “other”, and separated from society: “In industrial culture, the artists constitute in fact, an ethnic group”, subject to the full “native’ treatment” (Deren, 1953: 7). Deren argues that it was this sense of “otherness” and of being a victim of prejudice that allowed her to interact with the Haitian peasants without committing similar effronteries toward them. Her experiences gave her a subjectivity and artistic openness that helped her divine meaning through intuition and feeling.

She was taken into the Voodoo faith as an initiate and thus placed herself within the space of the “other” with the acceptance of the Voodoo practitioners. However, Deren was a poetic filmmaker, with her aesthetical and ethical tendencies planted in modernism, and thus embraced the primitive “other” not as an observed curiosity, but as a living part of her own psyche. This is in part due to her creating film as an artist, and not as a scientific ethnographic document. She faithfully - and as unobtrusively as

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<sup>15</sup> Deren, Maya, *Religious Possession and Dancing* (1942).

possible - recorded the Voodoo rites, firstly for her own artistic manipulations, and then also as a token of respect for the practices, as she came to understand Voodoo as a complete and highly integrated cultural system for the Haitians. Deren's own ideas on documentary filmmaking illuminate this shift, and as a result are certainly mixed and rather limiting. In essence, she sees documentary as an artisan pursuit, more of a science (an objective representation) to satisfy our curiosity about the world, or to reveal what we would not otherwise see, objectively and impartially. For her, if documentary sacrifices its objectivity for lyricism it will fail as a film document. She always referred to her film footage of the Voodoo rites as the "Haitian footage", never as documentary footage; this was to distance the film from her own strict notions of what a documentary should be.

I therefore found myself drawn to the creative manipulation of reality (Deren, 1947: 20) within documentary as an experiment in form; an attempt to marry the visual poetry of Deren to the poetic metaphor of Voodoo, and to précis Deren's words, the technical trade of documentary (ibid: 34).

Restaging is a rather unusual practice in documentary, but it can be seen as a valid way of working for the artist. A restaging involves taking the elements of someone else's work and creating a new form out of it, as an orchestration, or a remixing. By re-staging *Divine Horsemen* (1985), I have taken this existing work and re-contextualised it to heighten aspects of poetic form, such as Deren's use of slow motion and repetition to reveal meaning that may have been lost or stifled by the original Itto cut. This is a form of mimetic translation similar to Benjamin's notion of the "mimetic faculty" (Benjamin, 1979: 160): to transform the original work to inherently illuminate the "inner meaning" of the source footage in order to maintain "the aura of the original by transforming it, precisely so that its truth might be preserved" (Buck-Morss, 1977: 87). I have never classified this as my own film. However, it is my interpretation of a Deren artefact, and the Voodoo ritual encapsulated within it. It is an act of sympathetic translation to transform one form into another, to reveal the inner meaning.

## THE FUGUE OF CULTURES

In December 1946, Maya Deren wrote to Gregory Bateson who, with Margaret Mead, had filmed *Trance and Dance in Bali* (1937, 1939, released 1952). Her letter concerned his review of the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition, "*Arts of the South Seas*" (1946).<sup>16</sup> Bateson had described the show as having a "symphonic" unity (Bateson, cited in Jackson, 2002: 141). Within this review, he explained that the exhibit had been arranged to allow "the spectators standing within the spatial display of one culture's artefacts to see across that room into the space of another," (Bateson, cited in Jackson, 2002: 141), thereby enabling the visitors to make connections between cultures, not just sequentially as they moved through the space, but also simultaneously within it. Deren told Bateson that his review had clarified her own ideas brewing about a new film consisting of a cross-cultural counterpoint of ritual and tradition:

As a matter of fact, you praise the exhibit precisely for the fact that each grouping of materials was true to the individual culture which it represented, at the same time that these groupings were so arranged in reference to each other as to create a "sensible" pattern which transcended them all and even strengthened them, each in their individual terms as well. It is this concept of relationships upon which I wished to build my film... My problem, in a sense, was to build a fugue of cultures. But each voice must have its own melodic integrity... (Deren, cited in Jackson, 2002: 141).

This first visualisation of her ideas for her visual "fugue of cultures" inspired me to see if there was a way to keep the narrative integrity of Deren's "Haitian footage" whilst at the same time exploring the poetic affect as vertical imagery, separate from the narrative space but cutting through it as a way of underpinning the narrative with the cosmology of Voodoo. This was visualised spatially within the three dimensional environment of the video artwork, similar to the spatial perspectives noted by Bateson within the Museum of Modern Art exhibition.

Deren wished to find artefacts and rituals that through the form and image could "carry the entire culture in their arms" (Jackson, 2002: 150). Bateson expressed concerns and reservations about her plan, saying that the images would lack the cultural cross-

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<sup>16</sup> The MoMA, exhibition, displayed art objects from Australia, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, New Guinea, Polynesia, Hawaii, and Easter Island (Jackson, 2002: 141).

echoes to keep their meaning as well as a thematic cohesion to allow the juxtapositions to make sense overall. Nonetheless, in 1947 Bateson did donate 20,000 feet of footage of the trance possessions filmed in Bali to Deren for her to use within her film *fugue*.

What did Deren originally intend for her Haitian footage? To answer the question I will be looking at her original thoughts around the creation of a “visual fugue”. A fugue is a musical term to describe the harmonious blending of voices or instruments contrapuntally. Originally, Deren wished to poetically juxtapose images of ritual, both religious and secular, to reveal a commonality of expression existing within the underlying intention and visual form. This would be composed as a type of graphical cross-cultural counterpoint:

It is upon these three ritualistic forms – children’s games, Balinese and Haitian ritual – that I wish to build the film, using the variations between them to contrapuntally create the harmony, the basic equivalence of the idea of form, common to them all (Deren, cited in Jackson, 2002: 140).

Within her “fugue of cultures” (Deren, cited in Jackson, 2002: 143), she wished each element would keep its meaning and integrity, yet, at the same time blend and transcend into a discernible holistic pattern that would strengthen the individual rituals within the emergent whole. Paradoxically, she wished to find the power of the same within the strength of difference, a form of ritualistic “mimetic faculty”, a Deleuzian “difference and repetition” (Deleuze, 1977: xx).

The fugue is polyphonic in form, as is the drumming in the Voodoo ceremonies; hence it has a temporal, durational quality. A musician or singer takes the lead, creates a theme that is then explored within the counterpoint, either within the simultaneous harmony that can be seen as a vertical, or the sequential melody horizontally; the theory thus mirrors Deren’s own theories of art-film being made up of horizontal linear narratives and vertical plunges of poetic metaphor. This is further exemplified by the cosmology of Voodoo, symbolised within the cosmic mirror, and personified by the shape of the cross:

For the Haitian, the metaphysical world of *Les Invisibles* is not a vague, mystical notion; it is a world within a cosmic mirror, peopled by the immortal reflections of all those who had ever confronted it. The mirror is the metaphor for the cosmology of Haitian myth...

The metaphor for the mirror's depth is the crossroads; the symbol of the cross. It is, above all, a figure for the intersection of the horizontal plane, which is the mortal world, by the vertical plane, the metaphysical axis, which plunges into the mirror. The crossroads, then, is the point of access to the world of Les Invisibles, which is the soul of the cosmos, the source of life force, the cosmic memory, and the cosmic wisdom (Deren, 1953: 35).

The vertical dimension comprehends “both the abyss below and the heavens above the earth, the dimension of durational infinity; the horizontal comprehends all men, all space and matter” (Deren, 1953: 37). This was an essential quality of the video installation, which highlighted the Deleuzian thought image caught on the cusp between the time-image and the movement-image: an embodied affective state in which the fluid nature of the frame in endless mirrored repetition enclosed the viewer. The image reached out beyond the frame to allow an affective embodiment with the viewers as they reached in, themselves mirrored and multiply reflected in the two-way glass.

Graphically and conceptually the “fugue of cultures” would have been possible, as can be seen by her suggestions within her thematic statement to the Guggenheim (ibid: 5). However, to be able to keep the intrinsic properties of each, to be able to sum up a whole ritual or a whole culture in a gesture or an artefact, while - through juxtaposition - creating a visual contrapuntion (something new and un-thought of out of the whole), would in practice be almost visually impossible. This is really a case of a wonderful theory, though in practice impossible to film, and allow the snippets of ritual to sum up a whole culture, without at the very best trivialising the ritual, and at the worst desecrating it. This moral issue certainly is one of the factors in her abandonment of this film idea:

I had begun as an artist, as one who would manipulate the elements of reality into a work of art in the image of my creative integrity; I end by recording, as humbly and accurately as I can, the logistics of a reality which had forced me to recognize its integrity, and to abandon my manipulations (Deren, 1953: 6).

Deren soon realised that the complex cosmology of Voodoo as a pragmatic and living faith could not be understood through snippets of filmed gestures and segments of ritual. Creating montages of Voodoo with children's games would not elevate hopscotch to a ritual communal form. More likely, it would associate the rites of Voodoo with childish

games, and children playing, which would verge on a form of colonial racism. Due to Deren's sensibilities, for ethical reasons she could not carry on with this film approach:

And the elaborate design for the montaged film is somewhere in my files, I am not quite sure where. That is unimportant, for a new plan of editing is necessary, and this is my next immediate project (Deren, 1953: 5).

This showed the collapse of her ideas of form and ritual as just purely an empty methodology. As Voodoo is a practice that is integral to all parts of the community, how could she just look at one part of the greater whole without violating the rest of the parts? She wrestled with these ideas in her journals until she came upon the notion of "equivalence", which is the cross-fertilisation of the integrity of form:

I suddenly realised that the relationship between abstraction, poetry, mythology and reality was a relationship of equivalence, rather than of application directly. Thus, in preserving the integrity of myth ideas on an abstract poetic level, I was making a statement, simultaneously, about reality on another level" (Deren, cited by Jackson, 2002: 140).

In other words, all is relative. This can be seen in the way that Voodoo operates. The dances are a ritual form to express a particular emotion or feeling, as expressed within the trance rites for *Erzule* the Loa (goddess) of love. Through the communal acting out of this expression of love within the traditional form of the rites, the metaphysical emotion being acted out transforms into physical realities within the community (Deren, 1953: 266). As noted earlier, "primitive man had a greater understanding than we do that the object of fear (or love, illness etc.), must be objectified (Brakhage, 2004: 200).

### ***DIVINE HORSEMEN: the process of creating the installation***

Firstly, I gathered all the material Deren produced in relation to her Haitian Voodoo experiences. These included the original soundtrack to the trance rites, the commercially available film footage, and the imagery of the vevers (religious Voodoo drawings), and

quotes from Deren's book *Divine Horsemen, Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1953), which was a mixture of anthropological study, personal recollections, and her own art philosophies around the cosmology of Voodoo. Through this remixing, I will not only explore Deren's own art style, but also try to empower the Voodoo ritual within Deren's original film footage. Within the cosmology of Voodoo, the "image" of the object and the object are considered one and the same: it could thus be argued that the image is the object. For Deren, film's "magical" potential was "its ability to make the facts of the mind visible" (Russell, 1999: 217), to explore the recesses of the soul, and to aspire to a form of consciously controlled, intuitively embodied art ritual for the betterment of all mankind as a way to expand human consciousness. Through the form of the installation, I endeavoured to reveal the reality of both the physical act and the metaphysical expression within the trance possession rites.

The sense of transformational magic as a temporal state had been completely stifled by the Itto cut of *Divine Horsemen* (1985), mainly through the suppressing of the durational sounds of the polyphonic drumming within the soundtrack, and through using the voice-of-god commentary over the visual beauty of the rites. Deren rarely used music in her films, and never used dialogue or voiceovers. Arguably, therefore, there is a certain restoration process going on within the work, a stripping back to reveal the power of the raw images and the raw sounds existing in the original captured events.

The original sounds and images had to be re-joined. This footage had never been seen in this state before, as all the edits that Deren had created from the footage had no soundtrack. As stated in her application to the Guggenheim Foundation for extra funding, she proposed to juxtapose the ritual dances with the ceremonial songs and the "voices of people possessed by the Gods". Deren had complete conviction in the power of the sounds to reveal the metaphysical experiences of the possessions "as the audio-visual evidence of the spiritual/invisible realm intersects with the material/visible" (Deren, cited in Jackson, 2002: 159). This alludes to the durational force of the music within trance possession as a major factor in pushing the performers within the ritual into other states of being.

The major problem with the documentary that was posthumously cut was that the edit completely disregarded the nature of the film footage that had been shot and Deren's

film style. In addition, there was little regard for Deren's own notes for how she planned to structure and create this work. The voice-of-god commentary using quotes from her ethnographic book studying Voodoo, entitled *Divine Horsemen Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1953), and the flowery prose describing the cosmology of Voodoo works well on the page, but feels pompous and stultified when heard spoken over the rhythmic durational music of Voodoo drumming. Instead of complementing and adding to the intensity of the rites, it diminishes them. Little thought was given to the complementary aspects between Deren's own film style, her theories on film form, and the cosmology and ritual in the Voodoo rites. Poetry and power was wiped from these images and what was added, namely the voice-overs, compounded this, essentially turning Deren's raw poetic footage into a documentary that was expository in form. The expository mode arranges views of the world within rhetorical arguments that tend to address the viewer directly, utilising the voice-of-god commentary, in which the speaker is usually heard but never seen. The word has more importance than the image and tends to assert perceived fact. Therefore, the commentary fell between two forms, and in essence worked in neither. "As an ethnographic film, it has a voyeuristic structure that runs contrary to Deren's insistence on the holistic, psychological, emotional, and experiential quality of her approach to Haiti" (Russell, 1999: 213). Deren did not use speech or dialogue in any of her films, as noted by Moira Sullivan: the "documentary made by Teiji and Cherel Itto, which they made to finish Deren's work, opens up the footage to the contradictions of image and text that Deren tried to avoid" (Sullivan and Nichols, 2001: 221).

With the obvious flaws inherent in the Cherel and Teji Itto cut of the *Divine Horsemen* (1985) highlighted, I now had a methodology, a plan to align Deren's relative values with Voodoo in order to filter the complementary elements of both into a whole as a new form; a form which would tap into the magical durational nature of the Voodoo trance rites and Deren's ritual art form of to create a balance between both, as a "visual fugue". The symbol of the cross with the circle was a perfect visual metaphor of Deren's own film form, comprising "poetic verticals", and "narrative horizontals", encompassing ritualised images as loops, circular overlapping slow motion, and repetitions.

By creating a spatial three dimensional digital-image reflection in *Divine Horsemen*, both the poetic and the narrative elements could coexist as a floating cross of

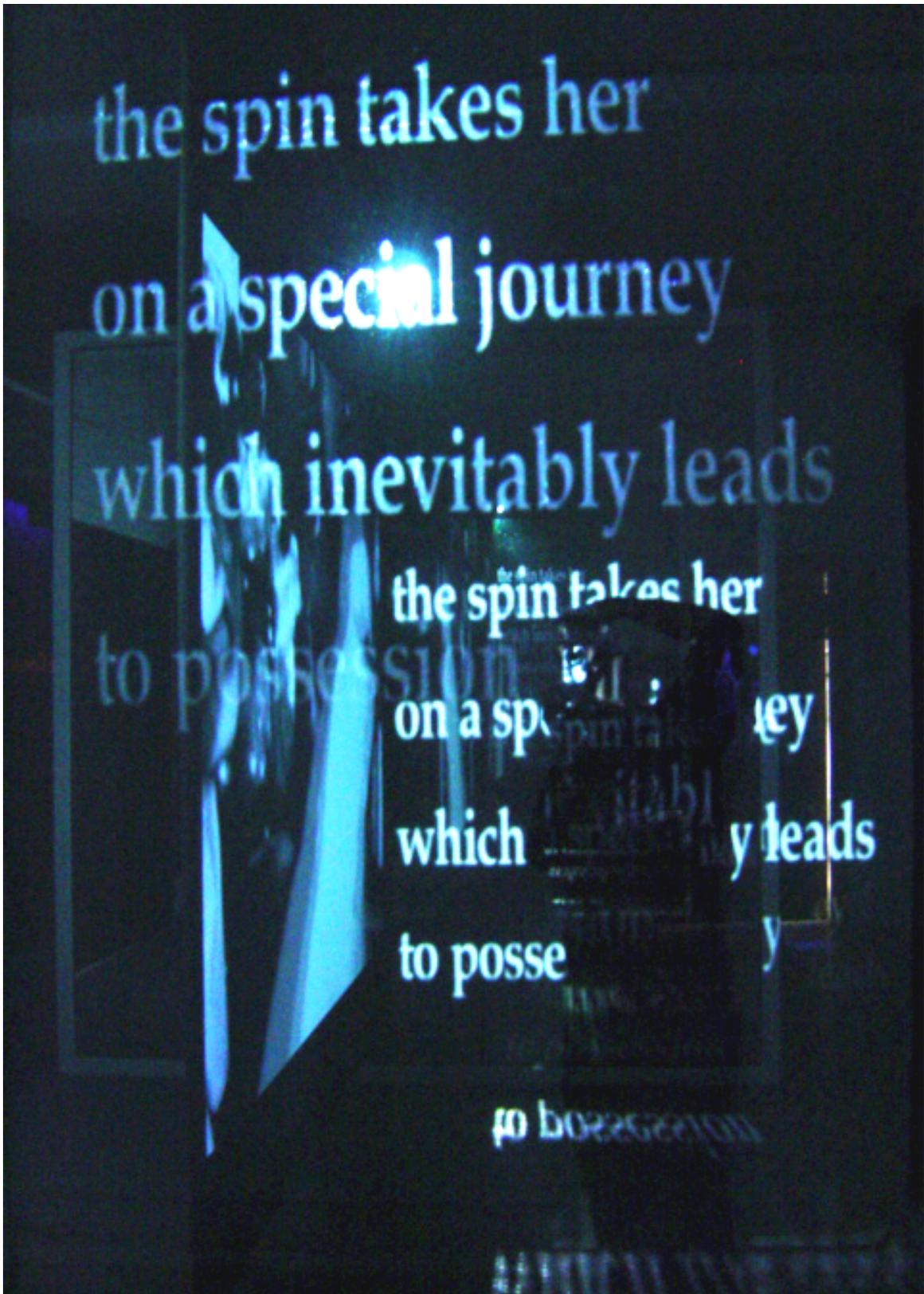
light, which allowed the vertical “open whole” of the temporal poetic imagery to exist within the linear movement-images of the narrative action, whilst keeping the integrity of both (without the need for cutting back and forth between each, which would have led to a diminishing of both within a single-screen work). Therefore, the physicality of the video screens in the gallery space was used to explore spatiotemporal techniques beyond the edit, and the image within the virtual three-dimensional frame allowed both to exist independently, whilst at the same time being joined together in the same space in the form of a “visual fugue”. “It is indeed the polyphonic (vertical and horizontal) structure of the baroque fugue that figuratively captures the variety and density of Maya Deren’s life, and art form” (Jackson, 2002: 213): this recreated Deren’s original template for the “fugue of cultures” film. In *Poetry and the Film* (1953), Deren talked of the unexpected associations that can be picked up by being by an open window, listening to the sounds of the room that you are in, and the sounds of the street. She described a form of simultaneous blending of separate forms and distinct forms into a fugue of cultures, “but each voice must have its own melodic integrity” (Deren, cited in Jackson 2002: 123). Hence creating new meaning existing within the blend between distinctly different cultural rituals juxtaposed together to discover the similarities in difference:

If were brought in on a different level, not issuing from the image, which should be complete in itself, but as another dimension relating to it, then it is the two things together that make the film poem. It’s almost as if you were standing at a window and looking out into the street, and there are children playing hopscotch. Well that’s your visual experience. Behind you, in the room, are women discussing hats or something, and that’s your auditory experience. You stand at the place where these two come together by virtue of your presence. What relates these two moments is your position in relation to the two of them (Deren cited in Sitney, 1978: 179).<sup>17</sup>

The viewer’s position in relation to the space of the installation reveals a different image, created by the reflection within the mirror glass, and the angle of the light hitting it from the projectors, mirroring Deren’s own notions of a dimensional juxtaposing, and blending of disparate elements into a poetic form. Preserving the integrity of Deren’s film aesthetics physically within the artistic form of the installation simultaneously empowered the cosmology of the Voodoo rites as an act of equivalence.

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<sup>17</sup> Deren, Yale lecture, (1949).



*Divine Horsemen* (2005). Text taken from Deren's book *Divine Horsemen Voodoo Gods of Haiti* (1953).

Deren described this in her Guggenheim application as “an extension of the concept of continuity on the basis of the equivalence of elements identifiable as dis-associated”, looking for the similarity in difference, a “difference and repetition” which tied into the inherent mimesis of the Voodoo ritual reflected in the mirror glass surrounding the film footage. Hence, the form, theory, aesthetics, and imagery of the raw footage, all complemented the magic of Voodoo within a relationship of equivalence. This empowered and linked the magic, art, and (digital) technology together, hence a reintegration and joining of science, art, magic, and philosophy. This was a key aspect of Deren’s own studies and was explored within her writing, *An Anagram of Ideas on Art, Form and Film* (1946). It was also the key element missing from the Itto cut. I hoped to open up a space to illuminate a core truth between Deren the artist/filmmaker and the cosmology of Voodoo.

### ***DIVINE HORSEMEN: the process ends***

In Deren’s films as in Voodoo, there was a continual journeying to the crossroads, the point of access to the world of cosmic memory. At this junction, a vertical plane plunges into the world of *Les Invisibles* while a horizontal plane remains fixed in the mortal, visible world, for Deren the dive into the abyss, the white darkness of trance possession, symbolised the very processes involved in her own film art and in the act of creativity. This process mirrored Deren’s ideas of the “poetic vertical” as the domain of metaphor and visual poetry.

Poetry, to my mind, is an approach to experience... The distinction of poetry is its construction (what I mean by a “poetic structure”), and the poetic construct arises from the fact, if you will, that it is a “vertical” investigation of a situation, in that it probes the ramifications of the moment, and is concerned with its qualities and its depth, so that you have poetry concerned, in a sense, not with what is occurring but with what it feels like or what it means. A poem, to my mind, creates visible or auditory forms from something that is invisible, which is the feeling, or the emotion, or the metaphysical content of the

movement. Now it also may include action, but its attack is what I would call the “vertical” attack (Deren cited in Sitney, 1978: 174).<sup>18</sup>

The cosmology of Voodoo was a template for Deren’s aesthetics. The icons and imagery used within the Voodoo rites (especially that of the crossroads with a circle) completely mirrored the style of her editing and the visual metaphor of poetic verticals and narrative horizontals. Expressed through the ritualistic use of repetitions, this was recreated within the form of the video installation. All of her ritualistic explorations were encapsulated within the religious trance rites of the Voodoo.

I find it hard to believe that this serendipitous fusion was merely an accident, and I wished to reclaim the work back to its intended manner, that of a crossroads between two states of “being” between two forms; that of experimental ethnographic film and poetic metaphor, a dual multiplicity, an embodied temporal form of the mind made manifest.

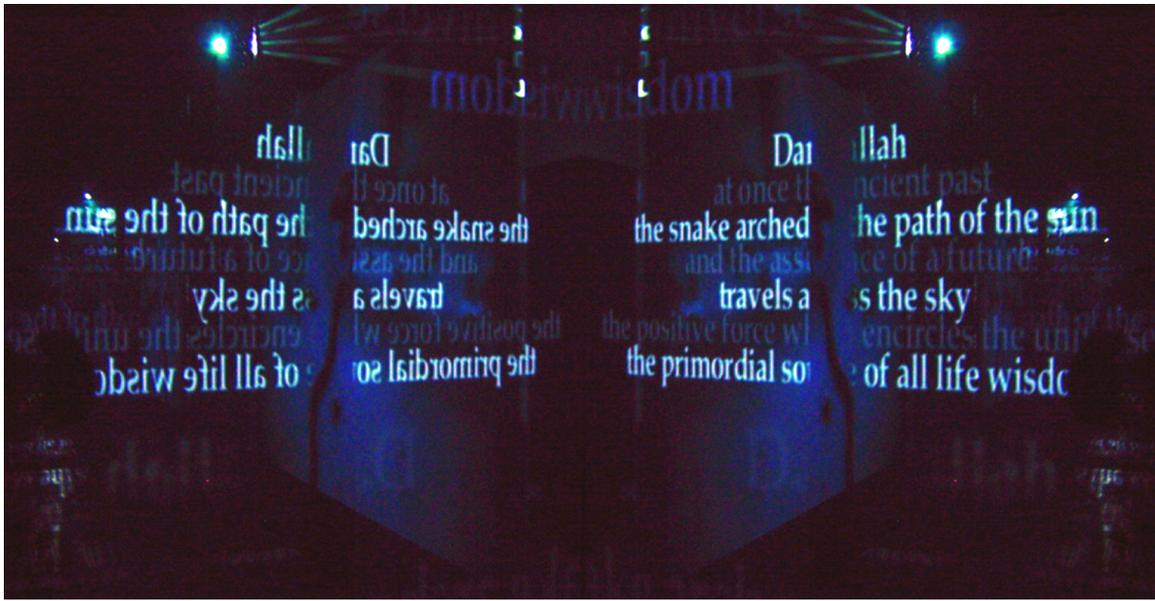
Did the Voodoo rites reveal to her when she faced the white darkness of possession herself that to make art out of this would be artifice? So she became a slave to the faithful act of documenting, forgetting that Voodoo was a pragmatic religion. This was summed up by the fact that the tools and the sacred drums used within the rites are normal everyday instruments, and they only become sacred when they are blessed for a rite. Deren was pragmatic enough to be completely dispassionate about this. However, this was what she saw the role of the artist to be: passionately dispassionate:

All invention and creation consist primarily of a new relationship between known parts... In film whether the images are related in terms of common or contrasting qualities, in causal logic of events, which is narrative, or in the logic of ideas and emotions, which is the poetic mode, the structure of a film is sequential. The creative action in film, then, takes place in the time dimension; and for this reason the motion picture, though composed of spatial images, is primarily a *time form* (Deren, cited in Sitney, 1978: 69).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Deren, Maya, *Poetry and Film*, Cinema 16, New York, 1953.

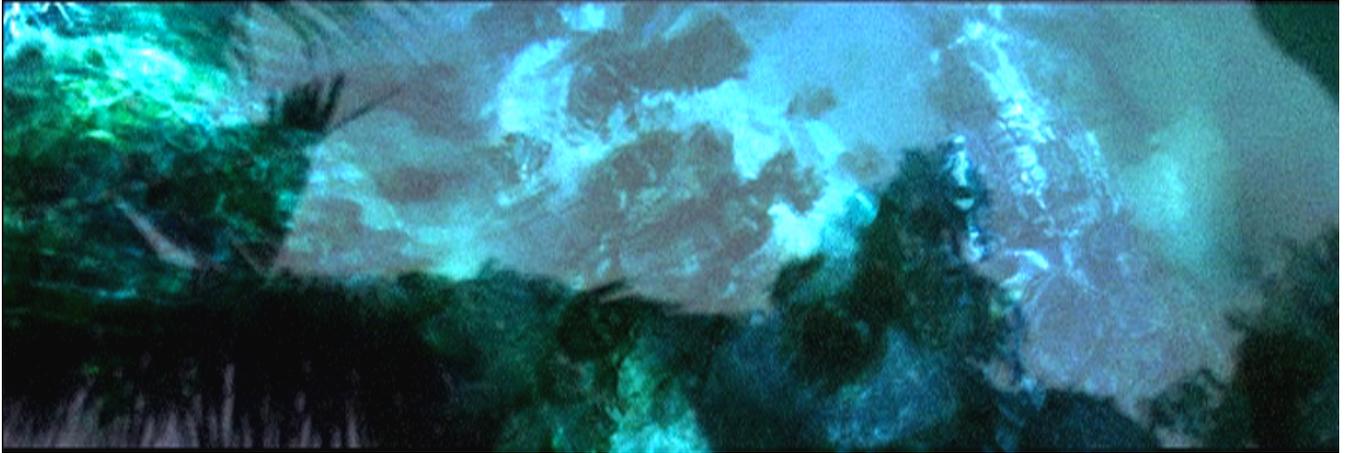
<sup>19</sup> Taken from *Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality* (1960).



*Divine Horsemen* (2005). Damballah, the good serpent of the sky.

#### **PEOPLE INBETWEEN: a starting point**

A theory of Deren's that became essential to the form of *People Inbetween* (2007) was the "value of zero" (Deren, 1947: cited in Jackson, 2002: 159); in essence the power of the spaces in-between the action, called the "interval" by Vertov - a musical term describing the spaces between notes that give the piece its rhythm. Deren described this as "the necessary intervals between actions" and "that which gives to action its rhythm" (Jackson, 2002: 159); the unbroken flow of activity and inactivity that create the rhythms of life. This notion stuck with me and although it did not have a direct effect on my processing of *Divine Horsemen* (2005), with my next work *People Inbetween* (2007), the notion of "zero" became increasingly important: as more often than not it is in the emergent power of nothing that one can find the secret well for the possibility of the most powerful thoughts. A major element of this work was to explore Deren's notion of "the value of zero" (Deren, 1947: cited in Jackson, 2002: 159), and to see if I could tap into the temporal nature of life in the Sri Lankan and Dutch Burgher environments, allowing the natural durations of the spaces to flow within the power of nothing, the power of the interval.



The Memory River, *People Inbetween* (2007).

*I will have not so much as a dream as an image that repeats itself.  
I see my own straining body, which stands shaped like a star and realise  
gradually I am part of a human pyramid.  
Below me are other bodies that I  
am standing on  
and above me are several  
more, though I am quite near the top.  
With cumbersome slowness we are walking  
From one end of the huge living room to the other.  
We are all chattering away like the crows and the cranes  
so that it is often difficult to hear. I do catch one piece of dialogue.  
A Mr Hobday has asked my father if he has any Dutch antiques in the house.  
And he replies, "Well... there is my mother".  
(Running in the Family, Michael Ondaatje, 1983)*



*People Inbetween*, (2007), 180-degree panoramic image, Borella Cemetery, Family plot.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PEOPLE INBETWEEN

The premise for the video installation *People Inbetween* (2007) became a question that was also the title, which is what happens within the in-between? Whether this is the images and illogical associations between images, or the energetic spaces of the body between two races existing as part of either and hence a member of neither - the alien outsider or the desires of a “body without organs”.

Within the visual form of the video installation, film no longer as the links and chains of the associations or attractions of images within “the open whole” but the whole as the unknown space, the whole as becoming the alien “outside/other”. However within the text the personal stories and letters of family and Burghers intimately flow, yet who has the intimate memories to truly understand these stories, becoming the alien “inside/other”:

Film ceases to be ‘images in a chain... an uninterrupted chain of events each one the slave of the next’, and whose slave we are. It is the method of BETWEEN, ‘between two images’, which does away with all the cinema of the One. It is the method of AND, ‘this and then that’, which does away with all the cinema of Being = is. Between two actions, between two affections, between two perceptions, between two visual images, between two sound images, between the sound and the visual. The whole undergoes a mutation, because it has ceased to be the One-Being, in order to Become (Deleuze, 1989: 170, 180).

The dynamic act of becoming is essential to the trance possession experience throughout the Urvedic demon exorcism, important within aspects of intercultural film and hence a major element within the video artwork *People Inbetween*. Also a critical part (whole)<sup>20</sup> of Deleuzian philosophical thought processed through the time-image.

To introduce the notion of “becoming” I would like to recount a story told to me by my Mother of when she first came to the UK in 1952. It helped to formulate my reasons for creating the video installation *People Inbetween* exploring my own diasporic identity. It was her first year at Kingston Art School and the art teacher had asked

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<sup>20</sup> Eluding to The Deleuzian concept of the “dcentered center”, also called the “plane of immanence” that is the light/energy of cosmic atomic mater interacted with within the boundaries of known consciousness.

everybody in the class to paint a picture of their kitchen at home. After a minute or two the art teacher came over to my mother and asked her why she looked slightly lost. She said, “I am not sure what to do as I have never been in the kitchen at home”. After a few giggles from her classmates the teacher replied. “Well just make it up or something”. This is what my Mother did: She painted a fantasy; she did not try to imagine what her kitchen at home in Sri Lanka looked like but painted what she thought the teacher and the rest of the class would think it would be like. She tried to live up to and create not her idea, but their fantasy of a native Sri Lankan kitchen. Therefore, she painted a picture of huts and happy natives, rice pounders and grinding stones not a cook or a servant in sight. This made me question and think about how much of my identity is playing up to and created by other people’s fantasies. How much of my identity was a fabrication?

We should not, for a moment, underestimate or neglect the importance of the act of imaginative rediscovery... Cultural identity is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’ (Hall, 1995: 224, 225).

An act of “becoming”, which in essence has similar overtones to the creative art of sympathetic mimesis involved within trance possession and ritual magic. An act of becoming an “other” through the temporal, the durational and the transformative, which is inherent within the healing rites of the Urvedic demon exorcism as discussed earlier. The processes of energetic becoming are the essence of *durée* and the “time-image”. When there is no “open whole” or no memory to create meaning, then the gaps in the time-image are voids of “becoming” as an “outside/other” fluxing between two other states of being; a “quantum<sup>21</sup> other”. In the book *Gilles Deleuze’s Time Machine* (1997) Rodowick states:

I believe there are deeper philosophical principles that not only provide new ways of understanding and appreciating the difficulties of “modern” cinema but also open up new debates of interest for cultural studies. If there is no self-identical subject who can speak

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<sup>21</sup> Alluding to the mathematical theory within quantum mechanics known as the “measurement theory” in which quantum particles (sub atomic particles) exist in a state of everywhere and nowhere at once until the act of consciously observing them in a fixed position. Arguably a “plane of immanence” resultantly observed within a “zone of indetermination”.

for the image or interpret it as whole, if the complexity of the image itself can be neither reduced nor represented as a whole that can be contained in memory, then what does the time-image represent or communicate? Only time, the impersonal form of time that divides the ego from the I and disjoins all forms of identity, in the subject or in the image, as a force of Becoming (Rodowick, 1997: 188).

This force of becoming is the essential nature of intercultural film, of trance possession (as a transformational act) and the nature of the in-between state of being between two cultures and “becoming” something else. It is the driving force behind durational time, never repeated never the same always fluid and continuously becoming an open future. It is inherently linked to affect, as the state of becoming between perception and action.

Affection allows movement towards a future response as a primary experience, and is the key to thought within the movement-image and thought within the time-image. Within the interval of un-thought space there exists the possibility of a new thought “and it is not merely a difference of degree that separates perception from affection but a difference in kind” (Bergson, 1912: 57). That is to say “my perception is outside my body, and my affection within it” (Bergson, 1912: 59). Hence, affection “becomes” within the interval between an incoming perception and an outgoing action as referred to earlier (page24), and hence can be summed up as the very interval itself.



*People Inbetween* (2007), the memory river, Anthea and Jennifer.

**PEOPLE INBETWEEN:**  
**Becoming, Affection, and the Genesign**

As discussed by Barbara M. Kennedy (2000), images are not always linked within modern cinema. As cinema evolved away from classic continuity editing hence the cuts and the edits have less significance in themselves, they become de-linked: “what emerges is often a kind of “non-commensurability” (Kennedy, 2000: 99) of relations between images. Film becomes linked affectively to the rhythm of the body as a “plane of immanence”: “[i]t performs as a body, a molecular body, through the affective” as becomings, as flows of intensity that are felt (ibid). The body is the essential element within both the structure of *People Inbetween* and the transformational rites of the Urvedic demon exorcism: this is the essence of what Deleuze calls within the time-image a “genesign”. He notes that many post-colonial and intercultural works deal with acts of transformation, when the body becomes something else (Deleuze, 1989: 150). There is a continual engagement with the search for identity in many intercultural works; exploring this constant difference, a constant re-thinking of the image and its relation to the body, as other, as me, a “ciné-trance” (Rouch, cited in ten Brink, 2007: 93).

Genesign refers to “time as a series of(s)...” in which documentaries are fictions, and actors perform truths as a series of potential becomings (Deleuze, 1989: 275). Deleuze does not expand this notion, but as a sign concerning post-colonial and intercultural works, it merits closer scrutiny. Genesigns refer to hybrid forms, similar to Deleuze’s notions of minor literature (works dealing in unusual, ground breaking forms). These are works that create and play with new languages: “A minor literature repeats a voice, not in order to maintain the tradition, but to transform the tradition” (Colebrook, 2002: 121). Hence, the aim is arguably to create a transcendental difference through a repetition of forces, similar to the process of the “mimetic faculty”, a repetition of the spirit of an idea to create difference.

Genesigns are time-images that break with classic genres, creating new ways of seeing the world, particularly when the body is split from the sensory-motor schema (Deleuze, 1989: 276). As potentialities, repetitions becoming differences, creative evolutions, time is not ordered: it transforms. Identities are at stake in genesigns, as

Deleuze states - it deals with people who are not yet. Film is therefore a method by which to become, allowing post-colonial cultures to find their own voices or recreate their own histories, sometimes through myth and fantastical story telling. Deleuze cites the films of Rouch as an example “of an author becoming, of his becoming-other”, in particular, *Les maîtres fous*, (Deleuze, 1989: 276). A fiction is invented for the sole purpose of revealing a truth (ibid: 151). Deleuze states that this is where the filmmaker himself becomes the dispossessed, “I is *another*’, that is *me a black*”, meaning the filmmaker loses his ego, becomes one with, or is the “black”, the diasporic, the dispossessed (ibid: 153). With the video artwork, *People Inbetween*, I am becoming the other, however I am the abstracted other within an intensity of desires to be at one with my mixed race heritage.

The whole of the video art installation, *People Inbetween*, is a body, my abstracted body. I took myself out of the frame as I wanted the images and the places of the in-between spaces of my diasporic identity to be my body in a state of becoming, a “body without organs”,<sup>22</sup> Deleuze talks of the body as the interstitial, “the body holds the un-thought in life” (ibid: 189). The body is where I become the key to my feelings as an affective resistance before thought, but complementing the new thought. This is why *People Inbetween* is a body (my body) wanting to become at one with myself, as British, as Sri Lankan but always a Dutch Burgher: “The body without organs is a field for the production of the process of desire” (Kennedy, 2000: 99).

*Asia*. The name was a gasp from a dying mouth. An ancient word that had to be whispered, would never be used as a battle cry. The word sprawled. It had none of the clipped sound of Europe, America, Canada. The vowels took over, slept on the map with the S. I was running to Asia and everything would change (Ondaatje, 1983: 22).

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<sup>22</sup> The “body without organs” is a complex Deleuzian term derived from Artaud, which refers to the body as relations of temporal becomings, of desires, which become social codes and political hierarchies that are attached to society. Hence, the mass of affections and desires in the body before they are constituted into feelings, or social norms. When I use the term, “body without organs” I refer to the yearning to become at one with my mixed identity, a becoming, a flux to find my social and political place (Deleuze, 1977: 160, Colebrook, 2006: 131). The body is a fluid term; Deleuze describes the body as a series of informed “speeds”, and “intensities”. The body is a notion of forms, how all matter, molecules, and mind, knit and relate together. “The body without organs is a field for the production of the process of desire. “It is what Deleuze (also) calls the plane of immanence, a series of becomings, before the structure of behavioural roles, through specific moralities and principles” (Kennedy, 2000: 99).

Michael Ondaatje described the start of his long journey home, returning to our conjoined Dutch Burgher roots. *People Inbetween* is my long trek home, but to a home that is no longer there and a family that are all dead and buried.

Becoming is a process of immanence, as flows of “intensity that operates outside subjectivity through affect” (Kennedy 2000: 99), the “unthought is felt at this level as an intensity as becoming in a molecular connection” (ibid). *People Inbetween* cries out with affective molecular connection, of sensual ennui, an affective unthought primal wanting to become a body at rest. The Urvedic demon exorcism is the cry of the body between the fractured state of possession and wholeness. “The body forces us to think what is concealed from thought, life. Through the body, the cinema forms an alliance with the spirit, with thought” (Deleuze, 1989: 189). As Deleuze states, the body is the time-image, “the attitude of the body relates thought to time as to that outside which is infinitely further than the outside world”, affect as a prime force, a pure quality (ibid).

*People Inbetween* is about this alliance; through my feelings I wished to perceive my place in the outside world and spiritually connect with my culture, the Dutch Burghers. Each de-linked shot is a break in the sensory-motor schema, which can only be brought together through affection and the unthought feeling of what is in-between; for me, however, this was not an abstract process, it was the process of metaphorically putting my body back together, a transformational (genesign) act.

Within the video installation I sought to evoke intimate yet distanced spaces (an act that is inherent to trance possession, and sensual magic); this was achieved by the creation of extreme wide angle images that produce a distance between the viewer and the subject, whilst at the same time the subject matter in the panoramic scenes are intimate private areas, such as the family plot in Borella cemetery, or the exorcism of a village girl. I went into this video artwork thinking of it as a poetic/experimental piece focusing on the shared family memories of the Dutch Burgher Community of Sri Lanka; a triangular communing between myself, my Mother, and Sri Lankan identity, processed through the diaspora of the Dutch Burghers. In order to facilitate this I tried to connect emotionally with my Sri Lankan culture, putting myself through a series of trials and ritual journeys in order to experience the spaces and places associated with traditional Sri Lankan and Dutch Burgher identity. These included the climbing of Sri Pada (a Holy

Mountain, and a Buddhist pilgrimage) and participating in an Urvedic (spiritual healing) demon exorcism. I am the only person to document one of these performances in its entirety. I hoped to understand more about my own cultural ethnicity and deepen the cultural understandings of Sri Lanka and the Dutch Burgher community, which has been described as a “lost white tribe” (Orizio, 2000: 2).

The core of the installation is a poetic study of the diaspora and fragmented identity of the Dutch Burghers. Even though they had lived in Sri Lanka for over four hundred years, they were still seen as a displaced racial minority by both the English (pre 1948 Independence), and are still regarded as so by the Sinhalese.

When my mother came to Britain she did everything to become British. I am British and for me this film journey was about evaluating my Sri Lankan identity through imprinted genetic embodied memory and learned behaviours. This was reflected in the series of trials and ritual journeys that I put myself through. However, by removing myself directly from the expanded frame of the installation I sought to create a ritualised, depersonalised, and more abstracted piece of work; a work in which all of the disparate elements, when pulled together by the act of experiencing the installation across the three gallery spaces, add up to evoke the nature and the feeling of being mixed race and caught between cultures – thus in essence an outsider, and a fragmented “other” within both.

The subject matter and video imagery across the three gallery spaces abstractly represented the fractured parts of a mind and body; in the terminology of Deleuze, and Artaud, “a body without organs” desire sundered from the “I” of the ego, an almost trance like state. Within this fracturing out and coming together, I hoped to reveal an emergent space, which is the affection within the interval, the void filling up with an act of becoming existing in the “in-between”.

As a personal poetic work, which exists between two cultures, this art installation fits into the allusive category of intercultural film; it should therefore not be seen as a narrative story of the Dutch Burghers but as a temporal exploration of lost memory, lost community, and my own place within this rather fluid hybrid ethnicity (mix) of Asian and European.

The video installation consisted of four screens; the panoramic spaces, the memory river consisting of family photos animated in water with audio conversations

from the Burgher community flowing around this, and two complementary screens. One of these complements the memory river, with the grounding elements of the history of the Burghers logically explained by Deloraine Brohier (ex-president of the Dutch Burgher Union). The other was a foil to the panoramas, showing slowed down poetic details, close ups, text and interviews to inform around the panoramic screen spaces. This screen took aspects of classic montage and placed it externally to the panoramic screen, so allowing the panoramic space to be free of cutaways and close ups. These montage elements were synchronised with the major screen, allowing a freeing up of the space within the panoramic frame to explore depth of focus, while permitting the complementary screen to explore poetic elements, such as slow-motion, close-ups of faces, and a traditional montage edit. The slow-motion details of the faces of the performers and the patient within the exorcism rites are an interpretation of Epstein's *photogénie*, to reveal the close-up details, the face, or inner meaning of specific images within the panoramic spaces. Deleuze refers to this as an "affection-image". This detail may reveal the feeling of all imagery associated with it on a primary (first) level.

This highlighted a cultural difference in film form, with montage as an assembly system with a cultural affinity to Western filmmaking, while the panoramas as open spaces allow for a drift of perceptual meaning to be experienced by the viewer, long static takes linked to pockets of melodrama being a typical Sri Lankan film form. By the act of separating out the elements of "montage" and "depth of focus", both a more informed directed area, and a more experiential area exist within the same footage and within the same area of the gallery space.

Everything in this work relates personally to me, even down to the fact that Lionel Wendt who narrated *The Song of Ceylon* (1933) and photographed parts of the film was a relative of mine, and that the demon exorcism ritual happened in the village that my family's servants and retainers came from. Everyone in the film would be linked directly by blood or by community, which I envisioned as an extension of me; as the quote from Ondaatje's book *Running in the Family* (1983) exemplifies this (at the beginning of this chapter). Within this video artwork I sought to step through my own ethnicity and journey as the "insider/outsider" (Minh-ha, 1989: 133) between two worlds, and I wanted people to experience that in an emotional, sensual affective sense.

The Burghers are a displaced people that ultimately fit into neither the dominant Buddhist Sri Lankan culture nor European identity, hanging onto their Dutch heritage as the direct descendants of the Dutch settlers who came to Ceylon. The Burghers are a Sri Lankan racial minority actively displaced through the political fundamentalism of Sri Lankan Buddhist Nationalism that surfaced as a political force within the island in the 1940s (see logbook pages 75-85 for further information concerning the history of the Dutch Burgher community, and a social critique of caste and race in Sri Lanka).



*People Inbetween*, (2007), 180-degree panoramic image, Dutch Burgher Union.

The Dutch Burgher Union, the club restricted to those of Dutch descent, once a powerful secret society but now only a gloomy billiard-hall near Buller Road, draped in dust and cobwebs (Orizio, 2000: 16).

**ME as the OTHER,**  
**The emergent space of the IN-BETWEEN**

As stated by Laleen Jayamanne when talking of her film *A Song of Ceylon* (1985), anthropology has traditionally been enamoured with the “other”. She discussed the Basil Wright film *The Song of Ceylon* (1933) as a work that highlights the purity of Sri Lanka, the glorified noble primitive “other” impacted by industrialisation. As Ceylon changed its name to the People’s Republic of Sri Lanka in 1972, it became a post-colonial echo and a response not only to the colonial view of the “virgin island” with its happy natives, but a memory of a country that in essence has completely changed, even down to its name (Jayamanne, 2001: 64).

Trin T. Minh-ha, when discussing the notions of in-betweenness calls for a continuous re-appraisal of words, definitions, and meanings so as not to let terms become tired or appropriated. She sees this in Maoist terms as “the verbal struggle” (Chambers, Curti and Minh-ha, 1996: 10, 11).

After a while, one becomes tired of hearing concepts such as in-betweenness, border, hybridity, and so on... (But) For the time being, then, we should continue to use words like ‘in-betweenness’ and ‘hybridity’ as tools for change, and we should keep on redefining them until their spaces become so saturated that we would have to couple them with other words or invent some kind of hybrid word in order to go a little further (Chambers, Curti and Minh-ha, 1996: 10, 11).

It is a struggle to evolve the meaning of words away from their colonial racist pasts. An example of this is the term “hybrid”, which was originally used within the colonial system to describe the prejudice against race mixing, as the “degeneration of blood and the conjectured infertility of mulattoes” (Guneratne, Dissanayake and Stam, 2003: 32). However, hybrid and diaspora are terms that have also come to be associated with first and second generation immigrants to the United Kingdom.

If you are a mix of two cultures there will always be a friction between fitting into one or the other, or neither. In essence, this is Dutch Burgher diaspora; being treated as foreigner in your own homeland:

Violations of boundaries have always led to displacement, for the in-between zones are the shifting grounds on which the (doubly) exiled walk. Not You/like You (Minh-ha, 1989: 137).

There is no direct translation for the word “in-between” within the Sinhalese language; mixes are seen as immoral and deficient. Sri Lankan film depictions of the Dutch Burghers echo this. In the cultural mind of the Sinhalese, the Burgher female is seen as a fun loving, Westernised, loose woman. This cultural stereotype cuts across all aspects of representation, from stage to screen and literature, with the Burgher woman represented as the immoral “other” to the timid and morally upright Sinhalese (Buddhist) village woman. Screen portrayals in films such as *Sisila Gini Ganee* (1992), in which the main character has a relationship with a Burgher girl who says that she does not believe in marriage and that all she wants is a free life; exemplify this attitude. She of course meets a tragic end and is always held up as a cautionary example or impure “other” to the virtuous Sri Lankan girl, who is by contrast is pure and demure (Wimal, Ratnavibhushana, 2000: 65). The Burgher woman functions as a symbol for the degenerating aspects of a modernised Western culture, and the evils of being mixed race.

The British in the 19<sup>th</sup> century created a middle class amongst the high class Burgher and Sri Lankan families that took on the accretions of Western culture, classical literature, philosophical reason and in some cases religion. This provided white-collar workers for the British colonial machine, yet they were seen as those who were also not intended to be mingled with as others and natives.

This can be summed up by the attitude of Caroline Corner in her book, *Ceylon the Paradise of Adam* (1908); written after she had lived in Ceylon for over seven years. She was considered enlightened, and a liberal among the English:

Herein lie the pomp and circumstance of the dwelling – a queer combination of East and West – the bungalow being the *only point* where the centripetal and centrifugal forces of East and West do meet and mingle. The effect although bizarre, is picturesque and somewhat artistic withal. Civilisation and barbarism, crudity and culture, the latter depending on the European occupant *individually*, for *collectively* culture is conspicuous by its absence in Ceylon<sup>23</sup> – ancient and modern, everything antithetical and anachronal

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<sup>23</sup> Sri Lanka, like India, has one of the oldest cultures in the world, with a literary tradition going back many thousands of years. There are examples of Sanskrit poetic graffiti, dating from the

arranged together in a delightful *olla podriga* of the Orient and the Occident (Corner, 1908: 7).

Sometimes when reading post-colonial texts I am reminded of this patronising tone passed off as reasonable debate. Such bloodless, patronising (ethnographic) texts and films (about Africa) prompted Ousmane Sembene to remark, that “Africanists observe us like insects” (ten Brink, 2007: 118). I then realised that *People Inbetween*, whatever form this artwork took, would always be a political work.

The very form of the work as symbolising parts of a fragmented body highlight the individual linked to the community, the multiple. This depersonalised expression of self was in essence a trance experience. The possession rituals are perfect metaphors for this, as was the diasporic Burgher psyche. The layout of *People Inbetween* reflected this. With multiple screens and sounds spatially arranged and actively experienced by the viewer, an “expanded cinema” was produced - not necessarily to alter or expand consciousness, as postulated by Youngblood (Youngblood, 1970: 75), but to experientially show “other” conscious states. This was evident in the artwork as both a multi-screened video experience across three gallery spaces, and through the use of the expanded 180-degree panoramic video space within the extended frame. Therefore, the form of the artwork embodies the metaphor and meaning within the underlying intercultural themes. The frame and the projector were active elements within the video installation that flow with and add to the greater conceptualisation of the piece as a whole. Within this artwork, the image is not the frame; the image is the affective, sensual, embodied space in-between and encompassed through the use of the expanded frames:

The role of the projector is radically widened; it is no longer a passive projecting device, but an active tool in the creation of new kinds of films/concepts/spaces. The role of the rectangular screen edges is opened out, by direct use of its shape, and by the employment of images (conceptually) lead out of its confines into wider spaces. The frame itself is no longer a discrete entity, but an active unit, capable of immeasurably numerous possibilities (Hamlyn, 2003: 50).

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fifth century carved into the walls of Sigira palace rock fortress, talking of the frescoes painted in caves within the rock, of celestial temple virgins.

In *People Inbetween*, the space (venue), frame (or multiples), projection method and sound design were all as important as the visuals. They blended and reacted within the space they were in, and were designed to change as they were interacted with. The experience was not passive; the installation had to be experienced in a mobile way, like viewing sculpture. I have tried to bring together the genre of documentary with the process of video installation. This is not as strange as it sounds; historically this was a combination that within the concept of “expanded cinema” (Youngblood, 1970: 75) had produced many innovative works. “Expanded cinema” was summed up by Nicky Hamlyn in *Film Art Phenomena* (2003), as “being concerned with the nature of the projection (as) event: the space and the audience’s placement within it, the projector as light beam” (Hamlyn, 2003: 43). Expanded cinema aimed to change the viewer’s relationship with the image, not just conceptually, but also physically – through multi-screens and sculptural installation utilised in order to break the frame and create an interaction with the audience, and thus allowing the physicality of the image to exist in space and time beyond the film frame as both a physical and a meta-physical experience (for further analysis of “expanded cinema”, see logbook, pages 104-108).

## EMBODIMENT and the INTERCULTURAL

Intercultural cinema is a movement insofar as it is the emerging expression of a group of people who share the political issues of displacement and hybridity, though their individual circumstances vary widely (Marks, 2000: 2).

“Intercultural” indicates a context that cannot be confined to a single culture. It suggests movement between one culture and another, thus implying diachrony and the possibility of transformation (Marks, 2000: 6).

In her book *The Skin of the Film* (2000), Marks talked of intercultural film as tactile works appealing directly to the cinema of the senses, a way to evoke with sensual memory and embodied knowledge, hidden histories and other cultural spaces both through the content and the form of the film. This is the representation of culture apart from and beyond the perceptions of Euro-American societies.

Intercultural film deals with embodied experience. As there is no other record other than the tactile visual memory of an event, the body becomes a source of “not just of individual but of cultural memory” (Marks, 2000: xiii). This touches on Bergson’s theory that “memory is embodied in the senses” (Bergson, 1911: 21). Intercultural film has an emergent character in that it creates a new film language out of the need to represent and to be heard, specifically within the many varieties of the post-colonial situation. “Ultimately I argue that our experience of cinema is mimetic. Cinema is not merely a transmitter of signs; it bears witness to an object and transfers the presence of that object to viewers” (Marks, 2000: xvii). Hence an example of the animistic quality, within cinema’s mimetic capabilities. Within many intercultural works, to use Hall’s phrase, “identity must be used as a process rather than a position”; a struggle to excavate “irretrievable histories based on collective fantasies and dreams”. I saw this process as an “actual fantasy”, a form of Deleuzian “genesign”, where the underlying visceral truth of an event can be revealed through the transformative power within the ritual fantasy of the fact through the act of mourning, remembering, and mythologising the lost Dutch Burgher identity. Indeed, intercultural film tries to reconstitute history, often “through fiction, myth, or ritual” (ibid: 3). Many of the images within *People Inbetween* explored

memory, loss, and death. Therefore, the living spaces of the Dutch Burgher Union were empty of life.

As Marks points out “it is with some hesitation that I have chosen the rather mild term *Intercultural*” (Marks, 2000: 6) for film that could be described using phrases with weightier meanings, such as, “third world cinema”, “hybrid cinema”, “imperfect cinema”, or “post-colonial”. As Minh-ha commented, the more terms are popularised, the more they have to be re-appropriated, “and we should keep on redefining them until their spaces become so saturated that we have to couple them with other words to go a little further” (Minh-ha, 1996: 11). “Intercultural” is a term which acknowledges the fluidity (synesthetic nature) within films that question the spaces between two or more cultures. *People Inbetween* specifically dealt with the spaces between cultures, embodied in my own ritualised journey through Dutch Burgher and traditional Sri Lankan cultural spaces in search for areas of belonging. Intercultural cinema deals directly with sensual imagery; “it stresses the social character of embodied experience: the body is a source not just of individual but cultural memory” (Marks, 2000: 24). I hoped, as noted by Marks, that through these journeys the “ritual connects individual experience with collective experience, activating collective memory in the body” (ibid: xiii). Could I though my ritual trials achieve this connection? In addition, by exhibiting this embodied ritual journey through the in-betweens of my own ethnicity as a form of “expanded cinema” could I evoke this act of “becoming” as an other state of consciousness within the transformative embodied experiences of a multi-screened event?

Intercultural cinema deals in sensual embodiment. Marks saw a direct correlation between the modern cinema of the time-image and the sensuality of intercultural cinema. The embodied memory of the intercultural immigrant lost to official cultural history creates an in-between space, where the intercultural is the political act of the displaced searching for their own voice, their own lost cultural memory. “These films and videos must deal with the issue of where meaningful knowledge is located, in the awareness that it is between cultures so can never be fully verified in the terms of one regime or the other” (Marks, 2000: 1). (For further analysis of “intercultural cinema”, see logbook, pages 101-103).

## GALLERY ONE: THE PANORAMAS

The panoramic spaces created for *People Inbetween* were slices of places projected 1:1 life-size suggesting doorways into other worlds; they were chosen to represent a ritual journey and the life of an abstracted body, the “body without organs” of immanent molecular desires. The panoramas of traditional Buddhist Sri Lankan spaces were full of people either in the act of prayer through the climbing of Sri Pada, or in a traditional Sri Lankan village setting interacting with each other within the complex social rite of the Urvedic demon exorcism. The panoramas of the Burgher spaces were empty. Hence, I wanted to explore the natural rhythms of the empty spaces of life. Or as Deren put forward with her notion of “the value of zero”, that being “the necessary intervals between actions... which gives to action its rhythm” (Deren, 1947: cited in Jackson, 2002: 159), I wanted to see what nothing held.

An essential part of the theme of this artwork is the notion of fractured identity and in-betweenness. It was logical that the form of the video installation as well as the method of shooting and technically creating the work should reflect this. Therefore, the extended viewing angle within the frame of the panoramic spaces was created by using three cameras mounted on a bar fifteen inches long, with one camera in the middle and the other two on each end; the two cameras on either end of the bar were tilted outwards. This created a viewing area of 180-degrees. At the same time due to the angling of the outer cameras a bending and a flattening out of the perspective in the outer sections of the panoramic shots, suggesting an almost map like flattening out of the greater space of the video image.

Within the working of the optical image (opsign) is the paradox of memory recollections. Since the power of the optical-image is in the failure of this process, “when we cannot remember, sensory-motor links remain suspended, therefore, no link with either forward action or recollection, it enters into a virtual relationship with itself” and the viewer (Deleuze, 1989: 54). Hence, the “optical-image is empowered further through either little memory, or and the failures of recognition” (ibid: 55). Within the panoramic Dutch Burgher spaces, there are no associative memories, hence, time becomes more focused, and the images demand more attention as they fall in on

themselves, drawing out the relationships of the dual affective states between image and viewer.

An example of this would be the seven-minute block of unedited footage of the panorama of the Dutch Burgher Union. This was an extended shot composed to allow for the natural rhythm of the space to be evoked, designed to open the space out and within through the extreme depth of field and the panoramic area. I pictured these as spaces floating between worlds and cultural realities, meaning the panoramic spaces are “other” realities opened out to feel as if the viewer could walk into these sensual intercultural landscapes.

I am asking the viewer within my own artworks to be consumed by the spaces; and for this reason, the size, length, and static nature of the panoramic spaces were designed to be places entered into, situating the viewer as the lost participant.

I was inspired to do this in order to study the rhythms of Dutch Burgher spaces compared to traditional Sri Lankan spaces, but also as a way of exploring Bazin’s theories centring on the depth of shot, and the “fact image” as a way of exploring other realities within the expanded frame space.

Bazin argued that through the subtle use of *mise-en-scène*, an absence of classic montage, the use of deep focus photography and long fluid camera movements, the inner meaning, hence a more open perceptual meaning to the shot would come through as the image revealed itself beyond the shot as merely a sign, as is used within classic montage to build a narrative.

This allowed the viewer time to reflect on the temporal space of the film to create their own meaning from a series of fact images filtered by their own memory and their own embodied experiences. Bazin summed up the “fact image” with the analogy of picking your way over a river by jumping from one steppingstone to another: “the mind has to leap from one event to the other as one leaps from stone to stone in crossing a river” (Bazin, 1971: 35). Therefore, the mind has space to create within the film image its own connections to get across to the other side. The fact image in essence is not a sign within a dialectical montage but a moment that reveals its meaning within the reality of the temporal nature of the film, which may exhibit an openness of perceptual meaning to be picked through, so the viewer has to feel his way using the inherent imagery of the

shot to form meaning from the fact of the image, jumping from shot to shot.

Essentially, classic montage is building with bricks to use another of Bazin's analogies; the brick is a manufactured block to fit with other bricks to build a structure, as montage uses images as signs fitted together to create a set meaning. With a montage shot the form of the brick (shot) in relation to the other bricks (shots) is its function within the overall structure or the scene (ibid: 99). What is inherent within the shot is less important than its sign or meaning.

Bazin states whatever type of montage, whether classic, or the "montage of attractions" put forward by Eisenstein, they all share a common trait: "namely, the creation of a sense of meaning not objectively contained in the images themselves but derived exclusively from their juxtaposition" of one image by association with another image (Bazin, 1967: 25). An example of the differences between montage and depth of focus noted by Bazin is the classic scene in *Nanook of the North* (1922), in which Nanook is seen hunting a seal:

What matters to Flaherty, confronted with Nanook hunting the seal, is the relation between Nanook and the animal; the actual length of the waiting period. Montage could suggest the time involved. Flaherty however confines himself to showing the actual waiting period; the length of the hunt is the very substance of the image, its true object (Bazin, 1967: 27).

A moment of *durée*, as a duration of film time which has a similar ethos to Deren's notion of the "value of zero" (Deren cited in Jackson, 2002: 159). This therefore, allows the panoramic spaces to have long moments of uninterrupted durational time to reveal the true objectivity of the space enfolding within the substance of the image and within the natural rhythm of its particular moment in time. Using long static shots and depth of focus reveals a cultural truth within the rhythms of "other" lives and scenes. In intercultural terms this evokes the feeling of other cultural realities within the affective space of the interval.

Bazin goes on to stress that by using long takes and deep focus photography, "reality", or the objectivity within the shot can reveal itself within its own time and space – in essence the objectivity as an embodiment of the "real" within the image, as fragments of reality ordered obliquely in the time within the unfolding sequences of

shots. Thus, deep focus photography within the shot was a way of allowing the story to naturally unfold and evolve within the frame, which he said, allowed for a purer, more natural and truthful cinema experience. Bazin stated within his critique of montage and depth of focus.

In montage the camera lens, classically, had focused successively on different parts of a scene, depth of focus takes in with equal sharpness the whole field of vision contained simultaneously within the dramatic field. It is no longer the editing that selects what we see, thus giving it an *a priori* significance, it is the mind of the spectator which is forced to discern... the dramatic spectrum proper to the scene (Bazin, 1971: 28).

By creating these expanded frame spaces I wanted the essential rhythm within the natural environments of the panoramic spaces to be revealed as a sensual interval, whether this was the empty spaces of the Dutch Burgher Union or Borella cemetery, or the narrative spectacle of the unfolding cultural dynamic of the Urvedic demon exorcism rites.

Within a Deleuzian reading of Bazin, Jayamanne makes connections between Bazin's notions of the "fact image" and Deleuze's time-image. In Deleuzian terms, the depth of the deep-focus image can become an experience in time (Jayamanne, 2001: 137): Due to the expanded frame and the depth within the imagery the space exists as a moment of time separate from any unfolding action or reaction within it. Within this "fact image", the logic of the action within the shot is favoured compared to the logic of the montage between shots juxtaposed to create meaning. The "fact image" creates spaces where the spectator formulates their own meaning within the linkage of these fragments of facts. "To think across a gap is to make linkages across cuts that are non-rational" (Deleuze, 1989: x). This highlights the differences between Deleuze's "movement-image" and "time-image": the movement-image, in which frame follows frame with a logical causality built on the necessities of action and reaction and the time-image which breaks with the causality of action upon action and frees time from this: "images are no longer linked by rational cuts and continuity, but are re-linked by means of false continuity and irrational cuts" (ibid: xi). Deleuze also states that what is specific to the creative time-image "is to make perceptible, to make visible, relationships of time that cannot be seen in the represented object and do not allow themselves to be reduced to the movement of the present" (ibid: xii). This is also the case with the depth of field of

an Orson Welles shot, or floating disassociated events of banality within De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* (1948). "Optical-images" as sensual visual affective durations of imagery exist de-linked from the narrative action of a shot as irrational intervals, "because the irrational interval no longer forms part of any sequence or of any whole, it posits for itself an autonomous outside and gives itself its own interiority" (Rodowick, 1997: 180) of durational time as creative change, hence allowing the viewer to experience other perceptions:

It is the methodology of the in-between, between two images as an affect (a feeling) within the interval, which radically calls into question the image of both within the reactive space between two images. This statement inspired by Deleuze could easily be a description of post-colonial or intercultural film, as the space of "becoming" the "other outside of ourselves" (Deleuze, 1989: 180). The durational act of time as creative change - "real time is real change" - is a "vital process, something like the ripening of an idea. It is within this act of becoming" (Bergson, 1911: 360, 362) that the intuitive act of the intensive, "qualitative multiplicity", plays such a vital part. To summarise Bergson, intuition as a methodology (separate yet interdependent to the extensive, "quantitative multiplicity", of logical explanation) lies at the creative heart of feeling and of becoming within durational time as fundamental change.

Within the panoramic images in the installation, pockets of time unfold to reveal a sensual reality within the hyper-reality of the extended composited spaces. Some of these panoramic spaces are built up from over sixty layers of separate pieces of imagery, as digital-images made from many parts with many possible links. This was discussed in the introduction.

In Bazinian terminology I wanted to create segments of sensual "fact images", even within the exorcism rites where the action of the ceremonies is edited into, due to the length of the ceremony being over eight hours long. It is important to note that due to the use of the same static panoramic shot, the time movement of the panoramic space feels separated from the edited actions of the rites: the "fact image releases a perception of time de-linked from action, charged by the senses" (Jayamanne, 2001: 142). Indeed, "the optical-image becomes invested by the senses before action can take shape in it" (Deleuze, 1989: 4). The panoramic spaces are sensual optical lead images, designed to

evoke emotional facts. In essence, *People Inbetween* could be described as a series of fractured time-images, spread over the expanded cinematic space of the video installation. This metaphorically describes the diasporic fracturing of Burgher identity and ultimately, within this fragmented state in flux laid the possibility of a total transformation as symbolised by the Urvedic demon exorcism rite.

The fact image and the use of depth of focus created sensuous optical islands within a time structured randomness, a space created for contemplation or distanciation; a freeing up of the time experience through a lack of logical channelling, allowing the viewer to become a leader and thus create his/her own film reality. It is not that these digital “stylisations of unstylised reality” are more real, it is that the creation of the expanded frame and the extended spaces across the area of the gallery allows the viewer to follow his/her own direction: the experience is therefore more real.

Being and becoming in-between is a recurrent theme throughout this installation: in-between the infinite still (the memory river) and a duration of time as transformational change (the Uvedic demon exorcism); in-between the intimate personal story and the distance of abstraction; in-between the sensuous embodied image; in-between affection and perception and the “optical thinness” of the image that is un-recordable; in this in-between space of nothing, which holds the possibility of containing everything, the in-between feeling of the active state of magical trance possession is accessed, physically experienced yet inherently durational and metaphysical.



*People Inbetween* (2007), the memory river.

## CONCLUSION:

### The Durational Art of the Digital as the Images of Perception

As Deleuze stated at the end of *Cinema 2*, “there is always a time, midday-midnight, when we must no longer ask ourselves, what is cinema? But what is philosophy?” (Deleuze, 1989: 280). He even gives us an answer to this. In *What is Philosophy* (1994), he states, “philosophy is the creation of concepts. Art the creation of percepts and affects, science the creation of functions” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 216), hence cinema at its most sublime can become a fluid mixture of all three; the digital, through a decentred fluid framing between technology, artwork and the viewer may give back to cinema its temporally, its embodied heart. Breaking the hegemony of the cinematic frame allows a merging of the “zones of indetermination” between the digital artwork and the active viewer.

A work of art is an emotional and intellectual complex whose logic is its whole form. Just as the separate actions of a man in love will be misunderstood, or even thought “insane,” from the logic of non-love, so the parts of a work of art lose their true meaning when removed from their context and evaluated by some alien logical system. And just as analysis of the reason of love may follow upon the experience, but do not explain or induce it, so a dis-sectional analysis of a work of art fails, in the act of dismemberment, to comprehend the very inter-active dynamics which give it life. Such an analysis cannot substitute, and may even inhibit, the experience itself (Deren, 1946: 25).

This statement from Deren, taken from *An Anagram of Ideas on Art, Form and Film* (1946) reveals a deep and subtle understanding of Bergsonian metaphysics, and the imagist poetic works of Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Who arguably based many of their notions of poetic form on the writings of Bergson, with Pound even calling himself an “imagist”: Bergson always talked of reality as images, to separate his philosophies as a middle ground between the objects of materialism and the subjects of idealism. His genius was to break the link between time as movement in space, realising that durational time was a constantly evolving force of change, never repeatable, which unlike motion cannot be reversed. Bergson equates the mind's power of intuition as the “moment by which we emerge from our own unseen force of *durée*” (Deleuze, 1988: 33): a creative becoming envisaged through the strict methodology of intuition, in which affect as

abstract feeling within the interval of the mind/body sensory-motor schema may lead to an original thought beyond the mechanistic behaviours of spatial movement as logical analysis, preferred by the mind to turn perceived movement-images into quantifiable degrees of actions.

Bergson highlighted the temporal forces of *durée* as being embodied within the very creative forces of the artist, the intuitions of the scientist, genius; including the mind and the body, memory, and living matter which all exist in a “dual multiplicity”, the very forces of *durée* as the temporal creativity existent in life. Logic is the way we process matter images into actions to move forward in life, a mechanical motion in part, “time, is the way of life itself” (Bergson, 1911: 21), one by degrees, the other in kind.

Indeed, Deleuze saw the time-image as a study of durations that are not our own (Colbrook, 2002: 47). “The present is sensory-motor; it concerns the introduction of movement” (Guerlac, 2006: 187). When this is suspended, *durée* as a moment of time flows into the interval in which the mind may open to unveil a creative thought.

In the *Divine Horsemen*, this is tied to the photogenic quality of the face, to the inner meaning of the image as an aspect of *photogénie*: but it is a transformational possessed face, which is linked to the cosmology Voodoo. An act of durational becoming inherent in the forces of the “time-image”, blended with the narrational aspects of the movement-image and linked to the visual metaphor of the “open whole”; the “open whole” being that which expands and falls back in on itself due to the spatial physicality of the video installation beyond the frame, and thus existing in this context as a sculptural, three-dimensional temporal space, exploring Deren’s film philosophy of the “emergent whole”. *Divine Horsemen* explored the poetic metaphor of the “open whole” as a “sensual thought”, in part due to the artwork’s methodology as an investigation of Deren’s “poetic vertical” and “narrative horizontal”, which in her own artworks she never fully realised. None of Deren’s films have a narrative base from which to explore poetry, as they are all purely poetic - *Divine Horsemen*, being based in documentary, did. Hence, the possibility arose to take Deren’s premise on form within narrative and poetry, and explore it within the context of the Voodoo rites and their cosmology as an analogy of Deren’s “poetic vertical” and “narrative horizontal”.

The work is an affection-time-image, which had the inherent character of

temporal metaphor existent in the “open whole” - a state which Deleuze felt was not achievable within the time-image because the film images are joined by irrational cuts across intervals as fissures of meaning, hence the “outside alien space as the whole”. However, within the artwork, as an example of digital new media, these categories are fluid and mixed, summed up through the ephemeral nature of the floating fluidity of the three dimensionally expanded frame: the video cross of light as the crossroads.

In *People Inbetween*, affection is a pure experience which is met with desire, created by the interval of inaction, the space of nothing, asking, who am I, what do I desire to be. This was evoked by the empty places of the panoramic spaces of the Dutch Burgher Union and Borella cemetery. Hence an optical-image was produced, exploring Artaud’s notion of “raw cinema” as the void of nothing, creating an “impower of thought”, although within this the possibility of a new thought. Hence, in nothing is the possibility of everything (Bergson, 1911: 297, 298).

Affection and desire are explored as an act of becoming; this is evident in the panoramic spaces of the Urvedic demon exorcism (trance possession) rites as a space of transformation, fuelled by the *durée* of the music and the dancing, through the acting out of the desire of transformational becoming.

Both artworks looked at thought within the digital-image as transformation, fuelled by affection and desire as an act of becoming change, but these video installations engaged with change on different planes; where change is through difference in repetition a photogenic affection-time-image is created, as in *Divine Horsemen*, and where it is in the in-between space of the interval, an “optical-image” as a “genesign”, an op-gen-sign, as in *People Inbetween*.

In Bergson’s *Creative Evolution* (1911), time is a force of production, mutation and invention, of the past pushing through the present towards an open future. Time becomes fluid, like a digital force, pushing into the image of reality in ways that may not have been accounted for; ways proposed by Hansen, “that extend the creative and affective capacities of our bodies”, as zones of temporal becomings (Hansen cited in Guerlac, 2006: 192). The digital image interacts with the mind and the body, pushing the frontiers of the body as a “centre of indetermination” into the decentred virtual space of

the digital (the computer world), a becoming of the affective face of man/machine in temporal virtual space (Hansen, 2004: 10).

With the digital revolution of the image, Bergson's thoughts have become important in a revitalisation of cultural meaning, a way of breaking with a linguistic hegemony of thought, and reinventing the meaning of the image as a process pertinent to the fluid becomings of the digital world of affect, of sensation, and of the body as a mergence with the image; away from static models, tied down to concrete forms, hence becoming qualitative differences that occur as changing images in time. This whole thesis is a break from the old models of linguistic analysis, as a process to recognise the fluid nature of the image, set free from static material space into the realm of the *durée* (durations) of digital time.

All of the topics that I have talked about, aura, *photogénie*, mimesis, affection and memory exist in the delay between perception and action – the interval.

By creating a centre, an “I” within the vibrational flux of the world – the plane of immanence, we tie perception to a fixed point of view; therefore people subtract perceptions to make sense of the inherent durational chaos of reality. By creating a decentred centre, through mimesis, or investing an object with its own centre, a face as a zone of indetermination as with the concept of *photogénie* we invoke the durational vibrational forces of “others” and hence open up the possibility of becoming other perceptions of reality in durational time. Cinema has the ability to do this by expanding our perceptions into the perceptions of others, as does trance, each with an inherent power to unveil the deeper aspects of reality.

T. E. Hulme, in his essay, *Bergson's Theory of Art*, taken from his book, *Speculations* (1924), refers to “the function of the artist” as the ability to “pierce through here, and there, the veil placed between us, and reality by the limitation of our perception engendered by action” (Hulme, 1924: 147). The artist, through intuition, delves deeper into the “intensive depths of the whole of reality, to pull out truths that are hidden, that have not been communicated or visualised before”; therefore, “art merely reveals, it never creates.” It allows us to see an experience in (durations) time, as a direct communication of “the real shape of things” (ibid). Indeed, the meta-physicist Henri Bergson argued that the artist, through intuitively communicating an intensive affection,

“makes you realise something which you actually did not perceive before” (ibid: 169). Hence intuitions and affections may unveil deeper aspects to reality within the durational workings of the interval, as perceptions of perceived “others” and hence other ways of perception.

Time is becoming difference; motion is being repetition (Guerlac, 2006: 202). Always put “experience before analysis, to get the values straight” (Deren, cited in Jackson, 2002: 148), and remember that “time is invention or it is nothing at all” (Bergson, 1911: 361).

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**FILMS**

***DIVINE HORSEMEN***

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Disc One:	Gallery Installation Artist's Talk Private view
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***PEOPLE INBETWEEN***

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Disc Two:	Poetic Documentary Installation Highlights
Disc Three:	Extras
Disc Four:	Complete Installation
Disc Five:	Artist's Talk

Films available at Vimeo (see links):

<https://vimeo.com/50822125>

<https://vimeo.com/50363298>

<https://vimeo.com/50277112>

<https://vimeo.com/53311842>