

WALKING THE CITY TO THE SCREEN
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INTRODUCTION

I was on my way to Central Station, where I was planning to photograph something. As I felt that the tram I was sitting in started to move, pinhole camera shaking on my lap, I realized that it was actually this movement that interested me much more than what I initially planned to photograph. So I took off the lid. Pointed towards the other side of the tram, the camera was left exposed for the duration of the tram ride. Using my body as a tripod it witnessed 42 minutes of people entering and leaving the vehicle, 42 minutes of the city through windows. The movement of the camera coincided with the movement of the tram, and the shaky image that developed in the darkroom later on was the result of this parallelism.

Making pinhole cameras allows me to approach photographic elements — such as light, movement and exposure-time — from both a technical standpoint and a more abstract or poetic one. Questions of how people act in specific spaces and how those experiences could be represented through the mediums of film and photography have been at the core of my practice for a while already. Lately, the filmic representation of the experience of the city is particularly intriguing to me, and has become the subject of the present text.

The text will unfold itself as research into how movement can produce such an image of the city. It explores moving up and down streets and stairs, this way and that way, slow and fast. Moving eyes, walking feet, shaking trams and starting trains. Three different types of movement and their interrelations comprise the main focus of the text: the filming movement of the camera, the movement of the filmed body, and the movement of the spectator who is watching the film. I aim to visualise this structure and argue that it is the way in which these three relate to each other that determines the qualities of the city-image that is produced. My main intention here is to challenge the objectives of showing ‘real’ time and space in film. What are possible structures that effect a real representation of our city-experience? Also, what does such a ‘real’ representation of the experience of the city actually entail?

I will start by comparing two different films in which the protagonists are filmed as they are walking through the city: *Cleo from 5 to 7* by Agnes Varda and *Run Lola Run* by Tom Tywyker. Then I continue walking; through coherence and fragments, across the medium of analogue film, notions of duration, editing-techniques, the movement-image, trains and subways, memory and maps. All along, the three movements of camera, filmed body and spectator enter the screen at different times. They introduce themselves through examples of films, philosophies and personal encounters. By bringing them in relation with each other, I want to speculate on their implications and compare the city-images they produce. The text is led by questions that trigger other questions: What is the source of a city-image? When do we turn from passive spectators to active cameras? How can we record our own city? And finally, what takes the city to the screen?

PART I: REAL TIME AND SPACE IN THE CITY — FOLLOWING CLEO AND LOLA

“You now find yourselves in the heart of this city.”

Leaving the gates of the subway station I see a group of people. They are standing in a circle, their backs against the town’s main bridge, some cafés and market stands, their faces directed towards a loud man holding a green umbrella in the air. It is a nice day today, sunny. People try to pass the group. The green umbrella instructs the people to come closer to him, the blockage is undone, blood starts to flow again.

When people talk or write about the city, I recognise that they often tend to make parallels between the body and the city: the centre of the city could, for instance, be described as a *heart*, which pumps people like blood through its many streets (*veins*). The *swarming* movements of people during rush hour could be compared with the brain’s neuronal activity. To ‘sprawl’ means to lie with one’s arms and legs spread out in an irregular or awkward way; when people talk about an *urban sprawl* they refer to the process of suburbanisation of a city. The body-city metaphor triggers numerous associations and also has

numerous implications, one of which I am specifically interested in: to see the city as a body is to see the city as a whole, natural and coherent unity of organs.

It feels like a pleasant way of looking at the city. It recalls the image of a group of cells under the eye of a microscope, their imperceptible size suddenly perceived. Aerial shots of the city present us with its expanding width; high office blocks and apartment buildings capture its growing height. That which otherwise would have escaped our eyes is now visualised in crisp images and transparent architectures. The organised city lies before us, ready to grasp. French anthropologist Marc Augé (b.1935) claims that, like movies, these seamless images educate our gaze and add to what is our dominant aesthetic, that of the cinematic long shot.¹ Seeing the smooth flow of cars on a highway, Augé says, or aircraft taking off from airport runways, creates ‘an image of the world as we would like it to be.’² Do these unifying metaphors and cinematic long shots indeed create our image of the city? Or could their suggested dominance be counterbalanced with other approaches, proposing a perhaps more fragmented recording?

CLEO

Augé’s cinematic long shot reminds me of the *French New Wave*. French New Wave is a name given by critics to a group of French filmmakers in the 1950’s/1960’s. What was ‘new’ about them was their turn against the strongly narrative cinema of the time. They wanted to get to the essence of film and found this in the camera’s ability to — objectively — present the existing. This non-human eye was seen as something extremely powerful and as the one thing that enabled cinema to ‘give the present the weight that other arts deny it.’³ It is this true realism that the French New Wave filmmakers

1. In film and photography this is a shot where the camera is placed far away from its subject in order to capture a large area of view. It is often used as an establishing shot which contextualises a scene by showing the relation between the protagonist and her surroundings.

2. Marc Augé, *Non-Places; An Introduction to Supermodernity* (London: Verso, 1995), p. xiii.

3. Eric Rohmer, ‘The classical age of cinema; such vanity is painting’ in *The Taste for Beauty*, trans. Carol Volk, ed. by William Rothman and Dudley Andrew (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 46.

searched for within their films. Similar to how long shots capture a large amount of city-space in a single shot, their characteristic long takes⁴ capture a large amount of city-time in one shot and are used to come close to the *real* city, along with other methods such as the use of natural light, natural sounds and non-professional actors.

Agnes Varda (b.1928), a filmmaker who predated and influenced the French New Wave, explains her motive for the use of such a long take in an interview on her film *Cleo from 5 to 7* (1962). In this film, the camera follows singer Cleo minute to minute, as she is awaiting the result of a medical test. Varda says the following:

The challenge was, I did not want to skip anything. You know, the language of cinema is that you’re allowed to skip. I take my luggage here and then you see me in the train; you don’t need to see everything, you understand I’m traveling. Now, in that film, every step is [recorded]: when she goes out, each step, and when she has to cross her courtyard; there is no ellipsis of time, no ellipsis of geography. I was afraid when I did this: what if we get bored? That was the challenge: to really be with her in the real distance she covers, in the real time of what it takes to go from [one place to the other].⁵

The language of film allows the filmmaker to make shifts in time and space, while still creating a readable image. One can still read the logic of the character’s movement or ‘understand she is travelling’, even if parts of that movement have been cut out. Varda does not dismiss this entirely, I believe, but challenges herself to emphasise first and foremost the camera’s own ability to uninterruptedly record ‘reality’. The described long take of Cleo walking through the city is an example. For the duration of this walk, Varda used only one camera

4. Uninterrupted camera-shots that last longer than a typical take would before cutting to another shot.

5. Art on Screen: A Conversation with Agnes Varda, Varda interviewed by Rani Singh at the Getty Research Institute, november 2013, http://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions_events/events/agneWs_varda.html (accessed 12 September, 2017).

and did not adjust the film afterwards with any editing techniques. She used the personage of Cleo to instantly connect different buildings, shops, cafés, people and gazes together in one coherent walk through the city. In the end, I believe Cleo is therefore the only ‘editing tool’ used in the making of *Cleo from 5 to 7*. Followed by Varda’s camera, her moving body functions as a direct way to connect city-shots together. The result shows a very ‘naked’ or ‘raw’ experience of the passing of time in the city. I would argue that, similar to how the camera’s take is left undisturbed, Cleo’s walk offers an ‘undisturbed’ city-experience: one without sudden shifts in time, unexpected encounters or cuts in space.

In January 2017, the first movie to be shot and screened at the same time was released. *Lost in London* (2017, Woody Harrelson, b.1961) shows a guy who is trying to get home yet keeps bumping into friends and members of the British Royal Family. This live comedy can perhaps be seen as an extension from Varda’s wish for true realism. Sebastian Schippers’ (b.1968) *Victoria* (2015) is an earlier example in which someone (Victoria) is followed in some city (Berlin), for some hours during one night, in one take. The shift from the French New Wave’s methods to Schipper’s spectacular film and Harrelson’s live experiment is however quite extreme. It might suggest that perception and experience of real space and time have also shifted.

LOLA

Whereas *Cleo from 5 to 7* celebrates a real, coherent topography of the city, German filmmaker Tom Tywker’s (b.1965) *Run Lola Run* rejects it. *Run Lola Run* (1998) shows Lola who has one goal: in twenty minutes she must find 100,000 marks and take them to her boyfriend, Manni, who is in trouble and waiting for her somewhere on the other side of town. The film consists of three parts

of twenty minutes, each of them showing Lola running in a similar order through the streets of Berlin. However, her encounters along the way differ slightly each time because of minor changes in time and space; therefore each part ends with a different solution. The difference in camera angles and techniques in the three parts of the movie underlines this change of narrative. Interestingly so, it is also emphasised by the fact that the film’s geography does not fit the reality of the city. Lola passes different places in the city of Berlin, which are in fact impossible to link together in one long take. Turning around the corner of one street, she continues running through an in fact very distant street. In his essay *Berlin on Film: A Mediated and Reconstructed City*, British architecture theorist Graham Cairns (b.1971) elaborates on this deliberate and effective rejection of the real geography of Berlin, by saying that ‘just as the narrative and its protagonists build up their own impossibly fragmented and repeated stories, so too does the city. Directly paralleling the film’s narrative, it rejects its real topography.’⁶

Twyker thus employs the camera in a very different way than Varda. He does not seem to focus on the camera’s ability to record passing city-time in one single, ongoing camera movement. Instead, he seems to want to activate all the different perspectives, shot lengths and zooms the camera has to offer. With *Lola*, he builds up an impossible sequence of city-images. She connects disconnected places in Berlin as she crosses through them and forms logic out of Twyker’s cuts in city-space. Both Varda and Twyker use their protagonists as their glue; Varda as she is instantly editing the actual city in one coherent camera movement; Twyker as he pastes an impossible city together later on. The way in which Twyker chose to film and edit the city triggers me as a viewer to consider the city as a fragmented place of cut-outs, jumps in time, accidents, and changes.

6. Graham Cairns, ‘Berlin on Film; a Mediated and Reconstructed City’ In: *Filming the City; Urban Documents, Design Practices and Social Criticism through the Lens*, ed. by Edward Clift, Mirko Guaralda and Ari Mattes (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), p. 150, 152.



TOP: Film still from *Cleo from 5 to 7*, Agnès Varda, 1962: Cleo is walking through the streets of Paris.

BOTTOM: Film still from *Run Lola Run*, Tom Twyker, 1998: Lola is running through Berlin.

WRITING THE CITY

Run Lola Run seems to favour a fragmented and creative perspective of Berlin. If one would map out the two protagonists' paths, Cleo's route follows the logic and unity of the urban grid, whereas Lola's deviates from it. In a similar way Guy Debord's *The Naked City* (1957), a 'psychogeographic' map of Paris, proposed a more subjective and temporal view on a city. Different parts of Paris have been shuffled around and are reconnected by red arrows, visualizing the unplanned directions that could be taken. Psychogeographers like Debord (b.1931, d.1994) believe that personal experience and memory are what shape our reality of space, rather than factual knowledge. Their emotional approach has been said to display the 'soft city', whereas cartographers, architects and city planners would often show the 'hard city'. French philosopher Henri Lefebvre (b.1901, d.1991) strongly influenced these ideas as he made a similar division between *lived space* and *conceived space*⁷ in his book *The Production of Space* (1974). For him lived space is an experienced space, which exists in thoughts and stories and can be evoked in film. He contrasts this with conceived space: space conceptualised by urbanists and architects; a space he considers lifeless.

It is a bit puzzling to me to render the practices of city-planners as such. I would not say they are involved with 'lifeless' space, but more so with 'to be lived'-space. Their proposals are thorough considerations for cities that are to be lived, cities that are to be holding people and their stories in their arms in the future. An architect or urbanist is thus always looking at a time which is still to come, and creates a montage of city-sights that is still to be seen. The filmmaker's camera however, as it is filming, always looks at time that has passed; this is the nature of the camera: to record something that has been (lived). Within the practice of filmmaking, different understandings of these notions of recorded time and

7. He also describes a third category: *perceived space*, which I do not mention here.

lived space exist. The two films discussed previously, *Cleo from 5 to 7* and *Run Lola Run*, form the basis of what I want to explore: how can filmmakers deal with the 'real' in the recorded time and space of the camera? What different approaches exist within filming the city? And what could be the consequences of those approaches?

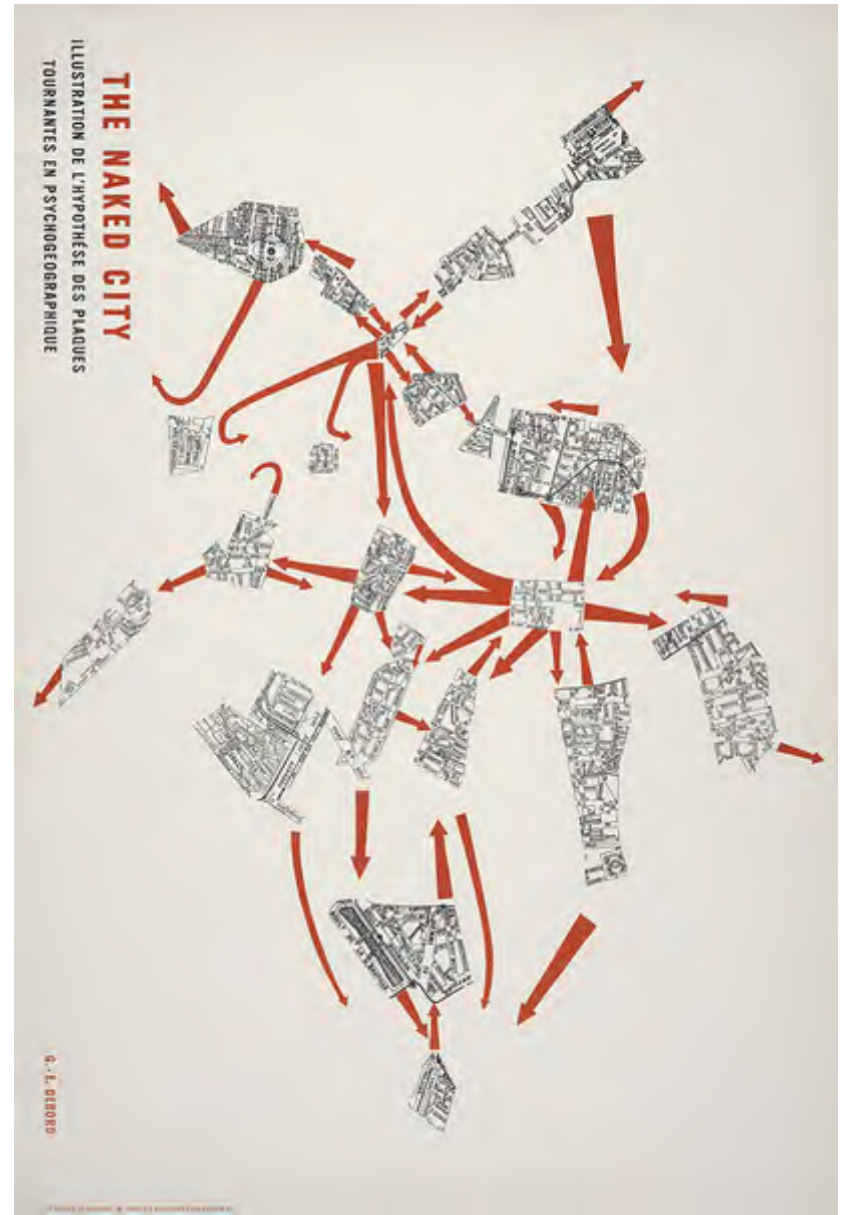
One way to start thinking about this could be through a comparison French theorist Michel de Certeau (b.1925, d.1986) makes between someone walking in a crowd through the city's streets and someone standing on a viewpoint (perhaps one of those high office blocks). He states that the one on the tower can read the complexity of the city because her bird-eye perspective 'immobilises [the city's] opaque mobility into a transparent text.'⁸ The walker of the street practices the city in a more ordinary way. Living down below, under the 'thresholds of visibility', she is blind; she writes an urban text as she is walking, without being able to read it at the same time. Text can thus not only be seen as a means to describe a city with (through the body-city metaphor, through speaking of 'hard' and 'soft' cities, etc.), but text *is* city, city is text.

8. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, The University of California Press, 1980), p. 93.

I like going up to high places in Amsterdam. Seeing the city laid out before your eyes, you are able to point in the direction of your house and follow your finger as it describes how you got here. Most sounds from below are dimmed; only sometimes the ring of a bell comes through, announcing a tram's turn to the left or right. This sudden silence and outlook of the city is, however, not so much what gets to me. It is the moment that comes after: the moment of walking down towards the streets again. Absorbed in those veins, I indeed feel somewhat 'blind' as I cannot read the city-landscape anymore but only catch it in glimpses as it is throwing its stories back at me. It is this last idea of only being able to perceive the city in pieces that is offered by

Lola's run. Cleo's walk, on the contrary, presents a more transparent city, similar to the one I observed from above.

When the experience of the city is one of fragmentation, then the image of Berlin that *Run Lola Run* gives might be closer to this real spatial experience of fast impressions than the coherent image of Paris by Agnes Varda in *Cleo from 5 to 7*. It was, however, Varda who strived to show real time and space in her films. In the next chapter I would like to take a closer look at film, to search for a way to interpret her claims of realism.



PART II: 24 FRAMES PER SECOND – THE WALK OF THE CAMERA

The metaphor of a person and her shadow that appears in cinema, but also in other fields as literature, psychology and visual arts, can often be seen as a way to introduce duality and more specifically the possibility of a protagonist's double. The protagonist has a certain conscious identity, but also carries another, often repressed and unknown identity, as her 'shadow'.

Shot on 16mm film in California, *Shadowland* (2014) is a 15 minutes long black and white film by Swedish filmmaker and photographer John Skoog (b.1985). Accompanied by a mix of sounds comprised of parts of dialogues, older Hollywood films and site-recordings, different clips of Californian landscape follow each other up, slowly evolving from endless desserts to Rocky Mountains and wide rivers. It is this incredibly rich landscape that has often attracted filmmakers to use it as their set. The faraway became close by: the Sahara Desert became a two-hour drive and Alaskan rivers were now only ninety kilometres away. There, one could fake an entirely different place because of similarity in geography. In his work, Skoog restaged shots of places in California that had been used before in films to represent



Two film stills from *Shadowland*, 16 mm black and white film, John Skoog, 2014.

such other locations in the world. The slow pace allows the viewer to read these different places. Practically emptied from actors, it is the landscape itself that seems to become the protagonist in *Shadowland*. California appears to be so very diverse, that rather than thinking of it as a place of *double* identity, one can think of it as a stand-in for *multiple* others, a land with multiple shadows, as if lit from from many different angles.

What I find specifically interesting about *Shadowland* is how Skoog's reflections on film and the Californian cinematic history are already inherent in his means of filming. Using the medium of 16mm black and white celluloid in 2014, Skoog 'films' the history of film, no matter what he points his camera to. He films a time when black and white film was used instead of colour film, as it was cheaper and more accessible. He films the camera as a moving eye that can record time. He films the representational character that film has been charged with from the start; which now turns fake Californian locations into trustworthy replicas of other places. I would, therefore, suggest that Skoog did not just film fields or rivers, but always film itself, and that this might be the most prominent 'shadow' in *Shadowland*.

FILM AS PATH

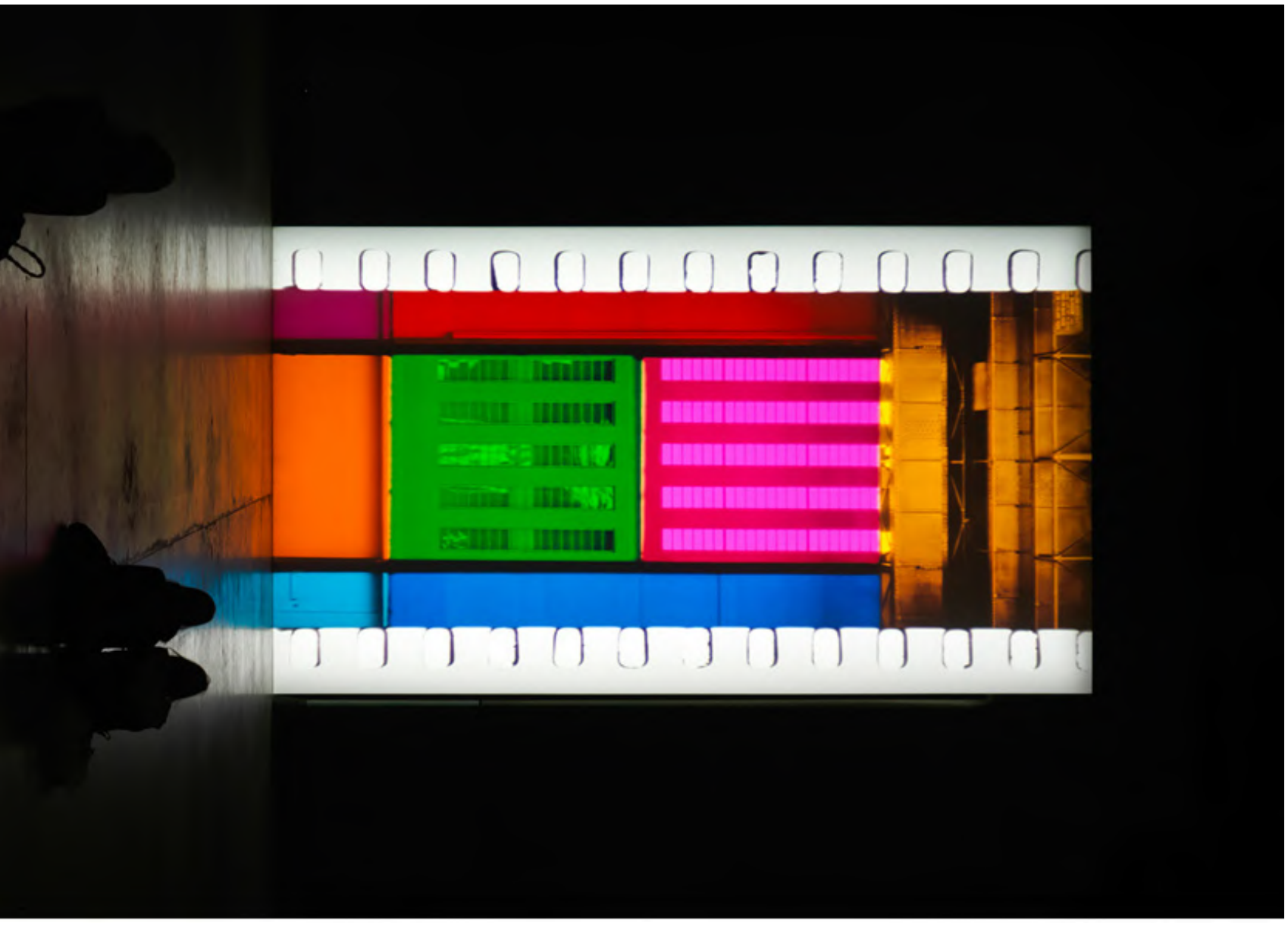
A work in which the medium of film more explicitly mirrors its content is *FILM* (2011) by English artist Tacita Dean (b.1965). It was exhibited almost seven years ago in the Turbine Hall of Tate Britain in London and points towards Dean's fascination with film 'for film'. The Turbine Hall is a large, one could say spectacular, space of about 23x35x155m, which different artists over time have been invited to fill with site-specific and large-scale installations. Dean responded to the verticality of the hall by projecting

her portrait format 35mm colour and black and white film, on the whole length of the east backside wall.

In a continuous loop of eleven minutes, different images pass by that have only been edited by analogue techniques such as glass-matte painting, masking and the use of multiple exposures. The sprocket holes that can be seen on the edges frame the images as segments of an analogue film reel. The images themselves refer both to the camera they were made by and to the place in which they exist now. The shot of escalator steps is, for example, compared with film that is moving through a camera; at the same time, it also emphasises the Turbine Hall's architecture, making the viewer look up towards its distant ceiling. Another example is the selection of images that refer to works that preceded Dean's in Tate: again linking *FILM* to the place in which it is shown. An orange that pops up at some moment reminds of Olafur Eliasson's sunset that took over the Turbine Hall in 2003, for instance. *FILM* appears to me as a very self-reflective work; looking at itself and its surroundings, responding to both in a very precise rhythm. In an interview with Dean, it becomes clear that her choice for this analogue medium does not come from a sense of nostalgia, but rather from amazement with its distinctive physicality and its direct connection to time. '*FILM* is about film', she says and 'film is time made manifest: time as physical length – 24 frames per second, 16 frames in a 35mm foot.'⁹ You can run out of film when the whole length of your film roll has been completely used. Whereas most filmmakers would find this limiting, Dean argues that this finite length of a roll of film makes for creative decisions.

Dean's thoughts on film are formed along and within her practice as filmmaker. I wonder if the notion of the 'distance' of time she puts forward resonates with how people experience time while watching a movie.

9. Tacita Dean, 'FILM' In: *Celluloid*, ed. by Marente Bloemheugel, Jaap Guldemond (Amsterdam, EYE and Rotterdam, nai010 publishers, 2016), p. 38.



Installation view of *FILM* in the Turbine Hall, 35mm colour and black and white film, Tacita Dean, 2011.

Whereas the filmmaker is essentially occupied with movement (that of the camera), the film spectator, faced with exactly that movement, always remains tied to her own non-movement. Sitting still, how does she experience the camera's motions through time and space?

An Anthropology of Images (2011), by German art historian Hans Belting, examines how a camera's sequence of frames can be experienced by the spectator. Belting compares the ephemeral nature of film with the immobile position of the spectator in the movie theatre and points exactly towards this 'contrast between the moving eye and the restricted movement of his body in the seat.'¹⁰ It is this contrast that makes us strongly identify ourselves with what we see, he claims.

Indeed I would say that the stream of images triggers a stream of one's own memories, associations and mental images to flow. Even though you would think going to the movies means being exposed to and absorbed in stories which are not your own (but of some woman in Paris or Berlin); you are actually also, at the same time, extra exposed to your own 'story'. In this sense the camera's bird-eye perspective in Skoog's *Shadowland* does not just function as a means for logical overview. Rather, it functions as a temporary host for the spectator's memory: flying over those Hollywood mountains she can at times drop her own stories in the grass, generating lived space and injecting time into places where time seems to stand still.

Not only film, but also city-space is something we perceive as a series of (camera)-frames, claims Soviet filmmaker and –theorist Sergei Eisenstein (b.1898, d.1948). In his essay *Montage and Architecture*¹¹ he elaborates on the relation between city and film, using the 'path' as a way to argue that we understand our experience of space mostly in a sequential manner.

10. Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011), p. 52.

11. Sergei Eisenstein, *Montage and Architecture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989).

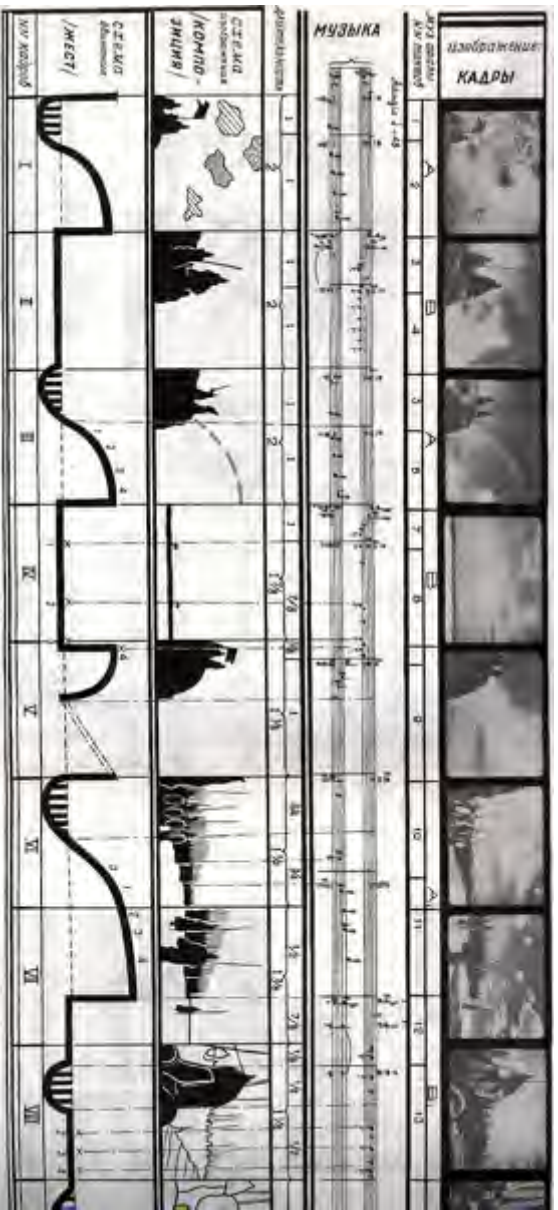
Film provides us with a 'succession of shots' that offer different viewpoints, which make its spectator *mobile* (even though she is *immobile*; sitting still). Almost reversely, the city's architecture is physically, often, immobile, yet made mobile by the spectator who moves around it and has different views of it along her path.

FILMING FILM

Bearing this in mind, I want to look again at the two films discussed before: *Cleo from 5 to 7* by Agnes Varda and *Run Lola Run* by Tom Tywyker. What I would like to explore is if and how these films present 'real' time and space. The main focus of Belting and Eisenstein seems to be the relation between the movement of the camera and the (non) movement of the spectator. When film is, for example, shot from the perspective of the protagonist (when in fact *her* eyes become the camera), the immobile position of the spectator helps to identify with those eyes.¹²

12. An angle referred to as 'subjective camera'.

As Varda and Tywyker film Cleo or Lola moving through the city, these protagonists do not become cameras. Like I argued before, they become editing tools. Filmed from outside, they are used to cut and paste an image of the city together. In order to develop an analysis of if, and how, these walks offer 'real' city-time and -space, I think it is important to recognise and focus on the movement of these filmed protagonists. In the context of watching film I thus believe we have do not have hold of two, but of three different movements that stand in a certain position towards each other: the movement of the camera, that of the filmed body and that of the spectator. To see how *Cleo from 5 to 7* and *Run Lola Run* differ in the image of the city they generate, I think we should look for example at how Cleo's walk relates to the walk of Varda's camera. And what can we say about Lola's run and the camera that films it?



A Sequence diagram for *Alexander Nevsky*, a film by Sergei Eisenstein, 1938, showing a 'succession of shots'.

Walking through the city expresses time in physical length: it takes 19 minutes to finish the 'path' from my house to the library or: it takes 19 minutes to walk 1500 metres. Tacita Dean expresses celluloid film-time in physical length as well as she says that 'two and a half minutes is a 100 feet of 16mm film; 1000 feet is eleven minutes of 35mm.'¹³ Such translations from film to distance, distance to time, and time to film offer a very dynamic approach to the filmed city. Because when we consider film as a path or walk, we can also start to consider a walk through the city as film. Filming a woman walking through the city, I argue, can then be seen as *filming film*.

The two walks –the one of the camera and the one of the woman- can coincide, like two figures that overlap precisely. This is, I think, what happened with Cleo's walk in Varda's *Cleo from 5 to 7*. The real time Cleo passes walking through the street becomes the time we as viewers spend watching her walk through the street. It is because of this double duration, where the movement of the camera follows Cleo's movement like her shadow (and uses this parallel movement as an instant editing tool), that Varda's film of the city can be said to express *real* time and space. Lola's run did not have this immediate, transparent match with the camera's. She was running a distance, which is in reality impossible to finish in the time she was given. Film is falsely translated into (street) length, length into time and time into film. Instead of using the movement of the filmed body to mirror and emphasise the camera's own walk, Twyker uses it to 'falsely' construct a collection of different city-shots together later on. Doing so, he makes use of our embedded notion of the camera as something that gives the reality of the city an objective weight, but deliberately counters it at the same time.

The way Lola runs through the city makes me think of the tram ride I took the other day. Reading a book, I did not look

up until I came to the end of the line. Missing out on all the places the tram passed in-between, I was skipping streets like Lola. Her fragmented route reminds me of the different vehicles that circle around the city. Don't they also paste different and distant city-spaces we daily inhabit together? Don't their movements create similar 'mismatches'?

PART III: STRETCHED OUT CINEMAS

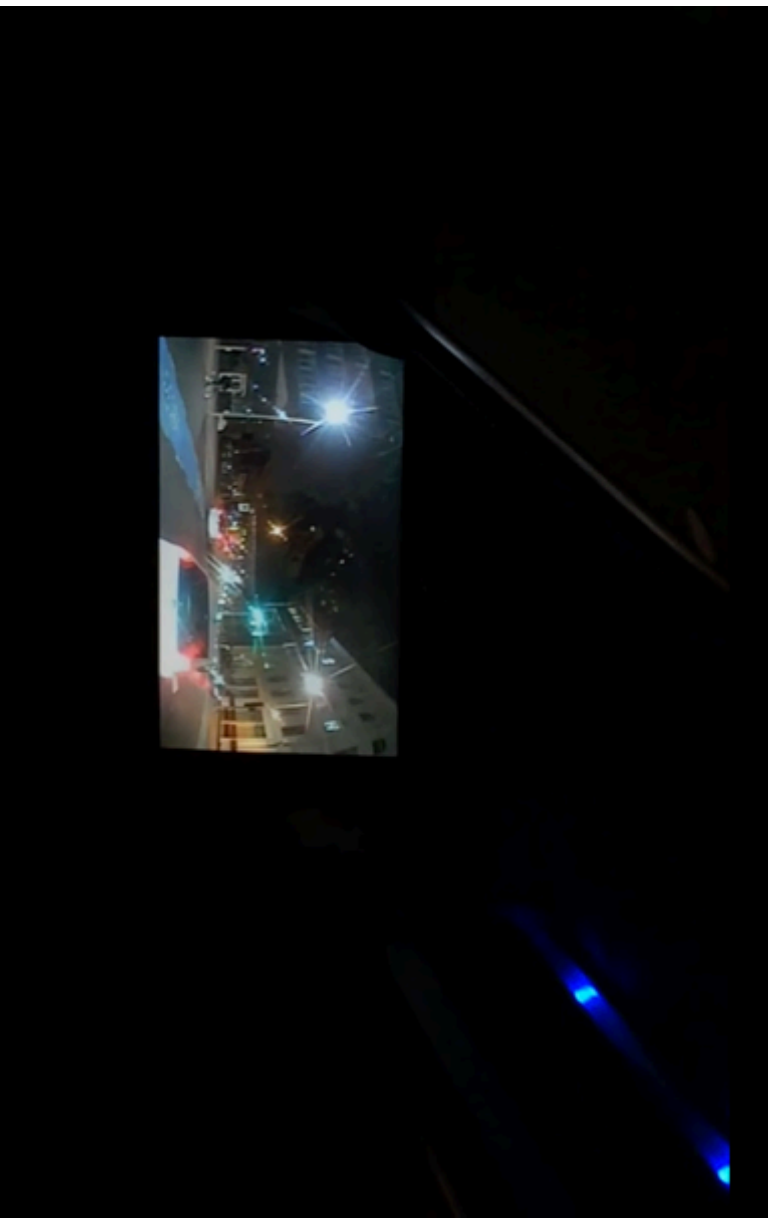
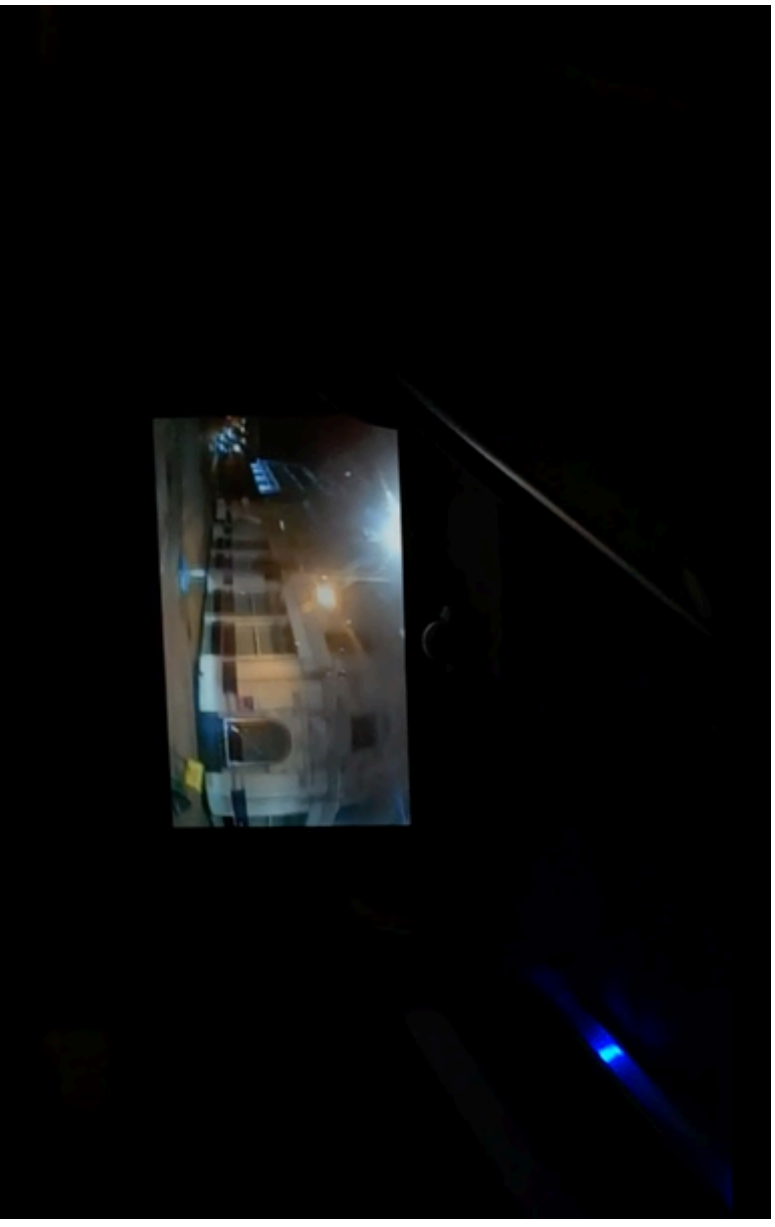
On a Friday evening last November I sat in a coach that took me from Stansted Airport to London. A screen hung inside of it, showing a live stream of the streets we were driving through, filmed by a camera that seemed to be attached to the outer front of the bus. I did not really understand why this was done; nobody seemed to be watching it and couldn't we also just look outside the windows and see exactly the same?

A couple of days later I went to see *Instant Stories*¹⁵, an exhibition of Wim Wenders' (b.1945, Germany) Polaroids in the Photographers' Gallery. Leafing through a book that collected small writings by Wenders about his work, a small text about one of his Polaroids caught my eye*.

Wenders speaks about his 'camera car' only once, in this single note, and does not mention what he means by it. The combination of words excites me however and I would like to expand it in my own analysis.

15. *Instant Stories*, Wim Wenders' Polaroids took place from 20 oct 2017 until 11 feb 2018.

* Then I ran outside, sat in our camera car and took a picture through the windshield, in front of the hotel. This is it: it has cracks now, like an old painting. Some pictures from that first batch of films show the same phenomenon. The rest of the early SX70 photos still look more or less the same today as they appeared to us on day one, miraculously taking shape out of their white nothingness to a shiny, bright, sharp and colourful picture.



Two photos of the screen that hung in the bus to London.

CAMERA CARS

Even though I very much like walking through the city, I must admit that a lot of my paths are mediated by vehicles, instead of by my two legs. Rather than *moving* through the city as a camera ourselves, I guess it could be said that we are increasingly *being moved* around by what I will call ‘camera cars’. As a tram moves through the streets, it is framing the city in its windows. This movement that characterises the vehicle is what enables it to function as a camera and to produce a moving image of the city-streets. The tram thus becomes a camera car and the people inside become immediate viewers of the film it creates. Travelling by tram is like watching a movie in the theatre: again we are immobile spectators, mobilised by the tram’s film. Tourists can often be recognised as the ones who are still looking through the windows with excited eyes, those who have lived here for years as the ones sleeping with their heads against the glass. They have seen this movie many times.

Wim Wenders is mostly known as a film-director. In one of his early films, *Alice in the Cities* (1974), he attributed the protagonist with the same fascination for Polaroid photography he himself had. *Alice in the Cities* features a German journalist Philip Winter, who meets a young girl called Alice and her mother Lisa in New York, where they are all trying to book a flight home, to Germany. Lisa leaves Alice temporarily in Winter’s care, but then disappears to take care of some personal business. What follows is a long journey that Philip and Alice undertake together: from New York to Amsterdam, from Amsterdam to Wuppertal and from Wuppertal to the Ruhr district; all in order to find Alice’s grandmother. The Polaroid camera, always in Philip’s hands, functions as a vehicle for Wenders to explore his thoughts on (the impossibilities of) true representation. At the same time it sheds light on many other cameras

in the film: the different cars, trains, busses, ferries and planes that move Philip and Alice around.

In one of his writings on cinema, Gilles Deleuze (b.1925, d. 1995, France) describes the mobile camera as ‘a general equivalent of all the means of locomotion that it shows or that it makes use of (...)’¹⁵ It is this equivalence, he says, that Wenders makes the soul of *Alice in the Cities*. Deleuze himself used this equivalence to develop his argument of the ‘cinematographic movement-image’. He stepped away from the idea that film exists of a sequence of still frames, only to be mobilised by the moving filmstrip. Instead of recognising this montage as the creator of movement (like Eisenstein), he recognised the movement that is already inherent in each of the frozen images on the filmstrip. Essential in his analysis is his understanding of the image. By *image* Deleuze refers to any individual aspect of the world, whether it be the Sun, the Earth, an oxygen molecule, you, me or this text. In the process of imaging, we are ‘slicing’ one of these particular things into a part. The ‘cinematographic movement-image’ is a specific kind of image, wherein essentially a movement or transition is extracted from the world.

The different camera-shots in *Alice in the Cities* (all taken by the Dutch cinematographer Robby Müller) highlight this notion of the movement-image. We come to know Philip and Alice through the photographs they take out of the plane, the car-mirror that reflects their faces and the houses they point to from inside the tram. All these different plane-, train- and car windows continually frame their search for Alice’s grandmother. Rather than filming movement from one fixed point, the camera moves itself; it actually blends with these vehicles. Thus instead of showing movement from a locked perspective or presenting it as a sequence of events, the movement image here shows the flow of movement *itself* as an extraction

15. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), p. 26.



BOTTOM: Film still of *Alice in the Cities* by Wim Wenders, 1974, showing Alice's hand holding a Polaroid they have taken through the plane's window.

TOP: Polaroid described by Wenders in the small note: *West 81st Street, New York*, Wim Wenders, 1972.

from the moving vehicle. On the coming pages are some film stills from *Alice in the Cities*. One of them is shot from inside Philip's car: on the edges of it, a car antenna, mirror, dashboard and wheel are outlining what we see. They remind me of the perforations visible on the edges of Dean's images in *FILM*. Similar to how those sprocket holes indicated that we were looking at an analogue film reel, the window here frames the images as images taken from inside a moving car. *FILM* very strongly referred to the Turbine Hall it was shown in, *Alice in the Cities* constantly indicates the vehicles in which it came to exist.

The other day I was sitting in a bus, looking outside, when it started to rain. I remember seeing the first raindrop glide down the glass, slow at first and then suddenly very fast. I imagined sitting in the movie theatre and seeing drops hitting the big white screen, gliding down in groups, as if it started raining on the other side.

WHAT DID I MISS?

Deep in the belly of the city, the subway-vehicle takes up a special position as she has her travellers blindfolded. She chops up their experience of city-time and space in the sense that she enables them to traverse a distance in less amount of time than they would spend walking, just like cars or trams do. However, the subway intensifies this experience by removing parts of the sequence of images her passengers travel through. She is like a stretched out, underground cinema; traveling in darkness we are at times exposed to the lights and noise of some subway-stop. Arriving there is like suddenly waking up after you have fallen asleep while watching a movie with friends. You ask them to fill in the gaps: 'Where are they now?', 'Whose house is this?', 'Who is she?', 'What did I miss?'

French, Colombian and Chilean artist Tania Ruiz Gutiérrez (b.1973) is the kind of friend who helps you fill in these gaps. When she saw the Malmö subway station in Sweden, she 'found that it definitely needed some windows.'¹⁶ This being impossible as the subway was underground, she came up with the idea of projecting the windows: 'The idea of transforming the entire station into a train appeared to me as simple and elegant.' *Annorstädes/ Elsewhere/Ailleurs* is a work from 2010, which exists of panoramas of video projections that are shown on walls parallel to the tracks of the subway station. The images are taken during Ruiz Gutiérrez' travels through forty countries on five continents. She used a small video camera and recorded from different moving vehicles such as trains, boats and cars. She shot different kinds of land- and cityscapes: the salt flats of Uyuni, the fields of Siberia, the river of Orinoco in Venezuela, the square of Plaza Mayor, the streets of Den Haag and many more: 'the Malmö Central station will travel the world.'¹⁷

The pace of the videos recalls that of a train that is just beginning to move. They stay in this slow starting speed and never accelerate; a sharp contrast to the busy and hurried minds of the travellers. When a train enters the tracks, its body is covering more and more of the projections. It is quite beautiful to see how it then starts to work as an editing tool: simply by entering the tracks, it cuts up the footage projected behind it. When it has left you have missed a piece of the video. The work also evokes French film pioneers Auguste and Louis Lumière's *Arrival of a train at la Ciodat* (1896): its 50 seconds being one of the earliest examples of silent film. In the film you see a train entering the tracks at Ciodat and travellers waiting on the platform, slowly shuffling along with it. The film comes with an exciting story: the 'cinematographic train' is said to have made the *immobile* audience get up from their chairs, as it seemed to dash towards them.

16. Karen O'Rourke, *Walking and Mapping: Artists as Cartographers* (London, The MIT Press, 2016), p. 173: O'Rourke quotes from email exchanges with Tania Ruiz Gutiérrez on December 11 and 14, 2010.

17. ELSEWHERE the artwork; A connection between the city and the entire world, Tania Ruiz Gutiérrez commenting on her work, www.elsewhere.name/index.php?start=1 (accessed 8 December, 2017).



Two film stills from *Alice in the Cities* by Wim Wenders, 1974, shot from inside a moving bus and boat.



BOTTOM: Alice in the Citizen film still from inside a car, showing Philip and Alice from behind (and Philip reflected in the car-window).

TOP: Alice in the Citizen film still showing a moving vehicle from outside.

Seeing that the flickering images on the movie screen were in black and white nor hearing the film running through the projector could stop the spectators from sensing that what they were watching was real. The train's movement made them feel physically threatened and left them panicking.¹⁸

18. Martin Loiperdinger, 'Lumiere's Arrival of the Train: Cinema's Founding Myth', *The Moving Image*, Volume 4, Number 1, 2004, p. 90; Loiperdinger quotes Hellmuth Karasek from *Der Spiegel*.

Arrival of a train at la Ciotad was shot in the midst of the Industrial Revolution, ten years after the introduction of 'standard time' (a synchronisation of clocks that helped growing train travel with coordinated departure and arrival times). What medium other than the moving camera, itself in the midst of technological development at that time, would have been more able to catch this approaching train? And along with it, its consequences for our experience of time and space? More than one hundred years later, Ruiz Gutiérrez' *Annorstädets/Elsewhere/Ailleurs* inverts Lumière's moving image. It does not separate camera from train, filming that train from outside, but lets them become one. The whole Malmö station turns into a gigantic camera train. And the people waiting on the tracks, checking the signs for delays, drinking silent coffees, are spectators of the film created.

REMEMBER-MOVEMENT

Could the physical act of descending stairs towards subway-tracks set off a more mental descending of stairs in your own body, towards your memories? This analogy between the subterranean and the subconscious can possibly give insights on what the subway's blind movement does to the bodies inside it. One's memories are tied to places. The underground network of subway stations is able to let travellers recall different places and times in one ride. Like Marc Augé phrases it, the subway map can be seen as a reminder, as a 'memory-machine' or 'a pocket mirror on which sometimes reflected, and lost in a flash, the skylarks of the past.'¹⁹

19. Marc Augé, *In the Metro*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2002), p. 4.

Sitting in the metro, you can at certain points discover that your own inner geography (a mental construction of past places) and the city's subterranean geography overlap. Hearing a voice announce the next stop, seeing your fellow travellers covered in daylight after exiting a long tunnel, feeling a sudden shiver when the metro changes track: these sensations can, I believe, shake your memory, make you remember and imagine, moments and movements from another time.

Hans Belting makes a similar observation about subway and memory when he compares the way a subway network is spread out under the pavement with the way memory is laid out in the brain. In this 'memory map', he sees memory images always linked to memory places 'which operate like relays or stations.'²⁰ When confronted with subterranean city cartography, this mental construction casts a person's own cartography over it. Just like some stops connect different rail lines together, a stop can also function as a node between subway map and memory map. I believe it is such a spatial coincidence between the subway's movement and a traveller's memory-movement that can cause shocks in the thickness of that memory.

20. Belting, *An Anthropology of Images*, p. 45.

Now what I would like to argue is that a camera's movement through the city can do the same with the memory of film spectators. A filmed city can function like a ride on the subway, turning filmmakers into subway drivers. Augé puts it very elegantly and simply when he says that those who often take the subway 'basically handle nothing more than space and time, and are skilled in using the one to measure the other.'²¹ I would say that filmmakers are dealing with the exact same measurements and translations between time and space within their processes of making. They handle city-space through filming it for a certain amount of time and in a certain speed or logic; either fast or slow,

21 Augé, *In the Metro*, p. 8.

ordered or fragmented. On the other hand they can catch experiences of city-time by moving through space in different ways; in one take, for example, or in many different takes which are pasted together later on.

Movement through the city takes up time and space. The relation between those two determines the qualities of the (movement) image it produces. Whether *real* or not, they all invest in recording (the body of) the city. How can we relate to this circling, changing, moving image of the city?





BOTTOM: A train covering up projections: film-still of a documentary film of Annorstädas/ Elsewhere/ Ailleurs by Tania Ruiz Gutiérrez, 2010.

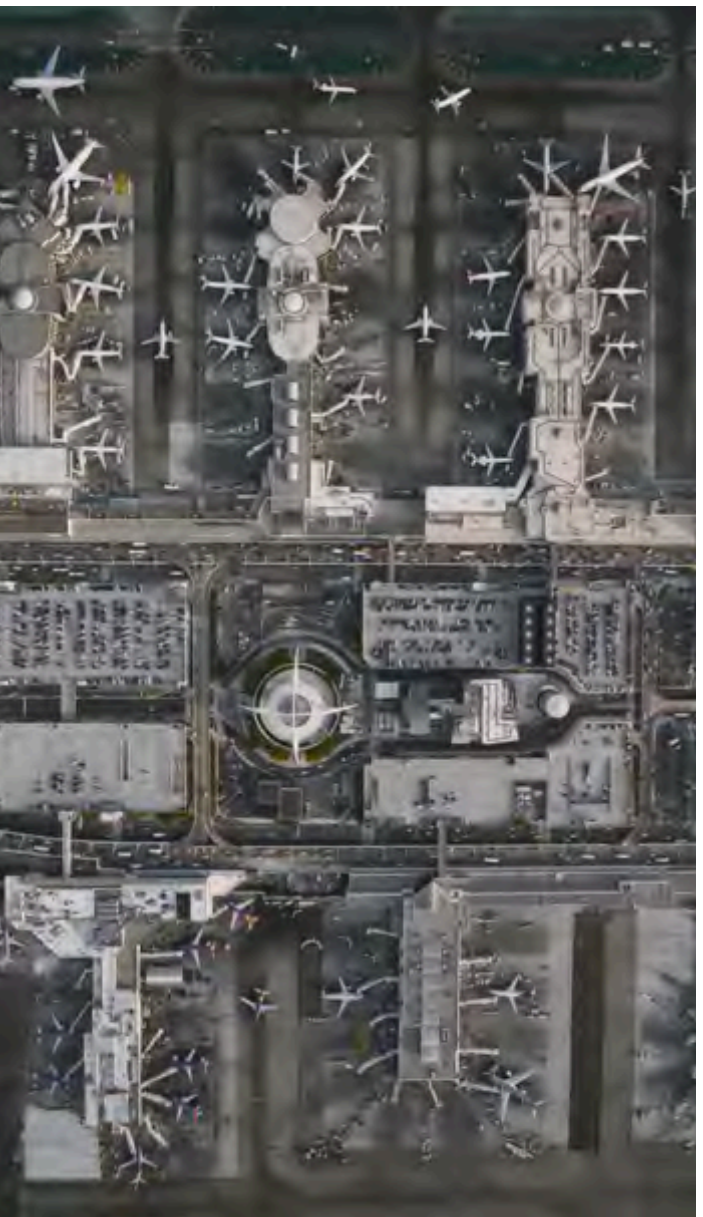
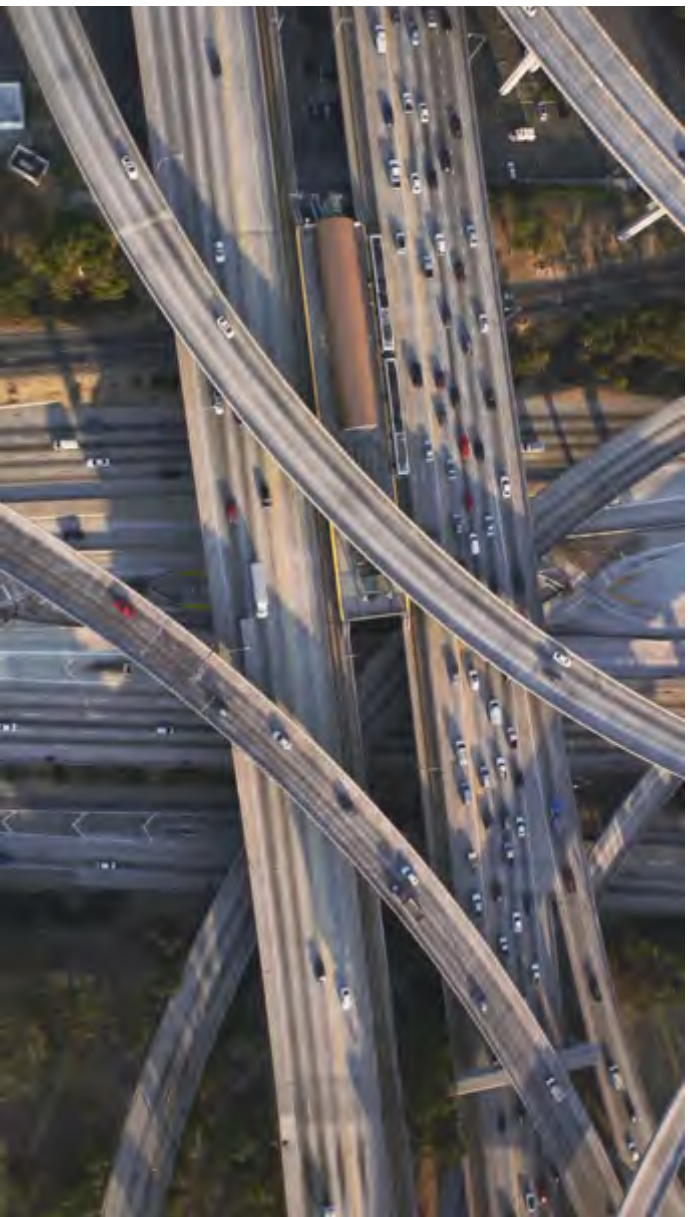
TOP: Film still of Arrival of a train at la Ciotad by Auguste and Louis Lumière in 1896.

PART IV: THE CITY RECORDS ITSELF

LONG AND NAKED: NEW YORK ON SCREEN

It was a night in one of the last weeks of the summer holiday that I fell asleep on my sister's couch. Some hours later I woke up to the image of a highway on her laptop. It was moving very slowly, showing different roads turn, cross and overlap from above. Very quietly and very smoothly, cars were driving up those roads. After five minutes a new screensaver popped up, this time showing an airport as seen from the air. Its stretched out landing grounds and storages were being mapped as slowly and quietly as the highway was just before. Both beautiful and unsettling, these screensavers might be evident examples of images that trigger us to have a 'global view of things'. If smooth, coherent and aerial images belong to our dominant aesthetic, then these screensavers are the ultimate cinematic long shots.

Again later, another screensaver lit up the living room. My sister's sleeping face turned blue, white and purple as a drone flew over the city of New York. The image reminded me of a film by American film director Jules Dassin (b.1911, d.2008). In the first chapter I mentioned Guy Debord's psychogeographic map of Paris and how it



Two stills from screensavers released by Apple in 2016, showing a network of highways and an airport, both located in Los Angeles, from above.

praised subjective memory and experience as tools to map a city with. Debord named his 'map' after Dassin's film that had been released ten years before: *The Naked City*.

The Naked City (1948) is a film noir in which a young model is found murdered in her apartment in New York, followed by police investigation. The way this detective narrative unfolds is however quite different from what one would expect. First of all, Dassin used actual, 'naked' locations in New York, instead of film studios. Also, throughout the movie, different people and their lives are introduced, even if they are not that much related to the murder at all. These scenes simply function to show the city's woven net of stories in which the murder took place. The main characters of *The Naked City* are presented as one amidst many others. By giving all these others a voice and face, Dassin demonstrates that the city can be mapped in many different ways.

The film is introduced with an aerial shot of New York, quite like the gloomy screensaver. We hear the producer say the following:

Ladies and gentlemen... the motion picture you are about to see is called *The Naked City*. My name is Mark Hellinger. I was in charge of its production. And I may as well tell you frankly that it's a bit different from most films you've ever seen. As you see, we're flying over an island. A city. A particular city. And this is a story of a number of people -and a story also of the city itself. It was not photographed in a studio. Quite the contrary. Barry Fitzgerald, our star... Howard Duff, Dorothy Hart... Don Taylor, Ted de Corsia and the other actors... played out their roles on the streets, in the apartment houses... in the skyscrapers of New York itself. And along with them, a great

many thousand New Yorkers played out their roles also. This is the city as it is. Hot summer pavements, the children at play... the buildings in their naked stone... the people, without makeup.²²

Whereas the drone finds itself being invisible, leaving no fingerprints on the silent, sharp and smooth image of the screensaver, the presence of someone holding the camera in the helicopter can be felt and is exposed, naked, through the pulsing noise of the helicopter and the shaky images.

MAPPING THE CITY

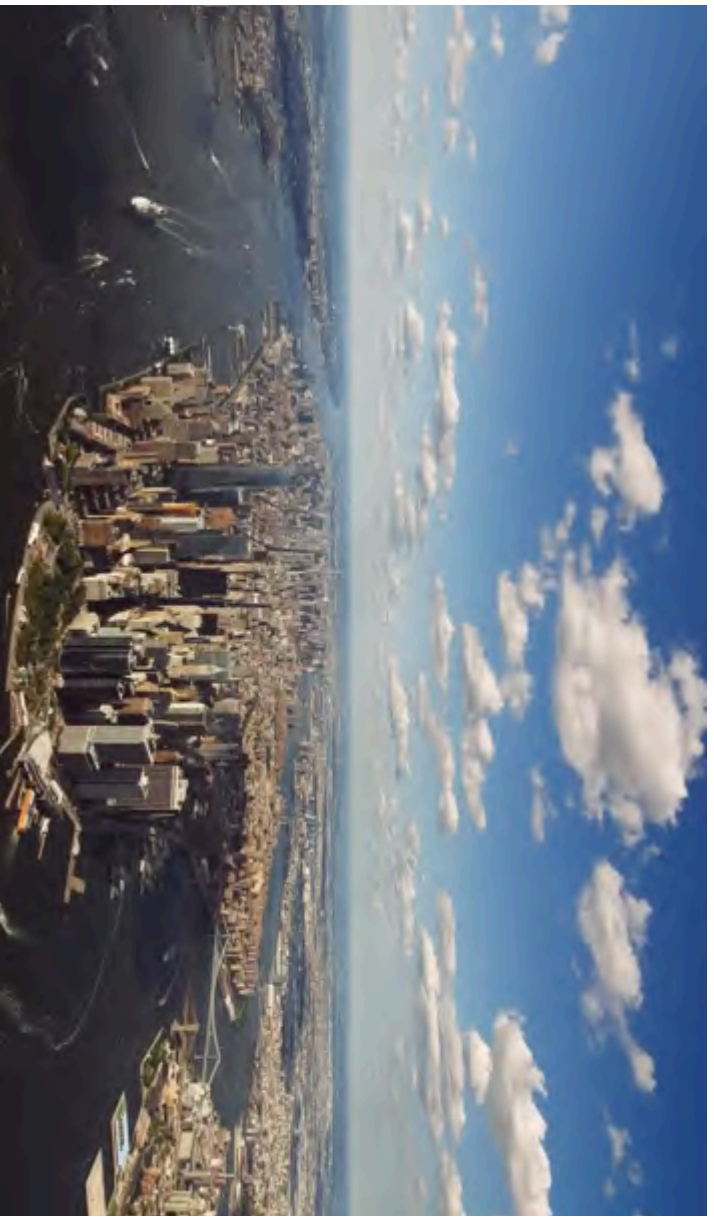
Dassin's choice to use real locations for his film was rather revolutionary at the time. Michelle Teran's (b.1966, Canada) work *Folgen* (2013, translated both as the verb: 'to follow', and as the noun: 'consequences') shows a more recent investment in exploring the 'real' city and its 'real' stories. Teran was watching videos that were put online by other people as blogs that recorded their daily lives and events. She stood up from her seat and used the videos and their stories to mobilise her own story. Her performance *Folgen* starts with her reading out loud a letter addressed to the makers of those videos:

I want you to know that I've been following you. I watched all your videos, every last one of them. I thought that if I watched you long enough, I would start to know you better. Eventually, I decided that I wanted to see if I could find you. That is when I stood up from behind my computer screen and entered into the city. I decided to follow in your footsteps using your memories as guides.²³

From information of where these videos were shot, Teran was able to track down where each person slept, worked, met their friends and bought their food. It is through

22. Jules Dassin, *The Naked City* (Hellinger Productions, Universal International Pictures, 1948).

23. Michelle Teran, *Folgen*, 2013



Two aerial shots of the city of New York: at the bottom a film still from Jules Dassin's *The Naked City* (1948), at the top a still from a screensaver produced by Apple in 2016).

ordinary places like these that one can map out someone's life and now Teran lets these marks determine her own steps too. She uses them as a guide for inhabiting the city she knows in a different way, quite literally from another perspective. One of those perspectives is Manny's:

Dear Manny,
Today I decided to try and find the apartment where you lived. It's a place where so many things happened. Birthday celebrations, holidays, dinners [...]. I came here today because I was looking for evidence that you do exist. That's why I sit now at a café across the street. This morning when I first arrived I walked up to look over the list of names at the doorbells and saw your name on the door. It's exactly where you marked it. It's a bit startling to find your name on the door. I didn't expect to find it that quickly.²⁴

24. Michelle Teran, *Folgen*, 2013.

Her work reminds me of how people sometimes feel the urge to visit the locations where a film they have seen was shot. There is something about being in those actual places that appears to bring you closer to the film itself. Sometimes these maps of film locations are so detailed that you can see where a specific conversation took place or an exact line was spoken. Quite some places in Amsterdam have appeared on the white screen. Knowing about these films I notice how they mingle with my own associations with the city. Cycling over the 'Magere Brug' ('Skinny Bridge') with a friend the other day, I asked: 'Did you know James Bond's *Diamonds Are Forever* was shot here?'

CAMERA LEGS

Moving through the city, you see how time passes in the shape of trams disappearing around the corner or other

people walking to their destination. Being close to these units of time is like hearing a washing machine running at home, whose spinning sounds and movements make one feel at ease. Or like watching a movie in the theatre, knowing the coming two hours of the day will be covered with projections. A city's veins are filled with such units of time. The city, as a rumbling gathering of all these different things that take place, is in this sense a place that is *filming itself*. She has hold of many different mediums through which she is continually recording herself, and through which our city-image is continually reshaped. She is filmed with many different lenses: from the back of a bike in the early morning, through the tram's window when going to work, from the roof of a parking lot... The footage we are accumulating of and *with* the city keeps on expanding and changing. The fragmentation this process creates can, in my view, not only compensate for the unifying metaphors and cinematic long shots that surround us, but even outbalance this coherent image of the city.

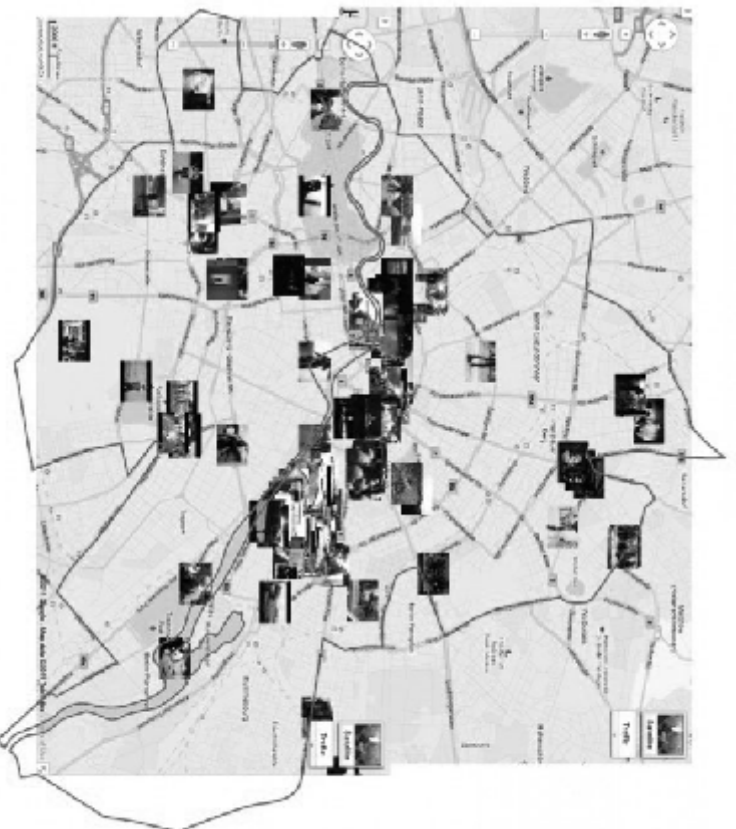
Walking might be something that does still enable us to have a continuous city-experience. American writer Rebecca Solnit (b.1961) phrases her praise for the movement of walking as she says: 'Each walk moves through space like a thread through fabric, sewing it together into a continuous experience, so unlike the way air travel chops up time and space and even cars and trains do.'²⁵ Solnit describes the walk as a way to experience real time and space, recalling how Varda filmed Cleo's walk through the city. As I have argued previously, I indeed think walking has a direct relation with time, comparable with analogue film. But much like Tacita Dean did not intend to critique digital film, rather merely wanted to plea for the possibilities offered by analogue film, I am not intending to critique the 'chopped up' movement produced by busses or trains. On the contrary, I like being moved around by those

25. Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A history of walking* (London, Granta Publications, 2001), p.xv.

camera cars. I like falling asleep in the train. I like seeing someone else fall asleep in the train. I like waiting for a tram with people I do not know. I like writing at the airport and seeing planes take off. I like moving with others.

Within the broad area of city-movements, I believe that what gives walking an exceptional position is the following: it demands us to both *record* the city with our movement and *watch* the image that is produced by that movement at the same time. Whereas a tram or train allows us to sit back and 'enjoy the movie', our legs ask us to film that movie ourselves. While walking, we are filming and watching film at the same time. The movement of the camera and the movement of the film-spectator coincide: our body doubles as camera and spectator. In *Cleo from 5 to 7*, the exact symmetry between the camera's movement and Cleo's movement produced real time, and similarly here it is the harmony between the camera's movement and the spectator's movement that connotes the activity of walking with real time and space. The 'real' continuity of the walking movement that is often praised is, in my eyes, the result of this direct, transparent match between movements. A match that I think is quite rare in our daily experiences, but essential in order to develop an individual, critical and creative interaction with the city.





BOTTOM: Part of Teran's *Folgen*: a map indicating all the different locations where the videos were shot, by placing video-stills of them in Berlin.

TOP: A screenshot of the website 'themoviemap.com', showing a movie map of London in which dots locate different movie scenes around the city.

It often happens that as you are heading somewhere you happen upon new ideas. Walking through the city or writing a text, a thought pops into your head, turning you away from your planned destination, changing your course of movement. Sometimes it simply allows you to stand still and see how you got here -and where you could go next. I would like to approach this temporary conclusion as something that offers such a moment.

Writing this text is a careful act of dissecting city-images; an act of isolating, analysing and again interrelating different movements of camera, filmed body, and spectator that together set up certain qualities of the filmed city. I am exploring both recorded- and remembered time by taking on different positions of immobility and mobility, and looking from different perspectives of the bird-eye and the walker. Film becomes a distance sometimes traversed by camera cars, other times by camera legs. And throughout this walk, it is especially the question of when a film can be said to offer 'real' city-time and space that catches my interest. 'Real', I examine, is a quality that is hard to grasp because it is so easily interpreted in the sense of 'truly representative'. Yet since our actual,

daily experience of the city is in many ways fragmented, this interpretation would disqualify Cleo's coherent long walk in *Cleo from 5 to 7* as something that offers real time and space. Therefore I suggest that Varda's claim of realism points towards something else: towards a certain instant coincidence that exists between the movement of the camera and that of Cleo. This idea of a match reappears in the act of walking, where the movement of the camera coincides with that of the spectator. Walking is therefore, I suggest, a way to directly record your own image of the city and also to be immediately confronted with that image. This film can then be used to challenge other (moving) images, like the ones coming from camera cars or the ones we watch in the movie theatre.

With this text I investigate my own practice of image-making as well. The pinhole photographs that developed parallel to my writing are immediate examples, but I also came to rethink other, previous and digital photographs, like the series I made at Schiphol International Airport two years ago. They emerged from walking around the airport many days and nights, experiencing the specific way in which light works at that place. I was interested in how this influenced the way people spend time there, waiting and anticipating for planes to land or take off. If I now think back to that project, I realise that I was especially looking for instances in which the airport reflected photographic qualities such as light, movement and time.

The presented research on passing time and crossing space in the filmed city is far from exhaustive. Notions of repetition of movement or the 'everyday film' have not been discussed in depth yet, but are very closely integrated in our lives. How do we experience boredom in the clear-cut timeframe of a daily bus ride to work for example? What are the silent gestures travellers use to interact in an early morning train? How does one come

to comprehend this language? Or how is a train station designed to accommodate people that are waiting? Acts of waiting or being bored at first sight may seem to involve a kind of absence of movement. However, they do manifest themselves in the very presence of movement as well: when moving becomes 'waiting to arrive', and the film produced by a tram in the windows does not interest its travellers anymore. Film duration is then converted into functional time; time for checking up on e-mails, finishing assignments or catching some sleep. A century ago, however, an audience still faced Lumières' moving train with complete anxiety. This shift only leaves us to imagine what movements will record the reality of the city another hundred years from now.

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