Deleuze's meta-cinematic framing: multimodal meaning-making in Installation Art

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BY: **Sotirios Bahtsetzis**

ABSTRACT

The article discusses multimodal meaning-making in the context of video and multi-media installation art and related curatorial practices. It draws on the Deleuzian concept of pure duration or 'time-image,' understood as a Foucauldian dispositive (Panagia) and, thus, as a broader heuristic device in discussing the viewer's experience engulfed in installations. It discusses non-discursive aspects of meaning-making while focusing on the viewer/ participant's subjectifying, multi-sensorial, kinaesthetic, performative, and time-based experience of an exhibition. We discuss installation art as a temporal situation, constructed on the difference between represented or narrated time and subjective or reception time (Petersen), following the phenomenological category of the artwork as a 'temporal object' (Ingarden). The paper aims to offer novel interpretive tools for investigating our current shifting sensorium engaged in meaning-making. It also maintains that installation art constitutes not only a compelling cultural strategy for "imagining and imaging the world" (Rodowick) but also the means to understand how modes of perception converge in producing subjectivity.

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Introduction

It has been often attested that the overall objective of Gilles Deleuze's two cinema books *L'image-mouvement. Cinéma 1* (1983) and *L'image-temps. Cinéma 2* (1985) is not to produce another film theory but to rethink the image concept as the

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formative ground of our thinking. Deleuze attacks the immutable and rigid notion of representational thinking understood both as an aesthetic category and as an attribute of the philosophical notion of the subject – "the notion of the mind as a mirror" (Rorty 1979: 12) – since he distrusts all kinds of representations in philosophy, that is, either mental images (dreams, memories, fantasmata) or even visual metaphors (Deleuze 2004: 57). The Deleuzian cinema implies a paradigmatic change not only in how reality is perceived but most significantly, in the meaning-making within any thinkable reality. In this regard, cinema for Deleuze must be somehow linked to the notion of subjectivity, echoing Bernard Stiegler's later thesis of the "cinematic constitution of consciousness" (Stiegler 2011: 15). Since for Deleuze cinema is assigned "a restoration of the laws of the process of thought" (Deleuze 1989: 211), filmic devices relate both to consciousness and subjectivity, compelling the philosopher to maintain that "we had always had cinema without realizing it" (Deleuze 1986: 3).

Deleuze's level of generalization makes his theory transposable to the domain of visual arts. We assume first a conceptual analogy between the aesthetic devices of late modern exhibition-making of engulfing the viewer, exemplified in installation art, and the primary filmic devices (the frame, the shot, and the montage) of filmmaking. Installation art breaks with the traditional separation, cemented in art theory since Lessing's essay *Laokoon oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie* (1766) and his famous division of the arts into spatial and temporal art forms, striving to combine space and time into a unified concept. One of the essential conditions characteristic of installation art is "its special ability to unfold its material so that it stretches out in time, and hence the temporal structure of the viewer's reception also becomes stretched" (Petersen 2015: 199). As Anne Ring Petersen has demonstrated, installation art has numerous possibilities for the representation of time since it can press it together, expand it, speed it up, put it on standby, or fragment it (190).

Most importantly, Petersen's distinction between "represented time" (the temporal structure inherent in the represented motif of the work of art) and the "time of reception" (the temporality related to the viewer's experience during the decoding of what is represented in the work of art) is a fundamental feature of installation art. However, these are intrinsically intertwined, so a distinction between them makes sense only as a tool of analysis. In this respect, being present inside an installation comes much closer to experiencing a musical piece, which according to Roman Ingarden, is a "temporal object" [*Zeit-objekt*]. He aptly distinguishes between played music, which is the various and individual performances of a musical work, by their nature unrepeatable and always differing, and the notated music, the work that remains 'the same' in all the modifications to which it submits. While the single performance is real and tied to the here-and-now, the work in the form of the musical score is a "purely intentional" object withdrawn from actual time (Ingarden 1989: 106).

Ingarden draws on his teacher Edmund Husserl, who "defines as temporal the object constituted in its duration as flux or flow, and whose flux is coincident with the flux of consciousness of which it is the object" (Stiegler 2009: 5); a statement that describes installation art in the best possible way. As inherently spatial constructs, installations are, thus, becoming pure temporal objects in the moment of viewing since they are directly linked to the experiential temporality of their actual or prospective viewers. An installation can spread its elements out and separate them clearly using spaces, thus, forcing the viewer to perceive it in succession, even when this reading is not dictated in a linear manner. The spectator's engulfment in it and his encounter with the various exhibition spaces considered as a spatiotemporal situation, can best be analyzed using a spectator-oriented methodological approach to describe the film viewing experience. In these terms, we can rethink the temporal filmic devices forming the conceptual backbone of Deleuze's cinematic typology as being fundamentally spatial since they produce a dynamic space that encompasses or even produces the viewer's sensorial embedment in the exhibition's site. The cinematic dispositive, comprising the increasing spatialization of the time-based film art and the temporalization of the viewing experience in installation art, describes not simply a different aesthetic mentality based on the experience of modern cinema but rather the emergence of a spatiotemporal perception-image. Eventually, we will argue that both installation art and the curatorial practice that informs it embody, more than any other media, the meta-cinematic condition of consciousness for which "the world advances to a meta-cinema" (Deleuze 1986: 59), that is, as an equivalent to thinking itself.

The cinematic dispositive

Deleuze's implied meta-cinematic account of the world seems equivalent to Michel Foucault's concept of the "visibilities" [*visibiltés*]. It was Deleuze (1989b: 57) who pointed out that the Foucauldian notion of visibilities constitutes a nodal point for understanding Foucault as a visual historian and not only as the founder of discourse analysis – an observation to be further developed by John Rajchman (1988) and Davide Panagia (2019). According to David Rodowick, Deleuze's radicalism consists in the fact that cinematic "strategies for imagining and imaging the world"are conceived as "assemblages," or "technological" and at the same time "spiritual automata where each era [the era of the movement-image and the era of the time-image] thinks itself by producing its particular image of thought (1997: 5). Foucault's dispositive is for Deleuze not unlike his sense of cinema as an assemblage machine, that is, a site of the complex movement of perceptibility and actions that goes beyond the hegemonic representational regime of perception (and power) (Panagia 2019: 724), as this has been exemplified in Foucault's conceptualization of disciplinary apparatuses

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[*appareils disciplinaires*], notably in Bentham's penitentiary building of the Panopticon, or Charcot's Salpêtrière Hospital. This implies that, unlike an apparatus, the Foucauldian dispositive does not necessarily aim at the disciplinary normalization of behaviors but bears witness to their possible questioning or undoing of the apparatus. Therefore, they allow various constructions of the world and the subject, and thus visibilities to unfold. Deleuze describes the dispositive complex as a "multilinear ensemble" that holds "curves of visibility," "curves of enunciation," and "lines of force" (1992: 159, 160). We will explore this statement in more detail later on.

Deleuze proposes a taxonomy of the dispositive-as-cinema that reflects filmic narration's aesthetic devices, i.e., frame, shot, and montage. He appropriates Henri Bergson's philosophical ideas of *Matter and Memory* (1896) to outline the first articulation of the cinematic dispositive. The latter has three different modalities, which correspond to the three different aspects of the movement-image/shot: the perception-image (films related to the perceptual process), the action-image (films linked to the narrative process), and the affection-image (films associated with the expressive process). Deleuze defends here Henry Bergson as a thinker of the cinematic consciousness precisely because, in his view, Bergson first pointed out the importance of movement and duration to spectatorial activity. Bergson's concept of "real movement," which means concrete duration within time, is associated with "movement-images" or "mobile sections of duration" (Deleuze 1986: 11). According to Deleuze, these have been the basis of the early twentieth-century American popular film (comedy, musical, and western). Movement is not equivalent to "an order of poses or privileged instants" but instead to an informational set of "any-instants-whatsoever" [*instants quelconques*] (Deleuze 1986: 4), meaning images of different kinds and from various points of view. Rodowick explains Deleuze's conception of spatiotemporal linearity, characterizing the regime of the movement-image, by using Buster Keaton's films as an example of silent Hollywood cinema:

> In Keaton's film, every division, no matter how unlikely and nonsensical, is mastered by this figure of rationality, where the identification of movement with action assures the continuous unfolding of adjacent spaces. The consequence of this identification is *the subordination of time to movement*. Time is measured only dynamically, as a process of action and reaction rebounding across contiguous spaces through match-cutting. (Rodowick 1997: 3; author's emphasis)

However, this type of montage accounts for an automatic spectatorial "psychomechanism" with a quasi-sensomotoric and affective impact on the spectator. Drawing on Sergei Eisenstein's and Walter Benjamin's concept of the shock in film, Rodowick

clarifies Deleuze's point as follows: "At the most fundamental level, cinematic movement, whose essence is a montage, produces a shock in thought communicated directly, physiologically and mentally, to the spectator" (Rodowick 1997: 182). Eisenstein's conflictual montage, which Deleuze calls the "dialectical automaton" (182), affects the body with sensations and causes involuntary reflex actions in an almost Pavlovian way. In this regard, it can be described and explained in terms of the suture theory.

Deleuze's cinematic dispositive, seen as the quintessence of cinema, achieves its full impact with the emergence of the "nonorganic or crystalline regime" of the time-image, a concept he introduces in *Cinema 2*. Both the instant (e.g., the still image and the long-exposure photo), the leading device of imagery before the emergence of cinema proper, and the sensorimotor unity of the movement-image, dominant in the pre-war film, are now contrasted with the aesthetic devices of the post-war European modernist and the New American film. This presents a third type of dispositive: the pure duration or the time-image, the cinematic dispositive proper.

This duration is disjointed from diegetic spaces or actions, which have been deployed to direct our attention to the perceptual, the narrative, or the expressive process. Instead, these become autonomous, purely optical and sound (tactile) images, free from the sensory-motor association of the movement-image. This development equals an absolute emancipation of the senses. For Deleuze, as for André Bazin, Italian neo-realism signaled this new beginning, "an impulse to leave the primacy of motion and linear narrative mode behind, in favor of increasing reflection on, or denaturalization of, cinematic representation" (Rebentisch 173). Drawing on Deleuze, Julianne Rebentisch notes:

> Moreover, the relative independence of the individual shot and the associated heightened significance of the interval between the individual images imply an increasing reflection on time, which here no longer appears as merely derivative of movement, as time represented indirectly, but comes to the fore in the dimension of representation itself. (Rebentisch 1997: 173f)

In the last chapter of *Cinema 1*, entitled 'Crisis of action-image,' Deleuze determines the five characteristics of the new emerging time-image to be "the dispersive situation, the deliberately weak links, the voyage form, the consciousness of clichés, [and] the condemnation of the plot" (Deleuze 1986: 210). The influence of new narrative literary modes (stream of consciousness, the Nouveau Roman) on modernist cinema had a significant role in this transformation. Alain Resnais' film *L'Année dernière à Marienbad* (1961), based on a screenplay by Alain Robbe-Grillet, presents a convenient example. Its storytelling is elliptical (often marked by extremely long takes with minimal camera movement and jump-cuts), following all five characteristics mentioned above. Using

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what Deleuze, drawing on mathematics, calls "irrational" intervals (*interstice*), a crack or fissure within linearity, links between sequential shots do not adhere to an obvious temporal or causal narrative coherence. This type of film is opposed to the era of the movement-image, which is based on a rational ordering system (with the so-called continuity system in montage epitomizing this system) intended to make the story legible and smooth running, giving the appearance of continuous time and space.

Deleuze's somewhat erratic commentaries on Bergson's notions of movement, image, cognition, and time aim to explain his cinematographic concepts (Deleuze 1991: 9). Most notably, cinematic flow is understood in a temporal (and in this respect, Bergsonian) context, and defined as duration. Bergson meets in this context suture film theory, which proposes an inevitable and predefined identification of filmic time with the spectator's time, allowing for percepts and affects to be transferred from one to the other. Successful suturing presupposes a rational ordering system (the continuity system by editing) intended to make the story as legible and smooth running as possible, thus, rendering us unconscious that we are experiencing the passing of time with and through the camera eye. Suture assumes, in this regard, the spectator's unconditional identification with the mechanical camera eye – and, more precisely, with what it shows us from its vantage point. This is evident in the way, for instance, in the 1970s, Jean-Louis Baudry conceptualizes cinema as a "simulation machine"capable of offering the subject "representations mistaken for (actual) perceptions"(Baudry 1992: 705). Duration is understood by Bergson, on the one hand, in psychological terms and on the other as a pure philosophical category. At the same time, visual perception is introduced as an agency of differentiation between different ontological levels, that is, the virtual and the actual. Despite Bergson's critique of cinema in *Creative Evolution* (1907), Deleuze defends Bergson as a thinker of both the virtual and the cinematic consciousness. Specifically, he considers Bergson the first to point out the paradox of movement and duration in spectatorial activity and the autonomization of time in the novel, non-deterministic understanding of the filmic time.

The autonomization of time flourishes during the advanced cinema era, with its distinctive regime of the time-image shattering the linearity of temporal succession and meaning-making. Temporalizing the image as pure duration means that this new cinema "could not transcribe events which had happened, but necessarily devoted itself to reaching the event while happening, sometimes by cutting across an 'actuality,' sometimes by provoking or producing it" (Deleuze 1986: 206). For Deleuze, a direct time-image is a "temporal structure" that "goes beyond the purely empirical succession of time in terms of past-present-future. It involves a co-existence of different durations or duration levels; a single event can belong to several levels. The sheets of past co-exist in a non-chronological order" (Deleuze 1989: xii). In Rodowick's account, "time no longer derives from movement; 'aberrant' or eccentric movement derives

from time. (…) there are images of disorder, instability, and diversity; in short nonlinear relationships" (Rodowick 1997: 5, 16). Or, as Deleuze puts it:

> There is no longer linkage of associated images, but only relinkages of independent images. Instead of one image after the other, there is one image plus another; and each shot is deframed in relation to the framing of the following shot. (Deleuze 1989: 214, original emphasis)

As Rodowick puts it, "deframing … presumes a virtual relation with the Whole that is the regime of the time-image" (Rodowick 1997: 186; Deleuze 1986: 17). To delink and deframe images entails assuming the coexistence of percepts and affects, or even percepts and meaning-making. With the help of the montage, images are deployed in the cinematic dispositive proper not to create the effect of linearity, unity, and identity but actually to disrupt them. The time-image is linked to one of Deleuze's principal concepts in *Bergsonism*, the notion of memory as a virtual coexistence of past and present. For Deleuze, "the past and the present do not denote two successive moments, but two elements that coexist" (Deleuze 1991: 59). This notion of time also has consequences for the constitution of our psychological consciousness: "it is *all* our past, which coexists with each present. … The whole of our past is played, restarts itself, at the same time, on all the levels that it sketches out" (Deleuze 1991: 59, 61; original emphasis).

This is why we come across some puzzling Deleuzian statements such as: "The past is 'contemporaneous' with the present that it *has been*" (Deleuze 1991: 58; original emphasis). However, after reflecting upon this sentence, which describes the modalities of memory and time, we may surmise that it also provides an excellent description of modernist cinema. The cinematic experience is always a kind of a déjà-vu, an already seen, actualized, or embodied in the present and bearing residues of our past, with all of them "coexisting..[and]..repeating each other" (Deleuze 1991: 61). This is an excellent reason to follow Deleuze's assumption that the screen is "the frame of frames" (Deleuze 1986: 14) and cinema advances to a dispositive of the brain (Deleuze 2007: 287-296).

The reference to *Bergsonism* (1991) – Deleuze's 1966 book on Bergson's philosophy – also accounts for understanding one of the crucial characteristics of modernist cinema: the link between cinematic experience and memory. Memory is not necessarily understood literally as recollection, as in the case, for example, of the stylistic devices of the flashback or dream sequences. Memory doesn't necessarily occur through utilizing psychological imagery. In the regime or the time-image, images fluctuate between actual and virtual; they record or concern memory, and they confuse mental and physical time, real and virtual conditions (Rodowick 1997: 79-118). In Deleuze's terminology, this happens in cinema through the deployment of 'crystal-images.' Understanding

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memory as the virtual *coexistence* of past and present, Deleuze views the 'crystal-image' as the *event* of recollection, an event both virtual and actual. The irreducibility of the crystal-image "consists in the indivisible unity of an actual image and 'its' virtual image" (Deleuze 1989: 78).

> What constitutes the crystal-image is the most fundamental operation of time. […] time splits in two dissymmetrical jets, one of which is launched towards the future while the other falls into the past. […] The crystal-image is, then, the point of indiscernibility of the two distinct images, the actual and the virtual, while what we see in the crystal is time itself, a bit of time in the pure state, the very distinction between the two images which keeps on reconstituting itself. (Deleuze 1989: 81, 82)

Mirjam Schaub takes the cinematic image as constitutive of the simultaneity of different aspects of meaning or, better, the *multiplicity of meaning*. The logic of succession, linked to speech, is now replaced by the logic of simultaneity, embodied by the crystal-image. An image understood as a bearer of virtuality is opposed to the system of language (that system of fixed meaning based on the sequential arrangement of words that structures time). Such a transition from the temporality of the sayable (*l' énonçable*), linked to the written or oral linear continuity, to the temporality of the visible (*le visible*), connected to the simultaneity of the image's perception, constitutes the actual philosophical ground of Deleuze's post-representational thinking. Such a significant change of medium from speech to visual comes with an effort to devise conceptual tools – notably in the two books on cinema – that analyze the seemingly erratic, disconnected, and certainly not unidirectional aspects of visual and kinaesthetic perception.

According to Rodowick, Deleuze criticizes Christian Metz's notion of the filmic *énoncé* and his theory of narrative derived from the *grande syntagmatique* "for assuming that meaning is only linguistic meaning, and for reducing the image by subtracting its most visible characteristic: movement" (Rodowick 1997: 6f). Instead, and according to Deleuze,

> [the image-components of cinema comprise a moving] signaletic material that includes all kinds of modulation features, sensory (visual and sound), kinetic, intensive, affective, rhythmic, tonal, among the verbal (oral and written). Eisenstein compared them first to ideograms, then, more profoundly, to the internal monologue as a proto-language or primitive language system. But even with its verbal elements, this is neither a language system nor a language proper. It is a plastic mass, an a-signifying and a-syntaxic material not formed linguistically. (Deleuze 1989: 29)

As Schaub points out, in Deleuze's late philosophy, notably his book on Bacon and the two cinema books, his early problematics of temporality returns, bringing about the replacement of the philosophical term of time by the notion of the image (Schaub 2003: 12). This differentiation should also be linked to the diversified concept of the Deleuzian (and also of the Foucauldian) dispositive, which is of two kinds: a dispositive of visibility and a dispositive of utterance (Deleuze 2007: 344). A crystal-image is a model of time, understood as a system used to visualize and explain abstract and complex relations and conditions. It is also a dispositive of visibility, meaning, a physical and institutional mechanism, and a particular knowledge structure whose power is based solely on visual thinking. Crystal-images are models of thought that are self-aware of their status as devices of perception, action, and affection. For that reason, crystal-images are contextual and medium-reflective. When Deleuze calls them 'mental-images,' he tries to clarify that meaning is produced not only by utterances but also by visual percepts, which can model, control, and determine people's gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses. In what follows, we propose that crystal-images are produced not only in modernist cinema but also in installation art, understood as a time-structuring medium.

The dispositive of installation

Exhibitions are spatiotemporal phenomena, simultaneously visual, haptic, and corporeal. According to Paul O'Neil,

> an exhibition is a temporary, architectonic structure that possesses potential planes of interaction for the viewer, which I would describe as: (1) surrounding the viewer who moves through it, (2) interacting only partly with the viewer, and (3) containing the viewer in its space of display. (O'Neil 2012: 92)

O'Neil's notion of the exhibition, indicative of installation art, will be discussed in connection to David Bordwell's notion of the spatial percept (Bordwell 1985: 101) to describe the exhibition goer's multi-sensorial and kinaesthetic experience. Bordwell's method involves analyzing the filmgoer's cognitive processes while perceiving the film's non-textual, aesthetic forms. His term 'spatial percept,' comprising both viewer space and represented space in the film, functions as a fundamental category in his approach.

Drawing on Bordwell, an analogy can be established between film viewing and looking at an installation piece. This analogy suggests that with film, just as with a display of artifacts, there is a differentiation between a positivistic notion of an "empirical space," i.e., the display's modified interior and its evident architectonic anchoring, and

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the spatial percept, i.e., how the viewer experiences this installation (Bordwell 1985: 101). However, applying the concept of spatial percept in the context of an exhibition means differentiating between a spatial percept experienced collectively (viewers will agree about the visual content of the installation) and a subjective and unique percept for each viewer. This distinction reformulates the differentiation mentioned above between represented time (the temporal structure inherent in the represented motif of the artwork) and reception time (the temporality related to the viewer's experience and decoding of the artwork's representations). As Petersen observes, "in installations, as a whole, the represented time is not something that exists separately; it is partly a product of the viewer's reception and dependent on the reception time, which is always a perceptual and subjective time whose course is determined by the constantly changing positions that the viewer must adopt in the space" (2015: 231).

To explain how reception time is structured, we must draw on Deleuze's typology, specifically on the moving *shot*. This will act as a guiding principle in understanding the installation's structure. As we have pointed out, the moving shot constitutes the film's primary aesthetic device for Deleuze: "The shot is like the movement which continuously ensures conversion, circulation. It divides and subdivides duration according to the objects which make up a set; it reunites objects and sets into a single identical duration" (Deleuze 1986: 20). This echoes Bordwell's account of the frame: "The perceptual act is not a kind of snapshot of the whole picture. Viewers search the composition, fixating briefly but repeatedly on certain regions […] areas most likely to provide information about objects' identities and depth relationship" (Bordwell 1985: 102).

The use of the shot as a heuristic device – which, in contrast to the photographic frame, has a temporal nature – seems to allow for a further conceptual analogy between viewing a film and observing a display. The ultimate goal of the installation is to position a moving viewer into an artificial system with an appeal to his subjective perception. When attending an installation, we act as wanderers, traveling from one element to another, from part to whole, and from whole to parts. This visual method entails a particular temporal structure whereby "the experience of succession participates in a dialectic interplay with an experience of simultaneity" (Petersen 2015: 197). Meaning resides in this interplay of succession and simultaneity. The same also holds for film since, in principle, the shot device implies the sum of all possible perceiving options and perceivable views offered to the viewer. In this regard, the spectator's focus on specific areas and objects offered to view correlates to the organizing mobility of the film shot, which, similarly, installs the spectator into an artificial perception system.

To further elaborate on this analogy between film- and installation- viewing, we consider the third filmic device and constitutive pillar of filmmaking: the *montage*. With montage, we don't mean the mechanical act of editing, but the creation of the

successive interchange of images, the filmic sequence that accounts for the final spatial percept. Montage is paramount to film because it employs the stylistic device that creates the actual rhythm of the viewing experience. For some filmmakers and scholars, it constitutes the critical cinematic mechanism. As Bernard Stigler, drawing on the birth moment of the montage, or what has been called the 'Kuleshov effect,' remarks:

> In fact, it is this cinematic effect that ceaselessly produces a particular consciousness, projecting onto its objects everything that has preceded them within the sequence into which they have been inserted and that only they produce. And in fact, this is the very principle of cinema: to connect disparate elements together into a single temporal flux. (Stiegler 2011: 15)

Can we establish a further analogy between film viewing and observing an installation based on the notion of the montage? The arrangement of objects in display in installation pieces often follows the narrative modalities enabled by the filmic device of the montage. Viewing an exhibition means moving from one painting on the wall or an object on a pedestal to the next one linearly. However, installation art entails a broader sensory experience, rather than floating framed points of focus on a neutrally painted wall or displaying isolated objects on a pedestal. An installation offers its viewer maximum freedom in the arrangement of views/percepts since the viewer is expected to be immersed in the sensory and narrative experience surrounding him. In this regard, installation bestows an unprecedented importance on the observer's inclusion in what he observes, always based on an implicit instruction to choose various paths in the piece and form his points of view. The maker of an installation holds the facilitator position of an individually concluded subjective experience since the spatiotemporal percept created is neither an entirely subjective nor an utterly arbitrary construct. Moreover, as Deleuze points out, montage is often pre-described and pre-included in the function of the film shot, as "there is a circulation between [frame, shot, and montage] which enables each to contain or prefigure the others" (Deleuze 1986: 29). This is also true in exhibition experience.

For the exhibition goer, every change in viewpoint generates a new observable situation. This is equivalent to listening to a musical piece whose auditory experience differs with each performance. Although in contrast to, at least, conventional music compositions, the duration of experiencing a display is not pre-described. The display resembles some modernist compositions, whose notation is provided by the composer, but their arrangement is decided by the performer spontaneously during each performance. In both cases, a set degree of aleatory, chance, and indeterminacy plays the principal role. This implies a significant distinction between a notion of space comprising all possibly perceivable vantage points, views, and percepts as conceived by

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the artist or the curator, collected into the total perceptions of a displayed artwork (all optional routes that all viewers can take inside the space), and a specific viewing subject's actually achieved spatiotemporal percept – the realized cinematic effect of the exhibition-goer's movement. Forming the various subjective viewpoints when experiencing installation art establishes an aesthetic device, which accounts for open, generic, non-causal, utterly disjunctional spatiotemporal percepts, lacking a standard quality to compare or ensure an impossible all-inclusive totality. However, installation art's control over the rhythm of passing the time and the arrangement of images/percepts offered to its viewer does not conceal the constant conflict between disinterested criticism and sympathetic involvement but exploits this conflict for the benefit of the second.

Such differentiation is crucial because it establishes the characteristic quality of viewing within the exhibition situation: a constitutive flux. As Nikolaus Hirsch observes, "exhibition making implies the concept of exposing objects and materials, but it also exposes a particular concept of time; or, more precisely, it creates different time zones and asynchronous rhythms between curatorial strategies, artistic practice, and institutional architecture" (2014: 66). However, instead of acknowledging the conflict between time zones as a challenge of contemporary installation, one should see the asynchronicity as the actual gain of the exhibition-goer's experience. "Curating in this context means delineating temporary positions, or, in other words, curating time" (Hirsch 2014: 67). Incidentally, this *curated time* is the spectator's durational experiences while strolling the exhibition, which seems to be orchestrated following an invisible score that overlies the exhibition space, as Hirsch maintains.

The spatiotemporal percept is always novel due to the temporal character of each exhibition-goer's perception modalities, similar to the film or music experience. Or, in the words of Rodowick, drawing equally on Bergson and Deleuze: "with respect to movements, duration is singular, qualitative, and unrepeatable" (1997: 21). This flux is characteristic of the specific montage in films of the time-image regime.

> This montage construction might better be characterized as "differential," since sequences are formed not through linear succession in space and chronological succession in time but through the incommensurability of space and time reasserted in every irrational interval. […] the differential relations: "between" images and sounds are furrowed by *pure virtuality*; the force of time. (Rodowick 1997: 179; author's emphasis)

And this brings Deleuze away from suture theory and closer to Bergson's ideas on cinema. Describing the viewing of a display concerning its reception modalities as a spatiotemporal flux formed by differential sequences of percepts might account for

various curatorial practices related to installation art. Understanding the viewing of a display as the attempt to create a personal space of duration corresponds with Rebentisch's account of installation art, which drawing on Russian-American artist Ilya Kabakov's notion of the installation as 'an abandoned scene' compares it with Gertrud Stein's experience of modern theater concerning the metaphor of the landscape (Rebentisch 156: 146-155; Stein xxix-xxx). The effort to create a subjective feeling of temporal flux is evident in cinematographic installations, which use the aesthetic device of the loop, the presentation format, often dispersed across several monitors and screens or even in relation to other objects in the room.

The Canadian artist Stan Douglas has extensively elaborated the notion of duration as a flux in film viewing and installation art display. His *Journey Into Fear* (2001), a 16mm film installation with a total running time of 157 hours, consists of a computerized loop of 15 minutes-long commonplace dialogues on value and truth. The cyclical and elliptical narrative structure aims to intensify the experience of duration. The set for Douglas' video is a replica of the wood-paneled quarters in a container vessel at sea, as seen in a like-titled 1975 Canadian thriller. It functions as the ironic counterpart of the initial film set, which in this regard and probably against the director's intentions, is understood by Douglas as a prefiguration of an archetypal installation: a disconnected, generic, and emptied space. Both set and characters are treated in Douglas's adaptation as props, moving the spectator's attention away from the narrative fabula and redirecting it to their own subjective perceptual (and, incidentally, affective) constructions. Speech and image together form an involuntary *déjà-vu*, which frames our conscious life: an actual direct image of our cinematic consciousness. Installation art can create a powerful narrative since "it can fictionalize a space in a way that singular objects seldom can," as Brandon Taylor maintains (1995: 151). In addition, it can also create conditions for reflection and even introspection regarding one's identity.

Rebentisch maintains that any installation aspiring to transform the dreamlike black box of classical cinema into a contemporary exhibition space and "to release the conscious activity of the audience from its illusionist, spellbound latency" (2012: 174) needs to deconstruct illusionism. Installation art has, in this regard, much in common with experimental film (or 'art film') discussed by Deleuze. The experimental film often exposes the entire cinematic apparatus by "exhibiting and reflecting on, not only its means of presentation (camera, light, editing, and so on) but also its forms of presentation (dark room, projection on a vertical screen, frontal arrangement of seats)" (Rebentisch 2012: 174). Douglas' *Journey Into Fear* does the same not only in breaking down filmic illusionism into its components and exposing the tricks based on which the narrative of a film is sustained but in demonstrating how the temporality related to the viewer's experience is formed by the temporal structure inherent in the installation piece.

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Journey Into Fear is a commentary on installations as crystalline temporal objects, understood as devices that unsettle received perceptual modalities. This condition accounts for the display's materialist immanence against an illusionist effect. Perhaps, it is also one of the reasons for many people's resentment of this novel artistic medium. Such a display system replaces the transcendental place of the artwork's magical or dream-like self-assured presence with the immanent and somewhat inconsistent quotidian site of the viewer's presence. It points towards the evidence of our internalized cinematographic consciousness, which doesn't reassure identity but questions it. As the trailer of Resnais's film *L'année dernière à Marienbad* announces: "What really happened 'last year'? You, the viewer, must answer these questions. Observe carefully. An object, a gesture, a décor…." A film of flux, like Antonioni's *L' Aventura* (1960), "whose ironic title points to spaces where any decidable action or interpretation has evaporated leaving characters who wait, who witness only the passing of time as duration" (Rodowick 1997: 13), can be compared with the disconnected and emptied spatial percepts of Michael Asher's installations or the highly suggestive Barbara Bloom's installations, to name some of the forerunners of the medium.

It is highly tempting to classify the various approaches to installation art according to the Deleuzian typology of the time-image. However, such an attempt would be a Sisyphean endeavor considering the amplitude and variety of existing practices. Still, one should stress the insights gained concerning the meta-cinematic conditions of displaying art, which means that the time-image modalities account for a subjective utilization of *time passing by*, an appropriation of the filmic apparatus in favor of the beholder, and an autonomization of the artwork's inherent temporality. In Walter Benjamin's famous essay on the artwork, the film is associated with the aura's decline in the twentieth century. However, the aesthetic devices of modernist art film, as described by Deleuze, have succeeded in initiating the temporization of experience and reintroducing, at least to an extent, a novel auratization. This reintroduced form of subjective and individualized *uniqueness* parallels the aesthetic experience of the various curatorial devices associated with installation art.

In this regard, the spatial percepts of installations enabled by the exhibitionary dispositive account for the formation of specific subjectivities. As with all social constructionist theories, it is self-evident that the individual is understood not in an essentialist but a performative manner, i.e., not as an autonomous and sovereign entity but rather as an *effect* of the discourse in which it partakes. Clearly, the workings of the dispositive may fail, be disrupted, or even subverted. All these eventualities account for subject formation in ways other than expected. As Gillian Rose maintains, Foucault's arguments regarding the subjugating nature of the apparatus do not rule out the latter as a research topic. However, researchers associated with Foucauldian analysis have not yet proceeded in this direction (2007: 185). Rose's

statement implies that "the notion that different audiences might react differently to the same image is so rarely acknowledged conceptually, that the methodologies that flow from that conceptualization therefore also neglect the processes of audiencing" (Rose 2007: 191). By allowing for a complexity of personalized, visual attachments and identities to evolve and offering the freedom to identify with them via exhibition-making, models of subjectification are constructed, replicated, and naturalized, often without conscious control. This allows for the open-ended understanding of the exhibitionary dispositive as an identity-maker. In this respect, one must agree with Rebentisch's view that installation restores to film, if not the quality of genuineness or originality, then at least an auratic uniqueness. This does happen, but not for the reasons Rebentisch suggests (175). The auratisation effect should be related solely to the viewer, who becomes an integral part of the installation piece.

We can find an ideal example of an exhibition visitor's time becoming the curatorial practice's actual content in how the curator and collector Ydessa Hendeles organized her exhibition *Partners* at the Haus der Kunst (Munich, 7.11.2003 – 15.2.2004). Hendeles divided the exhibition space into three sections, placing the artworks in a dialogue with one another and other everyday objects. The distinctive feature of the exhibition was that every visitor moved through its three sections in a non-linear manner, having to revisit already-seen areas to access the rest and, thus, entering another passage and another curatorial construction. Mieke Bal described the exhibition as "a meta-exhibition – an exhibition exploring the nature of exhibiting" (2007: 72), while Ernst van Alphen clarified Hendeles's unique spatio-narrative technique quite insightfully:

> All of Hendeles's exhibitions deploy narrative principles in particularly efficacious ways. Those narrative principles are so productive precisely because they are not pre-established – that is, they do not project a coherent meaning (a fixed, conventional plot) from the outside on the combination of selected objects. The narrative of Hendeles's exhibitions manifests itself as a process that takes place during the visit to the exhibition. Through the visitor's walking tour, going from one work to another, the narrative comes about. It is the walking tour that becomes the narrative. (Alphen 166)

This personal narrative is bound to the memory recollections triggered by each viewer's encounter with the exhibited items. In this way, it advances a time-intensive viewing to the durational dispositive of the time stored, condensed, or extended not only in the works but also, and most significantly, in the display arrangements and curatorial choices. The Hendeles example highlights the subjective character of displaying as a constitutive feature of contemporary curatorial practices that aim to facilitate the individual experience of the exhibition-goer. However, we should not see this

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experience as service provision in times of neoliberal governmentality (Foucault 1991) – as a crude and unsophisticated understanding of the notion of experience implies (Serota 1997). Instead, it relates to the emergence of subjects and ideas through the exhibition structure. Exhibitions like the one curated by Hendeles expose the classical cinematic apparatus and uncover the hypnotic, illusionist cinema effects by *internalizing* the apparatus. They *make* the beholder the apparatus. Not an apparatus in the sense that suture theorists understand cinema, but as a Foucauldian dispositive that subjugates viewers while also offering comprehension of themselves. Jean-Luc Godard's insight concerning this is revealing:

> When the spectator looks, the camera is inverted – he has a kind of camera in his head: a projector projecting. And furthermore, when Lumière invented the cinema […] when he invented the [movie] camera, at the same time, the viewer served as the projector; the same apparatus served both of them. (Godard 145)

Godard provides an excellent description of the visual dispositive, the psychological automaton (not the automated *psyché*, as suture theorists might argue) we find at work in both modernist film and contemporary installation practices. This automaton understood both in its materiality and its informational structure (informational as in computer science understood as processed, stored, or transmitted data), may account for the Deleuzian cinematic consciousness. This automaton responds to the properties of each exhibitionary dispositive, which entails architectural settings (display structures, lighting, pedestals, frames, gallery furniture, seating, and overall exhibition design), pedagogical devices (labels, explanatory videos, guided tours, etc.), exhibition rituals (e.g., prohibition on touching objects and images enforced by warders), as well as various visual documents (e.g., plans and exhibition designs, spatial layouts, installation photographs and publicity shots of visitors). Meaning is made possible through specific material practices.

This accounts for a materialist-performative understanding of the dispositive. The emancipating properties of contemporary display practices (deployed deliberately as content-makers in installation art) derive from their potential to function as a dispositive proper, not as a metaphor of time but as a temporal object, which is fully embodied, individualized and spectator specific. It is precisely this property that both crystalline film and contemporary installation share, which enables them to act against what Deleuze calls image *clichés*, meaning both the snapshot, the set phrase, and the stereotyped thought. His critique of *clichés* goes hand in hand with his philosophical program of establishing an emancipated subject:

> They are these floating images, these anonymous clichés, which circulate in the external world, but which also penetrate each one of us and constitute his internal world so that everyone possesses only psychic clichés by which he thinks and feels, is thought and is felt, being himself a cliché among the others in the world which surrounds him.[...] Under this power of the false, all images become clichés, sometimes because their clumsiness is shown, sometimes because their apparent perfection is attacked. (Deleuze 1986: 208-9, 214)

The main objective of Deleuze's 'cinematology' is to establish a novel consciousness of selfhood, notably, a de-personalized, residual, and truly temporal subjectivity (Deleuze 1990: 256). This endeavor poses an aesthetic but also and primarily an ethical problem. Despite suture theorists' Platonic understanding of the cinematic apparatus as a simulation machine that perpetuates Cartesian dichotomies between thinking and the world, Deleuze's meta-cinematic dispositive adopts the notion of a phenomenal and empirical subject that remains structurally incomplete as it is always within the temporal flux.

> The form in which undetermined existence is determined by the I think is the form of time [...] my undetermined existence can only be determined in time, as the existence of a phenomenon, a phenomenal subject, passive or receptive, appearing in time. So the spontaneity of which I am conscious in the I think cannot be understood as the attribute of a substantial and spontaneous being, but only as the condition of a passive ego feeling that its own thought, its own intelligence, by which it says I, takes place in it and on it, not by it. This is the beginning of a long, inexhaustible history: I is an other, the paradox of inner sense. (Deleuze 1995: 86)

The problem, which Deleuze repeatedly addresses throughout his oeuvre, aims to give an account of the diversity of spatio-temporality that characterizes his prospective philosophy of immanence after the modern demise of theo-metaphysics. For time to be thinkable and livable for us, it is not enough that it is pre-given, cohesive, linear, and representable, i.e., *present in person*, reaching us from non-empirical *a priori* concepts outside the material world. Instead, we should reinstate time in the realm of flux or, vice versa, temporize the intelligible subject following the paradigm of the time-image.

Deleuze embraces the cinematic image, notably crystal-images, as his key philosophical concept in understanding identity through inverting the traditional metaphysical relationship between identity and difference. According to Deleuze, the classical image of thought is Eisenstein's dialectical automaton, which Rodowick calls "a

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Hegelian cinema of the sublime" (183f). In such a Hegelian cinema, image, concept, and affect enforce the dialectical sublation of differences "through principles of continuity and resemblance, contrast and association," which ultimately establishes a constant and firm identity. The latter inevitably raises questions of origin and end, limits and border, inside and outside. In contrast, for Deleuze, identities are produced only through differentiation processes; that is, all identities are effects of difference, of multiplicities of meaning. In doing so, "internal difference" receives an ontological privilege over identity (Deleuze 2004: 32).

This relates to film since an important narrative principle in the film is repetition; specifically, repetition with changes or shifts, the principle of one thing as a result of another, suggests a development over time. This issue is taken up again in Deleuze's cinema books through the notion of the 'interval,' i.e., the invisible gap between two subsequent images [*l'entre-deux*]. The interval brings differentiation within contemporaneity, allowing a narrative to unfold by creating a causal relationship between a before and an after. We read time in the intervals between static images since we are compelled to fill the gaps and make meaning out of the succession of fast-moving images we perceive(see Petersen 2015: 230).

It is a concept expressing a purely immanent (i.e., contained within) dimension of time, "time livable of itself" (Marrati 2008: 85). In Deleuze's long-standing preoccupation with the "plane of immanence" and the "image of thought," such a temporality based on pure difference is understood as a "becoming other or virtual." This principle also applies to the notion of the subject, for the meta-cinematic dispositive of contemporary installation embodies the materiality or mediality (what Stiegler calls "tertiary memory") of such a differential and, effectively, virtual notion of subjectivity. The time-image communicates "only time, the impersonal form of time that divides the ego from the I and disjoins all forms of identity, in the subject, or the image, as a force of becoming" (Rodowick 1997: 188). Installation exemplifies the establishment of a late modern decentered subjectivity while going against the modernist conception of an autonomous, centered, and universal subject (Bishop 2005: 130-31; Petersen 2015: 413-14). The subject model reflected in installation art parallels the Foucauldian dispositive's understanding of the self as a performative and intersubjective entity inscribed in a specific knowledge/power network.

From a poststructuralist perspective, identity is constantly recreated as an effect of the situations in which a person is involved. We introduced the notion of the "situative experiential formation" to clarify how installation structures the viewer's experience and self-understanding based on his bodily presence inside a constructed situation (Bahtsetzis 2006). Seen from the perspective of Deleuze's deconstruction of the theory of the cinematic apparatus, installation constitutes a meta-cinematic dispositive that exceeds the boundaries of the apparatus itself, as well as the

epistemological conclusions and conceptual difficulties of the modernist subject that relies on it. Precisely to the degree that we, along with Deleuze, recognize the decisive agent of this development – what Stiegler calls the *cinematographic* (2011: 26) – as the main characteristic of contemporary aesthetics, installation art advances to a paradigmatic non-semantic (meta-iconic, meta-discursive and post-representational) dispositive of ontological inquiries, that is, an emblematic crystalline dispositive for imagining and imaging the world. If the artist's role is to imagine what it would mean to create a radically new image, such an endeavor might also account for a process of imagining a fundamentally new self for the viewer.

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AUTHOR

Sotirios Bahtsetzis Associate Professor, Department of Culture and Creative Media and Industries, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Thessaly, Greece.