PUBLIC FANTASY

JUDITH BARRY

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*an anthology of critical essays,
fictions and project descriptions by
Judith Barry*

EDITED BY IWONA BLAZWICK

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cover:
In the Shadow of the City... Vamp R Y,
1982 -85, Slide, Film Installation

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Foreword

This anthology of critical essays and fictions by Judith Barry is in a sense a textual catalogue in that her writings constitute an integral, not illustrative part of her work as an artist. Just as her videos, installations, exhibition designs or public works can combine the aesthetic and symbolic manifestations of cinema, architecture, sculpture and computer technology; her texts are similarly heterogeneous. Challenging the canonical boundaries of discourse, Barry sets up a debate between disciplines, between film theory and architectural analysis, philosophy and cultural studies, art history and psychoanalysis, software and semiotics. In this plurality she can be described as a postmodernist. Her subject however, is not the impotent, placeless and homogenised spectator lamented by the post modern critic, but the interpretive, multi-cultural participant. Barry does more than merely describe a post industrial landscape; she walks across it constantly questioning how its forces might be, not reversed, but co-opted, not ignored, but given over to the empowerment of those it seeks to make invisible.

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Most importantly our thanks to Judith Barry for her immense energy, enthusiasm and commitment.

IWONA BLAZWICK

Spectacle and Subjectivity: the work of Judith Barry

JOHANNA DRUCKER

In the summer of 1991, commuters waiting on the platform of London's Hammersmith Underground Station found themselves being addressed from the windows of a kiosk by large disembodied heads. These video portraits narrate stories of dispossession and cultural exclusion. They are manifestations of a larger project, developed over ten years through texts, videos, installations and exhibition designs by artist Judith Barry.

Voyeurism, spectacle, the power of display and the seductive apparatus of projection have been central to her work. Through a range of formal strategies that co-opt critical analysis, architectural form and cinematic spectacle she has explored a range of interconnecting themes: desire as a cultural product; the circulation of signs in the transformed landscape of urban redevelopment; the formation of the subject in the spatial and social apparatus of viewing. Recent projects display the current focus of her work: the inscription of history in the spaces of the city.

Barry belongs to the generation of artists who define their practice in relation to cultural theory as much as through aesthetic issues. She shares with contemporaries such as Krzysztof Wodiczko, Hans Haacke or Jenny Holzer, a strongly focused concern with the institutionalisation of power and the strategies by which cultural hegemony is reproduced and naturalised in the contemporary landscape. Building on a legacy directly traceable to the work of the Situationist International and the British Independent Group, Barry addresses the specific intersection of contemporary architecture and urban planning with theoretical questions formulated in the semiotic and psychoanalytically informed texts of contemporary criticism.

However unlike other artists for whom Baudrillard or Guy Debord provide a

platform from which to embrace the notion of the simulacrum, Barry's critical project insists on the existence of the *real* as a necessary point of reference within the so-called 'society of the spectacle'. From Barry's perspective (and the same might be said of Wodiczko, Haacke etc.) Baudrillard's notion of the simulacrum has a dangerous potential as an instrument in the rationalizing language of corporate entrepreneurial rhetoric. Much of her recent work focuses on an urban landscape transformed in the 1980s by developers and architects who cavalierly disregarded the actuality of lived experience in the spaces they created. The disorientation and displacement of the individual effected by mirrored surfaces, gaudy facades and guarded atriums parallels the evacuation of the individual subject's real body from Baudrillard's simulacrum. As Barry states, 'Baudrillard is the perfect philosopher for developers, because he dissolves the body.'

Barry's work also continues a tradition of modernism which took the city as the primary site both of modern life and of the possibility for radical intervention on the part of the artist activist. Her training in architecture and design combined with critical theory early on in her artistic practice. It was Walter Benjamin's analysis of architectural form that defined it as a site where the cultural dynamics essential for consumption were produced; further, it articulated the perversities of the engagement of a mass imaginary with commodity culture. Not surprisingly, traces of his arcades' project of the 1930s, a paradigmatic analysis of space as cultural formation, show up in Barry's 1980-81 video, *Casual Shopper*, which investigates the sleights of display used to excite desire in a West Coast shopping mall. Conflating the domains of public consumption and private seduction Barry's video traces the movements of a couple, both models, through the continually displaced focus of each other's gaze in the synthetic spaces of the mall. The space of shopping becomes the space of their unappeasable desire.

Echoing the analytic techniques of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown's *Learning from Las Vegas* Barry carried out a study for a real intervention in a shopping mall in Palo Alta, California, where she suggested subtle reorderings of all the signage and window displays. Though unrealised, this project gave her intimate familiarity with the elements which circulate as signs within that designed environment and their engagement with the dynamics of desire.

Barry's interest in issues informing current architectural practice and the design of contemporary space coincided with an art world interrogation of the production of subjectivity as an essential component of art activity. By the time of her 1985 piece, *In the Shadow of the City Vamp r y*, she began to investigate certain

themes also evident in the work of artists such as Dan Graham, Jeff Wall and Barbara Kruger. They shared a concern with spatial positioning, wishing to examine the interactive conditions of spectatorship within social systems of signification as deployed through architectural means and through the 'apparatus' of representation.

In the Shadow of the City Vamp r y, Barry uses a two sided screen on which she projects images of a suburban parking lot and a Manhattan apartment building. Both night-time shots, these images have window into which short film sequences, glimpses of figues enacting fragmented narratives, are projected. These static and moving images are hypnotic, irresistable yet alienating. Condensing the site of viewing with the urban planner's schematic presentation of the spectacle, this representation of voyeurism becomes its enactment. In opposition to the Baudrillardian schizophrenic subject, ruptured and split across the endlessly refracting surface of the simulacrum, Barry proposes a vampiristic subject, driven to a ceaselessly consuming spectatorship.

The implication of the viewer into the complex set of relations put in motion by the piece, makes it impossible to occupy any stable, fixed or resolved position in relation to the image. This destabilisation of the subject has been a conspicuous device in the work of a generation of women artists, strategic in a feminist subversion of the conventions of representation. Barbara Kruger, Cindy Sherman and Jenny Holzer, to name three definitive practitioners, have systematically attacked the fictive authority of both artist and viewer through the use of images and linguistic means which call attention to the production of subjectivity.

Barry also shares concerns with artist Victor Burgin, whose interest in the cinematic codes of voyeurism, and almost fetishistic engagement with the obsessional terms of Hitchcockian fantasy, are equally self-conscious in their manipulation of visual devices. Both Barry and Burgin are relentless in their reworking of the scopic drive and a rechannelling of the unconscious engagement with visual pleasure into an unstable and disorienting confrontation with its production.

Model for Stage and Screen, shown at the Venice Biennale in 1988, comprises an antechamber leading to a chamber filled with fog and bathed in green light. Moving between these areas the spectator 'hallucinates', projecting an uncontrollable retinal after-image. Unlike Burgin, for whom sexual fantasy is a central subject matter, and for whom the image is the means of deploying the fantasmatic device, Barry returns continually to the domain of the social, usually urban environment.

First shown as part of the Projects series at MOMA, the 1986 piece Echo

investigated the trajectory of the architectural inventions of early modernism and the implicit social liberation they promised. Beginning with images of a Johnsonesque atrium in Manhattan, whose glass and steel frames trace their lineage to that architectural icon, the Crystal Palace of 1851, and again using video projections and screens, Barry explored the subject relations produced in the mirroring activity of glass architecture. An archetypal businessman trapped within a Miesian glass house stares out through its gridded wall in hopeless frustration, a loop of Narcissistic relations tying him to the echo of a corporate world. Architecture serves here not as metaphor or symbol of techno-corporate space, but as the means by which power relations are established. The crux of Barry's premise becomes clear here: that the structural features of contemporary architecture function as the structuring apparatus of a particular form of subjectivity. Barry eschews the old fashioned rhetoric of alienation as well as the slick gloss of postmodern simulation both of which produce passivity; one through a freezing of the will in the face of futility; the other through a belief that there are no successful strategies of intervention. By contrast, her work continues to argue passionately for attention, criticism and action within the social sphere.

More recent works, such as *First and Third*, which was part of the Whitney Biennial in 1987, made explicit the investigation of cultural hegemonic practices, which works like *Echo* addressed more generally. Rather than deal with types (the businessman, the shopper), *First and Third*, used specific narratives of individuals whose oral histories (albeit edited and re-presented by actors) bespeak the experience of immigration and race relations in the United States. With the projection apparatus concealed in a trompe l'oeil design, these talking heads in the darkened entry to the stairwell at the Whitney inserted their presence into that institutional framework with pointed effectiveness. In the manner of Krzysztof Wodiczko's projections on facades, which similarly make use of juxtapositions of institutions, images and, to use Roland Barthes' term, the third meaning produced in the interaction, these heads appeared as if from nowhere, their technical method of production as effaced in the corridors of the Museum, as their histories are systematically excluded from mainstream narratives of contemporary America.

First and Third, embodies a subtle, but implicit critique of the very institution which exhibits the work. Barry has engineered similar subversions of artworld structures and policies through her exhibition designs. Often made in collaboration with architect Ken Saylor, she has designed exhibitions at the New Museum of Contemporary Art and Clocktower in New York and the ICA in Boston. Her

approach to the design and installation of shows such as *Damaged Goods*, 1986 or *Impressario: Malcolm McLaren and the British New Wave*, 1988 at the New Museum has its roots in the early work and exhibition strategies of Independent Group members Richard Hamilton, Eduardo Paolozzi and the Smithson's; and the Archigram group. By creating dynamic and unexpected juxtapositions of objects and images, and constructing interactive environments Barry demonstrates her debt to the IG's cross-bred formulations between art, pop culture, architecture and technology. Her grounding in their strategies is a practical one; for one of the Clocktower's exhibitions on art and pop in 1987, she made a full scale restoration of the IG's ground breaking *This is Tomorrow* installation.

At its most expansive and ambitious, Barry's work takes on the ethics of urban planning and redevelopment in historical terms. *Adam's Wish*, installed at the World Financial Centre in 1988, and in Hartford at Real Art Ways in 1989, investigated what Barry terms the 'disappearance of iconography from contemporary architecture'; that is the associative images and stories which traditionally accrue to built forms, features which ground the individual subject in some experience of identification through which meaning is produced. Meaning could be generated through proportion and a sense of human scale; through the relation of elements within a space to points of view and alignment along sightlines from perspectival centres. It could be evoked by actual elements of decoration and statuary providing fragments to be recognised, assimilated, enjoyed. Both the pleasure of imagination and the pleasure of the body were available in such a system, generally associated with classical architecture.

By emphasizing both the historicity of form and the location of subject experience within the body of the viewer, Barry asserts the necessity to consider *place* as the site of an interaction between history, property, community and subjective experience. *Adam's Wish* comprised an 'electronic fresco', an image projected upwards onto an oval screen which was hung beneath the dome of a corporation's headquarters. Engaging the observer's upward craning gaze is a fast edit journey of a man through space. The space is variously that of the city, the corporation, the body and the church - this everyman, or Adam (our generic, original, man/human) is himself transformed as he moves from the vaguely threatening plazas of New York's City Hall to re-emerge in Michaelangelo's Sistine Chapel. Announced by bolts of lightning - a sign of nature and a reference to the moment when the spark of life is passed by God to Adam - this brief sequence allows Barry to link the cycle of Adam's relation to actual space to a history of architectural iconography. Her contention is

that the loss of such imagery coincides with a loss of a '...sense of shared community, public vision and responsibility'.

The high tech production apparatus of Barry's work implements its sharply focused concerns with illusion and voyeurism, the seductive pleasures of looking as they are complicit with the effaced means of social control and manipulation. The loss of history which in turn subverts the real is *produced*, not incidental, and Barry's insistence on the reassertion of historical form as an essential element of subjective experience in contemporary life signals her intervention in the safe and stylish markets of both architectural design and contemporary art. Undermining the rhetoric of postmodern glibspeak celebrating the simulacrum, the work of Judith Barry continually questions its premises in her artistic practice, calling attention to the apparatuses of production of the social realm rather than celebrating the success of signs taken at the face value of their appearances.

Sections of this text have also been published in Artscribe International, Issue No 86, 1991

The Memory Theatre of Giulio Camillo based on l'Idea del Theatro
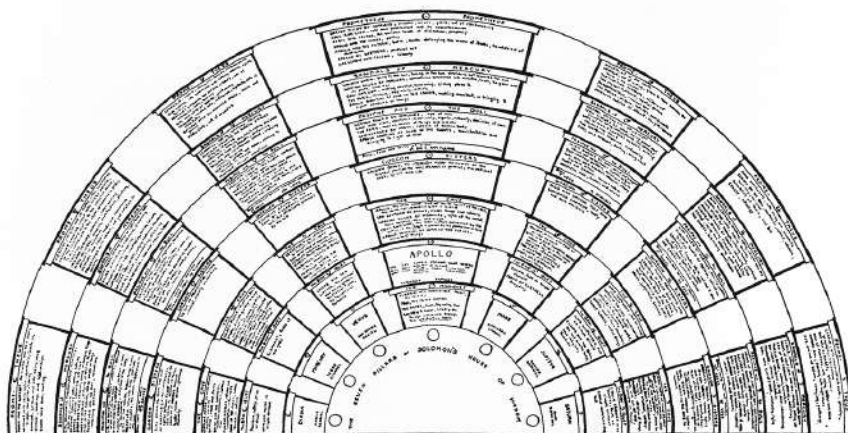
Casual Imagination

In literature, indeed, even the great criminal and the humourist compel our interest by the narcissistic self-importance with which they manage to keep at arm's length everything which would diminish the importance of their ego. It is as if we envied them their power of retaining a blissful state of mind – an unassailable libido-position which we ourselves have abandoned.

The great charm of the narcissistic woman has, however, its reverse side; a large part of the dissatisfaction of the lover, of his doubts of the woman's love, of his complaints of her enigmatic nature, have their root in this incongruity between the types of object-choice.[1]

The activity of shopping directly engages the shopper in the generation of a complex narrative all her own. In a sense she is the protagonist of the detective story, following her own desire as she moves through the store, but not to the scene of the crime. Access to her desire is so difficult, so mysterious.... Hence the difficulty for each of us in finding out what really interests us.

If woman is enigmatic, it is because she has reasons - good ones - for hiding herself, for hiding the fact that she has nothing to hide...[2]

1. Sigmund Freud, 'On Narcissism: An Introduction' 1914. *Standard Edition*, vol. 14, trans. James Strachey, London: Hogarth Press, 1953, p. 89.

2. Sarah Kofman, 'The Narcissistic Woman: Freud and Girard,' *Diacritics*, 10, no. 3, Fall 1980 p 36.

Shopping is marked by a series of exchanges, of looks and projections, in an environment that is deliberately mazelike, composed of inhabitable space that is only corridors. Pedestrian space as such for resting, occupying in groups, and sitting down does not exist. All of this space is filled with items to purchase, and with the application of Bauhausian principles to store design, the architecture itself has been completely effaced.

In one sense the architectural plan could be said to describe the nature of human relations since it marks the elements it recognizes - the walls, doors, windows, and stairs, which both divide and selectively re-unite inhabited space.[3]

By the end of the fifteenth century, the madonna and child had become earth-bound. These figures are more than the subject of the picture - they *are* the picture, they fill it completely. A look at the floor plans for villas of the period reveals a tendency toward the same corporeality. It is difficult to tell which parts of the building are enclosed and which are open; the relationship between all the spaces is similar throughout. The chambers, gardens, loggias, and courts all register as walled shapes - they add up to fill the site. Doors and stairs are used only to connect adjacent rooms. This plan shows that there was no qualitative distinction between the way through the house and the inhabited space within it. In these villas, household members had to pass through room after room to conduct their business, with the effect that every activity was liable to be interrupted unless definite measures were taken. Similarly, as we know from the writings of Castiglione, Erasmus, and Cellini,[4] social contact in the villa was normal and privacy/solitude the exception. Rarely is architecture mentioned specifically in the writings of this period and there is a predominance of figure over ground. These figures occupy the room, but there is no indication of what these rooms were actually like.

Department stores are transparent so that nothing interferes with the shopper's vision. While space planning has remained quite rigid over the last forty years,

3. There are severe methodological problems in treating architecture and human relations as part of the same textual system, in addition to the collapsing of class and ideology into the assumed transparency of architecture, but since I set out to describe *how* the commercial space, specifically the department store, is mediated by the television commercial, I had to propose a relation. In this sense this article might be considered a textual reading of the spaces buildings occupy and the social relations within them. I found Robin Evans, 'Figures, Doors and Passages', *Architectural Design* 48, no. 4, 1978: 267-Y78, extremely useful in formulating some of these relations.

4. See Castiglione, *The Courier*; Cellini, *Autobiography*; Erasmus, *Epistolai*.

display techniques have continued to improve, particularly in relation to the variety, wattage, and mood of the lighting utilized. In addition, total environments are often built entirely of transparent materials, creating a phantasm (phantom) of set design.

Consider the difference in the utilitarian design of the supermarket versus the department store. The supermarket has high shelves and straight aisles allowing for the maximum amount of goods to be presented in a minimum amount of space.

> *The man with the proper imagination is able to conceive of any commodity in such a way that it becomes an object of emotion to him and to those whom he imparts his picture, and hence creates desire rather than a mere feeling of ought.*[5]

Can we say that buildings accommodate what pictures represent - the social relations of a particular period in history? Can we generalize about these relationships by examining the plans, photographs and paintings of an epoch for characteristics which might allow for or provide insight into the ways in which people occupy space?[6]

After about 1650, a radical reorganization took place in home design. Entrance halls and back stairs combined to create a network linking the rooms of the entire house. Every room had a door or a passageway into the hall. At first, the corridor was installed parallel to the connecting room, but gradually it replaced the adjoining door completely. This parallel division functioned to give the family direct access to one another and also served to keep the servants in the adjacent area: an area that was not thought of as a place, but as an activity - a corridor, a passageway. This innovation mirrored the increasing desire for privacy and a simultaneous strain on the relations between the classes. The compartmentalized building was organized as a thoroughfare, because movement was the only thing that could give it coherence.

> *Private life, thrust into the background in the Middle Ages, invades iconography, particularly in Western painting and engraving in the sixteenth and above all the seventeenth century.*[7]

5. Walter Dill Scott, *Influencing Men in Business*, New York: The Ronald Press, Co., 1911; enlarged ed., 1928, p. 131.

6. Evans, op. cit., p. 274.

7. Philippe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick, New

The corridor had another effect: as a thoroughfare it was able to draw rooms at a distance closer, but only by disengaging those close at hand. The corridor facilitated communication, particularly speed, but diminished contact. Privacy and uninterrupted solitude could not be secured.

The family, which had existed in silence but 'did not awaken feelings strong enough to inspire the poet or artist', became a concept. This powerful concept was formed around the conjugal family, as opposed to the 'line' – that of parents and children, and the specific relation between them that the concept of childhood refined.[8]

As the events of the seventeenth century were displaced onto the nineteenth, the body was conceptualized differently. It lost its carnality and was seen as spiritual otherness - just as the telling of sexual thoughts, desires, and transgressions became part of confessional discourse. Consider the famous Pre-Raphaelite painting by William Morris, in which his wife Jane is the subject of his representation of Guinevere. There the body becomes the site of an invisible occupant. The objects surrounding her and the space they mark are stand-ins for her spiritual presence.[9]

The old code of manners was an art of living in public together. The new code emphasized the need to respect the privacy of others.[10]

The matrix of connected rooms was appropriate to a society that valued carnality, recognized the body as the person, and experienced gregariousness as habitual. The corridor plan, which completely replaced the Renaissance villa plan, signified the drastic separation of those three functions. What was previously united under one roof was now institutionalized as consumption, production, and distribution in distinct parts of the city. The corridor plan was also appropriate to a society that found carnality distasteful, that separated the body, dividing it into a multitude of discourses, and that regarded privacy as habitual.

York: Vintage Books, 1962, p. 347.

8. Ibid., pp. 839-364.

9. Evans, op. cit., p. 274.

10. Louis Sebastian Mercier, *Les Tableaux de Paris*, Paris: Gustave Desnoiteres, 1853, p. 19.

The design in the mind of the architect belongs to an order of eternal truth which the actual building expresses in material stuff.[11]

Prior to the sixteenth century, no buildings existed that contained a stage and an auditorium with spectator seating. In his Gran Teatro delle Scienze, Giulio Camillo (ca. 1475-1544) hoped to construct a model theatre that reversed the relationship of spectator to audience. Originally, Camillo had thought to use the metaphor of the human body as a microcosm of the universe in order to illustrate his memory system, but later he chose instead the ancient metaphor of the world as a great theatre.[12]

May we not regard every living being as a puppet of the gods, which may be their plaything only, or may be created with a purpose. [13]

Camillo was attempting to combine the form of the encyclopaedia with the Ciceronian mnemonic method of visual 'loci' for the retention of knowledge or orators. The art of memory was associated with images. Pictures were believed to signify an ultimate reality which words could not represent. In one hour, by occupying the centre of the stage, the scholar could master the universe which the theatre reconstructed through a Vitruvian ordering of the planets in conjunction with elements from Christianity, Neoplatonism, Hermetics, and the Kabala. Along with the memory theatre came the conviction that man could grasp and hold the greater world - of which he, man, is the image - through the power of his imagination. Imagination became man's highest power and he could obtain the world beyond appearances by holding onto significant images.

Before the invention of printing, oral memory became codified into rules. According to Cicero, the invention of the art of memory rested on Simonides' discovery of the superiority of the sense of sight over the other senses. 'Simonides', says Plutarch, 'called painting silent poetry and poetry painting that speaks.' Poetry, painting, and mnemonics were seen as intense visualization. By the Middle Ages the

11. Frances A. Yates, *Theatre of the World*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969, p. 191.

12. Ernst Curtius, *European Literature ard the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953, pp. 138-144.

13. Plato, *The Laws of Plato*, trans. Thomas L. Pengle, New York: Basic Books, 1980, Section 1, line 644d, pp. 24-25.

art of memory had been dropped from rhetoric and degraded as a memory aid for a weak man who had to use corporeal similitudes to retain his spiritualness.[14]

> All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women, merely players. [15]

In the late sixteenth century, Andrea Palladio designed the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza, based on a reconstruction of a Vitruvian theatre. Its proscenium represents the stylized facade of a two-story palace and, as in the traditional Roman theatre, it has five doorways, three in the back and one on each side. What is most unusual about the theatre is its use of stage design in perspective (the contribution of Vincenzo Scamozzi, who completed the theatre after Palladio's death) to give the illusion that the five doorways on the twenty-foot stage empty into the street. It might be interesting to consider the relationship of the use of perspective and its representation in the theatre to the development of the Enlightenment city.

The first boulevard was designed by Sebastiano Serlio in 1507 for an Ariosto play; the illusion of the boulevard existed before the boulevard. Many of the ways in which perspective might be utilized were formulated by men who today we would call military strategists (although at the time there was no such profession - hence the term 'renaissance man'). Theatre for the 'renaissance' mind represented imagination in space, not fiction. Early plays were often historical tableaux performed in the palace.

Serlio's five books of *Architettura* did more to turn the theatre in the direction of the frenetic expansion of Vitruvius' remarks about changing scenes. With Serlio's illustration of the comic, tragic, and satiric, the art of theatre was identified with the art of changing perspectives. The audience looked at a 'picture theatre,' a window, where the 'renaissance' developments in optics and mechanics as well as perspective could be displayed.[16]

14. See Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966. pp. 129-159, and Douglas Radcliff-Umstead, 'Giulio Camillo's Emblems of Memory,' *Yale French Studies*, no. 47, 1972: p. 47-56.

15. William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. Richard Knowles, New York: Modern Language Association, 1977, Act 2, Scene 7, lines 147-148.

16. For a discussion of perspective and optics in relation to the construction of the theatre, see Yates, *Theatre of the World*, pp. 112-135.

In one sense, perspective could be seen as taking over the function of the occult memory art, displacing perception and emotion onto a kind of mechanics. Perhaps this can best be expressed by comparing the medieval street, meandering and crooked, with a limited vista and haphazardly erected buildings which had grown up organically along the arteries of the town, with the boulevard based on perspective, imposing order from a fixed plan, demonstrating the illusion of harmony, and having a view as though there could be a window on the world.

Perspective had become a methodology, among other things, a way of methodologizing the imagination.

Walter Benjamin quotes Georg Simmel: 'Interpersonal relationships in big cities are distinguished by the marked preponderance of the activity of the eye over the activity of the ear. The main reason for this is the public means of transportation. Before the development of buses, railroads, and trams in the nineteenth century, people had never been in a position of having to look at one another for long minutes or even hours without speaking to one another.'[17] For Benjamin, this situation is not a pleasant one.

Before the institution of the arcades in Paris in the mid-nineteenth century, pedestrians were literally pushed out of the way on the boulevards by the fast-moving carriages of the royal and the wealthy. Although the arcades represented the increasing commercialization of public space, they also responded to a need, providing a thoroughfare and a vista for the pedestrian. The arcades, at least, provided a shop window on the world. The harnessing of private-sector values to create a passageway that was public (but which in fact was private) helped to generate a new subject - the *flâneur*. He felt more at home strolling in the interiorized miniature city than within his own four walls. The arcades, like the boulevards, also shared a militaristic function, for while they were not too wide to effectively blockade, they could be shut against the 'rabble'. However, unlike the boulevards, they did not allow for a mingling among classes; rather, they encouraged a new form of spectatorship to become normal. Not only was there a predominance of the eye over the ear, but the lack of allowable contact and the separation between the classes made this voyeurism the only form of communication that was acceptable. The world of experience was becoming the imagination.

The *feuilleton* section of the newspapers created a market for another kind of

17. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, trans. Harry Zohn, London: New Left Books, 1973, p. 38.

speculation: anthologies of literature designed to be sold in the streets. First came the portraits, or 'physiologies,' then came the *feuilleton* section itself with its short, gossipy witticisms, large ads and serialized novels. The *feuilleton* linked together the phantasmagoria of Parisian life. It set a standard of value by providing relief from the tedium of an increasingly fragmented yet mundane existence. In the newspaper, scattered, illogical events from day to day, had no underlying connection except contemporaneity.

Here the [masses that crowded through the arcades] appear as the asylum that shields an asocial person from his persecutors. [18]

If the *flâneur* is an unwitting detective it accredits his idleness. In Alexander Dumas' serialized novel *Mohicans de Paris*, the hero searches for adventure by following a scrap of paper which he gives to the wind to play with. But, no matter which trail he follows, each leads him to a crime. The increasing need to narrativize daily life, to imbue its fragmentation with meaning while simultaneously laying the foundation for what would lead to information theory and surveillance technology, is reflected in Benjamin's remark that it was the detective story that was most emblematic of the fabric of Parisian life in the nineteenth century. Yet it was not only the detective story, but the *flâneur* and other participants who contributed to this narrative of city life. In his quest for the fantastic, this idler was fascinated by social situations within which he could imagine himself. Imagination was reaching beyond the world of appearances to a private, self-contained world where the subject was supreme. This was imagination free from images, unbound by conventional memory practices. The printed page made memory unnecessary and provided an audience, a shared practice where this constant desire, the telling and retelling- even if it couldn't be expressed by touching or conversation - found other means of expression, as a history, a poem, a private discourse, or a secret.[19]

Life before the seventeenth century was lived in public, either in the streets (outside of the small, one-room dwellings that housed all but the wealthy), or in the 'big' house that fulfilled a public function. This was the only place where friends,

18. Ibid., p. 38.

19. See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1: *An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley, New York: Pantheon Books, 1978, and *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith, New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.

clients, relatives, servants, protégés and workers (the same people who would have spent their early years in the one-room dwelling) could meet and talk. These visits were not simply either professional or social: there was little distinction between the categories.

> *The traditional ceremonies which accompanied marriage ... afford further proof of society's rights over the privacy of the couple.... Privacy scarcely ever existed when people lived on top of one another, masters and servants, children and adults, in houses open at all hours to the indiscretion of callers.*[20]

In discussing newspaper ads in the mid-nineteenth century, Benjamin complained that the ad took up more space and was better designed than the copy around it, so that even when the product was criticized in an editorial, the effect was negligible. Advertisements, shorter news items, serial novels, and a decrease in subscription rates began to alter the way in which newspapers were consumed. Suddenly, to be out of date was to be out of fashion - a sin. The news items caught on because they could be employed commercially. *Reclamé's*, independent notices masquerading as news items, referred to products that were advertised in the paper. Although they were denounced as irresponsible and deceptive, their use underscored the increasing connection between advertisements and paper sales. These short news items and different typefaces allowed the papers to have a different look every day, predisposing their daily purchase and making them appropriate complements to the newly defined cocktail hour - the ultimate in non-serious gossip that had become institutionalized in the cafés.

Deception had come under criticism in other public forms, particularly in the diorama where it was charged that Daguerre's sorcery 'carried the viewer away to Switzerland, the land of yearning, and the effort was so perfect that a sentimental Englishwoman believed she had reached the valley of Chamonix, the destination of her consolatory escape from the metropolis - or at least she owned to being truly enchanted.'[21] This observation is typical of spectator responses to the diorama in that it explicitly links the power of the imagination and the impression of reality with sorcery and witchcraft. By 1889, when Anton von Werner's memoirs were published, the issue of deception as ethics was directly addressed. Werner compiled a mass of

20. Aries, op. cit., p. 405.
21. Dolf Sternberger, *Panorama of the Nineteenth Century*, New York: Urizen Books, 1977, p. 11.

testimony by domestic and foreign colleagues, all of them confirming that the art of deception was 'done for its own sake, and not - to deceive.'[22]

Just as the changing face of the paper predisposed the pedestrian stroller to purchase it, so, too, the daily change in advertisements enticed the stroller into the new department stores. Already the stroller in the arcades appreciated the displays in the store windows. As Baudelaire remarked, 'They gave the *flâneur* somewhere to rest his eyes.' (Even as late as Dadaism, Marcel Duchamp noticed the relation of the avant-garde to the practice of the consumer that the product of the avant-garde was to have the same characteristics of planned obsolescence/mass production as the products of mass consumption while simultaneously allowing the producer/artist to register shock at being reduced to a machine.[23]) The spectacle of looking, along with the accumulated skills of set design, painting and lighting were employed to transform the stroller into a shopper and the arcade into a department store. 'The intoxication to which the *flâneur* surrenders is the intoxication of the commodity around which surges the stream of customers.'[24]

By the early 1890s many people who, perplexed by the changes taking place in American life, began to turn to the political and economic writings of Ruskin and Morris, but also of Carlyle, Kropotkin, Tolstoy and others who wanted to turn back the course of industrial development. All of these authors argued that first it was important to create a humane society; only then could satisfactory products be made. Versions of this society varied but in most of them the division of labor was minimal, wealth came directly from the land, and craftsmen, not artists or machines, made the everyday goods. The model of the ideal citizen in this felicitous state was the medieval artisan. He was a member of a society of equals, and he was free to work as he wanted, unencumbered by abstruse ideas about what 'art' was.[25]

Baudelaire saw his existence outside conventional society, as a *bohème*, all the more heroic because it was so *'ordinaire.'* His poem, 'Le vin des chiffoniers,' details

22. Ibid., p. 34

23. Discussed in Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1976.

24. Benjamin, op. cit., p. 55.

25. David Handlin, *The American Home: Architecture and Society, 1815-1915*, Boston: Little Brown Co., 1979, p. 442.

the way in which the poet derives his heroic subject from the refuse of society: it is a chronicle of the ragpicker. 'Here we have a man who has to gather the day's refuse in the capital city. Everything that the big city threw away, everything that is lost ... he catalogues and collects ... he collects like a miser guarding a treasure the refuse which will assume the shape of useful or gratifying objects.'[26] This same mythical projection extends to the consumer who was presented with the possibility of heroism by adopting the images of commercial products. As Charles Perrier said in criticism of Courbet's painting, 'Nobody could deny that a stone-breaker is as worthy a subject in art as a prince or other individual.... But, at least, let your stone-breaker not be an object as insignificant as the stone he is breaking'.[27]

Realism in art became the protest - and yet the paradigmatic expression - of an increasingly bourgeois society. Even though realism attempted to forsake all idealism to depict reality, it still frequently repeated Jean-Jacques Rousseau's ideas about the intuitive grasp of truth that the uncorrupted man, as represented by the peasant, embodied. The bohemian spirit, constructed in opposition to the bourgeois spirit, had an ambivalent relation to and was part of the bourgeoisie: the differences were complementary rather than exclusive. Nowhere is this clearer than in the work of Baudelaire who, 'having failed to create a politics of his own, brought to perfection the attitude of stifling contempt for the world, making the city mere decoration for a private drama.'[28] With the growth of the department stores, which presented vast panoramas for gazing, the *flâneur* was free to pursue his private drama indoors. (Certainly, not being able to buy must have made it all the more enticing.) Not only did this roving spectatorship focus 'pleasure' within proscribed, rigid ways along 'memory paths'[29] - but the bourgeoisie fulfilled the aims of the revolution by providing it in the form of the mass and the anonymous crowd, the perfect correlative to privacy, collectivization and individual fantasy.

In the early nineteenth century, the subject matter of salon painting was considered important as it expressed the cultural values of the ruling class (which

26. Benjamin, op. cit., p. 79.

27. Quoted in Linda Nochlin, *Realism*, Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1971, p. 35.

28. Benjamin, op. cit., p. 14.

29. Term used by Freud to describe the way in which events are inscribed within memory. See especially 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' (1895), where, despite the neurophysiological orientation, Freud attempts to account for the way in which memory trace follows one route in preference to another.

until the first French revolution had been totally based on court life). After the middle of the century (and during the short-lived Second Republic), advertising in stores and newspapers might be seen as taking over much of this function, particularly among the bourgeois and peasant classes. Artists had already begun to construct an aesthetics in opposition to the academic salon style, as can be seen by tracing the acceptance of the work of Manet, Courbet, Daumier and Millet. Subject matter had become increasingly unimportant in conventional terms; gone were the representations of 'noble' subjects in historical settings with all the trappings of wealth.[30]

Not only that, but a different attitude, best expressed by Kant in his *Critique of Judgement*, fostered the popularization of art as an *experience* - taking it away from the educated class, where a certain amount of erudition was required to 'read' the salon paintirigs, and 'making it available to everyone.'[31] The quality of the work of art could only be known by a personal experience of that quality and that experience could only be achieved by placing oneself in the right relationship to the work under consideration - by adopting the right attitude.

It might be argued that advertising effectively assumed the functions of salon painting for the newly emergent bourgeoisie. Salon painting, with its emphasis on legible signs, was already a kind of advertisement for the aristocracy. This 'advertising' was also aided by the widespread acceptance of a Kantian-based aesthetics, since it was this aesthetic that could be incorporated into the practice of advertising and made to place the spectator in the 'right relationship' to the newly discovered commodity. Did advertising facilitate an aesthetics which had come to be based as much on taste as fashion, and which was also bound up with the notion of the 'masses' in Marx's sense as well as Rousseau's natural man?

30. See Nochlin, *Realism*, and Sternberger, *Panorama*, pp. 111-129.

31. Kant continued his investigation of synthetic propositions in the realm of aesthetics: that all judgments of aesthetic criteria are based on subjective states and not on rationally applied criteria, and that these judgments are not only based on personal taste, but can claim universal truth. Clement Greenberg is perhaps the best known critic espousing this formalistic (because it takes into consideration only the intrinsic qualities in the work of art) viewpoint. This view has been attacked in recent years for its failure to be historically specific, for its reduction of all art to a celebration of the senses, rather than allowing for the real network of complex relations situating the work of art within culture to be exposed (T. J. Clark).

It doesn't take much acuteness to recognize that a girl who at eight o'clock may be seen sumptuously dressed in an elegant costume is the same who appears as a shop girl at nine o'clock and a peasant girl at ten.[32]

The bohemian was about to become the 'anti-hero' of the mid-nineteenth century. For with his ability to empathize with both the organic and inorganic as the source of his inspiration, the poet enjoyed the incomparable privilege of being both himself and someone else, as he saw fit, like a roving soul in search of a body - even if that body became an 'old boudoir full of faded roses' or a 'forgotten Sphinx that in some desert stands.'[33]

In the broader context of a burgeoning commercial culture, the foremost political imperative was what to dream.[34]

As Victor Hugo said, 'A street, a conflagration, or a traffic accident assemble people who are not defined along class lines. They present themselves as concrete gatherings, but socially they remain abstract-namely, in their isolated private interests. Their models are the customers who, each in their private interest, gather at the market around their common cause.'[35] Hugo wrote this to explain, in part, the failure of the 'mass' to solidify into a political body. For Benjamin, it was monstrous that private individuals could cluster around their private interests.[36]

. . . it was enough in some areas of Paris to be seen dressed like a worker to risk being executed on the spot.[37]

Yet, increasingly this historical period was marked only by private interests (expressed by all classes in their imaginative fantasies), in the construction of the

32. Benjamin, op. cit., p. 28.

33. Ibid., pp. 55-56.

34. Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of Consumer Culture*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1976, p. 109.

35. Benjamin, op. cit., p. 62.

36. Ibid., p. 68.

37. T. J. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois: Artists and Politics in France, 1848-1851*, Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1973, p. 14.

The department store provided a safe arena for the new work of the bourgeois woman in the home - consuming - by giving her an institution to which she could go unchaperoned. Department stores could not be dens of vice, like the tavern, for what woman of good breeding would risk her reputation? Instead, they were based on the baroque idea of the palace, and the woman was often handed over to the gentleman proprietor, who took the place of her father or husband.

What is most needed for American consumption is training in art and taste in a generous consumption of goods, if such there can be... Advertising, whether for good or ill, is the greatest force at work against the traditional economy of an age-long poverty as well as that of our own pioneer period; it is almost the only force at work against puritanism in consumption. It can infuse art into the things of life; and it will... [46]

Early department stores were constructed around a gallery utilizing an atrium and skylights to maximize the availability of light to the multiple tiers. Palatial in design and elegance, they differed considerably from most department stores today with their self-effacing fixtures and invisible walls. Early department stores presented a simulation of the glamor and glory of the court, now available to everyone. Their ornate balconies, crystal chandeliers, and grand staircases provided both an efficient flow of pedestrian traffic and unlimited visual access: to see and to be seen. Shopping had become the grand activity - the merchant's court.

The essence of the commodity structure is that the relation between people takes on the character of a thing and thus takes on a 'phantom objectivity,' an autonomy that seems strictly rational and all embracing to conceal every trace of its functional nature: the relation between people. [47]

Shopping creates a particular subject within an activity that is complexly coded. Of course, there are psychoanalytical concepts that would be applicable,

45. Edward A. Filene, *Successful Living in the Machine Age*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1931, p. 157. Filene was a department store merchant who became the 'mouthpiece' of American industry.
46. Leverett S. Lyon, 'Advertising,' in *The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, ed. Edward R. A. Seligman, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1930, vol. 1, p. 475.
47. Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1971, p 45.

although it has not been my intention to apply them in so preliminary an article. Shopping functions as both a means to something and as an end in itself. It is located as a reward, as a pleasurable activity encompassing so much that is considered desirable in the culture within which we live. Shopping as an activity is relatively recent. As work became less a matter of accumulated skill and more a question of loyal diligence to task, consumption was depicted as the way in which diligence could be objectified. By smoking a pipe or looking a certain way, people could accumulate the social appearance necessary in a world which placed decreasing value on creative skill. Creative skill came to be located in the act of consuming. 'They must consume to be healthy.'[48]

There is no one who escapes shopping's primarily bourgeois dictum, an activity that bears the trace of yet another bourgeois activity of exchange: 'the baby's cry answered by the breast . . . where the non-specific demand of the baby, the cry', forever gets the same response, the breast - the ultimate pacifier. 'Rather than merely answering the generalized request for love, the mother's response satisfied the need by provoking and reducing the excitation to a particular zone of the body . . . The desire that the 'lost object' causes . . . is at once unconditioned in that virtually any object will suffice, and conditioned in that the object must gratify a particular zone.'[49]

Shopping is an activity that consists of predictable yet indeterminant activities, where, as in the cinema, what we go to see, what we experience over and over again, is our own desire.

A signifier is what represents a subject. For whom? - not for another subject, but for another signifier.[50]

Television commercials are viewed on TV sets in the home. Shopping takes place in a space specifically constructed for that purpose. Just as theatres are constructed to make possible specific spectator relations with the film, stores are constructed to produce specific subject-effects in the consumer. These, of course,

48. Ewen, op. cit., p. 38.

49. John Brenkman, 'The Other and the One: Psychoanalysis - Reading The .Symposium,' *Yale French Studies*, no. 55-56, 1977, p. 418.

50. Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: W. W Norton & Co., 1978, p. 198.

are quite different from the spectator subject-effects produced through the cinematic institution, although there are also a number of parallels. In fact, early shopping malls were often built around movie theatres.[51] However, we cannot make the comparison 'film is to theatre structure' as 'television commercial is to shopping structure.' The shopper in the store is not stationary, but is constantly moving and there is usually not an actual film or TV commercial with which to enter into an identificatory relation. During Macy's promotional week, designers were spotlighted in monitors in front of their respective departments. This practice was discontinued when the department managers noticed that the shoppers who watched the videotape no longer felt the desire to browse in the department where the videotape was playing.

All of this leaves to the side the fact that while the cinema subject is passive and the shopping subject is constituted as active, and both reflect a private subject involved in a private activity, the spectator sits and the film does its work, the shopper moves and the store comes to life.

When the shots of a TV commercial are considered in relation to the store, rarely do they represent diegetically the mall or store complex, so already we are not speaking of a denotative relation, but of several referential and discursive interactions.[52] The department store and the television commercial need the spectator/shopper to 'come to life'. Both exploit the mechanisms of identification often associated with, and in some relationship to, the cinematic institution. And while the specific nature of these relations has yet to be articulated, nonetheless, they too create an effect such that all traces of their respective discourse are erased.[53]

51. David Horn, 'A Moving Picture Theatre and a Shopping Center', Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1930.

52. Much of the recent film theory has tended to collapse these two registers. See Christian Metz, 'Metaphor/Metonomy, or the Imaginary Referent,' and Bertrand Augst, 'Metz's Move,' both in *Camera Obscura*, no. 7, Spring 1981. 'Métaphor/Métonomie, ou le référent imaginaire,' was first published as the fourth section of *Le Signifiant Imaginaire: Psychanalyse et cinéma* (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1977). To quote Augst: 'The danger of confusing the discursive and the referential concepts is in fact implicit in any form of enunciation because the associations between referents . . . can always be stated, and once they are, they in turn become the principle and the driving force behind various discursive sequences which may be codified to varying degrees. Conversely, the associations which appear in discourse always suggest the existence of parallel associations between the corresponding referents' (p. 38).

The commercial often utilizes a 'musical' format where the diegetic rules which control the logic of the narrative are suspended, creating a thirty-second world in which there is perfect resolution: the commercial, more than other conventional Hollywood genre, allows for the willful suspension of belief in favor of a continuity carried through the music. The store also seeks to create a situation where realism might be suspended. In its maze-like corridors is constructed an imaginary space where nothing interferes with the shopper's perceptions, not the past, not other memories; there is only *now*. And credit, which has been instantly available since 1882, allows for immediate possession.

The store engages the shopper in a process of self-fetishization, a continuous repetition of an activity whose 'aura' is its power as an image which attracts and transforms.[54] There are certain specific features of the psychological process of shopping that might allow us to say this - such as the primary and secondary narcissism that is clearly involved, or the fetishization of objects which take the place of or stand for our desire (recalling Freud's dictum that associations take place along proscribed paths: the inscription of the 'plan').

But if the woman fetishizes herself, is her recovered unity re-experienced as an adult 'mirror-phase'? Surely, she does not regress to the pre-symbolic. Or, is there someone else on the other side of that mirror? Fashion for women revolves around these issues. How can she gain access to this Other? How does she 'misrecognize' herself? Fetishism is a broad term that can be applied to the 'everyday' as well as the psychoanalytical. I am using it here as both the 'process of fetishism' where different objects are substituted for desire, as well as fetishism where objects are tied to other objects, including, of course, the subject herself.

What must be continually kept in mind is that the concept of fetishism in

53. I refer to the denotative nature of the film as well as the psychical effects (subjecteffect) produced within the subject as s/he watches a film in the theatre. See in particular JeanLouis Baudry, 'The Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus,' first published in English in *Film Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1974-75); Christian Metz, 'The Imaginary Signifier,' published in French in *Communications*, no. 23 (1975), published in English in *Screen* 16, no. 2 (Summer 1975): Jean-Pierre Oudart, 'Cinema and Suture' and Stephen Heath, 'Notes on Suture,' both in *Screen*, 18, no. 4, Winter 1977-78. In a related yet different way the relations between the consumer and the 'shopping institution' are such that they appear to be transparent, anonymous, invisible, and yet natural.

54. See, in general, Guy DeBord, *Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black & Red, 1977.

psychoanalysis is bound up with questions of sexual difference and disavowal.[55]

The image/object is a mixture of what is present and also at the same time what is absent - of fulfillment and lack. In a commercial this same operation is at work when the image of the product and the product itself are associated. In the store you have a real material - the product for sale - *used* to represent something else. A fiction has been generated elsewhere, yet the material of the signifier appears to remain within the real space of the store, while in the TV commercial you are faced with what is unreal, because the material of the signifier is not completely real, but is absent. There is a slippage between the referential and discursive levels. As Christian Metz has said, the material signifier is much more unreal in film (and commercials), which makes the belief in the diegesis of the film (or commercial) all the more real (in cinematic terms).[56]

The concepts of mass production/efficiency and product differentiation through advertising removed to some extent the analyzable signifier that Jean-Louis Baudry describes in 'Author and Analyzable Subject', replacing it with other signifiers not as specifically tied to an 'author'.[57] Mass production and product differentiation were germaine to the construction of the consumer subject. As mass production took the value of an object away from its producer-author, it had to be given value through product differentiation. Advertising tries to place the consumer in the 'right relation' to the product. A product which initially is perceived as having no meaning must be given value by a person who already has meaning for us. Television commercials, like ads, invite us to freely choose ourselves in a way in which we have already been constructed. Barthes characterized the hermeneutic code, the code of expectations, as a proposition of truth articulated like a sentence.[58] In this sense, 'truth in advertising' can be seen not as a movement by irate citizens

55. See Jacqueline Rose, 'The Cinematic Apparatus: Problems in Current Theory,' in *The Cinematic Apparatus*, eds. Teresa De Lauretis and Stephen Heath, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980, pp. 172-186. Basically Rose argues that the concepts of the 'imaginary,' 'disavowal,' 'fetishism,' and so on only have meaning in relation to 'sexual difference.' See also 'The Cinematic Apparatus as Social Institution: Interview with Christian Metz,' *Discourse*, no. I (Fall 1979): 7-38.

56. Metz, 'The Cinematic Apparatus', p. 17.

57. Translated by Bertrand Augst and Johanna Drucker in *Apparatus*, ed. Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, New York: Tanam Press, 1981, pp. 67-83. See Metz's response in *L'éffet cinéma*, Paris: Editions Albatross, 1978, pp. 51-78.

58. Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller, New York: Hill and Wang, 1974, pp. 84-88.

to clean up the ad business, but as part of a public relations campaign which attempted to legitimize the advertising industry's own concept of truth as honesty; and as identified with a concept of reality whose naturalness disguises the ideological material of the cultural message - making it appear self-evident.[59]

Most television commercials revolve around a sentence (slogan) articulated through partial representations, utilizing the principles of montage. It is the particular aptitude of filmic images to maintain some kind of diegetic continuity that has allowed the television commercial to continue in the tradition of Kuleshov's experiments pushing to extremes the possibilities for associations between images.[60]

Baudry describes Chanel and her suits as creating for the buying public a neurosis that is identifiable. Chanel's company makes a perfume which is advertised on a similar premise. The glamorous and recognizable star's face (Catherine Deneuve) is associated in the print ad with the bottle of perfume. But perhaps the most slippery signifier of them all is the commercial where an undulating, vaporous, and sexual shape, changing its colours from green to blue and gold, spends twenty-five seconds before our eyes only to be at last identified as the bottle of Chanel No. 5. The subject as author-producer is analyzable in brand names, designer jeans, and even in department stores themselves: the Sak's woman and the Macy's woman.

The commodity's value is not so much the unmediated relation between a need and the object's inherent qualities, but the effect of those underlying intersubjective, symbolic libidinal relations on the consuming subject, which determines the relation of subjects to objects. As Lacan has said, history in psychoanalysis is an open interplay between the events in a subject's life - or history - and the history that the subject makes of these events. Narrative is not simply the expression of an already formed ideology, but the very form that ideology takes.

It is, of course, in making sense, in naturalizing the discontinuities, the ruptures in the social fabric that ideology takes on its 'always-already' formed characteristics. Floyd Dell, a libertarian historian of the 1920s, saw modernity and mass production machinery as establishing family life on the basis of romantic love because it changed the fundamental character of the productive relation that had characterized the patriarchal formation.[61] Businessmen had a different view: that of the reconstitution of the declining pre-industrial patriarchy into a recomposed

59. See James Rorty, *Our Master's Voice: Advertising*, New York: The John Day Co., 1934.

60. For a discussion of Kuleshov's experiments, see Jean Mitry, *Esthétique et psychologie du cinéma*, vol. I, Paris: Editions Universitaires, 1963, pp. 283-295.

conception of authority. There was still Mom-and-Dad-and-the-Kids, the family romance, but the link between them was thoroughly externalized as the bourgeois family became the site of leisure and consumption.[62] I would argue that the power of this history-making ability, as it mediates the relation between this subject and her/his objects in the imaginary/symbolic realms (as those relations have been constructed in Western metaphysics) is bound up with questions about representation itself - within historical formations preceding psychoanalysis.[63] How can one trace back a concept as poorly defined as 'imagination' within the 'world of experience', retrospectively, into a mythical past? The store is the plane upon which the subject and object are united in a real sense. It is tempting to map a Lacanian reading onto the construction of the shopping subject. Certainly you could argue that the S/s, the repressed signifier that turns out to be an endless chain of associations, occurs in this activity.[64] Even though the objects themselves lie outside the discursive system, and there is not a one-to-one correspondence between these operations and the referent; they have come to represent what they signify. We do not buy a pair of jeans, we buy an image of the jeans, in a different way than we buy an egg, even a brown, fertile egg. We buy how this image will make us feel - an image

61. Floyd Dell, *Love in the Machine Age: A Psychological Study of the Transition from Patriarchal Society*, New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 193.

62. The significance of youth is central here both as signaling a change in production values (strength to run a machine and work versus accumulated skill) as well as shifts in authority. Age becomes a detriment - compulsory retirement. See Max Horkheimer, 'The End of Reason', *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science* 9, 1941: pp. 366-388.

63. I have been referring to the construction of the bourgeois family so as to discuss the construction of the consumer. The subject however, is not articulated within the frame of Marx' 'social imaginary'. This chain of 'facts' spanning the last four hundred years has been reconstructed from the present perspective, and shares in the problems of a historicizing methodology.

64. Lacan adopts Saussure's linguistic description of the sign to generate his re-reading of Freud 'that the unconscious is structured like a language.' S/s, signifier over signified, with the bar containing in the form of its barrier the idea of a repression of the signified such that a symptom is a signifier whose signified is repressed from consciousness. This is particularly apparent in Freud's case histories, such as 'The Rat Man' (1909) This repressed signified can be seen as an endless chain of repressed signifiers; additionally Lacan's formula for metaphor the replaced signifier doesn't vanish, but slips below the bar to function in an associative chain marked by nodal points (Lacan, Écrits, pp. 148-152). For it is the structure of metaphor (as read by Lacan) that makes symptoms possible.

that places us in the 'right relationship' to these feelings. Fredric Jameson characterizes the space of the imaginary as an ambiguous redoubling, a mirror reflection, an immediate relation between the subject and its other in which each term passes immediately and is lost in a play of reflections such that the fragmented subject becomes re-united in the object.[65]

The decentered subject - unlike the transcendental subject, who was idealized by Kantian metaphysics, and unlike the bourgeoisie, for whom the avant-garde was this idealized subject - was ready for reflection. Advertising produces an image of resolution that cannot be accomplished in social life. The aura of television is the fetishization of the image itself. The set is the mediator between the image and the producer of the image, the spectator. Ultimately, it is the image that becomes the locus of value. Since pseudo-experience is not gratifying, we find our pleasure in its pseudo-ness, in the process of image-making, of technological manipulation. This is why contemporary advertising no longer glorifies the product, but glorifies the system, the corporate image and advertising itself.[66]

We take our pleasure in the technology of fantasy, through the deliberate fake-ness of special effects. The relation constructed through special effects involves the spectator in both avowal and recognition, denial and repression. '[A special-effect shot] can pull its illusion out of the hat, while simultaneously displaying its capacity to astonish the senses.'[67] This process occurs along with the 'ordinary' mechanisms already operating through the TV commercial and its signifiers.

Since the mid-1970s, a revival has been taking place in downtown San Francisco department stores. There has been a return to the baroque palace construction of the mid-nineteenth century. Yet, now there is a twist, for the shopper is not naive; the shopper knows that the recaptured glory that the store attempts to pass onto its customers - as it dispenses with its own self-effacement - is not the revival of the beaux-arts tradition, but the analyzable subject of the store itself, as author-distributor, permanently on display in the building.

65. Fredric Jameson, 'Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture,' *Social Text* 1, no. I, Winter 1979: pp. 130-148.

66. Shierry Weber, 'Individuation as Praxis,' *Critical Interruptions*, no. 1, 1980: pp. 34.

67. Christian Metz, 'Trucage et cinema,' in *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, vol. 2, Paris: Rlincksieck, 1972, pp. 173-192, my translation.

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CASUAL SHOPPER 1981

3/4" colour video, stereo sound, 28 mins

This film is about people who shop casually, who go to the mall to browse at their leisure, when there is nothing better to do. It features a woman, a dentist's receptionist; and a man selling ski equipment part-time. He is saving his money for a European holiday. They are both looking for something.

This is a love story that never advances beyond that which can be imagined, which is never consummated, but returns to a prosaic scene where dreams are exchanged and desire circulates endlessly.

The activity of shopping is a predictable yet indeterminate one, where, like the cinema, what we go to experience over and over again is our desire. This activity constructs a particular subject within a specific terrain, the mall or store, where a number of forces are mediated by the individual as he or she participates in the experience, including the complex drives at work in the individual psyche as well as the social imperatives of the commercial.

Just as cinemas are constructed to make possible specific spectator relations with the film, so stores are designed to produce specific effects within the consumer, through the use of endless corridors filled with objects for free libidinal access, set design and grid lighting. Of course, there are fundamental differences between the movie spectator and the shopper. The shopper is not stationary, but is constantly moving and does not identify with the objects in the store in the same way as with the characters on the screen. But, they are linked in several crucial ways through the process of looking that must be brought to both occasions to activate desire - the spectator sits and the film does its work, the shopper moves and the store comes to life.

Starring: Harriet Payne & Bill Shields
Camera: Jed Handler, Rick Lambert / Audio: Diane Stockler, Rick Lasky / Production Assistants: Deborah Sullivan, Alex Prisadesky Post Production: Television Office, UC Berkeley / Sound Design & Mix: Andy wiskes & Dan Gleich / Audio Prerecording: Peter Miller Audio Post Production: Zoetrope Studios

Pleasure/Leisure and the ideology of the corporate convention space

Amid all the cries of crisis surrounding the end of capitalism, it is perhaps important to consider what Herman Kahn calls the 'key vocation of the future', the extraction of the maximum amount of information from whatever data is at hand.[1]

The so-called new endeavour, this extraction of information, implies a further investigation than just the 'reading', albeit a textual one, of the 'data' under discussion. In 'Architecture and the Critique of Ideology', Frederic Jameson asks the question, 'How can space be ideological?'. The space he refers to is the space of architecture, nothing less than the schematization of social relations worked out in a literal form. Jameson further problematizes the question by attempting to banish the spectre of the body as the fundamental measure of a 'humanist' Marxism by asking '... if the body ceases to be the fundamental unit of spatial analysis, at once the very concept of space itself becomes problematic: what space?'.[2]

Caught between the 'phenomenological' as implied in the concept of the body and its lived experience and the 'structural', where the individual building or city is taken as a text in which all codes are to be read, Jameson recalls Henri Lefebvre's concept of urban space as the fundamental category of politics and of the dialectic itself. Jameson particularizes the role of the Italian architectural historian, Manfredo Tafuri, whose project in the realm of architectural history has been to

1. Herman Kahn, in Jonathan Crary, 'Eclipse of the Spectacle', *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, Brian Wallis, ed. The New Museum, 1984, pp. 286-287.

2. Frederic Jameson, 'Architecture and the Critique of Ideology', *Architecture, Criticism, Ideology*, Princeton Architectural Press, 1984, p. 51.

introduce a notion of class criticism into architecture. Although Jameson points out that this might be seen as an oversimplification of Tafuri's project, it is interesting to consider Tafuri in relation to the concept of social space in the practices of many artists engaged in articulating a relation to architecture. Certain assumptions are shared: that the critique must take a negative form, which doesn't allow for the positing of some future revolutionary style, or for the possibility of it occurring under capitalism at all. This critique is usually centered around the repudiation of the humanistic Marxist tradition and becomes a somewhat tautological circuit. If the body (read subjectivity) is abandoned as the unit of measure, what replaces it? Even the switching of devices implies a receiver.

But there are other ways to consider how space is ideological. Under the rubric of post-modernism, for example, the city is understood to be a collection of images which are constructed by the inhabitant as they are experienced; no longer are cities idealized concretizations of social relations. The cinema has become the central determining metaphor for simultaneous collective reception[3] in a public space (although the specifics of each individual watching the cinema are ultimately private / psychoanalytical). It is this form of image-making and receiving that gives the lived experience of the city its particular ethos. The success of films such as *Liquid Sky*, *Stranger Than Paradise* and *Desperately Seeking Susan* operate predominantly through the construction of a believable NYC experience. These films are a kind of *mise-en-scène*, which have become so internalized that the viewer / inhabitant is left with the unnerving feeling that s/he is living in a movie. While on a simple level 'living a movie' might be compared to 'all the world is a stage and we are merely players' of Renaissance life, *mise-en-scène* must be viewed in today's terms as ideological, precisely because it is so 'invisible and taken for granted'.

Another publicly oriented, small-audience form of address is the *private* space of the corporate convention, which employs a variety of visual forms and other theatrical devices to reach its audience. For it is this social space, figured differently than the 'private' in private humanistic space, that remains basically unknown and outside of what might be called public corporate space, which might include, for example, the lobby of a headquarters, general exhibits designed for the public, and advertising campaigns on network or cable television.

'The world as a stage' has a long tradition. It was a central ideological metaphor

3. For a discussion of the concept of 'simultaneous collective reception' see Benjamin Buchloh's 'From Faktura to Factography', *October* 30, 1984, pp. 82-120.

of Renaissance life, setting into place the entire schema of statecraft as a kind of stagecraft. Statehood consisted, in part, in the ability to inhabit the role of the monarch at a time when monarchy was not well established. This required the reworking of popular mythology and the staging of dramas that could provide a lived experience in which the principals involved could participate, first at a state function and then later in actuality. For example, the combined talents of Inigo Jones and James I were realized in the masques at the court of James I. In these masques stagecraft and statecraft provided a seamlessly rendered allegory which, during performance, took on both an alchemical and a mythic status. Usually a hoped-for event, such as an alliance with another country or its conquest, was dramatized as though it were a mythic play. As the events unfolded, the audience, unlike most agit-prop today, was actually the audience for whom it was intended and became aware of the real stakes in the drama. Generally, this event would culminate with the King and Queen, who were victorious in the drama, descending from the stage and dancing with the audience - symbolically celebrating the desired event. Magic and the alchemical tradition were intrinsically a part of this process yet, the mechanical and scientific tradition grew out of / alongside the alchemical one. The metaphor of changing lead into gold was a metaphor to describe a change in consciousness from 'baseness' to a higher spiritual level - the unification of man with heaven and the end of the feudal wars. The technical marvels achieved by Jones must be viewed as part of this tradition.

Jones is generally credited with the design and implementation of sophisticated stage sets and flats. He produced complicated 'flying' sequences by using a pulley / lever system to lift ornate chariots and other devices to the rafters, gradually floating them down to the stage. In addition, he developed a sophisticated system for flying sets (flats) in and out of place on the stage in a matter of seconds, again using a pulley system to manipulate them through the rafters, producing illusions which seemed like magic and which referred to this alchemical tradition.[4] The monarch who could produce these illusions in the company of this private arena was also thought to be able to produce them in the public area. In another study Frances Yates[5] describes how complicated the parade routes of returning or visiting royalty

4. Lily Campbell, *Scenes and Machines on the English Stage during the Renaissance*, Cambridge University Press, 1923.

5. Frances Yates, 'The Entry of Charles IX and His Queen into Paris, 1571', *Astraea*, London: Routledge and Kegan, 1975, pp. 127-148.

Another tie of these newer forms of stagecraft to the Renaissance tradition is the secrecy that surrounds the events. In the Renaissance period, alchemical societies communicated with one another using a complex system of codes and visual images open to interpretation on a number of different levels - somewhat similar to Barthes' textual analysis. Their meaning was opaque to some but transparent to those who were initiated. The inner workings of these large corporate conventions also follow the dictates of a secret society. Usually there is no press surrounding these conventions, or gatherings (as they are often called), nor are the subjects or the images of these visual presentations released to the general public. Instead, corporations, who spend millions of dollars on advertising, do everything in their power to veil these events with secrecy.

How ideology provides for forms of subjectivity has been one of the key concepts in developing a radical critique of corporate capitalism, in particular, countering the notion that this critique would have to take place in some (utopian) future. As Lyotard points out in *The Postmodern Condition*,[9] narrative is a way of consuming the past, a way of forgetting so that something else can take its place. With science, information (data) is hoarded and stored as a new kind of capital. In tying their presentations not to corporate ethos, but to elements of popular culture, the corporations are hiding 'information' from their employees, while simultaneously reminding them that they are an elite group, members of a somewhat secret society - while actually giving them less 'information' than the stodgy old business meeting did.

In a sense the humanist measure of the body has been replaced somewhat by *mise-en-scène* as the measure for the way in which corporate private space is understood. This *mise-en-scène* sets the stage not as an experience in the old-fashioned way of group politicking and individual encounters, but as a kind of group transcendental experience in which the effects of the encounter are more important than the event that was mutually witnessed. These effects act as a counter to the 'alienated sameness' that is the lived experience of the 'everydayness' most of us have. The corporations have taken over many of the functions of consumer society, reminding us exactly how much pleasure-in-leisure is a part of capitalism.

9. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
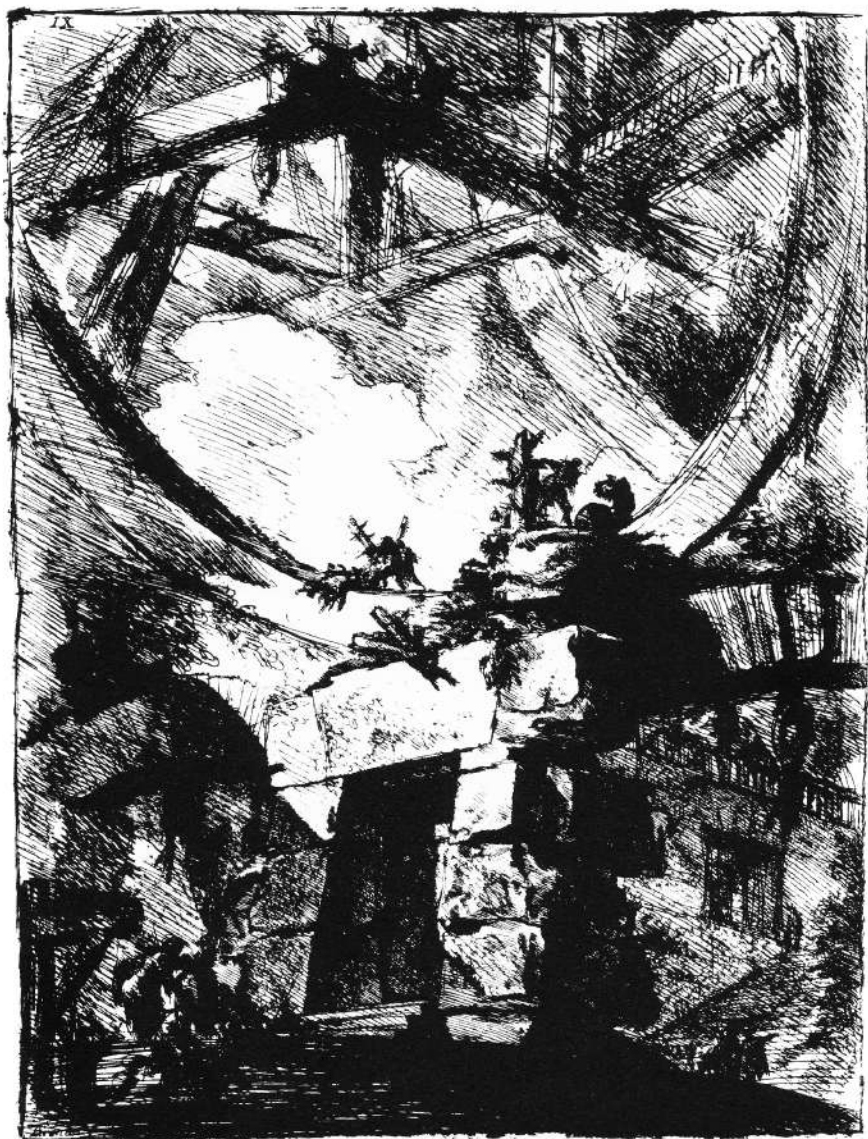
Piranesi, *The Prison Series IX*, circa 1750

ADAM'S WISH

Installing the project for Real Art Ways at Hartford (a city undergoing major development) raises questions about art and arts organisations' participation in urban development. Development is not intrinsically bad, and RAW has been instrumental in improving the quality of cultural life. But this same cultural life is sold by developers to pave the way for further development. RAW have participated in the re-development of Hartford's downtown yet it does not benefit from the revitalisation of the area. Nor do the artists. Like their counterparts in Manhattan, they are forced to re-locate by escalating rents. Should we as citizens of a particular place be only grateful when a developer wants to build a building, or should we have a voice in what our city will become?

The World Financial Centre is a complex of four high rise towers built during the Wall Street boom of the mid-80s, a glittering edifice attesting to the power and glory of capitalism...its marble passageways and brilliantly illuminated domes are reminiscent of the baroque splendour of Alain Resnais' film *Last Year in Marienbad*. And yet no narrative unfolds. I was struck by the absence of an iconography, by those images, stories and allegories that are associated with the study of art and architecture. I decided to consider the history of trompe-l'oeil and illusionistic ceiling painting in relationship to corporate architecture particularly as the space of the World Financial Centre seemed to relate to the history of church architecture.

I made a one-minute video loop; projected onto the 30 foot wide dome of the North Gatehouse it functioned like the trompe l'oeil ceiling paintings in St. Ignacius' Church in Rome. These paintings place the spectator in certain relations to the images portrayed while dictating the path the worshipper must follow as s/he moves through the space. The main character of the tape is a worker called Adam. First I explored his relationship to the commodity structure, and then I worked backwards historically to look at iconography in relation to illusionistic space. The last sequence deals with the dystopia of city life and the escape (fall) of Adam back into corporate space. Essentially there is no escape from corporate space which I present as a kind of monument or tomb.

In the opening sequence the worker pauses for a moment and looks up at the dome. At the moment of his seeing, he ingests the entire dome in a yawn that accompanies his look. It is this moment of ingesting that is the catalyst for narrative play to occur. It licences his imagination, allowing his body to be split, multiplied and inscribed onto the face of the dome. In terms of the history of architecture there are two things going on here. One is the relationship to the imagination that is contained in classical architecture. The other is the introduction of irrationality into classical architecture, perhaps best expressed by Manfredo Tafuri's reading of Piranesi's *Le Carceri* and *Il Campo Marzio*.

For those of us who are concerned to articulate the notion of subjectivity that lies at the heart of 'post-modern' experience, questions remain about the construction of the self in terms of a 'real'. Generally, this reality has been identified with the body, and questions have tended to centre not on where to locate this body, but how. For, despite textual efforts to the contrary, the body still exists - it is not 'erasable' neither is it a mere construction of discourse.[2] To examine how the doppelganger functioned within literature is the purpose of this essay. Throughout it, I will be using the body as generally synonymous with the concept of the self. For the body as the doppelganger seems to use several competing agencies against one another, particularly, the inhabited body of daily life that the self is conscious of; and the phantom body of the unconscious self, which is at the mercy of 'the drives'[3] and threatens to usurp the place held by the conscious self.[4]

The figure of the double is relatively prominent throughout the history of world literature, occurring in so-called primitive belief systems where it frequently takes the form of a mis-recognition of the self's image or reflection as some aspect of the soul or shadow. For the Judeo-Christian tribe, it can be associated with the concept of the guardian angel. In literature, the 'double by enchantment' appears as often in the East as the West, although here I will concentrate on Western literature. This doubling by enchantment can be a magical exchange of forms (as in Plautus's *Amphitryon*, in which a god assumes the form of a man) or a mystical life-giving practice by which a creation of man's comes to life (as in the golem of the Hebrew tradition or in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*). Outside the realm of magic and folklore, the double exists as a 'natural' phenomenon, the result of a chance resemblance (as in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*) or mistaken identity (in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*). It also figures in occultist literature where it takes the form of the astral body and the spiritual double, particularly in Karl von Eckartshausan's

2. In another kind of essay I would probably formulate the concept of the body as very different from the concept of the self, but for my purposes here it is useful to consider them in this manner.

3. Drives are usually translated incorrectly as instincts, but they are more the neutral representatives of a somatic impulse and generally take the form of a wish, providing the motivating force behind all psychic activity from dreams to rational thought.

4. The material for this section was compiled from the following sources: Crawley, A.E., 'Doubles', Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, London, 1908-26; Rank, Otto, *The Double*, Germany, 1914; Tymms, Ralph, *Doubles in Literary Psychology*, Cambridge, 1949 ; Wellek, Rene, *Confrontations*, New York, 1955.

Aufschlusse Zur Magie. But it was in the Romantic period, and in German literature, in particular, that the concept of the doppelganger was formulated.

In the figure of the double, the uncanny, the horrible, the mysterious, the grotesque and the prosaic merge or are juxtaposed with apparent ease. It is this merging or juxtaposition that accounts for much of the terror beneath the surface of its stories, and that shocks the reader into realizing that the fantastic and supernatural are not comfortably removed from everyday existence. German Romanticism was a continuation of the *Sturm und Drang* literary movement of the 1770s which violently protested the precepts of the Enlightenment. Philosophically, it was rooted in Immanuel Kant's idea that, knowledge being limited, faith in rationalism could be undermined; in Johann Fichte's concept of the limitless potential of the imagination; and in Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling's belief in the harmonious partnership between man and nature. In addition, Gothief Heinrich von Schubert's notion that the language of dreams is a kind of hieroglyphics, which man need not learn because it is innate and therefore understood by the soul when it is released from its imprisonment in the corporal aspect of the body, provided a touchstone for the Romantic imagination.

The relationship between Romanticism and Enlightenment thinking might be characterized as one of despair. The Romantics posed what Rene Wellek called the 'past and present glories of the social order of the Middle Ages' against the economic and socially liberal ideas of the rationalists. By this he meant that the Enlightenment period was not necessarily to be opposed to Romanticism but that it imposed a systematized body of knowledge in the Middle Ages. Questions about the place of the individual, such as the expression of the imagination, the sublime, wonder and aesthetics, had not been dialectically opposed as they were to be through the simplistic binary oppositions imposed by the Enlightenment. For the Romantics, complex questions about the relation of mind to matter and man's relationship to God, time, space and the universe were painfully supplanted by alien and unacceptable terms. Thus the concept of the self as a construction of the literary imagination became the terrain in which many of these questions were figured.

Jean Paul is generally considered to be the first German Romantic. His forte was the fantastic and the grotesque and he mixed them with a lacerating humour that turned realism inside out.[5] He is also credited with coining the term 'doppelganger', which he held to mean 'what people are called who see themselves'. For him, there was an intrinsic duality in the construction of subjectivity: an 'I' participates in life while another 'I' observes. Implicit in his ideas about the self was

the notion of a unified subject, an 'I' that is not at the mercy of another, observing 'I' - an 'I' that, in other words, is not self-conscious.

In the work of E.T.A. Hoffmann[6] the doppelganger is often combined with the grotesque. Because the grotesque erases the boundary between the human and the animal, it is difficult for the reader and indeed the protagonist to identify the protagonist's place. This concept of the grotesque was extended to the mechanical, to the automaton; a reality was described that contradicted the world as we understand it and presented it as a true, insightful, reality. It is when the described unreality became real for the reader, and the grotesque ceased to be a game, that fear became intense, leaving a vision of madness as the only sanity and the world as a lunatic asylum.

The lives of the Romantics and post-Romantics illustrate many of the psychological disorders that were played out in their works.[7] Otto Rank's 1914 study *The Double* discusses the hallucinations, delusions and intense fears of going insane that plagued Hoffmann and, later, Feodor Dostoevsky. Subject to severe depressions, Jean Paul similarly feared insanity, while Edgar Allen Poe was, in addition to being alcoholic and possibly opium addicted, phobic and compulsively brooding. All of this is simply to say that the concerns these writers expressed in their writings were of the nature of a vested interest - that is, their psyches bore signs of the split experienced in the Enlightenment period. And it was far more complex than the commonsense view of Romanticism as the 'dark' side of the Enlightenment would suggest. In fact, it is possible to view Sigmund Freud's contribution to psychoanalysis as, in a certain sense, resolving, or at least, putting back into daily life much that the Enlightenment had removed. For it was he who revived the mythical concepts banished under rationalism by taking them out of the realm of the magical or supernatural by conceiving of their study as a science. As a result, the self began to be viewed as the intersection of various agencies, many of which were irrational and not subject to empirical verification following their own logic in dreams and the workings of the unconscious.

5. Richter, Jean Paul. See in particular *Siebenkas* and *Titan*. He is known as Jean Paul and was a major influence on Hoffmann.

6. Hoffmann, ETA. See in particular 'The Sandman', *Katermurr* and *Die Elixiere des Teufels*.

7. In this list I would include Achim Arnim, Clemens Bretano, F.M. Dostoevsky, Hoffmann, H. Kleist, E. Poe, F. Raimund, Jean Paul, R. Stevenson, L. Tieck, and 0. Wilde among others. This is by no means a complete list.

The figure of the double takes a variety of forms in Romantic literature but, invariably, a series of coinciding motifs appear. There is almost always a counterpart that resembles the main character down to the smallest details of voice and clothing - a counterpart that, seeming to be 'stolen from the mirror', appears to be the protagonist's reflection. This double inevitably works at cross purposes with its prototype and, as a result of a relationship, usually with a woman, a suicide to kill off the irksome persecutor is likely to ensue. In a number of instances, this situation is either combined with a thorough going persecutory delusion or will be over-whelmed by it (as when the protagonist is literally taken over by the double), which produces the picture of a total paranoiac system of delusions.

When discussing the double, Lacan's concept of the mirror-phase is very useful since it aptly describes one of the doppelganger's central motifs.[8] He tells us that it is somewhere between the ages of six to eighteen months that a child arrives at an apprehension of both its self and the 'other', indeed of itself as other. This discovery is assisted by its seeing its own reflection in a mirror for the first time. That reflection enjoys a coherence that the subject itself lacks - in other words, it is an *ideal* image. However, this self-recognition, Lacan insists, is a misrecognition: the subject apprehends itself only by means of a fictional construct whose identifying characteristics - focus and coordination - it does not share. The mirror stage is one of those crises of alienation around which the Lacanian subject is organized, since to know oneself through an external image is to be defined through self-alienation. As a consequence of the irreducible distance that separates the subject from its ideal reflection, it entertains a profoundly ambivalent relation to that reflection, loving the coherent identity that it provides while, because the image remains external to it, also hating it. The radical oscillation between contrary emotions associated with the same object characterizes all of the relationships of the imaginary order. As long as the subject remains trapped within that order, it will be unable to mediate bet-ween, let alone escape from, the binary opposition structuring all of its perceptions.

It certainly could be argued that the doppelganger is trapped or caught in the imaginary order of the mirror-phase. The imaginary is a term used by Lacan to designate that order of the subject's experience that is determined by identifi-cation and duality. Within this schema, the imaginary processes the symbolic,

8. Lacan, Jacques, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, London, 1977. See particularly 'The Field of the Other and Back to the Transference' pp. 203-262. Also *Ecrits*, London, 1977, in par-ticular 'The Mirror State', pp. 1-7 and 'The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious' pp. 146-178.

introducing the subject to language and the Oedipal triangulation. The two complement each other: the symbolic establishing the differences that are such an essential part of cultural existence, and the imaginary making it possible to discover correspondences and homologies. With the doppelganger, however, one could argue that this hierarchy is reversed and that it is the imaginary that takes precedence. As Anika Lemaire writes, 'The imaginary is an infinitely supple conceptual category. It covers everything in the fantasy which is an image or representation of a lived experience pertaining to the castration (Oedipal) complex before its formalization, forever incomplete ...(and) petrified in the symbol of the phallus... at the level of lived experience'[9]. Just as the mirror stage in both Lacan's and Lemaire's reading carries undeniable traces of cultural intervention so too is a child's identity culturally mediated, so that in one sense it could be argued that the mirror stage occurs from within the symbolic. In this way, one can say that the ego ideal is always socially mediated and that the identity of the subject is maintained only through a constant repetition of the identification by means of which it first found itself. In terms of the doppelganger, it could also be argued that it is, for the ego ideal, the intrusion by the symbolic into the constitution of the imaginary that causes confusion since it is then that the subject is conscious of an 'other' with which it can not merge and which refuses to be banished or to disappear when the subject turns away. This 'psychoanalytic' reasoning supports what might have been expected all along: that the doppelganger confirms rather than denies the possibilities for the split subject, and that it is precisely in this split that the real stakes are located and not in an attempt at unified subjectivity.[10]

One area where the theme of the doppelganger is noticeably silent, however, is in regards to a female double, although there are a few instances (Hoffmann's *The Sandman*, for example) where the figure of a woman participates in a double constellation. Of course, the triangle around which the love story is fashioned always involves a woman but it is only as the third term who represents the opportunity for passage through the Oedipal phase. As the object-choice for love, in other words, a woman is the only one who can provide an access of resolution for the protagonist as he attempts to pass through the symbolic. One possible explanation for the lack of female doppelgangers may be that all of the doppelganger stories (at least those that I have found were written by men whose psychological problems, tended to

9. Lemaire, Anika, *Jacque Lacan*, London, p. 147.
10. Freud, Standard Edition Vol.17 pp. 232-233.

show up in their central characters. Why wasn't the theme of the doppelganger as a female taken up by the women writers of the 18th and 19th centuries? Perhaps one reason is that women, particularly at that time, were seen as eminently replaceable - that is, they already stood as doubles for one another in society and that, therefore, this level of psychic angst did not appeal to them. Because they had to be the eternally feminine (at least in literature), no such double was readily available.

Still, it could be argued that not only did many of the characters created by Armentine Lucille Aurore Dupin (who dressed and played the part of her constructed alter ego George Sand) embody the theme of the double. For her characters often functioned as incomplete halves who awaited union through the transcendent power of romantic and spiritual love - through the power, that is, of a saintly woman's super-human efforts to effect the ultimate transformation of an irresponsible man into a reasonable one. But while this is in some sense, an instance of doubling, it is too metaphorically general a treatment to serve the questions about the doppelganger that I have been raising. Instead, it was within her own life that parallels with a psychoanalytic construction of the doppelganger are most apparent. She disguised herself as a male to gain access to a society that otherwise would have been closed to her, and through the effective management of her alter ego, she managed to successfully multiply her personas. This allowed her on the one hand, to become a successful novelist and salon figure, and on the other, to have the experience of numerous love-affairs and adventures which, because of her dual identity, did not cause her censure. In other words, by living out the life of a double and participating actively in the formulation of her identities, she seems to have been able to avoid the death wish that haunted the romantic men of literature.

The doppelganger is not only allegorical (in Walter Benjamin's sense of history turning toward nature) and textual (when, as in the post-modern condition, almost anything can function as a double for anything else), but it is also significantly situated around a rupture in the social fabric of the psyche. The doppelganger took on sinister menace, that doubt of the ego which Freud, in his essay on the 'uncanny'[11] characterized as *unheimlich* or unfamiliar. In researching its etymology, Freud found that *heimlich* is a word that develops in the direction of ambivalence until it finally coincides with its converse. On the one hand, it means what is familiar and agreeable and on the other, what is concealed and kept out of sight. It is this construction of the doppelganger as one that is different and yet the same that is so characteristic

11. Freud, Standard Edition Vol.17 pp. 219-256.

of the genre and imbues it with a sense of the uncanny, particularly in Hoffmann and later, in Arthur Schnitzler when the double is the criminal other self.

In Dostoevesky's *The Double*, perhaps the most psychological of the literary treatments of this theme, the doppelganger is presented as an 'other' self who usurps the place of the original self and makes it impossible for the narrator and the reader to decide which is the 'true' self - which self has the authority to claim autonomy. The double is seen as not only a deviation from society, but as a barometer of the sheer elusiveness of reality; and the impossibility of human freedom when there is no way of determining reality outside the self as a unified subject. A theme with contemporary resonance that also surfaces in the story is the insurmountable difficulty of distinguishing between an original and a copy. To some extent, this is ground covered by Jean Baudrillard in his *Simulation*, where he develops the concept of the simulacrum. But it is in Baudrillard's *Ecstasy of Communication* that a similarity can be noted between the question of subjectivity that the Romantic writers posed and his own treatment of the subject. In both cases, subjectivity's essentially schizoid nature is denigrated, taking the form of fantasy and the supernatural for the Romantics and a kind of science fiction through simulation for Baudrillard. In fact, an argument can be made that it is in the realm of science fiction that the irrationality/menace that characterizes today's social life will most often be found.

This denigration, which seems to characterize the plight of all the figures of the double, is related to another issue current today that is, to borrow a term from Derrida, the logo-centrism at the apex of Western metaphysics. This reflects an attempt to cover up the obvious: that the duality it embodies is only masking even more *differences* and that no resolution is, in fact, possible. It has been narrative's great historical task to attempt to remedy this by multiplying these differences allegorically and by making each 'character' double for a part of utopian totality so that, as with the irrational, we no longer seem to notice.

But, to return to the question that I raised at the beginning of this essay, why are the figures of the vampire and Frankenstein's monster still with us while the notion of the doppelganger has vanished? Certainly there is an argument to be made for the idea that the remaining pair are metaphorically one another's doubles - two sides and two complementary faces of a single society. The monster (man's higher self) represents the worker who, though incredibly bungled in the making and not found in nature, is almost a robot, a monster drudge created by the misplaced humanism of the aristocracy and science (Dr. Frankenstein) whose power must not

be unleashed. The vampire, in the form of Count Dracula, represents a member of the aristocracy who has given up all claims to aristocratic privilege (as Bram Stoker noted in his 1897 version of the story). This count not only has no servants, but he doesn't eat or drink, is ascetic, and doesn't love. When he kills it is not for pleasure, but because he has to survive - in fact, he is so economically inclined that he does not waste even a drop of blood. He is, in short, a capitalist - an accumulator, as Jonathon Harker learns when he searches the castle and finds piles of money from all over the world covered with dust.

But what about Superman, you may be asking? Why doesn't he embody the concept of the doppelganger, particularly when you have the idea of meek, self-deprecating Clark Kent, the false alter-ego, inhabiting the persona of the super hero? For one thing, there is no question, which the doppelganger poses, as to who is the real Superman, for it is always Superman who is Superman. Even in those instances when Superman takes advantage of what was always his terrible promise (that he could be a being more powerful than the rest of humankind), he is always still Superman, and Clark Kent is only his disguise. For another, Superman (as well as King Kong and The Hulk) is not only devoid of the supernatural but his figure carries none of the elements of the uncanny or even of horror found in the doppelganger. In the case of The Hulk, the nuclear accident that leads to mild-mannered research scientist David Banner's transformation is even treated as a fair price to pay for such an interesting effect.

Nevertheless, perhaps part of the answer to the question of the doppelganger's disappearance lies in the domain of these characters, that is, in the domain of popular culture. Popular culture has the ability to reduce everything to the same field of inquiry, to abolish all difference in the realization/perpetuation of itself. In the Romantic period, the idea of a mass culture as we live it now did not exist. To say merely that all of the dramatic cultural political and economic changes that have taken place over the last 200 years cannot be analysed here would be woefully insufficient. From this late capitalistic vantage point, with its possibility/terror and promise of a mass culture, the duality of existence embodied in the Romantic condition seems to belong to an era that believed in the ability of the individual to effect a real transformation in the material circumstances of living. Certainly that belief is reflected in Freud's later writings. Thus it hardly seems insignificant that Lacan has returned to an earlier Freud, the Freud of the unconscious and the drives, to develop his theories about the construction of the subject. Very obviously, he is not concerned with the unified ego, or with the possibilities that it might present.
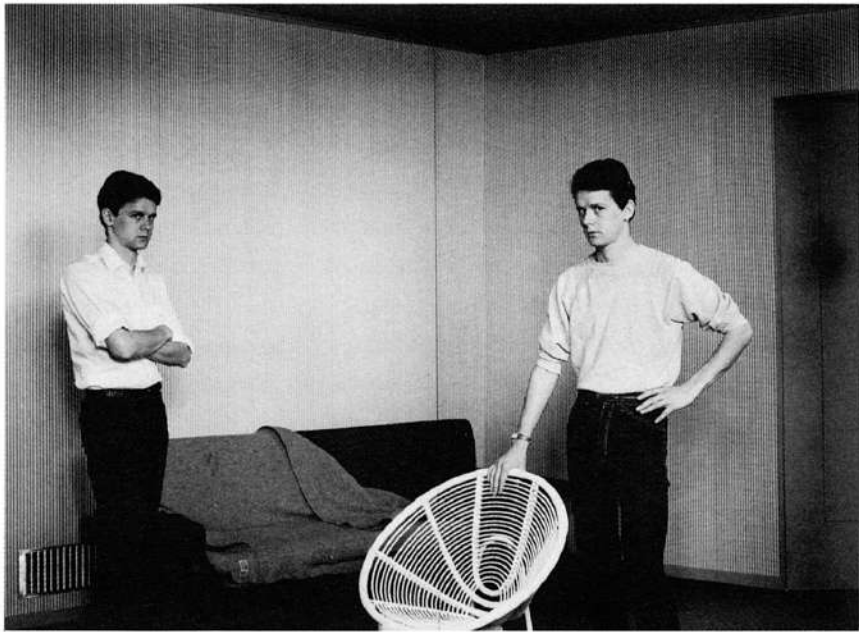
Jeff Wall, *Double Self Portrait*, 1979
Cibacrome transparency, flourescent light, image 172 × 229 cm. Collection Art Gallery of Ontario Toronto

To illustrate the significance of this change, it might be useful to shift terms by considering the matter from the perspective of the practice of art. In discussing Courbet's self-portraits recently, Michael Fried continued to develop the thesis he had begun to articulate in *Absorption and Theatricality*, in particular, the conflict between spectatorship and painting that emerged for French artists and critics as early as the mid-1750s.[12] For Diderot, the principal critic addressing the issue at the time, the problem centred on describing the conditions that had to be fulfilled for a painting to persuade its audience of the truthfulness of its representation. Nothing was more fatal to the process of persuasion, he insisted, than when a painter seemed to evince consciousness of being beheld and that, therefore, a painter should extinguish any such consciousness by absorbing his dramatic persona into the painting's action. So absorbed, a painter would appear unconscious, which would allow the spectator to project himself into the painting or, to put it another way, the spectator would then have unobstructed access.

By careful attention to compositional details, Fried argues that Courbet

12. See Fried, Michael, *Absorption and Theatricality*, Berkeley, 1980.

attempted to do away with the theatrical arrangement between the painting and the beholder. To make the argument, he resorts to a form of phenomenology close to that of the late Merleau-Ponty, in particular, to the notion of subjectivity as being somewhat synonymous with the body and to the broader phenomenological idea that the unconcious is directly accessible through the conscious; and that the self, having free access to *all* the experiences of consciousness, can therefore be understood as an *effect* of consciousness. According to Fried, Courbet tried to cancel the distance between himself and the self represented in his painting, which indicated a desire to absorb the beholder into the painting in a corporeal way - to effect a phenomenological merger of his self with the experience of painting. As a result, the space of the painting, like that of the lived body, became orientated, that is, the relations among objects were chiefly to be comprehended in terms of an implicit relationship to a beholder whose separateness, distance and capacity for spectatorship it was the aim of painting to abolish. In this analysis, there is an attitude toward the present that suggests that the spectator and the painting are to be combined in a kind of continuous moment; since to abolish the spectator is to abolish the notion of time or, at least, the temporality a beholder represents.

In Jeff Wall's *Double Self Portrait*, a 65 x 85" back-lit transparency installed in a lightbox, the theme of the double is treated overtly, although the terms of the argument are substantially changed. The surface of the photograph reveals it is made up of two halves, so that the two 'Jeff Walls' function only as representations. To the question, 'Which of the represented Jeff Walls is the 'real' one?' the photograph as evidence offers no answer; in fact, it neatly reasserts the argument made by Walter Benjamin in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* about the impossibility of an original photograph. As neither image of Wall is a mirror for the other, nor can either image or even the entire photograph function in that capacity, the question of who is the double is mute. It is not as a lost *other* that this photograph constructs its meaning, but as a subject under simulation. It is this simulation of the double, of two that are obviously the same and seemingly caught in each other's gaze, that looks out at us to hold our gaze.

Moreover, this hold on our look has been carefully planned by someone who is absent. It is a look whose inscription in the photographic process is already accounted for/by/through institutional practices of representation, which can be read across many different axes of power and knowledge, and with which the subject has agreed to be complicitous. Power is a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised.[13] In Wall's piece,

the question is who has power within the photographic space, who is caught in whose gaze? The gaze of the Wall figures functions to trap not him, but the gaze of the spectator. It is this gaze directed by both figures at the same point that locates the spectator in an eye-line match. As for Wall himself, we can assume that he was caught long ago.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault describes three functions of the gaze, all of which seem to be at work in this photograph: the moral, the epistemological, and the political. It was the distinction of the panoptic system to institute a unidirectional gaze whose effect was to collapse these three functions into morally self-monitoring subjects.[14] Its constraining force in *Double Self Portrait* is the sense of power literally being passed over the surface of its application to the other side. This is similar to the way in which viewing practices at the cinema set in place dominant cultural values while simultaneously mirroring the split the subject knows to be at the centre of the arrangement, namely which side of the screen s/he is on. What Wall's *Double Self Portrait* ultimately shows is how well the lesson from the panoptic system has been learned, and how internalized the gaze has become.[15]

What Fried identified in writing about Courbet was his attempt to cede to a lack of consciousness - to merge into the pictorial space. Isn't that what was ultimately behind the question of the double, as well? For with the desire for resolution of the self there is also the pain of dissolution of other possible selves. In Wall's 'double' this question is not asked for it is no longer what is at stake. And, just as the unity of the subject is no longer assumed, it could also be argued that it is no longer even desired. Certainly, contemporary feminism has replaced the

13. Foucault, Michel *Power/Knowledge*, p.56, NY, 1977.

14. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp.202-203, NY 1979.

15. The best definition of the panoptic system is probably Bentham's own description. The device consists of a central elevated watch tower surrounded by a circular disposition of cells, each of which traverses the entire thickness of the building and thereby permits its single inmate to be caught, silhouetted, in the light which passes through the cell from the outside. This arrangement makes it possible for a lone observer ,in a central tower, to supervise a multitude of individuals, each of whom is cut off from any contact with other inmates. Furthermore, since the guard can not be perceived from outside the tower by the inmates, an effect of constant, omniscient surveillance is obtained. Since no prisoner knows when s/he is being watched, the prisoner is obliged to constantly police her or his own behavior. As Foucault writes, it makes possible an entirely radical exercise of power held in place without any physical constraint other than architecture and geometry.

concept of otherness (which has been defined as not male) with the idea of 'difference' (which is to be articulated by women). For women, the question is no longer what identity should they have, but how should that identity be constructed? In the work of Cindy Sherman and any woman who picks an identity from her closet - choosing, one day, a business suit because it contains one set of cultural assumptions and, another, black leather because it represents another possible identity - we can see how all these identities are already culturally in place, giving only the semblance of difference. The question is how can less culturally sanctioned identities be represented? And, if we could recognize a real difference, would the culture just absorb it anyway?

It is interesting to note that in the 19th century, the concept of 'character' was predicated on the undesirability of personal change. Character had to remain constant in order to withstand the vicissitudes of turbulent social upheavals. In Dickens' novels, the protagonist is often born poor, becomes rich, grows poor, and so on, but it is his constant good character and steadfastness that allows him to prevail. For women it was the ability to make transcendental self-sacrifices that provided solace, if not happiness. In most contemporary popular novels, however, it is telling that the narrative interest centres on the ability of the protagonist to change a great deal over the course of the story, such that all resolution is internally managed and the world can be seen as normal and rational.

The concept of the doppelganger is specifically not at stake in the contemporary practice known as post-modernism, but subjectivity is. For Baudrillard, subjectivity, under the regime of mass culture, is schizophrenic; for Derrida, it is decentered; and for Craig Owens, it is allegorical. As I have tried to show, the doppelganger disappeared because the specific historical construction surrounding the need for a tangibly unified subject began to dissolve into the fragmented collection of possible differences (identities) we experience today. But other, more important, questions remain. If it is possible to deconstruct the subject of Western metaphysics, what will remain of him? Will he just be a schizophrenic in front of his screen, marking the void in the centre of the social fabric? If he isn't aware, he may find out that while he was 'away' something else took over his place, for not having subjectivity, as it has been conceptualized under modernism, does not mean that there will be nothing, only that there will be *difference*.

IMAGINATION,
DEAD IMAGINE 1991

10'x10'x10' mirrored cube, 5 video projectors

An androgynous head is projected as if contained within a minimalist cube. Sounds of the head slowly breathing fill the space. The head is serene, waiting. Suddenly a substance pours over it from all 5 sides, drenching it in what appears to be a bodily fluid. The spectator wants to turn away but cannot, the gaze is compelled through the invocation of the scopic drive. Horror at the repulsive nature of the substance is replaced by fascination with the beauty of these 'overwhelming natural energies' as they seem to transform into majestic but abstract landscapes.

As Rosalind Krauss has written, 'Minimalism was indeed committed to (a) notion of 'lived bodily perception'...a perception that broke with what it saw as the decorporealized and therefore bloodless, algebraicized condition of abstract painting in which a visuality cut loose from the rest of the bodily sensorium and now remade in the model of modernism's drive towards absolute autonomy had become the picture of an entirely rationalized, instrumentalized, serialized subject.'

Merleau-Ponty's concept of the primacy of the 'lived bodily experience' established an internal horizon which produced meaning. Minimalism insisted on an immediacy of experience understood through the body; yet it eliminated any overt reference to the body.

This elision of the body finds an echo in the history of aesthetics, in particular the sublime. In the 18th century the power and terror of nature unleashed provoked intimations of infinity and diety, dwarfing the observer who, aspiring to transcendence, never forgot his insignificance.

19th century concepts of the sublime and the self were later transformed in America into the transcendental landscape, where 'the painter loses sight of himself in the face of nature', eliminating his mediating or interpretive presence.

Another concept of subjective experience set out by the use of bodily fluids is Julia Kristeva's notion of the abject. 'Food loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection. Yet, it is refuse and corpses which show me what I permanently thrust aside in order to live. These bodily fluids, this shit is what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty on the part of death. There I am at the border of my condition as a living being. Such waste drops so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit; cadere, cadaver. It is death infecting life. Abject'. And it is to this condition that the title *Imagination Dead Imagine* (after Samuel Beckett) refers.
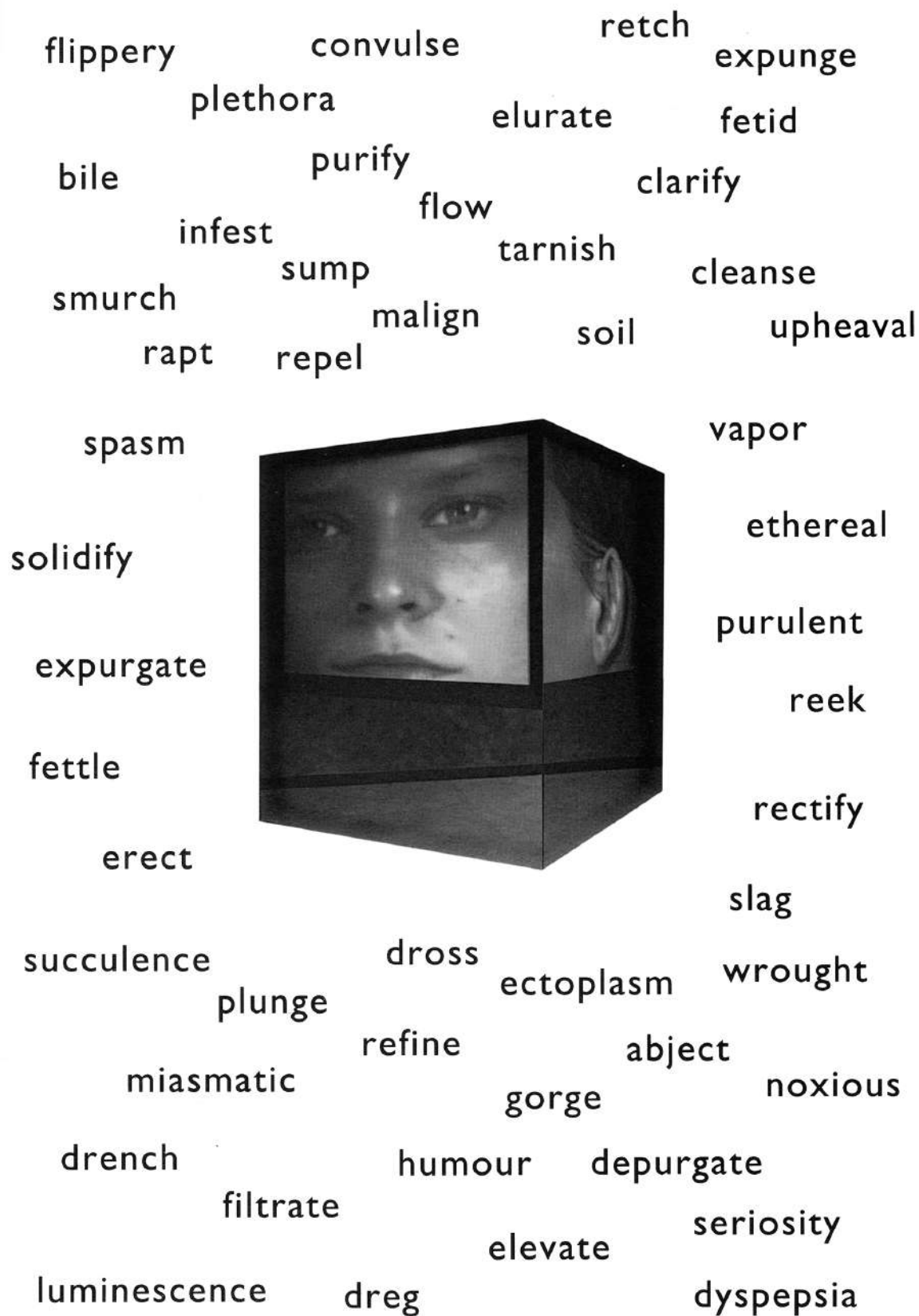
flippery

convulse

retch

expunge

plethora

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fetid

bile

purify

clarify

flow

infest

tarnish

sump

cleanse

smurch

malign

soil

upheaval

rapt

repel

spasm

vapor

solidify

ethereal

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erect

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ectoplasm

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refine

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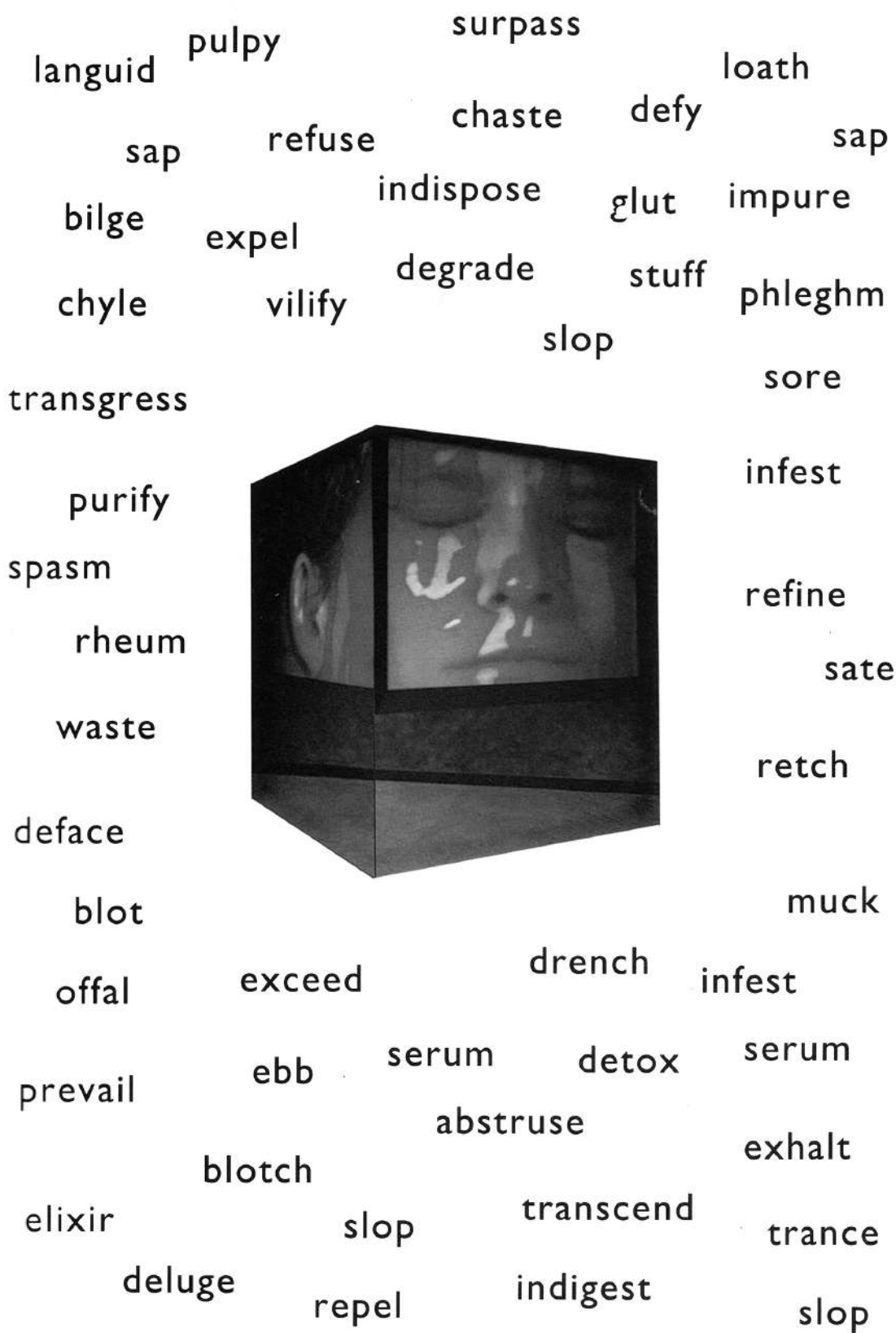miasmatic

gorge

noxious

drench

humour

depurgate

filtrate

seriosity

elevate

luminescence

dreg

dyspepsia

languid pulpy surpass loath

sap refuse chaste defy sap

bilge indispose glut impure

expel degrade stuff

chyle vilify slop phleghm

transgress sore

purify infest

spasm refine

rheum sate

waste retch

deface muck

blot drench

offal exceed infest

prevail ebb serum detox serum

abstruse

blotch exhalt

elixir slop transcend trance

deluge repel indigest slop

MODEL FOR STAGE
AND SCREEN 1987
Wood/ light, fog machine

Model for Stage and Screen is a projection piece where the viewer becomes the projector. Two discs are suspended in a chamber. Light and fog project out of the lower disc in such a way that eventually the viewer begins to experience a variety of retinal effects, (visions or hallucinations). Leaving the chamber and escaping from these hallucinations you experience another retinal effect, retinal excitation, as you see red on the white walls of the antechamber. It is a work where the spectator has little control over what s/he see.

Jonathan Müller, an early 19th century scientist, found that the nerves of different senses were physiologically distinct. When electricity was applied to different nerves it would generate different sensations: when applied to the optic nerve it produced a sense of light; applied to the skin, it reproduced the sense of touch. Muller also showed that the converse was true: a variety of different causes could produce the same sensation in a given sensory nerve. His experiments described the arbitrary relationship between stimulus and sensation, showing that the body has an innate capacity to misperceive, when all referential illusion is eliminated. Therefore, any coherent system of meaning based on perception through the body's senses is threatened.

I wanted to make a moment in a film where the spectator would suddenly be confronted filmically with the sensations of a real space; that awakening from the dream that is the movie, s/he

would find the theatre of space has continued. While maintaining the diegesis it would also fulfill the desire for narrative's closure. This is the film that leads out of the spectacle and into spectatorship, a promise of action continuing before the gaze.

Spectatorship being the incidence in which the gaze, above all else, is privileged - before action, before decision. This suggests two events inseparably linked together, where the desire to look and for the look to continue, crosses the desire for an end and for something of the past to take its place.

The prior event is the insistence of the inception of the gaze of Orpheus as he descends into the underworld and transgresses, by turning back, to look at Eurydice. This look, at a moment of forgetfulness, represents the locus of the gaze as the desire to unveil the mysteries of sexual difference and of death. It is in this moment of loss in the gaze that what was simultaneously once most desired is irretrievably lost. Without thinking, it represents that time in which desire is everything not of the world, but of another world, unknown without access.

This gaze, at the moment of its' giving over to an impetus so strong that it causes Orpheus to forget, is woven into the myth of the narrative as the representation of the inscription of the 'lack' as it passes from the temporal to the permanent, since Eurydice is taken from Orpheus on the wedding night before the final act. This eternal 'lack' speaks metaphorically not of castration,

but of the impossibility of seeing into that world where desire has presented itself. For it is into this darkness that it struggles most to perceive.

The other look, the gaze of Oedipus after he is King, is a difference. Blind eyes that only now see a truth that is beyond interpretation, being able to see, yet not seeing. Oedipus interprets again and again his own story. First of the oracle as told to him; then as a riddle, which he solves; then as a final oracle for which there is no solution. It is in the realisation of the impossibility of a solution that he blinds (castrates) himself, for it is here that he realises whose story must be told. The story of himself as it unfolds 'aprés coup', as a desire for the story about himself.

So it is that these two moments cross each other, the Orphic moment - the impetus for looking; and the Oedipal - the moment for insight. Yet with each, the gaze has a primacy that cannot contract ordinary experience, hence its metaphoric relationship with myth. This then becomes the logic, not for discourse, but for the ordering of discourse - for the structure of a narrative which cannot be played out.
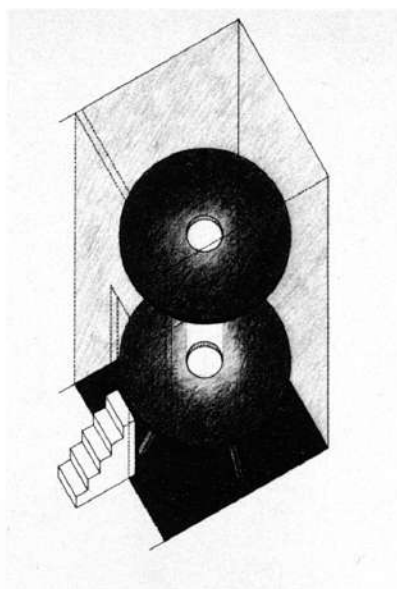
Wilful Amnesia

We were all together once and kind of stuck. We thought we had another condition for 'simultaneous collective reception' in television. After all, there we all were glued to the set. But the actual experience was different. Like the telephone we were connected only as we were separated by the apparatus itself.

But we were still stuck, wanting it, something. When we turned it on, and even when switching the channels, we wanted it. But what was it?

I kept going off on a tangent. I ran into my favourite renaissance scholar, realizing once again how much the desire for 'simultaneous collective reception' is tied to development of state-craft and the deployment of subjectivity. A monarch without a subject simply cannot be. And before that, too, religion, icons. But then nothing is ever comparable, and it is the differences that are important. And then asking a question: how is television not like 16th century masque balls in the English court of James, designed by Inigo Jones? That isn't a question so much as another kind of invention, history I did not trust. Of course, there were public processionals as well - court poets, painters and sculptors whose job it was to construct a symbology that could be read by the general public - Charles IX comes into Paris. That was 'simultaneous collective reception' in the 16th century, except the term didn't exist then and there are too many exceptions. There was for example a very different class structure both within the private domain (courtiers and not 'politicians') as well as the public (mercantile/peasant, but not bourgeois).

So where does that get us in terms of an analysis? And the term 'simultaneous collective reception' with its utopian optimism dating from the incidence of socialist revolutions.... that too, is something else. Benjamin Buchloh notes as he describes

this reception that entirely new forms of audience address had to be constructed if new 'masses' were also to be constructed. But who is making the construction; and in what sense are artists culpable? Unanswerable in terms of iconicity, unmanageable in terms of a present critique.

A riddle - like the history of the romance - beginning its life during the reign of Elizabeth I in the Ascension Day Tilts, where Elizabeth decided that she must replace the Church Festivals and be worshipped by her knights. It is not surprising then that the 'romance', becomes the 'romantic' with the triumph of wit in the 17th and 18th centuries - the mocking imaginative voice that could enjoy a form of social mobility, depending on who was in ear-shot. That was a romance, a fairytale: words were not things. Something for nothing, not contaminated by origins. But then monarchs were masters of rhetoric, too. You had to look the part and see your look reflected everywhere. Statehood consisted, in part, of being able to inhabit the role of the monarch, in the skilful reworking of popular mythology and the staging of dramas that could provide a lived experience (for a select audience of nobility) under specific conditions for a form of 'simultaneous collective reception'. James I's masques provided a seamless allegory which, as they were performed, took on the status of mythic truth. In the end, the monarchs came down off the small stage, real people were ennobled by the experience of the spectacle, and the king's story became everyone's.

This form of narration would ultimately find its way into the first person narrative of the novel and become democratized, as the romantic tradition took over the heroic figure and institutionalized the imagination. But it is still a riddle, how wit leading to the novel could point to a realm of experiences imaginable but not yet materialised; how a text could set into motion schemes for varieties of differing unimaginable outcomes.

How the text functions is, of course, through the psychoanalytic construction of one omnipotent presence of mastery and control allowable to the subject who can identify and find a place within the text. This is the transcendental subject philosophically inscribed throughout this system of representation, of metaphysics, of psychoanalysis and so on - we all know this and it is an old story.

It is the *collective* in 'simultaneous collective reception' that is important. That is what was at stake in the development of the cinema, particularly as a self-perpetuating machine. Yet in understanding the cinema's ability to mimic the unconscious, to literally re-enact its mechanisms and produce specific and predictable effects, it is not to a collective experience that reference is made, but rather to

a model that proposes and assigns a place to the spectator from which the 'hallucinated satisfaction' of infantile pleasure is recoverable. There is something else here as well. The cinema would have died out as just a curiosity had it not been able to be joined to the narrative tradition and tell a story. Once again it is the same story; a hero on a quest over and over again. And it is the same quest, for mastery and control. He must be master; and sadism demands a story - the ritual continuously presented for re-enactment, a strange form of worship.

Does TV provide a 'simultaneous collective experience' or is its power located in its ability to deliver the comfort of narrativity right into the home?

With our remote control devices, we ceaselessly change channels, looking for something, rarely stopping.

If we are unable to consistently watch something, does that mean that we no longer desire the kind of narrative closure implied by the format of the same story; the story of the hero and his quest? Perhaps. If the feelings of mastery and control usually associated with the autonomous ego's investment can be delayed or are no longer important concerns of subject positions, does this mean that other subject positions are possible? Or do we just exist in a timeless state suspended, waiting for something, some new chance for mastery and control. Certainly we are still looking.

There is, amid all the operations performed on a unified subjectivity, one figure, a remnant from the Romantic period that is still powerfully a part of contemporary imagination in much the same way as it was in its own time. That figure is the vampire. That this figure could survive several centuries in a basically unchanged state, (at least in terms of how he is understood) cannot be seen as a failure of imagination so much as a testament to the profound separation at the core of post-modern experience between a lived historical past and the continuing present. Consider the case of Baudrillard's schizoid subject stuck in front of his screen, seeing no separation between the private and public and having the experience of neither since he is schizoid and therefore, by definition, outside the bounds of the psychoanalytic remedy. How different Baudrillard's position is from Foucault's in *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault states: "He who is subjected to a field of visibility and who knows it assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself, he inscribes himself in a power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles, he becomes the principle of his own subjection." Baudrillard assumes, however, that this network is neutral and, rather than examine the void, he prefers to float. This leads to the 'final apathy', which to quote from Freud, is a condition wherein treatment is resisted. In one

sense, Baudrillard's concept of the 'hyper-real' might be said to function in much the same way that language functions for the schizophrenic. "In schizophrenia words are subject to the same process as that which makes the dream-images out of latent dreamthoughts - to what we have called the primary process. They undergo condensations and by means of displacement transfer their cathexes of one another in their entirety. This process may go so far that a single word, if it is specifically suitable on account of numerous connections, takes over the entire representation of a whole train of thought." Obviously, I am not saying that Baudrillard or his theory are exactly schizophrenic - I am only pointing out the neatness of a theoretical tautology from which for him there appears to be no escape. Schizophrenia is, according to Lacan, a failure of the subject to accede fully into the Symbolic, and results in psychosis. This formulation parallels notions around establishing a different order of subjectivity. However, it is precisely this order of subjectivity as difference definable as madness' which has always been located (since psychoanalysis) as 'other'. Octave Mannoni notes: 'What is truly Freudian is the discovery that the ego is the object of narcissism, that it belongs to the Imaginary order, that it can in some way be 'other' than ourselves, an image in which we can alienate ourselves, particularly in psychosis.' The crux of the argument both for different kinds of subjectivity and especially for those marginalized groups of others who include women, minorities, and any non-male groups or entities, revolves around the formulation of all differences as a kind of psychosis. That is the legacy of legitimation.

That said, what is so appealing about the vampire? Surely metaphor is no excuse for political practice. In turning, however, to one of the last great sentient beings of the Romantic imagination a reconsideration of the vampire myth from the vantage point of late 20th century capitalism may provide some insight into the possibilities for other formulations of subject positions.

The symbology of the vampire contains a cross-section of irremediable contradictions that lie at the heart of modernism. We all know the most obvious one: the vampire is not dead, yet he is not alive. He sucks life through the blood-kiss, yet he cannot bleed, except after 'feeding'. He cannot experience pleasure because he is no longer human; and of course, cannot procreate through the sex act, although he can make others like him, but they cannot assuage his loneliness. He lives outside of time and, as such, has no history, no memory, nor is he bound by the conventions of daily life. He must live at that time when all else is dead, at night. He lives in a dreaded state of anticipation and anxiety which carries with it a profound emptiness

and loneliness not remedial even by death for he cannot easily die. He must spend his time watching the lives of others who are unconscious of his very existence. He cannot stand his reflection because it reminds him of his situation. He cannot constitute himself as an 'other' through the mirror phase. He is doomed to be what he is, he cannot change the fact that he does not exist. The mirror does not lie here, does not allow him that feeling of mastery and control essential even to adult survival. It insists on showing him precisely the state he is in.

Most vampire stories describe the plight of the vampire, not as a victim, but as a member of the last vestige of the aristocracy, an aristocracy which feeds on the masses, inciting them to such a feverish pitch that they stalk the vampire and attempt to either burn or murder him in his crypt. He is portrayed usually as a male who feeds on the not quite sexually innocent females, those females who evidence desire, whom he seduces as he enters their bedrooms at night. He offers a sensuous pleasure and the possibility of surrender to something that is impossible to confront, creating in his victim, at first, a fervourous anxiety which sets up in the victim a particular kind of desire, and, in later stages, gives way to seeming apathy and delusions. Exactly what the configurations of this desire are, remain as always tied to particular plots, yet in most cases the victim ultimately desires to make into a vampire those that it most love.

In considering aristocratic social relations in terms of the control of images, one thing is clear. The aristocrat had culture and produced images, while it was often the peasant or artisan who was commissioned to *make* the images. In democraticizing these images, the bourgeois wanted to claim them for his own, to make them over, in a sense, into his own image. In a certain sense it could be argued that the vampiric symbol represents to the enlightened bourgeois the fear that something evil and horrible is at the core of bourgeois consciousness from the older aristocratic regime, and that it will forever be a part of the new consciousness, impervious to history or the passage of time. To be reminded of these social relations around the image sets up an angst that is only partially alleviated by proprietorship.

The early history of the bourgeois as a collector of images is well documented, but with the growth of mass cultural images a different hierarchy of the image emerges. And something of the old aristocratic regime returns. To begin with the images of mass culture are not democratic, but autocratic. One controlling image serving many people. Here the duality inherent in the relationship of the image to the masses recurs - the question of which it is - democratic or autocratic—hovers around each popular image. The question seems unresolvable and creates an

anxious tension by virtue of its impossibility and promise. The image works on the masses when, to refer to Metz's *Imaginary Signifier*, the spectator is in a certain kind of trance. And like the aristocrat, the image demands that a certain fealty be extracted. The nature of this fealty is a hunger, a hunger so powerful that it creates in the spectator the desire not only for more images, but for that state of mind produced by the images themselves.

This state of mind is a surrender to those conditions imposed by its regime - the reign of 'lifestyle'. This is not a state of being synonymous with the 'infantile pleasure' produced by narrative structure in the cinema. It is arguable that the pleasure of cinema is the pleasure experienced by the adult (as though he were an infant) as 'hallucinated satisfaction'; in taking up this position, or being served by these images, the consumer performs that double movement, the suspension of disbelief. Unlike conventional narrative, which sutures the consumer's place with its reliance on closure, switching channels allows for no such hallucinated satisfaction. The consumer is forced to confront the impossibility of his position. The place that is set is not necessarily for him. Desire is unrelieved and the non-narrative condition is characterized by a tenuousness, making sure that he (we) cannot exist on the other side of the screen, no matter what our desire, try as we might. Humanistic liberalism calls this state anxiety.

This is that state of anxiety produced by the conscious realization, on the part of the spectator, of the utter alienation and lifelessness of his or her position in front of the screen. 'Lifestyle' is unobtainable. Consumption brings no relief. McLuhan's message - that the medium is the actual action, or event - can be seen in one sense as the medium that is able to inhabit or take on the properties of a variety of forms. This echoes the process not of the construction of the symbol, but the locus of the space from which the present can be interpreted. This could again be the soothing seductiveness of textual analysis where, to give one example, the Symbolic can be reduced to a code, and read as that code which cannot be reduced beyond its binary oppositions - beyond, as Barthes states, the 'articulation of two face to face warriors engaged in a ritualized battle!' This symbolic code can be seen as inscribing into culture all of the central binary oppositions, the antitheses, that maintain the social order.

Yet what can a code tell us about the incidence of its own failure when any number of possible readings are available? The crisis of disbelief which surrounds the producer/reader of the television text is familiar to everyone. It is a legacy that characterizes the conscious relationship of the spectator to the television text. It is

also the same relationship that is characteristic of any would-be producer of a television/mass media broadcasted and received image. We watch consciously *or* we surrender, no longer struggling but giving up to the images a level of criticality that Barthes called the pleasure of the analysis. Unfortunately, this surrender does not produce satisfaction, but only the fervourous dreams of the possessed. The remedy for this condition as de Palma has shown in the film, *Body Double*, is action. It is only by *producing* images that the subject of mass culture begins to feel some measure of control over the alienation produced by this condition. The vampiric position becomes the position of the spectator in the face of mass culture. Simultaneously it must be embraced by the maker at the moment of action for the activity itself is horribly contaminated. Yet always in this ritual, there is the hope for another ritual of shared communion utopianistically defined as 'simultaneous collective reception' - a religious experience exchanged in alienation, at the site of a desire wholly mediated by this state.

So the images of mass culture might be said to construct a vampiric consumer. Like the vampire, the spectator cannot recover by consuming the images, or by avoiding them either. Just as the vampire cannot come back to life again as he was before, but only look forward to the nothingness of the present, rather than final death. The bourgeois has finally ingested the last traces of the vampiric condition, and become a kind of vampire himself. It is this crisis on *this* side of the screen, and not at the mirror, where this vampiric condition might be said to be felt most in all of its historical uneasiness. And it is this crisis in consciousness, what Freud called 'disavowal' which might be said to most characterize the vampiric state.

Vamp r y

She made a place for herself in her old spot. Carefully draping the red velvet around her body, naked again. Force of habit had led her to shed her clothes. It was dark. The time of night when she could no longer tell time, when it wasn't to be considered any longer. When even time couldn't tell, this time that was timeless, she thought. It was this time that she had chosen. A time when she could be anything, claim any past, absorb any fantasy. Like this, at this time, she felt she could most be herself.

Her past didn't add up to much yet, but there was no one she wanted to be. She wasn't a special woman singled out for great achievement. She would never be a mayor or a president, a famous artist or intellectual. And the tragic women of the past didn't interest her much either. There was no one she wanted to be but herself.

She knew there were ways to dream, as a few had, carrying their private fantasies out into the world, creating empires held together by a logic not of money or territory, but of the solemn power of desire - endlessly exchangeable, yet never satiated. This desire had passed through her on its way somewhere else, as it had propelled her to another place, perhaps even here. This desire had moulded her in its imageless way to be like it was, capable of assuming many forms, capable of circulating, so that part of her was always held up, watching for the other parts to catch up, to continue circulating. She spent much of her time waiting in this somewhere else, looking on as a voyeur, totally and completely absorbed, galvanized as she approached her own perversion.

In the daylight, faced with her desire, she rarely succumbed to it, preferring instead to sleep the disinterested sleep of a dreamer. So that when late night came and she awoke, the day took on an unreality already half-remembered by the night.

It was in this state that she had placed herself. In this domain that she waited for what she knew must eventually happen.

The room grew darker now. The faint moonlight from behind the jalousied windows moved off. The mansion was still. Nothing filtered through from the swimming pool, no bodies were outlined in the glass of the one-way mirror lining the walls of the huge bedroom. No laughter seeped under the heavy chateau door. No one was playing at the billiard table.

And just as her body began to ache from remaining lifeless for so long, she heard the door slowly open. Barely breathing, she watched as he entered the room, to the blackness that was familiar. He seemed tired. He didn't reach for the lights, but moved carefully, avoiding the big circular bed that usually occupied his attention, side-stepping the litter of newspapers, teletype print-outs, and other emblems of his empire that were uncharacteristically left to accumulate and remind him of the passing of time. This was his empire she knew, the place where he, too, was most himself.

All memories would stop soon. They would become what they were. She could see from her vantage point that he had stopped pacing and was looking towards the window, towards the city that he could only image through the blinds. A city he no longer saw. Soon he would approach the bed and turn the cameras on, just as he must have wanted to do when he was an usher at the movies. But unlike then, this movie would never end. And she would be immortalized, living forever, like the other women he possessed and then democratically shared with those who consumed the glossy pages of his magazine. In this mansion whose sole function was to protect the endless night, they would be forever. The only question was who would take the first bite.

She pushed the curtain aside and came up behind him. Her body lightly touching his back. As he turned and began to suck her, he asked again if she was already dead, or just so different she couldn't exist.
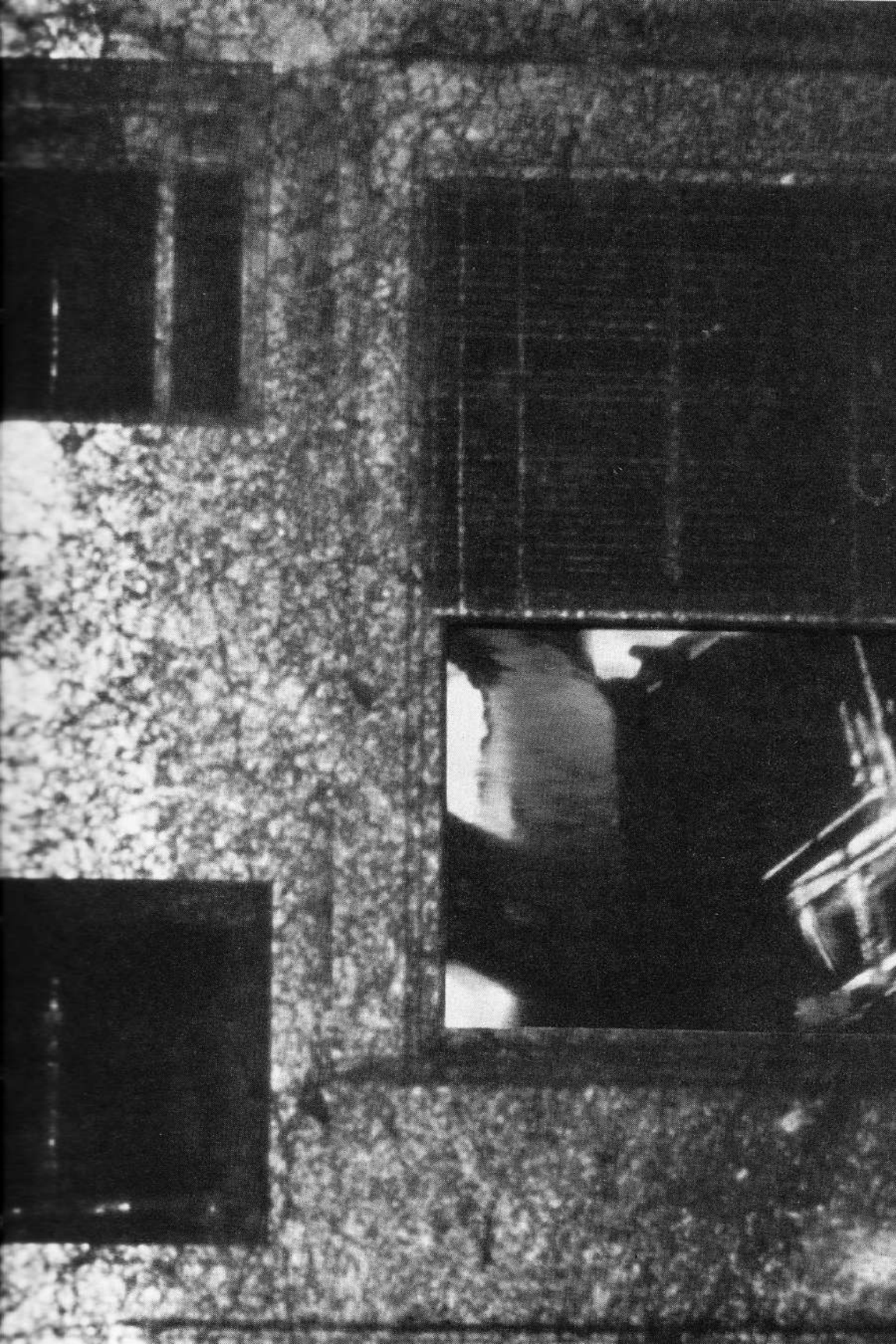
IN THE SHADOW OF THE CITY... VAMP R Y... 1982-85

1x2 ratio screen, 4 Super-8 loop projectors,
4 slide projectors, 2 dissolve units, cassette
player, amplifier, 2 speakers

This work simultaneously presents interior and exterior scenes. The viewer first encounters a giant projection of a parking lot; shot at night the scene includes 2 buildings. At the window of one, a woman stands and smokes, watching a young man sleep. A picture-window incongruously placed in the other, shed-like building, shows several figures looking out through half-drawn venetian blinds. The overall scene fades around the windows which are trans-posed into a different image. A high rise apartment block appears, equally cine-matic in scale. The 2 scenes being enacted through the windows continue, but with totally different meanings, codified by the change in their exterior settings. The other side of the screen shows the interior of an expensive, circa 1850 apartment and a 'post modern' couple, dressed in black and flanking 2 win-dows. One window shows a film sequence of a young suburban man returning home from work and tripping over the children's toys in his driveway. Shown in slow motion it is difficult to tell if he is tripping or flying. The other window shows a de Chirico-like pan of the bombed out buildings of the Bronx. Also in slo-mo the picture changes very subtly, almost like a dream. The slide image dissolves into another shot of the same apartment, uninhabited, ossified. The film loops continue playing, indicat-ing that nothing 'outside' has changed. The sound track is a mix of 16th century religious music and electronic sounds. It is reminiscent of the rever-berations in a cathedral after the sound

of chanting has died and as the city sounds of a business day take over. The spectator's relation to the film sequences is one of expected narration. We wait in front of the screen for something to happen, so we can come closer to be involved. But on each side, in different ways, we are refused entry, enthralled by an apparatus which was always intended to be literally over-powering. Unlike a film where we identify with an 'I' that will take us in (to the story and toward eventual mastery and control) here we identify with the place each image has created for us, and with the distance or separation that keeps us away.

For me, architecture as the bearer of the inscribed social relations structuring the world has been subsumed by media so that it can no longer exist in a 'platonic' way, as an idea expressed in built form, to stand forever. Instead I see this architecture as most like the montage theories of the cinema, particular images with symbolic impor-tance which take on meaning as we move through the environments that shape our existence. Architecture has become transparent, a giant screen into which social life dissolves. By making explicit certain unspoken yet intensely felt subject relations, my work attempts to develop a theory of mass/media consumer culture, whereby as opposed to Baudrillard's schizophrenic, we inhabit the world like vampires, those last great, sentient beings of the 19th century imagination who are neither dead nor alive.

FIRST AND THIRD 1987
Video beam projection

'Let me tell you a tale about your country and mine. It's about a young girl who wanted to come to the states. She was working in an office. She wasn't educated, just a poor girl from the country-side whose family had sent her to Buenos Aires to see if she could get a better life for herself. She'd never been to such a big city before, so all the time she is reading and going to the cinema. She liked very much the cinema of the USA especially the love stories. Gradually she is befriended by the man who owns the business where she works. He asks her if she would like to accompany his children, as a kind of companion on a trip they will make to New York. Before she leaves she visits a fortune teller. She is told that she will get a white dress when she goes to New York and that a gringo will come and take her away. Sure enough, her boss brings her a present of a white dress the day they arrive. She is so excited that she changes into it and goes for a walk. But, as she is crossing the street, a car driven by a white man runs a red light, and suddenly she is dead.'
South American woman in her 20s

I began collecting the true stories for this work several years ago. I was interested in the newly arrived 'American's impressions of the States, and her or his ability to come to terms with the contradictory messages of American ideology with its promises of equality, personal freedom and so on. After I had collected about 12 of these stories, I was invited to participate in the Whitney Biennale. This seemed an appropriate piece for this space as it underscored the Whitney's own contradictory position of being mandated to show only American art: art that is generally from the white middle class, art that is certainly not representative of any other historical subject position. I edited the stories to point out the contradictions at the heart of the lived, everyday experience of many immigrants and minorities. The stories were narrated by actors. Their head shots comprise a series of video projections, each short story separated by a one minute interval so that unlike a news broadcast they would not run together into a continuous flow of disaster. On a metaphorical level these electronically generated projections reveal no beams of light; therefore the walls themselves appear to speak. They can also be presented in a range of architectural spaces generating new meanings in different contexts.

The background of these direct address video portraits lies in the way certain theoretical perspectives have questioned notions of history particularly in relation to film theory and the construction of subjectivity.

In the 1970s history as 'truth represented as past experience' was challenged by new understandings about the way discourse functioned in the terrain of signifying systems. Through analogy to classical realist Hollywood film, Christian Metz suggests that both history and discourse present forms of fiction. Metz develops Emile Benveniste's concept of the difference between history and discourse: 'The story as a system makes it possible to

reconcile all, since history in Benveniste's terms is always a story told from nowhere, told by nobody but received by someone.' While discourse, articulating that which is suppressed by history, is the address of the avant-garde.

Michel Foucault further located history in the terrain of signifying practices; by combining Althusserian Marxism with Lacanian ideas about how the subject is constructed through language, he was able to show how people's daily lives are shaped by institutional discourses outside their control. In this genealogy, history is reduced to the discursive practices that locate subjects and subject positions.

Roland Barthes' work on how it is that subjects are created through the reading of the text was used by Metz to discuss how subjects are positioned through the act of watching a film. He notes that 'In watching a film, I help it to be born, I help it live, since it is in me that it will live and it was made for that, to be seen, i.e. to come into existence only when it is seen.' These theories implied that the historical subject was to be written out of film theory because we can know nothing about this subject and because this subject was in a fixed position, constructed by institutional practices and the film/literary text.

Recently, Marxist and feminist theorists have begun to question these monolithic and a-historical constructions of subject positions seeking to put back into place questions of race, class, gender and differing terms of reception/resistance. For instance, one question now frequently addressed has been to try to find out how far actual historical subjects (receivers) resist the positioning that institutional discourses set for them. It was in this context that *First and Third* was constructed.

DÉPENSÉ 1990
wood, glass, video projection and documents
TSWA Four Cities Project, Glasgow

Although it was built in the nineteenth
century, and looks like an authentic ruin, the
old Cheese Market was abandoned only one
year ago. The interior, with it's wrought
ironwork, vernacular wood panelling, and
two interior towers suggests a Serlio-esque
stage set; a place in which all of the city
might be represented. The Cheese Market
was a place for exchange, so it seemed
appropriate that it be used in keeping with
its former function. Suspended from one of
the towers is a large case display similar to
one that you might find in an anthropology
or history museum. It's hinges are rusted,
and the locks have been pried open, the
glass front of the case is broken and the
fabric covering the structure is torn and
dirty. Spilling out of this vitrine are many
images of Glasgow's past - work that can no
longer be performed, buildings that have
been torn down, tenement neighbourhoods
that have been razed, trams and ships and
trains that no longer run; many of those
things that indicate that a former way of life
has disappeared. These images fill the fog-
laden air, waiting to be traded. Similarly, on
the floor in front of the vitrine, littering the
floor, are numerous documents of work long
past, of moments and incidents half-
forgotten, of time spent. These are also
waiting, but there is a difference. They can
not participate in the nostalgia factory, they
will never be used to feed the nostalgia
machine. For they are unexchangeable, and
now have no value. Even though once as
time sheets and business orders, drawings
and receipts, they were essential. The
measure of that which had been exchanged,
the very measure of work. And so they are
here, in this old market, as the reminder of
the quantifiable nature of time and the
character of certain kinds of loss.

MIRAGE 1984-85

3/4" colour video, stereo sound, 9 mins

This science fiction Western tells the story of a Native American Indian trying to return to a small town after the Vietnam war. Set in Lubbock, on the West Texas Plains, the action is located in the town's main tourist attraction, the 'Ranching Heritage Center'. Using the device of the road movie, the film explores the plight of the native, homeless within the reconstructed and fake history metaphorically suggested by the Center. We see through the eyes and time-space sense of the native, the tragedy of a destroyed heritage. This story was constructed from the writings and remembrances of Native American authors and local people who identified as Native Americans.

Mirage is an odd hybrid, something American, grown out of the red dust that is West Texas soil. A science fiction western. Has anything changed? It asks questions to interrogate a history that still exists, but isn't spoken. It refers to a time, the distant present, whose truth, such as it is, cannot be taken lightly: race, miscegenation and death.

Now you see it, now you don't. And can you trust what your eyes are seeing? Would you even know it, if you could?

Starring John Herring, Patricia Pope, Suzanne Bernard, Carl Pugh / Camera: Suzanne Griffith / Lighting: Kathryn Cloud / Production Manager: Ricahrd Privitt Music: Steve Paxton / Camera Assistant: Eric Noble / Post Production Editor: Rick Feist / Producer: Judith Barry, Kim Smith
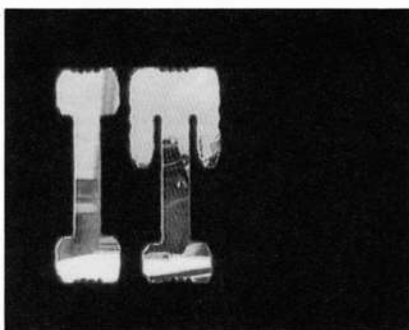
Designed Aesthetic: exhibition design and the Independent Group

One of the most direct and successful means by which the members of the Independent Group sought to address issues of popular culture and to engage a public was through the design of exhibitions. Over the course of its existence from 1952 to 1959, members of the IG were involved on various levels with the design and construction of several major exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Arts; and many members of the IG contributed to *This Is Tomorrow* at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1956. These exhibitions were characterized by a non-hieratic approach to art and photography, generally eschewing fine art objects and presenting images in the form of reproduction exclusively. In addition, the seemingly random installations utilized a montage approach which encouraged radical juxtapositions and privileged a heightened visual perception.

What is interesting from our contemporary vantage point is the way in which their analysis of advertising, styling, and technology through discussion groups and 'chaotic' exhibitions provided an index to the ways in which design - both as a product and as a producer of desire - could be approached through popular culture. For the IG, design became an unrepressed term whose circulation made possible the animation of a new series of relations within the fine-arts field. It seems clear that design - particularly product design but also interior and exhibition design - offered a visual lexicon familiar to many of the participants. Reyner Banham was a design historian and critic, Alison and Peter Smithson, James Stirling, Colin St. John Wilson and Alan Colquhoun were architects, Theo Crosby and Edward Wright were graphic designers, and Richard Hamilton taught design at the Central School of Arts and Crafts. Design, rather than fine art, was the language through which they

observed and apprehended the structure of their environment and the technology which was reshaping it. Design also became the medium through which all forms of popular culture could be critically evaluated.

In many respects the IG was like a visual think-tank; its discussions and exhibition plans were hashed out in a manner more similar to that of a design team in an architect's office than an artist in a studio. The lectures and discussions provided the raw materials and ideas for a collective thinking from which emerged a series of exhibitions. The collaborative nature of the meetings and projects distinguished the group efforts from the more private artistic practices of painting, sculpture, design, or collage. The members of the IG came together not so much as artists, but as collectors of images and information, which they sought to share. The exhibitions, rather than the art produced by individual group members, provides the clearest expression of their critical thinking.

Considered as a product, an exhibition is substantially and materially different from a work of art. Since an exhibition is temporary, difficult to represent in two-dimensional form, generally not portable, different from the sum of its parts, expensive to produce, not collectible and definitely not a commodity, it violates most of the tenets that structure a conventional object's entrance into the marketplace or into art history and criticism. Moreover, an exhibition, in that it is site-specific and confronts the viewer's passage through time and space while arranging a mass of material into a more or less coherent demonstration of a particular point of view, is in a rather complex and interactive way about the stimulation and sharing of ideas. Clearly, it is for this reason that the formulation of exhibitions appealed to the IG.

Given the shifting membership of the group and the widely divergent viewpoints, no coherent strategy was fully articulated, no manifesto written. One clear statement of a fundamental position of the group was expressed in the famous letter which Richard Hamilton sent to the Smithsons shortly after *This Is Tomorrow*. In that letter Hamilton described the IG's important 'manifestations' (including discussions and exhibitions) of the postwar years, drawing out the common thread of pop art/technology. The objective of this research, was to define pop art in terms of its main components: 'Popular (designed for mass audience), Transient (short-term solution), Expendable (easily forgotten), Low cost, Mass-produced Young (aimed at youth), Witty, Sexy, Gimmicky, Glamorous, Big Business.'[1] Within the field described by this list the IG was primarily interested in popular culture that dealt with technological change; they had no interest in soap opera, folk art, or

romance novels. Indeed, they seemed most interested in images that showed specifically how technology might change representation, as well as how technological change might be represented.

One of the critical concerns of the IG - both in selecting found images and in formulating exhibitions - was how individuals would respond to and interact with the new technological environment. Exhibitions, combining large-scale reproductions and movement through space, with suggestions of both the museum and the trade fair, served to suggest this change in visual perception as well as social and economic relations. By greatly enlarging photographs originally reproduced in books or magazines, they succeeded in transforming a visual text into something closer to mass propaganda or advertising. In this respect, the exhibitions functioned like an inversion of reading, as a type of fantasy experience sustained by a cinematic scale of imagery and by the potential for group reception.

Photography as a means of representation and as a device for exhibition design had been widely used in European trade, international festivals and design exhibitions since the 1920s. The pioneering work of El Lissitzky (particularly in the Cologne *Pressa* exhibition of 1928), and others, signalled the great possibilities that huge-scale photomontage sequences held for engaging the spectator through a direct and specifically controlled denotative relationship.[2] What the IG derived from the history of exhibition design seems to have been an interest in the production of a visual environment where flux and change, expendability, and the effects of new reproductive technologies might find expression.

In particular, they reflect a conscious engagement with the political and social conditions in England in the 1950s, not just through representations, but through a concrete (and sometimes metaphorical) analysis of ideologically inflected imagery. *Growth and Form*, for example, which was organized by Richard Hamilton for the ICA in 1951, is clearly a political allegory of the rebirth and restructuring of England and the postwar economy after the devastation of World War II. The theme of the exhibition was derived from D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson's book *On Growth and Form* (1917). The exhibition was originally proposed as part of the festival of Britain - a sort of postwar spirit-booster - but was vetoed by Herbert Read, president of the ICA, who failed to see the relationship of the exhibition to the festival's stated

1. Richard Hamilton, *Collected Words*, London: Hans-Jorg Mayer, 1983, p.28. This letter was written in January, 1957.

2. See Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, 'From Faktura to Factography', *October*, 30 Fall 1984.

This is Tomorrow, 1956
Whitechapel Art Gallery, London

theme: one hundred years of British achievement.[3] The exhibition, as installed at the ICA in 1951, utilized an organic-looking screen and floor- and ceiling-mounted projectors to animate the space. These devices also served to link the photographic representations of the diverse forms and structures found in nature.[4]

In 1953, Nigel Henderson, Eduardo Paólozzi, Alison and Peter Smithson, and Ronald Jenkins organized an exhibition at the ICA entitled *Parallel of Life and Art*.[5] This exhibition - originally called *Sources* - was conceived as the externalization of the image collections and scrapbooks assembled by the organizers. It also referred to the great modernist image collections of Moholy-Nagy (*The New Vision*), Ozenfant (*Foundations of Modern Art*), and Giedion (*Mechanization Takes Command*). In all, about a hundred photographic enlargements of various sizes were included in the exhibition, hung at oblique angles to one another and at varying heights. Included were images of machines, diagrams, hieroglyphics, X-rays, microphotographs, children's drawings and reproductions of works of art. On the whole the photo-graphs presented a rather grim and surreal panorama - especially in contrast to the rather more protean *Growth and Form* - prompting certain critics to accuse the organizers of 'flouting . . . the traditional concepts of photographic beauty, [perpetuating] the cult of ugliness and denying the spiritual in Man.'[6] The fact that the representations came from outside the art context, that they were not labelled or captioned, and that they were hung free-floating in a deliberately non-hieratic space, all reflected the organizers' belief that such imagery was altering the experience of daily life more than work being produced by 'fine artists'.

Richard Hamilton organized and designed another major exhibition at the ICA in 1955, this time focusing on technological development of all types of vehicles in an exhibition ultimately titled *Man Machine and Motion*.[7] For the design, Hamilton used modular steel frames to which were attached photo blowups and

3. Anne Massey, 'The Independent Group: towards a definition,' *Burlington Magazine* Vol. CXXIX, no. 1009 April 1987.

4. *Growth and Form* was held at the Institute of Contemporary Art, July 4 - August 31, 1951.

5. *Parallel of Life and Art* was held at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Sept. 11 - Oct. 19, 1953.

6. Reyner Banham, referring to the response of students at the Architectural Association discussion, in 'New Brutalism', *Architectural Review* 118, no. 708, December 1955.

7. *Man, Machine and Motion* was held at the Hatton Gallery, King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne in May 1955, and the Institute of Contemporary Art, July 6-30, 1955. The catalogue included a text by Reyner Banham and was designed by Andrew Froshaug.

plexiglas panels. This flexible system of cubicle modules completely surrounded the viewer with an open, mazelike structure which had the effect of echoing the exhibition's content (an idea the artist apparently derived from Duchamp): the spectator's motion in relation to a moving object. In one sense, Hamilton's interest in exhibition design was a way of exploring this phenomenon in a three-dimensional environment. In this exhibition in particular, he was able to investigate the history and variety of what he called 'adaptive appliances' - or machines which facilitated this changing perception of movement through space. Reyner Banham's essay in the catalogue situates this interest in the context of the legacy of futurism. The ideology surrounding futurism seemed to mimic that of the IG's with its interest in technology and the machine, sharing with it the essence of the popular cultural experience - its expendability, impermanence and adaptation to change.

This is Tomorrow, organized by Theo Crosby at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1956, gave twelve architect/artist teams the opportunity to design environments which by foregrounding the concept of design revealed new relations in fine art and architecture. Richard Hamilton and John McHale as artists and John Voelcker as architect, produced a visual synthesis of their shared interests in popular imagery, scale and spectator motion in the form of a built structure that could physically produce a heightened perception of two- and three-dimensional stimuli. A variety of different kinetic and synaesthetic materials were combined in a display system more reminiscent of a funhouse than an art gallery. Not only the sense of sight, but also sound and touch, were activated through the environmental use of a jukebox, movies and live microphones displayed throughout a tactile structure. *Patio and Pavilion*, produced by the team of Peter and Alison Smithson as architects and Eduardo Paolozzi and Nigel Henderson as artists, isolated the built world as a set of basic needs - a parcel of land, a patio and an enclosed space, a pavilion. Less a collaborative effort than a summary of their common concerns, this habitat with its reflecting aluminum enclosure, forced the spectator to consider him- or herself as a reflection of the environment, while simultaneously alluding to the impossibility of returning to a more primitive existence, since the entrance to the pavilion was blocked with wire.

The last exhibition associated with the IG was *an Exhibit* organized by Hamilton, Lawrence Alloway, and Victor Pasmore.[8] As Hamilton recalls, *an Exhibit*

8. *an Exhibit* was held at the Hatton Gallery, King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 3-19, 1957, and at the Institute of Contemporary Art, August 13-24, 1957.

was structured around the idea of abstraction: there would be 'no theme, no subject: not a display of things or ideas [but a] pure abstract exhibition.'[9] What he meant was that the exhibition would have no overt content related directly to popular imagery, but would be about the process of producing visual meaning. The exhibition consisted of panels of various colors and degrees of translucency which were distributed along modular grids and systematically installed. Perhaps the culmination of Hamilton's own exploration of exhibition design, the panels were arranged in such a way that as the spectator passed through them, compositions were generated.

After the late 1950s the discussion group/exhibition format of the IG seemed to splinter as each member became more involved in the exigencies of private practice - Hamilton, McHale and Paolozzi moved more toward fine art; the Smithsons extended their practical exploration of New Brutalism; and Banham, Alloway and others concentrated increasingly on theory and criticism. Seemingly, the moment to reproduce something temporary had passed. It makes you wonder if the impetus that created the desire to analyze this 'designed aesthetic' was satiated, or if what Hamilton had predicted in 'Persuading Image' had already happened, 'that the consumer will be designed to fit the product,' thus rendering analysis improbable.

9. Hamilton, *Collected Words*, op. cit. p. 26.
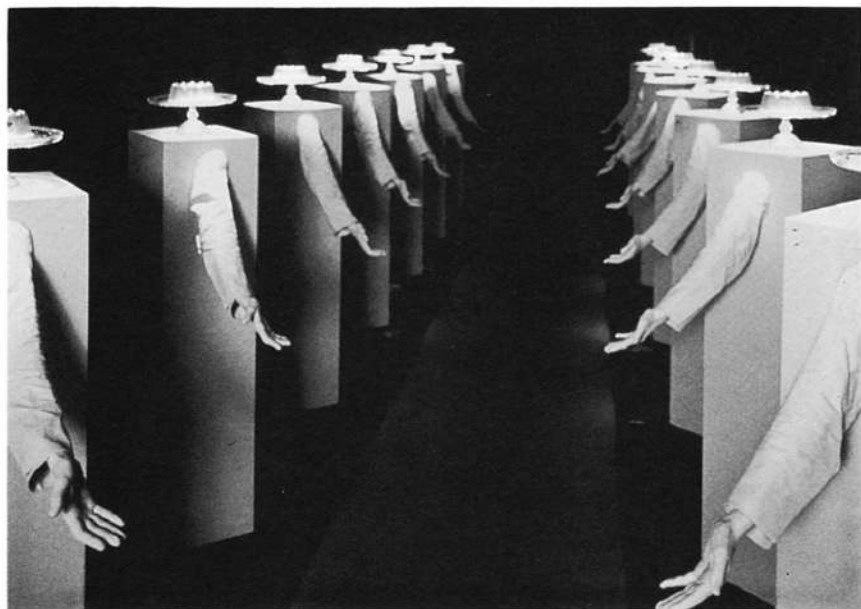
above:
Television Show, 1990
Exhibition at New Museum, New York
below:
Damaged Goods (Justin Ladda), 1986
Exhibition at New Museum, New York

Exhibition designs made in collaboration with Ken Saylor

Dissenting Spaces

'Space: That which is not looked at through a key hole, not through an open door.
Space does not exist for the eye only: it is not a picture; one wants to live in it.'
El Lissitzky, *Proun Space* 1923

In his manifesto for the *Proun Space* installation at the Great Berlin Art
Exhibition of 1923, El Lissitzky related his function as an exhibition designer to his
artistic practice and to his desire, in the Proun series, to establish an 'interchange
station between painting and architecture ...to treat canvas and wooden board as a
building site.' From these early investigations (later somewhat transformed by the
Revolution), Lissitzky developed an approach to exhibition design that sought to
problematize the role of the spectator, to create 'by means of design' an active
participation rather than a passive viewing.

In one of his most famous exhibition designs - the *Demonstration Room* for
the International Art Exhibition in Hannover and Dresden in 1926 - Lissitzky was
faced with the problem of how to display an overwhelming amount of work in a
rather small and intimate space. His solution involved the use of thin wooden strips
attached to the wall at 90° angles and in vertical rows; these strips were painted white
on one side and black on the other and mounted against a grey wall. From one
vantage the wall appeared white, from the other side it appeared black, and when
viewed from the front it seemed to be grey. Thus, according to Lissitzky, the artworks
were given a triple life. In addition, the paintings were double hung on a movable
panel system so that while one of the two was visible, the other could be partially
seen through the perforations of the sliding plate. In this way Lissitzky claimed to

have achieved a solution whereby the specially designed room could accommodate one and a half times as many works as a conventional room. At the same time, only half of the works could be seen at any one time.

We might compare Lissitzky's method to that other exhibition/display system which reached its apogee in the 1920s: the life-size diorama. Most notoriously instituted in the Museum of Natural History, New York, the diorama is perhaps best characterized by Carl Akeley's famous gorilla group diorama completed in 1926. There the spectacle itself (in this case the spectacle of 'nature' and 'wildlife') must be duplicated and recreated in such a way that the viewer might experience simultaneously the power of domination as well as the surrender of belief. At the same time, the quest for greater and greater versimilitude had already culminated in the development of the cinema apparatuses, so that in one sense at least the dioramas of the Museum of Natural History point to a relative loss of power instilled in the object.

Previously, the Victorian era - the historical juncture of both industrialization and psychoanalysis - had produced a fetishization of the domestic object leading to the design of specific cabinets enclosed in glass for display. But the exotic and fetishized objects, often collected from foreign lands, also referred to another tradition of display: the spoils of war. In 'Greco-Roman' times, displaying what had been taken in conquest had taken on various meanings since 'bounty' was exhibited not only to nobility, but also to commoners and slaves. Those who lined the streets gazed in awe at power conquered, brought home through possession, and served up as symbolic consumption. This dramatic exposition of the conquered object, surely the beginning of fetishism as developed in Freud's reworking of the myth, leads to a reconsideration of possession: as in, who is possessed and who is not. The numinious object lies in waiting, ready to grab hold, to snare, anyone who will dare to look. Medusa's head or Eurydice or the Gilded Calf: one can come close only to transgress.

But possession can take another form. That of a refusal or denial as in the case of functionalist design. Most utopian movements in design have tried to strip the object of its symbolic powers, as though the power of utility could somehow restrain the object's power over us. But, as Robert Venturi points out, functionalism was only symbolically functional: 'It represented function more than resulted from function.' Exhibition design, particularly in relation to objects, is deeply symbolic - it can rest on no other ground.

So we have the two poles of exhibition design: the theatrical, as in Akeley's

gorilla group diorama: and the ideological, as in the constructivist *Demonstration Room* by Lissitzky. Both reflect a desire to present situations in which the viewer is an active participant in the exhibition, and as Benjamin Buchloh points out, historically this incorporation of the viewer was symptomatic not only of a crisis in the representation(s) of the modernist paradigm, but also a crisis of audience relations 'from which legitimation was only to be obtained by a re-definition of its relations with the new urban masses and their cultural demands.'

Increasingly, these cultural demands were resolved under the sway of another kind of exhibition design, one designed not simply for display, but specifically for consumption, to cause an active response in the consumer, to create an exchange. This is the situation of the retail store. For it is in these spaces, in which one lives and works and through whose media apparatuses one is enculturated, that we find the congruence of the theatrical and the ideological, to my way of thinking, the culmination of exhibition design.

To develop this practice to be something other than just a way to move the eye through space, to make the spectator actually inhabit the space, Lissitzky had to produce an architectural effect. But for Lissitzky this was only an effect (as Buchloh notes, a shift in the perceptual apparatus), without a call to action, without a change in the social institution itself.

On the other hand, Maurice Blanchot, writing in *L'Espace*, declaims that space is discontinuous—the product of the engagements of forces, the void through which threatening gestures must be exchanged. Yet all resistance does not necessarily occur in space; rather it takes place through the agency of discourses that mark, channel, and position the body through and in other perspectives (read as representational systems). One challenge, then is to confront the supremacy of the eye/I (no accident that homonym in English!).

How to force a confrontation? If architecture embodies our social relations, then presentational forms (including staging and lighting devices from the theatre, opera and Las Vegas, as well as more obvious museological techniques) must refer to ways in which we wish to experience these relations. One confrontational tactic yet to be tried is the subversion of the wish for closure, possession, and gratification. One way to do this might be to make threatening the assumed neutrality of the exhibition space itself.

This need not be yet another call for 'the end of art' (as we know it) but more a further acknowledgement of the ways in which, to paraphrase Tony Smith's remarks at the beginning of 'Minimalism', 'it is the experience that is important. An

experience that is mapped out, but not socially recognised.' Minimalism allowed for the spatialisation of experience. Numerous other contemporary discourses produce different subjects within spaces that are ideologically coded. In exhibition and museum design, it is precisely these relations that need further elaboration. Given these conditions, the exhibition becomes the set for a play with objects describing various possible subject positions and making the viewer spatially as well as visually aware.

Damaged Goods, 1986
Exhibition at New Museum, New York
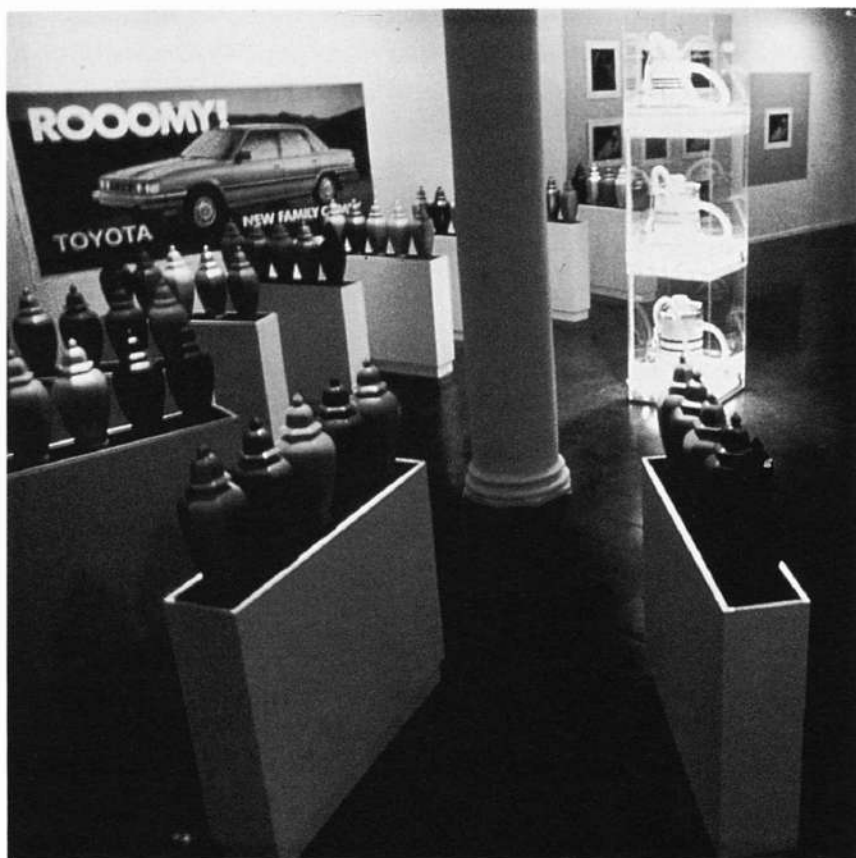
SPACE INVADERS 1982

3/4" colour video, stereo sound, 5 mins

We play video games knowing that we will lose. Our strategy is to react, to fire first, to try to discern the all important rules for discourse that determine the length of time before we will be shot out of the sky, before we must try to return. There is no overt narrative to link us to the past, no shared fantasy with the others around us, no longing or memory. Only the present and a barrage of lights and action and the over-powering feeling that we are really there or here, somehow more alive than before.

The body in space, floating, replaces the essentiality of drama, but was this always the case? Hugo Ball transformed himself into a marionette, a mannequin celebrating the reduction of man to a machine. Celebrating or lamenting, it is unclear. The Italian Futurists saw the metropolitan universe as devoid of sense or place, expressing a nostalgia for the future as well as the past. As George Simmel remarked, 'Pure nervous stimulation was the foundation of metropolitan activity.' The din of the city is seen as the sole reality; the joke, the agonized attitude converge in a re-iterated suicide attempt to teach those who can understand, to laugh at moral and material pain. By 1922 the mannequin jester was transformed into a clown capable of assuming a new identity, of pleasing those he serves, of prodding the Unconscious into a positivistic reconciliation of humankind with the city as a living machine: and we are all equal and all the same, we machines. From then on, writes Manfred Tafuri, the constructivist theatre sets itself up as the model for a positive

relation between man and machine, not because the cause of alienation has vanished, but rather because it has become greater. The Russian constructivist Mejerchold's method became that of wrapping within work the need for play, where this play could be taken back to the beehive of production and enslaved by it. With a maximum of planning and mechanization (and therefore only by total alienation) could mass human kind re-explode into a collective 'labor fest', liberated by the sacrificial rites of Dadaism, the disbelief in it all - the body trapped by its machines has no hope of being free. It shows up its own imperfections with the Soviet experiences of the early 1920s: it is no longer the theatre which went into the city, but the city that re-entered the theatre, the bio-mechanical acrobat had become the prophet of a society of total work. Oscar Schlemmer's marionette lived by the creed: all that can be mechanized must be mechanized, result - we can see that which cannot be mechanized. A big yes that reduces humankind to being a marionette liberates the same marionette, for the mannequin is 'that body which either has no consciousness at all or an infinite one; that is to say either a marionette or a god.'

Space Invaders is a science fantasy that maps the terrain of three environments connected through their access to what in the 60s might have been conceived of as a 'global village'; the giant video screen of the disco, the home television, and the video arcade game. But this global community has grown so

powerful that its inhabitants want to carry their own worlds with them. When that happens, what becomes of the present? Worlds collide and pretty soon 'everyone is a star'. Just like Andy Warhol predicted, but now it is for longer than 15 minutes.

Starring: Gina Marchito, Wayne Fielding and Mark Pierce / Edited by John O'Hearn and Johanna Drucker / Music: Sonic Youth / Special Effects: Chronicle Productions / Audio Rerecording: Peter Miller Studios / Production: EC Productions / Post Production: Television Office, UC Berkeley

Choros

The noise was over-powering. And yet she couldn't tell what made it so. It wasn't that it was impossible to hear, for when she listened selectively she could make out all the sounds, words even. And it wasn't only the acoustics, although she wasn't sure exactly where she was. But it seemed that when she didn't pay selective attention to each and every one of the sounds, that they all conspired to force their way through her ears.

It had not always been like this. Certainly, while she was waiting to go in she could still hear. Speak, too. Yet now, when she moved her mouth against the roar, nothing she could think to say would come out. In fact, when her mouth opened to push the hot air from her body out into the noise, it made only the softest of sounds, a gasp.

There was too much to see. All around her were others as well. Busy dodging the whistling objects that filled the air. A TV set flew by, still broadcasting the news; balls of all sizes whizzed around, each one just missing a hit; household objects - worse than home-shopping - were falling about; a vacuum cleaner hose sucked in too close to her as a toaster popped itself up and out, airborne. Moving to the left and to the right, she looked for shelter. But there was no place to go, no place to get out of the way. She didn't think that the objects were meant for any one of them, but surely they were all looking.

Deep space, so deep that it completely dimmed the edges, surrounded them with a tangible suspense. She could no longer tell which way she had come. Out of the darkness a number of forms moved. Somehow they were illuminated by lighting that followed them, travelling with them wherever they went. A large group of men

were herded and were herding a smaller group of women who chanted and yelled at the men, moving rapidly towards them and then, just as quickly, away. Weaving in and out of the flying objects was an ever-increasing group of people of which she was a part. In an extreme close-up she saw that the women were crying, although she knew that she had not changed positions. The change could only be ascribed to something else.

Behind them was another group of women leading or carting a woman on a tall stand. She was balanced precariously on a beam, dashing back and forth across it so rapidly that she could not fall off. As she came to each end of the beam she shrieked. The women who were rolling her carried on a conversation among themselves in an easy way, making it seem that the beam-woman's gestures and screams were completely unimportant.

Off in the distance she could make out the shape of cities. These were cities that she might have seen before but couldn't name. As she continued to look, they ran together. First appearing in one way, then another. Sometimes a part of a building, then a window, then a whole street. And then the perspective shifted as well, dipping and whirling about in a mad kind of dance. Depositing building parts around for them to see and then casually dissolving them into something else. What she could not be sure.

Just as she was thinking, a cart carrying another woman erupted into the midst of the chanting men and women. Now she noticed that the clothes were not clothes, but were more like robes. She noticed this because the new woman in the cart was tearing at her garment and gesturing wildly to the ever-increasing group of people that made up the crowd of which she was a part. She was getting crushed by the bodies as they pressed against her in their attempts to get closer to this woman. The woman's hair flew about her body and fell below her waist. She touched her breasts and scratched at her skin, drawing blood with her long fingernails. And just as the blood began to roll down her body like red tears, a giant bear pushed its way through the crowd and jumped into the cart with the woman. He grabbed at her hair, tearing it out in huge hunks, and throwing it to the crowd, until she was completely bald. Now her scalp was bleeding. Then the bear lashed her to the front of the cart and chained four of the herding men to the yoke, making them pull the woman through the crowd.

While all of this was going on, household items still filled the air, and the ground they were standing on was constantly exploding with buildings and their parts. People around her were struggling to make sounds now, so much so that the

air became even more oppressively hot. She knew that she would explode very soon. The woman who was lashed to the front of the cart was now unconscious. The bear was beside itself. Catching the fastmoving stand of the beam-woman, it climbed her pole and flung itself into the air. For a moment she thought that the bear could fly. But then it caught one of the flying objects in its stomach and slowly fell to the ground. Suddenly, as the bear fell, the people found their voices and began to scream, tentatively at first, and then more loudly, until everyone was screaming uncontrollably and so loudly that she could not recognize her screams from the screams of the others. They all blended together as one.

It took a while for everyone to realize that the bear, with what looked like one of the TV sets in its stomach, had landed. When the people saw this, they gradually became quiet. The objects stopped falling and the cities disappeared. Everything became still. And she found that they were standing on a vast and grassy plain.
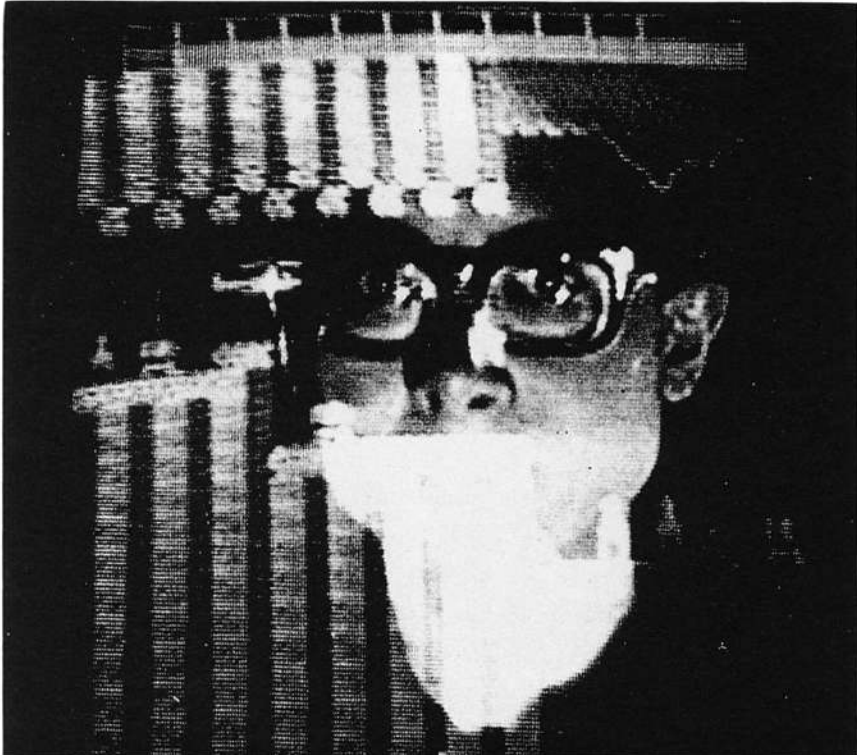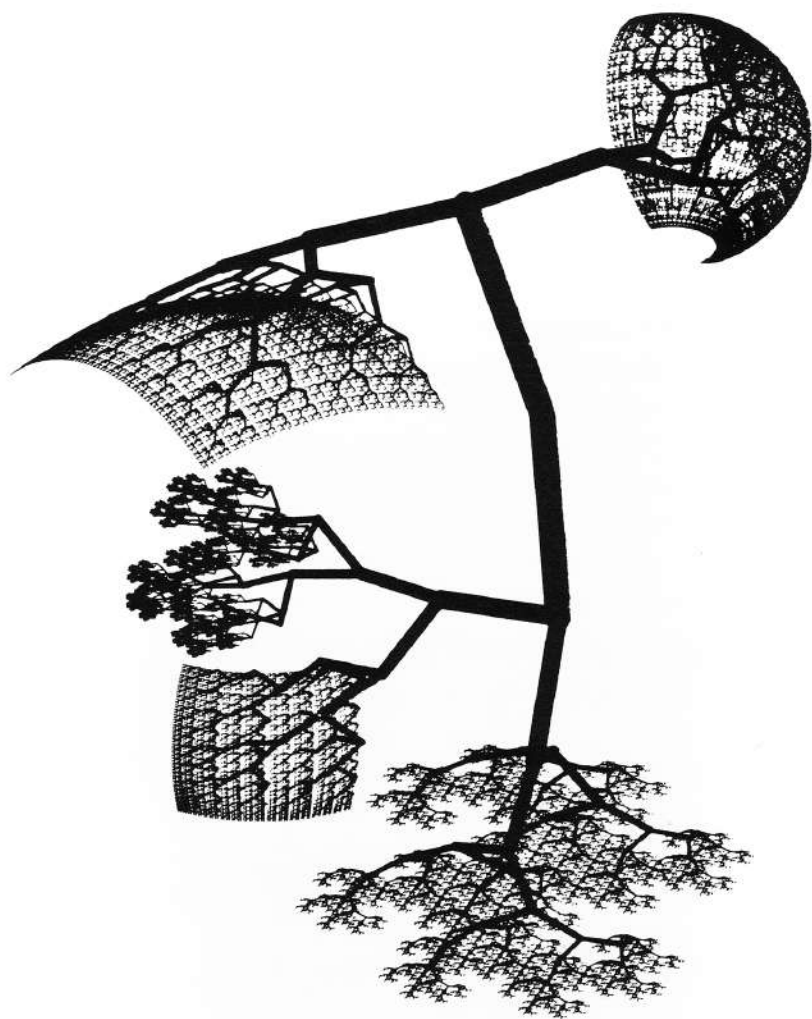
Hans Moravec, *Robert Bush*, Carnegie-Mellon University

Eyestrain

'When logos appear mysteriously on the screen, they seem to pass through our bodies on their way to our field of vision: when they swoop or tumble across the screen in elaborate trajectories, their controlled movements suggest not objects given momentum by some other force, but subjects with their own motive power. In this sense a logo can be thought of not only as the proper name of a station, but as a supernarrator that conveys us through various modes of discourse.'[1]

What is possible to experience visually using computer graphics substantially alters the place of the observer. The space of computer graphics seems to allow for a somatic understanding of spatial relations that for the most part do not originate with the body but are culturally inscribed through the psychic regimes.

The spaces described by 3D computer graphics tied to motion control (depth coupled with movement) are imaginary spaces. Spaces that are not inhabitable by us as real places, whose territorial imperatives have yet to be defined. These are spaces to which the codes of representation as we know them, are being applied. Hollywood, television, space programmes, the military - these are the largest users of 3D computer graphics techniques - smart bombs, star wars, flight simulations, TV logos and virtual reality rooms...

1. Morse, Margaret, ,'Television Graphics and the Body', *Television Reality*, University of Indiana Press, 1992

Most of us experience this space in our daily life is through watching television graphics, especially station logos, advertising breaks and lead-ins to prime-time

programmes. Watching these graphics the viewer flies through the symbolic universe of ABC, CBS, HBO, NBC, CNN. The movement provides a pleasure more satisfying than narrative closure, as meaning is constantly deferred, available but just beyond the frame. Film critic Margaret Morse notes that it is the way the logos shift the spectator between discursive levels that reveals one of television's deeper functions that is to 'create links and exchange values between otherwise incommensurable aspects of our culture's symbolic, economic and sexual, martimonial systems.'[2]

The animation of these letters gives them a literal presence which can be read, not as writing but as the trace of an absent subject. They take on the characteristics of an innate subjectivity, anthropomorphized like the fantasy creatures in fairytales, complete with allegorical meanings. There are parallels with both classical iconography and fairytales particularly in terms of the subject positions available to the viewer.

In classical iconography, the meaning of a form is revealed through the repetition of certain motifs onto which meaning is inscribed and to which it accrues. With TV logos, there is an insistence on repeated motifs expressed through continuous movement, such as a curve around a corner which reveals itself as a letter. Over time these moves take on certain meanings which change or proliferate according to their use within the structure of the advert. In one logo sequence the viewer flies down a street stuck to the side of something that seems to be vertical and which is too large to be seen in its entirety. As it curves around a corner it changes direction, shrinks and becomes horizontal, landing on a tilted plane just long enough for the viewer to catch a glimpse of the letters, then flying off in a different direction. As in classical cosmologies this space has no beginning or end, locating the viewer deep inside - not in one place, but in several at once, relying on the movement to literally suture the gaze across the moving planes. In the rational world, movement implies a causal relation, created by someone or something. This is one of the primary ways subjectivity is denoted among logos. If you were to freeze-frame many of the shots in the logo sequence I have described, you would see movement blur. The reason why it is impossible to read in its static form is that it is actually the movement that carries most of the primary meaning. That curve going around what appears to be a corner, but which retrospectively you realise is part of the actual station logo, carries the meaning. Without the movement it would mean something

2. ibid

different. As in classical iconography the meaning is ambiguous. Its literal meaning is familiar; the form is recognisable as a station logo. 'The logotype is the proper name, the character, and the 'corporate' body in one, a condensation of iconic and symbolic signs.'[3]

Speed is part of the primary meaning. Speed has numerous other associations: notions of progress, sex, excitement, excelling, letting go, winning. But above all speed thrills and thrills sell. Speed causes us to lose control, we give ourselves over to its exhilerating effects. It seems as though we are participating. Unlike video games where we fight to maintain mastery and control, in this universe of motion control to look is to be caught, not by an image but by something more powerful, which delivers you to where it wants you to go. Flight which is usually associated with liberation, becomes in the computer generated world, an agency of coercion, binding the viewer to the motion control movements.

As you read these moving logos an imaginary world opens up, not into the referential world of literary fiction, but the literal world of corporate iconography. Effects of perspective and scale combined with motion, pull the viewer inside the television. These effects were pioneered in movies such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* in the star-gate corridor and perfected in later space films such as *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*. Chase sequences composed of numerous motion control shots - computerized cameras capable of an infinite number of programmable moves; miniature models and live-action composited together on one final image track, bound the spectator to the story. In both films motion and perspectival shifts often seemed to be the principle attractions, as if it were these effects that the audience went to see over and over again. These sequences break all the rules of cinema such as crossing the 180 degree line, which would locate the camera off-screen or behind the screen in conventional 2D cinema turns but which in 3D simply extended the frame to further wrap the spectator in 260 or even 360 degrees of total, continuous, inhabitable space, extending the frame and making possible the illusion that it could expand infinitely. A plenitude without narrative closure.

In the model of vision proposed by modernism, the observer is both inside and outside the perspectival space - unaffected, external to the representation. This is the humanistic subject: universal, timeless, immutable, oblivious. However, critical discourses over the last 20 years have problematized this subject, interpolating her or him within the ever shifting terrains of social and psychic agencies. This is the

3. ibid

desiring subject, prey to the desires of consumption, occupying a space inscribed by ideology, taking their place in a history, a monolithic narrative that has been exposed as a fabrication. Like the older model of the observer, this subject is also represented as an immutable cypher unable to resist manipulation, powerless to consciously enter the scene of representation.

The development of the cinematic institution and its codes of representation, in particular its ability to deliver a believable, inhabitable representation of space, is often seen as the culmination of the trajectory of industrial and ideological development which centres on monocularly-based systems of perspective. Permeating all practices of the cinematic institution is a history of assumptions about the spectator's relation to representation that begins in the Renaissance with the camera obscura (or earlier Euclid) and progresses toward greater and greater degrees of realism or 'natural' vision while simultaneously ensuring that apparatuses of power mark the spectator in the appropriate place.

In considering the history of perspectival space it is important to remember two things: first that the idea of perspective existed before it could be manifested as real space; and second that perspective gave a form *to* and was a recognition *of* the place that subjectivity was to inhabit, a self-reflexive space that located the subject both for her/himself and for other subjects. Today, it could be compared to a methodology, in that it was a way to order the world in relation to the observer. But, as Victor Burgin asks, 'Could it be that it is the intimation of loss in the register of the visual which the Quattrocento defended itself against by fetishistically turning intuition into a system called 'perspective' - built not only upon a founding point of view, 'the point of view', but also the disappearance of all things in the vanishing point?'[4] In classical cosmologies, space was a plenum. In the medieval world, space (God's creation) was a fullness without a gap. Only with Quattrocento perspective does the observer confront an absence in the field of vision. But, it is an absence which is disavowed: the vanishing point is not an integral part of the space of representation; situated on the horizon, it perpetually pushes forward as the observer expands its horizons. But, the effect of monocular perspective is to maintain that space does have a centre and that centre is the observer.

An exception to this paradigm, which bears similarities to those models of vision being suggested by computer technologies is 17th century Dutch genre painting. In her study, 'The Art of Describing', Svetlana Alpers discusses the way in

4. Burgin, Victor, 'Abjection and Geometry', *Public* No.1, Public Access Collective, Toronto, 1988

which this art eschews narrative and textual reference, focusing instead on description and pictorial, visual surface. The world seems to extend beyond the frame of the picture and is not entirely contained within it. Moreover, it seems to be a world in which the place of the viewer is not marked. Summarizing the difference between Italian Renaissance perspective and Northern Baroque description, Alpers notes the following oppositions: 'attention to many small things versus a few large ones; light reflected off objects versus objects modeled by light and shadow; the surface of objects, their colours and textures dealt with, rather than their placement in a legible frame; an unframed image versus one that is clearly framed; one with no clearly situated viewer compared to one with such a viewer.'[5] In Dutch painting this difference produces a flat, almost two dimensional surface which fails to specify the place of the observer. The point of view remains unmarked, while spatial plan is based on a cartographic grid.

This description could well apply to the way in which computer graphics organises user interaction and manages menu displays, while providing numerous points of access for an observer who has been transformed into a user. Indeed, many of the oppositions that she sets out mimic the ways in which computer graphics has distinguished itself along the depth axis as opposed to the horizontal and vertical axes of the picture plane, scrolling along to reveal a continuous frame which can sometimes only be partially shown.

Somewhere deep in cyberspace in those places only computers can go, is MAX HEADROOM, a computer generated TV character. This digital being who comprises a 3 dimensional head and shoulders in a suit, embodies one of the first attempts to narrativise and aestheticise a computational, computer-generated space. MAX is one example of the technological developments which are transforming the space of representation and with it, dominant paradigms of vision and the nature of spectatorship.

'Media is ahead of aesthetics in that it has the capacity to define reality.'[6] Cultural historian Frederick Kittler envisions a time when all media are transmitted via the same network of optical fibre cables. These currently distinct media which today carry in their methods of reception and distribution a whole set of social relations, will become one; a single standardised medium.

Artificial Intelligence, (AI) is an area where previously discrete discourses are

5. Alpers, Svetlana, *The Art of Describing*, Cambridge University Press, 1981
6. Kittler, Frederick, 'Gramophone, Film Typewriter', *October* 41, Summer 1987

being re-contextualised. Philosophers working in the area of 'speech acts' and post-phenomenology emphasize the way human intelligence depends on context, its global character, its intentionality. These special properties ensure that human understanding can not be reproduced through computational means. However what makes some of their programmes work is not the reproduction of human mental processes, but their recreation of human social practices.

For example AI inventor Marvin Minsky represents the knowledge that computers hold as 'frames'; and these can be equated to stereotypes. Frames are a way to manage the complexity of ordinary social life. They allow knowledge to be stored and then reconstructed. Once the appropriate frame is identified, a situation can be compared with the frame and then evaluated through deduction. Frames delimit boundaries without attempting to recover a unified, or unifying subject. They provide a way to hold mutually contradictory view-points in the same space.

Roger Schank's CYRUS programme reveals how this model breaks with logical thinking even though it uses deduction. CYRUS is based on the professional and personal history of Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State under President Jimmy Carter, answering questions as if it were Cyrus Vance. In one instance, when asked whether Mrs. Vance had met Mrs. Begin, it guessed 'yes' by searching its memory for a social occasion when both men were travelling with their wives and physically in the same place; in this case a shared plane ride. Schank sees this programme as a precursor to data-bases of the future where the data-base reorganizes itself continuously as it comes to know what it knows. In this model symbolic information is not processed at all; instead knowledge is stored in an aggregate way as interconnecting yet competing elements, settling into a temporarily stable condition. This is a world of textuality gone wild where the computer stands on the same shifting ground as its human counterpart.

This is the shifting ground in which MAX HEADROOM is located. The story of MAX mirrors the realities of the CYRUS programme. Data about a nearly dead TV reporter, Edison Carter is accidentally fed into a mainframe computer; it attaches itself to a simulation model and actually grows. The time is 'the future' and television is the only growth industry.

Narrative codes and visual design solutions give a realistic and believable form to this represention of computer technology. MAX exists in the airwaves, the result of intermittent transmission. When MAX is not shown on screen he exists as electronic data. He is transmissional: forever in the act of becoming. He knows things humans don't know, yet he is not omnipotent. He experiences the interruptions

caused by power surges, high voltage and satellite relay delays. How this effects him is shown most vividly in his speech acts, the way he forms meaning constructions, the sense he constructs of the nonsense of a life-world set adrift. Sometimes MAX laughs the wild, uncontrollable, self-dissolving laugh of what in the 19th century would have been an hysteric. And like the hysteric he is uncontainable within the normal codes of representation.

MAX does however conform to former codes of monocularly based theories of representation/ vision, rather than sci-fi models such as Hans Moravec's 'robot bush'. This AI driven robot has branch-like fingers that can manipulate objects better than the human hand, and can perform thousands of tasks simultaneously. MAX has no real body and is based on algorithims (basic 'building blocks' of computer space) which present as much of him as can be known. In this sense he is a new formulation of that singular, static, unblinking, fixated eye that locates 'the point of view' for an observer. For it is the algorithims that define 3-D rationalised space or perspective on a 2-D plane. The basic device of the symmetrical visual pyramid or cone, intersected by a plane with one of the apexes receding or vanishing and the other located in the eye of the beholder, is exactly the same visual equation that brings you MAX, with one crucial difference: MAX's representation in no way defines the unreal space that is MAX. What you see is not MAX, but merely a simulation of a character, who is not real, but a simulation already; a simulated simulation.

Enter Virtual Reality. One of the selling points of VR space or cyberspace as it is known in sci-fi, is that it will at last reproduce a cinematic experience in which you can participate, where you can have an effect. This is not classical film theory with its model of spectatorship and its understanding of the scopic and invocatory drives. For here it is not just vision but all the senses that are used to actually *experience* a new world. This may sound like Baudrillard's simulacrum, but it is not a copy in relation to a real, once you are 'out there'; in fact it depends more on other senses than vision to create the sensation that you are actually experiencing this new world. The four other senses would have to be activated and wired into the computer to literally reproduce your sense of yourself in the VR environment.

To enter your virtual world, you are likely to start off at a station point hooked into a computer system. With the aid of wrap-around, TV camera goggles and a sensing glove which responds visually to your head, hand and eye movements within the virtual space, you enter a computer generated universe. Depending on how much computer memory you have you may elect to move through space continu-

ously as in the real world. You can jump around in different times and spaces, even creating them as you go along. The utopian model of the Virtual World is a computer capable of keeping up with your imagination. You wouldn't need the concepts of forward or backwards (in time or space) because you would already be there just by thinking. You would still be where you started, and you would already be there. You could certainly be in more than two places at once, although that would require the generation of multiple 'yous'.

But perhaps, you wouldn't want to be you. You could be something or someone else. It might be impossible to necessarily assign race, gender, class and other socially determined identities in a virtual world because in this world you will not have direct access to another person or entity as everything will be a simulation, to a greater or lesser degree.

Your only limit would be your imagination, your neurosis and your ability to pay for all the computer time you are using; and perhaps going somewhere would only be useful if it produced something tangible or pleasurable or exchangeable. A journalist recently celebrated new developments in Japan: ' 'virtual' kitchens have been designed for the Matsushita corporation; at a booth in a Tokyo shopping centre, housewives equipped with a headset and Dataglove were able to 'shop' in Cyberspace, matching 'virtual' refrigerators with their 'virtual' kitchens. Only the bill they received at the end was real.'[7]

What are the implications of hooking into another person's VR world? Would lived world civic solutions be operable here? How would social relations be negotiated in the VR planes? Does this computer technology represent Realpolitik thought control up dated, ideology in action? Will large corporations redefine the class system? This is after all a space which is infinitely generatable, transmittable and even storable, perfect for a commodity culture that is running out of capital.

The possibilities for expressing other realities, those histories and voices which have been suppressed, unrepresented or denied are also evident. Yet the history of the computer in the work place has further inscribed the class system. It has been a liberating tool for management but an oppressive one for the worker, able to measure and monitor every action of the worker at the work station. VR has the capacity to reproduce these relations. Will VR lead to an emancipatory practice, with real people, real space, our history - or will it lead somewhere else?

7. Simon Worrall, 'Anyone for Virtual Tennis?', *Sunday Times Magazine*, May 2, 1991

MAELSTROM

Maelstrom is an ongoing series which explores the meaning of new technologies. It looks at the impact of information and computer media on the design and use of public and private space. It addresses the paradox of computer and surveillance systems which both aid and inform while monitoring and controlling; and asks what are the implications of 'remote sensing' devices that monitor the world from outer space, or the development of artificial intelligences and virtual realities.

MAELSTROM: MAX LAUGHS 1988

Video projector, tape, wood, tiles

This installation explores the ways in which private space has been changed, even eroded as the development of information technologies impacts on our daily lives. It examines the new types of spatial relations being produced and what these could mean, the use of video beams mirroring the effects of these technological systems. On a visual level they comprise 3-D motion control and computer graphics; on an information level, geopolitical think tanks computer-linked through data banks and at home computer accessing. They imply an ordering of human relations that differs radically from the trajectory traced through the history of perspective, articulated today by film and television. The piece addresses the way these spatial relations affect social and political ideas about privacy, territory and boundaries of the self. It also questions the power of master narratives now that the position of the spectator has changed and their authority is no longer sacrosanct.

IF COMMUNICATION AND
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OR ARE THERE JUST
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AND THINKING-
MACHINES?
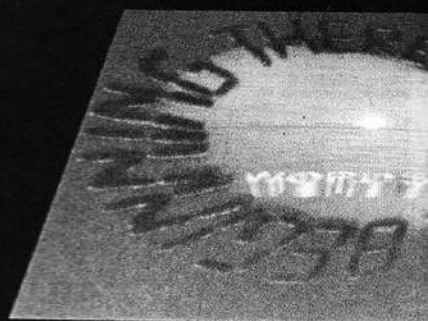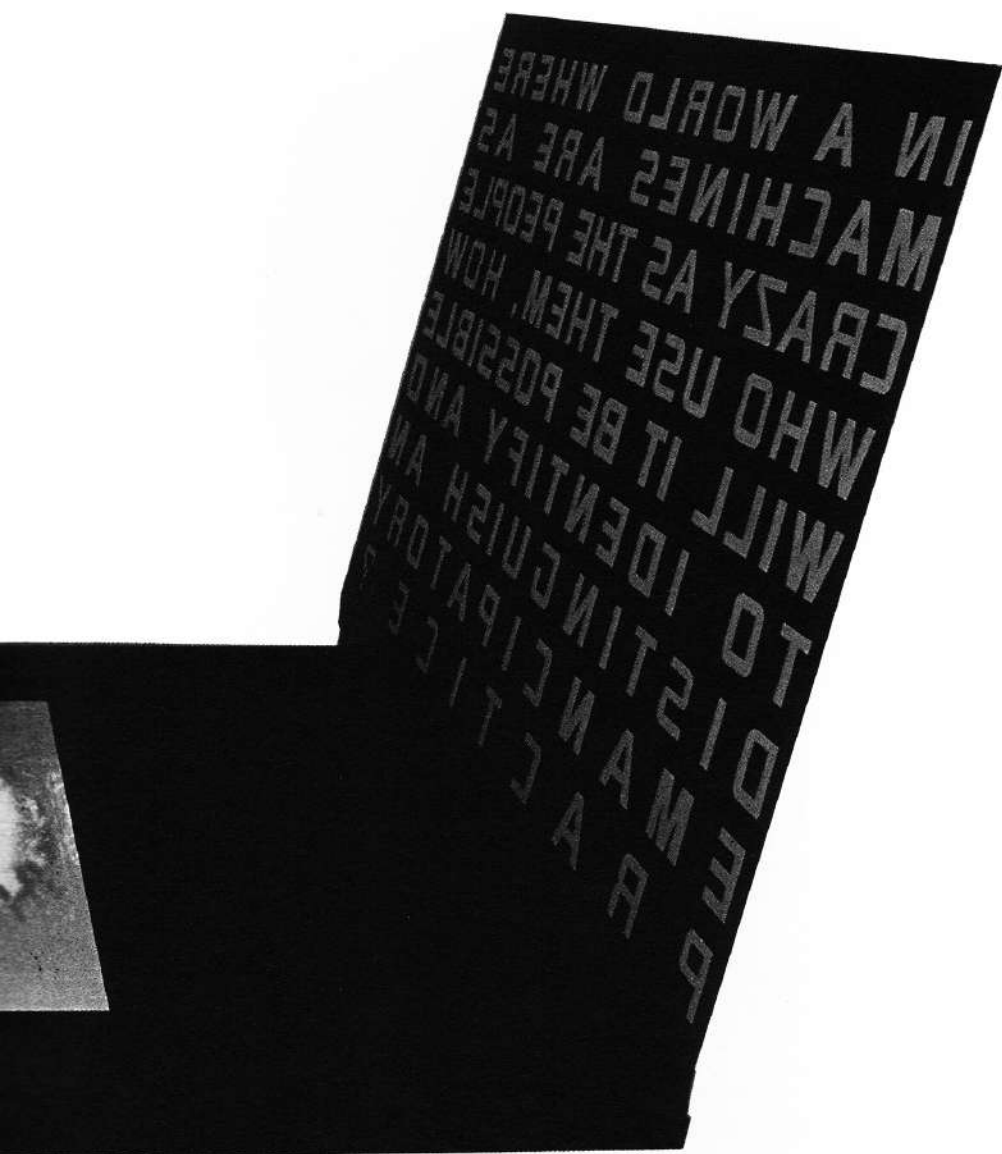
MAELSTROM II: ALIENATION

Maelstrom II: Alienation, comprises the second of five sections of the ongoing work, *Maelstrom*. An animated panorama or moving mural, this section will incorporate elements pioneered in earlier works. Portraits directly addressing the viewer in the form of mattes within the panorama echo the strategies of *First and Third*. It will use the motion control developed in *Max Laughs* to propel the spectator directly into the space of the panorama; and as in *Adam's Wish* the work explores the iconography of the work-place as it has changed under the onslaught of the computer.

The new spatial relations now made possible through 3-D motion control locate the spectator inside a three dimensional field. When movement is used with this technique, it is usually rendered in two directions (as in Star Wars), creating for the spectator the sense that s\he is moving along with the field. These devices radically break with the cone-of-vision model institutionalised in perspective whereby the viewer stands outside the window of representation looking in. Despite a tacit theoretical acknowledgement of change most artists have failed to investigate the transformations in representation effected by these technological developments leaving them in the hands of Hollywood film studios and the military. Yet installation presents a potent means for engaging the viewer experientially with the concept of 3 D motion control and its extension into 'virtual reality'.

Echo, 1986
slide, film, audio tape, projection

Judith Barry lives and works in New York. Her practice as an artist spans writing, video production, installation and public works. Since 1977 she has exhibited across America, most notably at the Whitney Museum, New York ('82,'87), the Museum of Modern Art, New York ('80,'86,'87,'88) the New Museum, New York ('85), MOCA in Los Angeles ('89), the University Art Museum, Berkeley ('89) and the Washington Project for the Arts ('89). In Europe, her work was most recently shown at the Caja de Pensiones, Madrid and was featured in the 1988 Venice Biennale; other shows include the ICA, London ('83), Riverside Studios, London ('87), le Consortum, Dijon ('90) and the Xavier Hufkens and Pieroni Galleries. Her videos have been screened at festivals in Melbourne, Basel, Taormina, Basel, Rotterdam and San Francisco. Public works by Judith Barry have appeared at Times Square, New York ('85), Real Art Ways, Hartford and World Financial Centre, New York ('88) the Cheese Market in Glasgow ('90) and the London Underground. She has designed exhibitions for the New Museum and Clocktower in New York. Her texts have been published in a range of magazines including *Aperture, Real Life, Screen, Parkett* and *Artforum* .

The texts in this catalogue first appeared in the following publications:

Essays:

CASUAL IMAGINATION	DISCOURSE 4, Berkeley, 1980-81
	MUSEUM JOURNAL 5, Holland, 1982
	BLASTED ALLEGORIES, MIT, USA, 1987
PLEASURE / LEISURE	THE EVENT HORIZON, Coach House Press,
	Toronto, 1987
CORPSES DON'T CAST SHADOWS	MUSEUM JOURNAL 6, Holland, 1984
WILLFUL AMNESIA	VIDEO BY ARTISTS, catalogue, Art Metropole
	Canada, 1986
VAMP R Y	PARKETT #13, Zurich, 1987
	Catalogue, Washington Project for the Arts,
	Media Gallery, 1989
DESIGNED AESTHETIC	THIS IS TOMORROW TODAY.
	THE INDEPENDENT GROUP AND BRITISH
	POP ART, Catalogue, Clocktower Gallery, Institute
	for Art and Urban Resources, New York, 1987
DISSENTING SPACES	DAMAGED GOODS, catalogue, New Museum,
	New York, 1986
CHOROS	PARKETT #13, Zurich, 1987
EYESTRAIN	Initially a talk given at 'Public Access', Toronto, 1988.
	It appears here co-edited by Brian Wallis and
	Iwona Blazwick

Projects:

CASUAL SHOPPER	Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1982
IMAGINATION DEAD IMAGINE	THE SAVAGE GARDEN, catalogue,
	Caja des Pensiones, Madrid, 1991
STAGE & SCREEN	APERTO, catalogue, Venice Biennale, 1988
IN THE SHADOW OF THE CITY	Long Beach Museum, California, 1986
SPACE INVADERS	San Francisco International Festival Theatre, 1982
MAELSTROM I (Max Laughs)	Matrix Gallery, University Art Museum,
	Berkeley, California, 1989
DEPENSE	NEW WORKS FOR DIFFERENT PLACES:
	Four Cities Project, catalogue, TSWA, London, 1990
FIRST & THIRD	WHITNEY BIENNIAL, catalogue, Whitney
	Museum of American Art, 1987
ADAMS WISH	Real Art Ways, Hartford, Connecticut, 1989

While many artists use postmodernism as a buzzword, Judith Barry takes an active
part in shaping its fundamental critical debates. Both as an artist and as a writer,
Barry extends discussions of postmodern culture well beyond formal issues
pertaining to the art or its purported demise. Instead, she confronts, with
refreshing curiosity and intellectual rigor, the essential dilemma of the postmodern
viewer: How does one define subjectivity in an age of radically transformed
relationships between technology, perception, and individual identity? Intensely
political, yet neither declamatory nor doctrinaire, these essays will provide
stimulating reading for even the most cynical postmodernist.

Brian Wallis
Editor, *Art in America*

In the reflection on the metropolis and its technologies of representation, Judith
Barry's writings present us with provocative insights into our fascination with
spectacle. Few artists trace with such breadth of reference, the ambivalent anxiety
and pleasure with which we respond to the seduction of images, and their effects
upon our sense of identity.

Jean Fisher
artist and writer