The Experience of Duration and the Manipulation of Time in Exposed Cinema

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Abstract

This paper seeks to weave a path through some of the temporal forms of moving images. These are models that were created with the development of video, videoinstallations and later exposed film, in a crescendo of possibilities dictated by the exploration of technology and the desire to place the viewer in a temporal flow which is controlled to a greater or lesser degree. At least three different lines of temporal forms which determine the image have been developed in the comparison of the "real" duration and the "manipulated" duration of artwork. The first group of forms includes manipulations based on the linearity of the image such as *delay* and slow motion. A second line is related to the particular practice of the *loop*, while the third concerns the temporal intermissions caused by the overlaying of several lines, of space and time, within a single piece of work or the itinerary created by the artist. This set of forms shows how the practices of relocation and installation in cinema are the result of the combination of the temporal and spatial values of the works themselves, the places in which they are exhibited and of the spectators.

This paper is part of the long-running debate on the contemporary forms of moving images,[1] whereby time, its duration and manipulation are key elements

[1] See among others: *Oui, c'est du cinema. Formes et espaces de l'image en movement,* ed. by Philippe Dubois, Lucia Ramos Monteiro, Alessandro Bordina (Udine: Campanotto Editore, 2009); Philippe Dubois, *La Question vidéo. Entre cinéma et art contemporain* (Crisnée: Yellow Now, 2011); Philippe Dubois, 'Un "effet cinema" dans l'art contemporain', *Cinéma & Cie. International Film Studies Journal*, 8 (2006), 15–26; Cosetta G. Saba, 'Extended Cinema. The Performative Power of Cinema in Installation Practices', *Cinéma & Cie*, 20 (2013), 123–40; *Unstable Cinema. Film and Contemporary Visual Arts* ed. by Cosetta G. Saba and Cristiano Poian (Udine: Campanotto Editore, 2010); Raymond Bellour, *La Querelle des dispositifs. Cinéma – installations, expositions* (Paris: P.O.L, 2012); Francesco Casetti, *The Lumière Galaxy. Seven Key Words for the Cinema to Come* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Francesco Casetti, 'The Relocation of Cinema', *Necsus*, 2 (2012), <http://www.necsus-ejms.org/the-relocation-of-cinema/> [accessed 1 November 2016]; Erika Balsom, *Exibiting Cinema in Contemporary Art* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013); Maeve Connolly, *The Place of Artist Cinema. Site, Space and Screen* (Bristol: Intellect, 2009); *Exhibiting the Moving Image: History Revisited*, ed. by François Bovier and Adeena Mey (Dijon–Zurich–Lausanne: Les Presses du réel/JRP/Ringier/University of Art and Design, 2015); *Extended*

in the construction of the artwork and of its fruition. The objective of this essay is to outline a classification of some of the recurring temporal forms of installed moving images. Given the complexity of the present-day scene, and considering also the magnitude of the exposed cinema phenomenon, it would now appear that the time has come to summarize the artistic practices of contemporary forms of the moving image. We use the general term 'exposed cinema' to describe its various forms, which could also be referred to as cinema, video, video installations, interactive installations and so on. This need to group them all under one umbrella has arisen, both from the various and diverse technological devices used (such as videotape, digital video, film, etc.), as well as from the institutional locations where these art forms are on display. Their exhibition within such a context renders them part of a unique and complex panorama.[2] The images and installations of Bruce Nauman and Dan Graham in the late sixties and seventies, and later those of Douglas Gordon, Bill Viola, Katia Maciel and Anri Sala, were all exhibited in similar settings, namely, institutional art spaces.

The theoretical framework available to us is vast. The many aspects of time, through the medium of videos and video installations, have often been touched upon, and some brilliant insights have emerged. In 'The Temporalities of Video: Extendedness Revisited',[3] Christine Ross identifies several forms of the exploration of time through the medium of video, paying particular attention, among other things, to the *loop*. As we shall see, this is a form which is widely used today. Rosalind Krauss, Catherine Fowler and Kate Mondloch[4] have also made further fundamental contributions to this theme, thus allowing us to map out a comprehensive framework.

Much less has been said, however, regarding our contemporary historical era, which started with the twenty-first century, and whose immediate roots are to be found in the expansion practices of 1990s cinema. For this we need to rely on interventions coming more from the curatorial field, such as that of Daniel Birnbaum, whose work *Chronology*[5] plunges us into a fascinating journey through temporality. Finally, the writings of Erika Balsom and Giuliana Bruno[6] are the best for understanding the complexity of the contemporary scene, with-

Temporalities: *Cinema and Contemporary Art* ed. by Alessandro Bordina, Vincenzo Estremo, Francesco Federici (Milan: Mimesis International, 2016).

[2] Francesco Federici, 'Framing Convergence. Theoretical Tools for a Landscape of Contemporary Cinematic Forms', in *Framings*, ed. by Slavko Kacunko, Ellen Harlizius-Klück and Hans Körner (Berlin: Logos Verlag Berlin, 2015), 367–82.

[3] Christine Ross, 'The Temporalities of Video: Extendedness Revisited', *Art Journal*, 65.3 (Fall, 2006), 82–99.

[4] See Catherine Fowler, 'Room for Experiment: Gallery Films and Vertical Time from Maya Deren to Eija Liisa Ahtila', *Screen*, 45.4 (2004), 324–43; Rosalind Krauss, 'Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism', *October*, 1 (1976), 50–64; Kate Mondloch, *Screens. Viewing Media Installation Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

[5] Daniel Birnbaum, *Chronology* (New York: Lucas & Sternberg, 2005).

[6] Balsom, *Exibiting Cinema in Contemporary Art*; Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (New York: Verso, 2002).

out getting caught up in classifications that relate solely to technological devices. Therefore, following the theoretical framework outlined above, this paper seeks to weave a path through some of the temporal forms of moving images. These models were created with the development of video, video installations and later exposed cinema, in a crescendo of possibilities defined by the exploration of technology and the desire to place the viewer in a temporal flow, which is subjected to greater or lesser degrees of control.

At least three different lines of temporal forms that determine the image have been developed in the comparison of the 'real' and the 'manipulated' duration of artwork. The first group of forms includes manipulations based on the linearity of the image such as *delay* and slow motion. A second line is related to the particular practice of the *loop*, while the third concerns the temporal intermissions caused by the overlaying of several lines of space and time within a single piece of work or the itinerary created by the artist. This set of forms shows how the practices of relocation and installation in cinema are the result of the combination of the temporal and spatial values of the works themselves, the places in which they are exhibited and of the spectators.

The aim of this essay is to provide an initial outline of certain developments, both historically and in contemporary practices, in order to facilitate reflection on certain forms of image manipulation, thus demonstrating the temporal complexity with which the image is constructed. This complexity, it ought to be reiterated, has often been overshadowed by the study of spatiality and the *site* in contemporary art. This work aims to show how, through the temporal forms analysed, we are now immersed in a context where the spatiality of an art work is constantly compared with its temporality. The result is various combinations of space and time, with the spectator at the centre.

The Exploration of Duration

To experience duration in exposed cinema means to be immersed in a constantly evolving flow. It is a paradox that, as spectators, we live within this movement, yet cannot grasp its essence. In order to do this one must take a step back in time to the dawn of video technology when, thanks to one of those fortunate meetings between the histories of art and cinema, temporality and spatiality became the two fundamental coordinates of artwork. In the exact moment when video came onto the art scene, its association with the word '*time*' became natural: 'Video technology was the first to mimic different functions and different time syntheses. It is a temporal technology not only because it modulates time-matter, but also because it always works on a duration,'[7] it manages in the utopia of put-

[7] Maurizio Lazzarato, *Videofilosofia. La percezione del tempo nel postfordismo* (Rome: Manifestolibri, 1996), pp. 106–07. See also Sandra Lischi, *Visioni elettroniche. L'oltre del cinema e l'arte del video* (Rome: Fondazione Scuola Nazionale di Cinema, 2001), p. 11.

ting together filming and editing and then vision.[8] Duration and its experience are one of the underpinning features of the electronic image and installations: to immerse vision in the present, as it is happening, is the prerogative of these art forms, without necessarily falling into the trap of the over-used notion of *time-based media*, which implies a rejection of the technical materiality of the device. In order to achieve this, the film has to exaggerate duration up to the point of eliminating it metaphorically. Andy Warhol, for example, worked in this way, seeking specifically to de-temporalize the film image by frustrating the spectator's vision. The final result of this continuous replication[9] is that time is somehow killed. In this sense, prolonging or slowing down are ways of destroying 'normalized' time, in direct contrast with the film industry model, but also with the artistic norm of the 1960s that was developing in tandem.

Continuing to the era in which exposed cinema was no longer a novelty, but rather the artistic norm, the title of the 2005 Biennale de Lyon was, significantly, *Expérience de la durée*.[10] In his introduction to the catalogue,[11] Nicolas Bourriaud uses notions from Bruno Latour and George Kubler as points of reference for a concept of duration that reaches beyond that of the present-day. From Latour he embraces the comment about modernist temporal flow, whereby 'au lieux d'un beau flux laminaire, on obtiendra le plus souvent un flux turbulent de tourbillons et de rapides. D'irréversible, le temps devient réversible';[12] from Kubler he accepts the denial of the temporal sequence as it is commonly understood.[13] These are starting points for inserting the values of duration into a context that is not linear, but confused and made up of overlapping elements. Bourriaud said he wanted to distance himself from 'global art' to become part of the legacy of conceptual art whereby 'art-making time is inseparable from the current moment'.[14] He instead became interested in the idea of *longue durée*,[15] as intended in the projectual dimension of artwork.

[8] See Maurizio Lazzarato, 'Paik et Bergson: la vidéo, les flus et le temps réel', in *Vidéo topiques: tours et retours de l'art vidéo*, ed. by Patrick Javault and Georges Heck (Paris–Strasbourg: Paris-Musées/Les musées de Strasbourg, 2002), 24–34.

[9] See Wayne Koestenbaum, *Andy Warhol* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2001); Sven Lütticken, 'Transforming Time', *Grey Room*, 41 (Fall 2010), 24–47.

[10] *Expérience de la durée* (Lyon, Biennale de Lyon, 2005), curated by Nicolas Bourriaud and Jérôme Sans.

[11] Nicolas Bourriaud, 'Time specific. Art contemporain, exploration et développement durable', *Expérience de la durée, Biennale de Lyon 2005*, ed. by Nicolas Bourriaud and Jérôme Sans, (Paris: Paris-Musées, 2005), pp. 17–24.

[12] Bruno Latour, *Nous n'avons jamais été modernes. Essai d'anthropologie symétrique* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), p. 100.

[13] George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

[14] Nicolas Bourriaud, 'Experiencing Duration 'the Story of an Exhibition', in *Expérience de la durée,* ed. by Bourriaud and Sans, p. 44. In French: 'le temps de production artistique était indissociable du temps vécu'.

[15] For a historiographical point of view see Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949), p. XIII; Fernand Braudel, 'La longue

Thanks then to the re-evaluation of duration in overlapping forms, we can link the artistic practices of video to those of installations. Whereas previously the focus was on the present and as such, duration was developed horizontally in a *continuum* that ended only when the spectator exited from the flow of the artwork, now perception is modified by multiple values, which combine to create a joint participation of horizontal and vertical temporal vehicles. This occurs in a present with a precise duration, yet at the same time continues.

Duration, inevitably linked to the multiple and possible concepts of time, can only be analysed when supported by a model of temporality. However, some of its features are common in various schools of thought and link to the simultaneity of several moments and, in particular, to the definition of a perception. If perception involves an action in time, in the same way perceiving duration involves a prior understanding of perception itself, with the risk of a short circuit, which is after all the form of inattentive contemplation of installed moving images.

Thus the analysis of the concept of duration, from the point of view of this research, oscillates between awareness (artistic) of the non-determinability of the temporal flow as normally experienced – therefore horizontal – and the need to find technical ploys to break this flow, which although not recognized, returns from the spectator's viewpoint as soon as he exits the temporality of the artwork.

Acceleration, slow motion, and editing are all ways of challenging the *real* duration, in an attempt to free the spectator from the obsessive contemporary fluidity and to oppose the general tendency of the moving image to draw his attention into a magma of times and spaces, without providing a way out. One could say that the attempt to free the spectator from time[16] becomes an attempt to imprison him in a flow that is simply different, but from which it is impossible find a perpetual liberation. The spatialization of time with various duration effects leads to an overlapping of perceptual lines.

Linear Forms of Duration

The idea of duration, when it passes into the field of moving images, brings into play several lines of argument regarding the image, its temporality and the extension of the temporality of the image. From a conceptual point of view, duration in itself can be detached from the development of the image, in the sense that it is the duration, in a certain way, that contains the image, since it delimits the extension. One comes to understand how the *experience of duration* can de-

durée', *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 4 (1958), 725–53, and the debate with Michel Foucault and Claude Lévi-Strauss.

[16] See Francesco Federici, 'Undefined Temporalities. Contemporary Cinematic Forms: From Chronophobia to Chronophilia' in *Extended Temporalities*. *Cinema and Contemporary Art,* ed. by Francesco Federici, Alessandro Bordina, Vincenzo Estremo (Milan: Mimesis, 2016), pp. 107 –25.

velop at the level of the present or move in directions that exploit the different possible temporal aspects.

From a technological point of view, the primary form of video is the present, the experience at the moment of its production, obtained through live recording. Today it is common, though at the time of its introduction it was of huge significance both in the fields of visual communication and of art, which has made widespread use of it. Video technology exists *only* in live recording, within the event, whilst with cinema time is deferred. Live television is different again, as it is part of a power *dispositif*[17] and as such cannot be associated with video, which embodies the artistic and creative choice of the *moment*. Just as time is the 'matter' of video, likewise video can intervene in the present, at the very moment of its making and can modify it through manipulation.

It is clear how the present experienced through video conceptually represents a resource, a possibility in artistic practice which does not appear to have been fully expressed. The exploration of the present is an exciting movement, when compared with cinema's inability to do the same. Very soon it becomes clear that the great interest in video art and video installations is of simulating all that happens in the present, be it memory, the experience of temporal contractions, acceleration, slow motion and, to an even greater extent, circularity. The present is a mere starting point, no matter how successful in its technological achievements. Strategies of experience develop from here and are carefully explored by all those artists who have the idea of consciously mixing space and time.

Forcing the viewer into an unnatural temporal experience in order to 'free them' from the common experience of time: this is not what we might call spectator freedom, yet it remains within an artistic paradigm that has never ceased to work since the end of the 1960s. Since then, thanks in particular to closed circuit (itself bearer of clear political and metaphorical significance), vision becomes imprisoned in temporal perception. Although today the passive/active dichotomy has been recognized as the product of a prevarication, the use of time, during those years in which the practices that are at the core of this paper began to appear, thrived on a search for freedom.

> Artists such as Graham, Bruce Nauman, and Joan Jonas all produced works containing feedback loops of live cameras and monitors, installations into which viewers are invited to enter. Drawn into the visual machinery they are not only viewers but instantly also part of that which could be seen, i.e., not only perceiving subjects but also bodies forced into the passive role of the perceived object.[18]

The body, which is the other main object of possible study regarding the practice of installed moving images, allows physical, sometimes haptic perception and itself becomes the object of perception in one of the multiple short circuits

[17] Lazzarato, 'Paik et Bergson', p. 30.
[18] Birnbaum, p. 154.

that characterize contemporary art. Too far away spatially to be *in* the screen, the body takes us *into* the time produced by the images. It is in any case a movement of entry, with the only difference, albeit major, being that when we deal with temporal matter easy entry means easy exit due to multiple factors such as concentration, surroundings and unfolding narrative unrelated to the work into which we 'enter'. As to the above-mentioned practices, in a historical moment in which the evolution of visual forms of control became pressing, it seemed logical to concentrate artistic attention on reflections on the physical and mental imprisonment of vision.

Bearing in mind that 'it is important to recognize that recent experimentation with spatializing time and duration, as well as its critical reception, has an important precedent in media installation art of the 1960s and 1970s',[19] we will now examine some works from that period.

Bruce Nauman, when working on the 'space-in-between' referred to by Margaret Morse,[20] was also working on a recurring temporality. Dan Graham, who according to Birnbaum exemplifies how to divide 'the Present Tense of Space',[21] operates in a similar way. The 'presentness' of which Robert Morris speaks is experienced by the spectator in a modified manner and above all is broken up into different levels of firstly spatial and then temporal editing. The act of being present collides with a series of ways of unfolding one's temporal self.

In Bruce Nauman's various *Corridor* exhibits, which span the 1969–1974 period, the return of the time of the experience divests the visitor's present essence. It's about starting with the idea that 'real space is not experienced except in real time',[22] considering that practices which can be united with post-minimalism[23] become greatly complicated by the breaking up of the *present tense*. To paraphrase Janet Kraynak, the experience of experience itself, provoked in *Corridor,* compresses the path traced by Nauman's original *performance*, its re-proposition in video and the present and future experienced by the spectator in action.[24]

Similarly, in the 1970's Dan Graham lined up a series of works explicitly connected to time and its fragmentation: *Past Future Split Attention* (1972) as well as *Present Continuous Past(s)*, *Two Rooms/Reverse Video Delay*, *Time Delay Room* and *Opposing Mirrors and Video Monitors on Time Delay,* all in 1974. As Nick Kaye writes, a game between 'Video Time' and 'Performance Time'[25] is on stage

[19] Mondloch, p. 42.
[20] see Margaret Morse, 'Video Installation Art: the Body, the Image and the Space-in-Between', in *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art*, ed. by Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer, (New York/San Francisco: Aperture/BAVC, 1990), pp. 153–67.
[21] Robert Morris, 'The Present Tense of Space' in *Continuous Project Altered Daily: The Writings of Robert Morris*, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995), pp. 175–209.
[22] Ivi, p. 177.
[23] Nick Kaye, *Multi-Media: Video - Installation - Performance* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 66.
[24] Janet Kraynak, *Please Pay Attention Please: Bruce Nauman's Words: Writings and Interviews* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p. 30.
[25] Kaye, p. 37.

and both are revisited by the spectator and by the vision in a game that is purposefully made to be labyrinthine. The artist criticizes Morris's *presentness:* he wants to make the spectator's perceptive process explicit and at the same time show the impossibility of 'locating a pure present tense'.

When spatialized, the forms of video show the technological fragility of live filming by inserting simple manipulations. *Delay* is one of the most common and efficient. It describes the trajectory of the route, re-proposing in sequence the trajectory itself in a process that can ideally only be stopped by the spectator's static nature. They are practices that will soon be abandoned since, in a certain sense, exploited to the highest level by the artistic scene and also because, after a certain period of time they no longer represent social and cultural demands. When connected to closed circuit, manipulation through *delay* remains one of the most interesting forms of time analysis, showing immediately that video too, although made up of time, cannot be used in the analysis of the same, unless through manipulations made with the intention of simulating the overlapping of human perception.

Exactly ten years prior to the aforementioned *Biennale de Lyon*, the third edition of the same event[26] had as one of its centrepieces a work by Douglas Gordon, the slowing down of *The Searchers* (John Ford, 1956) which was decelerated to a duration of five years. *5 years drive-by* (1995) allows the spectator to see only one second a day of Ford's film. It is one of the many experiments by the Scottish artist on cinematographic-artistic duration. It is curious to think how the same artistic event, the Biennale de Lyon, could have chosen works, ten years later, which reflected on slowness, speed and duration.

It is equally true that the first wave of experimentation in the field of video and video installations came to an end in the first half of the 1990s, giving way to the more 'complex' forms of the 21st century. Françoise Parfait, who quotes Gordon's work, relies on Paul Virilio's philosophy and his idea of 'espace-vitesse' and 'esthétique de la disparition' where the moving images are only perceived in the moment in which they disappear.[27] Therefore, if the acceleration of human time changes our relationship with reality, within the museum time, the excessive slow motion of the projection changes our relationship with the artistic reality. In this Douglas Gordon is repeatedly a master: the formula of *24 Hour Psycho* remains contemporary and can be expanded in various ways, as in *5 years drive-by*.

[26] *Interactivité, image mobile, vidéo* (Lyon: Biennale de Lyon, 1995), curated by Thierry Prat, Thierry Raspail and Georges Rey.

[27] Paul Virilio, *Esthétique de la disparition: essai sur le cinématisme* (Paris: Éd. Balland, 1980); Paul Virilio, *La Machine de vision: essai sur les nouvelles techniques de représentation* (Paris: Éd Galilée, 1988); Paul Virilio, *La Vitesse de la libération* (Paris: Éd. Galilée, 1995). 'Pour moi la vitesse est l'analyseur numéro un. Dans une société où la vitesse n'était pas mise en œuvre techniquement, industriellement, on pouvait encore se poser la question. A partir du moment où on invente la machine à vapeur et le télégraphe, c'est fini.' Paul Virilio, 'Les Rèvolutions de la vitesse. Conversation avec Paul Virilio', in *La pensée exposée, Textes et entretiens pour la Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain* (Arles/Paris Actes Sud/Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, 2012), p. 258.

It means denying habitual perception and moving into a temporal model which is rather uninviting for the spectatorial habit of speedy fruition.

It is also about connecting with a concept that contrasts speed. Not that Gordon's work is forcibly affected by the development of socio-political movements intent on the slowing down of life, a life which today is considered archaic in its forms. However, art affronts its contemporaneity and feeds on it. Indeed, Bill Viola – another contemporary star – has made slowness and visual intensification his distinctive hallmark, to the point of forcing the spectator's vision into the perception of the slowing down of the image.

The exhibition dedicated to him at the Grand Palais in Paris[28] cannot be enjoyed unless the time of the works is respected, intensifying a visual route very different from the contemporary tendency of viewing artwork in a museum. Both Bill Viola's temporalities as well as the spaces enlivened by the interferences produced by each of them, strike us with their inevitable wholeness, and rarely in their singularity. It is a paradoxical outcome, since the use of such decelerated motion together with the use of high-precision cameras should attract our attention towards detail and not the whole. Instead a strident contrast is created: Viola's unbearable temporality is made visible by the spatial leaps into which vision is forced, where several works are displayed together or where the idea of polyptych (highly developed in Medieval and Renaissance culture, source of inspiration for the Californian artist) bows to narrated time. If we think of the room in which there are three works of art, *Catherine's Room* (2001), *Four Hands* (2001) and *Surrender* (2001), this becomes evident. Eleven pictures are created from three works, each one practically devoid of action and all slowed down to the point of visual exasperation. But the characteristic precision of the images produced by the artist comes to light more in the whole than in the detail. The spectators' vision leaps, seldom allowing contemplation and, in spite of this, the perception of the slowness is clear in their eyes. In a less recent interview dedicated to the question of time in his works Bill Viola explains:

> You have to look at two different kinds of time in a very general way that exist in the world. The time of each individual, their life cycles and their lifelines. And the kind of time that is associated with nature and the world which is eternal and infinite and exists beyond the span of any individual person. And we can only know the former but we aspire to understand the latter.
>
> That's why all great religious traditions have some kind of theory or idea or concept of eternity and that's when you look at human life in individual terms you end up with a life with a beginning and an end like films do. And if you look at human life from a social standpoint […] then you're looking at a circle that is always turning and is eternal really.[29]

[28] *Bill Viola* (Paris: Grand Palais, 2004), curated by Jérôme Neutres and Kira Perov.
[29] Stuart Koop and Charlotte Day, 'Video, Being and Time. Interview with Bill Viola', *LIKE*, 8 (Autumn 1999), 20-26, p. 20.

Hence his attraction to oriental, cyclical and non-linear temporal forms, capable of expanding the range of contemplated vision beyond the linear misinterpretation of time. Likewise, his need to move in a manipulated temporality is derived from this philosophy. Just like Gordon, who is explicit in this, Viola realizes that his work is imperceptible, in the sense that it is not perceptible according to contemporary possibilities. He offers it as a sort of temporal alternative to common time, like a model of resistance to collective fruition.

Therefore, the manipulation of the temporality of the image becomes the most appropriate form, in art, for *measuring* memory and experience: non-existent temporalities are made to collide (in our perception) with recognized models in an attempt to create awareness in the experience of vision.

Cyclical Forms of the Image

The form of the *loop* is one of the essences of the moving image in contemporary art, one of the real forms that are opposed to the finiteness of film as presented at the cinema. The contemporary temporal essence returns towards itself, as if the impossibility of a comprehension based on criteria that have since been abandoned could be remedied by an obsessive return into a confused temporal labyrinth.

The *loop* has a practical and a conceptual function. The first relates to the fruition of the work: when we are faced with artworks that are the result of an 'open-ended temporality'[30] the only way to enter the visual discourse is that of repetition. This allows us to take back what was lost upon entering into a random moment of the development. Similarly, it enables the spatialization of the work. Leaving the flow of the image in continuous development, the relationship with the *site* becomes critical, because they are in relation *ad infinitum*.

The second, on the other hand, is related to the chronological need of contemporary art. Manipulations such as *delay,* slow motion and acceleration are important visual styles for many artists and have led to a series of undoubtedly valuable widespread practices. The *loop,* however, highlights the contemporaneity around the idea of repetition, which has become the only acceptable chronological development in the chaos of proposed timelines. The return is a sort of systematic proposition of our contemporaneity. 'Loops, circularity and rotation are modes of visualization, modes of (in)stalling time. What they have in common is their ability to make moving images and entire sequences return',[31] says Birnbaum, referring particularly to the work of Tacita Dean, *Fernsehturm* (2000).

From among the artists working with this form of temporality, we could take the Brazilian Katia Maciel as an example. *'Répétition(s)'*,[32] the Paris exhibition dedicated precisely to repetition in the moving image, is interesting in this re-

[30] Mondloch, p. 43.
[31] Birnbaum, p. 68.
[32] Katia Maciel, *'Répétition(s)'*, (Paris: Maison Européenne de la Photographie, 2014).

spect. For the artist it is about relating the time of the vision to the time of the artwork in a very particular way, using short video sequences to be shown in continuous repetition, hence *loop,* inserting these returns at a precise moment of the action, in order to create an endless repetition. All this is obtained using micro-actions. According to Katia Maciel:

> On pourrait affirmer que le temps est, à certains égards, une invention issue de notre rapport existentiel à la répétition. 'Nous sommes ce que nous répétons sans cesse', affirmait Aristote dans l'*Éthique à Nicomaque*. L'idée de répétition se manifeste à travers la plupart de mes travaux dans lesquels le temps semble résister au temps. L'utilisation récurrente de la mise en boucle de séquences vidéo n'est pas seulement une figure de style, elle est, avant tout, l'essence même de la poétique qui opère dans les images que je façonne.[33]

Time withstands time through its repetition with no solution of continuity. They are videos that determine an immediate misunderstanding of the action once in front of the image: in *Meio cheio, meio vazio* (2009), the simple act of pouring water from a jug into a glass struggles with the fact that the glass is always half full, never filling to the top. The *loop* allows us to break the chronological advancement of the action and doing so visually creates an impact with the spectator's perception. A similar procedure occurs in *Timeless* (2009) where the spectator is in front of an hourglass in which the sand both falls and rises, moving in both directions. A doubled moment, which again is endless: a sort of mechanism that 'create the illusion of an infinite present'. *Uma Árvore* (2009) was one of the most powerful installations of the Paris exhibition since it was installed in a room similar to a large corridor accessible to spectators, at the end of which there was the image of a tree, as in the title, which would extend and withdraw provoking the spectator's temptation to move his body forward and then immediately back again, whereby the extension of the branches becomes an effective presence in the environment.

Ondas (2006) was the only interactive work presented in the exhibition. It was a projection of sea waves and a 'reactive sensorial mat', whereby the weight of the spectator creates other waves under foot. Therefore it was a wave in the marine sense, but also a wave of energy, mixing the incessant flow of the water, a sort of natural *loop*, with a flow created by the visitor's body.

The examples of the Brazilian artist are interesting as they make the viewing experience of a very clear object (a jug and a glass, the beach, an hour glass, the artist herself) collide with the almost immediate surprise of an action that is impossible from a temporal viewpoint. A conceptual game, therefore, but of the type useful in the perception of the image of the daily flow of time. It was an exhibition that as a whole would not require more than a few minutes total

[33] Katia Maciel, *'Répétition(s)'*, <http://www.mep-fr.org/evenement/katia-maciel/> [accessed 1 November 2016].

viewing if one were to follow the chronological order of the videos in their entirety. The *loop* makes this discourse meaningless, because a series of interferences come into play that are modified each time the action returns.

Forms of Temporal Intermittence

The artistic presumption that any work, of any length, should be experienced in its entirety is frustrated by the actual spectatorial practice of cancelling the duration of the vision, substituting it with his own, personally 'invented' one.

There is undoubtedly an 'exploratory duration' that Anne-Marie Duguet speaks of in relation to Jeffrey Shaw's work.[34] A 'window shopping approach'[35] on the part of the viewer also exists. The work of art is, in contemporary times, the fruit of an attempted path of liberation of the spectator and, even when this has not been achieved, as a result it becomes possible to move with greater ease in the exhibition hall of the museum.

At the Venice Biennale 2013, the French Pavilion (in actual fact German, because the two countries had decided to swap buildings for the 2013 edition), displayed a work by Anri Sala, *Ravel, Ravel, Unravel*. Based on the *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D major* (1930) by Maurice Ravel, this work offers the viewer a unique experience that is therefore complicated to analyse. The first level, architectural, is also important for temporal analysis. Christopher Mooney writes:

> The French building is an innocuous enough space. Built in 1912, designed by an Italian and owned by the citizens of Venice, it presents exhibiting artists with only one problem: how to fill its standard-issue neoclassical shell. The German-designed and owned pavilion, however, with its temple-like apse and towering Teutonic pillars, presents a surfeit of ticklish issues: architectural, aesthetic, political, you name it. Built in 1909, Nazified in 1938, de-Nazified in 1947 and almost razed a couple of times since, it is overdetermined by history and overloaded with ghosts. Included among the latter is the spirit of the last artist to show there, Christoph Schlingensief, who died in August 2010, a year before his Venice installation opened. Schlingensief's curator and widow turned the building into a Schlingensief mausoleum of sorts, and it worked – the Biennale jury awarded the pavilion its top prize.[36]

It was the same pavilion that had witnessed the famous work of Hans Haacke, who in 1993 destroyed the marble floor where Mussolini and Hitler shook hands. With an emotional load of this magnitude, Anri Sala decided to rethink

[34] See *Jeffrey Shaw: a User's Manual, from Expanded Cinema to Virtual Reality* ed. by Anne-Marie Duguet, Peter Weibel and Heinrich Klotz (Ostfildern: Cantz, 1997), p. 21.
[35] Anne Friedberg, *Window Shopping. Cinema and the Postmodern* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1994).
[36] Christopher Mooney, 'Anri Sala', *Art Review* (Summer 2013), <http://artreview.com/features/feature_anri_sala> [accessed 9 February 2016].

the space and time: he compelled the spectator to go in through a side entrance, leading firstly to a room where he could watch a video depicting DJ Chloè Thévenin, *Unravel* (2013). Through the next door, the central room served as the core of the artwork: lined with soundproofing material, it contained two screens, one higher up and the other lower and slightly to the left, with two video performances of Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D major*, performed by the virtuosos Louis Lortie and Jean-Efflam Bavouze: hence *Ravel Ravel* (2013). From here there was access to the third room, with the second projection of *Unravel*, showing Chloè Thévenin trying to concatenate the two interpretations of the *Concerto*. This is followed by the exit.

> Le projet d'Anri Sala ne réalise pas un véritable réarrangement de l'œuvre originale, mais des modifications de tempos, afin de créer une sensation d'espace variable, c'est-à-dire d'extension voire d'étirement de l'espace. Il recherche 'la perception d'une chasse', selon ses propres termes, comme si deux voix se répondaient mimétiquement.[37]

To this spatial extension another equivalent temporal one was added, because the modified repetition created the effect of an elongation of perception. When the concerts began, the two tracks were simultaneous. At a certain point they divided using the technique of *phasing*, based on the de-synchronization of two musical phases. This is a trick of space and time, therefore, within a structure that is already complex, from a historical viewpoint.

> When you work with a time-based medium you are aware of the use of time and how it is experienced. Making a film is like simultaneously crafting an object and the duration of the public's encounter with it. The duration becomes the object. The efficiency of the object will depend on the efficiency of its duration. But the objective time and the subjective experiencing of it do not always have the same duration. Sometimes the experience of time feels longer or shorter than the real duration, the time-code time.[38]

The relationship between the duration and the object of vision became crucial, to the point that it depended on the duration of the latter, in a circuit between objective and subjective time. The French pavilion was organized in this way and as such was a model: it included the art of time in the extension of time and modified the values of both, according to the relationship with the spectator, who was thus obliged to follow a precise path, but despite this still able to choose his viewing time. An artwork of this kind clearly highlights the question of 'forms

[37] Christine Macel, 'Faux Jumeaux', in *Anri Sala, Ravel Ravel Unravel*, ed. by Christine Macel and Anri Sala (Paris: Manuella Éditions, Institut Français, Centre National des Arts Plastiques, 2013), 9-20, p. 15.
[38] *Anri Sala*, ed. by Mark Godfrey, Hans Ulrich Obrist and Liam Gillick (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 27.

of temporal intermittence' that complete our journey: artworks that are initially complex, with the aim of reflecting adequately on the relationship between space and time within the work. Artworks that incorporate a reflection on the different levels of artistic device in direct comparison with the installation *site* and the medium or media selected. *Ravel, Ravel, Unravel* is a key example that showed the interpenetration of spaces and times of viewing. The spectator's subjectivity was added as a last line of perception, overlapping temporal and spatial perception. In this sense the forms of temporal intermittency were the result of previous experiences of linearity and circularity and the best example for reflecting on the management of the spectator and his times in contemporary art.

Thus we can observe how the different forms that have been analysed offer a path that aims to summarize the main forms of the temporalization of moving images when they are spatialized. From the linear forms that have been offered to us by the history of contemporary visual arts, to circular forms, peculiarities of moving images and in particular exposed film. Both ways of using time are at the basis of the composite system, the last one we considered, of which Anri Sala's pavilion was a key example, considering the explicit reasoning on the relationship between images and sound. Taken together they show us how the forms of relocation, exhibition and installation, are part of the same set, one that compares the spatial with the temporal values of images and the places in which they are located.