

Statescapes

An Expanded Cinema Exploration into Memory, Looping Patterns, and Simultaneous Temporalities

By Ramona Caprariu

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of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in
Digital Futures.

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Abstract

OCAD University

Digital Futures

Master of Fine Arts, 2019

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Statescapes is a practice-based project that draws upon Henri Bergson, experimental film, installation art, and affect theory. I investigate the flow of an artwork that harnesses the potentials of reflective research into memory and thought processes, through a personal lens of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy coping skills. In bringing the work to an installation context, I make further claim into a collapsing and questioning of temporalities. While experimental film has made considerable strides in challenging cinematic conventions, I offer a new media perspective on the tradition by using 3D software and morphing functions to subvert the edit and the timeline.

The anchoring question that bridges the personal with the theoretical is: How can timelines be explored in expanded cinema in a way that comments on individual perceptions of time and memory?

Keywords: expanded cinema, installation design, Bergsonism, affect theory, personal reflection

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Chapter 1: Introduction

I am a multidisciplinary artist with a background in cinema looking to move into new practices and perspectives. However, with such shifts, it is paramount that I also maintain my personal outlook with art. I favour a formalist and experimental approach to film that can exploit and make visible all the technical considerations of a moving image. The primary investigation of this master's thesis lies in the exploration of memory modalities through a multi-screen-reliant video installation. Within the install, questions of a variant edit, detail fragmentation, cyclicity, and 3D space cinematics come into focus. The videos are illuminated by writings around memory, time, affect and expanded cinema.

The drive for making this particular work stems in part from my experience with Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT). I entered a group program back in 2016 when I was going through what I thought was a situational depression. I was diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD); at the time, it felt like a relief to have a label. I have always had troubles verbally expressing certain emotions aloud so tacking on an additional explanation of a disorder that is already so poorly understood seemed to me a daunting undertaking. BPD is defined by emotional instability along with instability in regards to relationships and sense of self. It is absolutely more nuanced than I am letting on but that is because this thesis is about my own personal experience with BPD and DBT and what they have meant to me. I will be expanding on the particular steps and approaches I take into my process of crisis management and distress tolerance within my methodology section later on in this document. While it might sound cliché - maybe that is because it too often strikes true - but putting myself in therapy was the biggest prompt to getting to know myself better. There is an aspect of nurturing accountability that is

laced not with guilt and shame but with a responsibility to oneself. I was able to identify that these feelings I had that felt insurmountable were actually the product of my very typical thinking at the time. A big part of learning how to express one's emotions is learning how and why they have taken root.

So as I have just qualified, it is not that I cannot express my emotions adequately but that I have consciously made the choice to continue my alternative filmmaking path and focus on abstracted visual metaphors and motifs to explore how I choose to express my emotions. As such, I have taken the inspiration for my videos as being representative of the actual physical spaces that I inhabit now and how my memories mingle in with my present tense during an emotionally charged episode. Memory fragmentation has already been examined at length through various created works. These writings will be examined later in this thesis. My intention is not to craft a pure memory space. In keeping with the theory I am informed by, the simultaneity and coexistence of multiples is important in how I express the contents of the videos.

Cinematics within a 3D space that explore deviant approaches - ones that do not just aim to imitate what is already possible with more traditional equipment - was also a goal of exploration with this thesis. With camera morphing and object morphing techniques, different instances meld into others fluidly, as they often do in our minds. The experience of the installation intends to harken to thematics as well. Only from a position afar can all the scenes be viewed in their entirety but when in the midsts of them, the occlusion recalls the singularity with which we see the world in the midst of a crisis.

Statescapes is my thesis video installation that harnesses and seeks to represent my current emotional and mental states. Using sonic and visual details cultivated from spaces I frequent such as my apartment, my parent's house and the outdoor paths I take to arrive at these and other locations - be they the homes of ex-friends/partners or personal landmark locations - I craft unreal and distorted scenes from very focused details. It is amongst these details that my memories often get triggered and I spiral into my patterned thought cycles. The scenes thus focus less on representing memories as full-fledged scenes and more on how the mingling of the past with the present might be explored. The whole installation focuses on the 'now', as fraught with loops, repetition, and disordered representation as I am used to. *Statescapes* intends to stand at the crossroads of expanded cinema and conceptual art with required attention to detail and metaphor. The research questions of this paper are as follows:

How can timelines be explored in expanded cinema in a way that comments on individual perceptions of time and memory? How might sameness, difference and the poetics of change, in the context of a pattern, multiplicity, and simultaneity, be presented and explored through visual and sound space? How can the connection between memory bias and factual history be explored through the content and physicality of the installation?

My master thesis explores expanded cinema, experimental film, installation art, affect theory and the theories of Henri Bergson in order to investigate how the moving image can play with memory, place, space, and time.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1 Temporal Structures in Cinema

2.1.1 Simultaneity and Linearity

Establishing an understanding of chronology and how we as a Western audience come to typically expect “chronological time, flowing steadily from before to after, [that] is an effect of its figurations: annuals, chronicles, calendars, clocks”.¹ To try and remove ourselves from chronological thinking in our everyday lives is impossible but it is worthwhile to understanding how our relationship to time has been deeply influenced by technological advancements; these have implicated our relationship from one with the cyclic processes of nature to one of standardization and cataloguing. It could also be said that the distinction between space and time is brought into focus. While a cyclical understanding of time may support a more interchangeable relationship to time and space, it is actually more so that they are currently confused as we are faced with an

“ongoing sense of temporal instability... The sense that our increasingly unanchored, fluid lives are at odds with the artificial construct of a linear chronology...Indeed, as Borges writes in ‘The Garden of Forking Paths’, ‘In contrast to Newton and Schopenhauer, your ancestor did not believe in a uniform, absolute time. [She] believed in an infinite series of times, in a growing, dizzying net of divergent and convergent and parallel times’”.²

¹ Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, “The Plural Temporality of the Work of Art,” in *Time*, ed. Amelia Groom (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2013), 39.

² Simon Starling, “Never the Same River (Possible Futures, Probable Pasts),” in *Time*, ed. Amelia Groom (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2013), 30.

This approach of plural time relations is pertinent to cinema that plays with temporal structures.

Trying to disrupt the sequential flow of film and its linear temporality unveils our own predisposed assumption that film represents the ‘present’ moment. Techniques like time lapse (to compress), slow motion (to stretch), looping, repetitions, and superimpositions all defy the conventional logics that have become tradition. As subversions, they counter narrative development by creating a time that is inescapable and uncontrollable.

Chronology propels a sense of irreversibility and a “vision of an inexorably progressive and productive future”.³ Permeating into other mediums, classical cinema follows similar codes and language too. The linearity with film especially is also due to how the film strip must move images through a projector: it was inherent to the medium. However, as art historian Elena Filipovic has found, in more recent years cinema has been making strides in

“creating works that deliberately counter the received ideas of how to represent the chronologies implicit in history’s unfolding - be it past, present or future.

Using such means as the cinematic cut, spatial dislocation, re-enactment, appropriation or collage, they construct dissonant temporalities within the same work of art”.⁴

Many artists have explored ways to mediate and subvert the cinematic timeline to adequately reflect how mental states do not index chronologically. One example is Doug Aitken’s multiscreen, fragmented video installation *electric earth, I am in you*⁵ offers up “the self [as] a

³ Elena Filipovic, “This is Tomorrow (and Other Modernist Myths),” in *Time*, ed. Amelia Groom (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2013), 42.

⁴ Filipovic, “This is Tomorrow”, 43.

⁵ Doug Aitken, *electric earth, I am in you*, (2000; United States), video sculpture.

zone where time and space intersect in a variety of ways, and the very concept of experience must be thought of in terms of this plurality”.⁶ *Statescapes* draws from Aitken’s and other artists’ approaches in order to create a multi-screen reliant video installation that externalizes and makes time relations visible as a way of subverting chronology. In the next section, Spatializing Time, artworks that deal with this theme of chronology will be described more thoroughly. However, I would like to return to the concept of simultaneity. Stan Douglas, for example, will be discussed as an artist that explores temporal polyphony in terms of simultaneous images in installation. Through this process, he is able to disrupt chronology but through the concept of simultaneity.

Simultaneity can be described as a multiplicity of movements, to avoid inferring a static simultaneity. This resulting kind of space that can express multiple times within also means “you can’t go back in space: the myth of the return...space has its times”.⁷ So time and space act simultaneously; both are always moving.

Shifting a focus to the medium of choice for my thesis - expanded cinema and installation video - requires a look back through time to understand historical explorations of simultaneity. In the 1880s, Eadweard Muybridge had a technique called simultaneous photography where he laid twelve to twenty-four cameras in a line parallel to the movement he was planning on capturing and then extending string from each camera into the path so that the movement of the subject would break the string, one by one, and trigger the cameras to shoot successively.⁸ When

⁶ Daniel Birnbaum, “Future Arrivals,” in *Time*, ed. Amelia Groom (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2013), 206.

⁷ Doreen Massey, “Some Times of Space,” in *Time*, ed. Amelia Groom (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2013), 118.

⁸ Susanne Jaschko, “Space-Time Correlations Focused in Film Objects and Interactive Video,” in *Future Cinema: the Cinematic Imaginary After Film*, ed. Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 430.

projecting all the exposed images at film speed, the effect was that of a moving image. From here, Etienne-Jules Marey endeavoured to develop a process that would record images all on the same camera plate rather than separate images, which he saw as limiting as it lacked temporal representation since you cannot account for how much time transpires between images. Marey created the cronophotograph that lived up to his premise and was scientifically important; he also inspired many thinkers and makers in that time period including Marcel Duchamp with the 1912 *Nude Descending a Staircase (No.2)*.⁹ ¹⁰ Bergson has some reservations about this because he held that instantaneous photography ranks all moments as equal and then falsely constructs a sense of time which is not incorrect, because the entire chronological succession was viewable within a single frame.¹¹ With the eventual digitization of images, many artists began to rely less on chronology to dictate the structure of a film as single cuts of film or single areas of a frame could be chosen and isolated. This allowed for an evolved and complexed time-space axis. In a work by Joachim Sauter entitled *Invisible Shape of Things Past*¹², virtual space and time are explored through transforming film sequences based on camera settings like movement, angle, and focal distance.¹³ The sequences are split up into single images that then reconstruct the film object as an actual object in 3D space. When interacting with the piece, it was possible to buffer back and forth through the object presented and see which point in the film sequence you were

⁹ Marcel Duchamp, "Nude Descending a Staircase (No.2)," *Philadelphia Museum of Art*, 1912. <https://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/51449.html>

¹⁰ Jaschko, "Space-Time Correlations," 431.

¹¹ Marta Braun, *Picturing Time : The Work of Etienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 281.

¹² Joachim Sauter, *Invisible Shape of Things Past* (Karlsruhe, ZKM Center for Art and Media: 2002), <http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/invisible-shape/>.

¹³ Jaschko, "Space-Time Correlations," 431.

engaging with – so it represented a literal time-space relationship. Martin Reinhart's *tx-transform* furthered this investigation into film's own spatiality by a software technique that does not restrict an image to showing only a 'corresponding' moment in time, but to depict the entire time.¹⁴ The time and space axes are transposed in this effort to show "filmic representation is no longer fixed exclusively through the spatial presence of an object; rather, its form depends upon a complex interplay of relative motions".¹⁵ A final work that also explores temporality and point-of-view perspective is the *Liquid Time* series by Camille Utterback and Romy Achituv that relies upon viewer interaction to disrupt the recording's chronology. The video image itself is split up into multiple time zones that can run independently from the overall expected chronology we are used to. This results in movement forwards and backwards in time.¹⁶

Time flows but does not disappear in our day-to-day lives and we have access to this preservation of and look into the past. Increasing juxtapositions and configurations of multiple time flows allow for the emergence of new art forms that might be more emblematic of the synchronicity we actually experience. It is not just in these new media contexts that these themes can be explored. Stan Douglas talks of 'temporal polyphony' in relation to his split-screen installations as "being able simultaneously to produce distinct voices has always been something [he's] been trying to achieve, not always having this idea of a single, static identity but one which is always challenged from the outside, and is able to think of the 'Other' simultaneously.

¹⁴ "Technique," *tx-transform*, accessed November 10, 2018, <http://www.tx-transform.com/Eng/>.

¹⁵ *tx-transform*, "Technique."

¹⁶ "Liquid Time Series," Projects, Camille Utterback, accessed October 25, <http://camilleutterback.com/projects/liquid-time-series/>.

Polyphony is a technique for doing that”.¹⁷ In the 1995 work *Der Sandmann*¹⁸, he exhibits two temporal moments, past and future at the same time, but we can hopefully as viewers take them both in and understand their temporal relationship. Especially in a world with so many stimuli and imagery, temporal polyphony has become the standard and habitual mental state, with constant perception and recollection.

With this section, it is interesting to contemplate time as potentially another creative tool available to be manipulated. Through my own manipulation of time, I am harkening to the inevitability of the cyclical thoughts and memories that come to mind in moments of vulnerability and stress. Artists such as Michael Snow work in formalist ways, bound by rules of time that produce films that ‘make a shape in time’, compared to time manipulation that ‘sculpts in time’.¹⁹ Time and art are bound with our expectations. Subverting these ordinary expectations and producing work that is concerned less with convention and more with redefining how to more adequately express the nuances of time expression is a goal of this document. Not only am I endeavouring to redefine conceptualizations by drawing upon existing ideas and techniques, I am also adding and contributing to the field. There is a lack in the works detailed above in terms of highly personal and autobiographical works; this is the area where I think these themes of memory and time fit in so naturally. As well, the deployment of digital tools to create these situations allows for continued experimentation with regards to representing how memory and perception fluctuates and cycles.

¹⁷ Daniel Birnbaum, “Crystals,” in *Memory*, ed. Ian Farr (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2012), 140.

¹⁸ Stan Douglas, *Der Sandmann* (1995; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York Gift, The Bohen Foundation, 2000), 2-track 16mm projection.

¹⁹ Catherine Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image* (New York: Wallflower Press, 2015), 118.

2.1.2 Spatializing Time

In returning to the example of *electric earth* by Aitken, it incorporates eight-minute-long looping screens arranged throughout three or four rooms. Aitken's intention with the work was to create a spatial solution that "[contested] the linearity seemingly intrinsic to [film and video]"²⁰ by not reinforcing expectations and instead, collapsing and expanding time. As the viewer walks through the experimental physical spaces at her own pacing, she is in charge of crafting her own narrative and structural understanding of the installation. The resulting narratives are nowhere near linear but circular, multi-layered and open-ended.²¹ The journey through will never be the same for any two viewers or for the same viewer twice. And in this close physical integration of viewer and artwork, the viewer becomes a part of the unfolding scenario as they are directly implicating their bodies with the imagery that they will be exposed to and in what proximity. Amidst all the overstimulation, the privilege of crafting a narrative comes in exchange for a submission to the multiple flow of sounds and sights. The actor subject in the videos is more of a fragmented character that allows for new forms of subjectivity to emerge.

In most cases, it seems installing time comes with the intention of disrupting expectations and conventions of form. While linearity is one that has been covered so far, there is also the notion of acceleration. A notable example is Douglas Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho*²² that took the Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 Hollywood film *Psycho*²³ and, riffing off film's projection speed of

²⁰ Kate Mondloch, *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 100.

²¹ Birnbaum, "Future Arrivals," 207.

²² Douglas Gordon, *24 Hour Psycho* (1993; United Kingdom), video installation.

²³ Alfred Hitchcock, *Psycho* (1960; United States, Paramount Pictures, Universal Pictures Home Entertainment, 2012), DVD.

twenty four frames a second, extended its duration from the original hour and forty-nine minutes to twenty-four hours in length. It is not at all expected that somebody spend the entire duration with the work and the rationale behind it was more so to exhibit how a work lives on in spite of our presence. The frame by frame progression continues in *24 Hour Psycho* no matter and a viewer will not likely ever have access to all of it.

I could be remiss to not talk about the reception of these kinds of long durational works. When it is not clearly delineated to a viewer how long she should dedicate to a work or if the work is too slow paced, she might not have the patience to try and figure it out. Museum audiences are often wandering and adding to the equation works that are temporally jarring and open-ended and they are probably gone. Or perhaps this is an unintended goal of supporting visitors in creating their own temporal experiences. Then again, this also “[runs] the risk of over-privileging the viewer’s role and implying that all meaning resides in the individual spectator”.²⁴ While there is no current way to ensure that all viewers will stay and experience an installation’s fullest offerings as it can depend on the type of viewer and is also very much the nature of being in a museum space. It is important to acknowledge that this type of temporally engaged work might be a prime candidate for loss of interest. Suffice it to say, spectatorship is a charged topic in itself and installation video can aim to provide critique on conventional interactions with commercial media, but the fact remains that technological advancements have had effects on how audiences perceive screen-based media.

Screen-mediated visibility has rendered audiences as screen subjects and that extends from the art space and into the everyday. In addition to the fact that we view varying screens on

²⁴ Mondloch, *Screens*, 121.

end throughout our lives, the ubiquity of screens has actually become less of a ‘seeing’ and more of a ‘thinking’ – we think through our screens. Moreover, this point has come up in how the screen manifests as a medium for all the works described thus far; the material of the screen is directly involved in the creation of the work’s content and form. My interest is not in banishing or admonishing screens but to consider my own relationship to them through what I want to be expressing. While my work takes the form of time-based screen display, it speculates about other spatial and/or hybrid modes of reception and presentation through the use of form and its unveiling over time in camera rotation.

In thinking about how the screen’s role might have changed in society, expanded cinema might be said to focus on the apparatus of the film as the primary experience instead of hosting a narrative as the priority. This gives way to a ‘present tense’ experience of the event, where one’s own involvement with the work dictates the duration. Participation of the viewer within the projection space collapses both the viewer and the environment into being aspects of the work.²⁵ At this junction of cooperative experience, one relies on the other for adequate existence. This can be said of all artworks, that they need reception, but especially with expanded cinema which aims to challenge the conventions of how we understand and expect cinema to operate for us. This results in a nuanced experience that still plays with form, repetition, and duration and suggests a wholeness that is apprehended by those who are patient.

²⁵ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, 166.

2.2 Bergsonism: *Matter and Memory*, Duration, Coexistence

To consider a theoretical and philosophical approach rather than one rooted in our everyday perception of time concepts will require a look at Henri Bergson who describes duration as a psychological experience - “it is a case of a ‘transition’, of a ‘change’, a *becoming*...However, defined in this way, duration is not merely a lived experience; it is already a condition of experience. For experience always gives us a composite of space and duration”.²⁶ Space exteriorizes an internal duration in a way that can then be expressed. If considering that duration marks a movement from what once was to what now is or will be means that “we are too accustomed to thinking in terms of the ‘present’how would a new present come about if the old present did not pass at the same time that it *is* present?...the past is ‘contemporaneous’ with the present that it *has been*...The past would never be constituted if it did not coexist with the present whose past it is”.²⁷ A state of time cannot exist in a vacuum and requires other states for comparison sake and relativity so that its purpose and perception can concretize it in a suitable way. The past and the present are intertwined and inescapable.

This especially rings true when considering memory in tandem with perception which might be “a theoretical fiction because in actuality, perception always includes memory; there is no such thing as instantaneous vision”.²⁸ To have an image always inflected by the past is very similar to the ways in which we think. To have our present experience coloured by former

²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 37.

²⁷ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 58-59.

²⁸ Suzanne Guerlac, *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006), 116.

experiences alike might sound obvious but it also expresses that the ‘present’ is in flux as it is more “like a moving target that moves through the temporal circuit of past, present and future...’my present’...both a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future”.²⁹ The past is immaterial and unconcerning of the body, it is a virtual representation but that is not to say that memory is a weaker form of perception. Perception is not a representation but an action that thoroughly involves us. Within the process of recollection and perception, the past coexists with a present of its own and so the present is but a contraction of a past. In this way, my installation exhibits the past through fragments that are called upon within and in the present.

Our everyday understanding of duration typically applies to the world of art – particularly performance work that draws attention to temporality. The aesthetic entanglements of duration involve “spatial senses of expansion, suspension, or collapse or by reverential, chaotic or cosmic phenomena, as notions of temporal distinctions are undone”.³⁰ Time is distinct from duration in that it lacks its thought, analysis, or representation and so, durational works can promote discourse on these failed forms that attempt to resolve for duration. The ways in which this is done is by subverting naturalized perceptions of time and in turn “[giving] access to other temporalities: to times that will not submit to Western culture’s linear progressive meta-narratives, its orders of commodification; to the times of excluded or marginalized identities and lives...time, then, as plenitude: heterogeneous, informal and multi-faceted”.³¹ Drawing upon

²⁹ Guerlac, *Thinking in Time*, 142.

³⁰ Adrian Heathfield, “Thought of Duration,” in *Time*, ed. Amelia Groom (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2013), 97.

³¹ Heathfield, “Thought of Duration,” 98.

this, I have thought of the various ways in which the linear progressive time does not apply to myself and how I can, through my artistic practice, represent a flow of time as I see more fit to describing how cyclical memory processes work.

2.3 Affect and...

2.3.1 Embodiment

In talking about affect, it is important to lay out a working definition since it often is confounded with other similar words. Brian Massumi's essay *The Autonomy of Affect* provides a foundation when more accurately describing an affect as an intensity rather than being synonymous with emotion. While an emotion is "a subjective content, the socio-linguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal"³², an affect is a precognitive autonomic state that is unqualified and without a label of function or meaning (as a feeling would be, which is entirely based on one's own biography). The intensity as affect is embodied in that it autonomically manifests through functions like increased perspiration or heart rate. With this, there is an understanding that affect functions less on a level of understanding and more on one of feeling.

In *The Forms of the Affects*, Eugenie Brinkema makes reference to 'intensity' as an embodied and affective experience of a spectator. Turning to the exterior "is redolent of a topology that de-privileges interiority, depth, containment, and recovery"³³ and so, there is less to say about a transference of affect and more as a circumstance that unfolds in oneself - it is

³² Brian Massumi, "The Autonomy of Affect," *Cultural Critique*, No. 31(Autumn, 1995): 88.

³³ Eugenie Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004), 23.

forceful and not just given. It takes reading for affective intentionality to fully grasp its potential and this process is not one of one-way interpretation but one of a consistent to and fro of “reading and rereading, returning, and rethinking”³⁴. This involves considering it a form without structure that cannot be easily defined and understanding that it is more about embracing the abstraction and offering up a designation to that which resists all other categorization. In my own work, the affective potential lies in the circling, returning, revisiting, and rotating of visuals and sounds, that get continually manifested in slightly new ways that can be read in new ways too. This functions much like memory and time do, as time passes and past details remain historically the same, our recollection, understanding, and approach may alter.

Memory is imbued with personal history and as such is collapsed and refracted when it is brought into the present. In *Cruel Optimism*, Lauren Berlant distinguishes between ‘environment’ and ‘event’ in describing a present that is informed by a past as something that can be returned to. An environment can be actualized through “predictable repetitions and other spatial practices”³⁵ and does not need to define any particular event because not everything gets recalled in the same memorable way. Instead, memories of events are often as episodes “that frame experience while not changing much of anything”³⁶. In this same way, the looping nature of the videos I am constructing harken to this inevitability of re-experiencing and remembering, each time with slight differences.

³⁴ Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 39.

³⁵ Lauren Berlant. *Cruel Optimism*, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2011), 101.

³⁶ Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 101.

2.3.2 Cinema

Delving into the actual medium of cinema, there has always been a concern for the spectacle and a cinema of attractions. The creation of illusory realities began as a way to showcase the newly developed technologies and so were focused on short, exciting instants of events rather than developing narratives.³⁷ These instants were coupled by static camera angles that gradually gave way to dynamic camera movements which immersed the viewer in what they were watching. With experimental and formalist film though, the long static take has remained a hallmark component with regards to cementing a durational focus to the image. What this also does is draw attention to the camera's view. Instead of consistently following the action and rendering the camera a clear teller of the story at hand, focusing on camera rotation as independent of the subject forms can reveal much more through what they might not actually reveal.

Brinkema describes a ten-minute single shot sequence from Michael Haneke's *Funny Games*³⁸ that examines the movement of light, succeeding a son's murder. The rest of the film's horror unfolds alongside the parents' grief and considering this "as a matter of form, composition, and structures requires leaving behind narrative thematics and critical treatments that claim mourning for meaning".³⁹ The structuring of the film in such a manner is what gives way to its affective reading. Haneke is making other points surrounding spectatorship of the grotesque and why audiences might seem compelled to view matter that is so inevitably

³⁷ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, 86.

³⁸ Michael Haneke, *Funny Games* (2007, co-production of United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Warner Independent Pictures, Warner Home Video, 2008), DVD.

³⁹ Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 99.

traumatic. To not deviate from the point at hand, the reason this shot is so effective is that it allows for a moment of reflection in the wake of trauma. The visual stasis can be expressive of an internal similarity. As well, the locked gaze “[re-asserts] the subjectivity of the filmmaker”⁴⁰ and draws attention to this presence of another, of an experience not private yet intimate.

Brinkema describes affect theory as “an attempt to dethrone the subject and the spectator—and attendant terms, such as ‘cognition,’ ‘perception,’ ‘experience,’ even ‘sensation’”⁴¹.

Instead, reading affects as forms runs in line with formalist film theory in placing importance on visual and temporal structures. To be more specific, this refers to “montage, camera movement, mise-en-scène, color, sound—and [...] more ephemeral problematics such as duration, rhythm, absences, elisions, ruptures, gaps, and points of contradiction (ideological, aesthetic, structural, and formal)”⁴². When it comes to incorporating intentions for affect into an artwork, there is a necessity to treat the affects as having forms. In considering light, colour, rhythm in how something is constructed and displayed, there is a prioritization of the technical elements of a film that, even though abstracted, can give way to different understandings from different viewers. In the videos I create for the installation, the feature of the varying camera angles accessed upon every successive viewing explores the facet of cinema being a construction in every sense of the word. What a viewer may view once may not be rendered the same way the next time and it is not up to the viewer as to what they see - they are witnessing a crafted work that can be situated and re-situated in any such way. Within the Experimental Film section of this document, I will develop the idea of drawing attention to the apparatus of the camera and within

⁴⁰ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, 87.

⁴¹ Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 36.

⁴² Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 37.

the Visual Materials section, I will expand on how exactly I am using affect to subvert and reconfigure what an edit might mean to me in a 3-dimensional space.

Brinkema references Kierkegaard's *The Concept of Anxiety*⁴³ that addresses the Heksebrev which is a book constructed of picture segments of people and animals that can then recombine into new reconfigurations when turned and shuffled.⁴⁴ With this kind of continuous motion that is embedded with erraticism and non-continuity, there comes also uncertainty with what is being presented because the assemblage differs with every turn. She describes it as similar to the stereoscope, a "protophotographic tool (and in the language of affectivity, no less) [that produces] a vertiginous uncertainty about the distance separating forms"⁴⁵. While the Heksebrev relies on no predetermined sense of flow to create a whole, the stereoscope, as well as a film edit, relies on a fusion within the same space of time as the images are attached to each other. The way I am approaching it within my installation is that there is an assumption of that kind of spatial multiplicity that then, with prolonged observation, is shown to be just differing perspectives that subscribe to the same time and space - the same pattern. In going back to that mention of Kierkegaard, anxiety is one of the affects Brinkema identifies as imperative to both mainstream and avant-garde cinema (the others being repulsion and distress, disgust, terror and horror).⁴⁶

⁴³ Søren Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard's Writings, VIII, Volume 8: Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Orienting Deliberation on the Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

⁴⁴ Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 188.

⁴⁵ Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 189.

⁴⁶ Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 133.

Hito Steyerl, an artist and writer, describes in *In Defense of the Poor Image* the affective qualities of ‘poor images’ as emblematic of a global condition. Poor images are not high quality - they have been converted, re-edited, uploaded, copied, and transmitted countless times.⁴⁷ They represent the neuroses and paranoias as well as the intensities and distractions of humankind. This duality of concern and expression is one I explore with the collaged styles in my videos. Incorporating digital video, 16mm and 3D constructions into the same ensemble creates new perspectives for images as “one might imagine another form of value defined by velocity, intensity, and spread”.⁴⁸ This works similarly to how my own thoughts and memories function in that they might not be predictable or pre-ordained in the ways in which they may surface. In the same way that images transferred globally “lose matter and gain speed”⁴⁹, memories can disintegrate over time and take on new manifested forms.

In Free Fall: A Thought Experiment on Vertical Perspective explores how new tools of vision and experience are impacting the contemporary condition of disruption and disorientation (Steyerl).⁵⁰ With 3D software implemented in such a way as I described, new perspectives are manipulated, forming these non-linear expressions. No longer is there a necessitated bind to a lens that is “cursed by its promise of its indexical relation to reality”⁵¹ because there is a plethora of opportunity for creation that does not require expensive technology. To represent is to have

⁴⁷ Hito Steyerl, “In Defense of the Poor Image,” *e-flux* #10 (November 2009), <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/>

⁴⁸ Steyerl, “In Defense of the Poor Image”.

⁴⁹ Steyerl, “In Defense of the Poor Image”.

⁵⁰ Hito Steyerl, “In Free Fall: A Thought Experiment on Vertical Perspective,” *e-flux* #24 (April 2011), <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/24/67860/in-free-fall-a-thought-experiment-on-vertical-perspective/>

⁵¹ Steyerl, “In Free Fall: A Thought Experiment on Vertical Perspective”.

freedom in crafting a space on one's choosing and cinema is moving towards this breaking free of traditional perspective. And especially with multi-screen works that quite literally challenge spatial vision, there is a dynamism entrusted to rejecting one unified outlook.

As well, with new media, considerations beyond just those of cinema need to be accounted for. In Susan Best's essay *What is Affect? Considering the Affective Dimension of Contemporary Installation Art*, she implores the possibilities of installation art to trigger interest. When there is movement - in terms of the viewer's physical position and the work of art itself - there is a different kind of engagement that might directly prioritize the body in space, affect and sensation.⁵² Being unhinged from a particular spot and given freedom to move, different impulses are activated, such as those pertaining to a touch impulse and tangibility. With my installation in particular, where the textured aspects of these minute moments are highlighted, the sense of touch is alluded to yet kept distance. This line of thinking led me to think of ways to bring the moving image out into the physical dimension, and I will expand on this more within the section Physical Space Considerations. The experience of the aesthetic work becomes a loop that engages the intellect and the senses; grasping such works can occur in many different ways as each individual is predisposed to alternate points of excitement and interest.⁵³

⁵² Susan Best, "What is Affect? Considering the Affective Dimension of Contemporary Installation Art," *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, Vol. 3 Issue 1 2002: 210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14434318.2002.11432712>

⁵³ Best, "What is Affect?," 222.

Chapter 3: Process

3.1 Situating Myself Within the Artistic Field

3.1.1 Personal Memory and Biases

“Contrary to what people say, using the first person in films tends to be a sign of humility: ‘All I have to offer is myself.’” - Chris Marker ⁵⁴

Within the methodology section of this chapter, I offer an in-depth overview of practice-based research. For this section though, I would like to acknowledge my method of personal reflection as one that builds up and informs my overall practice-based approach. My method is one of expressionism that is rooted in my abstracted personal feelings. A consideration of mine when embarking on this work is that my own role as the subject narrator is one of inherent bias. All that I can recount and wish to is drawn from memory and through time; I cannot say how reliable my memories are. The headspace I find myself in can lead to polarizing outcomes. When I find myself or will myself into a rational or wise mind headspace - this is drawing terminology from DBT’s emotional regulation skills (DBT Skills Training) - I have a thoughtful, radically accepting and almost optimistic outlook. When I am with an emotion mindset (also drawing from DBT), I am extremely catastrophic and deceptive in my outlook. Striking this dichotomy between emotion and rationality shows our ability to engage with different perspectives and lenses that augment how we interpret what is going on in our lives. Add to this the fact that everybody has tendencies towards recounting stories that are rife with inconsistencies and inventions. With subsequent re-tellings of a story, a story might get smaller as details are

⁵⁴ Jonathan Rosenbaum, “Personal Effects: The Guarded Intimacy of *Sans Soleil*,” *The Criterion Collection* (blog), June 26, 2007, <https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/484-personal-effects-the-guarded-intimacy-of-sans-soleil>.

forgotten but it also might get bigger if fictive elements are incorporated.⁵⁵ It happens though, with enough repetition, that the way in which we repeat a story will be the same, thus cementing our memory alongside it. With every successive re-telling, there is a re-living of that experience, a re-entering into that mindset.

Recalling stories is actually not about recalling the actual events themselves, which have been forgotten, but the gists of the events that are then filled in with reconstructed details. With this process, a teller undergoes subconscious evaluative rules that “tend to reflect very strongly one’s view of the world, oneself, and the events that have occurred in one’s life”.⁵⁶ The story composition process is also very much affected by what the events we are recalling reveal about ourselves as we want to reflect well and elicit sympathy. With this being an honest and personal endeavour, I am not hesitant to reveal my own flaws, weaknesses, accountability, and unreliability. As well, telling - or composing - stories affects our memories of them in that we always remember the rendition, the copy; and not the original. This demonstrates how our own interpretations play an integral role in how our memory operates - it is not simply what is historically factual. Knowing this, I am accepting my own place and space as a narrator and artist that is embarking on a study of my own memories, however they manifest.

3.1.2 Experimental Film/Works

Experimental film is characterized by its re-evaluation of cinematic norms and its approach to narrative alternatives. In choosing this mode of filmmaking, I am opening myself to

⁵⁵ Roger Schank, *Tell Me a Story: Narrative and Intelligence*, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 115 .

⁵⁶ Schank, *Tell Me a Story*, 137.

a wide array of artistic inspiration, ranging from stylistically innovative to contextually relevant. In thinking about the style of the videos I am rendering, I look to the filmmaker Paul Clipson and the video maker Sabrina Ratté. The former was invested in psychedelic, non-narrative analog work that exclusively dealt with in-camera techniques, lending to double exposures and layered superimpositions. The latter blends nature and architecture in digitally rendered spaces. Both artists work with impressionistic styles and aim to work with time, space, and perception. Clipson's works use saturated colours and close-ups to strike intimacy and emotionality and while Ratté's works might lack human subjects, they too explore aesthetic subjective abstractions.

Following on this path of stylistic relevance, I also look towards filmmakers that use the post-production and editing process as a way to subvert temporal flow. In this category, I have Peter Tscherkassky's *Outer Space*⁵⁷. The film uses processes of optical printing to transform original footage⁵⁸ from Sidney J. Furie's 1981 film *The Entity*⁵⁹. As a result, the film is trying to detach from the rules of the film frame by shattering them, with "[interest] in the limits to which film can be subjected to degradation and dissolution via refilming, layering and imposition, and visual fragmentation"⁶⁰. The resulting rhythms offer a new temporality that fuses times beyond that static present we might be used to. The deforming and subversion of what is expected from a film's linearity also draws attention to the potential malleability of the medium to showcase new

⁵⁷ Peter Tscherkassky, *Outer Space*, (1999; Austria: P.O.E.T. Picture), 35mm.

⁵⁸ Rhys Graham, "Outer Space: The Manufactured Film of Peter Tscherkassky," *senses of cinema* Issue 12 (February 2001), <http://sensesofcinema.com/2001/cteq/outer/>.

⁵⁹ Sidney J. Furie, *The Entity*, (1982; United States: 20th Century Fox, 1983), VHS.

⁶⁰ Graham, "Outer Space", <http://sensesofcinema.com/2001/cteq/outer/>.

possibilities. And to bring back Paul Clipson, with his films *CHORUS*⁶¹ and *UNION*⁶², means a more detailed look at the in-camera mechanisms he uses. With *CHORUS*, imagery from three different cities melds into a night-scape collage of light and colour. The result of this kind of collapsing of geography inextricably links these localities in a conversation, a group effort in trying to convey some message. In *UNION*, there is considerable metaphor regarding a supposed connection between the consciousness and nature. Using nature as a subject and also a perspective shows how infinite it can be in its representation, whereas architectural man-made structures have more clearly defined limits. This ever-reaching attitude mimics the similar lack of relation and direction in thought processes. This connection between nature and mental states is one that links into the contextual contents of my videos.

In further consideration of the context, I look to Robert Smithson, Guy Maddin, Chris Marker, and Mona Hatoum. Robert Smithson is primarily known as a land artist but he has shot films of his various sculptures too. In this passage from the written work *A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects*, he says

“one’s mind and the earth are in a constant state of erosion, mental rivers wear away abstract banks, brain waves undermine cliffs of thought, ideas decompose into stones of unknowing, and conceptual crystallizations break apart into deposits of gritty reason... This movement seems motionless, yet it crushes the landscape of logic under glacial reveries. This slow flowage makes one conscious of the turbidity of thinking. Slump, debris slides, avalanches all take place within

⁶¹ Paul Clipson, *CHORUS*, (2009; United States: Light Cone Distribution and Preservation), Super 8mm on 16mm.

⁶² Paul Clipson, *UNION*, (2010; United States: Light Cone Distribution and Preservation), Super 8mm on 16mm.

the cracking limits of the brain. The entire body is pulled into the cerebral sediment, where particles and fragments make themselves known as solid consciousness”.⁶³

This contextualization of a landscape as a space that reveals depths of a human mind is a major interest in the memory metaphors I employ in my videos.

Guy Maddin’s *Seances* is an interactive film that creates a unique film for each individual viewer based on an embedded customized algorithm that selects scenes from its database inventory in real time. The spliced together film ranges from ten to fifteen minutes in length. On the National Film Board website, where *Seances* can be accessed, the first line the viewer reads is “[It is] your one chance to see this film”.⁶⁴ *Seances* is non-traditional in many aspects, as it has also been viewed as an installation where the interactivity takes on a new level and the viewer can actually influence and select aspects of the content. The images within the film prioritize the feeling of resurrecting former films over a narrative of continuity or coherence. The actors are trying to “recreate a lost form of expressivity that often looks like camp. Acting, for Maddin, is a kind of performative archeology (*The Globe and Mail*).⁶⁵ The remixed experience is thusly about memory - of lost cinema that is renewed and perhaps no longer lost, of artificially altered imagery suggestive of a time that is gone, of recreations that are experienced once and then are never to be experienced in that same way again. The editing is reminiscent of collage and

⁶³ Robert Smithson, "A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects," *Artforum* vol. 7, no.1 (September 1968): 45.

⁶⁴ Guy Maddin, *Seances*, (2016; Canada: National Film Board of Canada), interactive project. <http://seances.nfb.ca/>

⁶⁵ Robert Everett-Green, "Seances: Guy Maddin’s film generator is an endless cinematic experience," *The Globe and Mail*, May 2, 2016, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/film/seances-guy-maddins-film-generator-is-an-endless-cinematic-experience/article29825665/>.

juxtaposition which ties back into Hito Steyerl's description of an aesthetics that has undergone multiple iterations and assembling.

Measures of Distance by Mona Hatoum⁶⁶ brings this survey back into video works. It features the on-screen sprawling of Arabic text from letters that her mother wrote to her while being read out loud in English. The background images of her mother are intimately captured and speak to a close bond but the context of the letters speak to much more: "exile, displacement, disorientation and a tremendous sense of loss as a result of the separation caused by war".⁶⁷ The work reconfigures her own and her mother's identities in a society rife with stereotypes of Arab women. This intimate revealing of oneself and facets of familial relationships strikes as relevant to my own work. My reflective journalling features quotes I remember my own mother saying to me on various occasions I now forget the context of. Still, these quotes have taken on a new form as they consistently come to me in my most stressful moments as positive reinforcement of negative feelings. In chronicling these words and giving them life through my own voice, as Hatoum does, I re-contextualize the words and make them my own narrative - they're no longer things that have just been said to me, but things that I say to myself. Opaqueness and ambiguities we can offer up about ourselves may sometimes mask as indulgent reveals.

To not neglect the affective importance of aspects brought up in the works above, I return to Brinkema for her reading of Chris Kentis' 2003 film *Open Water*⁶⁸'s one-minute sequence where the audience is invited to revel in the abstracted forms of "space, time, and image that

⁶⁶ Mona Hatoum, *Measures of Distance*, (1988; United Kingdom, Tate Museum, 1999), video.

⁶⁷ "Mona Hatoum: Measures of Distance," Tate Museum, accessed January 25, 2019, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hatoum-measures-of-distance-t07538>.

⁶⁸ Chris Kentis, *Open Water*, (2003; United States: Lions Gate Films), DVD.

involves the film falling out of the time of the narrative, dropping into the unattributable and uninhabitable space of six studies of line, shape, and blue”.⁶⁹ Of course, this is in reference to a narrative film so an abstracted shot out of nowhere will have more resonance by virtue of it being unexpected. But, it can still be gathered that there is affective importance in showcasing a scene like this that can explore the intricate textural sensuousness of flowing water in a film dedicated to the ocean. To play with light and shadow against the surface of the water in its various kinetic forms lends itself to a new understanding of energy and vision, a flow different to that of the rest of the film. This shows the importance of purposeful and affective movement within the frame and is a consistent consideration of mine as I am using a mixed approach of 3D animations and live-action footage to convey these ideas. Still, one of my aims is to draw attention to the fact that the videos are digital constructs. Obscuring the fact of the lens and the frame will not suffice in this approach and so experimental filmmakers “emphasise the equivalence in the point of view of the camera, filmmaker and spectator at the moment of reception”.⁷⁰

With experimental film, it is possible to construct and demarcate a reality of your own devising that can envision a personal interiority. In extending the reach of experimental film, one finds that installation and expanded cinema offer even more new ways to separate from cinematic conventions.

⁶⁹ Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 229.

⁷⁰ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, 96.

3.1.3 Expanded Cinema

3.1.3.1 Multi-Screen

With expanded cinema, I have identified three characteristics that I am drawing inspiration from for the fruition of my installation: multi-screens, the sculptural nature of the screen, and sound as material.

Isaac Julien uses the term ‘meta-cinematic’ to describe the progression of cinema into an installation context. It describes an approach that harnesses and emphasizes the relationship between the audience and the gallery space. Throughout his own works, he uses multiple screens, characters, landscapes, and points of view to showcase the coexistence of multiple truths.⁷¹ Metacinema as a derivative of metafiction and is a mode of filmmaking where the audience is aware of the fictive nature of what they are watching. In attaching this same kind of approach to installation art, it means to draw upon stylistic choices that heighten the experience of the installation as a spatial one. It means exploiting the presence of multiple screens to show competing dissimilar imagery that might feign as something other than, to entice and challenge a viewer into considering what it is they are actually being exposed to.

In Eija-Liisa Ahtila’s *Consolation Service*⁷², there are two screens displaying the same scene but from different angles; this deconstructs temporal and spatial continuity. While one screen is concerned with detail and context shots, the other moves the central narrative forward. Time may crystallize but it never coalesces into a coherent stable conception of the subject. The

⁷¹ Rafaela M. Ferreria, “Exhibition Review: Isaac Julien’s Playtime” (Postgraduate diploma, University of Warwick, 2014), 10, https://www.academia.edu/10555066/Exhibition_Review_-_Isaac_Juliens_Playtime.

⁷² Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *Consolation Service* (Karlsruhe, ZKM Center for Art and Media: 2002), <http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/consolation-service/>.

story is intended to be multilayered, open-ended and circular too. This exceeds the dominant form of chronology as there is no distinct beginning, middle, or end. Such is the power of an installation to generate a subjective experience of time because the onus is on the viewer to string together what they are viewing.

Within Catherine Elwes' *Installation and the Moving Image*, she offers an explanation of the *Shoreline* series by Chris Welsby⁷³. It is a six-screen reliant installation that depicts the movements of a shoreline. While it is perceived as a panorama by way of how the screens are situated in the space, it is an illusion.⁷⁴ All six of the screens actually show footage captured from a sole viewpoint but at different times of the day. This looping extension of temporal instances subverts our expectation of when what we are seeing has occurred and in the context of what else surrounds it.

Another work that works off abstract, non-linear imagery is Oskar Fischinger's *Raumlichtkunst* that was a series in the late 1920s that used anywhere from three to five 35mm film projectors alongside color filters, slides, and reels of hand-painted and tinted films.⁷⁵ They were a very early attempt at immersive environments because they drew upon a combination of space, light, and music to create medium-specific experiences. The installation itself is presented as continual loops that offset at certain points and so unfold in varying ways. Having this kind of asynchronous, spontaneous, and unexpected development of a work is unique to installation.

⁷³ Chris Welsby, *Shore Line 1*, (1977; United Kingdom), 16mm 6-screen installation.

⁷⁴ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, 95.

⁷⁵ "Oskar Fischinger: *Raumlichtkunst*," Weinstein Gallery, accessed January 10, 2019, <http://weinstein.com/exhibitions/oskar-fischinger-raumlichtkunst/>.

3.1.3.2 Sculptural Nature of the Screen

In terms of an unexpected development, there are other works that take advantage of the physical spatial dimension to highlight the existence of competing perspectives. Such a work is Michael Snow's *Two Sides to Every Story*⁷⁶ where there are two opposing viewpoints at work (yet both are a deconstruction of a single cinematic viewpoint): one of the cinematic result and the other with behind the scenes footage of the filming process for the same shot. Both cannot be experienced at the same time and this kind of withholding of information from the audience is again a unique offering of expanded film works. It benefits from the fact that space creates limits and borders and as a viewer, you are tasked with making decisions about sequence and duration. There is an aspect of 'working' for clarity, the experience is not passive. In this piece, in particular, the screen is metal and hovers in the middle of its gallery space. Only in this kind of sculptural context is it possible to present two different moving images that are inaccessible at the same time.

3.1.3.3 Sound as Material

Sound has not been a noted consideration so far but that is not at all to say that it lacks significance when treated alongside visual elements. In Doug Aitken's *Song 1*⁷⁷, sound is at the forefront of the experience. The installation is a 360-degree panorama that loops through different recorded versions of the 1934 song "I Only Have Eyes for You"⁷⁸. He analyzed the song

⁷⁶ Michael Snow, *Two Sides to Every Story*, (1974; Canada: National Gallery of Canada), sculpture and 16mm film loop projections.

⁷⁷ Doug Aitken, *Song 1*, (2012; United States: Collection of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden), 7-channel video projection.

⁷⁸ Dick Powell and Ruby Keeler, "I Only Have Eyes for You," 1934, soundtrack for *Dames*.

as a three and a half minute perfect pop song that can figure within a structure that has a pulse of 60 bpm.⁷⁹ This structure is a kind of architectural grid where the choruses and hooks are placed so that it seamlessly moves from rendition to rendition. This mathematical inclination is one I have considered for *Statescapes* where precision and fluidity in visuality and sound is as important or even more important than the content itself. Having a sound design that remains constant through iterations of different visuals is an interesting concept; it adds an additional dimension of interconnectedness.

Within installation, there is potential for both fragmentation and cohesion. The properties of sound, like music and speech, transition one scene to the next in film and in installation, “pull together physically distinct elements”.⁸⁰ Two works, Simone Jones’ *Within Distance*⁸¹ and Julian Rosefeldt’s *Manifesto*⁸², employ sound in disparate places that reward viewership with noticeable connectivity and insight. Both installations dispatch screens playing simultaneous imagery that then sync up at magical moments, to create this cohesive whole that, even for just a moment, makes all the sense in the world. *Within Distance* is a two-screen video projection that places the screens in separate places and comments on the apparatus of cinema. The two projections depict different narratives that still manage to share auditory and visual connections so that the viewer is left with an opportunity to string together a story.⁸³ *Manifesto*, similarly, has moments of

⁷⁹ Geeta Dayal, “Doug Aitken’s Song 1 Wraps Museum in 360-Degree Panoramic Video,” *Wired*, April 18, 2012, <https://www.wired.com/2012/04/doug-aitken-song-1/>.

⁸⁰ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, 98.

⁸¹ Simone Jones, *Within Distance*, (2013; Canada), 2-part video projection.

⁸² Julian Rosefeldt, *Manifesto*, (2015; co-commissioned by ACMI – Australian Centre for the Moving Image Melbourne, the Art Gallery of New South Wales Sydney, the Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and the Sprengel Museum Hanover), 13-channel video installation.

⁸³ Christopher Cutts Gallery, *SIMONE JONES: Within Distance* (Toronto: 2014).

auditory and visual simultaneity and multiplicity. In this thirteen-screen installation, actress Cate Blanchett recites manifesto speeches relating to various artistic and political movements. There comes a moment in each video where she turns to face the camera and delivers her speech with a monotonous chanting quality. The syncing up of all the videos in this small passage of time resonates in the gallery space and becomes something that is expected and looked forward to, even though the words might lose their weight as they get swallowed up in the room's soundscape. The work also explores a multiplicity of medium as it draws upon text, film, performance, costuming and fine art.⁸⁴ This layered kind of large scale work was a reference point for *Statescapes* as it too is trying to blend different mediums, like photography, text, 3D environments, and film techniques into one cohesive whole.

3.1.4 Expanded Animation and Intentions

This research project's culminative output will not be strictly experimental expanded cinema but also animation. With this acknowledgement, I need to contextualize the medium and then offer my intention behind this switch of medium. 3D animation gained traction in films of the 1990s as there was movement beyond the world of practical effects and into computer generated possibilities. While there is potential for immense breadth in terms of animation history, I will focus on expanded animation which in Philippe Blanchard's MFA Thesis is described as a hybrid practice like "animation combined with installation or live performance as alternatives to single-channel works".⁸⁵ He uses the term in alignment with Gene Youngblood's

⁸⁴ Josephine Livingstone, "In *Manifesto*, Cate Blanchett Delivers a Virtuoso Set of Performances," *The New Republic*, May 9, 2017, <https://www.wired.com/2012/04/doug-aitken-song-1/>.

⁸⁵ Philippe Blanchard, "Quest for Fire: Explorations in Expanded Animation," (MFA Thesis, OCAD U, 2010).

definition of expanded cinema from his book of the same name. The exploration of expanded animation marks a “sort of emphatic return of the real: the real time and space of the viewer”.⁸⁶ Bringing imagery back into awareness and perception is my intention with the installation. Even in designing the overall space, which I describe more in the Physical Space Considerations section, there was attention given to expanding the animation material out into the physical dimension. Though my installation is less of a performance than this definition might entail, the way in which I use 3D software and have the screens relate to one another, there is a kind of screen-to-screen interactivity that viewership clues into.

There are many animators working within this realm of experimental and expanded animation that seeks to construct otherworldly landscapes, imbued with elements of reality but ultimately presenting in uncanny unreal ways. This creation process is much like the grounding process that gives rise to the artwork. Dissecting and taking in a space through its textural particularities and then having them manifest once again through imagined forms and imagined movements. As well, my background is in film and my practice will always be informed by such. I carry filmic sensibilities as an artist and draw most of my reference material and inspiration from cinema so it feels most natural to me to use it as my foundation. I conducted a summer independent study with Philippe Blanchard in 2018 where I first began to explore Cinema 4D (a 3D modelling, animation, and rendering software). I used the time to explore what transitions might look like in 3-dimensional space, through the use of portals, camera paths, etc.

⁸⁶ Blanchard, “Quest for Fire”.

Instrumental in this conceptualization was the work of Mandy Wong who's work *Fault Lines*⁸⁷ looks at texture and imagined cityscape in an ingenious exploratory way.

I mentioned Sabrina Ratté earlier as an artist that explores aesthetically modelled architecture and I would like to add Katie Kotler as an artist that works with colour and geometry in an installation setting. Her focus on the physical space working directly with the presentation of the animations speaks to the kind of collapsing of temporalities I too am interrogating with my own work. In terms of an artist that is exploring unreal formations with realistic textures, there is Alex McLeod but his modelling expertise offers a different intention than my own - where the primitive shapes are valued for their intrinsic nature as fundamentals that can have anything attached to them.

3.2 Methodology

In identifying my methodology as being a mixed-methods approach involving a personal reflection method within a practice-based research methodology, I have been able to map a trajectory that implicates data collection and an iterative flow.

3.2.1 Personal Reflection

The term 'autotheory', used in Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts* and building off of Paul B. Preciado's use of the word in *Testo Junkie*, describes autobiographical writing that exceeds boundaries of the 'personal' and charts a body's relationship and affects to surrounding events.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *Fault Lines*, video file, 3:11, Vimeo, posted 2016, <https://vimeo.com/165802127>.

⁸⁸ Micah McCrary, Interview with Maggie Nelson. *Los Angeles Review of Books*. April 26, 2015.

My intention is to use my own personal experiences as a way to draw attention to my position as a person recounting memory and emotional items. The way in which I conduct and explore my reflective journalling is ideally done from a neutral, impersonal, and objective stance, as this aligns with a research philosophy. For me, this is untenable because I do not wish to propose any one correct way to reflect. My process is to embrace fluxes of unreliability and even aim to draw attention to it. In retroactively recounting instances of my life that were not experienced with a drive to be a part for this eventual work, I am using my powers of hindsight and retrospect as a lens that informs my experience and understanding. My material/data collection is another way in which I harness my reflections. Typically, there is a strong reliance and push towards written material as a catalog for reflection but I am taking influence from my time in DBT in regards to the grounding techniques we were taught. Grounding to the present moment orients you within your surroundings and is essential to not spiralling out in emotional crises. In interpreting this and how the skill has and continues to work for me, I find harnessing focus on aspects close around me helpful. This feeds into how I will be undertaking my research: through photographs and sound recordings. While autobiographers write about epiphanies as impacting the trajectory of their lives and “[revealing] ways [in which] a person could negotiate ‘intense situations’ and ‘effects that linger—recollections, memories, images, feelings—long after a crucial incident is supposedly finished’”⁸⁹, I find that something as natural as time passing allows me to negotiate my past in different ways. Distance from a situation ideally allows for some clearer-headed insight. As well, creating something that remains emotionally relevant to myself for long stretches of my life is very important. The data will all be first-hand, created and gathered. My

⁸⁹ Ellis et al “Autoethnography: An Overview,” <http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.1.1589>

personal reflections have everything to do with my own plight as an individual. My stance is as a researcher that is coming at it all with a DBT-fulfilling lens. This means offering a lens that runs in tandem with the skills I practice within my therapy sessions and in my own personal skills-building. Therapy offers a reflective mode with myself and an assertion of how I see myself functioning as a filmmaker and what I hold as the linkages between my personal life and my artistic life. This is not to say that the piece I have made is therapeutic because the thing I have experienced with therapy is that it is never finished, much to the chagrin of my parents who still do not fully understand why I need to seek it out in the first place. I have not mastered, by any means, the skills I was exposed to. It is all a process where material is consistently being added to the experience, and nothing is ever done or set in stone, so to speak. To bring DBT into my practice requires getting out the mindset that therapy is intended to ‘fix’ somebody. It functions in a myriad of ways for different people but for me, it provides safety, reassurance, and a space for reflecting. For this reason, I find myself flowing in and out depending on what is occurring in my life. Further, self-reflection is a research practice also might suggest some kind of resolution and clarity but this kind of evaluation did not feature in my lines of research questioning.

3.2.2 Practice-based

My workflow finds fruition in the executed work, where the autoethnographic goals and interests find a way for actualized form. My practice-based output is the result of multiple iterations that have found me moving back and forth between my written document and video work - to have them both adequately express one other. Since my research questions are so directly implicated with the installation itself, it is clear that “the product of creative work itself

contributes to the outcomes of a research process”.⁹⁰ This document explores the more theoretical ramifications of my lines of questioning while the installation itself is an actualization of my continued findings. It has been at once restrictive and freeing to strive towards connections and reciprocity in my work.

3.3 Materials Collection and Processing

3.3.1 Visual Material

The process of evaluating and constructing the visual material requires a merging of ‘real’ and ‘representational’ forms as a way of actualizing a memory space. I conducted a reading of Kathleen Stewart’s *Ordinary Affects* to gain an understanding of the minute details of the affective power in ordinary everyday instances. The book is a collection of stories that blend with close ethnographic details to create an opportunity for readers to attach and relate to their own experiences. Another assessment of the ‘ordinary’ comes from Lauren Berlant in *Cruel Optimism* and she describes it as “a porous zone that absorbs lots of incoherence and contradiction, and people make their ways through it at once tipped over awkwardly, half-conscious, and confident about common sense”.⁹¹ Knowing that ordinary instances are collections of events and responses that are taken into creating our intuitive world view means that they might be used to then create artworks. Eugenie Brinkema in *Forms of the Affects* describes various modalities of affect that might be potentially folded into the actual creation of a

⁹⁰ “Research Methodologies for the Creative Arts & Humanities: Practice-based & practice-led research,” Edith Cowan University, accessed December 20, 2018, <https://ecu.au.libguides.com/research-methodologies-creative-arts-humanities>.

⁹¹ Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 52.

work. Such include a colour system, light and shadow, line and subversions of the horizon, mise-en-scene, and repetition. These all add visual dimension and interest to moving image works and also work to convey deeper emotional intention.

With a colour system, designating scenes to specific schemes gives the colour a force and weight as a visual symbol. I knew I wanted to have three scenes in the installation. As for what each scene would represent and feature, I had to think about material content first. I decided to use textural macro photos as my collection of materials. This is important because they serve as the details to locations where so much has transpired and where so many thoughts and memories have been re-lived and remembered. It then developed quite naturally that the three scenes should feature my own apartment, my childhood home, and the outdoor journeys traveling to varying points of interest. With these scenes in mind, I thought about a colour scheme of red, green, and blue to signal to more commonplace colour psychology (red as passion and fury, green as natural and free, and blue as cold and sterile). The colours could service as a “formal explosion of rhythms and repetitions”.⁹²

With light and shadow, questions of visibility, illumination, and obscuring of detail and form come up. These can be used stylistically to heighten or diminish different aspects in a scene. My approach with this is illumination as a way of moving things in and out of focus, such that everything remains in its place, but the way in which they are unveiled is different.

With graphical elements like line and horizon, in addition to mise-en-scene, I am brought to consider the camera movements. Since I am taking advantage of a certain feature called morphing camera within Cinema 4D that can gradually shift and animate qualities and settings of

⁹² Brinkema, *The Forms of the Affects*, 179.

one camera to another, I am using the different camera angles as the fundamental compositions. The camera angles never change, but the sequence in which they are activated does. So setting them up just requires an understanding of interesting framing that can, at once, show cinematic acuity as well as a thematic inclination. An angle that has a focused foreground and a potentially out-of-focus background incites interest in what exactly the composition is trying to convey. And since there are two opposing screens for each scene presented, there is more opportunity to gauge what each camera angle is picking up at that certain timestamp of the video.

In keeping with the thematic bend of the visuals, repetition and reflection are interesting to consider because not only do they further drive the point of the cyclical looping nature of memory, thoughts, and the videos themselves, but they also function as visual motifs. Repetition often denotes anxiety and recurrence while reflection denotes similarity. Both of these facets work into how I view my own mental processes. They can be alluded to stylistically and as well through metaphors like water bodies that might cast reflections in a scene.

Other metaphors, such as Smithson's eroding rockslide as a slipping fragile consciousness or wave imagery that I have practiced as a DBT distress-tolerance metaphor, serve to provide an out-of-body equivalency for experiences that cannot be done justice with mere words. Another popular memory metaphor is from the film *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*⁹³ where the main character's "fragile memory is echoed thematically by the rather literary metaphors of snow, sand, cracking ice and the crumbling house".⁹⁴ These are all helpful

⁹³ Michel Gondry, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004; United States: Focus Features), DVD.

⁹⁴ Allan Cameron, *Modular Narratives in Contemporary Cinema* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 84.

considerations as I construct my scenes and try to embed them with abstract yet purposeful imagery.

Beyond metaphors, there is also a concept called ‘psychological closure’ that refers to our need to stabilize and make sense of a complex environment by way of “mentally [filling] in gaps in visual information to arrive at complete and easily manageable patterns and configurations”.⁹⁵ We always have a tendency to create perceptual wholes out of individual elements. The three principles that work into this concept are proximity, similarity, and continuity. Knowing these does not necessitate my ascribing to them as rules though, because my intention is not to offer up scenarios that feel clearly whole; there is not something to solve for. They are good to consider when thinking about what a viewer is most attune to, even unknowingly perhaps, when viewing my work.

My first-iteration animations feature attempts at blending these various ideas into cohesive videos that are viewed as abstracted animated forms (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

For the process of gathering my textures and developing them, I used my Nikon DSLR for photography and then Substance B2M to finalize the texture maps that I could then bring into Cinema 4D. This process lends itself a bit more to photogrammetry so that there is detail and depth to the images but still remains tileable, for my created 3D models (Figures 4, 5, and 6).

⁹⁵ Herbert Zettl, *Sight Sound Motion: Applied Media Aesthetics* (California: Wadsworth Publishing, 2013), 116.

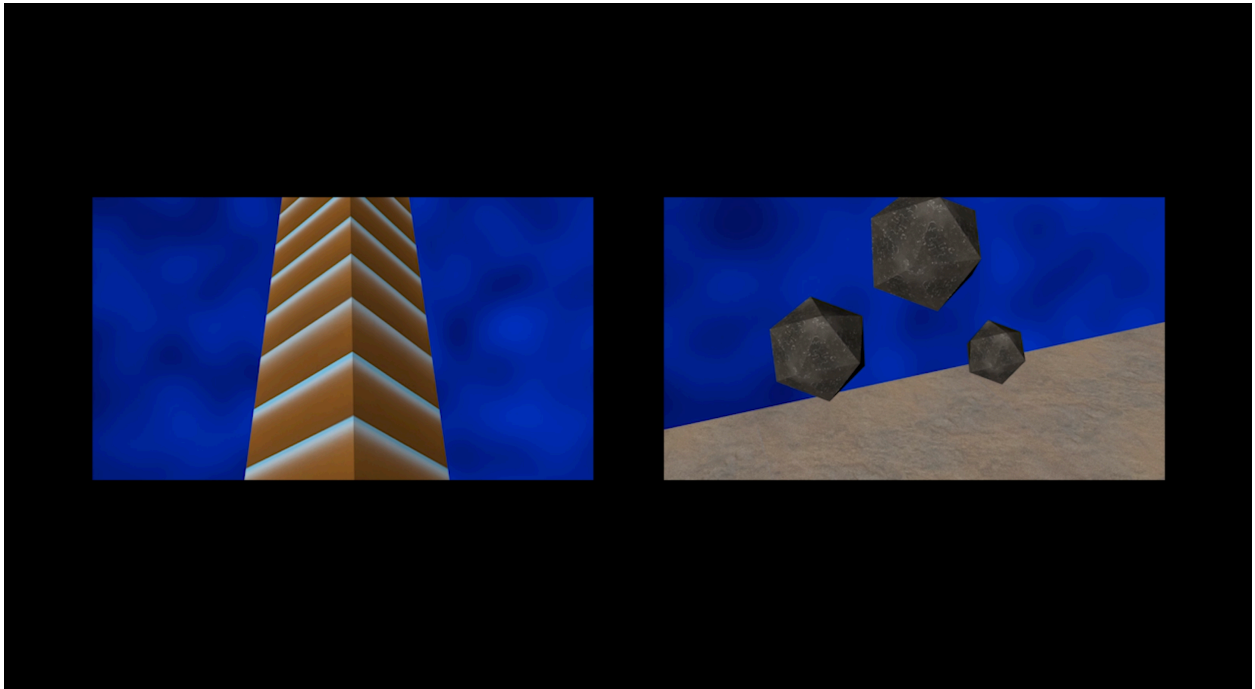


Figure 1: Still #1 of a preliminary iteration animation

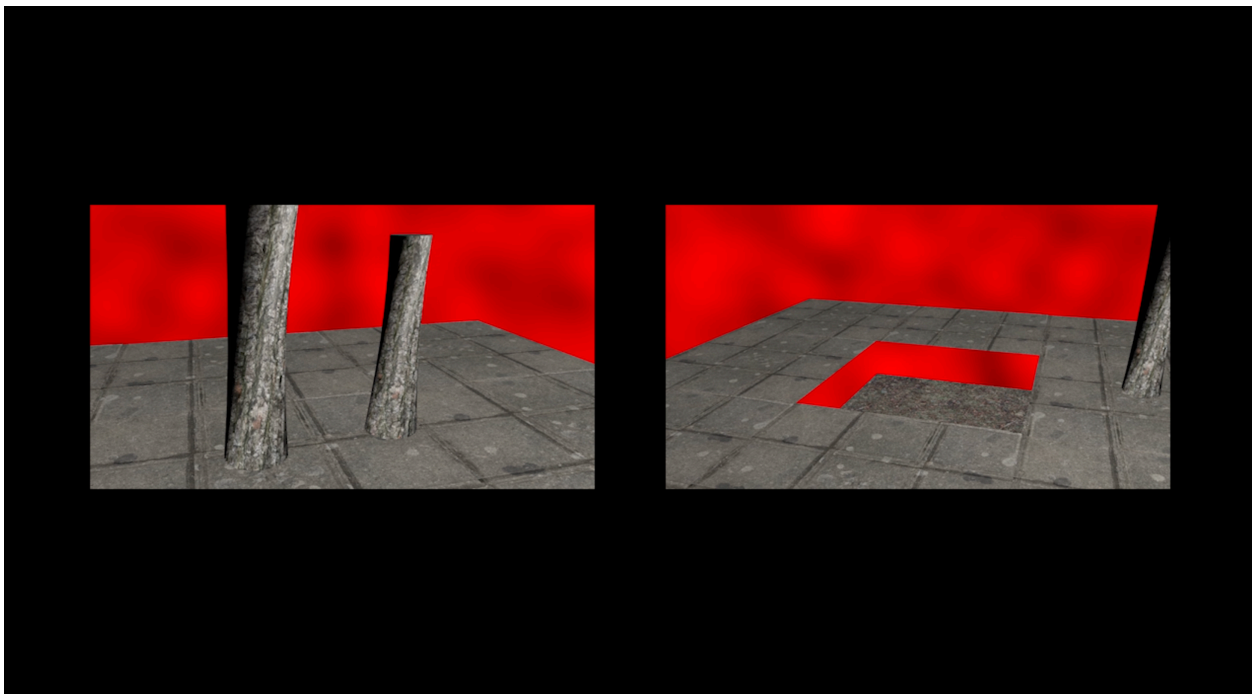


Figure 2: Still #2 of a preliminary iteration animation

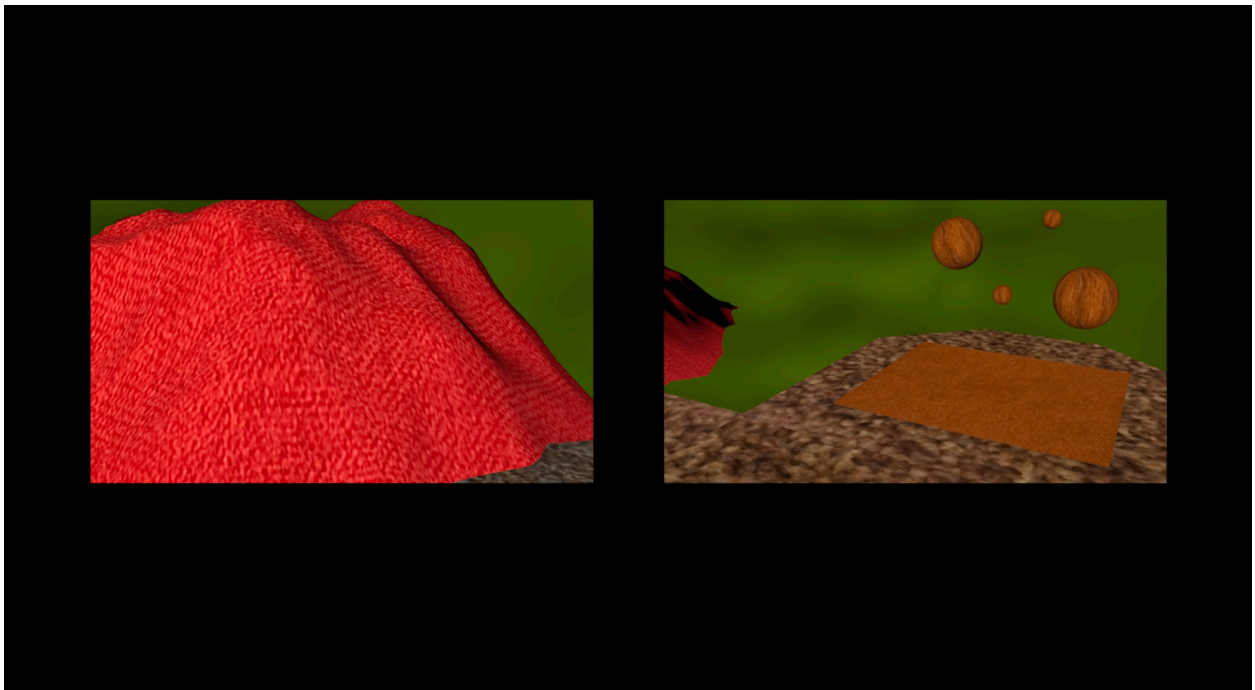


Figure 3: Still #3 of a preliminary iteration animation

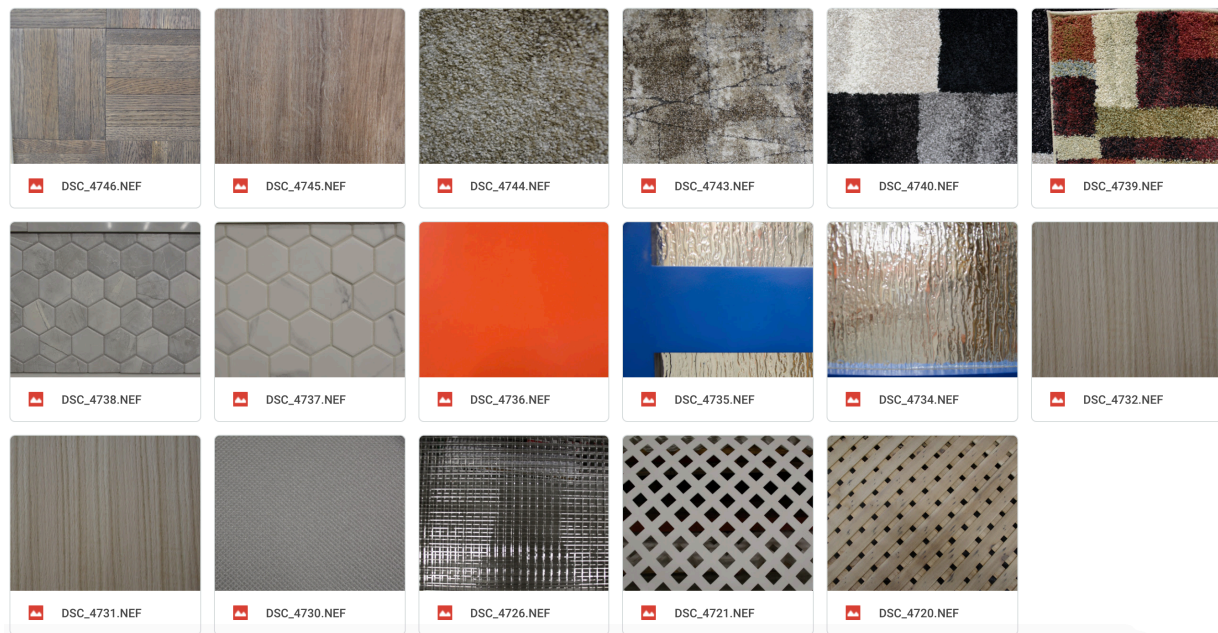


Figure 4: Texture Collection

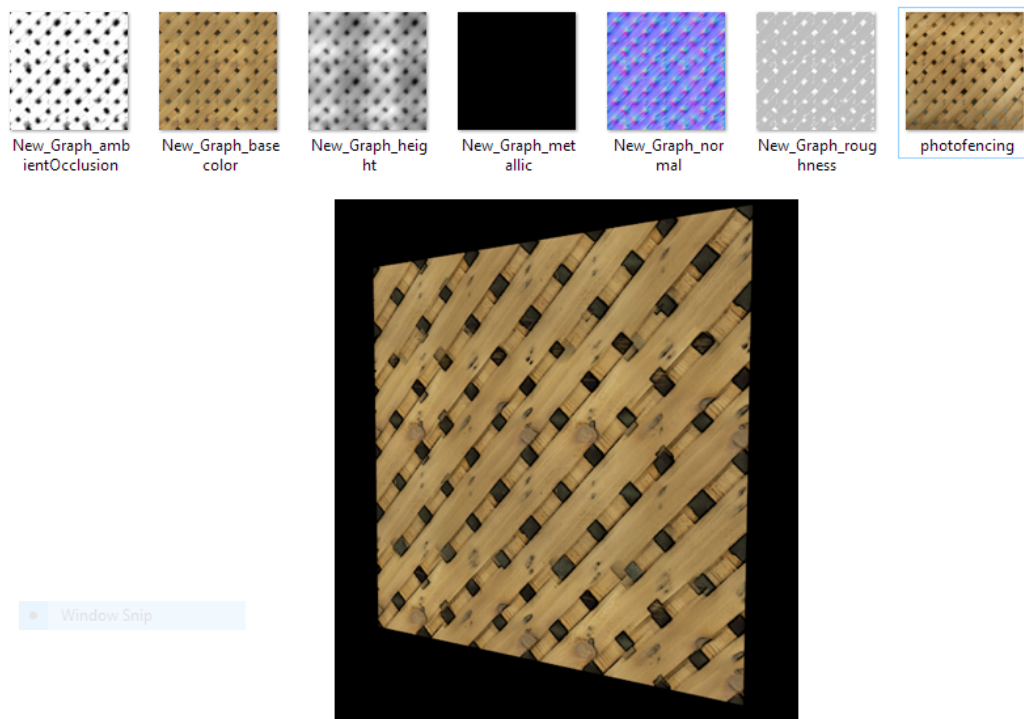


Figure 5: Texture Processing #1

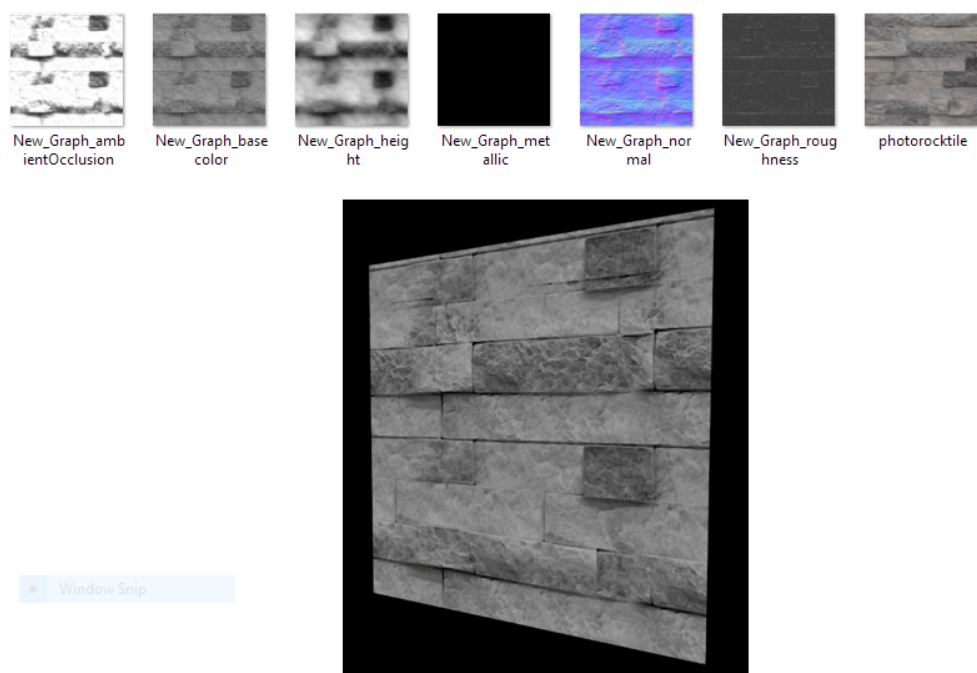


Figure 6: Texture Processing #2

To end on a final note on the mechanics of the videos, the way I am subverting the need for an traditional edit (such as having scene transitions or cuts) is by having fluidity in terms of the morphing camera and object morphing features I am using. ‘Morphing’ (Figure 7) is a principle of animation where pixels from one shape gradually change into those of another. I am adding to this visual importance a consideration of space and time because morphing is about transition. Then the morphing camera that turns and rotates into new settings is about definition; it defines a new spatiality with new orientation. This all lends itself more and more to the distinction of a memory space where things gradually take on the appearance of something else, as something reminds us of another instance, of another time.

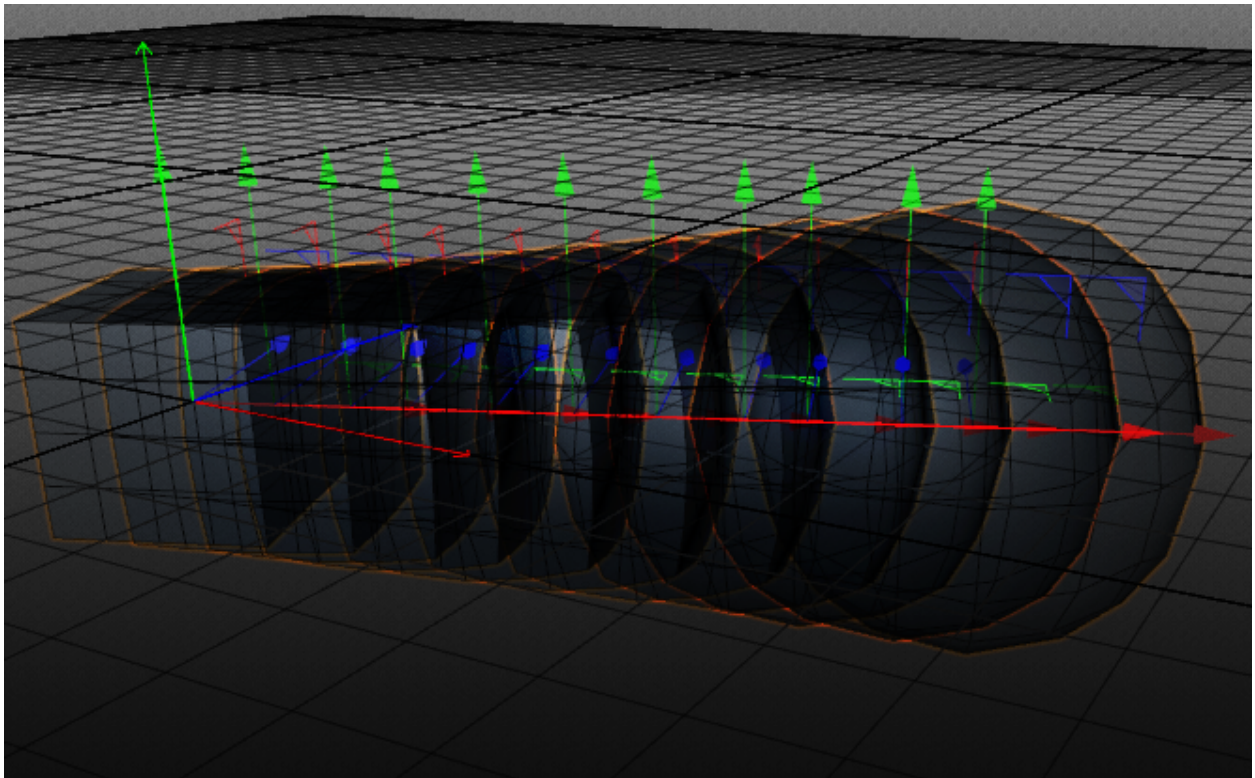


Figure 7: Object Morphing Example

3.3.2 Auditory Material

With audio, I initially took references from music, as is usually the way I try and work with my longtime friend and collaborator, Nick White. I am proficient in explaining what I am aiming for with a sound design if I have musical references to draw upon; I am able to cue into particular effects, techniques, and feelings in a way that explaining with words is next to impossible. I began with the Haruomi Hosono's soundtrack for Hirokazu Kore-eda's 2018 film *Shoplifters*⁹⁶ which features tracks that are sparse yet melodically intriguing. With these tracks, I learned from Nick that the themes I was trying to allude to with the sound design (such as pattern, consistency, repetition, incremental looping change) could be executed through things like pitch shift, chord progression, reverb, looping, delay, echo, and choir harmonics.

I then began looking at musicians incorporating field recordings and interviews into their songs and I found Joseph Shabason and Yves Tumor, with the album *Anne*⁹⁷ and the track *Limerence*⁹⁸, respectively. Shabason's *Anne* features interviews with his mother where they discuss her memories of childhood and parenthood, but with the looming overhead information of her Parkinson's diagnosis that tinges the work with bittersweet impermanence. The recordings are heartbreaking and brutally honest, and when paired with the interesting instrumentation, are truly affective pieces. In *Limerence*, the recordings are paired with digital noise that lends them a quality of being from a past time, of something lost, forgotten, and now recovered. The story is one of romantic intensity and overwhelming familiarity in the scenarios depicted. To be able to

⁹⁶ Haruomi Hosono, *Shoplifters OST*. Victor Entertainment, 2018, digital release.

⁹⁷ Joseph Shabason, *Anne*, Western Vinyl, 2018, digital release.

⁹⁸ Yves Tumor, "Limerence," track 4 on *When Man Fails You*, Apothecary Compositions, 2016, digital release.

conjure a similar weight of importance, affective resonance, and familiarity is a goal of the soundscape of *Statescapes*.

So, writing the script for the sound design was a process that implicated autoethnography and DBT. I made use of DBT's rational mind and emotional mind modalities to 'paint' the different modes of words I am capable of. My first foray into this was an interactive fiction experiment I created with an online tool called Texture. I looked at all these different events in my life in the most factual, reductive way and then challenged myself to enter a rational mind and emotional mind to construct interpretations of these facts. This is actually how we remember things - not through fact but through interpretation. And so the interactive fiction unfolded in such a way that for each statement, you could only select one lens through which to view said statement (but with the knowledge that the other lens is meanwhile coexisting). This exercise led me to adopt a similar process in my script writing. Choosing to write this way made me consider if it worked into an interpretation of a split personality, or a questioning of which is the true identity but the answer is both and neither at the same time. In a similar way, my use of Romanian and English in recounting my memories is a testament to the duality of my identity as an immigrant and status as a Romanian-Canadian. There is hybridity in my nature and hybridity in my work. With a bilingual voice, there is a sense of two identities being housed within the same person. Add to this fact that the voice is disembodied, and the feeling instilled in the viewer is one of uncertainty, uncanniness, and perhaps suspicion.

The presence of the voice is unlike what a narrator might function as in a traditional sense where it “‘escorts the image’ and....clear up any ambiguities in the image”.⁹⁹ The voice here is adding but another layer of information to the experience.

This brings me to the content of the script. I knew I wanted to fuse field recordings as well as recitations of my script. The sound recordings would go hand-in-hand with the imagery discussed in the script. I drew upon the premise of Marcel Proust’s *In Search for Lost Time*¹⁰⁰ where one object can give rise to a memory of an instant where this object appeared before, thus developing complex links of seemingly unrelated instances. This functioned as the launching point for me to consider different facts of my life and then trying to imbue them with a rational outlook and then an emotional outlook to gain a more nuanced perspective bearing less my present state of mind and instead, bringing me back to those actual experiences. This was a difficult process because I had to dredge up a lot of old thinking habits and patterns that I wish I could say I have freed myself of. On many occasions, I was convinced I had backtracked immensely and would not be able to ever see an alternative viewpoint besides the ever-powerful and all-consuming emotional mind. In these cases, taking a break and concerning myself with my mental health and distracting is what has been most helpful for me. It might just be delaying some inevitable comeuppance, but it’s what I have relied on for years. And so, I have managed to maintain some semblance of sanity throughout this process.

When trying to determine which facts and memories I would focus on, I turned to Kathleen Stewart’s *Ordinary Affects* again for her descriptions of ordinary affects as “things that

⁹⁹ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, 212.

¹⁰⁰ Marcel Proust, *In Search for Lost Time* (New York: Modern Library, 2003).

happen...in impulses, sensations, expectations, daydreams, encounters, and habits of relating, in strategies and their failures, in forms of persuasion, contagion, and compulsion, in modes of attention, attachment, and agency, and in publics and social worlds of all kinds that catch people up in something that feels like *something*".¹⁰¹ This understanding of ordinary affects as public yet intimate shows them to be ever-reaching yet personal. They denote unrooted flows and trajectories of possibility and potentiality but this kind of abstracted description does little in helping me embed these sensibilities into my writing. But I learned that it is less about generating explicit meaning and more about having the words and descriptions focus on texture and tangibility. It is through this that their intensities can speak for themselves and the audience can gather and build thoughts and feelings in response. Writing the script is in part a bit like creating a circuit that "conducts force and maps connections, routes, and disjunctures".¹⁰² With this mapping out of difference, there is an inherent potential for recombination, new perspectives, and arrangements.

¹⁰¹ Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2007), 1-2.

¹⁰² Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*, 3.

I offer up my script:

Sound Effect = flame with match

- “You’ve gone to the bathroom in my apartment and come out singing ‘Happy Birthday’ with a carrot cake you had kept hidden in your backpack. This is still the nicest thing somebody’s done for my birthday.”

Sound Effect = kettle boiling

- “Over dinner, you tell me my bad attitude is the real problem in my life. We walk home and you tell me you’re scared I’ll drag you down. It turns into another scenario where I end up consoling you.”

Sound Effect = TV static

- “You tell me you like to fall asleep with the tv on so that you don’t feel as alone. I think you’re pathetic but I do the same thing now.”

Sound Effect = Lathe

- “You call out this athlete for saying she did a 360 turn in the tournament. You think she’s dumb for not realizing 360 degrees makes a full circle that would bring her back to the same point. I still can’t tell my left from my right”

Sound Effect = Fireworks

- “It’s Canada Day and you’ve invited me fishing with your parents. I get the feeling they’re suspicious of me and my feelings but I watch the fireworks regardless and tell myself I’ll remember this exact moment.”

A present moment is, if going back to Bergson, composed of assembled, disparate singularities. It is artificial to separate what happened in the past from the present or the future since memory effectively combines them in an unending dynamic movement. This reinforces my approach of using motifs to connect from one instance to the next.

3.4 *Statescapes* - The Exhibition

3.4.1 Research Questions

To bring the discussion of the video installation back into the context of the earlier stated research questions allows for a re-assessment of the document running in tandem to the artwork:

How can timelines be explored in expanded cinema in a way that comments on individual perceptions of time and memory? How might sameness, difference and the poetics of change, in the context of a pattern, multiplicity, and simultaneity, be presented and explored through visual and sound space? How can the connection between memory bias and factual history be explored through the content and physicality of the installation?

The timeline is explored through gradual morphing from scene to scene rather than expressing reliance upon a traditional edit style. As well, the configurations of the scenes upon each iteration varies and this refers to the sameness and difference we are confronted with when recalling and reliving memories. Patterns exist but it might take a while for us to apprehend them. Offering motifs that link the visual, sound, and voiceover elements also harkens to these patterns of repetition and themes of multiplicity and simultaneity. The textural visuals are real, non-procedural and grounded in the present-tense and yet are imbued by these memories that seem lost in time. They have occurred already and keep coming back into this present experience

of the installation - much like my own experience of having them come to me when I am in the spaces from which I have extracted the textures.

3.4.2 Precision of Sound/Visual Connections

The installation itself relies heavily upon precision to execute the themes of synchronicity and shifting temporal flows. For a critique I conducted in the Thesis 3 course, I had incorrectly rendered out one scene to be a second shorter than the other two scenes and so even though I had the video synchronization in place and an overall correct technical setup, this slight misstep rendered the whole experience moot. I was not able to convey what I wanted to convey and even just on a visual level, to have asynchronicity just does not land the same kind of interest for me in this work when it is entirely about coexistence and roving thoughts, experiences, and memories. The timing up of all the camera morphing and the object morphing is a crucial element to how these videos are constructed and received. I also thought about the timing of which the scenes will swap screens too so that each scene is not entirely relegated to one set of screens for the entire duration of the installation. This, for one, adds visual interest, as well as dynamism and unpredictability. Keeping to a consistent time for a switch would become expected so having the switch alter between anywhere from after one run-through to after three run-throughs. As well, I want to emphasize simultaneity with regards to the sights and sounds so there are moments where they do link up and refer to one another, creating this feedback loop with the soundscapes and all of the screens within the installation. But it still depends on which cameras are activated, so it might not be apparent with every run-through that this is happening.

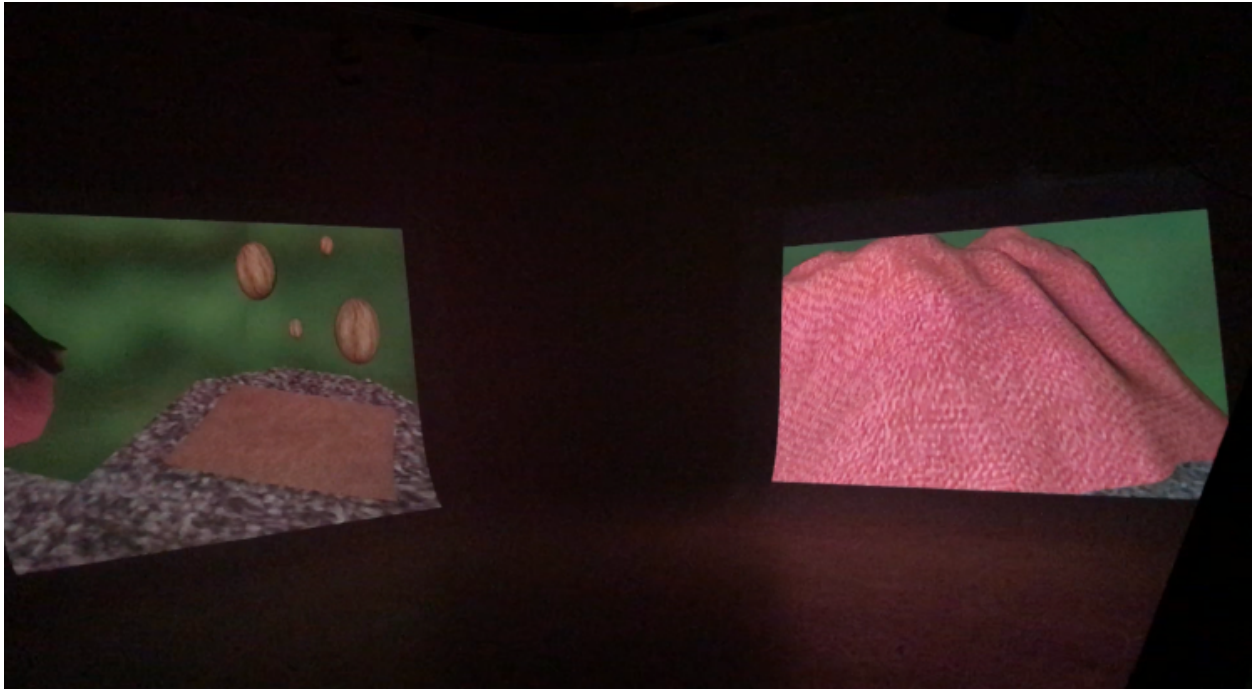


Figure 8: Installation layout from first iteration (2-screen attempt)

3.4.3 Physical Space Considerations

The gallery space cannot be a final thought as this is an installation bound in a physical dimension. In initial iterations of the installation, I experimented with a two-screen version (Figure 7) and then the three-screen version (Figure 8) I settled upon. In the first test, only one scene was explored but I was able to get a sense of scale and how the two images representing each scene might interact with one another. From here, the second test involving the three split-screen projections was still limited to wall space, but provided further insight into how a viewer might strike connections between all the images at once, with camera movements all occurring simultaneously too.

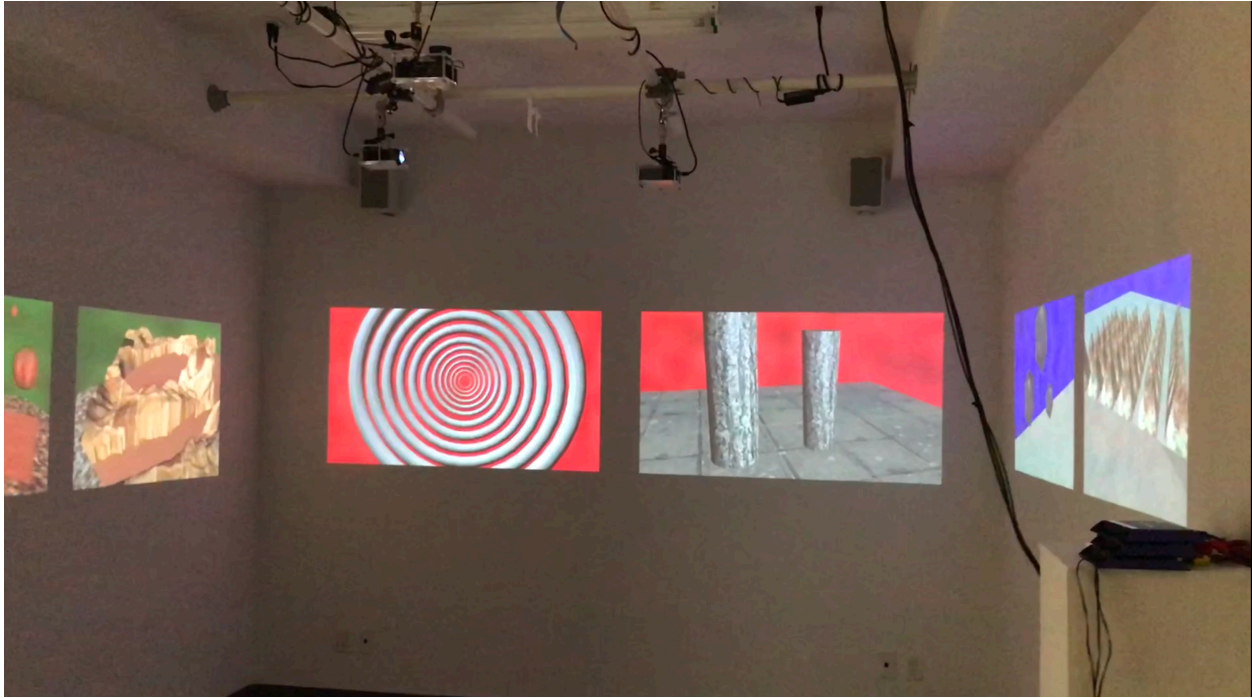


Figure 9: Installation layout from second iteration (3-screen attempt)

To bring the videos out into the present moment, I am constructing a quilt-inspired flooring plan that features textures strongly reminiscent to the ones available in the videos. This will offer up a tangibility to the touch impulse that the videos might inspire. It also works back into this feedback loop of questioning the temporal and space relations of when exactly events are transpiring/keep transpiring.

In terms of the layout of the exhibition itself, I have gone back and forth on the affordances of various approaches towards video installation. On one end, hiding the equipment and cabling for a pristine experience conveys a clean professionalism. But, my advisors continually encourage me to think towards what is in service of the work itself. With this in the back of my mind, the opportunity to make visible all the different supporting materials and tools

that craft the installation space is a novel one. Since my work is an assemblage effort invested in culling textures that reference particular physical areas in my life, visibility and perception are important; so exhibiting in an open and deconstructed way services the experience of the viewer.

As well, the positioning of the screens will be such that from the entry point of the installation, at a distance, all three sets of screens are visible. When up close, amidst the chaos, it will be harder to gain clear sight of all screens. This reminds us of how hard it is to be aware of patterns in our lives when we are in the thick of an experience, going through the motions. With a step taken back, a new perspective can be drawn though.

3.4.4 Exhibition Documentation

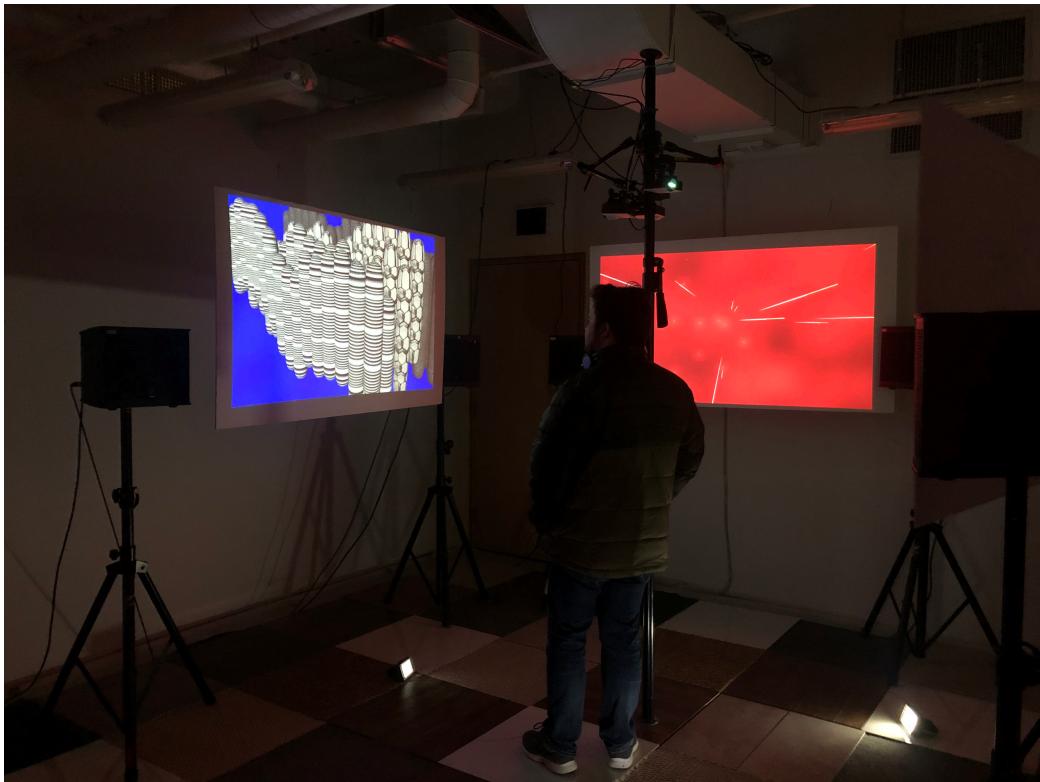


Figure 10: Installation Still #1



Figure 11: Installation Still #2



Figure 12: Installation Still #3



Figure 13: Installation Still #4

Chapter 4: Conclusion and Reflections

In the various critiques and check-in points I had during this thesis process, I was able to streamline my intentions and reevaluate project feasibility. From my advisory committee to my classmates, I received feedback and input that has been invaluable in charting my own trajectory as an artist and thinker. In the initial meetings, I expressed hesitancy in my own vision but as I honed in on what it is I, as a filmmaker, question about the medium and its potentials, I was able to pinpoint my interests with simultaneity, pattern recognition, changing perspectives, and nonlinear mechanics. Branching these interests off into the affordances of the technology I am working with, 3D software, I was able to develop succinct research questions that have been the focus of this document.

I struggled in finding a balance between my existing sensibilities as a moving image maker with those of a 3D animator. Since I have come at this from a particular angle with a particular hypothesis, I feel my style of creation is less polished and more abstracted; but this serves my purposes and has not been a downfall.

Presenting my final installation at the Digital Futures Thesis Exhibition proved to be a multifaceted learning experience where I was able to gauge audience interest, speak more specifically about my personal artistic intentions, and conduct observations into how individuals interact with my work. Duration is a condition of experience and I created the parameters for the installation but the reception is in the domain of the viewer; they choose to experience the installation in any which way, especially because of the durational framework. To have an ideal scenario of what is being gathered then feels futile, even though it is necessary to consider when crafting an installation. It is satisfying for me to have people acknowledge and be affected by the

form of the work. It is such an autobiographical piece that I felt no need beyond the voice clips to contextualize the subject matter, and I received feedback from individuals that the ambiguity served their experience well. People experienced the work in a multitude of ways and I believe this is the hallmark of an effective piece - where the experience dictates how the experience is perceived and each individual has the liberty to craft their own understanding.

In researching my questions, I was not expecting to come out with straight resounding answers. I ended up with a highly personal process that explored my own approaches to using visual and sound space as a furthered medium of exploring my own psyche. No longer restricted to a singular screen, I used physical space and multiple screens to do this.

With my project, I hope that I am able to convey an affective experience that reaches beyond my own personal memory sphere. I hope it adds to the conversation of what expanded cinema and installation art are capable of in the midsts of all the technology available today.

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