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IMAGES BETWEEN THE WORD AND THE FILM

A Study of the Relationship between Literature, Film and Images

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This Ph.D. thesis was conceived at the intersection of artistic praxis and academic studies, and I will here describe how I have structured my work so as to profit from the dialogue between art and theory. In the beginning I intended to investigate the relationship between literature and film, but soon it turned out that I would also have to include the relationship between the film and the film still, in particular the significance of the still that singles itself out within the film, since it reveals determining conditions for the making of a film.

My interest in these issues emanates from my own artistic praxis where I have explored various film narratives in a number of my art works, attempting to update the issues these films touch upon. I also investigated to what extent the written word determines the film, both concerning the transfer of literature to film, but also the part the script plays in the conception of the film. My first concern here was that which could not be transferred, and I looked for film directors who avoided a theatrical representation and represented literature in a subtler manner.

In 2004 I reworked Michelangelo Antonioniôs film *Il deserto rosso* (*Red Desert*, 1964) and turned it into a series of drawings and photographs, presented as a slideshow, *Sometimes the Desert is Red* (2004). In 2006 I spent some time in Helsinki to work on a similar project based on Ingmar Bergmanôs film *Sommaren med Monika* (*Summer with Monika*, 1953), and after visiting the original location for Bergmanôs film, Ornö in the archipelago of Stockholm, I produced my video, *Sommaren efter Monika* (*Summer after Monika*, 2007). These two works functioned as a point of departure for my study and I realized that my research at times included a comparative study of the two film-makers. I realized, however, that this

was partially due to historical circumstances, and found that it would be beneficial to include other film-makers as well.

Here I will present the problems that I have identified during my research, and which I have dealt with both in my practical and my theoretical work. This process started with the production of a work of art, which I researched focusing on the facts I needed to develop the work. At a later stage I started to look for theory that addressed the problems that I encountered in the process of conceiving the work of art, and here certain aspects sprang to view that determined the course of my further academic research.

From Literature to Film

I have analyzed three adaptations of literature to film; Ingmar Bergmanôs adaptation of Per Anders Fogelströmôs novel *Sommaren med Monika* (1951, tr. Summer with Monika) Orson Wellesô adaptation of Franz Kafkaôs novel *The Trial* (1998 [1925]); and Michelangelo Antonioniôs adaptation of Julio Cortázarôs short story ñBlow-Upò (1967 [1959]). In these works there were certain aspects that I found particularly striking, for example, in the transition from Fogelströmôs novel to Bergmanôs film elements were left out that changed the protagonistôs character. Here I realized that some situations convey their message too overtly when visualized, and that the written word lets readers create their own images while reading, which lends a certain abstraction to the work. In film the situation is forever fixed in the image created by the director, thus offering the viewer fewer opportunities to generate a different visual interpretation of the narration.

Orson Wellesô adaptation of Kafkaô novel tries to avoid illustration by using locations that creates a universe just as illogical and yet convincing as Kafkaôs. Welles creates a perpetual continuity in space by juxtaposing

the interiors of the abandoned Gare dôOrsay in Paris with exteriors in Rome and Zagreb. Within scenes interior and exterior are mixed to create a sensation of a space that continuously unfolds and constantly surprises the viewer. One short tale in the novel is retold in a series of drawings, however, that mediates the tale in a manner closer to literature, albeit in cinematic language. The still images resist illustrating the tale, instead presenting the viewer with a situation where something can still be added, as indicated by the gaps between the drawings.

Finally, Michelangelo Antonioni uses Julio Cortázarôs short story as an inspiration for his film *Blow-Up* (1966), constructing a whole film around the brief scene that Cortázar describes in his story. Here questions of space and stills are central as well, dealt with in a manner strikingly similar to that chosen by Welles. Cortázarôs story is transferred from a square in Paris to a park in London and the softness of the greenery is used to emphasize the ambiguity of the enigmatic events that take place here. However, Antonioni also includes a series of stills that works as a vehicle for the narration of the film. This succession of stills consists of black-and-white photographs taken in the park, some of which have been blown up and appear as grainy abstractions. The protagonist studies them in his studio, accompanied only by the sounds from the park, and arranges the events depicted on the stills into a possible scenario. This montage of stills and sound creates a moment that invites the viewer to participate in the construction of a possible story as well; the grainy stills provide a blank space that makes it possible to visualize images in a way similar to reading.

The Film and the Still

I have been occupied with two problems concerning the still and the film; the first involves how a memorable still singles itself out and thereby interrupts the rhythm of the film. The other is to what extent the still image within the film invites the viewer to participate more actively by creating gaps in the narration, especially if the still images are presented in succession. When analyzing the film still I have compared it with the still photograph, and for this purpose André Bazinôs theories have been helpful since he points out that realism is an aesthetic, and thus not a truth in the same manner as we expect a documentary to be. Neorealism opened the door to documentary qualities, and the influence of the photograph as evidence shaped film-making concerned with reality.

Roland Barthesôtheories on photography go one step further by presenting a vision where certain photographs carry intensities that arrest the viewer in a manner that reaches beyond mere documentation. Barthes also writes about a third meaning found in particular film stills that transfers emotions that are not directly caused by the story, but that nevertheless intensify it. I draw on these theories when analyzing selected stills from both Bergman and Antonioni, identifying striking examples in both film-makers that I suggest open up new aspects in their film-making.

Gilles Deleuze theories on film have also proved useful, since his focus on how form has shaped the development of film in general reveals facets not previously elaborated in film theory. Since the apparatus of terms he presents is very extensive, however, I focus more on general observations on film-makers, especially Welles in relation to Kafka. Frederic Jameson makes some observations on film-making in a postmodern era, and his reflections on *Blow-Up*, where he comments on both Bazin and Barthes, have been central for my distinction between the photograph and the film still.

Blanks and Blow-Ups

One of the difficulties when transferring literature to film is to maintain a certain level of ambiguity that the text offers, since the cinematic image presents a fixed version of events that during reading are left to the reader to interpret. Wolfgang Iserôs theories on the blanks suggest that the images created by the reader while reading are necessarily abandoned when a blank appears in the text, forcing the reader to mobilize imagination to generate new images. Drawing on these theories I analyze certain successions of stills in films to suggest that they offer a similar possibility to the viewer. The enlarged photographs in Antonioniôs *Blow-Up* appear as an abstraction, much like certain stills in his other films, as well as in films by Bergman, thus revealing an attempt to create a blank, or void, for the viewer to fill out.

The Discrepancy between the Script and the Film

Another aspect of the relationship between word and film is the script and its function in the conception of the film. I examine how Bergman creates scripts that appear as film novels, which in a sense simulate literary adaptation by appearing more as novels than actual scripts, and thereby introduces aspects of the characters that provide useful information for the actors. Furthermore I worked in depth with the script, *Technically Sweet*, by Antonioni, for a film that was never realized, but published in Italian, *Tecnicamente dolce* (1976). Together with artist Yvette Brackman I curated a group show using this script as a point of departure. We had the script translated into English and handed out copies to the participating artists to use as a source of inspiration for new art work for the show. I studied the script and decided to focus on the descriptions of landscapes, since these were unconventional. I focused on scenes in Sardinia and travelled there to document locations that appeared in production stills in

Technicamente dolce. I summed up my experiences in a video, *A Technical Problem* (2008) that featured excerpts of the script in a voice-over, while the footage presented discrepancies that revealed other aspects of the script.

Overview of the Chapters

Images between the Word and the Film consists of three chapters, each relating to a work of art that I have created, which in turn serves as a point of departure for reflections and analyses made in that chapter. The process has been structured as follows; first I have produced a work that in itself has entailed research. This work then launches further theoretical reflections, addressing problems that I encountered in the making of the art work. After completing the theoretical section of each chapter, I described the circumstances of conception for each work and used this description as an introduction to the chapter.

Chapter 1: *Introducing Summer after Monika*

This chapter consists of four sections that investigate the relationship between literature and film, and the relationship between the still and the film. In the first section I analyze the transformation of Per Anders Fogelströmôs novel *Summer with Monika* into Bergmanôs film with the same title, where I focus on how the character Monika changes from novel to film. Here I also refer to Bergmanôs script *Cries and Whispers* as one of his film novels, but also in order to examine how a film can emerge out of a single image. In the second section I focus on the composition of the still in film and compare some images from the films Bergman did with Gunnar Fischer in the 1950s, with compositions in films made with Sven Nyquist from the beginning of the 1960s. The third section compares different successions of images in Bergman films to trace how the images are used in a more rhythmical montage. The last section uses Barthesôidea of the third meaning as a starting point for a comparative reading of stills

from Bergmanôs last film *Saraband* (2003) with stills from John Cassavetesô last film *Love Streams* (1984).

Chapter 2: *From* Blow-Up *to* ñLas babas del Diabloò

This chapter starts with a comparison of two short stories involving peculiar and fantastic animals; *The Metamorphosis* by Kafka and ñAxolotlò by Julio Cortázar. Both stories use the animal metaphor to describe an experience that only can exist within literature, to create a space in-between and avoid already defined concepts in society. The second section analyzes Wellesô adaptation of Kafkaôs novel *The Trial*, with a focus on the spatial relationship between the novel and the film. The next sections investigate the short story and the film; section three focusing on Cortázarôs short story, with an attempt to describe the Latin American context that characterizes it. The fourth section deals with Antonioniôs film *Blow-Up* and investigates the importance of photography for the development of Antonioniôs film-making, using an early essay on the river Po as a starting point. The fifth section draws on Iserôs notion of the blank to analyse the function of blanks in a cinematic context. The last section concludes with some reflection on a later short story by Cortázar, ñApocalypse in Solentinameò (1980 [1977]), which addresses similar topics as ñBlow-Upò, but in another political reality.

Chapter 3: *A Technical Problem*

The last chapter starts with a summation of the previous chapters to reach some defining conclusions, elaborating more thoroughly on the connections between word, image and film. Some conclusions I reached here will be used when I develop my ideas about the script in the next two sections. The second section investigates how Antonioni conceived his script *Technically Sweet*, and describes my experience of encountering the landscape that was supposed to appear in the film with the script in mind. The last section uses some selected stills from Antonioni films to analyze

how he creates blanks in the film by composing images that leave lacunae for the viewers, making it possible for them to engage more in the narration of the film.

Comments on the Interplay between Art and Theory

In recent years artists have begun to use scientific and theoretical terms to describe their methods. A large number of art works have registered events, searched in archives or documented phenomenon in society of a sociological, anthropological or historical character. This information is usually presented in a visual context, or in printed matter. Often, however, these works lack a summation of the consequences suggested by the material. I have the feeling that working in an academic context would be beneficial for this kind of project, since the goal of the research would have to be more clearly defined, and this usually opens up a host of new and challenging problems. My own experience of working in an academic context has proven that this can indeed be true.

Initially I intended to create some drawings that related to what was left out of literature that was adapted for film, but I soon set this project aside for more challenging concerns. While reading about film, the material imposed itself on me, and without having worked with video before I suddenly created three new video works in the course of these last three years. I have always been interested in film, but found it hard to engage with video art from the 1990s with its focus on the body and performativity. I love cinema, and I miss literature, and this drove me to experiment with the possibility of producing video works that presents literature differently. Working with these problems in an academic context opened up possibilities in my artistic practice that I had not seen before, and I will continue to use the tools I have amassed during my Ph.D. studies when I go on to create new works of art.

CHAPTER ONE

Introducing *Summer after Monika*

This study started with an impulse to get better acquainted with the films of Ingmar Bergman. I might have seen some while growing up in Sweden but if that was the case my memory of them was faint. I started out with some ideas picked up from interviews and occasional clips showed on television, and this made me interested in *Sommaren med Monika* (*Summer with Monika*) since I had heard Bergman describe it as the easiest film he had ever made, as they just went to the archipelago and shot it. I acquired a box with videotapes from the Swedish Film Institute which apart from *Summer with Monika* also included films such as *Det Sjunde Inseglet* (*The Seventh Seal*, 1957), *Viskningar och rop* (*Cries and Whispers*, 1973), *Sommarlek* (*Summer Interlude*, 1950), *Smultronstället* (*Wild Strawberries*, 1957) and *En lektion i kärlek* (*A Lesson in Love*, 1954). This was a useful introduction and my collection of Bergmanôs films has been growing since because his films are so closely interrelated and thus invite parallel readings. *Summer with Monika*, however, was so direct and its roughness particularly attracted me. I had previously created a ñremediationò of Michelangelo Antonioniôs *Il deserto rosso* (*Red Desert*), where I turned selected scenes from the film into a slide series of drawings and photographs. Antonioniôs film takes place in an industrial area in Ravenna, and I re-shot the scenes I had chosen in the suburb of Amager, Copenhagen, with a post-industrial atmosphere. I felt that it would be interesting to do something similar with *Summer with Monika* since place plays such an important role for the development of the story. Later I noticed a link to neo-realism both in *Summer with Monika* and in *Red Desert* but I was not aware of this when I started working on the project. I felt it was necessary to find an environment as close to Stockholm, but which nevertheless offered a certain necessary

displacement. Helsinki proved to be a good solution since it resembles Stockholm but nevertheless has its own characteristics.

Summer with Monika is about Monika and Harry, seventeen and nineteen years old, who meet in a café in the early spring and fall in love. They run away from their dreary jobs and unsatisfactory family relations and spend the summer together in the archipelago, living on a boat that belongs to Harryôs father, who is in hospital. When autumn comes they return to the city, and as Monika is now pregnant they get married, but also begin to drift apart. Monika starts seeing other men and it is Harry who takes care of their child when they part. I found the story quite refreshing since the characters are complex; full of faults yet with disarming qualities. What interested me most, however, was the way in which the places ï the city and the archipelago ï were used to reflect on the charactersô situation in society.

Looking through the film I stopped it whenever I saw an image that I found interesting and made a quick sketch of each selected scene. This procedure resulted in a very close study of the single images of the film, and after a first selection I tried to find places in Helsinki that could be useful for my project. For the time when Monika and Harry were newly-wed living in their apartment I found a suburb from the 1960ôs, which I thought would be suitable for a couple in their situation today. For the scenes in the archipelago I visited a friendôs summerhouse in the Pellinki archipelago outside Porvoo, with rocks and forests similar to those that appear in *Summer with Monika*. To emphasize the contrast between these different places I let the scenes from the city appear as colour photographs to accentuate their documentary character. The scenes in the archipelago, however, I decided to turn into a series of drawings since I felt that the stay there was of a more fictive character; a dream outside society where everything is simpler. The black and white pencil drawings contrast with

the colour photographs where the characters are left bank; white spaces in the landscape that invite the viewer to fill in a personal impression.

Meanwhile I realized that Bergmanôs film *Summer with Monika* was based on a novel with the same name by Per Anders Fogelström from 1951, which was created in tandem with the film. When I read the novel there were some discrepancies that struck me, e.g. that Monika was portrayed differently, appearing much more like a child and less in charge of her actions. This revealed Bergmanôs rendition of the novel and I felt it would be interesting to incorporate this in my own project.

To get closer to Bergmanôs film I decided to visit the location for *Summer with Monika*, the island of Ornö outside Stockholm. This time I did not take photographs but documented the trip with my video camera. I did not particularly look for the locations that appear in the film but focused more on abstract elements, such as the surface of the water, the wind in the reeds, and the moving spruce branches in the forest. What I extracted from Ornö was the movement my own images ï drawings and photographs ï lacked. Later I let these video sequences constitute the background for a voice-over reading of excerpts from Fogelströmôs novel. These excerpts reveal sides of Monika that are both heartbreaking and touching, but which put into perspective the filmôs rendition of her character. The video sequences, photographs and drawings were assembled into a film presenting a multilayered story. This short film, *Summer after Monika* (5:32 min., 2007), includes my own subjective rendering of Bergmanôs film, together with excerpts of Fogelströmôs novel and footage from the filmôs original location, thus presenting fiction at several levels.

Fiction thus appears as a montage which ï rather than causing the elements that have been assembled to clash ï emphasizes the displacement from one rendition to the next. *Summer after Monika* thus

takes into account the passing of time as part of a narrative where each rendition adds another layer to the work. It also investigates, however, how a text takes on a new meaning when it appears in a visual context. The risk of illustrating written fiction is imminent in film-making and in *Summer after Monika* the text is highlighted, referring to Bergmanôs film as well as appearing in its own right. The drawings and photographs, however ï the still images in the film ï do not derive from the novel but rely entirely on the film.

Studying *Summer with Monika* so closely was intense since one seldom looks through a film almost still by still as I did to create a storyboard consisting of what I considered the key moments in the film. This procedure increased my awareness of how the single frames in the film were composed. I also realized that many of the most suggestive images were shot without characters and worked as pensive moments for the viewer, inviting other kinds of reflection.

Summer with Monika starts with a series of images of Stockholm one early morning and the light is hazy and soft. Filmed with a fixed camera, the images show water, ships and docks by the Old Town in Stockholm. The images are presented as a series of moving stills that smoothly succeed one other, followed by Harry riding his bicycle through noisy traffic. This shift sets the tone for the film, a dreamy atmosphere set against grim realities. Later in the film another succession of remarkable stills appear when a frightened Monika is seen hiding in the water behind some reeds. Shots of the sky, an owl, a spider, and the moon on the waterôs surface convey Monikaôs predicament, depicting a moment filled with tension. Moreover, as viewers we experience an intense presence where all the sounds of the night are as clear to us as to Monika.

Summer with Monika is an early film in Bergmanôs î uvre, told at a vital pace and convincing because of its simplicity. His later films are more refined but therefore also less inclusive. *Summer with Monika* carries an innocence which in later films is replaced by experience and a greater awareness of the cinematic tools. For me it has been a great challenge to analyze the film at several levels and it has encouraged me to study Bergmanôs film production more profoundly, especially how Bergmanôs collaboration with his cinematographers ï Gunnar Fischer in the 1950s and after 1960 Sven Nyquist ï affected the development of images in his film production. I realized that his writing is instrumental in this development in that the script influences how he communicates with his collaborators.

Making *Summer after Monika* meant living very closely with *Summer with Monika* for a long time, reviewing it numerous times, and involving endless examinations of single frames. Finally I started to notice the tiniest details in the film; one particularly memorable moment can be found in a sequence from the archipelago. Monika and Harry are discovering the island and enjoy their solitude. Harry is relaxing on a rock, closing his eyes because of the sun. A shadow is cast over him, and we see Monikaôs feet step over him to get his attention. This scene only lasts a couple of seconds but says a lot about their relationship. I used this image, i.e., Harry sleeping on the rock with a foot walking over him, for a drawing I later turned into a large wall drawing the size of a movie screen. One instant of the film was thus enlarged; one I would not have noticed had I not scrutinized *Summer with Monika* so closely.

1. From Literature to Image

We are used to looking at the relationship between literature and film as a story being visualized; the text converted into moving images that correspond to its content. This relationship, however, offers more complex relations than mere visualisation for modes of presenting narrative differ in literature and film and thus some changes result. Usually the content of novels will have to be shortened to fit within the length of a feature film, but the characterså inner reflections are also hard to transfer. Thus a rearrangement of the material is needed and here faithful decisions do not always prove to be the most successful. The reader creates the images while reading, whereas the film offers us images already created by someone else. Within the film, however, it is possible to create moments in a way that engages viewers as if they were readers by leaving things unsaid or creating a different sense of time. What is left out becomes important since it withholds something from the viewer, mimicking the way in which literature withholds images.

Moreover, there are some similarities in the relationship between literature and film and that of film and the still, since both these relationships refer to a whole of which they are just fragments. The passages left out when a novel is adapted to film continue to affect the end product and thus implicitly exist within it. The still from a film is always a fragment of that film, although certain film stills become emblematic of the whole film. Here I will examine more closely Ingmar Bergmanås adaptation of Per Anders Fogelströmås novel *Sommaren med Monika* (1951) to the film of the same name from 1953, since this film displays significant discrepancies with the novel. Simultaneously the film contains stills composed to offer the viewer a pensive moment; stills that have become emblematic of the film itself. For this purpose I have studied stills from other Bergman films to investigate to what extent his collaborations with his cinematographers have affected the images in his films.

In a passage in *Roland Barthes* by Roland Barthes, the author reflects on what he calls ñle plein du cinémaò, i.e., the saturation of cinema; the idea that there is nothing left for the viewer to fill in. I can relate to what he writes since I experience something similar when I watch contemporary films. They exhaust me and I feel that there is very little space for the viewer to participate in the creation of the story. Everything is neatly arranged and the result seems predictable. I lack the sensation I have when reading a book where I can use my own experience to creating the images:

> Constraints of representation (analogous to the obligatory rubrics of language) make it necessary to receive everything: of a men walking in the snow, even before he signifies, everything is given to me; in writing, on the contrary, I am not obliged to see how the hero wears his nailsð but if it wants to, the Text describes, and with what force, Hölderlinôs filthy talons.
>
> (Barthes 1977, p. 54)

The saturation that Barthes refers to was what led me to further investigate the relationship between the moving image and the written word. I particularly relate to when Barthes writes that everything is given to the viewer. This indicates an overload of information that can become tiresome to work out. Film is a very absolute activity, involving many senses as well as a temporal experience fixed in a specific timeframe. The body remains still and the only movement for the viewer is what happens on the screen. This situation requires the viewer to remain passive, and the spectatorôs position is indeed fixed inside a movie-theatre. When reading a book the position of the reader is by no means fixed, and the temporal aspect depends entirely on the readerôs own dispositions. Moreover, the images are not given but created by the reader while reading. When a literary image is visualized in film, it will forever be fixed on that version,

until another adaptation is produced. Whereas in literature something may have appeared ambiguous and open for interpretation, in the cinematic image it becomes visible in a singular way since we are left with the directorôs version. This version can of course carry another kind of ambiguity and be interpreted in several ways, but it leaves us with a fixed visualisation of the text, an image created by someone else.

Another problem that occurs when literature is adapted to film is that certain situations lose some of their attraction when they are visualised, since what we had imagined in the text comes to us at full speed and thereby overwhelms us. The text offers a degree of abstraction which the film replaces by offering a visual rendering of it. What appears horrific can be much more effective when hinted at rather than being spelled out. Bergman comments on the relationship between text and film in his book *Images* from 1990, where he comments on his impressions after having watched his films again:

> The terrible thing about [Through a Glass Darkly] is that it offers a horrendously revealing portrait of the creator and the condition he was in at the start of the film, both as a man and as an artist. A book would have been much less revealing in this case, since words can be more nebulous than pictures.
>
> (Bergman 1994, p. 248)

Here Bergman points out the force of the image, i.e., that it gives us all the information at once. Whereas the words may be rendered to a situation in the present, the cinematic image remains a preservation of a past situation. The ñnebulous wordsò lend themselves to a variety of renditions, while the image works as a precise interpretation of a situation which tells us a lot about its creator. This is particularly interesting in relationship to Bergmanôs own writing for the cinema, since he developed a kind of film-

novel where the scripts for his later films can be read as novels. The dialogue is incorporated with descriptions of events and situations that will not appear in the film but that effectively set the scene. Details from the charactersô lives are described precisely, and although they are not incorporated in the film they leave the impression that they are important for Bergman when he creates the stories he will later film. This information must also be of great help to the actors in understanding the characters Bergman wishes them to perform. When you read these screenplays you realize how small the discrepancy is between them and the finished films. Their literary form conveys very precisely the sentiment of the future film. The screenplay for *Cries and Whispers* starts like this:

> My dear friends!
> Weôre now going to make a film together. It will look different from our earlier works, and this script will also look different. We shall strain the mediumôs resources in a rather complicated way. More than usual therefore, I must talk over how we are to give shape to our problems, cinematographically and artistically.
>
> (Bergman 1977, p. 59)

From the very beginning he indicates that the script is an instrument for the participants in this film project. Since Bergman wants to try out new ideas he also feels that the script needs to take on a new form. The script therefore shifts between scenes, on the one hand, and comments, on the other, that are meant to question his own ideas; emphasizing that although he tries to be as precise as possible, some situations are not yet resolved. In *Images* Bergman describes the initial idea for the film like this:

> The first image kept coming back, over and over: the room draped all in red with women clad in white. Thatôs the way it is: Images

> obstinately resurface without my knowing what they want with me; then they disappear only to come back, looking exactly the same.
>
> (Bergman 1994, p. 83)

Bergman created his script from this original idea and explains that he slowly identified the women and realized there were three women waiting for the fourth to die. These four women are the sisters Maria, Karin and the dying Agnes, and Anna, a servant. Agnes lives at their parentôs manor with Anna who is caring for her, and since Agnesôcondition is deteriorating the two sisters come to stay at the manor, taking turns sitting with her. To explain them as persons Bergman tells us stories from their lives, stories that will not appear in the film but that give the characters contour. To explain Anna he writes about a cherished memory of hers: Anna had a little daughter who passed away when she was three years old, and who lived with Anna and Agnes at the manor. Bergman describes this memory as follows:

> In the drawing room there is a big music box that plays old dance tunes. One day, a thunderstorm breaks over the house. Agnes puts on all the lights in the drawing room. Agnes, Anna, and Annaôs little daughter dance and play together while the rain beats against the windows. Then they build a house under the big dining table. There they are as close as a single body, in common shuddering enjoyment, undisturbed by the violent storm. In this way they forget their fear.
>
> (Bergman 1977, p. 64)

This scene does not appear in the film, but it conveys the intimacy between Anna and Agnes, how close they are in an unarticulated, physical way.

When Agnes has died, the two sisters get together with their husbands at the manor after the funeral. Mariaôs husband Joakim suggests that they do something for Anna since she has looked after Agnes for the last 12 years. Karinôs husband Fredrik exposes his ungenerous nature by dismissing the idea as utterly ridiculous. But Karin declares that she has promised Agnes that she can take a memento with her. Fredrik gives in and Anna is summoned:

> Maria calls Anna, who enters the room with calm indifference. Joakim explains what they have decided. Anna thinks it over for a moment and then says that she doesn't want anything. She says it in such a tone that Frederik feels annoyed.
>
> (Bergman 1977, p. 92)

We learn later in the film that Anna has already taken what she wishes to keep, Agnesôdiary.

The script ends with Anna, alone in the big house, wandering from room to room, not knowing what to do. She looks out of the window when the evening falls and from far away she faintly hears a child crying. The film ends quite differently, with Anna calmly sitting in her room reading aloud from Agnesôdiary. After the first sentence, the voice-over shifts to Agnesô voice, recalling a summer day with her sisters. In flashbacks we see the sisters walking in the park. They sit down on a large swing and the camera focuses on Agnes while we hear her read from the diary, expressing her gratitude for having the privilege to experience this moment. Here it becomes clear that no matter how well-prepared the director is, the material and the images arrange themselves, and become a consequence of earlier arrangements. It is also an example of how a director like Bergman ï who insists on not trusting improvisation ï nevertheless leaves opportunities open.

Gilles Deleuze writes in *Cinema 2, The Time-Image*: ñThe cinema does not just present images, it surrounds them with a world. This is why, very early on, it looked for bigger and bigger circuits which could unite an actual image with recollection-images, dream-images and world imagesò (Deleuze 2007b, p. 68). This sentence begins the chapter, *The Crystals of Time* where Deleuze develops his theories on time in cinema. Bergmanôs script for *Cries and Whispers* can also be seen as an attempt to build a world for his images, since he describes circumstances and situations that are not included in the film, but which are nevertheless important for it as a whole. Bergman creates a similar relation to the adaption of literature to film by extending the script to a film-novel that includes more details than is usual in a script for a film.

Deleuzeôs notion from the chapterôs opening sentence, however, concerning the need to create a world for certain images, can also be used to analyze the relationship between the single image and the series of images that constitute a film. The recollection-images, dream-images and world-images Deleuze mentions in relation to an actual image suggest that film is not just a succession of stills but that these images represents different concepts of time that co-exist within the film. In relation to flashbacks Deleuze mentions the re-collection of an event, and suggests that ñthe actual image itself has a virtual image which corresponds to it like a double or a reflectionò (Deleuze 2007b, p. 68). This image with two sides, actual and virtual, is described as follows:

> It is as if an image in a mirror, a photo or a postcard came to life, assumed independence and passed into the actual, even if this meant that the actual image returned to the mirror and resumed its place in the postcard or photo, following a double movement of liberation and capture.
>
> (Deleuze 2007b, p. 68)

A beautiful cinematic image in itself, this description reveals some of the complexities in the formation of a ñtime-imageò. What interests me, however, is how that postcard or photo in itself can be a vehicle for the creation of the rest of the film by functioning as a motor for the narrative, that event or episode from which the rest of the film is constructed. What singles this kind of images out from the still photograph is that while the photograph is always a world in itself, presenting all the components at once, the film is still part of a succession. With the screenplay for *Cries and Whispers* Bergman has managed to create a world around a single image: four women in white in a red room. This image is not a conclusion but the starting point that is nevertheless omnipresent within the finished film. Furthermore Bergman succeeds in creating a complex narrative that interweaves various concepts of time.

Another image from the film touches on the concept of time divided into present and past but in a different and more literal way. Deleuze writes about the crystal-image, that ñthe past is constituted not after the present that it was but at the same time, time has to split itself in two at each moment as present and pastò (Deleuze 2007b, p. 81). In a scene in *Cries and Whispers* when Agnes has passed away she comes back to the other women to ask for help since she is stuck between life and death. She lies in her bed screaming; unable to leave this world and unable to enter into a new state. Her sisters are horrified and run off but Anna comes to comfort her, getting into her bed and soothing her in a silent, bodily embrace. This image has indeed become emblematic for the film, capturing the moment of compassion that makes it so memorable. What the sequence also captures is the perfect image of a split between past and present, or even more correctly, the moment before the split. It is as if Bergman uses this image to force cinema to expose some of its inherent conditions to him; he is investigating how far he can push its boundaries. The result is not so

much an example of a Deleuzian crystal-image as an attempt to reveal the conditions of film as form.

Cries and Whispers is a mature work from an experienced film director, where the script has taken on a form of its own; the film-novel. Some parts of its world will not appear in the film, but are nevertheless important for its conception. In that sense the parts of the screenplay left out of the film still exist within it, since they influence the actors and other collaborations when the film is conceived. Bergman is known as an auteur, writing and directing his own films. However, a film most people think of as a pure Bergman film, *Summer with Monika*, is actually adapted from a novel. In *Bergman on Bergman* (1970), a series of interviews with Bergman conducted by Stig Björkman, Torsten Manns and Jonas Sima, the director is asked to describe the circumstances for the filmôs conception:

> Jonas Sima: *Summer with Monika* is a film people are determined to regard as your own work. How much of the script do you attribute to Per Anders Fogelström? Originally it was based, wasnôt it, on a short story which, after the film was released, became a novel?
>
> Ingmar Bergman: Quite right ï after the film it was turned into a novel. It all started one day when Per Anders Fogelström and I ran into each other on Kungsgatan. I asked him what he was doing. He said: ôIôve got this thing in my head, but how itôs going to turn out I do not know.ôôReally?ôôYes, itôs about a girl and a fellow, just kids, who pack their jobs and families ï and beat it out into the archipelago. And then come back to town and try to set up in some sort of a bourgeois existence. But everything goes to hell for them.ô
>
> (Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 72)

Bergman recalls that every time he met Fogelström he asked him how things had turned out for that couple: ñAnd by and by, during the film stoppage I suppose it must have been, we got down to work on the scriptò (Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 72 Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 72). He continues: ñI do not quite remember ï he wrote so fast ï whether the novel came out before the film stoppage was over, or not. Anyway I know the script was handed in to [Skandinavisk filmkompagni] and Carl-Anders Dymling liked itò (Ibidem). The strike lasted from January till autumn 1951, and by that time Skandinavisk filmkompagni needed new films to show in their cinemas. Bergman recalls promising Dymling that it would be a very simple film to make, just a small crew using a silent camera, shot on location in the archipelago. In *Images* Bergman comments on this experience: ñI have never made a less complicated film than *Summer with Monika*. We simply went off and shot it, taking great delight in our freedom. And the public success was considerableò (Bergman 1994, p. 295).

I have a copy of Per Anders Fogelströmôs novel *Sommaren med Monika*, published by Albert Bonniers förlag 1951. It is hard to know when in 1951 it was published but it must have been written simultaneously with the script. Yet there are a lot of discrepancies between the novel and Bergmanôs film. It is impossible not to leave things out when you turn a novel into a film, but here I find it particularly interesting to follow how the transition has changed not only the scenes, but also the characters. Fogelström grew up in Södermalm, a part of Stockholm which at that time was characterized by poverty and social problems, but attended school every day in a more privileged part of town. The indignation underlying *Sommaren med Monika* ï his interest in describing the circumstances of less privileged people ï can be traced to this experience. Monika is a product of Södermalm, and Fogelström depicts her as a child; irresponsible and immature, dreaming about what life could be like.

The novel is divided in three parts, called ñTolvanò, ñThe Boatò and ñThe Homeò. *Tolvan* means twelve in Swedish, and is the name of the café where they meet. This part describes how they fall in love and start dating. They both have dreary jobs; especially Harry is constantly humiliated. Harry lives alone with his father in a neat apartment, his mother having passed away many years previously. Monika lives with her family; both parents and a lot of younger siblings in a small, crowded apartment. In the second part, ñThe Boatò, we follow how Harry and Monika quit their jobs and decide to leave Stockholm in Harryôs fatherôs boat. They spend a happy summer in the archipelago, living on the boat. Monika gets pregnant and they return to Stockholm when the days grow chilly to establish a life together. In the last part, ñThe Homeò, Monika and Harry have married and while Harry works hard to support them Monika starts drifting away, bored and alone in their apartment, without the ability to properly take care of their child. She starts seeing other men, Harryôs aunt takes care of the child, and they finally get divorced. The novel ends when Harry revisits Tolvan, reminiscing about their first meeting, and although the end of their relationship is a relief, he wanders off uplifted by the memories.

Bergmanôs film follows this structure but quickly moves from ñTolvanò to ñThe Boatò, where the main focus is on their stay in the archipelago. There we follow how the relationship between Monika and Harry develops and how the first few days of intense desire is soon be replaced by a more strained atmosphere. When Monika discovers that she is pregnant she starts fantasizing about their new roles, Harry will go to work and she will stay home taking care of their child. Fogelströmôs depicts the scene where Monika tells Harry that she is pregnant as follows:

> She looked a bit warily across at Harry who was pulling on a shirt and trousers ï he couldnôt stand as much sun as she could. He had dozed off with his head under a newspaper, exactly as he had told her his father usually did. What would he think? He would probably think that it would be quite nice to have a little baby. Perhaps it might have been better if they had waited a bit but there was nothing you could do about that now. Having it removed was only done by those who didnôt love each other.
>
> (Fogelström 1951, p. 143; translated from the Swedish by Jane Rørdam)

She wakes him up and when he caresses her stomach she asks him if he can feel anything. A bit uninterested he answers no and when she insists, he understands what she is trying to tell him and reacts with pride when he realises the seriousness of the matter. He wants them to stay together and to provide for Monika and the coming child. In the film this situation takes place after dusk; Monika and Harry are sitting on a rock, the light is faint, it is as dark as it gets during a Swedish summer night in the archipelago. The camera frames their faces and behind them we see the pattern in the rocks. They have been telling each other about their families, how they grew up, and Monika is leaning her head on Harryôs shoulder. She bluntly tells him that she is pregnant, neither worried nor particularly excited. Harry is excited but also taken aback by the prospect of responsibility. He suggests that they return immediately, but Monika replies in a most convincing way that she wants to have this summer together and wants it exactly the way it is. The shy approach in daylight in the novel is replaced by the intimacy of the dim summer night, where Monika straightforwardly declares that she is going to have a baby, not particularly touched by the circumstances. The dreaming child in the novel is here replaced with an unsentimental young woman.

In their new home some changes occur in their relationship, with Monikaôs growing annoyance caused by Harryôs sense of new-found responsibility. She withdraws from him, not the least amused by his focus on the importance of educating himself so he can provide properly for her and the baby. When they have moved into their apartment, Monika spends the days alone while Harry works all day and after work attends evening school. She starts to gets bored and lonely, and misses their summer intimacy:

> They had only had the flat for a few weeks but she already felt as though she had lived there longer than that and felt she knew it well. Sometimes she felt as though she was in a small prison, spending all day there on her own. In the evenings she occasionally went out to the cinema and at night Harry came and kept her company. She would have liked to have spoken to him as they lay there ï after all, she had slept quite a lot during the day. But he was tired on account of the two jobs he was holding down and, at times dropped off to sleep without answering her. This was not deliberate, but because he just couldnôt stay awake any longer and this tended to irritate her from time to time.
>
> (Fogelström 1951, p. 169)

Here it is clear that Fogelström tries to create some sympathy for Monika, describing her as trapped in a situation that she cannot handle. In Bergmanôs film, however, Monikaôs character is developed differently. When their child is born and it is evident that Monika is not interested in caring properly for it. Harry takes care of the crying baby at night although he works all day to make money.

When Harry is offered a well-paid job out of town, he decides to take it, although he will be away for a week. They have lied to Harryôs aunt, and

have told her that Monika has gotten a job, and that they therefore need her help to take care of their child. In the morning, before the aunt arrives, Monika expresses her disgust at the thought of being alone with the child for a week. The aunt arrives and fetches the child and, when they are alone, Harry tries to say goodbye to Monika in a somewhat tender way. But Monika distances herself and scornfully bids him farewell. When she is left alone in the apartment she triumphantly combs her hair, still half-dressed but without bothering to button her blouse. She starts singing, wiggling her hips and there is no doubt how she intends to spend her time. Here Monika is turned into a temptress without any conscience, primarily thinking of satisfying her own needs.

Fogelström tries to use Monikaôs social class to explain her actions; consequently it is also possible to see her as a strong individual who refuses to follow norms. Bergman makes this point differently, using cinematic tools to create sympathy for Monika. When Harry has left we soon find Monika in a café with a new lover who starts the jukebox. He then lights her cigarette and the camera focuses on Monika when she takes the first drag. We see her in profile, and while the camera comes closer she slowly turns around. Her face fills up the whole screen and we see her looking straight back at us, and all we see are her eyes examining us. Her gaze is unapologetic, neither proud nor ashamed, and this ambiguity wins over the spectator, disarming the viewer and making it impossible to judge her. Bergman writes about this scene in *Images* and states with reference to the actress who plays Monika: ñHarriet Andersson is one of cinemaôs geniuses. You meet only a few of these rare, shimmering individuals on your travels along the twisting road of the movie industry jungleò (Bergman 1994, p. 295). This was the first time Bergman and Andersson collaborated and they simultaneously had a love-affair. Their collaboration was to outlast the affair and Peter Cowie describes how their professional relationship developed:

> Harriet Andersson represents the first great female influence on Bergmanôs films. She starred in *Monika, The Naked Night, A Lesson in Love, Dreams,* and *Smiles of a Summer Night.* Later she returned to play two memorable roles: Karin in *Through a Glass Darkly*, and Agnes in *Cries and Whispers.* Bergman relished her fierce, wriggling personality, her independence, and her quick intelligence.
>
> (Cowie 1982, p. 101)

What is notable is the importance Bergman gives Anderssonôs contribution to the scene that he describes as follows:

> Here is an example of her talent: The summer has ended. Harry is not at home: Monika goes on a date with a guy named Lelle. At the coffee shop he drops a coin into the jukebox. With the swing music resounding, the camera turns to Harriet. She shifts her glance from her partner straight into the lens. Here is suddenly established, for the first time in the history of film, shameless, direct contact with the viewer.
>
> (Bergman 1994, p. 296)

Indeed, it is a memorable moment and it is also here that Bergman begins to use the close-up in this particular way, something he was to develop further in his later films. When interviewed by Jan Lumholdt about her role as Monika, Andersson recalls that Fogelström was very pleased with the film, and with Lars Ekborgôs and her interpretation of Harry and Monika:

> After the film had been produced he wrote a very good article in *Folket i Bild* about how good we both were. One would have

thought that the book had been modelled on us, instead of the other way round.

(Lumholdt 2005, p. 50; translated from the Swedish by Jane Rørdam)

The pictorial interpretation of the novel thus did not work as a mere illustration but added qualities to the characters that made them even more convincing. The script for *Cries and Whispers* works differently, since here passages are included that were never meant to appear in the film, but which Bergman adds to make the whole world he has elaborated for the film visible to his collaborators. Thus he inverts the relationship that typically obtains between novel and film, describing circumstances that he knows will not appear in the film, but that are nevertheless important in its conception.

2. The Film and the Still

As the description of Bergman and Anderssonôs collaboration reveals film is indeed a joint effort. I would like to continue with an investigation Bergmanôs relationship with his cinematographers and their influence on the images in his films. A study by Birgitta Steene, *Måndagar med Bergman* (*Mondays with Bergman*, 1996), investigates the response of a contemporary Swedish audience to Bergmanôs films and contextualizes these responses historically by comparing them with the critical reception of the films of Bergman when they were released in Sweden. Steene conducted her investigation by interviewing the audience at *Fågel Blå*, a small art-house cinema in Stockholm where Bergmanôs films were shown regularly every Monday for a couple of years at the end of the Nineties. In the introduction to her theoretical methods she states:

> It has been pointed out that producing a film entails group work which, unlike a literary work, is dependent on a whole staff of creative people. This staff includes the photographer, actors, the sound technician and film architect. However, even if one started taking into consideration the myth about film stars being more than just a product of gossip and considered the cinematographerôs personal film photos, the concept of film as a collective work has contributed most of all to cementing its process of development. The idea that a film is based on group work rarely touches the recipientôs viewpoint when seeing the film. One could even maintain that it is not until this confrontation occurs that the film can be said to have been accomplished.
>
> (Steene 1996, p. 54; translated from the Swedish by Jane Rørdam)

I have introduced the mythology of the movie-star ï or maybe it is more appropriate to talk about the favoured actresses in Bergmanôs auteurial universe ï through the example of Harriet Andersson as Monika, a role

where acting is blended with real experience. My interest in taking a closer look at these collaborations derives from my own experience as a viewer. My impression is that the images in the earlier films with Gunnar Fischer are constructed in a way that invites the viewer to participate to a larger extent than do the images in the later works with Sven Nyquist. When Bergman started his collaboration with Nyquist he was more experienced as a director and their collaboration resulted in other kinds of images, which emphasized movement within a narrow space. During his collaboration with Nyquist Bergman refined his work with the so-called chamber plays, often set on Fårö, where this isolated landscape functions as an extension of the claustrophobic chamber, a space for intimate dramas. The use of landscape in the earlier films with Fischer was inspired by neo-realism, emphasizing the interaction between the actors and the landscape to a much higher degree.

Cinematographer Gunnar Fischer ï who made *Summer with Monika* ï began his collaboration with Bergman doing *Hamnstad (Port of Call)* in Gothenburg in 1948. In *Bergman on Bergman* the director recalls his inspiration for *Hamnstad*: ñRosselliniôs films were a revelation ï all that extreme simplicity and poverty, that greynessò (Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 33). This neo-realist influence can also be traced in *Summer with Monika*, where Fogelströmôs experience of that environment gave the film its authenticity. But the pictorial side of the films Bergman made with Fischer developed into a more theatrical expression, where the influence from neo-realism was replaced with a more expressive style. Rosselliniôs greyness was replaced with dramatic high-contrast lighting, adding to the drama of the film.

Fischer was a couple of years older than Bergman and was originally trained as a painter, but learned his trade while working with Julius Jaenzon, a photographer of the great era of Swedish silent films who had

worked with Victor Sjöström on *Körkarlen* (*The Phantom Carriage*, 1921). Fischer was therefore well established within a Swedish tradition, but he had also worked with the legendary Danish film director, Carl Theodore Dreyer. In 1945 Dreyer was invited to Stockholm by Carl-Anders Dymling to shoot *Två människor (Two Human Beings*, 1954*)* and Fischer worked as a cinematographer on the film. Dreyer never acknowledged the film as his own; in his opinion the producers had too much influence over it. In an e-mail interview by Adam Bernstein, published in the Washington Post in 2008, Fischer ï who had been impressed by Dreyerôs films early on ï describes what he learned from that experience:

> Dreyer's comment to my work was something that stuck in my mind for the rest of my career. He said that there were one or two great shots, but the rest of it was like 'porridge and milk.' I clearly understood that he was referring to the shots with the soggy light and low contrast, and I thought to myself: Never again shall there be porridge and milk in my camera.
>
> (Bernstein 2008, page M07)

The lighting Fischer used is called *chiaroscuro*; sharp and full of contrast but with expressive and dreamlike qualities. This became an important ingredient in the Bergman films from the 1950s that led to his international breakthrough. Bergman and Fischer started out, however, with the semi-documentary style used in *Hamnstad*, which required a more restrained lighting. After having made a couple of films together based on scripts written by others, they did *Till Glädje* (*To Joy*, 1950), written by Bergman himself. In *Images* Bergman refers to it as a hopelessly uneven film with a few shining moments.

The next film they did together was *Sommarlek*, for which Bergman also wrote the screenplay, basing it on a love affair he had when he was young. This experience was first used for a short story, *Marie*, which he set aside for a couple of years. Bergman then wrote a first draft for a script, reworked it with the assistance of Herbert Grevenius, and finally had it approved for production. In *Bergman on Bergman* he mentions *Summer Interlude* as one of his most important films, describing it as follows: ñThis was my first film in which I felt I was functioning independently, with a style of my own, making a film all my own, with a particular appearance of its own, which no one could imitateò (Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 51). Indeed, although its images of privileged youth in a setting belonging to a world of grand summer residencies creates an old-fashioned atmosphere, there are some astonishing sequences in this film, containing images and themes that recur in later films. I will look closer at the composition of stills in this film to underline the differences between a still photograph and the film still.

The film is about a ballerina at the Opera, Marie, who revisits her youth in several ways. In flashbacks we follow her summer in the archipelago of Stockholm many years ago, and her romance with Henrik, who dies in an accident at the end of the summer. Marieôs uncle Erland, with whom she stayed in the archipelago, shows an unhealthy interest in Marie and is not at all pleased with this affair. When Henrik dies in hospital Erland takes his diary without letting Marie know that it exists. Years later Erland sends it to Marie at the Opera, and when she reads it she realizes that she has not dealt with the experience of Henrikôs death, but has only hidden it away. In order to revisit what happened that summer she takes the boat back to the island, where summer is over and the trees are bare. As she walks across the island she encounters an old woman, who passes with an enigmatic smile but without speaking. Later in the film we learn that this woman is the aunt Henrik lived with that summer, in an atmosphere best

described as chilly. In a scene from one of the flashbacks we learn that the aunt is rich and thinks that everybody is waiting for her to die to get their inheritance; as she tells the priest she plays chess with, she has no intention of dying yet. Logically she should have died a long time ago when Marie encounters her ï hence the enigmatic smile. It is of course Death walking by, whom we will encounter again more explicitly in *The Seventh Seal*. Other elements favoured by Bergman appear in the film as well, e.g., the landscape as a reflection or a mirror of the characterså state of mind. Steene reflects in her book on Bergman from 1968 on the use of landscape in *Summer Interlude*:

> All the permanent seasonal attributes of the northern summer are used: tranquil water, island scenery, glittering sunshine, and lingering twilight. The effect is an idealized, yet factual rendering of a story of young love. The camera is used very sensitively to emphasize this; the pictorial beauty of the film has not been surpassed in any other Bergman picture.
>
> (Steene 1968, p. 51)

Nature functions as a backdrop for days spent in freedom, away from troubled relatives and the landscape is used to emphasize the sensuous pleasure they take in this freedom; never has the archipelago been more inviting. After having met on the boat to the island, Marie and Henrik meet again by a jetty, Marie in a boat and Henrik bathing. Henrik is shy but Marie warm and insisting, and when they have gotten to know each other, she invites Henrik to a secret place where wild strawberries grow.

This is the ultimate symbol of cherished memories from childhood representing both innocence and intimacy that will appear in other Bergman films. In *Wild Strawberries* the same image is used when Isak Borg reminisces, although here sweet memories are mixed with bitter

experience. Wild strawberries also occur in *The Seventh Seal*, here as a meal shared between the actors and the knight, again a moment to remember for its depiction of generosity and inclusion in a small community. So when Marie invites Henrik to her secret place she includes him in her inner circle, and their intimacy grows while they explore the landscape together. It is as though nature is described as so breathtakingly beautiful because something as fragile as their teenage love cannot last. The melancholy of how briefly summer beauty lasts is emphasized to prepare us for the impending tragedy. *Summer Interlude* elegantly shifts between the innocence of youth and the disillusionment when this innocence is lost.

> Above all, *Summer Interlude* is interesting in that it clearly reveals how Bergman makes use of and transforms a familiar film genre ï such as the typically Swedish summer film with its light, romantic nights, glittering streams and young love. The transformation takes place when Bergman gives the Swedish summer landscape not only its traditional, symbolic interpretation as that of an innocent paradise and dream of life ï in contrast to the cityôs dark and threatening winters - but infuses this landscape with a personal vision, which is expressed by the ballet dancer Marieôs journey into the world of memories. Marieôs return visit to the island begins in the usual way as a Swedish excursion to the archipelago, including a light musical touch, where Vaxholmôs boat ploughs the water. However, when arriving on the island, the summer light changes to darker days, emphasized by the treesô dark branches and the wailing of the wind. Along the path an old woman appears, dressed in black, like a predecessor of Deathôs Gestalt in the *The Seventh Seal.* Bergman has altered a film cliché to a metaphysical condition.
>
> (Steene 1996, p. 172)

The story of *Summer Interlude* is presented through a series of well-composed images and Steene points out how the surroundings are use in the narrative: ñThe camera also helps establish nature, not only as a symbol and back-drop but as an active part in the filmò (Steene 1968, p. 52). The film opens with a series of images filmed with a fixed camera, which introduce us to images from the archipelago and the summer residence. In the first image in this series we see the house through the branches of a tree; a dark silhouette that frames the house. This emphasizes the distance between the tree and the house, indicating the position of the viewer. A selection of similar images follows while we are presented with texts introducing the film and the collaborators. When the introduction is over, an image follows of a church tower shot from below, again framed by the branches of a tree in the right hand corner. Then we see an image of the lower part of a tree, framed in the pavement, with a parked bicycle in the left hand corner. Some autumn leaves blow about in the wind and the image radiates a melancholy that reflects Marieôs state of mind. The framed tree also suggests Marieôs own entrapment, and during the course of the film we will learn how she breaks out of it by revisiting the past.

This series of images also introduces the Opera house where Marie works as a ballet dancer. Later we are introduced to the interior where we see Marie in a dressing room, on her way to practice. Someone delivers a package to her, and when Marie opens it she finds Henrikôs diary. Since there are certain technical problems connected with the performance, she can take the day off and finds herself with some unexpected time of her own. On impulse she takes the boat to the island where she spent her summer with Henrik, finally daring to revisit the past. When she gets off the boat and onto the island the trees in the landscape are again used to establish space between Marie and the viewer. Marie passes some tree trunks and it is as though we, the spectators, are standing behind the tree,

discovering Marie when she appears. Soon she encounters the ghost of Henrikôs aunt who leads her to the manor where she spent that summer.

Marie continues to a pavilion where she finally sits down to reminisce. The first shift to a flashback occurs, and in this flashback Marie wakes up on a summer morning in the pavilion and gets ready to go fishing. She puts on a swimsuit, grabs the fishing rod, and runs down to the sea and her rowing boat. This image subtly indicates a coming shift, since her vulnerability is emphasized through her interaction with the surrounding landscape. The scene is composed from above, we see the rock on which the camera is positioned at the bottom of the frame and, further down, the rock on which Marie is walking, on her way to the boat. The water is calm and transparent, and it looks as if the boat is floating in the air. But a dry, dead tree protrudes into the frame from the left, punctuating the idyllic image. Marie enters the boat, it rocks and she looks infinitely small; fragile in an even more fragile vessel. This scene captures the innocence of youth while also emphasizing its fragility.

This carefully composed image brings to mind Roland Barthesô thoughts on photography. In *Camera Lucida* (1980) he reflects on two elements in photographs, *studium* and *punctum*. *Studium* refers to the symbolic meaning of the photograph which is clearly visible to all viewers. Barthes is more interested, however, in the *punctum* which breaks or punctuates the *studium*, and depends on the individual viewer:

> This second element which will disturb the *studium* I shall therefore call *punctum*; for *punctum* is also: sting, cut, little hole ï and also a cast of the dice. A photographô *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me).
>
> (Barthes 1980, p. 27)

Although a film still is not a photograph and thus works within the context of other images, I here find Barthesô notion of the *punctum* useful in relation to the image of Marie in the boat, since this image from *Summer Interlude* mediates an emotion of its own. The *punctum* is possibly the dead tree, a contrast to Marie, who is portrayed as frail but filled with youthful enthusiasm. Steene emphasized the pictorial beauty of *Summer Interlude*, while Godard in *Bergmanorama* referred to it as one of the most beautiful films ever made. Emphasizing the beautiful aspects of the images, however, in a sense disarms the film, unless other qualities are highlighted, and the pictorial aspects of a film should not reach beyond its content. This is never a problem with the still photograph ï since it is supposed to work without a context ï yet seminal photographs are often presented in series. In his essay ñThe Third Meaningò from *Image, Music, Text* (1977) Barthes mentions his fascination with photographs related to film, which he often finds more interesting than the film itself:

> For a long time, I have been intrigued by the phenomenon of being interested and even fascinated by photos from a film (outside a cinema, in the pages of *Cahiers du cinéma*) and then losing everything of those photos (not just the captivation but the memory of the image) when once in the viewing room ï a change which can even result in a complete reversal of values.
>
> (Barthes 1977, p. 65)

Here Barthes emphasizes how the film still invites readings that go beyond the context of the film, because of the viewerôs knowledge that it is a still. These images thus invite the viewer to create the rest of the film; consequently this imaginary film can be more satisfying than the real film. Seen in this light, the still from *Summer Interlude* of Marie in the boat challenges the film by making a statement that lasts beyond its context. Barthes continues:

> The still, then, is the fragment of a second text *whose existence never exceeds the fragment*; film and still thus find themselves in a palimpsest relationship without it being possible to say that *one is on top of* the other or that one is *extracted* from the other.
>
> (Barthes 1977, p. 65)

But if the still from *Summer Interlude* overlaps the film, how does this affect the rest of the film? Is it possible that we remember these images before the actual film, and that they affect us and encourage other kinds of readings than those offered by the context of the film? Here the balance between the images in a film and the montage that constitutes a film becomes visible. If the still exceeds its context, it competes with its outcome, and thus blurs the directorôs intentions, unless this effect is part of the attempted expression.

3. Images inside the Film

It is interesting to compare the stills from *Summer Interlude* with stills from *Summer with Monika* since certain subtle changes have occurred. It is not so much the treatment of the single still that differs but rather how the stills are incorporated within the film. In *Summer with Monika* a sequence appears that consists mostly of still shots of the surroundings, which convey Monikaôs state of mind to the viewer. While the succession of stills in the opening sequence of *Summer Interlude* were used to establish Mariaôs environment, the stills in this particular sequence reveal Monikaôs innermost feelings at this very moment. These images are well integrated in the filmôs rhythm and slow down the pace before a scene where Monika breaks down.

In a later Bergman film, *Persona* (1966), the single images are used more consistently in an episode that appears before the filmôs actual story begins. In the opening sequence burning celluloid appears as well as persons who seem to be dead but later wake up. Here the images form a collage of what Bergman refers to as ñold ideasò, where the story that follows presents new takes on the identity of the artist. *Summer Interlude* and *Summer with Monika* were conceived in collaboration with Gunnar Fischer with whom Bergman continued to work until 1960. From then on Bergman worked with Sven Nyquist and together they started to develop new ideas about lightning; *Persona* is a striking example of how this affected the images. I will here take a closer look at some differences in the images from the early films and from films produced after 1960.

In an interview conducted by Michael Winterbottom about working with Bergman, Fischer describes their methods:

> Ingmar usually had a rough idea how he wanted the scenery (blocking). He always wanted the camera at the right place, and he

> always wanted to look through the camera when blocking the actors. Because he had to have the scene limited through the camera eye. So we always did it that way. And afterwards Ingmar and the actors went to one side and I had to get it ready.
>
> (Winterbottom 1988, pp. 15-17)

Clearly Bergman was very involved in the composition of each scene in a production, and thus also in the composition of each image that appears in the film. In *Camera Lucida* Barthes makes a distinction between what captures his interest in a photograph, and the general information passed on by a photograph, the immediate information, defined as the *studium*:

> It is by the *studium* that I am interested in so many photographs, whether I receive them as political testimony or enjoy them as good historical scenes: for it is culturally (this connotation is present in *studium*) that I participate in the figures, the faces, the gestures, the setting, the actions.
>
> (Barthes 1980, p. 26)

These terms apply to the film still since it provides the viewer with what needs to be present, the costumes, make-up, sets and locations. The film, however, is still always part of a larger temporal composition and the way it is inserted in the film as a whole affects the information in the single still and lends it new meanings. Each film still exists in relation to previous and subsequent stills and thus is part of the filmôs entire rhythm. Barthesô *punctum*, the arresting detail, on the other hand, initiates an involvement beyond mere information. To further distinguish between the two elements Barthes writes: ñLast thing about the *punctum:* whether or not it is triggered, it is an addition: it is what I add to the photograph and *what is nonetheless already there*ò (Barthes 1980, p. 55). When applied to the still of Maria in the boat from *Summer Interlude* this statement reveals

such a still boils down what is inside the film, while simultaneously inviting the viewer to add something. Thereby the still also competes with the film as a whole, since this single image contains so much of its essence. This film still singles itself out by inviting the viewer to make an addition as if it were a still photograph. What I suggest is that there is a risk that the rhythm of the carefully arranged images in a film is interrupted when a still distinguishes itself, taking on the same qualities as a still photograph. Hence the importance of balancing the well-composed still ï which hails the spectator ï with the stream of images that makes the story progress.

Jean-Luc Godard has praised *Summer Interlude* in his article on Bergman, *Bergmanorama* (1958), written in connection with a retrospective of Bergmanôs films at the Cinémathèque Française in Paris the same year, mounted in response to Bergmanôs international breakthrough with films such as *Sommarnattens leende* (*Smiles of a Summer Night*, 1955), *The Seventh Seal* and *Wild Strawberries*. Godardôs tribute to *Summer Interlude* goes so far as to refer to it as one of the most beautiful films in the history of cinema, along with films such as Jean Renoirôs *Le Carrosse dôOr* (*The Golden Coach*, 1953) and Roberto Rosselliniôs *Viaggio in Italia* (*Voyage to Italy*, 1953). To explain the uniqueness in Bergmanôs film-making, Godard describes his ability to evoke the inner life of his characters:

> In the Bergman aesthetic, those shots of lakes, forests, grass, clouds, his deliberately unusual camera angles, the elaborately careful back-lighting, are no longer mere showing-off or technical trickery: on the contrary, they are integrated into the psychology of the characters at the precise instant when Bergman wants to evoke an equally precise feeling: for instance, Monikaôs pleasure is conveyed in her journey by boat through an awakening Stockholm, and her

> wearIness by reversing the journey through a Stockholm settling down to sleep.
>
> (Godard 2008 [1958])

The lakes, forests, grass and clouds are even more present in *Summer with Monika* than in *Summer Interlude,* where we follow Monika and Harry when they escape the city and live in the archipelago for the summer. Marie and Henrik in *Summer Interlude* come from a privileged background; the summer estate where Marie lives with relatives is a manor and she spends time with Henrik in a little adjoining pavilion. Things are different for Monika and Harry; Monika shares a cramped apartment with her parents and siblings, which causes tensions and eventually makes her run away. She turns to Harry who lives alone with his father, who has recently been hospitalized for an uncertain period of time. Harry gets sacked from his job and in his fatherôs boat the couple sails off to freedom in the archipelago. Nature plays just as important a part here as in *Summer Interlude,* but the focus differs somewhat. In the former, nature is a source of pleasure with lazy days in the sun and milk and sandwiches waiting in the kitchen at the end of the day. In the latter the more unpolished aspects of nature are emphasized, hence the inclusion of nudity and the sensuality that Monika radiates. What was withheld and hinted at in *Summer Interlude* flourishes here. The grown-ups are out of sight and Monika and Harry enjoy their freedom with a fierce appetite. They explore nature like curious children, and enjoy it in a straightforward way. When exploring one of the islands they reach the parts furthest away, where the rocks meet the open sea and here they relax; Monika undresses in front of Harry to sunbathe, and the image of Monika naked in front of the rocks hit by the waves from the sea is both sensual and seductive. Desire is simple and uncomplicated here.

After some time without worries, realities soon sober them up, however. Monika is pregnant and their money is running out, so they have to live on what they can find or steal; mushrooms, apples, potatoes and milk. Late one night they take the boat to an island where they have seen a summerhouse with a promising garden. Monika is caught stealing milk and the residents take her inside the house and call the police. She is asked to sit down and is offered a piece of steak. The starving and pregnant Monika cannot take her eyes off the big steak in front of her, and finally takes it and escapes. Hiding in the forest she sits there chewing on this big chunk of meat like an animal. She then runs to the sea to find Harry whom she expects to be waiting there in the boat.

A remarkable sequence then follows. A huge bed of reeds is in front of Monika and she runs into it, and we see her disappear in the reeds. These are far off, but a branch protrudes into the frame from the lower right corner, close to us, pointing in to where Monika is running and thus emphasizing the distance. It is no longer twilight and the pale night reveals itself full of sounds. Monika hides in the weeds, crouching in the water and we hear an owl, and an image shows it flying away. Monika is like a frightened animal waiting for Harry, and her defiant attitude has disappeared. We see her face in a close-up, behind the straws of the reeds, revealing another aspect of her sensuality. Attentive and intuitive she blends in with nature. We hear her deep breath and the sounds of the night; another image that reflects the charactersô inner lives through the landscape.

The sequence offers a pensive moment which is achieved through its assemblage of stills. The owl is followed by an image of a spider building a web, and then in a close-up we see the spider waiting in the fine threads. A cloud is then shown with the moon shining half through it. This image is succeeded by some rocks and the reflection of the moon on the surface

of the water. This moment in the film not only offers a breathing space for Monika but also for the viewer. Here the narration stops and together we wait with Monika. Thus these stills, although appearing as a series of photographs, reach beyond the completeness of the photograph, as Barthes puts it: ñThe photographic image is full, crammed: no room, nothing can be added to itò (Barthes 1980, p. 89). When linked together in this montage the images resist this fullness and instead open up a new space. They reach beyond the document, and create a time of their own, not an account of real time, but time within fiction. Here the succession of images ï impressions of the night ï offer a moment which is not a proper break but nevertheless creates a space within the narration that invites reflections beyond the existing narration.

After *Summer with Monika* Fischer and Bergman worked together on *Sommarnattens leende* in 1955, as well as *Wild Strawberries* and *The Seventh Seal*, both from 1957. In the interview with Adam Bernstein, Fischer recalls being criticized for the lighting of the scene in *The Seventh Seal* where Death is playing chess with the young knight on the rocky beach, and where it appears as if the light were coming from two different places, as if the sky had two suns: ñTo this I usually respond: If you can accept the fact that there is a knight sitting on a beach playing chess with Death, you should also be able to accept that the sky has two sunsò (Fischer 2009 [2008]).Here it is clear that the restrained semi-documentary style of *Summer with Monika* is replaced with a more theatrical, dramatic lighting. In the scene from *Wild Strawberries* where Isak Borg dreams of his own death, blinding sunshine wipes out all nuances thus emphasizing the surrealist character of the scene. In 1958 they did *Ansiktet* (*The Face*) and in 1960 they did their last film together, *Djävulens öga* (*The Devilôs Eye*, 1960). Fischer comments on their break in the interview with Winterbottom:

> We had a very good collaboration for many years. I made 12 films with him. But on the last one, *The Devilôs Eye*, we began to part. I think we were very unlike in a way. And I was working on a film when he was preparing the next one. So he chose another cameraman and that was Sven Nykvist and he likes Sven very much and they worked very well together, I think. So they went on working.
>
> (Winterbottom 1988, pp. 15-17)

Bergman himself comments as follows:

> For me the filmôs suggestiveness lies in a combination of rhythm and faces, tensions and relaxations of tensions. For me, the lighting of the image decides everything. Little by little Gunnar Fischerôs idea and mine parted company; and this meant that the solidarity, the feeling of personal contact and interplay between us, which was so necessary to me began to slack ï largely, perhaps, because I became more and more domineering, more and more tyrannical, and more aware that I was humiliating him. Sven Nyquist is a much tougher personality.
>
> (Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 35)

What becomes clear here is the importance of trust between Bergman and his cinematographer, how this element is essential for a fruitful collaboration. Bergman describes Fischer as ñan extraordinarily fine artist; a soft silent, and introverted musician type, always discussing, always diffidentò. This sensitivity seems to have been the reason why he and Fischer worked so well together, but also why they parted. Bergman continues:

> If anything worked at all, it was because heôs an artist, because I could appeal to him all the time. But in my collaboration with him I was always unsure of myself, which I never am when working with Sven Nyquist.
>
> (Ibidem)

The vulnerability that Bergman articulates here is striking and exposes how dependent he is on his cinematographer. The collaboration with Fischer lasted for over 10 years and during this period Bergman developed from being a young, inexperienced director to a player on the world stage, putting Swedish cinema on the map again. This development inevitably changed his views and gave him experiences that encouraged him to take new paths. What I find notable, however, is how the composition of the images also changed, not just the lighting that Bergman himself prefers to refer to. The relationship between the single image and the entire rhythm of his films changed during the 1960ôs and I will here look more closely at some examples of stills from this period.

I have previously analyzed stills from *Summer Interlude* where Bergman uses o trees as a graphic element in the frame as a tool to draw in the viewer. Apart from a short episode in *Gycklarnas afton* (*Tinsel and Sawdust*, 1953) where Nyquist shot one sequence, Bergman and Nyquist started their collaboration with *Jungfrukällan* (*The Virgin Spring*, 1960). Ulla Isaksson wrote the film script which is a grim tale about Karin, a young virgin, who is raped and killed by three shepherds on her way to church. They steal her expensive clothing and spend the night at home of her unsuspecting parents, and try to sell them the clothes. The parents realize what has happened and their revenge is merciless. The scene of the rape is a forest glade, where some leafless dead trees lie on the ground, obscuring the view .Here the trees function to keep the viewer at a distance from the brutal confrontation when the rape takes place. Gone is

the inviting moment, replaced by images that distance the viewer, but which also emphasize that someone else is witnessing the scene. It is the girl who first accompanied Karin, but who was hesitant about going to church with her, and therefore let Karin continue on her own. The girl later changed her mind and when trying to catch up with Karin ended up witnessing the rape and murder from a distance. Thus peeping through branches, the viewer shares the girlôs secret gaze and becomes her accomplice. In his memoirs Sven Nyquist says about *The Virgin Spring*:

> In the *Jungfrukällan* we were content with removing all the artificial lighting, i.e. all the ñbeauty effectsò. Formally, this film differs very little from his classical films from the 1950s but, beginning with *Såsom i en spegel*, the style of Ingmarôs films changes radically. The fact that I took part in that radical change is the most important thing that has ever happened to me as a photographer.
>
> (Nyquist & Forslund 1997, p. 87; translated from the Swedish by Jane Rørdam)

Their next collaboration was *Såsom i en spegel* (*Through a Glass Darkly*, 1961) followed by *Nattvardsgästerna* (*Winter Light*, 1963) and *Tystnaden* (*The Silence*, 1963). According to Nyquist *Winter Light* was a turning point; Bergmanôs demands seemed out of proportion, since he only wanted to use natural light. Bergman says:

> Not one shot was taken in direct sunlight. We filmed only when it was overcast or foggy.
> A Swedish man in the midst of a Swedish reality experiencing a dismal aspect of the Swedish climate. In general, the film lacks highly dramatic moments.
>
> (Bergman 1994, p. 264)

In the end Nyquist found the experience highly satisfactory:

> Simplicity is less rewarding than the light of beauty. No one has any idea how much work it takes. For me the film was a meaningful school of learning from a teacher who made heavy demands. As is so often the case, one is grateful afterwards.
>
> (Nyquist & Forslund 1997, p. 91; translated from the Swedish by Jane Rørdam)

Their next film, *The Silence*, was not burdened with such restraints, instead Bergman recalls: ñIn *Tystnaden*, Sven and I decided to be uninhibitedly unchaste. It contains a cinematic sensuality that I still experience with delightò (Bergman 1994, p. 112).

After the colour film *För att inte tala om alla dessa kvinnor* (*All these women*, 1964), Bergman returned to black and white in *Persona*, about the role of the artist and the representation of reality in art, blending these concepts until finally the illusion becomes too real. The film is about two women, Elisabet, an actress who has decided to remain silent, and Alma, her nurse. They live together in a summerhouse where Elisabet is supposed to recover, but Alma begins to get confused. She identifies with Elisabet since she receives no response to her wish to confide in her, which in a way reinforces their intimacy. Alma enjoys talking and having an audience, while Elisabet is amused. Finally Alma discovers Elisabetôs observations of her by secretly reading a letter from Elisabet to her husband. Disappointed and furious Alma leaves Elisabet who finally returns to the theatre. Here it becomes apparent that the silent artist is more frightening than an artist in a crisis. It is when the artist refuses to fulfil the expected role that the audience becomes uncomfortable, since this forces them to turn towards themselves ï not always a pleasant experience.

The opening sequence of *Persona* is remarkable since it consists of a series of images that first seems to be stills, but then slowly start to move; reminding us that cinema ï in addition to being a series of images ï is movement. Bergman recalls how the idea for that sequence took shape; he wrote the script while hospitalized for a nervous breakdown and the images emerged out of his stay there.

> Well, while I was working on *Persona* I had a poem in my head, not in words, but in images, about the situation in which *Persona* had originated. I reflected on what was important, and began with the projector and my desire to set it in motion. But when the projector was running, nothing came out of it but old ideas, the spider, Godôs lamb, all that dull old stuff. My life just then consisted of dead people, brick walls, and a few dismal trees.
>
> (Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 198)

The sequence starts with film as medium, with celluloid, a reel and filmstrips revolving. The image that appears in the projector is first too strong, completely white, but slowly a cartoon -becomes visible, upside down. The sequence continues with scenes from a silent farce, and then the image of a spider, a lamb being slaughtered, a hand with a nail through it, a brick wall, some trees in a park covered with snow. Then there is a close-up of the face of an elderly woman, lying down, followed by close-ups of her hand and her face from above; then a boy appears, completely still, naked under a white sheet. Bergman refers to all this as old ï therefore also dead ï ideas. None of these stills appear complete on their own; they need each other to convey Bergmanôs vision as a whole. Again Barthesôconcept of the *punctum* comes to mind; the additional element that the photograph triggers in the viewer. The stills in this sequence do not invite additions in themselves, but as a whole. Thus in a way this

montage gives the single images a place of their own, outside the film. In *Camera Lucida* Barthes writes:

> In the cinema, whose raw material is photographic, the image does not, however, have this completeness (which is fortunate for the cinema). Why? Because the photograph, taken in flux, is impelled, ceaselessly drawn toward other views; in the cinema, no doubt, there is always a photographic referent, but this referent shifts, it does not make a claim in favor of its reality, it does not protest its former existence; it does not cling to me: it is not a *specter*.
>
> (Barthes 1980, p. 89)

The sequence then shifts since the raw material, the stills, start moving. The elderly woman ï potentially a corpse ï opens her eyes, as does the young boy under the white sheet thus questioning the photographic referent and its documentary qualities and reinforcing the ability to create an illusion. What Barthes refers to as the *spectre* of a photograph, however, is displayed so that it investigates cinema as a medium. We see the boy touch the screen, an invisible surface between him and the image of a woman that is out of focus, unreachable. We later learn that this is Elisabet, his mother, who is unable to respond to his affection. The image of the woman is blurred and fills up the whole screen, but it shifts, she closes her eyes, and then a new face appears ï still out of focus ï of another woman. The two faces belong to Elisabet and Alma and later in the film their faces will blend into one, an image of how their personalities will blend for a moment. Here Bergman fabricates a spectre, as if to remind us that we are about to enter a cinematic illusion.

According to Thomas Elsaesser, Bergman became a ñclassicalò film-maker when he made *Persona*, in the American sense, since he was one of the few European directors who managed to achieve a similar tactile

immediacy: ñEmotional intensity viscerally transmitted is one of the secrets of American cinemaôs sheer physicalityò (Elsaesser 2005, p. 138). Elsaesser refers to Bergmanôs way of manipulating space to create psycho-physical states, which of course applies to *Persona,* and the claustrophobia these situations mediate: ñThe barrenness of his island (the setting of this, as so many other films from the 1960s) was the richness of his cinemaò (Ibidem).

When *Persona* starts after the introductory ñpoemò, we see Alma being instructed by the doctor at the hospital. We also encounter Elisabet in hospital but soon the setting moves to the summerhouse by the coast, which is Fårö. The landscape of this rocky island is incorporated in the film, but many of the central scenes take place inside the summerhouse, filmed in a dreamy, unreal way, where a chamber play unfolds; the intimate drama Bergman developed in the 1960ôs. When the film comes to an end, however, the characters prepare to leave this secluded space. Elisabet packs her bag, and Alma takes care of the house, moving the chairs inside, putting the cushions in place and the viewer can relax from previous tensions, soothed by the simplicity of everyday activities. Then Alma grabs her bag and walks to the bus stop.

An image then appears which ï as Barthes puts it ï pricks me. We see a beach ï not sandy and inviting but barren and stony ï by the sea. A road makes a turn to disappear out of the image again. To the left we see a couple of post boxes, to the right some windswept pines. This image interests me because the isolated island here becomes visible as a community, making me curious about the people who live here. In the narrative of the film this image connects to reality ï where the bus can take you back to. The bus stops, Alma boards and it drives off. To begin with the camera follows the bus, but then it slides down onto the road to finally focus on the stones on the ground. This image takes us back to the

opening sequence, and corresponds to the still with the brick wall ï just as monotonous.

Then the film cuts directly to the image of the boy trying to make contact with the face of a woman on the screen. The brief respite is over, and the viewers are immediately reminded of the filmôs illusion; in the next instant celluloid is burning in a projector and when the screen turns black, the film ends. Steene writes about this interplay between reality and illusion in her Bergman study from 1968: ñBut *Persona* is not merely an experiment in the art of cinematography (a favourite word of Bergmanôs). The film also conveys a desire to stimulate the viewerò (Steene 1968, p. 121). Here she points out how the film investigates the relationship between artist and the spectator by using cinematic tools to reach beyond magical tricks and activate the audience. Steene continues, ñ*Persona* demonstrates in fact, what the writers of the so-called new novel have set forth in their program: that art can be an interplay between creator and receiver; that its function is not to soothe or entertain but to activateò (Ibidem). I would like to add that Bergman achieves these effects so brilliantly since he himself is also a receiver in his art, both in relation to the actors, but as we have seen in relation to the cinematographer as well. I have tried to follow the development of stills in Bergmanôs films to see how their expression has changed in his collaboration with two different cinematographers.

For the film-maker the creative act involves an interplay between all the collaborators, and in this act it is important to be open to suggestions. There is always a commitment to the audience in Bergmanôs work, even in more experimental works such as *Persona*. Returning to Steeneôs study of audience reception, some of the elderly participants stopped attending the openings of his films in the 1960ôs. They denied that it had anything to do with the contemporary cultural climate, but said that the darker aspects

of Bergmanôs work from this period repelled them (Steene 1968, p. 121). This reveals how Bergman refined his tools ï in his collaboration with Nyquist and their experiments with lighting ï and made Fårö his preferred location, thus elaborated a universe that some viewers came to experience as difficult to identify with.

The participants in Steeneôs study were asked to pick four favourite films and the top favourites were *The Seventh Seal*, *Wild Strawberries* and *Fanny och Alexander*, followed by *Persona*. Steene describes the method the participants used as a kind of ñaesthetic of empathyò, where personal engagement shaped their judgement, based on both psychological as well as visual qualities. A film like *Summer with Monika* did not figure on the list and when asked about their reaction to the film most of the audience saw it as dated, describing problems relevant to its time but that had lost their relevance today. Steene responds:

> A workôs survival is believed to be conditional upon its ñtrendinessò and, of secondary importance, its ñtimelessnessò. The Fågel Blå group felt that it had lost a lot of its old impact and had been transformed into a film document from the early 1950ôs.
>
> (Steene 1996, p. 152)

Thus the universe of the film must both correspond to its time and still deal with problems that reach beyond this period. Another comment, however, brings us back to the images in the films:

> Some of the comments made by the Fågel Blå group could refer to well-known picture compositions by Bergman which, in time, had grown into a form of emblematic prototype. The chess game between Death and the Knight in *The Seventh Seal*, Isak Borgôs meeting with his dead reflection in *Smultronstället*, Harriet

> Anderssonôs long look into the camera in *Sommaren med Monika* or the Pietà scene with the dying Agnes and the maid Anna in *Viskningar och rop* are examples of this. These pictures were experienced by most of the Fågel Blå group as being exquisitely composed and emotionally satisfying.
>
> (Steene 1996, p. 155)

It is notable that many of these images date from Bergmanôs early period, the 1950ôs, while of the later films only *Cries and Whispers* is mentioned. I have tried to investigate how Bergman avoided elaborate compositions of static single images in his later films in order to focus on the movement and rhythm in of the charactersô interplay with space in the chamber plays. What I find interesting, however, is the discrepancy between the favoured films and the images mentioned as particularly memorable, because here the balance between the single image and the film as a whole becomes visible, revealing how the well-composed single image still communicates effectively with the viewer. Thus the still can attract the receiver to a high degree, but if the context within which it works does not appropriately incorporate it, it will not render the film itself memorable.

To return to the question of creator and receiver, it is important to look at the above-mentioned image from *Summer with Monika*, where Monika looks straight into the camera. This image captures several of the issues discussed here. The sequence involves the relationships mentioned between creator and receiver and between director and actress. Harriet Andersson describes the circumstances of its conception:

> We filmed it without sound. I believe juke box music was to be added afterwards. First of all I lit a cigarette and then I had to turn round quietly. As we were shooting, Ingmar said: ñLook right into

> the lens!ô I do not think it was planned that way, because Ingmar is not usually in favour of any improvising. It just happened.
>
> (Lumholdt 2005, p. 48; translated from the Swedish by Jane Rørdam)

The result overwhelms the viewer with its directness, looking straight into the actressôeyes challenges the viewerôs normally passive role. Here the receivers, the audience, become aware of their position in a powerfully direct way. Taking into consideration Anderssonôs description of how the scene was conceived, it is worth noting how the relationship between Andersson and Bergman affects the situation. Their intimacy as lovers is also present in this image; trust creates an atmosphere where such an improvisation becomes possible.

Moreover, Bergmanôs praise of Andersson as a cinematic genius can be seen in another light, since what he refers to is her ability to transform his proposition into memorable cinema. In this sequence from *Summer with Monika* Andersson manages to receive the proposition and transform it into a gesture of her own in front of the camera. Thus the actress as a receiver, open to suggestions in this particular situation, involves the viewer to a rare degree. The interplay between creator and receiver is therefore not only a relationship between the audience and the director, but works on all levels of a film production, and thus affects the viewer in numerous ways. Although film can be experienced as saturated, to use Barthesôexpression, it is possible to construct the interplay between the single images in a manner that makes it possible for the viewer to engage more actively when the story unfolds. As I have tried to outline, the development of the images in Bergmanôs films goes from well-composed compositions to a more rhythmical montage, offering pensive moments or a more direct approach, but in both cases the viewerôs position is actively used in the creation of the images.

4. Rewriting the Past

Ingmar Bergman officially retired from film-making after *Fanny och Alexander* (*Fanny and Alexander*, 1986), which was also his final collaboration with Sven Nyquist. Bergman kept on writing, however, and occasionally produced films for Swedish Television and making what would be his final film, *Saraband*, when he was 86. The film is an interesting example of rewriting since it uses characters created for *Scener ur ett äktenskap* (*Scenes from a Marriage*, 1973), Johan and Marianne, as the starting point for a new story. We are led to believe that this story is about their reunion, but soon it becomes apparent that this is only a device to take us back to the past, where the wounds that haunt the characters were inflicted.

Saraband deals with the past on different levels, however, and one of the central characters in the film is actually dead, only appearing as a black-and-white photograph. Furthermore, Bergman quotes other film-makers; a central scene echoes Robert Bressonôs *Mouchette* (1967), which thus becomes another way of rewriting the past, in this case, film history. After having examined the development of the stills in Bergmanôs films with Gunnar Fischer and Sven Nyquist, it is worth examining how single images are treated in this final work. The past is made explicitly present through the black-and-white photographs, mostly conventional family portraits. A more refined use of the photograph appears at the end when Marianne shows a photograph of Johan and herself in bed, in a similar position to the one that appeared in *Scenes from a Marriage*, but showing Marianne and Johan in the present of this film. Here the simple notion of the photograph representing the past is reversed, and past and present are intertwined in an unsettling manner.

In this context it is useful to return to what Barthes writes on photography in *Camera Lucida* where he sets aside the arresting detail in order to discuss another *punctum*, that of Time:

> At the time (at the beginning of this book: already far away) when I was inquiring into my attachment to certain photographs, I thought I could distinguish a field of cultural interest (the studium) from that unexpected flash which sometimes crosses this field and which I called the *punctum*. I now know that there exists another *punctum* (another ñstigmatumò) than the ñdetailò. This new punctum, which is no longer of form but of intensity, is Time, the lacerating emphasis of the noeme (ñthat-has-beenò), its pure representation.
>
> (Barthes 1980, p. 94)

Thus the photograph, by means of its occasional vividness, still always reminds us of the passing of time, that-has-been, and therefore we inevitably associate photographs with death. This is indeed apparent in *Saraband*, where the photographs are used to constantly remind us of the past that haunts the characters. Even more interesting, however, is the way in which the images within the film, the single stills, carry an emotion that depicts the charactersô state of mind in the present. To create a reference to this particular situation, i.e., the last film by a film-maker whose death is literally close, I have examined *Love Streams* (1984) by John Cassavetes. *Love Streams* was the last film Cassavetes ever made and themes recur in both films ï dealt with differently ï but with a similar emotional intensity. I focus on how certain images within the film can transcend experiences and emotions that become particularly important under these circumstances.

Saraband opens with a prologue followed by 10 episodes, and then concludes with an epilogue. Prologue and epilogue shows the same

scenery, a room where transparent curtains let some light in. The first thing we see is a large table shot from above covered with old black-and-white photographs, some of which are bent. The photographs look like a map of someoneôs memories. The camera is then lowered and we see the table from one side; now the photographs resemble as a landscape, a topography of time. Liv Ullman enters as Marianne, a character she performed 30 years ago in *Scenes from a Marriage.* She invites us to share some of her memories as she tells us about her sudden urge to visit her former husband, Johan. The photographs are used as a narrative tool and, as she tells us about members of her family, she lifts them up, reminisces, then throws them away. Thus they are thrown back into the past until the next time they will be rearranged.

In *Out of the Past: Saraband and the Ingmar Bergman Archive* Maaret Koskinen investigates how a fictional memory functions for a writer and how the process of rewriting changes the material, blurring the line between the experiences of the fictional character and autobiographical details. Koskinen mentions *Dagen slutar tidigt* (*The Day Ends Early*, 1948) as an early example of Bergmanôs work that appeared in several forms; first as a novella, then as film script, then finally rewritten as a stage play. She continues:

> Or, to take a more well-known example, think of *Scener ur ett äktenskap* (*Scenes from a Marriage*, 1973), which was written as a script with decidedly literary qualities, then became adapted into a six-part mini-series for television, and later was cut down to half for cinema distribution ï and eventually ended up being re-produced for the stage.
>
> (Koskinen 2008, p. 19)

Thus the process of re-writing is integrated in Bergmanôs work and invites a closer reading of how *Saraband* fits into this universe.

Photographs in *Saraband* represent the past, but Koskinen points out that the past is constantly rearranged: òIn short, every memory revisited through writing may result in yet another layer of re-writing, so to remember is paradoxically also a way of forgettingò (Koskinen 2008, p. 23). She notes how Marianne is still a fictive person and that it is too easy to see *Saraband* as a kind of sequel to *Scenes from a Marriage*, since Bergman only uses these previous characters as a starting point for discussing the relationship between parent and child. *Saraband* investigates these relations through three generations, and Marianne witnesses the war between Johan and his son Henrik, and to how Henrikôs daughter Karin struggles to evade her fatherôs influence. Henrik was married to Anna, Karinôs mother, who passed away two years ago. He cannot handle his grief and turns to his daughter whom he uses as a substitute for his dead wife. It is insinuated that the relationship is incestuous and that his daughter is finding it hard to escape because she pities her father. Karinôs mother is made present by a black-and-white photograph, which calls attention to how much she is missed and how this affects her family. Thus the black-and-white photographs in *Saraband* directly indicate death, time passed and people lost. A

Emotional death is subtly expressed, however, through stills within the film. A scene where Karin runs away from her father features a series of images that express her emotions at this very moment when she is deeply affected by their encounter. Karin falls after running and rolls down a small hill coming to a stop head down close to a small pond. This scene is a quote from *Mouchette*, a film that Bergman deeply admired for the following reasons:

> Iôd put it this way: I felt a strong affinity with Bernanosô and Bressonôs *Mouchette*. Itôs a film I would have liked to have made myself, but which I didnôt understand. In *Mouchette* the motif is expressed clearly and explicitly, free from all impurities.
>
> (Björkman, Manns & Sima 1993, p. 43)

Bressonôs film is about the girl Mouchette, who maintains her dignity although she is abused and surrounded by brutality. Her final act ï rolling down a hill again and again until she finally finds the courage to roll all the way into the pond below it to take her own life ï is experienced as an act of her own will and thus as an act of liberation. Karin in *Saraband* does not take her life and exposes her despair in a different manner.

In an interview with Mario Verdone from 1952, Rossellini talks about *Germania, anno zero* (*Germany Year Zero*, 1948), a film made on location in Berlin after the War. The film follows Edmund, a young boy who has no grown-up to trust and who ends up killing his sick father out of mercy as well as for rational reasons. This act becomes unbearable for him and he then commits suicide by throwing himself from a ruinous building. Rossellini explains how a film can be constructed to reach a certain event: ñ*Germany Year Zero*, to tell the truth, was conceived specifically for the scene with the child wandering on his own through the ruins. The whole of the preceding part held no interest at all for meò (Rossellini 1992, p. 38). Thus he built the film not around the dramatic final scene but around but the image of the lonely child walking through the ruinous rubble of Berlin.

Returning to *Saraband* and the impact the argument has on Karin; will her actions lead to an image similar to the boy wandering through the ruins? Karin escapes and runs into the forest, then falls and rolls down the hill to the pond. She ends on her stomach and through some branches we see her

blond hair spread out on the ground. The scene has some similarities with the rape of the other Karin in *The Virgin Spring,* which we witness through the branches of a large fallen tree. In *Saraband* when Karin gets up there is indeed a fallen tree on which she starts to balance. She then walks into the water, disappears out of the image and we hear her scream, still outside the image. This is the hurt child, opening up to her pain, and when she enters the image again and sits down on the fallen tree, she cries softly. This image is a central, recurring theme in *Saraband*; the child left without guidance by the parents, abandoned morally and emotionally, just like Edmund in *Germany Year Zero* or Mouchette in Bressonôs film. Later in the film Karin informs Henrik that she plans to study abroad and that it is time for them to part. A shadow is cast, however, over her courageous decision, since we later learn that Henrik has tried to commit suicide and has been hospitalized. Here stills of Henrik are inserted; he is naked, covered in blood. Lost in his own grief he has managed once again to ruin his daughterôs life.

The black-and-white photographs in *Saraband* work as shadows from the past, a painful absence. In his essay *The Third Meaning* Barthes analyses some stills from Sergei Eisensteinôs *Ivan the Terrible*. Barthes chooses these stills because they express an obtuse meaning, hard to grasp but with a significance that goes beyond the immediate information we get from the still. Barthes mentions an informational level that communicates via the setting, the costumes and the relations between the characters. Another level is the symbolic meaning which transfers historical ideas and political details. Barthes insists, moreover, on a third level and argues that these images express something that is rounded, making it less clear and violent. In sequence where Karin runs into the woods it is not the last image ï where she silently weeps ï that expresses this third, or obtuse, meaning, since here everything is very clear. Instead we will have to look for an image that according to Barthes expresses an undefined emotion: ñI

believe that the obtuse meaning carries a certain *emotion*. Caught up in the disguise, such an emotion is never sticky, it is an emotion which simply *designates* what one loves, what one defends: an emotion-value, an evaluationò (Barthes 1977, p. 59).

Thus the image of the young woman balancing on the tree could carry such an evaluation, since it lets this individual express a vulnerability; a moment where everything is undefined. It is tempting to see this in the light of the fact that this was Bergmanôs last film, dedicated to his late wife Ingrid. The pain of missing a loved person is indeed felt in the film, since Anna still affects and moves the other family members, including Johan. These emotions, however, are depicted in a very straightforward way, often by a character looking at the black-and-white photograph of Anna. The loss of Anna is a fact, ever present in the film and never questioned.

The emotions that are left unsaid are Karinôs, when she is once again abandoned after Henrikôs suicide attempt. While Johan opens up to Marianne in anguish, later withdrawing into emotional isolation, Karinôs fate is left open. The ambiguous image of her by the pond depicts her emotional state without reaching a conclusion. What is present though is what I referred to earlier as the topography of time, where the past casts its shadow emotionally. The image in *Saraband* that potentially carries a third meaning mediates an emotion that becomes a peak in this topography, a place reached through time.

It is interesting to compare *Saraband* with John Cassavetesô *Love Streams*, a film that was also was conceived with the awareness that it would be the last. At a first glance is it easier to find differences than similarities between Bergman and Cassavetes. Bergman was always a part of the establishment in Sweden, primarily as director for several theatres.

A film-making pioneer, both in Sweden and abroad, he reached a position after his foreign success where he could get funding for almost any project. He later formed his own production company where he produced his films, although often with support from the Swedish Film Institute or Swedish Television.

Cassavetes was also a pioneer, but within a completely different system. After having made *Shadows* (1959) he won some recognition and had offers, but it was not until *Faces* (1968) that he had his major breakthrough as a director. He financed this film himself and by giving the participants in this project a percentage of the profit. *Faces* was a hit, both critically and financially; of his later films only *A Woman under the Influence* (1974) won the same acclaim. Nonetheless he was able to continue to produce films, often using his own home as location. In *Cassavetes, Posthumously*, French film director Olivier Assayas characterizes Cassavetesô way of making films and associates him with other European directors:

> In the face of the all-powerful film industry, he stood in opposition, representing the cinema of the auteur ï the very nature of which, it cannot be stressed enough, is to function independently, as a craft industry ï constructing his own economy, his own system, his own team and inventing for his own purposes his own troupe, as, in similar ways, did Bergman in Sweden, Fassbinder in Germany and of course the New Wave in France.
>
> (Assayas 2001, p. 201)

Bergman did indeed create a universe for his film-making when he used Fårö, the remote island where he lived, for his productions. This landscape plays a significant role in most of his films from this period, but in fact most of the production of *Scenes from a Marriage* was also filmed there, a

project which is closely related to Cassavetesô intimate film-making. But while Bergman received several Oscars for his work, Cassavetes received very little recognition at home during his lifetime; on the other hand he was often praised in Europe. This recognition increased after his death and Assayas reflects on this effect in connection with the reissue of most of Cassavetesô films in France in 1995:

> Almost every single title was running simultaneously in theatres all over town. All of a sudden, a few years after his death, Cassavetes was everywhere, overnight he became the epitome of hip. He became the ultimate model for every single young aspiring filmmaker.
>
> (Assayas 2001, p. 199)

Seen in this light it is interesting to read a review of *Love Streams* in the New York Times from 1984, written by Janet Maslin:

> Thereôs no other American director who can do what John Cassavetes does on the screen. There may not be many who would want to. Mr. Cassavetesô work in ñLove Streamsò is as overflowing with emotional constructions as it is barren from other forms of thought.
>
> (Maslin 2009[1984])

What Maslin cannot ignore, however, and points out in her closing remark is ñé the authority that much of Mr. Cassavetesô film possesses.ò It is an interesting remark since you usually do not associate independent film-making with authority, but with breaking rules. Probably it is Cassavetes ability to constantly question conventions in American film making that gives him this authority, which Maslin acknowledges even though she does not embrace *Love Streams*.

Love Streams was originally a stage-play, written by Ted Allen, but re-written for film by Cassavetes and Allen, that finally ended up a completely new work at Cassavetesô hand. A couple of years after the theatrical production Cassavetes got an offer from a production company that wanted to finance the film. The intention was to let Voight and Rowlands play the same parts as in the stage-play, but Voight proposed that he would direct the film, and since this was out of the question, he backed out of the project two weeks before the filming was due to start. This left Cassavetes with the option to play the brother himself, which he did reluctantly and in a much more sombre way than Voight had. The sombre tone was also caused by his condition since he had been diagnosed with a terminal disease and had been given six months to live before the production started. Without Voight, Cassavetes felt that it was necessary to rewrite the script and Allen comments on the way he treated the material: ñAs soon as John invested himself in the writing, he brought his life, his dreams, his problems to what had been my autobiographyò (Charity 2001, p. 189). It is obvious that this was even more pressing when he knew he would do the acting himself, and he continued to rewrite the script, even after the filming had begun.

Love Streams is about Robert Harmon, a successful author of best-selling books, and his sister Sarah Lawson. Sarah has recently divorced and is fighting for custody of her daughter who wants to stay with her father. In the first part of the film we follow Robert and Sarah separately, without knowing how they are connected. After an unsuccessful trip to Europe Sarah comes to stay with Robert in his house, and we are still not sure of their relationship. Sarah is obsessive about her family, whereas Robert is incapable of attaching himself in a relationship. In Allenôs play the incestuous undertone in their relationship is more explicit; in the film it is only hinted at. At a point Robertôs ex-wife arrives with their son, Albie,

whom Robert has not seen since he was born. She asks if Albie can spend the night with him, and Robert accepts. Their encounter starts rather awkwardly and ends disastrously when Robert takes Albie to Las Vegas and leaves him alone in a hotel room, while he spends the night with a prostitute. Sarah later asks Robert about the incident, and he replies: ñLife is a series of suicides, divorces, promises broken, children smashed, whateverò, a line that could describe the content of *Saraband*.

Halfway through the film Sarah and Robert are sitting in the kitchen, after both having spent the evening in someone elseôs company, and now they finally face each other. Before this sequence some remarkable stills appear of Sarah shot from behind. We see a lot of hair, but no face; she is a presence still out of reach. In another still Sarah is looking out of the window as Robert drives away in a cab. The back of her head is close to the camera, but out of focus, and we are forced to follow what she is looking at, the car driving away. Barthes suggested in *The Third Meaning* that the obtuse meaning revealed something blunted, images within the film that went beyond the describable. He refers to moments within the film that fit neither into the informational, nor the symbolic level, but which express a certain filmic experience, created by a few images within the film. The stills of Sarah from behind fit into this expression. We follow how she moves but what we see is a mass of soft hair, not a character. According to Barthes these moments are not common in films:

> Obtuse meanings are to be found not everywhere (the signifier is rare, a future figure) but *somewhere*: in other authors of films (perhaps), in a certain manner of reading ðlifeô and so ôrealityô itself (the word is simply used here in opposition to the deliberately fictive).
>
> (Barthes 1977, p. 60)

This description easily applies to moments in Cassavetesô film, and to his film-making in general. I have already suggested some stills of Sarah that fit into this way of ñreading lifeò. Another sequence that uses space and framing to describe an emotional state ï which is not reached by ordinary dialogue or a neatly structured story but through new ways of expressing such sentiments ï appears in the kitchen scene. According to Barthes: ñThe *contemporary* problem is not to destroy the narrative but to subvert it; todayôs task is to disassociate subversion from destructionò (Barthes 1977, p. 64). Indeed, Cassavetesô films are driven by an urge to challenge the viewer either by making the scenes much longer than we expect or to edit them in an unexpected manner. Leaving the viewer without any information about Robert and Sarahôs relationship through almost half of the film is an example of Cassavetesôway of keeping the viewerôs expectations open.

In her review of *Love Streams* Maslin describes how Sarah decides to buy a lot of animals for Robert: ñThe spectacle of Sarah arriving at Robertôs place with most of these creatures in a single taxi is funny enough. But the joke goes on too longò (Maslin 2009[1984]). This comment very precisely describes the reaction of critics ï and clearly also an unprepared audience ï to this kind of very long takes. Here the human drama comes in, however, and comfortable laughter is replaced with a feeling of awkwardness, that makes us just as insecure as the characters in the film.

To return to the scene in the kitchen, filmic space is used here to re-create Robertôs emotion in this moment. Tom Charity describes the scene in *John Cassavetes: Lifeworks*, referring to it as the centrepiece of the film, where we realize for the first time that they are brother and sister:

> The scene is set in Robertôs kitchen, but it is shot predominantly from the hallway, affording a medium profile shot of Sarah as she

> makes coffee, then turns and sits down at the kitchen table. The ever-elusive Robert, meanwhile, is almost entirely off-camera, screened by the wall (thereôs one extremely short cutaway to a different angle, a long shot of the pair of them). At one point he leans forward and grasps his sisterôs hand, but even then we can only see his forearm.
>
> (Charity 2001, p. 193)

This is another way of expressing emotions than in the stills of Sarahôs blurred hair. Robert is there, by the table, we hear him, but we cannot see him. When Sarah gets up and leaves him, his hand remains on the table. It is an image that expresses Robertôs withdrawn character; how he constantly hides away, but it is also an image of a withdrawn presence, expressing a current loss. To use Barthesôwords: ñThe filmic is that in the film which cannot be described, the representation which cannot be representedò (Barthes 1977, p. 64). What these images express is the presence of an emotional death, in *Saraband* through Karin, and in *Love Streams* by suggesting a similar emotional death in Robert. What also colours these episodes, however, is the autobiographical experience, the reality of the directorôs own death in the near future. Thus what exists within these works is an urge to deal with this sentiment. Charity expresses it as follows:

> Yet *Love Streams* is the valedictory work. Itôs a film which seems to draw on all Cassavetesôstrengths, not least his refusal to go gently into that good night. You could call the film a summation, but only with the immediate rider that, true to form, it resists the temptation to conclude anything.
>
> (Charity 2001, p. 184)

Here it becomes clear that the closeness of death does not invite a summation; instead these moments expose a vulnerability that transfers certain emotions. These emotions represent a peak, reached over time that reveals some late concerns which affect the viewer even though they have not been made explicit.

CHAPTER TWO

From *Blow-Up* to ñ*Las babas del Diablo*ò

Michelangelo Antonioniôs film *Blow-Up* (1966) is such an iconic film that it is hard to remember what made it attractive the first time I saw it. My lasting fascination has always been with the park scene, however, which I have watched over and over again, always equally spellbound and yet mystified. Not by the mystery itself, but by why it works so well to see a photographer hiding behind a tree (obviously too small), while he is taking photographs of a supposedly romantic encounter. The sound is important, no music, just all the sounds from the park itself, with the leaves gently rustling in the trees. A silence that is not a silence, but a kind of emptiness that makes you attentive.

This fascination has subsequently developed in two directions, one of which was to study Antonioniôs films, and the other was to visit and photograph parks. My study of parks has developed into a larger project where I emphasize the park as a story unfolding in space. Antonioniôs films have been a revelation, since he dares to develop other kinds of narration while paying little attention to conventional ways of structuring stories. The silence from the park appears in modified versions in all of his films, where the narration often follows a single character in a location which is experienced just by moving, looking and listening. Antonioni often continues to film the location even when the characters have abandoned it, letting the place itself convey emotions and experiences to the viewer.

The first Antonioni movie I studied closely was *Il deserto rosso (Red Desert*) which I was attracted to because of its unsentimental approach to industrialism. *Red Desert* takes place in Ravenna and focuses on the cityôs large industrial areas. The film was Antonioniôs first in colour and he

literally painted the locations to achieve the right effect. The nature surrounding the factories is painted grey to emphasize the pollution but also to draw attention to the artificiality of this development. The factories are filmed with a kind of admiration, making them look impressive so as to underline the ambiguity.

I was tempted to re-shoot some scenes from the film in the area where I lived at the time, a suburb in transformation; post-industrial in character and yet with recreational areas by the sea. I turned these images into a slide series, *Sometimes the Desert is Red* (2004), consisting of 20 drawings and 20 photographs which ï shown as a loop ï gave the feeling of walking through this area. The fact that the narration in this project simply consisted of the interaction between the characters and the environment was intriguing. Thus I became interested in developing a project without characters, just consisting of landscape and text, and I used the scene from Maryon Park in *Blow-Up* as a starting point, replacing the park in London with parks in Paris.

This project, *Parkscenario*, consists of photographs from four parks in Paris; the Bois de Boulogne, Parc Buttes Chaumont, Parc André Citroën and Parc de la Villette. Each park is represented by six photographs; three from 1999 and three from 2009, and each photo is accompanied by a short text describing a scene that could have taken place in the park. The texts can either be connected in time or by location, which diversifies the way in which narration is created. The scenes are described in a language that could appear in a film script ï thus establishing a connection with *Blow-Up* ï but without depicting any particular character. I grew interested in the short story by Julio Cortázar ï which Antonioni said inspired his film, *Blow-Up* ï originally titled *Las babas del diablo* (i.e., the devilôs drool) and I subsequently read it together with numerous other short stories by Cortázar. I was struck by the fact that this short story actually took place

in Paris and decided that it could be interesting to find the exact location. Cortázar describes the environment very precisely, so I had an idea of where I could find the square where the encounter described in the short story takes place, and I was intrigued by the idea of doing an adaptation of the story in a place where it actually unfolds.

Cortázarôs story starts on a Sunday morning in November and I went to Paris in November, 2008, to look for where it took place, and with a vague idea of how the text could be integrated with the video footage. In the short story Roberto Michel walks along the Quai de Bourbon on Isle Saint-Louis, ending up on a small square on the tip of the island. It was easy to find the square, which fitted perfectly with the description in the short story:

> After, I wandered down the quai de Bourbon until getting to the end of the isle where the intimate square was (intimate because it was small, not that hidden, it offered its whole breast to the river and the sky), I enjoyed it, a lot. Nothing there but a couple and, of course, pigeons; maybe even some of those which are flying past now so that Iôm seeing them.
>
> (Cortázar 1967, p. 118)

It was a sunny day and I videoed the square from different angles, but decided to come back on Sunday morning, since this would be closer to the short storyôs narration. Meanwhile I ran into a friend of mine, Manuel Cirauqui, who is Spanish and a great admirer of Cortázar. I asked him if he would like to participate in the film, reading excerpts from the short story in Spanish and, since he liked the idea, he agreed. What I had in mind was to mix excerpts of the short story read both in Spanish and English, to emphasize the moment of translation, both between languages

but also from literature to film. I visited the square the following Sunday and videoed it extensively.

While doing this I realized how much Antonioni had gained from staging the scene from the short story in a park, since the landscape there offers so many possibilities to engage the viewer. The square is small, surrounded by trees and houses, with a narrow view and with many people going for walks. While I was standing there with my little handy video camera, a woman in a car stopped in the middle of the street caught my attention. She appeared to be waiting for someone, and while I was filming her sitting in the car, another woman appeared, walking towards her parked car. She got into the car, drove away, and the first woman took her parking space. I got most of the exchange on film and was intrigued by their actions. Although they acted as if they did not know each other, they nevertheless seemed as though they were waiting for each other.

As I was too embarrassed to continue openly, I walked on a few meters to continue filming the woman while she was parking. What puzzled me was how aware she seemed to be of my filming her, acting out her parking session as if she were participating in a film. In actual fact she was, since I later included this footage in the film, so as to create a possible link to the woman in Cortázarôs story. Her behaviour made me wonder about her story, just as Michel started to interpret what he had been photographing in that square that other Sunday morning.

I had made an appointment with Manuel and we met that same Sunday afternoon in a café in the neighbourhood to find somewhere where he could read from the short story, while I filmed him. Interestingly, in Spanish the short story is called *Las babas del diablo* which means ñthe devilôs droolò. This refers to a man in the story but, since the film was so successful, in newer editions of the translation the story is renamed after

the film. We soon discovered that the café would be too noisy, and Manuel suggested that we should visit the bookshop called Shakespeare & Company, which had a large selection of English books and which frequently organized readings and workshops in a study on the first floor. We asked if it were possible to do a reading there and were told we were welcome to do so. Thus Manuel read the chosen excerpts in the study, and the noise from the bookshop blended in with his voice while I filmed him.

The footage of Manuel reading Cortázar in Spanish in the bookshop and the parking incident at the Quai de Bourbon were edited together with stills from the square and with drawings of the boy and the woman. The short story starts as follows: ñItôll never be known that this has to be told, in the first person or in the second, using the third person plural or continually inventing modes that will serve for nothingò (Cortázar 1967, p. 115). I wanted to emphasize this oscillating perspective and blended Manuelôs performance in Spanish with a voice-over reading of chosen fragments of the text in English. Thus the perspective constantly changes, emphasizing the short storyôs own shifting positions.

In the short story a boy is depicted in a drawing where he glances at a parked car in which a man is waiting. The woman who appears in the short story is also depicted in a drawing, but this time with a clear reference to Antonioniôs film. She is shown in the park from the film where ï raising her hand ï she catches the boyôs attention. When I made the drawing I scanned it at different stages, and this series was included in the film. At first you see the whole drawing, followed by another showing it at an earlier stage, and this continues until only the white sheet of paper remains. Slowly erasing the drawing to leave the screen empty is a reference to the photographic process, the only difference being that no image will appear since the process is reversed and a blank appears at the end. After the white screen, Manuel quotes from the short story with a

reference to the empty screen: ñWhat remains to be said is always a cloud, two clouds, or long hours of a sky perfectly clear, a very clean, clear rectangle tacked with pins on the wall of my roomò (Cortázar 1967, p. 131). This quotes not only erases the drawing but also the reference to Antonioniôs film, and instead we are left with Cortázarôs own ending, a blank where the reader ï or here the viewer ï can only imagine what actually took place.

Las babas del diablo is an attempt to combine literature and film in an unexpected manner. The storyôs plot is not made visual by actors, since the characters are only represented by drawings. Real incidents are combined with literature, and the viewer is experiencing the fiction as a text read aloud, in Spanish and English, and will thus have to create the images while listening. The result may seem confusing but, hopefully, also challenging, since it is my wish to develop another way of representing literature in film, not by staging the action, but by constructing a narration where listening is as important as seeing.

1. Kafka and Cortázar

Quite recently I discovered that the location of Cortázarôs short story is not far from the Gare dôOrsay, which Orson Welles used for his adaptation of Franz Kafkaôs novel *The Trial*. Kafkaôs novel takes place in Prague while Michelangelo Antonioni lets the story of his film *Blow-Up* ï inspired by Cortázarôs short story ï take place in London. These displacements interested me and I wanted to take a closer look at the importance of space in the work of Kafka and Cortázar. In their writings, surrealistic details appear and space is described in a precise and yet often unrealistic way. Furthermore, the narratorôs perspective changes to create a sensation of instability. I will here compare the opening sequence of Kafkaôs short story *The Metamorphosis*, to the opening of Cortázarôs short story ñAxolotlò to reflect on displacements in their prose, in space and in point of view, carried out through their use of language.

In his short introduction to Kafka, Ritchie Robertson describes the beginning of the short story *The Metamorphosis*, which Robertson calls *The Transformation*:

> When Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from troubled dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a monstrous insect. He was lying on his hard shell-like back and by lifting his head a little he could see his curved brown belly, divided by stiff arching ribs, on top of which the bed-quilt was precariously poised and seemed about to slide off completely. His numerous legs, which were pathetically thin compared to his body, danced helplessly before his eyes.
>
> (Kafka 1994, p. 76)

Robertson points out that Kafkaôs way of describing Gregor Samsaôs transformation is sober and descriptive compared to expressionist writers

who would have described a similar situation with more verbal violence. It is the descriptionôs matter-of-fact way that makes it so captivating. But Robertson continues:

> However, Kafkaôs compromise between realism and expressionism is tilted a little further away from realism. In calling the transformed Gregor an óinsectô, the translator and I have been cheating. The word Kafka uses is *Ungeziefer*, a much vaguer term meaning óverminô or a ópestô, connoting harmfulness and nastiness rather than identifying any actual creature.
>
> (Robertson 2004, p. 32)

This indicates that Kafka by means of his precise prose nevertheless tricks the reader in a very sophisticated way. The reader is given the impression that he is reading an account of actual event although there is no doubt that this event could never take place. Kafkaôs fiction makes us believe it is possible, however, and we cannot wait to hear how this unbelievable story will end. What is striking is that he accomplishes this by using terms that are vague, but which in a carefully constructed verbal context appear to be precise.

Kafkaôs story describes how Gregor slowly becomes aware of his condition but nevertheless continues to be stressed about his usual duties. Thus he panics about missing a train at the same time as he complains about not being able to sleep on one side due to his new condition. He is a commercial traveller and provides for his family ï consisting of his mother, father and sister ï and one of his concerns in this new state is how he will now be able to care for his family. When the family and the annoyed chief clerk sent by his employer discover him inside his room, they are revolted by what they find. His sister does have a caring and patient attitude at first, providing him with food and sweeping the floor

when she visits his room, but she closes the door carefully when she is done. This situation persists for some months but finally breaks down, and when the sister declares that he might not even be her brother, he knows that they have decided to give up on him. Gregor gives up, and since he had stopped eating some time previously, in his frail state he quickly dissolves on the floor in his room.

The family is relieved and livens up, and we follow their whereabouts, but now without Gregor Samsaôs point of view. Robertsonôs remarks: ñIt is not so much *what* you see, but *how* you see it, that concerns Kafka. And that too is a complex matter. Gregor registers his transformation without being able to assimilate such a revolution in his existenceò (Robertson 2004, p. 33). Thus the viewerôs bewildered position is expressed, in a sense, through Gregor himself. One moment you are sure of something, the next you lose orientation.

Robertson also comments on how this works in time: ñThe focus of the story is not so much the transformation as Gregorôs delayed response to his transformationò (Ibidem). What actually unfolds is a registration of how reality is perceived, and how hard it is to follow when this is expressed in an unfamiliar way. But the difficulty of trying to keep track is balanced with the excitement of being surprised, which stimulates a curiosity and makes the story so captivating.

The ambiguous character of Gregorôs new state leaves it up to the reader to define the character of this creation. Robertson mentions that Kafka in a letter to his publisher insisted that the óinsectô must not be depicted on the cover which leads him to conclude: ñKafka does not want to make us see but to bewilder us in our attempts at fictional visualizationò (Ibidem).

Thus the very idea of turning Kafkaôs prose into a visual representation is a project with some inherent obstacles. Numerous translations turn to describing Gregor Samsa as a bug, although this is not the proper translation, but apparently a proposition that helps in visualizing the prose. In a new translation from 2009 by Joyce Crick the opening sentence reads like this: ñAs Gregor Samsa woke one morning from uneasy dreams, he found himself transformed into some kind of monstrous verminò (Kafka 2009, p. 29). In the translatorôs note she explains her use of of the word óverminô:

> *vermin:* Kafkaôs word öUngezieferö suggests a öpestô or óverminô, but no specific creature. The details of Gregorôs body do not correspond to any insect, and do not cohere: if his belly is so domed, how do his small legs reach the ground?
>
> (Kafka 2009, p. 142)

Here the ambiguous character of what Gregor has turned into is underlined, emphasizing the impossibility of the existence of such a being. In *Kafka ï Toward a Minor Literature*, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari treat the existence of animals in Kafkaôs texts in a chapter entitled ñAn Exaggerated Oedipusò, where they scrutinize the role of the family and of the father in particular in Kafkaôs writing. They propose that Kafka in his *Letter to the Father* instead of accusing his father seeks to find another way to escape his influence:

> Nonetheless, the interest of the letter lies in a particular sliding effect; Kafka moves from a classic Oedipus of the neurotic sort, where the beloved father is hated, accused and declared to be guilty, to a much more perverse Oedipus who falls for the hypothesis of the fatherôs innocence, of a ñdistressò shared by father and son alike.
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 9)

Deleuze and Guattari suggest that Kafka wishes to exaggerate the image of the father, to blow the father up out of proportion, then to project this image ñonto the geographical, historical and political *map* of the world in order to reach vast regions of itò (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 10). Thus the father here represents something other than the head of the family; this could be any oppressive authority who impacts all kinds of areas. This could be applied to Kafkaôs familyôs position as Jews who had left their rural Czech environment for the city, where they remained a minority because they spoke German.

Being a minority implies being outside, and Kafka uses the German language in an innovative way to stress this point. Furthermore in his writing he constructs situations that exaggerate this position in order to find a way out. Deleuze and Guattari explain: ñThe question of the father isnôt how to become free in relation to him (an Oedipal question) but how to find a path there where he didnôt find anyò (Ibidem). One such path is what Deleuze and Guattari call ñthe becoming-animalò:

> To the inhumanness of the ñdiabolical powers,ò there is the answer of a becoming animal: to become a beetle, to become a dog, to become an ape, ñhead over heels and away,ò rather than lowering oneôs head and remaining a bureaucrat, judge, or judged.
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 12)

To become an animal therefore is more than escaping the father; it is a way of finding an expression that is outside the law of bureaucracy and technocracy. In this chapter Deleuze and Guattari emphasize that to become an animal is to participate in movement, and this movementôs aim is to reach a world of intensities, only valuable in themselves. These intensities are the liberation, or as Deleuze and Guattari express it: ñThe

act of becoming is a capturing, a possession, a plus-value, but never a reproduction or an imitationò (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 13). Thus the creation of Gregor Samsa is a sophisticated escape, and yet we experience him as captured in a body he cannot control, and when his family gives up on him he lays down to die, still obeying their rules. The escape in its intensity proves futile, an act that has not achieved in de-territorializing him sufficiently. The closing remark in the chapter points towards the novels:

> In fact, Kafkaôs principal animal tales were written just before *The Trial* or at the same time as it, like a sort of counter-point to the novel which liberates itself from all animal concern to the benefit of a much higher concern.
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 15)

The creation of Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis* is thus an exercise that Kafka would take to another level in his novels, but it is also an interesting example of a transformation that in its verbal form tries to escape a proper description. The creation of the beetle, bug, cockroach, vermin Gregor Samsa is an attempt to create an image that escapes visualization, and that only exists within the written text. Kafka provides us with an image that exists on its own terms inside language, but that does not exist outside it.

It is striking to compare the opening sequence of *The Metamorphosis* with ñAxolotlò, a short story by Julio Cortázar. ñAxolotlò was originally published in Spanish in the collection *Bestiaro* from 1951. Another collection of short stories was published in 1959 called *Las armas secretas*, including the short story ñBlow-Upò, and in 1956 he published *Final de Juego*. These collections of short stories were translated into English and published together in a volume named *End of the Game and*

Other Stories in 1967. Due to the success of Antonioniôs film *Blow-Up* this volume was reissued in 1968, now with the title *Blow-Up and Other Stories*. The volume opens with ñAxolotlò, originally published in *Bestiaro*:

> There was a time when I thought a great deal about the axolotls. I went to see them in the aquarium at the Jardin des Plantes and stayed for hours watching them, observing their immobility, their faint movements. Now I am an axolotl.
>
> (Cortázar 1967, p. 3)

Here the shift from human being to animal occurs in a somewhat different way, since although the man becomes an animal, it is more about a changing perspective than a proper transformation. Gregor wakes up and realises that during the night he has been transformed into something else, something that he cannot grasp but only experience. Cortázarôs story is about a man obsessed with the axolotls, a kind of lizard that lives in South America, on display in the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. He discovers them by chance and slowly they become more and more important in his life.

He starts to visit them every day and notices how the guard smiles perplexedly every time he turns up. While visiting, he leans on the iron bar in front of the tanks and stays like that for hours. There is nothing strange about this, since from the very first minute he saw them he knew that he was linked to them; something lost and distant was pulling them together again. He describes what he sees as follows:

> Mentally I isolated one, situated on the right and somewhat apart from the others, to study it better. I saw a rosy little body, translucent (I thought of those Chinese figurines of milky glass),

> looking like a small lizard about six inches long, ending in a fishôs tail of extraordinary delicacy, the most sensitive part of our body.
>
> (Cortázar 1967, p. 4)

Something happens here that seems a bit confusing; the perspective shifts from the man outside the aquarium to that of the axolotls themselves, commenting on their tails. The story continues with the man as narrator and he goes on with his observation of the strange animal until he is drawn so close to it that it feels as though there is no distance left. His face gets closer and closer to the glass until there is no distance left, and suddenly he sees his own face on the other side of the glass. Now he has become the axolotl that is observing the man: ñI was an axolotl now and now I knew instantly that no understanding was possible. He was outside the aquarium, his thinking was a thinking outside the tankò (Cortázar 1967, p. 8). The axolotl, now the narrator, continues and tells us that the man kept coming, but less and less often, until he finally lost interest.

What takes place here is not a transformation in the same sense as with Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis* since the situation is more about an exchange. The perspective of the narrator in the short story constantly changes between the man and the axolotl, to the confusion of the reader, and finally ends up with the man as an axolotl in the tank. This situation is expressed as follows:

> Only one thing was strange: to go on thinking as usual, to know. To realize that was for the first moment, like the horror of a man buried alive awaking to his fate. Outside, my face came close to the glass again, I saw my mouth, the lips compressed with the effort of understanding the axolotls. I was an axolotl now and now I knew instantly that no understanding was possible.
>
> (Cortázar 1967, p. 8)

The first horror is soon replaced with an acceptance of the situation, where the situation is even made general:

> The horror began ï I learned the same moment ï of believing myself prisoner in the body of an axolotl, metamorphosed into him with my human mind intact, buried alive in an axolotl, condemned to move lucidly among unconscious creatures. But that stopped when a foot just grazed my face, when I moved just a little to one side and saw an axolotl next to me who was looking at me, and understood that he knew also, no communication, but very clearly. Or I was also in him, or all of us were thinking humanlike, incapable of expression, limited to the golden splendour of our eyes looking at the face of the man pressed against the aquarium.
>
> (Ibidem)

Here it becomes apparent that the metamorphosis takes place through a phase where the situation could be compared with looking into a mirror, but showing another image than you expected, and where the proper mirror image never occurs, but is replaced with an exchange of positions. Thus by claiming an understanding by a changed position, Cortázar simultaneously makes it clear that no such understanding is possible. The man inside the mute axolotl can but look at the man outside, and only when he touches an axolotl next to him, does he reach some kind of understanding, expressed in a cryptic manner; ñé and understood that he knew also, no communication, but very clearlyò. Thus the man splits into an axolotl and the spectator who, rather disappointed, disappears, can be seen as a reflection of the viewerôs role. Because what Cortázar points out is how hard it is to reach an understanding just by looking at something, that we are often deceived if we remain in the position of the viewer. The

man inside the axolotl reaches this insight when he touches the other axolotlôs foot, and thus sight is replaced by touch, which relieves him.

Thus in his story, Cortázar explores how easily the gaze becomes deceptive, with a language where the descriptions of places, things and persons are precise but the narratorôs position is constantly shifting. Kafkaôs animal, óinsectô, is never described precisely, or in other words, the description is constructed in a way that escapes a proper image, yet we accept this being. Cortázarôs axolotl exists in reality, but the reader is never introduced to its specific features. The title refers to a special kind of salamander that remains in the larval stage all its life. It also has this remarkable ability to completely regenerate any wounded or lost part of its body. This makes it valuable for scientific research, and although it is an endangered species in the environment where it belongs, Mexico, it will survive in captivity due to its usefulness to scientists. This information highlights why Cortázar finds it interesting to develop a story around it since it represents an eternal in-between state.

In the short stories in *Bestiaro* Cortázar explores a similar in-between state; between reality and a dreamlike, surrealistic state that reflects on how we experience reality. What is striking, however, is that Cortázar withholds information about the axolotlôs character from the reader, while it obviously triggers him to create a situation that mirrors this ñin-betweennessò. Thus he uses details from reality with great precision to establish situations that slowly become surreal.

If Kafka was writing from an Eastern European perspective, Cortázarôs perspective is that of a South American living in Europe. His stories are written in Spanish but many of them take place in Paris, described in a precise and accurate way. Kafkaôs stories take place in Eastern Europe, presumably Prague, but places and streets are never described in the same

kind of naturalistic way that Cortázar uses. Thus they both work with displacement in different manners, but these nevertheless have a certain affinity. Kafka uses a realistic language to carefully describe highly unlikely situations in a sober manner, whereas Cortázar starts from reality, actual events and places, but takes them in unexpected directions through language that slides between several points of view.

If Kafka uses German from the perspective of a minority, however, writing as a German-speaking Jew living in Prague, Cortázar writes in Spanish as an Argentinean, living in Paris from 1951 until his death in 1984 and working as translator. Deleuze and Guattari point out in *Kafka* ï *Toward a Minor Literature* how Kafkaôs uses German in a specific manner: ñHe will opt for the German language of Prague as it is and in its very poverty. Go always farther in the direction of deterritorialization, to the point of sobrietyò (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 19). Thus Kafkaôs language is created from a specific situation that forces him to use language in a certain way. If German is a major language with great literature Kafka reinvents himself inside this language, constructing a minor literature from within. Deleuze and Guattari describe this minor language not as a language for a minority, nor as a minor language, but as a language that invents a new expression within an established language, in a sense creating room for experiences that have not yet been described, since they belong to the very few.

Later they remark ñWhat can be said in one language cannot be said in another, and the totality of what can and what canôt be said varies necessarily with each language and with the connections between these languagesò (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 24). The question here is where this leaves Spanish, a language spoken by a large majority but which has another tradition than German or English? Joyce and Beckett are mentioned by Deleuze and Guattari as examples of how they, as Irishmen,

have changed the utilization of English, and with Beckett the use of French as well.

It is also interesting to consider the relationship between the Spanish spoken in Europe and that in South America; which is major or minor, and what role has colonialism played in this relationship? Cortázar was born in Europe but grew up in Argentina and later moved to France. Thus his links to both continents were close and working as a translator raised his awareness of the possibilities and impossibilities of translation. My concern, however, is how both authors use spatiality in their writing to emphasize how nebulous and stretchable language is. If Kafka and Cortázar use unidentifiable or rare animals to find a new point of view, they do so to enable these creatures to explore the space surrounding them in an unpredictable way.

In both cases transformation takes place within language itself; in *The Metamorphosis* the inconsistent description of the animal Gregor Samsa has turned into is meant to defy pictorial visualization to remain hard to grasp. In ñAxolotlò the changing point of view between man and axolotl sometimes takes place within the same sentence but is made present through the space where they appear, either inside or outside the aquarium. In a sophisticated way both stories let us experience the world from another perspective, conveyed with a fluid and yet sober language, thus creating a surreal state within a realistic setting.

2. Continuity of Space

Franz Kafkaôs novel *The Trial* describes disappearing, claustrophobic spaces; unreal, but detailed in a realistic and precise manner. Julio Cortázarôs short story ñBlow-Upò is a completely correct description of an actual place in Paris. Both these literary works have been adapted to film, *The Trial* (1962) by Orson Welles, and *Blow-Up* (1966) by Michelangelo Antonioni. Although these two films deal with space in different manners it is interesting to compare them, since in both cases the literary places are interpreted quite freely into a new cinematic space. In Wellesô interpretation Kafkaôs claustrophobic spaces with surprises behind closed doors are turned into huge spaces that emphasize the individualôs powerlessness against authorities, whoever these might be.

When you visit the island in Paris where Cortázarôs short story takes place, you realize that the description of it is so very precise, yet Antonioni uses the story as a source of inspiration for a film that takes place in London. A particular scene from Cortázarôs short story appears in the film in a reworked version, but here the Isle Saint-Louis is replaced by a park, and the scene has become iconic in its use of the landscape. Thus by emphasizing scale, Welles reveals some of his concerns with Kafka, while Antonioni uses the vibrant city of London to create a portrait of a city in a particular period.

In his book *Rosebud: The Story of Orson Welles* David Thomson describes how Alexander Salkind and his son Ilya approached Orson Welles in the early 1960s to propose that Welles make a film based on a story by Nikolaj Gogol, *Taras Bulba*, which they would finance. A Hollywood production based on this story was already in production, so they had to drop the idea, but according to Thomson they persisted and presented a list of books for Welles to choose from, and he picked Kafkaôs *The Trial* (Thomson 1996, p. 365). The published screenplay of *The Trial*

includes an interview with Welles from *Cahiers du Cinéma*, where he describes the offer as follows:

> I once said that a good film could be made out of it, but I was not thinking of myself. A man came to see me and said that he thought he could raise the money for me to make a film in France. He gave me a list of films to choose from. And from this list of fifteen films I chose what I thought was the best; that was *The Trial*. Since I couldn't do a story I had written myself, I chose Kafkaé
>
> (Welles 1970, p. 9)

Although Welles here refers to it as a list of films we must presume that it is a list of books, and that Welles just visualizes them as films while selecting. What would be interesting to know, however, is whether the idea of making a movie out of Kafka's writing came from Welles himself, or whether it was a coincidence or an inevitable move. Gilles Deleuze writes in *Cinema 1* about the shot and the movement in film and in this context mentions Welles:

> Orson Welles often describes two movements which are formed, one of which is like a horizontal linear flight in a kind of elongated, striated cage, lattice-worked, and the other a circular sweep whose vertical axis performs a high or a low angle shot from a height: these two movements are those which had already inspired Kafka's literary work and we can infer that Welles has an affinity with Kafka which goes beyond the film of *The Trial*, explaining why Welles needed to confront Kafka directly.
>
> (Deleuze 2007a, p. 21)

This account of movement within the shot in Welles' films is also a useful description of the spatiality in Kafka's literary work. Deleuze here claims

that it was inevitable that Welles at some point would engage with Kafka, because they both succeed in creating a movement within space that is logical and yet hard to grasp. Just to read Deleuzeôs description gives one a dizzy sensation but this is also why spatiality is so overwhelming in both Kafka and Welles, i.e., how they establish space in a precise manner, a space that nevertheless can be completely incomprehensible.

For Kafka this can be exemplified by K.ôs first visit to the court in the chapter *Initial Inquiry*. The chapter opens with the sentence: ñK. was informed by telephone that a small inquiry would take place the following Sundayò (Kafka 1998, p. 35). K. receives this phone call in the office and when the vice president uninterestedly inquires if it was bad news, on his way to making a phone call himself, K. absentmindedly answers no, too confused to move or answer. He eventually realizes, however, that he will finally be confronting the authority that accuses him. The inquiry will take place on Sunday but he is still not sure of the time; however, since the courts are open for nine working days he assumes that this applies to Sundays as well. He hurries to the suburb where the address he is supposed to show up at is located. In *The Trial* his arrival in the area indicates its character:

> He had thought he would recognize the building, even at a distance, by some sign he hadnôt visualized precisely, or by some unusual activity at the entrance. But Juliusstrasse, where it was supposedly located and at the top of which K. paused for a moment, was flanked on both sides by almost completely identical buildings, tall gray apartment houses inhabited by the poor.
>
> (Kafka 1998, p. 38)

This is a simple and straightforward description of the area but then K. notices that the building is much larger, with a huge entrance and within

this several courtyards. He is unsure which entrance to choose. However, he decides as follows:

> K. went to the stairs to find the room for the inquiry, but then paused as he saw three different staircases in the courtyard in addition to the first one; moreover, a small passage at the other end of the courtyard seemed to lead to a second courtyard.
>
> (Kafka 1998, p. 39)

Here Deleuzeôs description becomes recognizable; the ñé circular sweep whose vertical axis performs a high or a low angle shot from a heighté ò, since we try to follow what K. sees looking up through the staircase, trying to pick one while meanwhile another courtyard is revealed with yet another staircase further away, thereby performing a circular visual sweep of the whole area, all in one movement.

The sequence concludes as K. remembers a remark made by the guard Willem that since the court was attracted to guilt, the room K. was searching for would have to be located off whatever staircase K. chanced to choose. This disorientating remark makes us aware of how impossible it would be for K. to find a method to see through the courtôs strategy, since they are always ahead of him. What is striking, however, is that this is expressed through space, no matter which move K. decides to make, it will have to be the wrong move and that is the logic of a law that K. cannot comprehend.

Nevertheless, K. Decides and walks up the stairs, armed with a strategy for finding the correct room. He will simply knock on every door and ask for a carpenter named Lanz. There is no need to knock though, since the doors are open and people are most helpful, and K. can easily see into the small, one room apartments where the women are cooking, often with a

baby on their arms. The search is fruitless and, on his way up to the fifth floor, he decides to give up.

Ever more annoyed with the futility of his search he returns and knocks on the door of the first room. A woman opens. She is in the middle of washing, and when he asks for Lanz she answers: ñThis way, please,ò and points towards the open door of the adjoining room with a hand that is still wet. Kafka continues:

> K. thought he had walked into a meeting. A crowd of the most varied sort ï no one paid any attention to the newcomer ï filled a medium-sized room with two windows, surrounded by an elevated gallery just below the ceiling that was likewise fully occupied, and where people were forced to crouch with their backs and heads pushing against the ceiling.
>
> (Kafka 1998, p. 40)

At first we are led to believe that K. is knocking on the door of a one-room apartment and when the woman opens, we are convinced that it really is the case. But instead we are thrown into another room, according to Kafkaò medium-sizedò, but which has two windows and is undoubtedly much larger than a one-room apartment since there is space enough for a whole crowd. K. hesitates but the woman grasps the door handle and tells him that she has to close the door after him, since no one else is permitted to come in. Then a young boy leads him through the crowd, to the platform where the inquiry will take place.

It is interesting to see how Welles handles this sequence, since his use of space differs visually from Kafkaôs; this is only a device, however, to create the same disorientation, since literature leaves so much up to the reader, while visual images tend to be definite in the sense that they do not

leave much doubt about what places and people look like. Welles solves this problem by exaggerating both K.ôs conduct, and the shift between the different locations, while still being remarkably faithful to events and dialogue.

In his study *Narrative in Fiction and Film*, Jakob Lothe analyzes Wellesô adaptation of *The Trial* and emphasizes his use of location:

> As Welles presents K. through Anthony Perkins, the main character appears being more active and apparently stronger than does Kafkaôs in *The Trial*. Welles compensates for some of this difference, however, by presenting both K. and the other characters as small and vulnerable in overwhelmingly large interior and exterior landscapes.
>
> (Lothe 2000, p. 122)

Wellesô film was to have been shot in Paris and Zagreb, and originally he had planned another ñlookò for his film, since his first impulse in interpreting Kafkaôs spatiality was to use a diminishing set, which grew more and more empty and thus created a sense of disorientation in a more abstract way. In the interview in *Cahier du Cinéma* he envisages it; ñThe number of realistic elements should gradually diminish, and to be seen to diminish by the spectators, until only open space remained, as if everything had been dissolved awayò (Welles 1970, p. 11). These sets were to have been built in Yugoslavia, but the producer could not find the money and filming was about to be postponed, while Orson Welles found out that the Gare dôOrsay in the middle of Paris was empty. In *This is Orson Welles*, a collection of interviews conducted by Peter Bogdanovich, Welles recounts how he found this solution:

> I was living here, at the Hôtel Meurice ï it was late at night ï wandering around in the sitting room, trying to figure out how to shoot without sets, *this* story in particular. And the moon is a very important thing for me, and I looked out of the window and saw *two* full moons. And then realized that they were the two clock faces of the Gare dôOrsay glowing in the night, and it was really a sign. I went down at four in the morning and got in a taxi and went in. And from four in the morning until dawn, I wandered around the deserted old railway station and found everything I needed for the picture.
>
> (Welles & Bogdanovich 1992, p. 246)

This anecdote also recounts a creative act where Welles manages to rethink his interpretation of Kafkaôs novel, finding a convincing solution which no one else had thought of. The Gare dôOrsay was built in 1900 and the architecture was carefully developed to ensure that it fitted in with the other grand buildings in the area, the Louvre and the Palais de la Légion dôhonneur. The result was an elegant construction where the modern metallic structures were covered by the façade of the Hotel dôOrsay, consisting of finely cut stones, which were part of the complex. The station was in use between 1900 and 1939, and then abandoned although the hotel remained in use. The hotel closed in 1973, and in 1977 the decision was made to turn it into a museum. In 1986 the Musée dôOrsay opened with a collection of art from the second half of the 20th century.

What is interesting is the clash between grandeur and decay that this place must have represented. According to the editor of *The Trial*, Frederick Muller, Orson Welles was actually staying in the hotel while they was filming and editing the film: ñAt that time, it was the Gare dôOrsay, the railway station, which doesnôt exist anymore, but was a very important hotel called the Hotel dôOrsay where he was staying and where I was

senio (Tonguette 2007, p. 36). Basically all the interiors of *The Trial* are shot inside the railway station and it is fascinating to see how within this enormous place they have created more intimate rooms where baroque furniture, old archival materials like books, newspaper stacks, and rows of boxes filled with card indexes, are mixed with more domestic things such a kitchen.

Heavy, decomposing textiles are used to emphasize the pomp and the decay. The steel construct of the railway station shows through all these props, however, and thus this huge building makes its presence felt even in the more intimate scenes. Some sequences are filmed just underneath the roof, a glass construction reminiscent of a greenhouse, where the transparency emphasises a claustrophobic feeling of being caught inside something. In some shots the hall of the railway station with a delicately patterned, large glass window is visible, and we sense both the elegance of the building and yet the uncomfortable atmosphere of its deteriorating state. In fact, with all its theatricality the film in a sense becomes a document of this place, registering the outcome of progress and neglect when new innovations replace outdated ones.

Most of the rest of the film is shot in Yugoslavia, however, and Bogdanovich asks Welles in what country he considered the film to be taking place, to which Welles replies:

> You can't make a picture nowhere – then it must be no good. It is Middle European, you see from the streets and everything. But, as in all of Kafka, it's supposed to be Czechoslovakia. The last shot was in Zagreb, which has old streets that look very much like Prague.
>
> (Welles & Bogdanovich 1992, p. 282)

At another point in the interview Bogdanovich mentions that Welles constantly cuts from one country to another in *The Trial*. Welles confirms this and notes that there are over-shoulder shots that go from Yugoslavia to France all the time. When asked if it bothers him Welles answers:

> I prefer it, because I hate to be held down by what exists. I like to manufacture what I want. Particularly because Iôm always in real places. If you get deprived of the sets you design, you at least want to be free with what you got.
>
> (Welles & Bogdanovich 1992, p. 249)

Here it is apparent that Welles first of all wants to manufacture a story, and for this purpose he needs to manipulate the material; twist it to make it fit into his mould. But he needs the idea of Czechoslovakia to create his film, and this idea is not bound to a particular geographical place. Instead it is a mix of modern blocks of flats and worn old rural houses, grand baroque buildings and empty squares in small faraway towns.

This idea of Czechoslovakia is paired with the interior of the Gare dôOrsay, displaying the remains of a recently abandoned modernity. This is emphasized with the over-shoulder shots that are not just cuts between different countries, but between exteriors from Zagreb and Rome, with the interiors of the huge set of the Gare dôOrsay.

It is interesting to examine how Welles has adapted the previously mentioned sequence from the chapter *Initial Inquiry* in Kafkaôs *The Trial*. From the accusation in the first chapter, some time passes before K. gets the message about when the first inquiry will take place. In the novel K. gets this message by phone, but Welles lets a note be hand-delivered in a grand, old theatre. K., played by Anthony Perkins, walks out of the theatre and into a foyer reminiscent of a warehouse, presumably the Gare

dôOrsay, where he meets a man, who takes him to another place, where two other men are awaiting orders to place him under a lamp. He is drenched in light while the men remain in darkness, emphasizing the atmosphere of interrogation.

K. leaves for the inquiry at the urgent request of the men, and the camera cuts to an over-the-shoulder shot of him arguing with them. What we see behind K. is a wall, an exterior somewhere in Yugoslavia, but the lamp is still in the image, although now it is turned off. Using this device Welles manages to mix interior and exterior to an even greater extent. The next cut is to a desolate area with large grey building blocks, supposedly the suburb where Juliusstrasse is located in the novel. Here K. passes many half-naked men and women, with their clothes wrapped up in parcels, silent, and wearing signs with numbers around their necks. These are indeed the poor people from the suburbs but also a reference to Auschwitz, a consequence of the fact that Welles is shooting in a post-World-War II world, forcing him to take this into account in his interpretation.

Then K. enters the building, which in the novel is the scene where he has many staircases to choose between, and no matter which one he chooses, it will be the wrong one. In the film, K. he finds himself at the top of the Gare dôOrsay, under the glass roof. He does not ask directions as K. does in the book, but does encounter the woman, still washing clothes, who shows him where to go. In the novel the door is open but here Perkins finds a closed door that he opens, and inside is an enormous room, full of hundreds of people, all waiting for him.

Welles has thus transformed a room with only two windows into a hall with completely different proportions. The woman closes the door, as in the novel, while telling him that no one is now is allowed to enter. When

the door has closed the little boy takes him by the hand and leads him to the court, which is also what happens in the novel. Thus Welles constantly mixes up different locations, in order to create a place as an idea, not as an accurate place. In his comparative study of Wellesô film with David Jonesô adaptation of *The Trial* from 1993, for which Harold Pinter wrote the screenplay, Paul M. Malone also refers to this sequence, about which he concludes:

> This series of many brief shots links footage from several locations into a coherent narrative progression which nonetheless defeats any attempt by the viewer to visualise the geography of Kôs city, and thus mimics Kafkaôs own narrative gift for combining detailed verbal description with vague and malleable relationships.
>
> (Malone 2000, p. 184)

Maloneôs remark brings us back to Kafkaôs writing, with its precise descriptions of incomprehensible spatial constructions. Welles achieves the same kind of disorienting spatiality just by refusing to assemble cuts with a coherent origin. He mixes exteriors with interiors within the same sequence, and uses backgrounds from Rome and Zagreb in another. Welles constructs an idea of space, which is far from the illustration of what the world should look like, according to Kafka. Instead he tries to recreate the spatial labyrinth Kafka creates with words, in a visual language that it refuses to represent. It is as though Welles has constructed two different labyrinths, and intersected these with each other.

One labyrinth consists of the interiors of Gare dôOrsay, crammed with old things decomposing ï paint peeling off the walls and heavy baroque props ï all intensifying the feeling of a fading grandeur, replaced by a new poverty and insecurity, plus the enormous office space where individuals become a noisy mass. The other labyrinth consists of large squares with

impressive architecture, sterile, modern suburbs in concrete, deserted landscapes and dark narrow alleys in old rural towns. These two spatial constructions are superimposed, and Perkins moves between them by opening new doors, constantly taking us to new spaces without ever letting us escape from this spatial construction.

Deleuze and Guattari devote the chapter *Blocks, Series, Intensities* to tracing a contradiction in Kafkaôs prose; that of the fragment and the unfinished, on one hand, and the series, the contiguous, on the other. If continuity is the condition for writing, then Kafka finds a way to combine the contradictory, the fragment and the series, by means of constructing blocks that are linked together in order to establish continuity, an endless exercise, his machine for writing:

> And, in fact, if it is true that each block-segment has an opening or a door onto the line of the hallway ï one that is usually quite far from the door or the opening of the following block ï it is also true that all the blocks have back doors that are contiguous. This is the most striking topography in Kafkaôs work, and it isnôt only a ñmentalò topography: two diametrically opposed points bizarrely reveal themselves to be in contact.
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 73)

It is this topography that Welles emphasizes by intersecting areas completely opposed to one another, but with an accuracy that makes us accept them as a progression. This labyrinth is endless, it is not constructed for the purpose of the joy in finding a way out, neither is it claustrophobic since it always offers a new escape, a new door to open, a new space to enter. Deleuze and Guattari draw a parallel to Welles and his use of architecture in *Kafka*, which not only applies to *The Trial*, but to other films of his as well:

> Cinema has a much greater link than theatre with architecture (Fritz Lang, architect). But Welles always brought together two architectural models and consciously used them. The first model is that of splendors and decadence, of archaisms, but possessing a completely contemporary function, rise and descent along infinite stairways, low-angle and depth-of-field, unending hallways, contiguous traversals.
>
> (Deleuze & Guattari 1986, p. 76)

Deleuze develops his analysis of Wellesôuse of depth-of-field more profoundly in *Cinema 2*, where he points out that he was the first to use it to construct a pure time-image, in *Citizen Kane* (1941). Here the recollection of each person who has known Kane becomes a sheet of the past that coexists in time. Using depth-of-field Welles succeeds in creating an image of time within the frame; the distance between what is happening in front and behind marks a passing of time within the same image. According to Deleuze: ñThe special quality of depth of field would be to reverse timeôs subordination to movement and show time for itselfò (Deleuze 2007b, p. 109). He also points out that ñé the only precursors in depth of field seem to have been Renoir, with *La régle du jeu*, and Stroheim, particularly in *Greed*ò (Deleuze 2007b, p. 108).

However, Renoir, who made *La régle du jeu* (*The Rules of the Game*) in 1939, does not use it in connection with recollection. *Citizen Kane* is the first film to present time as slices of the past, assembled without over-shadowing one another, in effect coexisting. Consequently the film works just like memory, where different layers of time exist simultaneously. In *The Trial*, however, hallucinations replace recollection as Deleuze points out: ñIn which sheet of the past is the hero to look for the offence that he

is guilty of? He can no longer recall anything about it, but the whole of it is hallucinatoryò (Deleuze 2007b, p. 114).

What is striking is how *The Trial* in Wellesô interpretation resists existing in a specific time ï although we know that it is after World War II ï conveying timelessness by emphasizing the decay of the modern invention, the grand railway station falling apart. In Deleuzeôs concluding remark on *The Trial* he points out how Welles manages to link the divergent spaces in the film:

> Welles success in relation to Kafka is that he was able to show how spatially distant and chronologically separate regions were in touch with each other, at the bottom of a limitless time which made them contiguous: this is what depth of field is used for, the areas which are the furthest apart are in direct contact in the background.
>
> (Deleuze 2007b, p. 114)

In *The Trial* Welles replaces recollection with hallucination by linking spaces that are without any apparent coherence. By assembling them, however, he creates continuity in space in a ñlimitless timeò, an endless progression that continuously moves towards the future. The film can be experienced as converted science fiction, where the anonymous future usually associated with this genre is replaced by Wellesôs assemblage of socialist architecture, baroque buildings, rural villages and the decadence of the Gare dôOrsay interiors in various stages of decomposition. Thus the future is mixed with the past by means of an elaborately constructed cinematic spatiality that replaces dream with hallucination, destabilizing perception with a state that is closer to reality, and therefore even more disorienting.

Within this assemblage are spaces that are part of Wellesô original vision of the film; sets that slowly disappear and that probably more closely resemble an anonymous science-fictional future. For example there is K.ôs visit to Titorelli, the painter associated with the court. The scene starts as K. enters an old building, presumably in Zagreb, and goes up a staircase to a big tank, on top of which sits a little wooden hut, Titorelliôs studio. K. is followed by a flock of inquisitive girls, unrestrained and quite intrusive. Inside Titorelliôs studio, the girls continue to watch them since there are fairly large holes between the planks, creating a vertical pattern of stripes. K. has to step over the bed, through a small door, into a room filled with archives. At the end of this room, another small passage leads to a corridor, which he enters to escape from the girls and his whole feeling of guilt. He runs through this narrow corridor, also consisting of planks that let in the light through wide holes; this time, however, they are horizontal and a radiant pattern of horizontal stripes is now cast over K. while he runs through the corridor. This is one of the most remarkable scenes in the film, catching the feeling of being trapped with stunning visuality. Bogdanovich asked Welles how they created the scene, to which he replied:

> I built a long kind of slatted chicken coop in a field and lit it with arcs at night; the camera was on a wheelchair and we ran backwards pulling the wheelchair because there was no kind of dolly that would fit in there. And I had a Yugoslav runner to pull the chair. That was one of the things left from my original design. That and the painterôs tank with the ladder the girls chased him up are the only two things left. We built that great big thing.
>
> (Welles & Bogdanovich 1992, p. 246)

This brings us back to Deleuzeôs description in *Cinema 1* on movements that appear both in Kafkaôs writing and Wellesôs films; ñhorizontal linear

flight in a kind of elongated, striated cage, lattice-workedò fits in very well with K. running through the corridor in the film. These elaborated sequences indicate that Wellesô original vision of the film implied an even more radical spatiality which perhaps would have brought us beyond hallucination and closer to a futuristic scenario. However, this makes *The Trial* appear to an even greater extent as a reluctant document of a modernity gone wrong, mixing decay with alienation, portraying progress as Perkins runs frantically through the corridor, where rays of light reinforce the speed as they flicker by.

3. ñ*Blow-Up*ò: The Short Story

Cortázarôs short story *Las babas del Diablo*, published in the collection *Las armas secretas* (1951), inspired Michelangelo Antonioniôs film *Blow-Up* (1966). In her essay *Between Utopia and Inferno* included in *Julio Cortázar: New Readings* (1998), Ana María Amar Sanchez reflects on why some of Cortázarôs works, the novels, seem outdated today and argues that their intertextuality, self-referentiality, and narrative experimentation are associated with literary movements of the sixties. The binary play that can be found in most of Cortázarôs works ï between two settings, two worlds, two types of reality ï can also be found in other Latin American texts, however. This binary play is thus a literary device that is common to a whole group of texts that together create a contradictory representation of ñLatin Americaò. Sanchez continues: ñMoreover, these particular texts ï which transcend differences of genre, era, author ï are tied to a system of representation that comprises an entire discourse on Latin Americaò (Sanchez 1998, p. 20).

As an example of another text that confronts this issues, Sanchez mentions Alejo Carpentierôs *Los pasos perdidos* (1953) which is about a journey towards a space beyond civilization into an impressive nature, to seek a long lost origin, leaving European customs behind. When the protagonist finds this mysterious, unknown world, however, he realizes that he is a stranger to it and that it is impossible to remain there. This journey expresses a longing for a place to which it is impossible to belong, and *Los pasos perdidos* is framed as a travel diary, fabricated according to the narrator with the help of a novel by a South American writer, which reinforces the assumption that this place can only exist in fiction. In her essay, Sanchez articulates her use of the term representation:

> I understand representation as articulating a network of relations that constructs meaning: It does not reflect the object correctly or

> incorrectly; rather it interprets and orders by assigning meaning to reality. From this point of view, all ñrepresentationsò propose a ñpoliticalò reading of the world, in that a given reading involves taking a certain position ï a stand or intervention ï regarding the nature of things.
>
> (Sanchez 1998, p. 22)

Sanchez suggests that the difference between realist and fantastic texts is of less relevance here. These texts are linked together by their approach to time and space, and as interpretations of the experience of being from Latin America. Sanchez regards Cortázarôs short story ñAxolotlò as a text that captures the impossibility of understanding the world that the axolotl represents: ñThis is a world and a condition (that of the axolotl) which is easily associated with pre-Columbian America, primitive and outside of timeò (Sanchez 1998, p. 28).

As the protagonist studies the strange animals through the glass of their aquarium he is filled with a longing for the world they represent. Cortázar describes the axolotls as follows: ñThey were larvas, but larva means disguise and also phantom. Behind those Aztec faces, without expression but of an implacable cruelty, what semblance was awaiting its hour?ò (Cortázar 1967, p. 7). The man wishes to belong to the world from which these axolotls originate but this cannot be achieved merely by studying them. Cortázar solves this problem by doubling the narrator, and now the man becomes the axolotl inside the aquarium looking at the man on the other side of the glass.

Being inside the aquarium, however, implies being silent, since this place offers no means for communication. This mythical position, beyond space and time, can only exist within language, by being written down. The unwanted belonging to European culture is therefore inescapable since it

offers the possibility to write, and this position, between an imagined origin and an imposed belonging, can only exist when written. The recurring shifts between these two worlds, that of a mythical Latin America, and that of the European culture, becomes an unstable position which, according to Sanchez, is expressed in Cortázarôs writing:

> Cortázarôs stories find themselves at the center of this struggle and are part of the unresolved tension generated by thinking and thinking oneself from within a dominant discourse, one always already constituted and from which there is no escape.
>
> (Sanchez 1998, p. 32)

Thus the only possible solution is to remain within the dominant discourse and to create a writing that suggests that reality exists on several levels. These levels are expressed in an assemblage of representations, where the fantastic is only one, and where other modes of representing reality ï historical, political and cultural, ï are just as present.

Unlike ñAxolotlò, ñBlow-Upò is not about merging two different worlds, but deals with representation on another level. The story is told in both the first and third person, and therefore does not represent a stable position but oscillates between several, which is indicated in the introduction:

> Itôll never be known how this has to be told, in the first person or in the second, using the third person plural or continually inventing modes that will serve for nothing. If one might say: I will see the moon rose, or: we hurt me at the back of my eyes, and especially: you the blond woman was the clouds that race before my your his our yours their faces. What the hell.
>
> (Cortázar 1967, p. 115)

In the story we follow Roberto Michel, a French-Chilean translator living in Paris, who likes to take photographs in his spare time. Walking through Paris one Sunday morning in November he heads for some buildings he wishes to photograph ï the Conservatoire and the Sainte-Chapelle ï but makes a detour around the Île Saint-Louis as he decides that the light is not quite right yet. Here he sits down and lights a cigarette and studies the little square where a couple is standing. When the narrator tries to recollect this moment he describes the couple as follows: ñAs for the boy I remember the image before his actual body (that will clear itself up later), while now I am sure that I remember the womanôs body much better than the imageò (Cortázar 1967, p. 112). The position described in ñAxolotlò ï of being between two worlds ï is not valid here, since the narratorôs position oscillates between the experienced reality, and the interpretation of this reality.

Michel uses the camera as a tool to document his surroundings, but he is also aware of the fact that it is an aesthetic act, and an interpretation, which becomes clear in this passage:

> Michel knew that the photographer always worked as a permutation of his personal way of seeing the world as other than the camera insidiously imposed upon it (now a large cloud is going by, almost black), but he lacked no confidence in himself, knowing he had only to go out without the Contax to recover the keynote of distraction, the sight without a frame around it, light without the diaphragm aperture or 1/250 sec.
>
> (Cortázar 1967, p. 118)

Thus the real distraction is to see without the camera, ñthe sight without a frameò, which in an inverted way disavows the cameraôs ability to objectively account for reality. This passage also emphasizes the unstable

position of the viewer, with or without the camera, as what we see will always be interpreted according to a set of cultural as well as personal notions. Here it is useful to go back to Sanchezôdefinition of representation since it covers a large field of different texts. What she finds inherent in a particular group of texts she is investigating is how they express a desire for belonging that has to be rejected, since the desired place is outside culture. The reluctant belonging to an imposed culture is expressed by contradictory representations of Latin America in these texts, and Sanchez specifies her use of representation because of these contradictions:

> Representations constitute the space of the imaginary, and as such are found in all types of discourse and even establish connections among various discourses. Representations also depend on the viewpoint of the subject, and thus become schemes for classification and valorisation that construct meaning.
>
> (Sanchez 1998, p. 20)

What is interesting here is that she also stresses how the subjectôs viewpoint influences the way in which representations are constructed. This taken into consideration, ñBlow-Upò does implicitly belong to the texts Sanchez refers to, since it undermines the subject as a solid construction. Cortázar takes the movement between a desired imaginary belonging and the rejection of this desire, and applies it to Michelôs attempt to interpret an encounter between a woman and a boy. He does so by questioning the rationality of a mechanical invention, convincingly demonstrating that a camera may produce images from reality, but that these images are completely dependent on how we interpret them. Michelôs interpretations are only assumptions, created in his own imagination, although presented as facts in a seemingly logically constructed narration. First he thinks the woman is seducing the boy, but

when he decides to take a photograph and is discovered, he realizes that something more serious is going on. A man is approaching the woman, the boy runs off, and Michel laughs at them to their face and walks off.

When he develops the film he realizes that the only shot that interests him is that of the woman and the boy and he starts working on it: ñThe negative was so good that he made an enlargement; the enlargement was so good that he made one very much larger, almost the size of a posterò (Cortázar 1967, p.126). This enlargement is then tacked up on the wall in his apartment, right in front of the desk where he works. He studies it once in a while when he takes a break from his translation. Here the photo as a neutral representation of reality dissolves, and instead a series of imaginary scenarios are fabricated:

> I donôt think the almost-furtive trembling of the trees alarmed me, I was working on a sentence and rounded it out successfully. Habits are like immense herbariums, in the end an enlargement of 32 x 28 looks like a movie screen, where on the tip of the island, a woman is speaking with a boy and a tree is shaking its dry leaves over their heads.
>
> (Cortázar 1967, p.128)

Here the photograph takes on a new function and becomes fiction, a movie that steps out of the enlargement and takes place in the apartment:

> All at once the order was inverted, they were alive, moving, they were deciding and had decided, they were going to their future; and I on this side, prisoner of another time, in a room on the fifth floor, to know who they were, that woman, that man, and that boy, to be only the lens of my camera, something fixed, rigid, incapable of intervention.

(Cortázar 1967, p.130)

This place ï the apartment ï becomes another aquarium, like that of the axolotl, where being on the inside implies being incapable of intervening. Michel creates a system of connections solely based on his own observations, which becomes a dead end since he gets caught up in his own assumptions. His understanding of reality rests on imaginary representations and when he continues to build on them it takes on proportions that he cannot handle. Sanchez has shown us that the construction of a literature representative of Latin America involved creating a space that only exists in writing. Only here is it possible to merge the place outside time and space ï the desired but impossible origin ï with the imposed culture Latin-American authors write within. ñBlow-Upò is not a representative example of this kind of writing, as is ñAxolotlò, but it nevertheless manages to convey the experience of that unstable position. Sanchez expresses it as follows:

> It is pointless to tap against the glass or press oneôs face against it, because the glass is the border. And to understand this one must go to the other side, to make oneself other; but in that case there is no return; rather the acceptance of belonging to that world.
>
> (Sanchez 1998, p. 28)

In ñBlow-Upò there is no border to cross, only an enlargement to be interpreted. The grainy enlargement is just another kind of representation, an aesthetic object that needs to be read in a cultural context to be understood. But when Michel fails to read it, or over-interprets it, Cortázar offers him a way out: ñWhat remains to be said is always a cloud, two clouds, or long hours of a sky perfectly clear, a very clean, clear rectangle tacked with pins on the wall of my roomò (Cortázar 1967, p. 131).

Here Cortázar proposes not a place in between, existing only in writing, but a blank space where something new can be inscribed. Instead of writing the impossible, Cortázar creates a space void of representation. If there previously was nothing in between to stand on, only a border, does this attempt point in another direction, proffering an opening instead of a dead end?

4. *Blow-Up*: The Film

Michelangelo Antonioniôs interest in London started when he stayed there with Monica Vitti while she was filming with Joseph Losey: ñI happened to be there by chance, to see Monica Vitti while she was working in *Modesty Blaise*. I liked the happy, irreverent atmosphere of the city. People seemed less bound by prejudiceò (Antonioni 2007b, 149). London had started to make an impact internationally during the 1960ôs, with much help from its fashion scene where a group of fashion photographers helped shape the image of models and changed some of the codes of fashion with their bold attitudes.

In his study *Hollywood, England* Alexander Walker claims that a 1964 article by Francis Wyndham in the *Sunday Times Magazine* was the genesis of *Blow-Up* (Walker 1974, p. 316). The article was called *The Model Makers* and followed the photographers David Bailey, Terence Donovan and Brian Duffy closely. Walker writes that the article caught the eye of Carlo Ponti who then approached Bailey about doing a short film about being a photographer at that time. This project was never realized and later Ponti approached Antonioni on the subject. This is somewhat contradicted in an interview with Antonioni in *Corriere della Serra* in 1982:

> While I was filming, I was hoping that no one in seeing the finished film would say: ô*Blow-Up* is a typically British Film.ô At the same time, I was hoping that no one would define it exclusively as an Italian film. Originally, *Blow-Up*ôs story was to be set in Italy, but I realized from the very beginning that it would be impossible to do so. A character like Thomas doesnôt really exist in our country.
>
> (Antonioni 2007c, p. 89)

It is possible that Antonioni had read Cortázarôs short story and had already planned to turn it into a film in Italy, and when Pontiôs proposition turned up, it was easy to adjust the story to London. What is significant, however, is the interest in turning what was happening in London at that time into a film. To Ponti it clearly had some market value, especially for a young audience, and with Antonioni as director it would also catch the interest of more arty crowds. On Antonioniôs part there was an interest in working outside Italy, but also a need to find new themes since the focus in his last four films had been on interior sentiments, expressed by the charactersô interactions with their surroundings.

Antonioni used locations to convey interior states as well as a situation: in *Lôavventura* (*The Adventure*, 1960) a woman is lost on an island and her friends seem even more lost when looking for her, stumbling around in the rocky, hostile landscape. In *La notte* (*The Night*, 1961) he uses modern architecture; the film opens with a view of modern Milan from the Pirelli building, a skyscraper in the cityôs centre. *Lôeclisse* (*The Eclipse*, 1962) is partly filmed in the E.U.R. district in Rome ï the design and construction of which was initiated by the Fascists ï which appears almost deserted at the remarkable ending where neither of the lovers turns up for their appointed meeting. His first colour film, *Red Desert*, depicts industrial sites in Ravenna with both fear and admiration.

These films are indebted to neo-realism since even when using post-war settings they are nevertheless made with the same kind of attention to the interplay between the individual and its surroundings. In an interview in *Playboy* from 1967 Antonioni reflects on this position:

> A particular type of film emerged from World War II, with the Italian neo realist school. It was perfectly right for its time, which was as exceptional as the reality around us. Our major interest

> focused on that and on how we would relate to it. Later, when the situation normalized and post-war life returned to what it had been in peacetime, it became important to see the intimate, interior consequences of all that had happened.
>
> (Antonioni 2007b, p. 155)

Although Antonioni emphasizes interior and thus intimate concerns, these were highlighted with the help of an intelligent use of carefully chosen locations. But with *Blow-Up* the director wished to open up the perspective. The locations no longer function discretely in the background with the characters in focus. In *Blow-Up* the interaction between the photographer and London as a big set is the real narration, and it is this relationship that is explored, not the one between the characters:

> In my other films, I have tried to probe the relationship between one person and another ï most often, their love relationship, the fragility of their feelings, and so on. But in this film, none of these themes matters. Here, the relationship is between an individual and reality ï those things that are around him. There are no love stories in this film, even though we see relations between men and women. The experience of the protagonist is not a sentimental nor an amorous one but, rather, one regarding his relationship with the world, with the things he finds in front of him.
>
> (Antonioni 2007b, p. 149)

It was important for film-makers in Italy after the war to deal with what was happening at the time with an immediacy which lends their films a certain documentary quality. What remains from neo-realism in *Blow-Up* is the urge to document an actuality ï the mood of the London scene ï as accurately as possible.

Since *Blow-Up* was Antonioniôs first film outside Italy, it was not enough to use his own experience about the place and well aware that his knowledge of the life of a fashion photographer was limited, he had to turn to other sources for information. For this purpose he sent a questionnaire to Wyndham ï the author of *The Model Makers* ï asking for a very specific account of their habits. According to Walker, Wyndham saved the questionnaire, excerpts of which read as follows:

> Antonioni asked, óAre fashion photographers requested to stress the sexual angle or merely to concentrate on the clothes? é Private life. Habits. Hobbies. Do they drink? How do they spend their days? Evenings? Week-end? What is really ñfunò for them? Some have Rolls-Royces: have they personal drivers? Or do they drive themselves?
>
> (Walker 1974, p. 320)

One of Wyndhamôs answers fits very well to the description of Thomas, the photographer in *Blow-Up*:

> ôDefiantly,ô wrote Wyndham, óthey have made no attempt to become ñgentlemen.ò In this they are like their contemporaries in show business é All (of them) sense obscurely that they are artists (although they are reluctant to admit this, for fear of sounding pretentious) é
>
> (Walker 1974, p. 321)

Walker also remembers how he at the time used to run into Antonioni at parties:

> When he got to London, Antonioni did his own leg work, too. I used to see him at many parties, where his innate shyness and limited English ï which is (or was in those days) poor when he did not feel himself among intimates ï gave him the excuse of playing the silent observer.
>
> (Walker 1974, p. 322)

All this gives us an idea of how important it was for Antonioni to get the picture right, since as an outsider he could merely observe what was going on. What is also interesting is the attention he paid to detail. This applies to the locations, too, as Thomasôs studio in the film was the actual studio of another fashion photographer at the time, John Cowan. Antonioni was therefore not afraid to intervene about the location or to alter it to fit into his composition, and Walker remarks about a scene that it gave the opportunity ñfor literally scene-painting in which the road surface was coloured a deeper shade of black and the house-fronts that the car passed acquired a poster-like series of huesò (Walker 1974, p. 325). Antonioni is a master of this mixture between an almost documentary precision and the freedom of artistic expression which makes his films so seductive. We accept it as a document but are seduced by the fictive elements.

Antonioni started as a reporter, writing film reviews for local newspapers in Ferrara, his hometown. He was later to write for the more prestigious Rome-based *Cinema*, and his article *For a Film on the River Po*, accompanied by photographic illustrations, was published there in April of 1939. Noa Steimatsky notes in *Italian Locations* that it is the first indication of a possible future as a film-maker:

> Though he had previously written for the local *Corriere Padano* published in his native Ferrara, Antonioniôs article in the prestigious Roman film magazine with national circulation can be seen to

> constitute a first statement of intentions regarding filmmaking. While it has lent itself to associations with early writings on neo-realism, the article binds a regional-documentary pretext with a modernist imperative.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 1)

Antonioniôs essay reflects on the possibilities of making a film with the river Po as its protagonist. His knowledge of the river was intimate since he grew up nearby, and it is this attachment, or desire to understand its development over time, that is the essence of the essay. Antonioni writes as follows about the river in the article:

> But the years do not pass in vain, not even for inanimate things. A time of reawakening also came for the Po. And then there were iron bridges over which long trains clattered, day and night; there were six-story buildings with enormous windows, vomiting dust and noise; there were steamboats, dockyards, factories, smokestacks, even other canals with cement banks. In short it was an entire modern, mechanical, industrialized world that came to wreak havoc upon the harmony of that ancient world.
>
> (Antonioni 2009, p. 98)

Here the break between an earlier era and modern times is described, with a hint of nostalgia but also with a resolute determination to accept the changes, and to understand what they bring. Antonioni describes how the population tries to adjust and to see the benefits that these changes will bring with them. The river has become precious in another way and thus the ambitions of the people living there have been satisfied. Then he continues:

> All this might seem literary, but it isn't. It is, or wants to be, cinematic: it remains to be seen how it can be translated into action. First of all, one question arises: documentary or fiction?
>
> (Antonioni 2009, p. 99)

Antonioni later managed to make this film, but some of the reels were ruined during the war and he used the remaining ones to make *Gente del Po* (1947), nine minutes long, i.e., half the projected length. Although an early film, the treatment of the landscape is already significant, and it focuses less on dialogue and more on the interaction with the specific landscape which will recur in a similar manner in his later work. It is not the film itself that interests me here, but the carefully constructed connection between text and photographs in the article. Steimatsky remarks in his essay that the photographs are seldom reproduced together with the text:

> Yet surrounding this convoluted text, the photographic illustrations ï not reproduced or discussed in subsequent reprints or translations ï will make salient a modernist consciousness seeking crystallization vis-à-vis diverse modes of landscape representation.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 2)

This occurs for example in a reprint in the spring issue of *October* 2009 where the text is only presented by a very small reproduction of one of the pages showing two of the photographs. Steimatsky makes up for this neglect by presenting the whole article as it appeared in *Cinema*, four full pages of which two just consist of photographs. In all there are nine photographs in the photo essay, one of them an aerial photo of the river and its banks from above. According to Steimatsky the photographs are probably taken by Antonioni himself, except for the one taken from the air:

> The visual essay, running alongside the verbal one, I will attribute to Antonioni himself not only for lack of other acknowledgement on the pages of *Cinema* but as it is, we will see, close to Antonioniôs vision as we come to identify it in the subsequent work.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 7)

These are then the first film stills produced by Antonioni, long before the actual film was made. The composition is simple and tranquil, with large monochrome areas that lend a degree of abstraction. On the first two pages we find two large photographs on the left-hand page showing a microscopic strip of land on the horizon, a large blank water surface and in front of this some fishing tackle, creating a pattern of transparencies with the fishing net. On the right-hand page the text is presented together with photographs of trees at various distances, graphics against the sky with the river flowing nearby. On the next two pages the text is printed on the right with the aerial photo and one of some boats by the riverbank. On the left are two large photographs showing the riverôs surface; only a few small boats and strips of land appear at the edges. Steimatsky describes them:

> Both stills are dominated by large expanses of water that approach the frame in magnitude, effecting an interplay of surface and depth, reflection and opacity: the water surface becomes comparable here to the surface of the photograph itself.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 12)

What is notable is that the photograph ceases to be mere documentation, and instead takes on the quality of an object. The images in the visual essay work in between the documentary and fiction since they purport to be an accurate account of this cherished landscape, even as their play with

composition takes them somewhere else, closer to fiction. When the surface of the water becomes the surface of the photograph, the temporality that conditions photography also comes into play. The time passed is part of its status as object, and thus nostalgia will always be linked to it.

Film offers other possibilities for documenting a place and a time, and Antonioni would turn to these when creating *Gente del Po*. But it is important to note the function of the photograph in Antonioniôs film-making, since from the very beginning it has been an essential tool in his film-making. The photograph as a document is important in the process of crystallization when the significance of a specific landscape is visualized. When this image is altered, however, by framing and composition and thus turned into fiction then the creative process begins.

Blow-Up opens with a lush green lawn over which we see the credits, where it is indicated that the film is inspired by a story by Julio Cortázar. After the credits the film cuts from the green lawn to images of modern architecture ï high buildings with a square between them ï and into this square drives a jeep with a theatrical group. The jeep is overfilled, and most people on board wear costumes, some of them with their faces painted white. The impression is that of a happening, the purpose being to drive around and improvise theatrical situations with passers-by in order to blur the distinction between the staged and everyday life.

In the next cut we see a lot of poorly dressed men coming out of a doss-house. We get a glimpse of a younger man who leaves his companions, runs off and gets into an open Rolls Royce. He drives away and at a red light is entertained by some of the members of the theatrical group, gives them some money, and then drives off through London. This opening sequence questions ways of representation, where the theatrical group

stages itself in a recognizable way, but operates outside its usual setting. The young man leaving the doss-house has disguised himself in order to be accepted in a world where he does not belong, and he has done so because he wants to document this world as he secretly photographs the other men.

This sequence sets the tone for the film by superimposing different levels of reality; the theatrical group without any false pretences doing its act, and the photographer who lies to get a glimpse of a world in which he does not belong.

The young man, Thomas, is the protagonist; a successful fashion photographer in London, blasé and tired of the fashion world, seeking other thrills. After the opening sequence we are quickly introduced to his work when we follow a photo session in his studio, a very intense and sexually charged encounter with the half-naked Veruschka, a star model of the 1960s who plays herself. Confronted with another photo session that makes him more moody, Thomas runs off to seek some distraction. He visits an antique shop where he asks to speak to the owner who is out, and he leaves the shop to kill some time while waiting for him. Grabbing his camera from the car he strolls off in the quiet Saturday morning, into a park.

In their book *Your Face Up,* Ali Catterall and Simon Wells pay special attention to the park: ñThe real star of the film, Maryon Park was founded in 1889, when Sir Spencer Maryon Wilson, a Charlton landowner, presented to the London County Council land that had served many years as a chalk, sand and gravel pitò (Catterall & Wells 2001, p. 30). They describe the park as it is today in detail, and also give an account of Thomasôencounter with Jane:

> The topmost part of the park is called Coxôs Mount, named after a local who took it upon himself to plant poplar trees here. The park-keepers call it the ñTop Lawnò, and it is here that Thomas first spots Jane with her lover. He photographs them and then refuses Janeôs demand that he hand over the negative.
>
> (Catterall & Wells 2001, p. 31)

This description gives a good sense of the topography of the park, which opens with a large lawn with a tennis court. Thomas photographs some doves, just as Roberto Michel did in Cortázarôs short story, and it is also in this sequence that the narrative from his eponymous story appears. Whereas Cortázarôs story takes place in a small square in Paris, Antonioni created cinematically more satisfactory scenery by restaging it in the lush park with vibrant greenery. Thomas strolls on into the park, and even makes some frantic jumps of joy when he enters the path that leads to the top lawn. Here from a distance he spots Jane with her lover and once again he avoids revealing himself, hiding behind a tree. The scene has become iconic since it brings together the peacefulness of the park with the underlying violence of public spaces without surveillance. Having failed to get the photographs from Thomas, Jane runs off across the lawn only to disappear into the greenery. Thomas is both amused and confused by the incident, but decides to go back to the antique shop.

The owner, a young girl, has returned and he tries to persuade her to sell the shop to him for a reasonable price. While he is talking to her, he spots a large wooden propeller that he buys and then tries unsuccessfully to fit into the Rolls Royce. He drives off through London and stops outside a restaurant where he meets his publisher. They look through the photographs from the doss-house; men in rags, some of them naked or about to undress. Thomas mentions what he has in mind for the ending, i.e., some peaceful pictures from a park that he took that morning.

Meanwhile they discover that someone is watching them, and Thomas runs out of the restaurant only to see a man hurry away. He jumps into the car and drives back to the studio, and when he is about to go in Jane arrives, breathless after a run, telling Thomas that she has come for the photographs. They go into the studio and Thomas plays around with her for a while, they flirt and finally he tricks her by giving her the wrong roll of film, which she leaves with, quite happily.

When he is alone again he develops the real film and soon starts working on some enlargements, which he tacks onto the wall to dry. What has happened in the park that morning is presented as a series of black-and-white stills from a film, but since they are spatially presented all over the room, there is no specific order in the narration. Thomas studies the photographs, and thinking that he has discovered something he focuses on a particular area in the foliage and enlarges it several times until it is completely grainy and abstract. He now studies these enlargements while putting on a record and the music becomes a soundtrack for this abstract film. Still he unsatisfied he returns to the other end of the room where the first series of stills are hanging. The camera moves between the photographs, and in a sequence consisting only of the photographs, a narration is created suggesting that someone is watching Jane with the man from the bushes, and somewhere between the leaves the contour of a gun can be seen. Accompanying this sequence is the sound of rustling leaves, and the introduction of this element from the real park reinforces the still sequence as fictional by making the element of montage visible. We are not in a real park but we can only see images that are presented in the way that Thomas has arranged. It is his interpretation of the documents that he has manufactured himself. The photographs in the sequence are presented as objects; lights are shining on them and they are mostly shown in relation to something else in the room, the wall, a pillar, a lamp, or with

Thomas in front of them. Thus they remain in their role as documents and fabricated objects, oscillating between the documentary and the fictive.

Thus Antonioni questions the ability of photographs to document anything and shows that interpretation is everything. Staging is essential here, however, because we as viewers are seduced to believe in Thomasô interpretation of the photographs, because of Antonioniôs convincing way of presenting Thomas working on the enlargements. It is the documentary quality of the account of how Thomas works as a photographer that convinces us and makes us believe in the photographs as evidence.

The merging of the documentary and the fictive in the sequence with the black-and-white stills from the park returns us to Antonioniôs article *Film for the River Po* where he asks: ñFirst of all one question arises: documentary or fiction?ò The answer turns out to be an elaborate mix of the two, where the documentary elements change the viewerôs reception of more fantastic elements, like in *Blow-Up* when Thomas actually finds a corpse in the park that has disappeared when he later returns. Steimatsky comments on Antonioniôs film-making in the essay from *Italian Locations*:

> The crystallizing of a sense of place ï a regional specificity that still carries realist values ï is bound up with its apparent opposite: the withdrawal of definite figuration, a fragmented modernist interrogation of the conditions of perception and of narrative, often accomplished through the syntactic, temporal modality of cinema.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 39)

This interest in regional specificity links *Gente del Po* with *Blow-Up*, while questions concerning perception and narrative are a recurrent theme in the films that gave Antonioni his breakthrough as a film-maker. In

Blow-Up, what Stelmatsky calls ñthe withdrawal of definite figurationò is most explicit in the series of black-and white enlargements where the grains dissolve into abstraction. The attraction of *Blow-Up* is that it presents in a very concrete way problems that in the earlier films were introduced more subtly through spatial investigations of architecture and landscape. In *Blow-Up* Antonioni attempts to create other forms of cinematic representation which appear when he lets the credibility of the photograph dissolve into a grainy, fictive puzzle, replacing it with abstract qualities in the landscape.

Thomas is convinced that he has prevented a murder but due to a series of interruptions he is unable to actually find out if this actually is the case. The photographs are stolen from the studio when he is absent, and although he actually sees a corpse at night in the park, it is gone when he returns in the morning. The film ends here, with Thomas in the park, where the theatrical group returns and plays an imaginary game of tennis. The imaginary tennis ball falls onto the grass in front of Thomas, and he picks it up and throws it back to them. Then the lawn takes over, and we are back at the filmôs beginning with the green surface over the whole screen. If we return to Cortázarôs short story, Michelôs enlargement at the end becomes ña very clean, clear rectangle tacked with pins on the wallò; a blank surface where everything is erased. In the film that clean, clear rectangle is replaced with the lawn, which although its tactility here takes on abstract qualities, replaces the document with a fragment of the landscape.

In his essay *The Existence of Italy* from *Signatures of the Visible*, Frederic Jameson comments on the lawn at the end of *Blow-Up*, using Barthesôs notions of the *studium* and *punctum* to reflect on this image of the ground. Jameson elaborates on some ideas of the conditions in film production in a postmodern era, and suggests a historical development consisting of three

stages: realism, modernism and postmodernism, which do not follow each other in chronological order. Instead the relations between these stages are constantly questioned and renegotiated. Jameson emphasizes that the very instability of a term as realism gives it historical interest and significance.

I focus on a couple of Jamesonôs ideas on photography and colour film which he develops in relation to *Blow-Up*, where he also refers to Bazinôs theories on photography in relation to Roland Barthes. Mentioning André Bazinôs theories on realism in cinema as immensely influential, Jameson points out how Bazin in his writing produces an ideal that is actually closer to photography than to film. (An in-depth discussion of Bazinôs theories on photography can be found in his own essay *The Ontology of the Photographic Image* where he tries to define why photography differs from the other arts. Here he points out that whereas painting had the burden of expectations of resemblance, in order to fulfil a need to recreate reality, photography could achieve this much more easily:

> Painting was forced, as it turned out, to offer us illusion and this illusion was reckoned sufficient unto art. Photography and the cinema on the other hand are discoveries that satisfy, once and for all and in its very essence, our obsession with reality.
>
> (Bazin 1967, p. 12)

Indeed, here was a tool that could finally give us reality exactly the way it was, without the interruption of an interpreting subject:

> For the first time an image of the world is formed automatically, without the creative intervention of a man. The personality of the photographer enters into the proceedings only in his selection of the object to be photographed and by way of the purpose he has in mind. Although the final result may reflect something of his

personality, this does not play the same role as is played by that of the painter.

(Bazin 1967, p. 13)

Bazin here demonstrates confidence in photography as a truth, untouched by an interfering subject. But although this might seem straightforward, his theory is a bit more complex, since when he applies it to cinema it is not the function of evidence that is important, but the possibility of registering without interruption. The use of depth of field, introduced by Renoir and Welles, made it possible to some extent to replace montage with a shot that emphasizes the continuity of dramatic space and its duration. Bazin mentions in *The Evolution of the Language of Cinema* how neo-realism achieves a new form of realism by stripping away expressionism and by excluding the effects of montage: ñAs in the films of Welles and in spite of conflicts in style, neo-realism tends to give back to the cinema a sense of the ambiguity of realityò (Bazin 1967, p. 37). Thus this theory requires an uninterrupted account of the event that thereby exposes a truth emanating from reality, given to us without too much interruption. To Bazin, realism is always achieved through aesthetic means, which he expresses when writing about neo-realism in the essay *An Aesthetic of Reality*: ñIn my view, one merit of the Italian film will be that it has demonstrated that every realism in art was first profoundly aestheticò (Bazin 1967, p. 25). Later in the same essay he continues:

> But realism in art can only be achieved in one way ï through artifice. Every form of aesthetic must necessarily choose between what is worth preserving and what should be discarded, and what should not even be considered.
>
> (Bazin 1967, p. 26)

Here it is clear that Bazin is not arguing in favour of the unedited document. He also emphasizes filmôs affinity with the novel, which was later developed into the auteur theory, which suggests that a director essentially writes a film just as an author writes a novel. However, Jameson emphasizes Bazinôs close link to photography and to black-and-white photography in particular, and argues that these theories are not developed from documentary film ï which would seem appropriate ï but by studying fictional film, and remarks on contemporary documentary film that:

> What is both postmodern and òmaterialistò about the newer documentaries ï and what makes them truer, but very distantly related and unexpected heirs to a Bazinian ideal which, after the end of black-and-white film, becomes something of a historical curiosity ï is their participation of that general repudiation of, and even loathing and revulsion for, the fictive as such which seems to characterize our own time: some new and intensified form of cultural guilt, perhaps, but even more surely the new logic of material signifiers which comes to characterize the moment called postmodernism.
>
> (Jameson 2007, p. 257)

In an inverted way this is what Bazin called our obsession with reality, which brings us back to *Blow-Up,* since it so clearly comments on photography as a document without validity, but at the same time creates a document of London at a particular time. Jamesonôs earlier remark on a contemporary revulsion for the fictive is relevant here since Antonioni reverses the use of fiction and documentary in this film. He does so by treating the fictive story as a documentary, presenting it in carefully chosen, but yet realistic colours (green, blue and purple) and then lets the

document, the black-and-white photographs, recently so credible, dissolve into a grainy representation, open to any interpretation.

Jameson comments on how the black-and-white process is a translation of light into a specific language, turning reality into endless gradations from black to white:

> Color stock is clearly no less a translation, no less a registering and an inscription in another medium: but it does not tend to foreground itself as a representational system, or to draw attention to its distance from ñrealityò the way the black-and white system does.
>
> (Jameson 2007, p. 263)

Antonioni uses the black-and-white photographs as a reference to a system recently abandoned, something that colour cannot replace, and thus raises the question of how form shapes content. Antonioni is aware of these mechanisms, and his own approach will be to emphasize the documentary elements within the fictive:

> During the postwar period there was a great need for truth, and it seemed possible to photograph it from street corners. Today, neo-realism is obsolete, in the sense that we aspire more and more to create our own reality. This criterion is even applied to films of a documentary character and to newsreels, most of which are produced according to a preconceived idea. Not cinema at the service of reality, but reality at the service of cinema.
>
> (Antonioni 2007d, p. 62)

In *Blow-Up* Thomas produces his own reality by means of his enlargements and in his thoughts about their content. The point is that there is no content; it is just Thomas who is inventing possible scenarios.

The fact that we actually see the corpse is just a way to reinforce this ambiguity. The blown-up photographs, documenting a location in the film ï the park ï have lost their validity as proof, and they dissolve in front of us, while the photo sessions with the fashion models remind us of the ability of photography to produce fiction. The fashion series represents a fiction consisting of still images, like the park still, but here the characters are replaced by the parkôs landscape.

Antonioni thus stretches narrative conventions by insisting on spatial constructions to mediate fiction, letting the interaction between the individual and its environment produce the story. When Thomas creates his version of what has happened, the wind starts blowing as a reminder that registering reality is not enough, as you have to display it accurately in order to make it convincing. Jameson draws attention to this by pointing out a latent urge for authenticity:

> The massy foliage of *Eclipse* is nothing but an episode: in *Blow-Up* however, the great trees of Maryon Park are shaken with wind as though by a permanent violence, day or night never at rest, it is as though in this place above the city the god of wind reigned in perpetuity. So crucial is the sound that in the most remarkable moment in the film, as David Hemmings grimly contemplates his ultimate motionless blow-up, the wind returns in the soundtrack as though to certify its authenticity.
>
> (Jameson 2007, p. 270)

Here the authenticity of the black-and-white photograph is dissolving, however, and Jameson points out that the opposition inherent in photography ï the studium as the objective account, and the punctum as the subjective experience ï collapses. In Barthesôs account of a photograph by Kertesz, showing a blind violinist led by a boy, he remarks

on the unpaved road: he "now what I see, by means of this óthinking eyeô which makes me add something to the photograph, is the dirt road; its texture gives me the certainty of being in Central Europe...ò (Barthes 1982, p. 45). According to Jameson, Antonioni is letting the textures in the park, the lawn and trees behind the fence, become another kind of *punctum* in his abstract photographic stills:

> Antonioniôs ground without a figure also wishes to be this ground which is a *punctum*: through it now pass, purified, abstracted, the neorealist impulses of his earlier films, now reified into the photographic stills that were their deeper truth, only to find these now collectable objects literally confiscated in their turn.
>
> (Jameson 2007, p. 271)

Thomasô photographs are stolen or ï to use Jamesonôs term, ñconfiscatedò ï but they have nevertheless disappeared for good, leaving the photographer with his unsolved mystery. Antonioni replaces them, however, with ground, not a dirt road somewhere, but the ground in the park itself. The green lawn, just as abstract as the grainy blow-ups, replaces them as that unwritten surface thus making it possible to imagine what is not yet there.

5. Blanks and Blow-Ups

In their writings Kafka and Cortázar define an area between reality and the less definable. This has linked their texts to the genre of the fantastic, but Jaime Alazraki argues in his essay *Toward the Last Square of the Hopscotch* (2005) that the horror in the texts of Edgar Allan Poe ï a writer associated with the fantastic genre ï is absent in writers like Borges and Cortázar. They are less interested in the darker side of human beings and therefore use the element of the fantastic for other purposes. Alazraki argues that these writers draw on fantastic dimensions, thus ñallowing for uncanny events intolerable within a realist codeò (Alazraki 2005, p. 9). He includes many other writers in this category:

> Accepting this fact, and acknowledging at the same time that the definition of ñfantasticò for this type of narrative is incongruous, I have suggested elsewhere to refer to them as ñneofantasticò as a way of distinguishing them from their distant, nineteenth-century relatives. This is not the place to expand on a proposal for a poetics of this new genre, but it seems reasonably acceptable to view certain works by Kafka, Blanchot, Borges, Cortázar and several others in Latin America as expressions of the neofantastic.
>
> (Alazraki 2005, p. 9)

According to Alazraki, Borges and Cortázarôs works use the fantastic to disturb the readerôs preconceived assumptions and to open up for other kinds of reception. Alazraki refers to Cortázarôs short story ñAxolotlò as an example of how the neofantastic combines the unbelievable with

reality and lets it exist simultaneously, while fantastic stories are constructed in a different manner:

> In contrast to the nineteenth-century fantastic fiction in which the text moves from the familiar and natural to the unfamiliar and supernatural, like a journey through a known and recognizable territory which eventually leads to an unknown and dreadful destination, the writers of the neofantastic bestow equal validity and verisimilitude on both orders.
>
> (Alazraki 2005, p. 13)

In Cortázarôs ñAxolotlò, this peculiar animal represents the position of in-between, emphasized by the perspective that oscillates between the man and the axolotl, to finally let a shift occur which brings no clarity, but lets us experience the silence inside the aquarium of the axolotl. In Kafkaôs *Metamorphosis* Gregor Samsa is not slowly transformed into vermin, but wakes up one morning to discover that he is one, and thus the reader is immediately presented with an unreal situation. This situation persists until the family gives up, and when Gregor Samsa dies, the family is relieved and even strengthened by the experience. Deleuze and Guattari refer to this kind of situation as a *becoming-animal*; a recurring state in Kafkaôs texts which as discussed above constitutes an attempt to avoid any identification with the authorities, be it the father, a bureaucratic organisation or geographical and cultural attachment.

Withdrawing into this in-between state is a way to avoid engaging the pattern of behaviour that the authorities force upon the individual, and to

find a new path that Deleuze and Guattari describe as follows: ñGregor becomes a cockroach not to flee his father but rather to find an escape where his father didnôt know to find oneò (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986, p. 12). In *The Trial becoming-animal* is replaced by another kind of transformation, that of spaces transforming into an endless series of new spaces. This in turn functions as the way out of the in-between position and of what the *becoming-animal* offered, and also a way out of the intimate sphere of the family.

In his film *The Trial* Orson Welles develops this spatiality even further by manufacturing the reality in his film as a collage of different locations. What Welles carefully avoids is depicting a place as it is in reality, although he constantly uses actual locations. Kafkaôs perpetually transforming spaces are achieved in Wellesô films by mixing locations in various countries into one scene, or by letting the action take place in an interior and an exterior simultaneously. The constantly transforming spaces in the film offer the viewer a feeling of disorientation similar to that experienced by the reader of the novel, but here they are expressed in an elegant montage of various locations. The inside of the *Gare dôOrsay* is mixed with an exterior in Zagreb; the two spaces surreally connected by a ceiling lamp which appears in both scenes.

Thus the state of being in-between has moved from the animal to a changeable spatiality. Cortázarôs animal in-between, the axolotl, is replaced in the short story ñBlow-Upò by another state of being in-between. This short story develops around the photographerôs interpretations of an encounter that he has witnessed in a square, and these interpretations will take on a different character when he studies a photograph of the event at home. Here the viewerôs point of view is

changeable; oscillating between different positions, emphasizing that there is no stable position between the continuously changing interpretations.

While the story poses questions concerning privacy and the voyeurism of others ï unfolding as it does in a public space, Antonioni took these questions even further in *Blow-Up* by transferring the story to a park, where these ambiguities become heightened and where the spatiality plays an even more important role. As a secluded area, the park offers the possibility of a tranquil visit, but also invites activities that need to be carried out without interference. This is what Antonioni hints at when he suggests ï in a very understated way ï that the photographer may have witnessed a murder taking place in the quiet park in broad daylight.

Antonioni also uses the park to develop the story dramatically, however, by letting the viewer follow the photographer hiding in the bushes while documenting what he considers to be a romantic encounter. The park is recorded as a space that continuously presents new corners and angles which unfold as the photographer tries to find new places to hide. Moreover, Antonioni also transforms this space by using a wide angle, letting the area appear larger than it actually is, which also contributes to the particular spatiality of this sequence. Antonioni comments on this in an article published in 1982 in *Corriere della Serra*:

> The same story could certainly have been set in New York or in Paris. I knew, nevertheless, that I wanted a gray sky for my script, rather than a pastel-blue horizon. I was looking for realistic colours and I had already given up, for this film, on certain effects I had captured in *Red Desert*. At that time, I had worked hard to ensure

> flattened perspectives with the telephoto lens, to compress characters and things and to place them in juxtaposition with another. In *Blow-Up* instead I opened the perspective, I tried to put air and space between people and things.
>
> (Antonioni 2007, p. 90)

In the park scene the greenery is used to create a sensation of a space without edges, where the softness of the vegetation causes the viewer ï and the photographer ï to lose their sense of orientation. The air and space between people and things emphasizes this softness without a focus, and this experience will appear again in the photographs from the park where the foliage is turned into a grainy grey abstraction. Thus the in-between position, which in Kafka and Cortázar is expressed through animals, is here transferred into a spatiality which in Wellesô film *The Trial* appears as a succession of related and yet incongruous spaces, while in Antonioniôs film *Blow-Up it* becomes the softness of the park itself, a greenery without edges that resists categorization.

Thus it becomes apparent that the neofantastic concerns the conception of time and space, as well as describing a state in-between as we have seen in both Kafka and Cortázar. It is striking that both Antonioni and Welles are attracted to works that have these qualities, characteristics which one would presume would be difficult to adapt to film. An intriguing coincidence is the fact that sequences of still images appear in both films. *The Trial* opens with a series of drawings while in *Blow-Up* still photographs are filmed in a succession to create an imaginary narrative. Both films are based on literary works which suggests that the stills serve

to mediate qualities in literature that would otherwise be difficult to convey in a filmic context.

These series of stills introduce images to the viewer in a succession where the cut between each still becomes crucial to our conception of the whole series. The single image interrupts the filmôs motion and indicates that something has been left out. What that may be is left up to the viewer to imagine. This situation bears some resemblance to that of reading a book, since the reader produces the images while reading, while here the viewer will have to imagine what should be added.

While the cut forces the viewer to produce what is missing, however, the sound is there as a suggestive element to influence the outcome of this process. In *The Trial* Wellesôvoice accompanies the shifting pictures, while in *Blow-Up* the wind from the park supplements the black-and-white blow-ups. This suggests that the montage of the stills and the sound can achieve an experience close to literature within the film, an in-between similar to that achieved by neofantastic writers such as Kafka and Cortázar.

Orson Wellesôs *The Trial* opens with a series of pin-screen animations, while we hear him read out loud from a tale, which he has moved up from one of the last chapters of the book. The images are created using a special technique; pins are placed on a huge screen and moved in or out, such that the shadows cast by the pins create a chiaroscuro effect (Welles & Bogdanovitch 1992, p. 272). Pictures are thus created with light, as the pins cast grey shades like a black-and-white photograph. They appear as reversed images except that the line is white on a darker background. We

see the gate, the doorkeeper and the man who is waiting to be allowed to enter.

These images succeed one other, voice-overed by Welles; when he has finished reading he introduces the source, and refers to it as a dream, or even a nightmare. This story will be told once more, i.e. at the end where it also appears in the book. In this scene the lawyer confronts K. with the story while projecting the images with a slide-projector onto a white screen. K. stands in front of the screen and casts his shadow on the images. The lawyer changes the images while he talks with K. about his case, and then lets the screen go empty. The silhouette of the lawyer appears on the white screen and then they switch positions, so K.ôs shadow is visible instead. The final image in this sequence shows K. in front of the white screen, casting no shadow. Here the empty rectangle no longer suggests possibilities, but a forthcoming defeat, as we discover later. Then, however, the previous images are replaced by an empty screen, creating a blank space which leaves the viewer to decide how the situation should be interpreted.

A similar blank screen can be found in Wolfgang Iserôs *The Act of Reading*, where he develops a theory of the function of what he calls ñblanksò in literature. Iser suggests that blanks and negations function as structures for indeterminacy in the text, and says that the blanks ñindicate that the different segments of the text *are* to be connected, even though the text itself does not say soò (Iser 1978, p. 182). Segments of the text connect to one another, but blanks break up these connections and the reader must thus create a link and, as Iser puts it, mobilize imagination. Iser continues: ñIn this process lies the aesthetic relevance of the blank. By suspending *good continuation* it plays a vital role in image-building,

which derives its intensity from the fact that images are formed and must then be abandonedò (Iser 1978, p. 186).

Iser developed this theory for literature and it is therefore not completely applicable to images, but the suggestion that images are created only to be abandoned is useful. Thus the image in literature needs to be reinforced, while in the cinema it is ever present. The stills accompanying the tale, however, and the empty screen at the end of *The Trial*, suggest that in film it can also be useful to create blanks to communicate experiences that otherwise would be too determined.

In *Narrative in Fiction and Film* Jacob Lothe analyzes Wellesô use of the tale, or parable as he calls it. Lothe uses this term because it has been applied to Kafkaôs writing and invites further interpretations:

> A parable may in other words be illustrative, but it may also be enigmatic and difficult in a way that requires interpretive activity: it is as if the readerôs interpretation completes and adds the end of the parable.
>
> (Lothe 2000, p. 109)

What is interesting is how Welles attempts to use his film to resist further interpretations of the novel, although Anthony Perkins as Joseph K. is active and aggressive, fighting against his fate. The film resists explaining or concluding, however, and instead offers an experience similar to that of the novel, but in cinematic language. Lothe points out that the way in

which Welles manages to transfer the parable to film reveals an understanding of that which it is unnecessary to try to visualize. Turning literature into cinematic language does not necessarily mean that actors visualize actions, since experiences can be expressed by other means that reach beyond illustration:

> It is as if out of respect for the parable he does not wish to go further than illustrating it with some simple pictures. Yet since the incorporation of these is structurally and thematically productive in the film, Welles succeeds precisely through his insight into what a film *cannot* do, in extending the limits to what a film *can* represent.
>
> (Lothe 2000, p. 124)

According to Lothe Wellesôsuccess lies in being able to see the limits of an adaptation by letting the text remain literature, without forcing it into another format. The blank screen behind Perkins links the drawings and the parable to him, but when it is left empty at the end of the story, the link is also wiped out, thus creating a blank that forces the viewer to recreate, or replace, the previous narration.

Iser divides blanks into first- and second-degree images. The first-degree image is created from knowledge given to the reader by the text, with a good deal of freedom to form the imaginary object. This image will, however, be challenged by other images or blanks, and the resulting clashes force the reader to continuously create new images and abandon the previous ones. The second-degree image results from the clash created by the blanks, a shift which according to Iser constructs a new coherence:

> In being forced out of first-degree images, we are not only made to react to what we have produced, but we are simultaneously induced to imagine something in the offered or invoked knowledge which would have appeared unimaginable as long as our habitual frame of reference prevailed. Although we are caught up in the images we build by reading, their very collision makes it possible for us to relate ourselves to what we are absorbed in.
>
> (Iser 1978, p. 189)

It is interesting to apply these ideas to the succession of still images that appears in Antonioniôs *Blow-Up*, since the photographer imagines something based on knowledge that he has produced himself. This circuit is possible because of his faith in photography as evidence, and although he persists with his vision, film does not confirm whether he is right. In Cortázarôs short story the enlargement is erased at the end: ñé a sky perfectly clear, a very clean, clear rectangle tacked with pins on the wall of my roomò (Cortázar 1967, p. 131). The first version of the text worked as first-degree images that were replaced with second-degree images when Michel imagined his version of what happened in front of the enlargement in his apartment. But Cortázar lets this last version vanish and creates a blank space that playfully replaces the chain of interpretations with the unwritten, leaving it up to the reader to imagine what actually took place.

In later works Cortázarôs playful prose was replaced by a more sombre style influenced by his growing political commitment. Reflecting on his friendship with Cortázar in the essay ñThe Trumpet of Deyáò, Latin-American writer Mario Vargas Llosa comments on his writing:

> In the Cortázarian world banal reality begins insensibly to crack and to give in to some hidden pressures that push it up to the prodigious without participating fully in it, maintaining it as a sort of intermediary, tense, and disconcerting territory in which real and the fantastic overlap without integrating. This is the world of ñBlow-Up,ò of ñCartas de mamaò (Letters from Mama), of ñSecret Weapons,ò of ñLa puerta condenadaò (The Blocked-Off Door), and so many other stories of ambiguous solution that can be equally interpreted as realistic or fantastic since the extraordinary in them is, perhaps, a fantasy of the characters or, perhaps, a miracle.
>
> (Vargas Llosa 2005, p. 222)

This also applies to the character of Thomas in Antonioniôs film, the photographer who registers without being able to intervene. While Thomas turns the black-and-white photographs into grainy abstracts, he is simultaneously turning them into a kind of blanks that function as a wiped-out space that he can fill with the images he himself produces. This takes place in the sequence where the sound of the rustling leaves returns, and Thomas creates a connection between the photographs which satisfies him. Antonioni manages to maintain an uncertainty as to whether or not Thomasô interpretation is actually true, which unexpectedly links the film to the genre of the neofantastic.

Antonioni is usually associated closely with neorealism, as he uses neorealist techniques in his filmmaking by paying attention to documentary detail. What he is actually doing, however, is using these realistic elements as a background for more fantastic occurrences. This

can be seen when the corpse appears in the park in *Blow-Up*, or when a hotel room turns pink after a sexual encounter in *Red Desert*, or in the extraordinary explosion of the house in the desert in *Zabriskie Point* (1971), where it is left unclear whether it is a dream or not.

If Antonioni incorporates more fantastic elements in his later films, however, Cortázar moves in another direction. Vargas Llosa describes this change as follows:

> Cortázarôs change (the most extraordinary that I have seen in any being and a mutation that it occurred to me often to compare with that of the narrator of ñAxolotlò) took place, according to the official version ï which he himself consecrated ï in France of May 1968. He was seen in those tumultuous days on the barricades of Paris, distributing pamphlets of his own invention, mixing with the students who wanted to elevate ñimagination to powerò.
>
> (Vargas Llosa 2005, p. 222)

This account elucidates a later short story by Cortázar, ñApocalypse in Solentinameò, included in the collection *A Change of Light and Other Stories* (1980). ñApocalypse in Solentinameò was first published in Spanish in the collection *Alguien que anda por adi* (1978), and was a personal account of a trip to Nicaragua where he visited the Christian community ï founded by priest and poet Ernesto Cardenal ï on the Solentiname Islands in Nicaragua Lake. Cardenal introduced artistic values to the people living there, who turned to painting in a simple,

folkloristic manner. When he arrives in Nicaragua, the narrator (Cortázar) is caught up in a press conference, described as follows:

> It was one of those hot spells and to make things even worse it all got started right away, a press conference with the usual business, why don't you live in your own country, why was *Blow Up* so different from your short story, do you think a writer must be involved?
>
> (Cortázar 1980, p. 119)

Frederick Luciani refers to this in his essay ñThe Man in the Car/in the Trees/behind the Fence: From Cortázarôs óBlow-Upô to Oliver Stoneôs *JFK*ò (1998), in which he reflects on the impact of ñBlow-Upò and on Cortázarôs influence on Hollywood after the filmôs success. Luciani is concerned with the fidelity of Antonioniôs film, an issue that ñreflects a North-South or First World-Third World polemic of cultural politicsò (Luciani 1998, p. 190). Luciani develops this further:

> The questions, interestingly, are all marked by a form of separation or division: Cortázarôs self-imposed exile from Argentina, Antonioniôs departure from Cortázarôs story, the debate over political engagement or disengagement among writers, and the related question of the need for stylistic accessibility among politically committed writers. The questions thus anticipate the existential problems in a larger context, which relate to a sense of a divided self.
>
> (Luciani 1998, p. 195)

The story ñApocalypse in Solentinameò is in a sense a comment on the issues raised in ñBlow-Upò; a reworking that takes into account Cortázarôs own development. It deals with reality in a more concrete way and replaces the abstraction of the grainy blow-ups by an imaginary reversal, where the photograph as evidence is both questioned and yet reinforced. Because instead of letting the photographs dissolve into a blank unwritten area Cortázar uses them as possible truth bearers, of a reality too cruel to grasp.

In the story, after the press conference the narrator takes a plane to the island with Cardenal and the rest of the party, arrives late at night and goes to bed almost immediately. Before going to sleep he admires some paintings in a corner of the room which he has been told were painted by some peasants, and the paintings are,

> é all so beautiful, once more the first vision of the world, the clean look of a person who describes whatôs around him like a song of praise: midget cows in poppy fields, the sugar-making shed with people coming like ants, the horse with the green eyesé
>
> (Cortázar 1980, p. 122)

The next day, before leaving, the narrator photographs the paintings and with a view towards projecting them on a screen in his apartment when he returns to Paris. When the films are developed he arranges to show them to his friend Claudine, and while waiting for her he decides to look at

them. When the images are projected on the screen, however, it is not the paintings that appear:

> You think what you think, it always gets ahead of you and leaves you so far behind; I stupidly told myself that they must have made a mistake at the camera place and given me some other customerôs pictures, but the mass then, the children playing on the grass, how then. Nor did my hand obey when I pushed the button and it was an endless sand flat at noon with two or three rusty-roofed sheds, people gathered on the left looking at the bodies laid out face up, their arms open to a naked grey sky; you had to look closely to make out a uniformed group in the background with their backs turned and going away, the Jeep waiting at the top of a rise.
>
> (Cortázar 1980, p. 125)

The session continues with images of outrageous assaults from all over Latin America, and when the last slide fades out, Claudine silently comes in. Feeling quite shocked, the narrator leaves the room without commenting on what he has just experienced, leaving Claudine alone with the images, only to return when she turns off the projector and remarks:

> They came out so well, that one with the smiling fish and the mother with the two children and the cows in the field; wait, and that other one with the baptism in the church, tell me who painted them, you couldnôt see the signatures.
>
> (Cortázar 1980, p. 127)

There is no explanation of the reversal, just another sip of a drink, and then silence, leaving it up to the reader to reflect on what this exchange implies.

This is a somewhat different play with the power of images over our imagination. In a way Claudine confirms that the pictures of the paintings from Solentiname really existed, they were not just a hallucination. The images of the assaults were also true, but only through their existence in reality, not through the photographs or paintings themselves. The play between first- and second-degree images is used here to make us accept a shift, which thus reinforces the violent clash. We expect to see the paintings, and recreate them in our imagination before the slide projector is started. When the change occurs ï turning out to be an imaginary displacement ï we accept these new images and establish them with our knowledge of that political situation. Claudineôs comments take us back to our first expectations, and this shift back and forth between the idyllic paintings and political violence disturbs our perception and shakes it by establishing an emotional crack in our consciousness. The reader is disturbed and this time Cortázar does not offer a way out as in ñBlow-Upò, where the clean, clear rectangle at the end offered an unwritten space, as yet undefined. Luciani comments on the difference between these two stories:

> The narrative end of ñBlow-Upò dissolves into ambiguous and overlapping frames of photographic and ñrealò reality, whereas the conclusion of ñApocalypseò offers two irreconcilably different

> visions (one idyllic, the other apocalyptic, but which one is hallucinatory?) of Latin American reality.
>
> (Luciani 1998, p. 196)

It is clear that the play with the perception of reality in ñBlow-Upò is replaced by other concerns in ñApocalypse in Solentinameò, and that Cortázar struggles with a reality so overwhelming that it can hardly be described in fiction. Ana María Amar Sanchez defined the duality in the writings of Cortázar and other Latin American authors as an attempt to create a space in fiction for what could not exist elsewhere: the duality of belonging to European tradition, and a geographical place associated with ancient myths. She points out that Cortázarôs stories are not only concerned with the opposition between Europe and Latin America, but are involved with the attempt to describe this duality in writing, thus establishing a space for this experience:

> It is not just the Buenos Aires-Paris dichotomy or a metaphysical exercise. The failure to cross, the impossibility of crossing, also reminds us that there is no *way* across, that there is no *between* to stand on.
>
> (Sanchez 1998, p. 36)

This experience takes another turn in ñApocalypse in Solentinameò, since the images in the slide projector are appropriate representations of Latin America, but the divergence is so great that it is impossible to make them fit. Cortázar makes no attempt to do so, but puts them on display in his flat in Paris, where they appear as a hallucinatory dream. The effect is

disturbing, but unfortunately reality caught up with this vision. Alberto Moreiras reflects on this in ñóApocalypse in Solentinameôas Heterological Productionò, where he quotes a statement made by Cortázar at a meeting at the Stockholm Pen Club 1978: ñé a year after I wrote it the troops of Dictator Somoza destroyed the small, wonderful Christian community led by one of the great Latin American Poets, Ernesto Cardenalò (Moreiras 1998, p. 161). Moreiras comments:

> If it had not been prophetic, if Somocista troops had not attacked Solentiname, Cortázarôs narration would still be available as a written text, but it would have markedly different readings effects. If the story had not been prophetic in the most terrible and elementary way, the question about the intentional genesis of ñApocalipsis de Solentinameò could conceivably be raised with a different force, and might have a larger resonance.
>
> (Moreiras 1998, p. 161)

Indeed, this fact makes it harder to deal with the story as fiction, but the original idea was probably conceived as a reaction to this brutal reality. The coincidence raises question about what Bazin called our ñobsession with realityò (Bazin 1967, p. 133), and what Jameson referred to as ñrevulsion for fictionò, since the merger of fiction and reality has become unsettling. It also reveals quite effectively, however, the need to represent reality in fiction, to make it comprehensible, and yet questionable. It is useful at this stage to return to Iserôs notion on the blank, since Cortázar uses it differently in the later story. Iser points out that although previous images are discarded they are nevertheless still part of the narration:

> The shifting blank is responsible for a sequence of colliding images which condition each other in the time-flow of reading. The discarded image imprints itself on its successor, even though the latter is meant to resolve the deficiencies of the former.
>
> (Iser 1978, p. 203)

In ñBlow-Upò the blanks were used in a playful way to destabilize the narration, by letting the narrator manufacture different stories from the same event. The images in ñApocalypse in Solentinameò are more an account of a reality, to which the writerôs reaction is powerlessness. All the playfulness has gone and is replaced by an attempt to represent this divided reality. In this case, however, the blanks in the form of a grey, abstract enlargement or the skyôs clear rectangle are not offered because there *is* no in-between. Writing about the duality within which Latin American writers work, Sanchez asserts that there is ñno *way* across, that there is no *between* to stand onò (Sanchez 1998, p. 36). The latter story presents this very directly, but this time the division takes place within Latin America, and it is this reality that Cortázar witnesses in his apartment in Paris, unable to grasp it or to intervene. It also reveals, however, the potentiality of the blanks offered in *Blow-Up* ï the grainy foliage, or the grassy lawn ï it can be more powerful to erase, creating experiences of a different kind than those that can be visualized.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Gaps in the Story: Connecting Word, Image and Film

This study started with an attempt to look into what is left out when literature is turned into film, to see if it was possible to see a pattern. This proved to be the case, but in quite an unexpected manner since the use of space in filmic language turned out to be more determining than expected. What also gained significance during my research, however, was the relationship between the film and the still, a relationship that revealed striking similarities with that of literature adapted to film. I will summarize some of the problems that I have defined during the process, and will subsequently present some of the conclusions I have reached. These will be followed by reflections on the relationship between spaces, locations and landscapes, and how these are used to create situations in film with similarities to the literary text. Finally I will focus on selected scenes from Michelangelo Antonioniôs films, where references will be made to films by Ingmar Bergman in order to emphasize how their approaches to these problems unexpectedly coincide in some ways.

The first time I encountered these problems was in 2004 when I created a series of still images from film stills in *Il deserto rosso* (*Red Desert*) Antonioniôs first colour film. Re-photographing the chosen scenes in colour, I turned some of them into black-and-white-drawings, and presented them together in a slide series, *Sometimes the Desert is Red* (2004), consisting of 40 slides shown as a loop. To create my work in a local context I transferred the landscape in Antonioniôs film, Ravenna, to an area in the outskirts of Copenhagen that I was very familiar with. I wanted to continue this process by creating a new work under similar circumstances and looked for films that used landscape in an intriguing way and found that Ingmar Bergmanôs *Summer with Monika* (1953) would be interesting to rework. The film is shot in black-and-white, and

once again I created a mix of colour photographs and black-and-white drawings. This time, however, the model was not satisfying and I felt that something was missing. I realized that Bergmanôs film was based on a novel of the same name by Per Anders Fogelström from 1951, and I read it to see if it could help my project. This proved to be the case since I discovered some striking discrepancies between the novel and the film, including the interpretation of Monikaôs character in the book and the film. This gave rise to two central questions for further research; the first concerning the extent to which the omitted material still determined the film. The second question had more to do with the stills as such, since I felt that the composition of the images in the film had also contributed to my interest in reworking it.

When a literary work is adapted to film, it is impossible to avoid leaving things out due to time constraints. It is not possible to include all details from a novel in a film, and therefore it is up to the director to make certain decisions. What is left out, however, will still influence the story, since the characters and events are developed more fully, thus enabling the progress of the story. Some passages, with inner thoughts such as memories or dreams, will be left out because of the impossibility of turning them into images. Others are left out because they make events too explicit, situations that in literature involve ambiguities but when fixed in the filmic language become one-dimensional. These missing parts represent ellipses, however, that still shape the filmôs content. Bergman used this in his later screenplays, including information about the storyôs characters which did not appear in the film, but through which their actions became more fully understood. Thus the literary work defines the film to a higher degree than one would expect, since the invisible fragments still play an important role for the narration as a whole.

The film still touches upon the same problems as those obtaining between literature and the filmic adaptation, since it is also a fragment of a larger work that defines it. A film still needs to be connected to reveal itself, while a photograph exists on its own terms. Some images in film, however, appear with qualities similar to certain photographs, since they manage to make a statement on their own. Roland Barthesôs concept of the *punctum* ï the arresting detail that involves the viewer on a level beyond mere information ï is useful when the film still is being analysed, since it points out how stills with these qualities single themselves out, and thus compete with the filmôs narration and interrupt its rhythm. One solution to this problem is to present a series of images as a montage to be included in the film as a segment and thus to a larger extent contribute to its rhythm. Nevertheless some images will be more memorable than others since they strikingly sum up some of the issues presented by the film.

Barthes suggests another category of film stills that carry a ñthird meaningò, with an obtuse character that suggests emotions that are difficult to penetrate or describe. These images express in a more specific way qualities that are purely cinematic. They can be seen as a summary of emotions that remain unarticulated, only intensified, and thus affect the film at a different level than more poignant stills do. These images remain indefinable and often express an absence ï a head from behind, a hand, a neck ï or the characters in between actions, representing a withdrawn state that surfaces here. These images can be seen as emotional peaks reached over time, where certain intensified moments crystallize themselves on the surface of the film.

The definition of space plays a significant role in the relationship between literature and film, and it has been striking to discover that literary works concerned with space that exists only in literature have attracted film-

makers. Kafka repeatedly created a spatiality that resists fictional visualization by mixing incongruous details and spaces, which in Wellesô adaptation of *The Trial* are translated into a series of incoherent locations. Kafka constructs spaces that only exist in his writing in order to redefine the terms of his own existence. Being Jewish and speaking German in Prague meant belonging to a minority on several levels, and Kafka creates an indefinable spatiality in his fiction that avoids categorization, thus extending his possibilities instead of limiting them.

Welles resists visualising these places in a realistic way and instead emphasizes their incongruous character by mixing locations that are obviously not connected to each other, or by shifting between exterior and interior in the same scene. He therefore succeeds in being faithful to Kafkaôs novel while simultaneously creating his own cinematic interpretation of its spatiality. Moreover, his vision updates the novel by juxtaposing modern urban areas with the decaying interiors of the Gare dôOrsay and old streets in Zagreb, and by means of this collage of locations he succeeds in commenting on the current modern state.

Like Kafka, Cortázar defines a place that only exists in fiction; a mythical place beyond space and time, an attempt to connect two worlds that do not fit together. The experience for many Latin Americans is that of being caught in a European Culture with which they cannot identify, but that nevertheless offers a culture and a language within which to exist. The other world is the dream of an ancient belonging, an untouched Latin America that only exists as a fantasy. In an attempt, however, to connect the fantastic with realism, Cortázar develops a space in fiction that consists of several realities that exist simultaneously, where the narrator oscillates between various positions.

Cortázar uses this in his short story ñBlow-Upò, where a photographer has witnessed an encounter in a public square, and where his impression of that meeting in the actual place is later replaced by another. An enlargement of a photograph from the event is hanging on the wall of his room and, as he stands in front of it, it takes on new meanings and reveals other stories hidden there. Thus reality is only a series of interpretations of what we see, taking on new meanings according to shifting opinions. Antonioni uses this short story as an inspiration for his film by the same name, where he lets the incident from Cortázarôs story take place in a park in London. Antonioni creates a document about London at that time, and lets the photographer take photographs of a couple in the park, within the narration, only later to question these photographs as documents. The black-and-white photographs are blown up into grainy abstracts from which the photographer creates his own fiction, and it is never revealed in the film whether he is right or not. Here the perpetually changing spaces in Wellesô film are replaced with the parkôs greenery, a softness without edges that resists categorization in a similar way. Both *The Trial* and *Blow-Up* (1966) succeed in creating an ambiguity similar to that of the literary works, through the clever use of carefully chosen locations.

Even more significant, however, is that a succession of stills is inserted in both films ï in *The Trial* a series of drawings and in *Blow-Up* the black-and-white photographs from the park. It is here that the real adaptation takes place and where the limits and possibilities of the cinematic image come to view. Wolfgang Iser writes about the function of blanks in literature and describes how the reader creates images while reading, which will have to be abandoned and replaced by newly created images. Iser argues that this is necessary since it is here that readers mobilize their imagination, forcing the familiar images to give way to new, less familiar ones. Between still images presented in a succession appear blanks and

gaps where the narration is missing, and these gaps enable the viewer to create images much as the reader of a book would.

Welles opens his film with a series of images in different shades of grey where the figures are indicated by means of a white line. These images depict scenes of a tale in Kafkaôs *The Trial*, which Welles reads while the images shift. This unexpected use of cinematic language takes the tale beyond illustration and instead merges the images with the tale to create a cinematic expression close to literature but nevertheless still composed of images in motion.

Antonioni achieves something similar when he lets the black-and-white photographs appear as a story that the photographer is trying to construct while looking at them. The photographs are accompanied by the sound of the rustling leaves in the park, and thus a cinematic sequence without motion in the images is created. The gaps between each still work as blanks, where the photographer ï and the viewer ï creates the images that are missing. Antonioni thus creates a less explicit narration, and instead invites the viewer, like the photographer, to interpret and connect the images. While remaining cinematic, these series are closer to literature than the usual adaptation, since the literal experience is adapted in a less obvious, but nonetheless convincing manner. This reveals that the links between the written word and images appearing in film do not necessarily involve theatrical representations, but that the literary work can be represented in a more challenging manner. The examples from *The Trial* and *Blow-Up* show that still images succeeding each other in a filmic context transfer the experience of the blank in literature into a cinematic context, and thus open up for a different way to link literature with film.

2. Writing the Image

In *The Empire of Signs*, Roland Barthes writes about Japan, giving an account of the experience of trying to find oneôs way in a city without any addresses. The methods are various, but carefully made maps seem to recur, and Barthes has saved some of these maps and included them as illustrations in the book. These maps combine Japanese signs with Western letters, executed in delicate handwriting and appearing as images of a collision between two systems. The challenge of navigating another system ï however illogical it may seem ï visualized in these small drawings is necessary. In this large city ï unnamed but presumably Tokyo ï the stranger is forced to turn to visual orientation since the usual maps are of no use. Barthes comments:

> All this makes the visual experience a decisive element of your orientation: a banal enough proposition with regard to the jungle or the bush, but one much less so with regard to a major modern city, knowledge of which is usually managed by map, guide, telephone book; in a word, by printed culture and not gestural practice.
>
> (Barthes 1982, p. 35)

Thus this city offers the opportunity to recover orientation as a visual experience. The printed instruction is replaced by the view and the encounter, or as Barthes puts it, every discovery ñcan be repeated or recovered only by memory of the trace it has left in youò. The visual impression, combined with the gesture of written instructions invites one to another reception of a place, and here a new writing of that place can begin:

> This city can be known only by an activity of an ethnographic kind: you must orient yourself in it not by book, by address, but by walking, by sight, by habit, by experience; here every discovery is

> intense and fragile, it can be repeated or recovered only by memory of the trace it has left in you: to visit a place for the first time is thereby to begin to write it: the address not being written, it must establish its own writing.
>
> (Barthes 1982, p. 36)

The discrepancy that Barthes describes between the formal map and the experience of the actual place can easily be applied to the relationship between the script and the making of the film. The written instructions take on new meanings when the filming takes place, and new aspects in the script become visible. Antonioni explains how he handles this situation in a discussion that took place at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia of Rome in 1961, after a retrospective screening of his films for students and faculty members:

> Aside from the fact that Iôve been working less in a studio (I have now made two films without once setting foot in a studio), I can say that even there the situation I described holds true. Of course, when preparing a set within a studio, I sketch out an idea for the designer or architect as to what I think the scene should be like, establishing thereby a certain rapport with the surroundings. But not until I actually find myself on the finished set, at that moment and that moment only, do I have the exact feeling of what the scene should really look like. And to some extent even those surroundings, which I myself to a certain extent have set up, can offer me surprises and suggest some changes, some new ideas. And I never reject those suggestions. Even here, before I start shooting, I remain alone by myself for a period of twenty minutes, a half hour, and sometimes even longer.
>
> (Antonioni 2007a, p. 29)

This statement reveals how receptive Antonioni is to his environment, that the situations described in the screenplay for him as a director merely function as a first suggestion, and that it is the actual encounter with a place that determines his intentions. Some of Barthesô reflections on the experience of a purely visual orientation when one visits a new place come to mind: ñé you must orient yourself in it not by book, by address, but by walking, by sight, by habit, by experience; here every discovery is intense and fragileé ò (Barthes 1982, p. 36).

The intense encounter between the individual and its surroundings is a recurring theme in Antonioniôs film production, and he uses these encounters to comment on the current state of society. Although seldom overtly political he nevertheless deals mainly with issues that describe sentiments in individuals caused by society In a speech Barthes gave in Bologna in 1980, when Antonioni received a prize from the city, he pointed out that: ñYour concern for the times you live in is not that of a historian, a politician or a moralist, but rather that of a utopian whose perception is seeking to pinpoint the new world, because he is eager for this world and already wants to be a part of itò (Barthes 1997, p.63). Barthes indicates Antonioniôs curiosity and eagerness for contemporary matters which is especially evident both in *Blow-Up*, where the London fashion scene at that time is depicted, and in *Zabriskie Point* (1971), with its take on American youth culture.

After these films, Antonioni was planning to start filming *Technically Sweet*, but was rejected by the producer at a very late stage and instead offered *The Passenger* (1975), written by Mark Peploe and rewritten together with Antonioni. Both *Technically Sweet* and *The Passenger* are about journalists who are dissatisfied with their current situation, and who try to escape it by making bold, and fatal, decisions. In *The Passenger* the journalist assumes the identity of a man who dies unexpectedly, and

continues his activities which turn out to be trading weapons and which eventually lead to his death. The journalist is played by Jack Nicholson who would also have appeared in *Technically Sweet*, along with Maria Schneider, who appeared with him in *The Passenger*.

I first encountered the screenplay for *Technically Sweet* when reading *Unfinished Business* (1998), a collection of never realized screenplays by Antonioni. *Technically Sweet* was not included in the collection, only mentioned, since it had already been published in Italian in 1976, but I was intrigued by the title. The title is a quote from a statement made by J. Robert Oppenheimer, who led the construction of the atomic bomb, during a hearing conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission 1954:

> When you see something that is technically sweet, you go ahead and do it and you argue about it only after you have had your technical success. That is the way it was the atomic bomb.
>
> (Columbia World of Quotations)

This is indeed a comment on progress and opens up for reflections on the scientistõs responsibilities. *Technically Sweet* is about a journalist, T, who spends some time in Sardinia. Here he encounters an unnamed woman, and once he has started an affair with her, he discovers that she is already involved with S. Eventually, T and S decide to go to the Amazon together. Their plane crashes in the jungle and they fight their way back to civilization only to die when they finally reach it. The film cuts between Sardinia and the Amazon, where the former increasingly appear as flashbacks.

In 2008 I produced and participated in the group show called *Technically Sweet* with artist Yvette Brackman at Participant Inc. and Anthology Film Archive in New York. The show used the script of *Technically Sweet*,

now translated into English, as a starting point and 13 artists were invited to participate in the project. Each artist was offered a copy of the screenplay to use as source for a new art work produced for the show. The fact that the script had never been filmed was what made it attractive, since this meant that it was still open, without any existing images. When I read the script I was struck by the way Antonioni included descriptions that created associations instead of proper instructions, and I used these descriptions as a starting point to develop a storyboard for a film. I focused on the scenes taking place in Sardinia, and decided to go there to encounter the landscape myself, while documenting the trip with a video camera. I planned to let myself be guided by the script, and the images in my video would be created from the information appearing in it.

A friend of mine had informed me that Antonioni had owned a summerhouse on the northwest coast of Sardinia so I knew that he had been familiar with this part of the island. We rented a car in Alghero, and drove north to find places that would suit the scenes that I had chosen. In a guidebook I found some places that accorded well with Antonioniôs descriptions of the landscape. We drove through Valle della Luna, a landscape with enormous rocks and mountains that had clearly inspired its name, the Moon Valley. Another description that had struck me in the screenplay was one from Tôs visit to a little fishing village:

> After a while he comes to a place from which he can see the small beach with the fishing boats. He continues. Behind a cluster of houses, on a small promontory of red rock, a house in the same red colour attracts his attention. He stops and watches it for a while. The house looks almost unreal in the sunset. T turns around and walks back.
>
> (Antonioni 1976, p. 44)

The way Antonioni described the house on the red rock ï seeming almost unreal in the glowing sunset ï interested me since it was one of those remarks that seemed challenging enough to turn into film. The guidebook described a small village called Isola Rossa named for a red rock in the sea just outside it and we decided to visit. When we arrived and walked around the village I realised that this was actually the very location that Antonioni had planned to use, since I recognized it from the production stills included in *Tecnicamente dolce*. As I became aware of the fact that I was visiting the planned locations I was thrilled for a moment by the fact that I was visiting a film location, but then I remembered that the film had never been made. The only time Isola Rossa would appear in a film was in my road movie inspired by the script.

This made me think about the significance of film locations, and how the fact that they are preserved on film affects our experience of them. In a sense they become virtual archaeological sites that we revisit every time we see the film again. We walked around the village and noticed that the strip of sand with small fishing boats on the photographs in *Tecnicamente dolce* was now replaced by a harbour full of pleasure boats. The red rock in the sea, however, was still there, and when we came to the other side of the village, we saw a house built of stones the same colour as the rock. It blended in with the surroundings and the house that Antonioni described in the script came to my mind. We waited for the sun to go down and filmed the house. This footage was later used, accompanied by a voice-over reading from the script, in a sequence in my film from the trip, *A Technical Problem* (2008).

The last scene in *Technically Sweet* describes how S. finally crawls out of the jungle, dying, and gets caught in a trap some children have made. The unconcerned children watch him dying and S. is too exhausted to even

beg for help. Finally he cannot keep his head up anymore and lies down on his back and the script describes what happens to him:

> He lets go and stays like that, on his back, watching the sky turning bluer and bluer and then pink. The pink concentrates in a spot that takes the form of a house, the red house, and on the doorstep the shape of someone whom we recognize as the girl.
> Then everything turns black.
>
> (Antonioni 1976, p. 111)

The red house from Isola Rossa returns in S.ôs hazy vision before dying, and is now in a surreal dream which gives it another significance. This excerpt is included in my film, and experiencing this place with the scriptôs narration in mind changed our reception of it. It felt as if the scriptôs story unfolded in front of us, only acted out by people passing by.

Thus the script changed how we perceived the place, and opened up to unexpected stories that we invented ourselves. The scriptôs narration inspired our own imaginations to generate a different interpretation of what surrounded us. In this film of the meeting between the script and the locations, several locations were juxtaposed with excerpts from the script. The excerpts appear as voice-overs in scenes from the actual places, but with a slight difference between what is described and what actually takes place. The viewer will have to concentrate on two activities, to listening and to seeing, and realizes that these different forms of perception compete with each other and therefore make us unsure of where to focus. This challenges the viewer but also opens up to another kind of story, with a less linear and more porous narration. The story of *A Technical Problem* is guided by someone elseôs intentions and, in the encounter with the places mentioned in the script, a new rendering, or writing, of the images presented there commences.

3. Selected Scenes and an Ending

In this study I have developed some ideas concerning still images in Ingmar Bergmanôs films, and I would like to conclude with some reflections on a few selected stills in films by Antonioni. The scenes that I have chosen express sentiments in a way that is particular to Antonioni but can also be examined with the same tools used for Bermanôs stills. What is striking about Antonioniôs film-making is how he incorporates the locations into the story and lets the way the characters encounter them reveal what is specific. Noa Steimatsky talks about an intelligence of place when he analyzes Antonioniôs use of certain places in his films, and he mentions some of the scenes that have become emblematic:

> The view from the iron bridge in *Cronaca di un amore* (*Chronicle of a Love Affair*, 1950) and from the tower of *Il Grido* were already striking instances, although *Lôavventura*ôs (1960) island views came to be the most celebrated, and the finale of *Lôeclisse* (1962) perhaps the most radical of Antonioniôs elaboration on this perceptual paradigm. The island where a character has disappeared without a trace, the deserted towns and vacant hotel corridors, the crossroads in the EUR Roman suburb to which the camera, but not the protagonists, returns ï these crystallize an òintelligenceò of place stripped of òextraneous and decorative elementsò as of overcoded rhetorical devices that would mediate human presence, and pastness.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 38)

The scene where Anna disappears on the island in *Lôavventura* (*The Adventure*) is as bewildering for the rest of the party as it is for the viewer. Her unresolved disappearance casts its shadow over the rest of the film, and thereby makes this absence determining for the film. Antonioni here breaks all film-making conventions and achieves a tension that is beyond normal suspense. Annaôs absence colours Claudiaôs and Sandroôs

relationship, and after they fall in love their search for her becomes ambiguous. At the end they are staying at a fashionable hotel in Taormina where Claudia decides to go to bed early, while Sandro seeks out some company. In the early morning is Claudia looking for Sandro and finds him with another woman on a couch downstairs in the hotel, she runs off, out of the hotel, disturbed, bewildered, sad. On a square outside the hotel she stops and we see her from behind looking at the foliage of a large tree. Claudiaôs blond head is seen from behind, in the right corner, and the rest of the screen is filled with the leaves of the tree, moving slightly in the wind. This image expresses ambiguity, since it is not clear whether she is sad or relieved, only left with a quiet turmoil in her mind. This still thus carries what Barthes referred to in his essay ñThe Third Meaningò as an ñobtuse meaningò, since it exists on its own cinematic terms, within the narration, carrying unarticulated emotions that are made present by their intensity:

> It is clear that the obtuse meaning is the epitome of a counter-narrative; disseminated, reversible, set to its own temporality, it inevitably determines (if one follows it) a quite different analytical segmentation to that in shots, sequences and syntagms (technical or narrative) ï an extraordinary segmentation: counter-logical and yet ótrueô.
>
> (Barthes 1977a, p. 63)

After the moment of this still, Sandro comes looking for Claudia. He finds her but prefers to go and sit down on a bench, with tears in his eyes. Claudia walks over to him and after hesitating, lays her hand on his shoulder and then caresses his hair. The film ends with an image of them from behind, Claudia standing and Sandro on the bench, to the right the façade of an old house and in front of them the sea, where an island is visible far off. The earlier still with Claudia carried an emotion of its own

that nevertheless colours this reconciliation. Thus the still expresses something on its own, and this is used in the filmôs narration to make this ending more open ended, closer to a reconciliation but yet unresolved, just like Annaôs disappearance. Later in the essay Barthes comments on subversion versus destruction: ñThe *contemporary* problem is not to destroy the narrative but to subvert it; todayôs task is to disassociate subversion from destructionò (Barthes 1977a, p. 64). Antonioniôs bold move to let Anna disappear was seen by the audience at its premiere in Cannes as outrageous, but as the importance of the film has been understood over time, we have been left with images that reveal a profound concern for the possibilities of a renewal of the cinematic language.

After *The Adventure* followed *La notte* (*The Night*, 1961), that opens with a view of Milan from above. The script indicates that there are window cleaners working on the Pirelli building, a skyscraper in the centre of the town. We are then introduced to a hospital, which Antonioni describes as follows: ñThe tree is in the garden of this ultramodern hospital, which is boldly styled with aluminium fixtures and enormous expanses of glass. Almost monstrous in its perfection, it evokes the picture of flawless and implacable scienceò (Antonioni 1963, p. 211). A couple, Lidia and Giovanni, are going to see a friend who is dying, and the encounter leaves Lidia concerned and mute, visibly troubled.

Later in the film, on her way home, she strolls around the city and, after a while decides to take a cab to the suburbs. Here the environment is less modern, and Lidia walks around reminiscing. After some time she phones Giovanni and urges him to come and join her in Sesto San Giovanni where they used to live. He arrives at dawn and they walk around together, and he remarks that nothing has changed, to which Lidia replies: ñOh, itôll change. Very soon.ò They leave the courtyard in front of the old

buildings and walk across a railroad track, overgrown and clearly no longer in use. Giovanni comments that the train used to run when they lived there. They continue walking, and disappear out of the camera field, and we are left with an image of the overgrown railroad, the tracks completely covered with winding branches of bushes and other plants.

The image remains for quite a while and leaves us with the impression of something abandoned, on several levels. The railroad has been taken over by other means of communication and is already outdated. We also realise, however, that Lidia has decided to go here to get in touch with sentiments from another time, and when Giovanni arrives we realize that it is not possible for her to find what she was looking for. For her too everything will change very soon, or already has. The still draws the viewerôs attention to the overgrown tracks and on the outskirts of the image some buildings can be seen. The winding plants and the disappearing tracks form a *punctum;* Barthesôattention to detail pricks the viewer, which stirs up an unexpected experience. This is not a *studium* of the area, but an image that tells something about the suburbôs history, just as it visualizes that Lidia herself slowly abandons what she is looking for, a dissolving intimacy.

Later that evening, the couple visits a party thrown by a wealthy industrialist in his sumptuous villa. In this extravagant environment in which they are not completely at ease, Lidia makes a phone call to the hospital, and is told that their friend past away ten minutes ago. Numbed and without telling her husband, she makes an effort to participate in the party. She even encourages Giovanni to seek a beautiful young girlôs company, and when they walk home in the morning she finally tells him that she doesnôt love him anymore. This is what she found out by revisiting their old neighbourhood, and with their friend gone, she becomes painfully aware of the fact that a period of her life is over, too.

Antonioniôs next film, *Lôeclisse* (*The Eclipse*), is also a film about a couple who are unable to fulfil their relationship. In a sense the ending is just as radical as Annaôs disappearance in *The Adventure*, since both the characters are missing when neither Vittoria nor Piero turns up at their rendezvous and, as a substitute for their reunion the camera registers the suburb, the E.U.R. district, where they were supposed to meet. This part of Rome is named after a project initiated by the Fascist regime to celebrate and manifest its power by means of an exhibition, *Esposizione Universale Romana*, supposed to open 1942; due to the war these plans were never completed.

The suburb still exists, consisting of buildings with exaggerated monumental proportions with the congress centre Palazzo dei Congressi, as the most striking example. However, Antonioni does not focus on the monumental buildings, but on the ghostly qualities of this over-dimensioned suburb. We see ordinary people acting out everyday activities; a nurse walking with a stroller, a gardener watering the lawns and people waiting for the bus. The viewer is waiting for the couple to turn up, and this expectation is met by the camera dwelling on such details as the shadow of a tree, someone crossing the street, a row of trees beside it, and its rustling leaves. The afternoon turns into evening without the couple showing up, and the film ends with an image of a street lamp against the dark sky, glowing more and more intensely in the night.

Another sequence in the film expresses unfulfilled expectations in a more direct manner. The stock exchange breaks down and Vittoria and Piero witness the chaos ï Piero as a cold dealer, and Vittoria trying to console her mother who has lost a lot of money. Piero discretely points out a man and tells Vittoria that he has probably lost two to three hundred million lire. Feeling curious, Vittoria follows the man, who sits down in a café

and starts sketching on a piece of paper. When he leaves the café, she cannot resist picking the sketch up. She studies it and strolls on until Piero spots her from inside a bar and invites her in.

While standing in the bar she tells him: ñLook, he drew a picture of some flowersò. Piero asks who, and she replies that it was the man who lost all his money. Then we finally see the piece of paper in Pieroôs hand, with flowers scribbled all over it. The image expresses the same inability to become involved as the coupleôs unresolved love affair, but is presented quite differently. Instead of expressing a sentiment by means of its surroundings, it is delivered here as a message that resists being a proper message, but which comments on the situation with a certain amount of humour. Nevertheless the still reveals a numb feeling caused by societyôs focus on the financial benefits of societyôs progress while neglecting to incorporate other aspects of development.

To sum up, these stills represent different takes on how the issues that concern Antonioni are introduced to his audience. In various ways the individual is presented in relation to his surroundings, and emotions are subtly transferred to the viewer through activities that expose conditions which determine these characters. Noa Steimatsky expresses it by proposing that early in his film-making Antonioni started to fracture the figure in an attempt to find out how firmly it was founded:

> Antonioniôs work was, from the start, thus based in a fracturing of the figure so as to test the ground and see how ground emerges *as* figure, capturing the movement by which one evolves into the other, dwelling on the narrative digression and graphic disturbances that arise in this process.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 39)

The concluding sequence in *The Eclipse* with its focus on details and textures indicates a will to expose this relation, and in numerous scenes we follow the close-up of an individual, which is then linked to the cityscape, then abandoned to focus on the corner of a lawn, some drops of water on leaves, ants on a tree or water running over stones. This is presented more radically in *Blow-Up*, where Thomas in the end is dissolving into the lawn and we are left with the ground as figure, with the lawn filling out the whole image.

Strikingly Bergman chooses to conclude the narration of *Persona* in a similar way. When the stay in the summerhouse where Alma and Elisabeth have had an intense and at times violent encounter is over, Alma cleans up the place before leaving. She takes the chairs indoor, arranges blankets and cushions, and when everything is taken care of she locks the door, grabs her suitcase and walks away to take the bus. It arrives, on a small, winding road beside the rocky beach and stops to pick her up. When the bus drives on, the camera follows it and when it is out of sight the camera glides to the side of the road and focuses on the earth covered with small stones, and for a moment the whole screen is filled by the ground.

After this, images of the boy appear where he is trying to touch a projection of Elisabeth, followed by close-ups of a film projector and finally a strip of celluloid that burns and ends the film. The still of the stony earth, however, becomes a *punctum* for the filmôs central narration just like in *Blow-Up*, where the figure dissolves into the ground, but it is this movement that allows other, unexpected images to evolve.

Bergman also used this in *En passion* (*The Passion of Anna*, 1969) with an ending that brings the grainy blow-ups of the black-and-white photograph from the park in *Blow-Up* to mind. *The Passion of Anna* takes

place on Faro where the widowed Andreas is trying to live a simple life alone, but he gets involved with Anna, who is also alone since her child and husband have died in a car accident. They start living together and slowly their relationship changes as Anna seems to be more unstable than first expected. Andreas withdraws and decides to leave her and announces this in the car while Anna is driving.

When she does not answer he gets agitated and tells her that he read a letter he found in her bag the first time they met, when she came to his house to use the phone. The letter was a farewell letter from her husband, who intended to leave her, a fact Anna never mentioned since she always referred to her marriage as an unusually happy one. Andreas asks if she intends to kill him too and in the script what then happens is described:

> Then I noticed that the car was going faster. In one swift instant I understood what was happening. I asked her to stop, so that we could get out, that we could calm down. I remember that I turned around, that the car was on fire. That I saw Annaôs face in the flames, that I saw her eyes.
> I remember running along the road. Then I felt the pain in my hands and face. An excruciating pain. I remember finding myself outside Eliôs house. Eva came toward me. I remember calling to her, but I had no voice left, it was hardly a whisper: ñForgive me, forgive me, forgive me, forgive me, forgive me, forgive me, forgive me.ò
> I remember her leaning over me.
>
> (Bergman 1977, p. 168)

But this dramatic ending is replaced by a more subtle one in the film, where Andreas manages to stop the car and get out. The film ends with an image of Andreas, alone on a road in a flat landscape. In the foreground to the left there is an old, dead tree and further away, past some water, is a

pole with telegraph wires, and even further away the sea. It is a grey day without shadows and the camera slowly zooms in on Andreas walking back and forth along the road. Then the zooms get closer more quickly and the image becomes more and more grainy; all we see is some water and Andreas, and finally a dissolving image of Andreas lying on the ground, a colourless filmic image. At this point we hear Bergmanôs voice: ñThis time he was called Andreas Winkelmanò. This possibly implies that what we have witnessed is fiction, and this time the actor portrayed a character called Andreas Winkelman. The image continues to come closer then finally dissolves completely, leaving a blank screen.

This blank, however, does not leave things open, it represents a finality that wipes every possibility out. This final blank reveals the potential of blanks in Antonioniôs films, since they do not carry the same finality. The wall of a house, the surface of a rock, an abandoned railroad or the soft greenery of the park; all work as a moment where the viewer can mobilize imagination to create associations that involve personal experiences, within the filmôs narration. Steimatsky sums up this ability to create a lacuna in the narration through the landscape:

> The forms of contingency responsive to a lacunary landscape wherein some of modernityôs most solid edifices have been destabilized, the shifts between a realist representational order and the dissolution of its secure devices, the discovery of abstraction at the heart of the figure and the figurative potential of the void ï these persist as defining features of Antonioniôs cinematic modernism.
>
> (Steimatsky 2008, p. 39)

The void found in the landscape, which Antonioni effectively used as a blank in film is offered to the viewer as a possibility, and thus works inclusively ï although at times bewilderingly so. Antonioni uses these

abstract fragments of reality to create a porous narration that lasts beyond its time, since they make it possible to insert contemporary experiences which ï together with the filmôs original story ï open up to associations that produce new, unexpected connections.

Bergman uses the ground in *Persona* and the dissolving images at the end of *The Passion of Anna* to indicate an end, a place where the narration stops. They do not involve movement but make it clear that the final moment in the story told has been reached. This is also the case in *Blow-Up* where the figure dissolves into the ground, turning into an abstraction similar to the grainy black-and-white blow-ups that appear in the film. The abstract images in Antonioniôs film, however, are not finishing moments; integrated in the movement they serve rather as a turning point for the narration, a lacuna where it is possible for the viewer to digest previous events.

With regard to these stills in Antonioniôs films I pointed out that these particular images intensify a moment in the film, changing our perception of what follows in the filmôs narration. These images are not particularly abstract but indicate a subtle ï hardly noticeable ï before and after, that changes our reception of subsequent events. The abstract moments that create a void have a similar function that is, however, less perceptible. The shadow of some trees on the road in *The Eclipse*; rocks appearing as flesh in *Red Desert*; the shiny surfaces of the hospital in *The Night*; the dusty desert in *Zabriskie Point*; all these images are integrated in the filmôs events while simultaneously representing other layers of the narration.

To reach an understanding of how these layers function, is it useful to turn to Antonioniôs own writing, from the collection *That Bowling Alley on the Tiber* (1986). This volume consists of sketches; short descriptions of events that could potentially be turned into a film. One of these short texts

is called *The Silence*, and describes a couple that after years in an unsatisfactory relationship finally open up and agree that it is over. When everything is out in the open, they have nothing left to say to each other. The short text ends like this: ñA story of husband and wife who have nothing more to say to each other. Just once to shoot not their conversation but their silences, their silent words. Silence as a negative dimension of speechò (Antonioni 1986, p. 25). The last sentence expresses an inversion of speech, and the following silence thus becomes more than just a silence, it becomes an unbearable void that has finally become visible.

The abstract moments in Antonioniôs films can be seen as an inversion of sight, a void that turns our perception of things around. They work as a turning point for our perception ï a standstill that forces us to recommence, recreating images of the well known ï and thus they manage to present new aspects of what we consider our reality. This is also what happens when literature is turned into film, or when the script is acted out while filming. Each medium has its own limit that is exposed when transferred into another. Here possibilities are discovered or abandoned and this exchange allows new expressions to take form. It is in this area that yet unseen creative acts can take place, shaped by the interplay between different media that thus offers entire fields of new possibilities.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between literature and film, and the significance of the still within the film. The possibilities of representing literature through a succession of stills within a film have been analyzed, as well as the representation of space in literary texts and film. For me as a visual artist, working with the interplay between the production of art works and theoretical reflections has been especially productive since it has revealed to unexpected academic perspectives.

I have studied three adaptations of literature to film, where I have examined how the literary narration is transformed during this adaptation. The first is Ingmar Bergmanôs *Sommaren med Monika*, based on a novel by Per Anders Fogelström. Here I have focused on the composition of stills, drawing on Roland Barthesôs ideas on photography and the film still. The others are Orson Wellesôadaptation of *The Trial*, based on Franz Kafkaôs celebrated novel, and Michelangelo Antonioniôs *Blow-Up*, which takes a short story by Julio Cortázar as its starting point. In these two films, I interrogate the role played by space in literature and how the directors deploy space in their films to similar and different effect. Welles transfers Kafkaôs perpetually changing locales into a mix of interior and exterior to achieve the same kind of disorientation, whereas Antonioni uses the uncertainty Cortázar creates in his writings to develop a story that investigates the representation of reality and the individualôs interpretation of it. In both of these films, successions of still images enable another kind of representation of literature in film.

In his theories on film André Bazinôs comments on the influence of photography on film and refers to realism as an aesthetic. Frederic Jameson, moreover, points out that documentary qualities are still profoundly influential in film-making. My literary examples, however, prove that some experiences can only exists in literature and that when

they are transferred to film, they stretch the medium to reveal new qualities. I draw on Wolfgang Iserôs theory on blanks to suggest that the blanks between the still images in films create a gap that the viewer can fill out and thus offers an almost literary experience in a visual context, where imagining is just as integrated in the creative act as seeing.

RESUME

Denne afhandling undersøger forholdet mellem litteratur og film samt betydning af still-billedet i filmen. I forlængelse af dette analyseres muligheden for at fremstille litteratur gennem en række af still-billeder i filmen såvel som funktionen af rum i litterære tekster og film. For undertegnede som billedkunstner har erfaring med sammenspillet mellem kunst og teoretiske overvejelser været fordelagtigt, og jeg synes jeg har været i stand til at inddrage begge dele i afhandlingen, og det har igen åbnet for uventede aspekter i arbejdet.

Jeg har fokuseret på tre forskellige filmatiseringer af litterære værker, hvor jeg har undersøgt hvordan den litterære fortælling bliver forvandlet til film. Den første er Ingmar Bergmans *Sommaren Med Monika* efter en roman med samme navn af Per Anders Fogelström. Her har fokus været på brugen af still-billeder og i den sammenhæng har jeg benyttet Roland Barthes' teorier om fotografi og brugen af still-billeder i film. De andre værker jeg har arbejdet med har været Orson Welles' filmatisering *The Trial*, af Franz Kafka's berømte roman *Der Prozess* og Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow Up*, som bygger på en novelle, *Las babas del diablo*, af Julio Cortázar. I disse film spiller det rum der er skabt i litteraturen en væsentlig rolle for den karakteriske fremtoning filmene har hver især, hvor Welles bruger Kafkas stadigt skiftende rum til at skabe en blanding af inden- og udendørs scenografier til at opnå en lignende tilstand af rumlig forvirring. Antonioni bruger den eksistensielle usikkerhed som Cortázar skaber i hans novelle til at udvikle en historie som undersøger fremstillingen af virkeligheden og den enkeltes fortolkning af det. Både i Welles' *The Trial* og Antonioni's *Blow-Up* optræder en serie af still-billeder, som giver en anderledes gengivelse af litteratur på film. I André Bazin's filmteorier skriver han om den indflydelse fotografi har på film og refererer til realisme som en æstetik. I forbindelse med det understreger Frederic Jameson at elementer fra dokumentarfilmen stadig påvirker

spillefilm. Men de eksempler der er brugt her viser at nogle oplevelser kun kan fås gennem litteraturen, som når de overføres til film udvider mediet til at afsløre nye kvaliteter.

Wolfgang Isers teorier om tomme felter i litteraturen bruges til at understrege at pausen mellem still-billederne på film skaber et hul som tilskueren selv kan fylde ud og således tilbyder en oplevelse ikke langt fra litteraturen i en visuel sammenhæng, hvor forestillingsevnen er en ligeså integreret del af den kreative oplevelse som det sete.

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