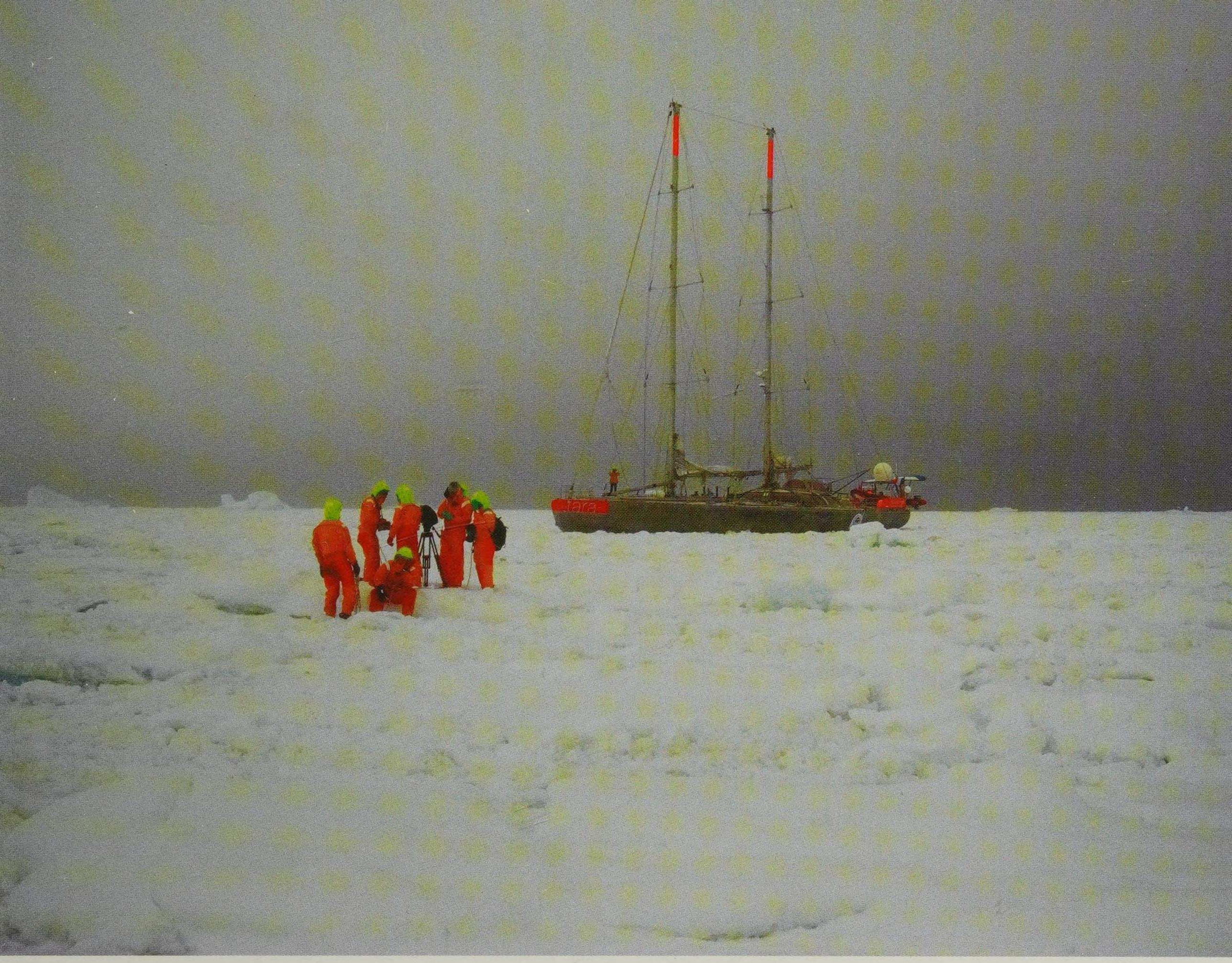


PARALLEL PRESENTS
THE ART OF PIERRE HUYGHE

AMELIA BARIKIN

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Over the past two decades, French artist Pierre Huyghe has produced an extraordinary body of work in constant dialogue with temporality. Investigating the possibility of a hypothetical mode of timekeeping—"parallel presents"— Huyghe has researched the architecture of the incomplete, directed a puppet opera, founded a temporary school, established a pirate television station, staged celebrations, scripted scenarios, and journeyed to Antarctica in search of a mythological penguin. In this first book-length art historical examination of Huyghe and his work, Amelia Barikin traces the artist's continual negotiation with the time codes of contemporary society. Offering detailed analyses of Huyghe's works and drawing on extensive interviews with Huyghe and his associates, Barikin finds in his projects an alternate way of thinking about history—a "topological historicity" that deprograms (or reprograms) temporal formats. Huyghe once said, "It is through the montage, the way we combine and relate images, that we can create a representation of an event that is perhaps more precise than the event itself."

Barikin offers pioneering analyses of Huyghe's lesser-known early works as well as sustained readings of later, critically acclaimed projects, including *No Ghost Just a Shell* (2000), *L'Expédition scintillante* (2002), and *A Journey That Wasn't* (2005). She emphasizes Huyghe's concepts of "freed time" and "the open present," in which anything might happen.

Bringing together an eclectic array of subjects and characters—from moon walking to situationist practices, from Snow White to Gilles Deleuze—*Parallel Presents* offers a highly original account of the driving forces behind Huyghe's work.

PARALLEL PRESENTS

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THE ART OF PIERRE HUYGHE

AMELIA BARIKIN

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For Vickie Douglas

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INTRODUCTION:

IN WHAT TIME DO WE LIVE?

A time negotiated in keeping with external constraints. A fiction extended into reality. An alternate coding of temporal practices. Over the past two decades, Pierre Huyghe has produced an extraordinary body of work that engages the time codes of contemporary society. An artist who has been described as an adventurer and an explorer, Huyghe has consistently worked with forms that do not fit into the frames in which they are made to appear. He has spoken repeatedly of the significance of deviant signs and fragile organisms: of the need for dynamic equivalences and blinking signals that cut across temporal partitions. More interested in processes of translation than the production of hermetic systems, Huyghe's work strives to keep structures open to potential: to maintain ambiguity by manufacturing moments of elegant irresolution. The individual's ability to get a handle on the present—to experience duration, to resist the codification of time as product—has been a continued and ongoing concern of his practice.

The formats that Huyghe has turned to in investigating this possibility are rich and complex. Since leaving art school in Paris in the 1980s, he has researched the architecture of the incomplete, directed a puppet opera, founded a temporary school, established a pirate television station, staged celebrations, scripted scenarios, and journeyed to Antarctica in search of a mythical penguin. He has also made numerous films and screen-based works, and it was these that first established his reputation in the 1990s, to the extent that Huyghe has confessed that he spent a good part of that decade trying to persuade critics that he was not a video artist, while simultaneously fending off accusations as to his purported "relational

aesthetic." Huyghe is, however, definitively an ideas-based artist, and his projects can be situated among a lineage of conceptual and postconceptual practitioners that properly begins with Marcel Duchamp, traverses the praxes of artists such as Daniel Buren, Yves Klein, Marcel Broodthaers, Michael Asher, and Robert Smithson, and coalesces around the works of a younger group of artists who came into their own during the 1990s: artists such as Philippe Parreno, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Liam Gillick, and Maurizio Cattelan. Huyghe has collaborated with these and many other artists on numerous occasions, and indeed collaboration has always been a major part of his artistic process. Like Matthew Barney, his productions are now reliant on the skills of a vast network of specialist practitioners: gardeners, lighting operators, cinematographers, puppeteers, actors, architects, and composers.

It is in part because of Huyghe's approach to media as a tool rather than a doctrine that critical reception of his practice has been so varied. His projects have been positioned against the backdrops of architecture, cinema, law, science, and art history. Curator Nicolas Bourriaud considered Huyghe an exemplar of his model of relational aesthetics in the 1990s; scientist Jean-Claude Amiesen has likened Huyghe's open structures to the flux of subatomic particles. Writers Jean-Charles Massera and Jean-Christophe Royoux both described Huyghe's works as mechanisms for reclaiming time, as it is lived, for the individual. This perspective is shared by curator Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev's suggestion that Huyghe's projects affirm the agency of the individual by working through "the infinite interpretations and folds of reality that are possible at every moment."[1]

This book positions Huyghe's work as a response to recent shifts in event culture: the transformation of the means by which events are constituted, transmitted, translated, and finally understood. As the first full-length art history monograph on Huyghe, it offers a detailed account of two decades of his practice, with specific attention paid to the historiographic dimensions of his projects. Huyghe's works clearly demonstrate that writing and making history are complicit with the formatting of time. Evaluating this complicity permits us to extract from Huyghe's projects an alternate way of thinking about history, one that pivots on the relationship between historiography and philosophies of time. In responding to this relationship, Huyghe has repeatedly spoken of the need for connective images, presenting the links in representational chains as a potential means of deprogramming temporal formats.

At the heart of this book rests Huyghe's founding of L'Association des temps libérés (the Association of Freed Time) in France in 1995. Not satisfied with divisions such as "work time" and "leisure time," the group asked: when is time ever truly free? The Association of Freed Time is not only the single most important

initiative in Huyghe's oeuvre, it is also his longest-running project to date. From this moment onward, Huyghe embarked on an ongoing search for further equivalences to freed time, seeking a model of temporality that elided normative "time codes" of industrial society in a bid to preserve the potential for something other to emerge. "The open present," he wrote, "is open to any and all incidences that might occur."[2] On the side of déjà vu, the open present is characterized by an aesthetic of the incomplete. It is most at home in unfinished structures or construction sites. It is not reconcilable with a single, fixed image, and it cannot be substituted for a caption. Like an organism, the open present requires context to survive.

In part, Huyghe's interest in this kind of temporal patterning can be traced back to his long-standing interest in the historiographic work of Michel Foucault. Writing about the changing shape of history in his introduction to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* in 1969, Foucault qualified the difference between the "old" and "new" methodologies available to historians on the basis of altered perceptions of historical time. By historical time, Foucault referred to the external imposition of temporal periods onto the unfolding of time, rather than the subjective experience of lived duration. Whereas "old" methodological approaches emerged from a consideration of long, even "glacial" periods of history (and here Foucault indicated his distance from the work of Braudel), the so-called "new history" responded to the phenomena of lacunae, gaps, ellipses, interruptions, and displacements: to the fugitive breaks of microhistories. In Foucault's words: "The old questions of traditional analysis (what link should be made between disparate events? How can a causal succession be established between them? Is it possible to define a totality, or must one be content with reconstituting connexions?) are now being replaced by questions of another type: Which strata should be isolated from others? What types of series should be established?"[3]

Huyghe was born in Paris in 1962, and his engagement with the break described by Foucault in the 1960s and 1970s is evidently retrospective. However, the presence of this break in his projects is most keenly felt through Huyghe's open approach to knowledge and its various representations as a historical task. Such openness, which eschews totalizing narratives in favor of discontinuities and interruptions, is hostile toward understandings of time as linear and history as chronological. Foucault confronted this problem by insisting on the fundamentally evasive quality of communication: how does one sentence survive, when so many contradictions or alternatives to that sentence may exist? Uncoupled from grand narratives, Foucault's "microhistories" also generated a perhaps unexpected outcome: a renewed attention to fiction. In Latin, the original meaning of "fiction" was *fictio*—to make or produce rather than to "make up"—and traces of this etymology are evident in the double meaning of *l'histoire* as both history and story within

both Foucault's writings and Huyghe's works. If we accept that no event or record is ever fully knowable, then there are always elements that slip through the cracks, factors that are inaccessible or that remain at the moment of their inception. As a mode of translation, history necessarily incurs ellipses.

Throughout Huyghe's projects, events are consistently prohibited from reconciliation with their images. Experiences and effects are made equivalent. Foucault has described this kind of suspension as resulting in the freedom of a vast field, "made up of the totality of all effective statements (whether spoken or written), in their dispersion as events, and in the occurrence that is proper to them." By erasing all unities in favor of singularities, discontinuity is given free reign. This in turn impacts all levels of historiography, from the geology of history to the simple statement. As Foucault explained it:

> The systematic erasure of all given unities enables us first of all to restore to the statement the specificity of its occurrence. . . . A statement is always an event that neither the language (*langue*) nor the meaning can quite exhaust. It is certainly a strange event: first, because on the one hand it is linked to the gesture of writing or to the articulation of speech, and also on the other hand it opens up to itself a residual existence in the field of a memory, or in the materiality of manuscripts, books, or any other form of recording; secondly, because, like every event, it is unique, yet subject to repetition, transformation, and reactivation.[4]

This statement is not at all a stable entity, but is by its own definition a time traveler. It is also, by recourse to its status as event, the smallest marker of both memory and history.

This is the field of relations that Huyghe has turned to again and again in the making of his works. Moreover, like Foucault, Huyghe also recognizes the role of discourse and language in the formatting of events. The propriety of language is fraught with anxiety precisely because of the "evental" qualities of speech: speech is ambiguous, dialogic, hard to pin down, and yet notoriously easy to poach. Huyghe's projects take advantage of cultural aphasia, playing on the gaps between words, between transmitters and receivers, pasts and presents. Operating with a logic similar to the "and" space conceived by Gilles Deleuze, Huyghe's work traffics in moments that although wrenched from their historical moorings nonetheless bear the weight of their own, unique temporal trajectories. Not quite like a palimpsest and certainly in opposition to the simulacrum, this version of historiography is closer to what Huyghe has described as a "third memory": the displacement of an event onto its representation so as to create a new object of translation. As Huyghe remarked, "It is through the montage, the way we combine and

relate images, that we can create a representation of an event that is perhaps more precise than the event itself."[5] This perspective positions politics as gestural, and prefers to chart the poetic and theoretical permutations of discursive structures rather than mark their delineations. It stems from an acknowledgment that political and existential agency is necessarily bound to the reception and preservation of events—a process that has been complicated in recent years by the influence of mass communications technology on the "making" of contemporary history.

In attending to the complex relations between events, images, and histories within Huyghe's works, I have found it useful to conceive of contemporary history as an amalgam of three, interrelated modes of temporality: the time of the market, the time of duration, and the time of the image. The time of the market correlates to working time. Its effect is most keenly registered in the tremors of economic rationalism and the temporal strictures of industry. The time of the market finds a counterpart in the time of the image, which encompasses the relation between representations and historiography. Huyghe's works insist that rather than dealing with the "time of the image," it is now more crucial to consider the image in time. This tactic counters the amnesia of instant history or "presentism" by recognizing that there is time beyond screen time. The subjective time of duration remains central throughout this analysis. Duration dilates and expands time, with no respect for the calendar or the clock. Its presence maintains the import of subjective differentiations that intrude on distinctions between the now and the then. As historian Reinhart Koselleck has argued, "There always occurs in history more or less than that contained in the given conditions."[6] In Huyghe's works, the attention to duration disables the homogenization of time codes, leading to the production of mirrors, doubles, and ghosts.

Chapter 1 of this book tracks Huyghe's works of the mid- to late 1980s. The chapter redresses a major deficit in scholarship on Huyghe's early practice, suggesting that his initial projects were foundational for his subsequent interest in durational structures and situations. Chapter 2 engages in detail with Huyghe's concepts of "freed time" and the "open present." Ignited by a consideration of incomplete architecture as a materialization of freed time, the chapter examines the correlations between Huyghe's temporal thresholds, the structure of the remake, and unfinished structures. At the center of this analysis rests the founding of the Association of Freed Time and Huyghe's question, "How do you want the present to be drawn?" In chapter 3, this question is maintained as a backdrop for evaluating Huyghe's engagement with a "relational aesthetic," with an eye toward alternative interpretative frameworks. Focusing on a cluster of Huyghe's little-known works of the mid-1990s, the chapter plays Huyghe's interest in cinematic protocols against Nicolas Bourriaud's model of relational practice. The

legal ramifications of Huyghe's dealings with intersubjective relations are confronted in chapter 4, with specific reference to copyright and copyleft doctrine in France and America. If producing history relies on existing production values, the system of dispersal is contingent on factors that cannot be accounted for within representational formats. Chapter 5 investigates the utopian dimensions of Huyghe's projects through discussion of two of his exhibitions staged in 2004 and 2005. Utopias are typically thought of as reliant on either a radical break in time or an instigation of a time outside of time. In contrast, Huyghe's work points to another dimension of utopia that derives from its capacity to react to the contingencies of the present, to fold moments or turn them inside out. This folding of time and space is explained in chapter 6 as a properly topological gesture. For Huyghe, topology offers a means of accounting for the heterogeneity of forms over time. This chapter locates in Huyghe's works a proposal for "topological historicity," a potentially highly productive framework for evaluating the interface between historiography and conceptions of time. Although the methodology for this framework is based on the mechanics of Huyghe's projects, it may also stand to address the broader parameters by which contemporary history is now produced, enacted, and finally understood.

During the course of this book, an eclectic array of subjects are momentarily brought into alliance: moon walking, Situationist practices, speech acts, science fictions, moral rights legislation, non-sites, incomplete architecture, topology, utopias, remakes, ellipses, and celebrations. The terrain of discussion is populated with characters both fictional and nonfictional including Snow White, Al Pacino, Annlee, Gilles Deleuze, Anna Sanders, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Chris Marker, Antonio Negri, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Professor Lindenbrock, Guy Debord, George W. Bush, Robert Smithson, Alfred Hitchcock, John Giorno, Dan Graham, François Roche, Jules Verne, and Edgar Allan Poe. A possible soundtrack might feature compositions by Iannis Xenakis, Pan Sonic, Angelo Badalamenti, John Cage, Edgar Varèse, Claude Debussy, Bernard Herrmann, and Erik Satie. There will be no attempt made to reconcile the diversity of this constellation of characters in orbit around Huyghe. The relations between the figures, however, are of primary interest and govern the direction of the narrative.


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CHAPTER 1

EARLY WORK

The year is 1984. Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* has just been translated into English, Michel Foucault is dying of an AIDS-related illness in a Paris hospital, Fredric Jameson's "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism" is published in the *New Left Review*, Run-DMC release their first hit album, and hip-hop goes both mainstream and platinum in a matter of weeks. Pierre Huyghe is enrolled at the École nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (ENSAD) in Paris, where he is studying set design, printmaking, photography, performance, and video production, as well as taking mandatory life drawing classes. He is twenty-two years old. Presented with a curriculum based around interdisciplinary teamwork and group classes, Huyghe takes to collaborative production with ease. Rarely working alone, he shares a studio with his friends and exhibits and works alongside his peers. Art history is something of an absent player within his studies—Huyghe has admitted he knew "nothing about art" when he started the course, and that he was not particularly keen on critical theory either: "I was more into music."[1] Curator Nicolas Bourriaud also remembers Huyghe at this time as preferring music and activity to theory, and it may well have been this approach to art as activity that fed Huyghe's burgeoning passion for cultural activism and punk aesthetics.[2] Many of his early art projects were guerrilla-style urban events produced largely illegally on the streets of Paris using readily available cheap and recycled materials. The very few object-based works that did make it into the gallery system were rarely exhibited more than once. It is then not surprising that critical commentary on Huyghe's productions during this time is confined to

a handful of reviews in French street magazines that, in archival terms, are as fugitive as the majority of the pieces themselves.

During his first year at art school, Huyghe together with several other young Parisian artists, including Nina Childress (the singer from the punk band Lucrate Milk) and Claude Closky, founded a group of what Huyghe has described as "very bad painters." "There were seven or eight of us," he recalls, "we did actions in public space, and we worked a lot on urban signage."[3] Other members of the group included Bla+Bla+Bla, Manhu, Ox, Trois Carrés, and Jean Faucheur, all of whom were working in the streets. Together, they branded themselves "Les Frères Ripoulin," a *jeu de mots* that meshes "Ripolin"—the common French house paint—with "Ripou" (from *pourri*: "rotten").[4] Embarking on guerrilla missions at night around the streets of Paris, Les Frères Ripoulin illegally pasted large rolls of painted craft paper over existing public billboards: "In Paris there are lots of billboards that are 4 by 3 meters . . . the television format but in the street. . . . We used to . . . just roll up the paper . . . and then make some drawings . . . at night. In the early morning, we'd glue them on the billboards."[5] The work had a limited lifespan, frequently not surviving for more than a few days before being removed or papered over by city workers.

Although the graphic style of Les Frères Ripoulin bore some resemblance to the American school of new figuration in the early 1980s—colorful mural-sized compositions overlaid with "primitive" figurative motifs and cut-up texts—conceptually the group was more closely aligned with the Nouveaux Réalistes, a small band of Parisian artists who worked with everyday junk, torn-up posters, and urban detritus in the 1960s. Founded by the charismatic French art critic Pierre Restany in Yves Klein's apartment on October 27, 1960, the Nouveaux Réalistes were seasoned pranksters who delighted in post-Duchampian interventions.

Les Frères Ripoulin's debut group exhibition was held at the Galerie du Jour Agnès b., in 1984. In the press, the group was lauded as "friends of New York graffiti, readers of comics, nurtured in the luminescence of the television screen with a passion for rock and cinema."[6] One year later, on May 15, 1985, they held their first "official" graffiti exhibition in a variety of public spaces around Paris, including the Opéra and the Bourse. The Mitterrand government's sanction of what just a few years earlier would have been deemed vandalism was no doubt influenced by the wide-ranging coverage of *peintre-taggeurs* and graffiti artists in both the French and international mainstream media. In 1981, *Libération* published a feature entitled "American Graffiti: TAG," which profiled the forefathers of the New York graffiti scene, including Futura 2011, TAKI 183, and SAMO aka Jean-Michel Basquiat. The follow-up story covered the link between graffiti and hip-hop music. Both articles were released just prior to the opening of the Centre Georges Pompidou's

blockbuster exhibition "Graffiti et société," which ran for one sell-out season before making a national tour of France.[7]

The public's enthusiastic reception of "Graffiti et société" was matched by a growing interest in graffiti and street art practices worldwide. In 1981, René Ricard took the cover of *Artforum* for his article on Basquiat, Keith Haring, and the New York graffiti scene.[8] The release of documentary films such as *Style Wars* (1983) and *Wild Style* (1984) further outed the underground to an increasingly international audience. Meanwhile in Paris, Michel de Certeau was busy romanticizing the art of the subway while moonlighting in the style of the Allen Ginsberg:

> We could mention the fleeting images, yellowish green and metallic blue calligraphies that howl without raising their voices and emblazon themselves on the subterranean passages of the city, "embroideries" composed of letters and numbers, perfect gestures of violence painted with a pistol, Shivas made of written characters, dancing graphics whose fleeting apparitions are accompanied by the rumble of subway trains: New York graffiti.[9]

Huyghe's activation of this realm provokes associations with other artists working with graffiti, culture-jamming, and street-postering in the late 1970s and 1980s, including Bazooka, Group Material, Barbara Kruger, ACT-UP, the San Diego Border Art Ensemble, the Guerrilla Girls, and, later, Felix Gonzalez-Torres. Parallels might also be drawn between Huyghe's projects and community-based public art initiatives prevalent in the mid-1980s: projects that positioned intervention as *the* paramount political strategy in the face of conservative governance (Thatcher and Reagan). However, for the members of Les Frères Ripoulin it was music—primarily punk, new wave, and hip-hop—that proved the most consistently inspirational model for their projects. Likening themselves to a rock band, the group's interests in urban settings, public performance, and anti-institutionalism had their roots in a shared punk aesthetic.

It was not long before the activities of Les Frères Ripoulin came to the attention of well-known New York art dealer Tony Shafrazi. Shafrazi's reputation as both an art vandal and a street-art patron was already established, largely due to his infamous 1972 vandalism of Picasso's *Guernica*, then on loan at the Museum of Modern Art,[10] but also for his patronage of Haring and Basquiat. Shafrazi masterminded the meeting between his New York protégés and Les Frères Ripoulin in 1985, inviting the Parisians to exhibit at his gallery from January 12 to February 9, 1986. The poster for the exhibition resembles the worst of 1980s album covers: a studio photo of the artists, clad in predominantly fluorescent outfits and striking a series of zany poses. "Ripoulin" is emblazoned in multicolored letters across the top of the page, decorated with dots, dashes, and squiggles.

The original lineup of Les Frères Ripoulin disbanded around 1987. Huyghe was the first to leave, admitting that he wasn't really interested in the painting so much as he was in the creation of actions or events that unfolded in time. As he later confessed, "the thing that was interesting . . . was first to have an image in the public space for a certain amount of time, creating a relationship with the environment intuitively, and then second the notion of a kind of 'branded aesthetics.'"[11] This interest in branded aesthetics has been described elsewhere by Huyghe as an investment in "formats," a term that Huyghe applies equally to Hollywood movies, pop bands, artists' retrospectives, TV news, and the "private residence on the tree-lined street: this is a format as well."[12] In the catalog for Huyghe's 1988 group exhibition at Galleria Fac-Simile, in Milan, curator Liliana Albertazzi wrote: "Xavier Veilhan, Pierre Bismuth, and Pierre Huyghe . . . do not place themselves outside of a system to denounce it; they are on the inside, and devote themselves, from the inside, to resolving the problem of the image."[13] What Huyghe kept from this period was the instant appearance of an event in public space, and a mode of collective practice.

Huyghe's contribution to his next exhibition was *Gore* (1989), a polyresin cast of the word "Gore," whose form emulated the definition of the word: bright red, dripping with blood—visual onomatopoeia. Although the sculpture instantly evokes both Joseph Kosuth's text-based work and Ed Ruscha's monosyllabic canvases of the 1960s, as a noun, verb, and object, *Gore* needed to be experienced in both time and space. The legibility of the word was dependent on the viewer's placement in the gallery. Perspective was therefore central to understanding the sign. Huyghe referred to the work as a "misleading sign," and conceived it as a proposal for thinking through problems.[14] This is a proposal for thinking through problems arising from the dichotomy of vision and intellect in the perception of the familiar. In his subsequent work, this interest in perspective, or the interaction between the ocular and the intellect, was revived as an entry point for exploring relations between received and perceived information.

1990: OFFICIAL BEGINNINGS

It was not until 1990 that Huyghe began to establish the network of collaborators that would seriously impact the tenor and direction of his practice throughout the next decade. This is also the year that Huyghe now regards as the "official beginning" of his practice, with his work attracting increased attention from a number of prominent French curators and writers, most notably Nicolas Bourriaud and Eric

Troncy. Bourriaud and Troncy included Huyghe's sculpture *Gore* in their group exhibition "French Kiss (A Talk Show)" at Halle Sud, Geneva, in 1990. Most of the artists included in "French Kiss" were in their early thirties or late twenties, and most were well known to Huyghe. In terms of Huyghe's practice, "French Kiss" was significant for two reasons. Firstly, the exhibition brought him together with artists Philippe Parreno and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, who were later to become key collaborators. Secondly, it was the first time that Bourriaud, in his capacity as a curator, had selected Huyghe's work for exhibition.

Parreno and Gonzalez-Foerster were art school undergraduates in Grenoble at the time, and the city was fast becoming known for the collaborative, collective practice propagated by its younger artists and curators. As Huyghe recalled, "There were a lot of reviews at the beginning [of the 1990s] on these people from Grenoble—Dominique, Pierre Joseph, Philippe."[15] Huyghe was very interested in what they were doing. Under the mentorship of artists like Ange Leccia and Daniel Buren, students such as Parreno, Gonzalez-Foerster, Pierre Joseph, and Bernard Joisten were privy to a mode of artistic practice that privileged collaboration and group management over solo production and studio-based work. They were also acutely aware of the work completed by the older generation of Grenoble artists on questions of cinema, collaboration, and narrative during the 1970s. The ideas of Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Pierre Beauviala, and Anne-Marie Miéville were, as Tom McDonough has noted, particularly influential in the undergraduate program at Grenoble's art school. "Around personalities like Leccia," McDonough writes, "young artists at the school took up the questions of cinema—or perhaps we should say questions of cinema(s)—and brought them into the domain of art. One of the most significant areas of critical investigation was modes of production: among these students we find a proliferation of collaborations and collective work, reminiscent of the group effort involved in any cinematic project."[16] It was precisely this collaborative working method that Huyghe, Gonzalez-Foerster, and Parreno shared when they first met.

"French Kiss" also furthered Huyghe's relationship with Nicolas Bourriaud, the precocious twenty-five-year-old Parisian correspondent for *Flash Art* who had just been granted curatorial control of the French Pavilion at the 1990 Venice Biennale. Bourriaud's brief text for "French Kiss" took the form of a diarized first-person address: a collection of notes toward the research and development of the exhibition, the relationships between the characters, the writing of the script. It bore all the hallmarks of his later writings on relational aesthetics: an insistence on the personal coupled with a strong interest in process. Bourriaud later included Huyghe's work in the 1992 exhibition "Il faut construire l'hacienda" (co-curated with Eric Troncy) and in the major 1996 exhibition "Traffic," held

at CAPC in Bordeaux. On paper, Bourriaud and Huyghe's relationship at this time appears close. However, both Bourriaud's and Huyghe's recollections of the period indicate otherwise. The curator later admitted that Huyghe's early work was of limited appeal;[17] and as Huyghe notes, "I didn't . . . interest Bourriaud as an artist when I was starting. The only works that made Bourriaud interested . . . were probably *La Toison d'or* [1993], some billboards perhaps, and then *Remake* [1995]."[18] All of these pieces were produced prior to Huyghe's representation by a commercial gallery.

Huyghe's first dealer was Roger Pailhas, and his premier exhibition at Pailhas's Marseille gallery was in 1994. With a stock of artists including the enormously influential Daniel Buren as well as Lawrence Weiner, Dan Graham, Jeff Wall, Jimmie Durham, and Rainer Ganahl, Pailhas was a highly respected dealer with significant international prestige and a recognized taste for conceptual practice. By the end of the 1980s, he also had cultivated a strong reputation for supporting local and emerging practitioners, particularly in Marseille, where his first gallery was founded in 1986. Huyghe was one of the youngest artists that Pailhas had selected for representation, and he remained with the dealer until 1998, contributing over fifty works during this period to the gallery's stock before signing with Marian Goodman Gallery in New York and then Paris, and Esther Schipper in Berlin.

I first visited Roger Pailhas's Marseille gallery in 2004, the year of his sudden death. It had been only a few months since the funeral, and the future of the gallery and indeed of Pailhas's entire collection was still undecided. The gallery was now closed to the public. Its white, warehouse-style spaces were dark and conspicuously empty. Packaged works of art lay stacked in brown cardboard boxes on the concrete floors of the two spacious exhibition rooms. Pailhas's office had not been touched. Mounted on the wall behind the reception desk was one of Huyghe's posters. The large-scale color photograph depicted two well-trodden paths weaving in opposite directions up a dry, grassy hillside toward a high horizon line—indentations worn down by footsteps over time. Entitled *Or*, the work is a relic of an intervention organized by Huyghe in San Francisco in 1995 in which a secondary route was manufactured adjacent to the original path.[19] Huyghe's photograph of the event refuses to demarcate one path as "fiction" and the other as "real." *Or* reminds us that there is no space, no inhabitable landscape, located "in between" reality and fiction. It also delights in the idea of a journey without a destination, reveling in the "strangeness of a path that leads nowhere."[20] This mode of thinking neatly sidesteps Jean Baudrillard's notion of the simulacrum that still, even as it destroys binary oppositions, can only ever operate in reaction to a dichotomy of authenticity and falsehood. Huyghe bypasses such oppositional discourse in order to direct his attention to the slippage between presentation and re-presentation.



Figure 1.1
Pierre Huyghe, *Or*, intervention, San Francisco, 1995.
Offset printed poster, 67 × 100.5 cm, 1999.

All of Huyghe's work at Galerie Roger Pailhas bore witness to this kind of investigation. The earliest piece in stock was *Paris Boum Boum* (1990), a hefty, clothbound book containing every issue of the eponymous Parisian weekly newspaper published in 1990. Still in circulation, *Paris Boum Boum* is a free publication that features hundreds of small advertisements for goods and services posted by individuals and corporations. Huyghe's formal presentation of the fifty-two editions of classifieds operated as a timekeeper or diary in its singular compression of data produced during a given period. As a timekeeper, however, its workings were perverse because the subjects of preservation are announcements *for* (trans) actions rather than documentations of the actions themselves. The time stored paradoxically remains in the future tense, as records of proposals for hypothetical relations and commercial transactions (such as lawn mowing, mechanics, garage sales, beauticians, singles pages). Meanwhile, the radical transformation of the media's public function—from cheap, throwaway street magazine to rarefied "history" book—makes for a simple but effective play on the difficulties in separating information from context. The work maintains the content of its source material but displaces it into another form.

MALL MYTHS: *TRAJET* AND *LA TOISON D'OR*

In the early part of the 1990s, Huyghe began to incorporate these kinds of displacements into public, event-based work. His 1992 project *Trajet* took the form of a street performance organized as part of a group exhibition with Galerie Sabrina Grassi in Paris. Prior to the performance, Huyghe found a large service van with transparent glass panels and installed a treadmill inside. Lit up like a shop window, the van was driven through the streets of Paris at night. Its cargo was a sole performer: a man who slowly walked on the treadmill as the truck cruised the streets. A photograph of the event was later reproduced as a printed poster, displayed in tandem with a map of Paris on which the route of the van was traced in black line.

While the piece clearly signaled an investment in Situationist practice of the late 1950s and 1960s, it was the map that most clearly betrayed Huyghe's debts to his predecessors. The Situationists were fascinated with systems of geography, cartography, and topography; as Huyghe later remarked, "the Situationists drew a *lot* of maps."[21] For Guy Debord, mapping was first and foremost about obstructing the relationship between cartography and power. Mapping produces a simulacrum of space that does not exist: maps are texts that naturalize power relations by freezing the unpredictability of social relations in regimented visual code. As texts,



Figure 1.2
Pierre Huyghe, *Trajet*, intervention, Paris, 1992.
Offset printed poster, 67 × 95 cm, 1999.

however, maps are also optimal subjects for *détournement*: "The production of psychogeographic maps, or even the introduction of alterations such as more or less arbitrarily transposing maps of two different regions, can contribute to clarifying certain wanderings that express not subordination to randomness but complete *insubordination* to habitual influences."[22] An analogous logic was at work in *Trajet*. Although the piece was seemingly imbued with a sense of urban drift, *Trajet*'s kinetics were both prescribed and prescriptive. The route taken by the truck was determined by streets normally followed by the performer during his daily commute to work—it was, as such, exemplary of those kinds of psychogeographical trajectories identified by Debord that drew on an individual's knowledge of quotidian space in order to navigate alienated urban terrain.

However, in comparison to the visually sutured cartography of the Situationists, the map Huyghe produced of the route was formally quite "straight": it preserved the geography of Paris (no archipelagos here); it charted a trajectory that could easily be replicated by the viewer; and it mapped a circuit in a recognizable public sphere determined by an individual's relation to sites of personal significance (such as home, work). If, as Michel de Certeau has remarked, "history begins at ground level, with footsteps," then *Trajet* neutralized the notion of pedestrian productivity and freedom as represented by both the *dérive* and the historical figure of the *flâneur*.[23] Moreover, by tying movement to technologically contingent forms (the van, the treadmill), Huyghe eliminated the revolutionary potential of wandering. Simultaneously, he constructed both a situation—a temporality that cradled an action—and a literal spectacle: the glass box resembled a shop window, and the performer a mannequin behind a screen.[24] It would seem then that both the aesthetic and the political dimensions of *Trajet* refused alignment with Debord's much earlier call for a revolutionary annihilation of spectacle culture.

But it is in Huyghe's *timing* of the operation that this reading is complicated. Le Corbusier regarded commuting time as a "surplus labor which correspondingly reduces the amount of free time."[25] In Huyghe's remake of a commute to work, surplus labor reappears as free time. The operation then initially answers Debord's earlier call to "replace travel as an adjunct to work with travel as pleasure."[26] On closer inspection, however, "replacement" does not adequately characterize Huyghe's approach. In a process closer to layering than updating, *Trajet* overwrites travel as surplus labor with travel as pleasure, while preserving both ends of the spectrum in the process. So whereas Debord argues that the spectacle replaces the "reality of time by the advertisement of time"[27] (that is, the time of consumption), Huyghe's promotional operation is mapped onto the real time of daily events.

Perhaps this is what Philippe Parreno was responding to when he characterized the piece as "a strange means of generating time without generating

history."[28] For Parreno, *Trajet*'s remake of the pedestrian's past trajectories disabled the inscription of "new" historical action in favor of pure duration. Although Parreno's remark is seductive, is it actually possible to generate time without generating history? Is it even possible to generate time? And precisely what does "history," for Parreno, denote? I would suggest that *Trajet* plays with a *sense* of time in order to disrupt ideology's symptomatic relation with existing temporal systems: an intervention into what Debord would have referred to as "irreversible unified time," or "the time of the world market."[29] Slippages in duration are invoked in the physical discrepancies between footsteps, treadmill, and vehicle—each step would literally span a distance of several meters if measured at ground speed—while the temporal function of these slippages is further skewed by Huyghe's layering of freed time across the field of surplus labor.

History does have a place in this interpretation. Instead of refusing the historical gesture, *Trajet* inscribed historicity at the level of the everyday in its performance of quotidian activity as an event. It unshackled history from the "irreversible unified time" reified by the "class owners of the economy" (to plunder Debord's lexicon), and refashioned the time of labor into freed or liberated time. Agency was relocated to familiar terrain and placed at the responsibility of the individual. Among Huyghe's porous interplay of temporalities, there is a discernible desire to curb or divert the symbiotic relation between historiography and power. It is this element that cuts through reified conceptions of history as "the time of things" regulated by the market to signal an awareness of history as flux—an endlessly unfolding work in progress with infinite permutations.[30] If, as Walter Benjamin once quipped, "history dissolves into images," in *Trajet* this dissolution was hampered by the deployment of what Huyghe has called "connective" images—images that serve as links in a chain of representation rather than as means to isolate the weight of singular moments.[31] We might visualize this process as a prickly network. Rather than melting into each other, the outlines of the links remain as aftereffects—a host of spiky, shiny shadows that connect the photograph of the action to its cartographic representation and again to the performance itself.

A similar kind of connective interlacing between image and event informed the development of Huyghe's *La Toison d'or* (The Golden Fleece), staged in a public park in Dijon in 1993. Huyghe's description of the event addressed the history of both the city and the park in terms of an associated symbolic order:

> *La Toison d'or* was a medieval order whose coat of arms depicted characters with the heads of animals; this was later adopted by the town of Dijon as its own coat of arms. *La Toison d'or* was also the name of an amusement park. After the park

> closed, the shopping centre which replaced it retained this name. At the tourist information office in Dijon, leaflets announce an event and illustrate pictures of what there will be to see even before the event has taken place. A contemporary fable is to be acted out at the foot of suburban buildings; a group of teenagers wearing animal heads typical of the characters one encounters in amusement parks will wander around a structure in a playground. The teenagers introduce themselves into the setting and re-enact the town's history in real time, from . . . within the symbols. *La Toison d'or* brings together and reverses time and history around the present moment, a real-time situation.[32]

This statement is typical of the mininarratives that Huyghe consistently crafts to accompany images of his work. These snippets of text stand in for the events described. They mix formal tenets (for example, costume, mise-en-scène) with a brief narrative description, written either in the present tense or future tense (never in the past). Each précis is accompanied by a limited number of photographs that serve as "visualizations" of the work. These photographs are not, importantly, the saleable objects of Huyghe's art (Huyghe has largely resisted the commodification of still images in his practice) but are rather subsidiary manifestations of temporal occurrences. It is also often difficult to ascertain whether the images are of rehearsals for an event to come or are documentary evidence of an event's past occurrence. The cover of the Dijon flyer, for example, features an image of a teenager wearing an animal mask against the backdrop of an urban playground, taken before Huyghe staged his intervention, and used as an advertisement for the subsequent public performance. The image's status as record thus remains questionable.

La Toison d'or operated diachronically in its layering of different temporalities. The far past (the medieval order) and the recent past (the amusement park and the mall that both adopted the original name) were brought into alliance in real time as a means of "reversing time and history around the present moment."[33] The coalescence was produced not simply as a means of bringing the past into dialogue with the present. Rather, the actors in the event were made to embody the emblems of a story whose functions had changed, in part for economic reasons. As prior employees of the closed amusement park, the group of teenagers were all unemployed at the time Huyghe invited them to participate in the event. The intervention was then populated by figures whose historical and economic viability had shifted over time. Characters previously employed by the amusement park were reanimated as a new tourist attraction that pointed toward the ancient past.

In some respects, Huyghe's project resonates with conceptual art's struggle in the 1960s to come to terms with the malalignment of direct and retrospective





Figure 1.3-1.4
Pierre Huyghe, *La Toison d'or*, intervention, Dijon, 1993.

levels of communication (Kosuth's work is an example). To Huyghe, however, it seems that such reconciliation is and always was doomed to fail—and that this failure should be celebrated as a necessary catalyst for other unworkable endings. As Thomas Hirschhorn once quipped, "Art and making artwork are utopian. But a utopia never works. It is not supposed to. When it works, it is a utopia no longer."[34] Huyghe's engagement with failure as a positive component of art making was clearly spelled out in his first major solo exhibition catalog in 2000: "Huyghe's work concentrates not only one-sidedly on objects, aesthetic references or the subjectivizing processes of Conceptual Art. . . . Wherever visual language is translated into a different category of language, the impossibility of obtaining a finalized 'perfect' text is inevitably the theme."[35] In *La Toison d'or*, the "impossibility" of producing a final text is communicated by blocking the transfer of the event to an image-based format. It is also important to note that Huyghe's production and regulation of the secondary commentary on his own work actually emulates (or doubles) the subject of the pieces themselves. Huyghe's projects often superimpose narratives on temporally discrete periods, overlaying myths and histories within particular geographic locations. But they also envision the substance of events as absolutely untranslatable and tied to their moment of occurrence. Although still developing at the time of *Trajet* and *La Toison d'or*, these considerations were reworked more fully in Huyghe's series of billboards, the first of which was produced one year after his staging of the event at Dijon.

THE ACTUAL AND THE VIRTUAL: HUYGHE'S BILLBOARDS

In the early months of 1994, Huyghe came across a newly established construction site near the Paris Métro's Barbès-Rochechouart station. Above the site was a billboard owned by the Dauphin company. Due to its large size and elevation, the advertisement was visible to pedestrians well before its location was physically reached.[36] It was this that piqued Huyghe's interest in the site, coupled with his previous investment in spaces for repetitive action—day after day, the same employees returned to the same workplace, in uniform, to perform their duties. One weekend, Huyghe trespassed onto the grounds with a group of five people whom he paid to perform the roles of the workmen. Costumes and hard hats were provided. In an interview with Françoise Chaloin, Huyghe explained, "It was very important for me that it was actors playing that part. I could easily have taken workmen busily at work but I wasn't interested in playing with the mirror effect. I used actors because I wanted to . . . introduce a distance and at the same

time link it to a situation."[37] A photograph of the event was made and printed to the scale of the billboard. The characters on the print appeared as life-size.

The following week, Huyghe returned to the site and illegally pasted this printed poster across the Dauphin billboard. He made one final photograph of the scene with the actors and their representation on site together. The figures pictured on the billboard appear more theatrical than their counterparts on the ground below: the foreman is reading from a piece of paper, one arm extended as if parodying a dramatic monologue. The rest of the cast, blocked evenly in the foreground as if members of a Greek chorus, brandish their tools like props. When the "real" workmen returned to the construction site the following Monday, the performance of their profession was clearly visible above them. The desired effect on the public was to confuse the identities of the workers and performers—and to all accounts, the results were successful. As Huyghe noted, "In Barbès, people were watching the workmen—present on both the building site and the poster—like actors. Reality became suspect. Are they extras? Am I myself an extra?"[38] The image was printed as a large-scale poster, described by Huyghe as "a reconstruction of an activity."[39] This was the final work of *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart*. The billboard itself survived only a few days before it was pasted over with corporate advertising.

In a 1997 review for *Artforum*, Olivier Zahm described Huyghe's billboards as illuminating a split between lived experience and its representation:

> Huyghe erected billboards picturing workers at the construction sites beneath them, thus superimposing two realities: the actual (the construction in progress) and the recorded (the blown-up image). Was the sign illustrating the activities at the building site? Or were the construction workers assuming roles suggested by the billboard? Huyghe's art inhabits this vertiginous place between what is and what might be, continually emphasizing the impossibility of separating lived experience from our representations of it.[40]

There are some pertinent points here—particularly the spatial invocation of vertiginous possibilities—and Huyghe was indeed suggesting that representation is a live format or an experiential process. However, the final print of *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart*—featuring the billboard *in situ*—was actually photographed from a different position than the image on the billboard. Hence rather than mirroring the site with its representation, Huyghe's poster aligns two dissimilar viewpoints within the same image; two different visual *and temporal* perspectives are juxtaposed within the same frame.[41] This transversal of not only site/image or event/representation but a mode of temporality was common to all of



Figure 1.5
Pierre Huyghe, *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart*, billboard, Paris, 1994. Offset printed poster, 80 × 100 cm, 1996.

the billboards Huyghe produced in the 1990s. The same inflection can be seen in *Bar du peuple* (1995), installed in Marseille; *Little Story* (1995), in Amsterdam; *Géant Casino* (1995), in the car park of a Montpellier shopping mall; and *Campus* (1995), on the grounds of the Université de Montpellier.

Though part of a series, *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart* is exceptional in that it alone presents the figures on the billboard and the figures on site as workers in identical costumes. This uniformity results in an absolute interchangeability between the subjects represented. Effectively, this works to block spectatorial involvement. The space of the construction site is a closed arena to the bystander: the action and representation are literally fenced in, both conceptually—the loop between event and image—and physically, by the makeshift fences around the grounds and the Dauphin frame. The resulting feedback determines the circuit of temporality played out in the work. *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart* binds the present to the just past.[42] Simultaneously, the exchange between the two images across the one frame splits time by signaling two possible pathways for future progression.

Gilles Deleuze has characterized images that succeed in balancing the weight of such disruptions as "crystal images." A notion first developed in *Cinéma II: L'image-temps* (1985), the crystal image is described as "the point of indiscernability of two distinct images, the actual and the virtual. What we see in the crystal is time itself, a bit of time in the pure state, the very distinction between the two images which keeps reconstituting itself."[43] Deleuze borrowed the terms "actual image" and "virtual image" from Henri Bergson, who, in *Matière et mémoire* (1896), used the terms to account for processes of recognition and perception. For Bergson, the "virtual image" was an effect of the intrusion of memories onto the object of apprehension in the present moment. Bergson also referred to the virtual image as an afterimage, a "memory of the present."[44] Although the virtual image is a component of all perception, it is hard to trace and difficult to observe. Indeed, Bergson admitted that the "afterimage" of the past in the present remains largely undetectable, and it was only during moments of "false recognition" that it might come to the fore. "False recognition" (*la fausse reconnaissance*) generates an awareness of the doubling of the present by perception and memory. It is precipitated by the feeling of déjà vu.

In *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart*, the point of "indiscernability," or the recognition of the virtual image, arises from the coexistence of the event (real) and its representation in the billboard (actual). This coalescence affects an expansion of the process that in Bergson's theory of the virtual image occurs almost instantaneously. When the virtual image is recognized, the memory of the present is accompanied by a perception of the memory. This statement is also true for

Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart in so far as it aptly characterizes *part*, but not all, of the circuit Huyghe establishes between the actual image and its virtual counterpart. What is missing from this analogy is the role Huyghe assigns to the real. While Deleuze's and Bergson's theories of the virtual image might comfortably encompass the formal workings of a double movement, they leave little room for alien elements that might disrupt diachronic flow.

Huyghe's second billboard, *Rue Longivic* (1994), infiltrated the double movement of his first billboard by pushing the actual image and its shadow, the virtual, into a game of chance. Rather than working on a direct correlation between the present moment and the memory of the present, Huyghe introduced an alternate time code. The initial process of production was the same: as with *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart*, Huyghe installed his billboard on the site that it depicted, in this case a suburban street corner in Dijon. And once again, the same perspectival collapse seen in the poster of *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart* appears. On the billboard, a woman is pictured standing on the corner. She is about to lean down and grasp something on the sidewalk. She hesitates, her hand hovering above the object. Yet unlike in *Chantier Barbès-Rochechouart*, in *Rue Longivic* Huyghe does not replace this actor with a worker counterpart when taking the final photograph. Instead, he matches her with a random passerby.

Huyghe's incorporation of a bystander into the scene was a deliberate strategy designed to cast the real into doubt. The passerby is pictured walking away from the camera, shopping bag in hand, on the street below the billboard. Her subdued clothing is tonally similar to the costume worn by the actor displayed above. Although the chromatic continuity lends a formal equivalence to the otherwise unmistakably singular figures, the equivalence is entirely dissimilar to that of the uniformed actors in *Chantier Barbès-Rouchechouart*.[45] *Rue Longivic* circumvents the closed loop between act and image by fixing the afterimage of the action in the public domain. This circumvention is staged in such a way that, to return to Deleuze, both the actual and virtual images "form one and the same scene where the characters belong to the real and yet play a role."[46] In his last billboard, *Club* (1999), produced for the Liverpool Billboard Project, Huyghe abandoned the use of actors altogether and photographed a young couple he encountered randomly on the street. The curators wrote:

> Standing at the corner of Slater Street and Seel Street in the heart of the city centre, [Pierre Huyghe] discusses his desire to photograph an event taking place in front of the panel upon which the image would later be installed. Pierre approaches a couple and explains his honest intentions. He asks them to kiss. The young man is slightly reluctant. The young woman is curious at the



Figure 1.6
Pierre Huyghe, *Rue Longivic*, billboard, Dijon, 1994.
Offset printed poster, 67 × 86.5 cm, 1999.

> thought of appearing on a twenty foot billboard. *It's our first kiss of the day,* he mumbles shyly.[47]

This exclusive focus on actual passersby, or "extras"—a movement away from theatrical actors to those that *take action*—was the culmination of Huyghe's billboard series.

As Huyghe later explained, "You can be the viewer of the poster and compare it with the reality playing out nearby, with the context of the image in which people move, just as you can unknowingly become an extra in the scene, or even, more rarely, you can become its agent—an actor."[48] I am reminded here of Jorge Luis Borges's "The Garden of Forking Paths," one of Huyghe's favorite stories. In this parable of temporality, Borges portrays the universe as "a growing, dizzying net of divergent, convergent and parallel times . . . which approached one another, forked, broke off, or were unaware of each other for centuries."[49] Embracing these infinite possibilities, "time forks perpetually toward innumerable futures"—not one of which is false, but all of which are contradictory. Huyghe's billboards, like his earlier work *Or*, are balanced at the junction of one such fork, wherein the splitting of a single path allegorizes time's lascivious promiscuity.

As a form of temporal "game playing," Huyghe's project was also indebted to the games of chance designed by George Brecht and Robert Filliou in the 1960s. Huyghe holds Brecht and Filliou in high regard, and their *Game of the Conditional* (1967) seems a pertinent antecedent for Huyghe's later work. The *Game of the Conditional* was based on the deconstruction of logical propositions. Sentences following an "if, then" structure were produced collaboratively. Each player took turns in supplying either the cause or the effect of the proposition without seeing what the other had written. The correlative conjunctions (then/and) appeared as breaks that indicate the potential for an alternate ending. Just as Brecht and Filliou played with the structure of language in order to highlight arbitrary causality, Huyghe turned to the sequencing of images and actions over time to invoke the "forking paths" of potential.

The linguistic implications of this process were dissected in Huyghe's 1995 works *Through* and *L'Écrivain public*, initially presented in the exhibition "L'Usage de l'interprète" (The Use of the Interpreter) at FRAC Montpellier. Although he was still living in Paris, in this year Huyghe's work was exhibited mostly outside the capital, and the FRAC network was particularly supportive of his practice. Huyghe characterized two of the works exhibited at Montpellier as models for an alternate use of a public profession: "I asked a public writer for two things. In the first, *Through*, the writer informed me, through the letters which she sent, about the contents of various dailies and magazines; in



Figure 1.7
Pierre Huyghe, *Little Story*, billboard, Amsterdam, 1995.
Offset printed poster, 67 × 100.5 cm, 1999.

L'Écrivain public, she wrote down everything she could observe, hear or see within a time period which we had defined" (the opening of the exhibition).[50] In the gallery, the dailies and magazines were exhibited in a box on the floor. The three letters interpreting these publications were handwritten in French, and presented with their envelopes. Each began with "Cher Pierre . . . " and contained personal details as to the writer's context ("it's sunny outside, I'm sitting here writing to you on the patio") as well as summaries of different news items ("In Tokyo, meanwhile, it's been reported that . . ").[51] Everything was in the present tense.

A decade after this exhibition, I reassembled the various components of *Through* in the back room of Roger Pailhas's empty gallery in Marseille. With its formal simplicity, *Through* recalls the formal presentation of Douglas Huebler's propositions or On Kawara's postcards. That Huyghe immediately linked his experiment in translating and negotiating raw data with the politics of museological display was particularly clear. Whereas *Through* personalized public information in a discreet, private address (the form of the letter), in *L'Écrivain public* each page of observations, once written, was immediately made publicly available for those in the gallery to read. The letter writer wrote, "The room is already occupied. Occupied? Or rather, hired for a few scattered people who hardly dare move around. It is very distinctly lit, clear and warm at the same time; on a single wall, the one on the right level with the staircase, are a series of photographs. At this moment, the space seems bleak . . . silence. A group asks who I am. 'A letter-writer.' Laconically."[52] The entire transcription of the exhibition opening was subsequently preserved as a work in its own right.

HENRI BERGSON'S CONE OF MEMORY

"I was particularly interested," Huyghe noted, "in the exact way in which she used something public as a starting point and then changed it with her own identity. She is a kind of double cone."[53] Huyghe here refers to Henri Bergson's metaphor for time and duration, the "complete state of coexistence" between the past and the present.[54] Bergson famously visualized the relation between memory, the past, and the present as an inverted cone, in which the most distant memories are situated at the base of the cone and the subject's intersection with the present moment is at the tip.[55] The "plane" of present time is represented by a square on which the tip of the cone rests, while the circular sections of the cone, marked off at various distances from the tip, represent the movement required to bring a past memory

into present consciousness. The cone resembles a telescope. Rotating the rings of time brings the past into focus.

If Bergson's diagram initially appears to be a fairly straightforward analogy for the process of memory, the inverted cone actually implicates a very specific relation between the past and the present. Bergson visualized the past as constantly in contact with the present (at the tip of the cone). This contact logically implies that the past predates the present—the content of the cone is always in a dynamic relation with the subject as memories "fall" toward the present moment from the edges of the form. However, on closer inspection, the intervals inscribed on the sides of the cone also suggest that the whole of the past is accessible at every moment, albeit in contracted or expanded form. In Bergson's cone of memory, the past and the present conjoin.

Deleuze later used Bergson's model to develop his idea of the "living present."[56] The living present is a kind of time in which "the past and the future do not designate instants distinct from a supposed present instant, but rather the dimensions of the present itself . . . the present does not have to go outside of itself in order to pass from past to future. Rather, the living present goes from the past to the future which it constitutes in time."[57] A similar temporal rhythm was already implicit in Bergson's suggestion that the past "cannot be known as something past unless we follow and adopt the movement by which it expands into a present image, thus emerging from obscurity in the light of day."[58] The emergence of the past in the present is dynamic. For Bergson, such mobility is related to duration, which he defines as a synthesis of image, matter, and movement. Through this synthesis Bergson went on to develop a theory of time that accounts for the coexistence of different levels of duration within the "whole" of time. As Deleuze later noted, "Bergson's always saying that Time is the Open . . . it's the whole, which isn't any set of things but the ceaseless passage from one set to another."[59] Whereas for Deleuze this proposition was enacted by the cinematic protocols of framing and montage, for Huyghe it emerges in the process of translation, as epitomized by his reference to the "double cone."

Rather than conceiving of the subjects of transcription as *within* the memory cone of the letter writer, Huyghe instead saw the potential for a secondary cone to join the first. This conjunction can be pictured in two ways. The cones might overlap at the tip, forming a kind of inverse diagonal structure. At the apex of each would be a different "present" that, because it is part of the cone, is also always part of the past. The fragments of the past that "fall" toward the present (from both ends of the cones) then have the potential to carry the elements of another past into a different present. Alternately, the two cones could be joined at their broadest point—the domain of the distant past—in order to generate two different

versions of the present. Although this latter model is intriguing, Huyghe's work tends toward the former, in that his double cone addresses relations between the past of a singular subjectivity and the plurality of pasts generated by external sources (that is, externally produced memories). "L'Usage de l'interprète" can be regarded as a major turning point in Huyghe's approach to exhibition making. Investigations into temporality, duration, and context were carefully teased apart, their structural relations exposed and contextualized within the space of the gallery—reformatted, essentially, as problems of timing and display.

BROADCAST PIRACY: *MOBIL TV*

Playing with the temporality of exhibition formats was also central to Huyghe's *Mobil TV* project (1995), a collaborative, pirate broadcast unit developed for the group exhibition "Aperto 95" at Le Nouveau Musée in Lyon. Prior to the exhibition opening, Huyghe set up a makeshift television station in the museum's auditorium, "complete with sound-stage, editing tables, and broadcasting equipment, in hope of infiltrating local airwaves."[60] Huyghe's original proposal for the project read:

> *Mobil TV* will be installed temporarily, a tool to be put at the disposal of different people. It will not be reduced to being only a tool for production or distribution of programs but will participate in a series of already existing stories that have the city as their setting. We will ask certain artists, filmmakers, . . . philosophers, linguists, economists, architects, and musicians to actively participate in the project.[61]

The idea was to restructure the time of television programming so as to play with what Huyghe called the "time-based protocol" of the television format. "Television," Huyghe explained, "is structured around working time."[62] The programming of *Mobil TV,* in contrast, was intended to be partly up to the viewers, who were invited to produce their own content during the working hours of the museum for immediate distribution.

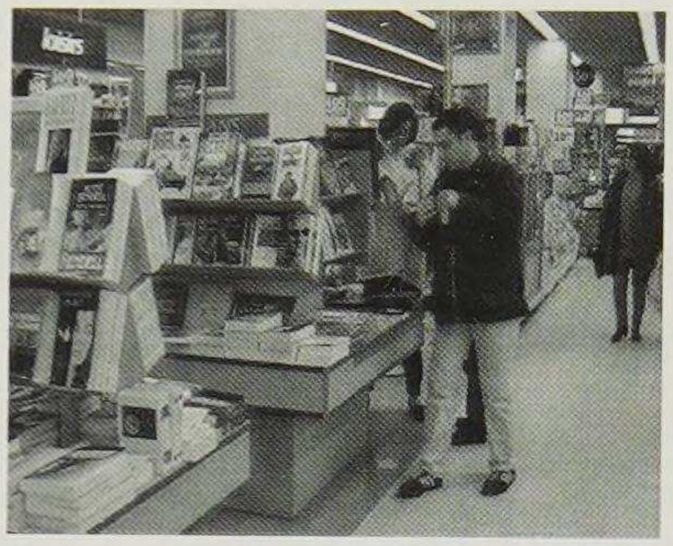
The project's final work developed along slightly different lines. Although Huyghe did generate some material that featured the city's residents, this footage accounted for only two small components of the programming schedule. The first component took the form of a vox pop questionnaire on people's attitudes toward clubs and associations (leisure time activities) that Huyghe filmed on the streets of Lyon. The second component was a casting session in which members of the public were invited to audition for an upcoming dance show (as Olivier

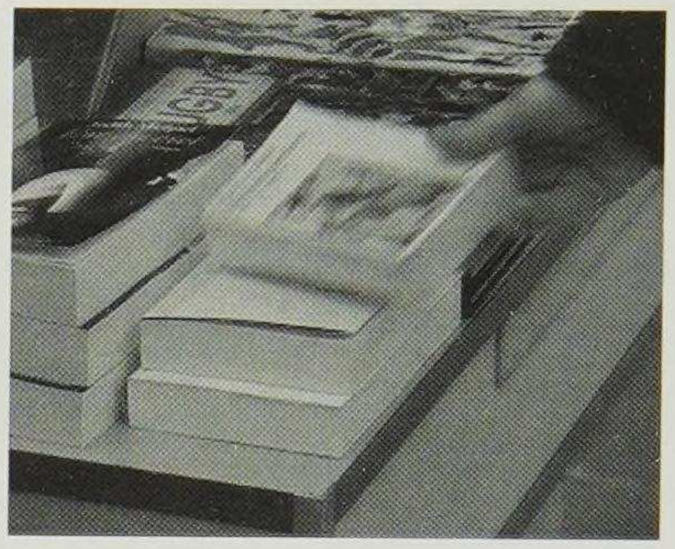
Zahm wrote, "Huyghe even went so far as to put up flyers announcing an audition for the popular Parisian television program, *Dance Machine*, filming contestants without ever revealing the whole to have been a ruse").[63] In between shooting these scenarios, Huyghe produced the large majority of the broadcast material in and around the museum himself.[64] His series of short video loops *Dévoler* ("un-rip-off" or "un-steal"), for example, pictures Huyghe entering supermarkets and department stores and surreptitiously returning his unwanted goods to the shop shelves. Around ten seconds long each, the clips have no titles or credits (like advertisements), and were designed to be "inserted into television schedules or used as demonstration videos for supermarkets."[65] *Dévoler* implemented an anti-transaction by moving useless objects along inverse trajectories. Like a reverse refund, Huyghe's action interrupted normative distributive relations between consumer and product. In addition to this footage, Huyghe made several "how to" demonstration videos (including "how to roll a joint"), and also a series of short skits that reactivated work by other artists in the Nouveau Musée collection, including Michael Asher, Daniel Buren, John Cage, and Lawrence Weiner. Huyghe spent two weeks in Lyon prior to the opening of the exhibition, "raiding" and "playing" the museum's archives in preparation for these filmed events.[66]

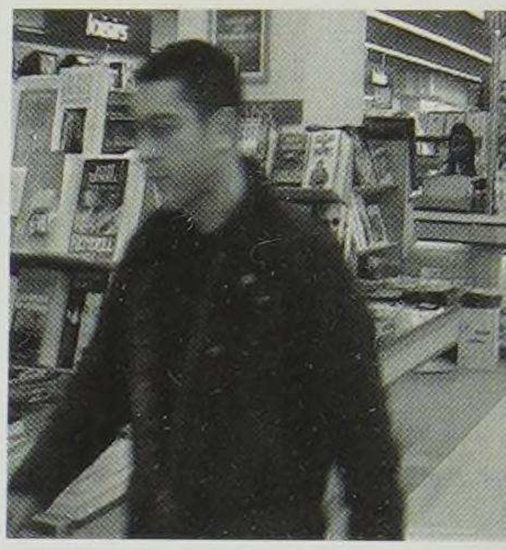
Huyghe was assisted in the production of *Mobil TV* by the young artist Melik Ohanian. As Huyghe recalled, "When I did *Mobil TV* in Lyon, I knew nothing about technology, and I needed some people to help me install the station."[67] Ohanian was introduced to Huyghe as a technical assistant on the basis of his prior experience in audiovisual production.

It is impossible to know precisely how much of Huyghe and Ohanian's prerecorded material found its way onto the television screens of Lyon residents. Putting a television transmitter at the disposal of the public in order to infiltrate the signal of existing networks is broadcast piracy, and Huyghe's transmission continued only until the authorities traced the signal back to the museum and requested its termination, shortly after the exhibition's opening.[68] Perhaps this was why the actual broadcasting that took place was minimal. Joe Scanlan, who was also participating in "Aperto 95," described Huyghe's work on the day of the opening as looking "pretty much like it had looked from day one: just so much equipment and lighting with wires strewn over half the auditorium floor, evincing the disappointing crappiness of all television studios."[69] As Scanlan reflected, "I thought it was all a ruse: that Huyghe was just playing at looking like a television station as a way of demonstrating that people will watch anything sufficiently laden with entertainment technology."[70] But Huyghe was more interested in displacing the site of the exhibition itself. The content of his work was visibly elsewhere, with only the apparatus for production illuminated on an empty stage.


Électroménager Hifi Vidéo








ULRIKE MEINHOF







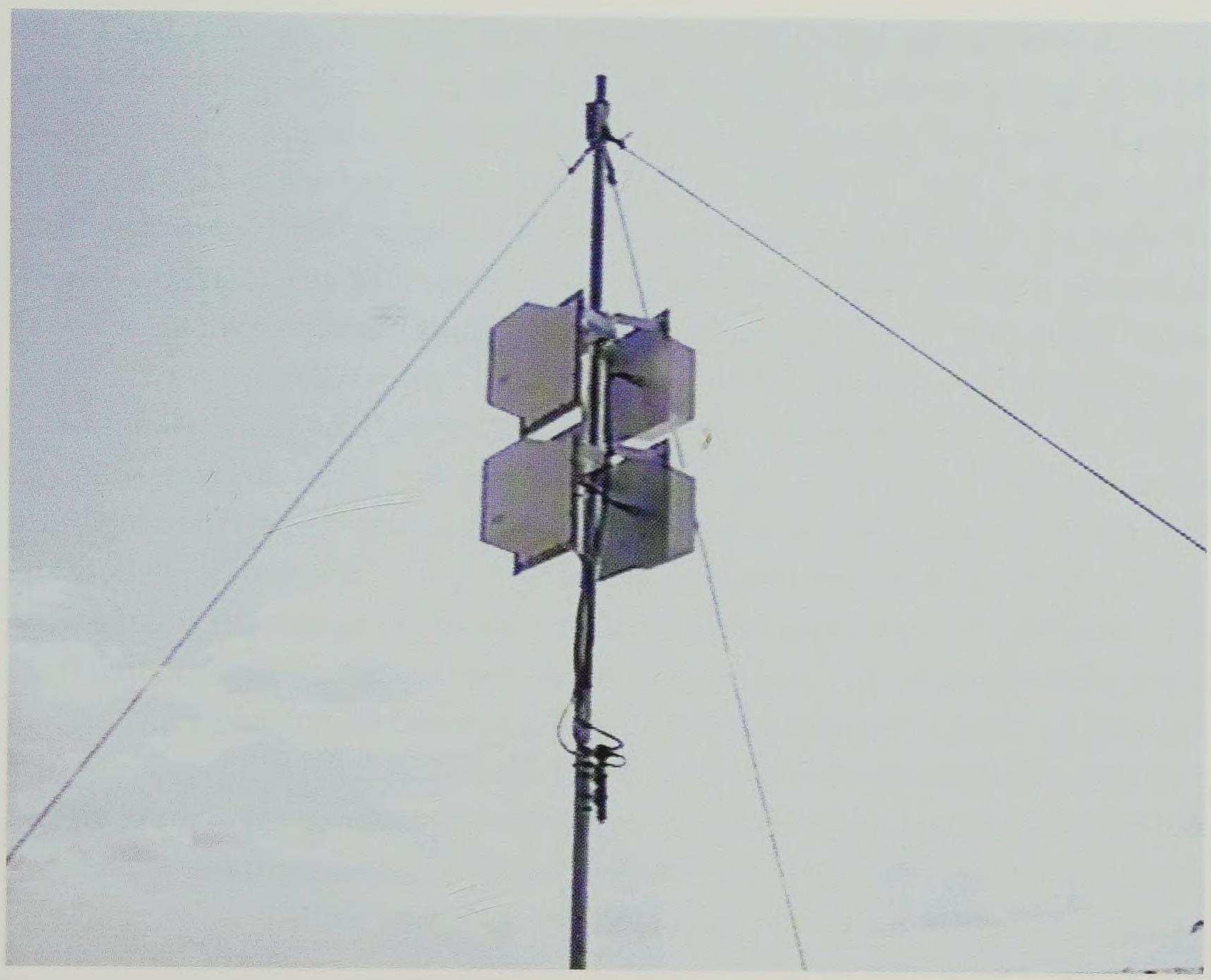


Figure 1.8 (opposite top)
Pierre Huyghe, *Dévoler*, Hi-8 transferred to Master Beta SP, 2 × 10 second loops, 1994. Collection FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon, Montpellier.

Figure 1.9 (opposite bottom)
Pierre Huyghe, *Mobil TV*, public television station, Lyon, 1995. Collection FRAC Rhône-Alpes. Composite image courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

Figure 1.10
Pierre Huyghe, *Mobil TV*, public television station, Lyon and Dijon, 1995–1998. With Melik Ohanian, Olivier Bardin, Liam Gillick, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Marine Hugonnier, Philippe Parreno, Matthieu Laurette, Joe Scanlan, Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Chris Marker, Pierre Joseph, Joachim Koester, Jimmie Durham. Collection FRAC Rhône-Alpes.

Evidently, the significance of those early experiments with Les Frères Ripoulin on the streets of Paris had not been lost on Huyghe. Even in the early 1980s, his focus was directed toward the staging of actions in public space for specific periods of time. Later projects such as *Mobil TV*, *Trajet*, and *La Toison d'or* all engaged temporally and temporarily with public space. Graffiti practices, Situationist thought, an understanding of the split between the actual and the virtual: these factors were all clearly foundational for Huyghe's subsequent practice. What has changed, however, is the addition of a theatrical rhetoric. Settings are described as "stages," subjects as "extras," and images as "scripts." Huyghe's references to actors are always intended in the literal, positive sense—those who take action or who *act*. Actions and images are coaxed into a gesticulated relay, their legibility consistently linked back to temporal protocols and the individual's relationship and ownership of those protocols (from the branding of experiences and the time codes of broadcast television to the surplus labor of commuting time). Rather than focusing on forms of activity that put an end to representation, then, Huyghe continuously positions representation as an activity in and of itself. These are works that generate a literal movement *between* images and actions so as to make visible regulatory frameworks. It is in this way that representations can become prompts for future activity, while images can enter into and effect reality.





CHAPTER 2
THE OPEN PRESENT

The individual's participation in the definition of his or her habitat is one of the means to "capitalize" on a portion of time, the time that becomes "free."
François Roche, 1995[1]

It is possible today to buy houses from a catalog, newly built and newly furnished, with stainless steel appliances throughout and a lawnmower in the garage. From the moment of purchase, clients set their clocks to the ticking of mortgage payments, monthly installments. and the rate of interest. Time is regulated by capital, segregated from the passage of historical or biological evolution. The "readymade" housing development is the real estate equivalent of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*: the "total package" of a domestic lifestyle. The American town of Celebration, Florida, is a prime example. Established by the Walt Disney Company in the mid-1990s, Celebration is located only a short distance from Walt Disney World. As one resident of the community enthusiastically proclaimed, "even though we must pay for the privilege, it's wonderful to live so close to Disney World. When you're not in the parks, you can still hear the distant echo of the fireworks each evening."[2] Celebration markets itself as a "real pre-1940s American town," but life in the exorbitantly priced estate is like inhabiting a billboard: a corporate microcosm, ringed like a moat by the security of Disney's family-friendly signature. It even has its own soundtrack—Muzak is piped continuously along palm-tree-lined Main Street—and property laws are in place to ensure that homeowners are prohibited from marring the Disney name (for example, yards must be kept free of litter and junk, short-term rentals are not allowed, and the cars parked on the street cannot exceed a specified number).[3] Everything is to be used, and nothing is to be created.

But there are models of inhabitation that have developed in opposition to the readymade, and those that can alter the culture of its use. In the Mediterranean,

and particularly in Italy, the countryside is dotted with examples of what Pierre Huyghe has dubbed "incomplete architecture": skeletons of buildings, some with scaffolding still in place, which are nonetheless inhabited as residences. The permanent state of construction is maintained in order to take advantage of a peculiar tax loophole in the regulatory framework. In these areas, property tax is due only after a building's completion: "If you don't finish the house, you don't pay taxes on it."[4] In addition to taking advantage of this loophole, the residents of the area are also known to dodge taxes altogether by erecting structures without permits. These illegal shanties are built in a hurry, and with materials that "just crop up here and there."[5] As Huyghe has explained, "For the Mediterranean dwelling, there is not a fixed moment of completion, you live in a work in progress, life unfolds in a transitory state, permanently under construction. There are no expectations, only a suspended time."[6]

What happens if these two architectural formats are set in dialogue with contemporary exhibition practices? Imagine, for example, that Celebration town represents a traditional, institutional museum framework, with its readymade installation spaces, permanent collection, regular hours, and exhibitions of specific duration. At the other end of the spectrum, within the architecture of the incomplete, we might alternatively conceive of works of art that do not deal in linear time and reject the idea of permanence, or consider artists for whom the concept of specific duration is irrelevant. It was this latter model that Huyghe had in mind when he traveled to the Mediterranean in 1993, accompanied by a professional photographer from *Domus* magazine, to document the unfinished buildings in the area. He called the project *Chantier permanent* (Permanent Construction Site) and described it as a "study in the form of photographs and texts of a particular method of production and living, the architecture of the incomplete."[7]

The material was initially to be collated in a book, under the proposed title *Les Incivils*. "Instead of finishing a house in a pretty, conventional, 'civil' way," Huyghe wrote, "you move into a building site . . . open to the sky. The whole structure is visible and you install a TV aerial. You grow plants over the reinforced concrete, you move into this transitory, façade-less place, expressing privacy within the communal space. The façade is the essence of civility and without it no irony is possible."[8] In Huyghe's vision, the unfinished structure is not only fully inhabitable but is ideologically weighted toward transparency: "This research is intended to open out into a practice, to bring this alternative approach to urban living face to face with traditional Western architectural ideas as characterized by the plan and the construction of a 'finished' space with models ready for immediate occupation."[9]



Figure 2.1
Pierre Huyghe (with François Roche), *Chantier permanent*, location photograph, 1993.

However, as with the initial version of *Mobil TV*, *Chantier permanent* evolved in ways Huyghe did not expect. On returning from the Mediterranean, he discussed his findings with architect François Roche in Paris. Huyghe's decision to approach Roche was unsurprising. Both Roche and Huyghe share an obsession with works in progress, open structures, and transitional forms.[10] Roche's contribution to *Chantier permanent* was a text, originally published alongside a statement by Huyghe in the magazine *Expose: La Maison*, in 1997.[11] These two statements and the accompanying photographs were the sole materialization of *Chantier permanent*. Huyghe's plans for an extended series of commentaries, conferences, and publications on the structures never came to fruition, and he later confessed that he considered the work "imperfect." The initial task of "wandering around the Mediterranean rim, including areas where fierce geo-political conflicts" were taking place, remained unrealized—as did the dissemination of the research among broader circles (what Huyghe referred to as "making the architecture official").[12]

Although *Chantier permanent* may have fallen short of its intended mark as an individual project, its impact on Huyghe's practice was profound. This was the first time that he had committed to text a conceptualization of architecture as a temporal marker and, most significantly, as a means to materialize "freed" time. *Chantier permanent* initiated a chain of subsequent projects that began to exceed the weight of its individual links. The organic interconnections that emerged later prompted Huyghe to characterize his entire output during these few years as "one big project."[13] The unifying force of this networked endeavor was, I suggest, a sense of the individual's relation to history that Huyghe gleaned from his experience with *Chantier permanent*. "What makes these [unfinished] dwellings singular," Huyghe has said, "is the interval between what they are and what they could potentially be."[14]

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE INCOMPLETE AND THE OPEN PRESENT

"*Chantier permanent*," says Huyghe, "is about the present. It concerns the establishment of what we can call an 'open present.' One responsive to any and all incidents that may occur."[15] If *Chantier permanent* was about the present, it was not a present bounded by amnesia, a moment shortchanged by history. Rather, for Huyghe the notion of an open present necessarily lets in elements of the past.[16]

Huyghe's attraction to the Mediterranean buildings can in part be attributed to the visible traces of the past—evidence of renovation, restructuring, demolition, reconstruction—that marked their design as "incomplete." To Huyghe, this

archaeology of the unfinished conjured up the "trains of thought and psychological states of the inhabitants."[17] The conscious registration of personal identity on site is largely foreign to Western building and planning, and has only recently come to critical attention in contemporary architectural practice (firstly in the literature on memorials and monuments during the 1990s, and secondly through the work of architectural firms such as Atelier Bow-Wow and R&Sie).[18] In 2000, Roche commented that "sites and territories nurture identities, preconditions and affects that architecture and urbanism have continuously restrained and eradicated."[19] To counter this eradication, Roche has stressed the importance of "making with" (rather than "making do"), a maxim that Huyghe has championed as well. "Making with" promotes a very different engagement of the past than, for example, a prefabricated construction, or even a printed photograph. Whereas a photograph is a positive imprint of the past, it is nevertheless continuously accessed in the "now": the interval between the production of the image and its moment of consumption is always missing. It seems that for Huyghe, activating the potential of the open present is contingent on bracketing the history of the "now"—the multifarious pathways that lead up to and are embedded within any moment in time—and then lending this context a concrete form. Following this logic, evaluating the responsiveness or adaptability of any given situation can only be undertaken from a vantage point in which prior negotiations are already visible. To Huyghe, the Mediterranean dwelling is one such vantage point.

The potential problem, however, with this model of the open present is that it might be activated only within specific environments. If locating oneself at a site in which the striations of the past are still visible "opens up" time, how effective is this strategy in a zone in which it is more difficult to access the past? In zones such as, for example, those glittering oases of capitalism that have been characterized by French anthropologist Marc Augé as "non-places"?[20] According to Augé, the non-place is a site that has been stripped of its anthropological identity; it may be replicated anywhere, anytime, regardless of geopolitical context. Shopping malls, parking lots, gas stations, airports, readymade communities, and museums are the exemplars of Augé's non-places. The operation of the non-place is akin to what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have called "smooth space": the space of capital in which the crisscrossing striations of power are invisible, smoothed out.[21] How is the past to be accessed in a zone in which there are no handles on the present?

For Huyghe, responding to this question seemingly has not required a great deal of effort. This is not because he has deliberately evaded the non-place in his practice, either as subject or site of exhibition (we recall his work with "mall myths" in *La Toison d'or* or even *Dévoler* of 1992). Rather, Huyghe's means of countering the amnesia of the non-place is by way of a pragmatic acknowledgment that site is

always activated by presence, commercial or otherwise. Such an acknowledgment is not easily reconciled with the tabula rasa of those sites discussed by Augé, or the smooth space theorized by Deleuze and Guattari. Again, however, Huyghe is not interested in merely illustrating theory. The majority of his works that explicitly foreground an open present have been undertaken amid incomplete structures, or within sites amenable to mutation, demolition, and reconstruction.[22] Huyghe's initial interest in these structures was not based on an a priori assumption that such open environments were necessarily conducive to realizing his (still rather abstract) notion of the open present. Even after *Chantier permanent* was shelved, Huyghe recognized that testing this hypothesis required further research.

THE FOUNDING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FREED TIME

Preliminary research into the contingencies of *Chantier permanent* was enabled by Huyghe's founding of the Association des temps libérés (ATL) in June 1995. The registration of the association was published in a 1995 edition of the French *Journal Officiel*, as Huyghe's contribution to the group exhibition "Moral Maze," curated by Liam Gillick and Philippe Parreno at Le Consortium in Dijon. The first annual general meeting of the association took place at the exhibition opening. Every artist involved in the show was present: Angela Bulloch, Maurizio Cattelan, Liam Gillick, Carsten Höller, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Douglas Gordon, Jorge Pardo, Philippe Parreno, Rirkrit Tiravanija, and Xavier Veilhan. Huyghe characterized ATL as

> a structure combining all those taking part in [the] exhibition, with the idea of instituting a series of activities. As if the exhibition marked not the end of a process, but a departure point for something else. . . . Whereas free time is time which is subjugated to working time, "liberated time" would aim to extend various practices to unrestricted durations and more specific types of reception.[23]

The phrasing is provocative. To what or for whom is time currently subjugated? And how might that subjugation be maintained or disabled? Huyghe makes an important distinction here between leisure time or "free time" and "freed" or liberated time. The "liberation" of time from restricted durations (specifically, those restrictions that feed into both Western architectural planning and the determination of "leisure time") indexes the infrastructure of the "free market" that Huyghe views as anathema to the open present. As sociologist Edgar Morin

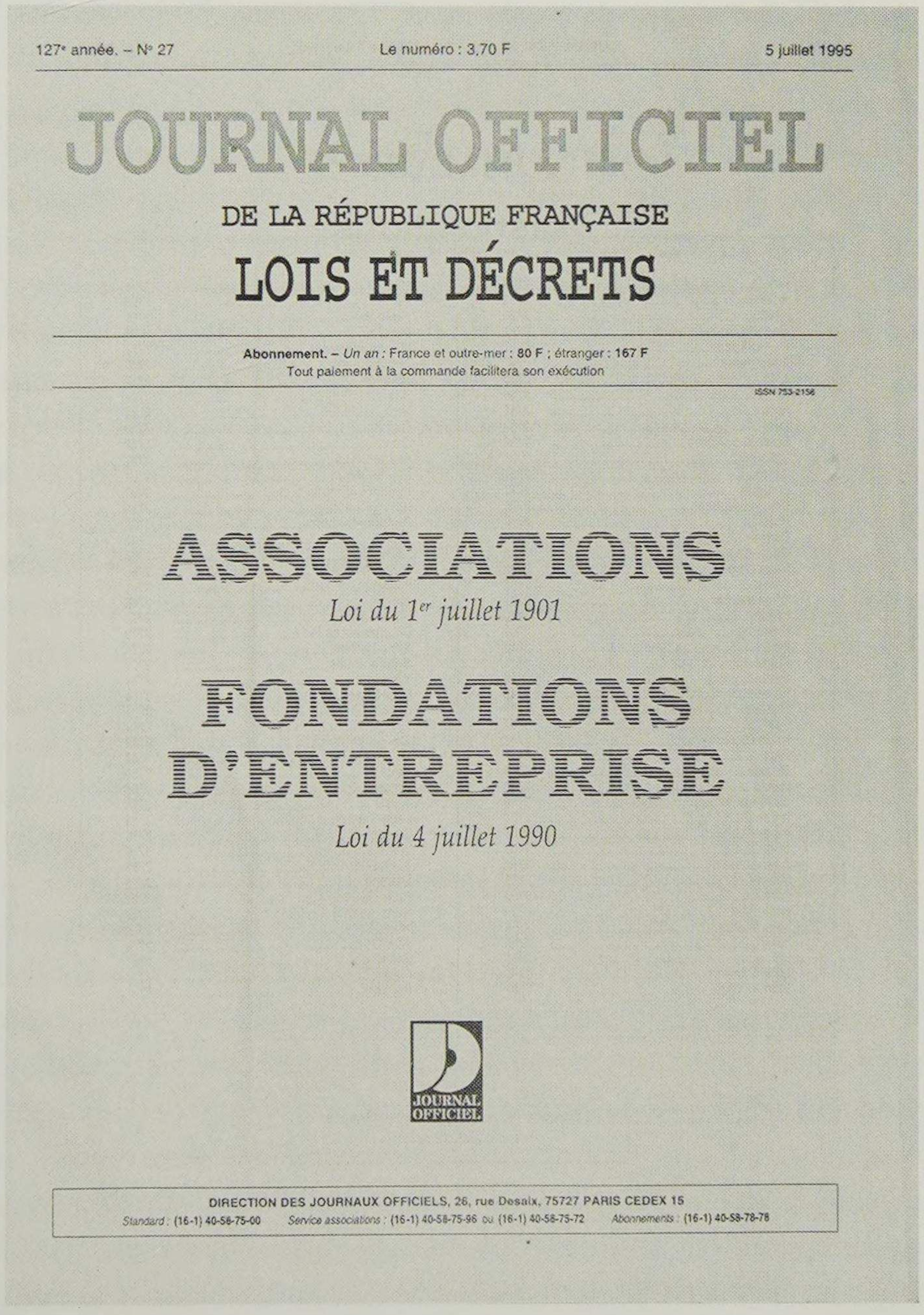
des métiers du spectacle. *Siège social :* 16, rue de l'Ouest, 75014 Paris. *Date de la déclaration :* 12 juin 1995.

995 – Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **ASSOCIATION DES TEMPS LIBERES.** *Objet :* pour le développement des temps improductifs, pour une réflexion sur les temps libres, et l'élaboration d'une société sans travail, pour faire connaître ses idées l'association organisera différentes réunions publiques, conférences, parutions, fêtes. *Siège social :* 6, passage Basfroi, 75011 Paris. *Date de la déclaration :* 12 juin 1995.

996 – Déclaration à la préfecture de police. **LE REVE BLEU.** *Objet :* soutien à l'enfance mal nourrie en lui apportant une aide

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Figure 2.2
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Association des Temps Libérés, French Association as Defined in the 1901 Act*, 1995. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

Figure 2.3
Cover page, *Journal Officiel*, July 5, 1995. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

has noted, "modern leisure issues from the very organization of bureaucratic and industrial time."[24] In France, prior to the rise of the bourgeoisie in the 1800s, access to leisure activities was exclusively in the domain of the upper classes. With the industrialization of the workforce, lower-class consumers were granted access to leisure activities facilitated by the new economic rationalism of modernity. In Huyghe's words, "Leisure time is constructed on working rhythms. It is an economic necessity, a compulsory flexibility."[25] Within post-Fordist economies, the conditions determining work and leisure have shifted in such a way as to radically compress distinctions between workers, consumers, producers, and employees.

As the propensity for immaterial labor increases, the worker is no longer necessarily employed to create specific products but is more likely to be contracted to design communicative and relational models. Consumers are now more commonly marketed ideas, experiences, and lifestyles than they are specific products. This shift impacts both the physical structure of the corporation—particularly multinational corporations—and the formatting of working time. By the "formatting" of working time, I refer not only to *how* work is done but *when* it is performed: witness the recent increase in short-term contractual positions, the termination of long-term "career paths," and the proliferation of casual flexi-work or the "work for hire" doctrine in capitalist economies. Under these conditions, workers no longer tend to clock in or clock out but are either employed intermittently, juggling short-term contractual obligations, or continuously, as with managerial or top-end white-collar workers whose personal lives directly bear on the credibility of the company (the private activities of this class outside working hours may impact broader economic stability). Huyghe's proposal for freed time recognizes that the restructuring of the workforce and the redefinition of working time has conflated the time of the self with the time of the world market. On the one hand, the ATL is a public register of a hypothesis whose trial is ongoing within Huyghe's work. On the other hand, it is a specific reaction to the current state of production in neoliberal economies, with the aim of figuring temporal detours.

Figuring "temporal detours" was also a major motivation behind critical theorist Antonio Negri's proposal for "liberated time." In his book *Time for Revolution*, Negri focuses on a perceived gap between what he calls "time as measure" and "time as life": time as measure is akin to the time of the market Debord reacted to in the 1950s, while time as life refers to social dimensions and is affiliated with leisure. According to Negri, locating the gap between these "time zones" might potentially revolutionize economic and social strictures. "Within the massive totality of real subsumption," Negri writes, "liberated time is not the residue of exploited time, but is rather the force that destroys and breaks up all the links of capitalist society."[26]

Negri's paradigm of freed time is related directly to ontology. It is designed to address the problem, for the subject, of reclaiming lived time.

At first glance, it would seem that Huyghe and Negri share certain critical agendas. However, unlike Negri's model for liberation, Huyghe's freed time is not a blueprint for revolution. *Time for Revolution* insists on counteraction. Negri espouses the critical role of "negative labor" and the need for alternative production models in disabling subsumption. For Negri, the subject is always linked to the constitution of the proletariat, and it is this contiguity that has allowed Negri to frame his project as a class action. Huyghe, in contrast, registered his proposal for liberated time within already existing legal sanctions: the official naming of the association was crucial. A revolutionary approach then seems out of alignment with Huyghe's long-term goals. "The critical position today," Huyghe has reflected, "would be to consider oneself as taking part in this culture of leisure and to work on that basis, rendering oneself available, destroying the linearity of time, offering services—in full awareness that it all plays into the hands of the new politics of flexibility."[27] Although Huyghe's complicity may have stemmed from a cynicism regarding the possibility of avoiding the "new politics of flexibility," what is most significant here is that Huyghe's proposal for freed time clearly surfaced from the pool of ideas generated by *Chantier permanent*.

ATL was designed to promote the temporality that for Huyghe was embodied by those unfinished homes in the Mediterranean region. Although Huyghe outlined the links between these projects at the time, it took another ten-plus years before the association reappeared as a subject of analysis in critical commentaries on Huyghe's work.[28] ATL is the cornerstone of Huyghe's practice. It fused his disparate investigations into temporality initiated by *Trajet, La Toison d'or, L'Écrivain public, Through,* and the billboard projects of 1994, and it also laid the groundwork for future research.

The House or Home? (1995) was the first project organized under the aegis of ATL, and it was designed to put the Association's mission statement to the test. During the autumn of 1995, Huyghe began searching for a house for sale whose construction was discontinued prior to completion. The plan was to invite the artists who had participated in "Moral Maze" to use this unfinished structure as a kind of base camp for a period of time. As with *Chantier permanent,* the half-ruined dwelling was perceived as a platform, ready to be activated: a scenario, rather than a plan. Intended to leave no visible or material traces, the process was confined to the social experience of the residency. It was about the formulation of a place determined by the temporal relations between the inhabitants, rather than the arrangement of products in a set environment (there were no stainless steel appliances throughout, no lawnmower in the shed). Several questions bracketed this fieldwork:



Figure 2.4
Pierre Huyghe, *The House or Home?*, residential project, 1995. Newspaper clipping courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

What happens if you inhabit the architecture of the incomplete? Is activating an open structure the same as inhabiting it, or is additional fieldwork required? Or in Huyghe's words, "Why should an exhibition last five weeks? Why not six months, why not a year, why not a lifetime? Why not one day? Why not an hour?"[29]

This last question is particularly significant, and it was born out of Huyghe's discomfort with the temporal formatting of exhibitions. The deconstruction of exhibition formats is a stable feature throughout the history of modern art. Just as Gustave Courbet's 1855 independently organized exhibition "Pavilion of Realism" shunned the Salon culture of the nineteenth century, so too did Dada, futurism, surrealism, constructivism, Fluxus, minimalism, and conceptual art all contribute their own platforms for working outside traditional museological frameworks. We could, for example, consider the institutional critique taken up inside the museum by Marcel Broodthaers (*Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles*, 1972), or the process-based propositions developed by Daniel Buren in the late 1960s. In 1971, Buren lamented the suffocation of art by the museum: "The work passes . . . from a closed place/frame, the world of the artist, to another place—paradoxically even more closed—the place of the art world. Here the alignment of works in museums may have a lot in common with a cemetery."[30] Buren thumbed his nose at the museum's "entombment" of

art by refiguring the meaning of installation. Not only did he begin to install work in museum spaces not traditionally reserved for the display of art—along floor runners, for example, and in stairwells—but he simultaneously expanded the exhibition outside the gallery walls. *Position–Proposition* (1971), for example, featured Buren's blue and white striped paper sheets both in the museum at Mönchengladbach and in the windows of franchises, on public transport and billboards, and in furniture stores around the city.[31]

At the time of "Moral Maze," Huyghe's antimuseological stance was heightened by his identification of a problematic discrepancy between the enclosed time frame propagated by the "traditional" museum and the nonspecific temporality of the work displayed therein. "Moral Maze" did not suffer this paradox silently, but prized it apart. According to Huyghe, the connection between the artists selected by Parreno and Gillick was a shared interest in a "series of relationships which are created or negotiated, particularly as these situations can produce exhibitions, images, objects, or alternatives."[32] Because of this privileging of negotiation, the idea of the "exhibition of objects as a finality" was ostensibly foreign to the methodology of the group.[33] Huyghe's founding of ATL and his proposal for *The House or Home?* offered a means to quit the museum altogether and extend the exhibition program outside of its designated time frame, "as if the exhibition marked not the end of a process, but the departure point for something else."[34]

Huyghe never managed to find a suitable site for *The House or Home?* He said, "It was supposed to be in an out of the way place, like a holiday house, and we couldn't find one in a site that would work. So the project was a potential."[35] Looking back at the documents surrounding the proposal (the statement on the work by ATL in one of Huyghe's catalogs, and the "note of intent" that accompanied his later exhibitions), it is not at all clear that the house was never purchased.[36] Huyghe's text on the work, although written in future tense in the form of a proposal, was not (and never has been) accompanied with a postscript. Its potential is preserved without the imposition of results. Moreover, the photographs that accompany Huyghe's text in catalogs, ubiquitously titled *The House or Home?*, usually picture an unfinished structure near Dijon that was only ever a proposal for the kind of architectural apparatus intended to support the concept. These images are a form of imaginary documentation: a fiction from which a reality might emerge.

Despite this, at no time did Huyghe consider the project a failure, or even, as with *Chantier permanent*, an "imperfect" piece. *The House or Home?* has been consistently listed in Huyghe's catalogs as a "residential project." Moreover, Huyghe makes frequent references to the project in interviews. From this apparent lack of distinction between the unrealized concept and the finished work, it is

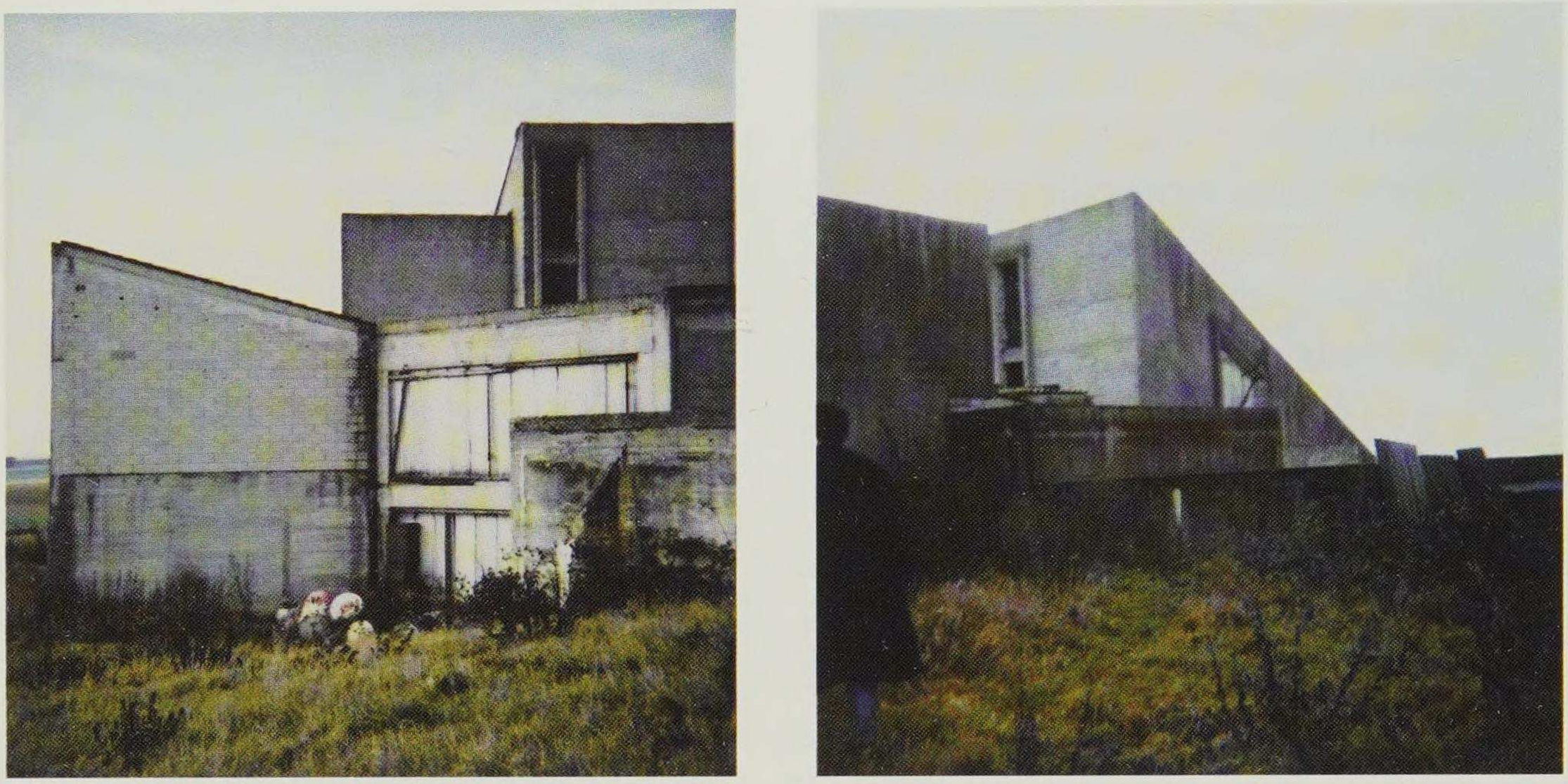


Figure 2.5
Pierre Huyghe, *The House or Home?*, residential project, 1995.

tempting to encompass *The House or Home?* within a genealogy of conceptual art in which the question of *access* to ephemeral or temporally specific production is central.[37] But this reading meshes awkwardly with Huyghe's methodology insofar as it appears to privilege concepts over materiality. The extent to which Huyghe balances concepts and forms is discernible retrospectively by piecing together the close-ups of individual projects over time. Huyghe does not tend to move quickly in his resolution of ideas and often stores scenarios for years before finding an appropriate opportunity to test their application. Although many of the ideas raised by *The House or Home?* were rapidly translated into stand-alone works and exhibitions, others remained in incubation. In this sense, the ATL not only offered a legal framework but it also doubled as a kind of conceptual insurance policy for the artists involved: a discursive storage unit in which to safeguard ideas and file them for future use.

One particularly compelling idea from *The House or Home?* that found no immediate application in Huyghe's practice was the desire to "house" two

competing discourses under the same roof: historiography (how the past is translated) and museology (more particularly, the durational structure of the exhibition). The conjunction of these two fields acted as a prompt for Huyghe's projects *Casting* (1995) and *Les Incivils* (1995). Once again, this work was informed by the kind of temporality explored by *Chantier permanent.*

Around six months after Huyghe traveled to the Mediterranean to document the area, he realized that he had seen this landscape before. More specifically, he had seen it through the eyes of the Italian film director Pier Paolo Pasolini, who in 1966 filmed his movie *Uccellacci e uccellini* (Hawks and Sparrows) around the same locations. Pasolini's surreal tragicomedy was shot primarily in the outer suburbs of Rome, but also conspicuously features landmarks from the surrounding region: valleys of skeletal structures, huddled together like decaying housing estates; mansions missing roofs and walls; concrete foundations puncturing the unformed edges of the metropolis.

Huyghe went back to the notion of the open present: a present that destabilizes the replacement of the "then" with the "now"; a kind of time that figures as a volatile constellation of moments, each interlaced with the other. We might picture this model as an enormous sieve that sifts through events and recycles their residue to feed itself. Loss is reduced. In a temporal frame open to all possibilities, there is a sense that nothing is ever fully obliterated by the passage of time. There is a portion of nostalgia and romance in this desire to liquefy temporality, but no more so than in the domain of traditional historiography wherein nostalgia is born out of a need to solidify or classify temporal units in linear progression. To avoid beginnings and ends blocks the reciprocity of cause and effect—of results and conditions—and eases the burden of responsibility from the individual. The past becomes a reservoir of potential—as do the present and the future. Total erasure of the past is not Huyghe's endgame. Amnesia is a hostile force for a present that insists on the necessity of déjà vu. How might this model find a formal equivalence?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE REMAKE: FOLDING TIME

The solution was practical, and turned around the concept of the remake. Huyghe had already gone some way toward exploring this idea in the latter part of 1994 when he remade Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954) with a home movie camera in a Parisian housing estate that was under construction. Entitled *Remake* (1994–1995), the work was produced, in Huyghe's words, in the "most literal way possible."[38] He played a VHS tape of the original movie to the hired



Figure 2.6-2.7
Pierre Huyghe, *Remake*, video projection, Hi8/Digital Beta, 100', 1994-1995. Collection FRAC Languedoc-Roussillon, Montpellier.



amateur actors and then filmed their renditions of what they had just seen, line by line, from beginning to end. The hesitations, mistakes, and halting dialogue (in French, with English subtitles) were maintained in the final edit.[39] *Remake* was Huyghe's first full-length film. It was shot on Hi8 over the course of two weekends. "It was the first time I had done a film. So I decided to do a feature film. Frame by frame."[40]

Although for the most part Huyghe reproduced Hitchcock's mise-en-scène faithfully, both the setting and the rapport between the actors are substantially altered. In place of Jimmy Stewart and Grace Kelly's snappy banter, Huyghe's twenty-something-year-olds speak lethargically, as if bored or apathetic. Huyghe later described the figures in *Remake* as "copiers" who feel nothing: "I said to them: you are mouths that talk and bodies that move in space. Copy James Stewart, not the character he is playing."[41] But there are moments in Huyghe's film when Stewart's expressions are suddenly recognizable on the face of the "copier": the way he peers through the window, his chin raised; the way he pauses, brows furrowed, before lifting the binoculars from his lap. Huyghe intersperses these moments of déjà vu with jarring dislocations: moments in which the dialogue no longer matches the action it accompanies. At one point, a delivery boy shows up to the apartment with pizza and Coke. "Jimmy Stewart," sticking to the script, refers to the beverage as wine and cordially pours a tumbler for "Grace Kelly."

French critic Jean-Christophe Royoux astutely described *Remake* as a structural fold by which Hitchcock's film is both exhibited and "kept in the background."[42] Similar conclusions can be reached by considering the psychoanalytic dimensions of Huyghe's project, particularly in relation to Sigmund Freud's conception of screen memories. Freud first described the layering of new data across existing memories in 1899.[43] He suggested that early memories could be recalled to screen out later events (thus, by extension, a prior exposure to *Rear Window* might act as a screen across *Remake*). This idea was almost immediately revised in Freud's subsequent *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901), wherein a screen memory is described as a *late* addition used to mask earlier, traumatic experiences.[44] Hal Foster's distinction between obscene and pornographic representations offers an analogous account for the change in Freud's thinking: "An obscene representation is one in which the object-gaze is presented *as if* there were no screen so that the object appears too close to the viewer. In contrast, the pornographic preserves the voyeuristic capacity of the viewer by maintaining the integrity of the screen."[45] In this sense, Huyghe's *Remake* can be classified as pornographic: voyeurism is enacted both *within* the text and through the spectator's awareness of the screen's integrity.[46]

Huyghe's aim with *Les Incivils* was to downplay the "plug and play" theatrics of *Remake* (or its pornographic dimensions) so as to better activate the open present. He also recognized that although the international popularity of *Rear Window* had, in a certain way, brought *Remake* into visibility for its audience, the familiarity of the source might be considered a drawback.[47] The Pasolini film was attractive partially because it was less well known than *Rear Window*. But Huyghe's move away from the landmarks of Hollywood was also a response to early criticisms of *Remake* that focused overtly on *Rear Window*, as if *Remake* were solely about the Hitchcock film: "Hitchcock was not the point. I was interested in the translation."[48] In order to make this process of translation clearer, to divert focus from the source toward the process, it seemed that the structure of the remake needed to be changed. Huyghe called this new project *Les Incivils*, giving it the same name that he had originally put forward for his book on "uncivilised architecture" two years earlier.

Les Incivils began with a casting session. Held in the white cube of Gallery Fac-Simile, in Milan, in February 1995, the event was billed as a Huyghe exhibition but it was also a platform for subsequent work. Over the course of three days, gallery visitors watched amateur actors audition for roles in the Pasolini remake. Huyghe "asked the actors to recite a passage and do whatever they liked for a minute."[49] The gallery became a stage; the viewers, extras. As Huyghe described it,

> A press announcement invites amateur actors to attend a casting session at a gallery for a film on Pier Paolo Pasolini. Over a period of three days, the aspiring actors follow one another while waiting their turn, merging with regular exhibition visitors. The scene that they are to perform is taken from Pasolini's *Uccellacci e uccellini*. . . . The casting procedure appears as part of an enduring process, one moment in the process of the production of an image. It contains all the people who will constitute the image but the parts have not yet been cast.[50]

As with many of Huyghe's production summaries, there is a smattering of poetic license in this statement. We know, for example, that the part of the cameraman had already been cast (Melik Ohanian secured that role during their collaboration on *Mobil TV*). Moreover, Huyghe also knew that he did not want his film to simply "activate" the past. He wanted an intervention, explaining that "it wasn't about seeing the film or the script as a dead set of shots or the end result of a process, but as an open guide for experiences."[51] With this in mind, Huyghe decided to track down the Italian actor Ninetto Davoli, who as a seventeen-year-old amateur had starred in



Figure 2.8
Pierre Huyghe, *Casting*, event, Milan, 1995.

Pasolini's *Uccellacci e uccellini,* to ask him if he would like a second run through the script. Davoli agreed.

Huyghe and Davoli returned to the original location of *Uccellacci e uccellini* to begin shooting *Les Incivils.* Although the structure of Pasolini's narrative was maintained, Huyghe supplemented the script with new, documentary-style footage featuring contemporary residents of the area. In Huyghe's words,

> *Les Incivils* takes on part of the narrative structure of *Uccellacci e uccellini,* the scenes and displacements are identical and the meeting scenes are branches leading off, meeting residents of the places where the previous film was made. *Les Incivils* guides our steps on a journey, it allows us to meet Ninetto Davoli, to visit places frequented by Pasolini, such as the beach where he was assassinated. I wanted Ninetto Davoli to draw out the role, like a reality which repeats itself, imitating itself, making time falter.[52]

It is no coincidence that making time falter was also central to Pasolini's original narrative. *Uccellacci e uccellini* is a time-travel film. It tells the story of two vagabonds on a vaguely defined pilgrimage (both to pay debts and collect them), along a road that seems interminable and leads to no place in particular. En route to elsewhere, they meet a talking crow: the incarnation of a Marxist intellectual from the 1950s. In recounting the story of *Uccellacci e uccellini,* the crow transports Davoli and his co-star Totò back to the past, to the year 1200, where they are transformed into Franciscan monks and sent on a mission to learn how to talk to the birds. On learning how to speak the new language, however, the duo realize they still cannot prevent the hawks from eating the sparrows (a thinly veiled metaphor for class relations). Back in the present, and fed up with the crow's dour philosophizing, Davoli and Totò end up killing and eating their feathered companion—but not before the crow warns that they will henceforth be "condemned," in some way, to digest his philosophies along with his flesh.

In Pasolini's film, the property laws of the region influence Davoli and Totò's travels across the landscape. Their journey takes them through unfinished housing estates and undeveloped private properties, down public highways, around sacred enclosures, and into that architectural gray zone between the suburbs and the metropolis.[53] Pasolini went to great lengths to highlight the subdivision of the land by the market. "Private property" signs appear frequently throughout the film, and the consequences of illegal trespassing are illustrated through absurd, slapstick conflicts between landholders, vagrants, and landowners. In Huyghe's film, trespass and property developed additional connotations. Huyghe's play on "property" extended beyond the physical allocation of land to

encompass issues of authorship, intellectual property, copyright, artistic autonomy, and remakes.

Unlike *Remake*, *Les Incivils* was a means of documenting *around* the remake, a way of being "inside the fiction, with the landscape," using Davoli as a guide. The location and characters of Pasolini's film were returned to the screen, as was the possibility of communicating across time. However, whereas time travel figures as a narrative component of Pasolini's film, in Huyghe's work time travel is adopted as a methodology. "It is a way," Huyghe wrote, "of experiencing a story by shifting it into reality."[54] The conversations with the residents of the area were folded into the original script; the narrative then spirals outward to include Pasolini's biography (for example, references to the beach where the director was assassinated, his relationship with Davoli). Like the structure of an unfinished house, the facade of the original film is pulled away so that its story might be opened to the sky.

Les Incivils premiered at the third Biennale of Lyon in 1995 and was exhibited again in 1996 in a group show.[55] The film has not been screened since, despite Huyghe's dissatisfaction with its initial exhibition. In Huyghe's view, the separation of the film from its context, by way of a single-channel video projection, was detrimental to the project as a whole. *Les Incivils* was but one part of a lattice of production built up from *Chantier permanent* and ATL, through to *The House or Home?* and *Casting*. Huyghe later explained, "What's important is the houses, the journey, and the film. The idea was to leave the gallery after the casting and make the film, a journey. Then do something at the gallery again, show the film for example. That never existed."[56] Also missing from the picture is any extended critical commentary on this work. Existing discussions on *Les Incivils* predominantly consider the film as simply another version of *Remake*, with the majority of critics never having seen the work. In the face of this analytical paucity, what follows is the most detailed account of the film to date.

THE WAY STARTS WHEN THE TRIP IS OVER: *LES INCIVILS*

Les Incivils opens under the sign of the moon. In a white room, actors rehearse their lines for the camera: "The moon's got a gravity that makes the tide rise," announces one man; "Ah, Luna!" his partner replies. Half Beckett, half Brecht, the dialogue is spoken in Italian and shot through with mistakes and reruns. Fetching their scripts, the actors start over: "Oh, Papa! Death is always on my mind. How can we go from life to death?" The screen tests are punctuated by credits



Figure 2.9
Pierre Huyghe, *Les Incivils*, video projection, Beta SP, 40', 1995.
Collection Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris.

and improvised skits: a short song, a woman circling the room with a black dog. These scenes were all filmed during Huyghe's casting session at Galerie Fac-Simile. From the gallery interior, the film cuts to a dingy parking lot. An old man addresses the camera: "They should have turned this area into a residential complex." Speaking of the degradation of the landscape, he complains of signs of neglect: condoms littering the ground, couples in cars at night, used syringes on cracked pavement. In the sky high above, a jet plane vaporizes twilight. The first title card appears, yellow text across the bottom of the screen: "The Way Starts When the Trip Is Over."[57]

At the junction of two paths, Ninetto Davoli and his father Cicillo begin their journey. Chatting idly, the pair exchange lines rehearsed in the casting session. On hearing the words for the second time, déjà vu seeps into the dialogue. The camera tracks backward along the road before them, the landscape receding as if glimpsed through a rearview mirror. Multiple shots of stripped or half-finished buildings cut into the journey: a woman dressed as an angel stands on the second story of an incomplete house, cradling a cup of take-away coffee in the fading sunlight. It starts to rain. Ninetto and his father meet their traveling companion, a talking donkey who plays the part of Pasolini's talking crow. "My parents," says the donkey, "are Mr. Doubt and Mrs. Consciousness. Whether you are a worker or a farmer is of no importance, this road takes you so far, where all the roads of the world join together again." The donkey (whose voice was supplied by Philippe Parreno) begins to tell the story of *Uccellacci e uccellini*. "We are in the year 1200," a title card reads, "Any resemblance with our contemporaries will be purely intentional."

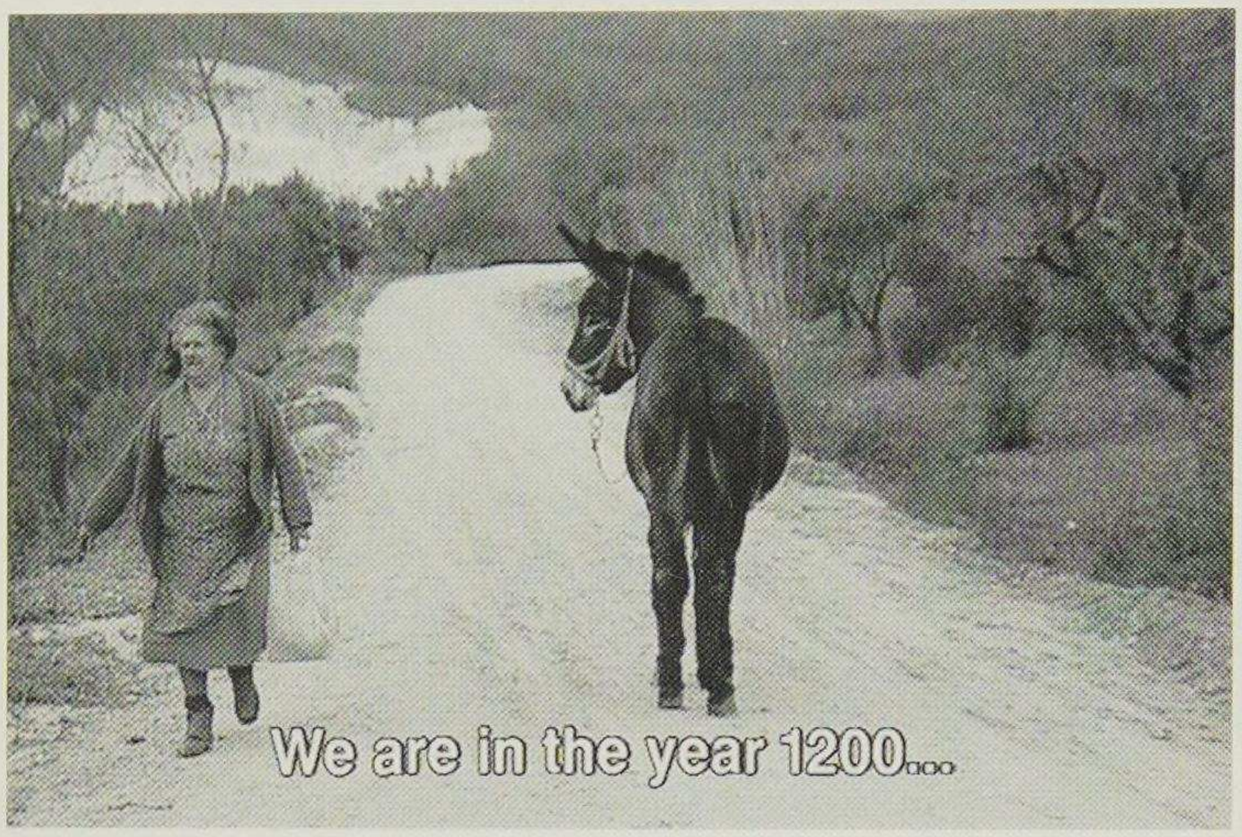
The scene shifts to a verdant landscape, the topos of the past. Father and son don the robes of Franciscan monks, accompanied by the sound track of chirping birds. An ecstatic dance unfolds as Ninetto and Cicillo leap crazily across the fields, flapping their arms like wings. "I've found it! I've found it," shouts Cicillo. An enormous flock of swarming birds twists against the sky. The flock soars through extraordinarily intricate patterns, their unity seemingly choreographed with minute precision. A conversation between the monks and the birds begins. In a cacophony of song, the flock communicates with the monks: "Who are you, what do you want?" The dialogue (subtitled in both versions) is lifted straight out of Pasolini, but Huyghe condenses into a single scene his characters learning to talk to the birds, a process that in Pasolini's film stretches for nearly a third of the movie. In Huyghe's remake, the moments of waiting and of learning how to converse with the birds are replaced by conversations with local residents.

"One of the interesting things about this film," Huyghe recalled, "was to go back to the places where it was shot. The backdrop had changed. Beside the

motorway that was being built, you find another alongside [it]. The very fact that I should travel, and go from place to place, coming across this situation and that, was part of the screenplay of Pasolini's film."[58] Huyghe's journey through the Italian countryside is relayed to the viewer through his conversations with contemporary residents. The past dissolves into the future: from the year 1200, we are launched into the year 2000. Here, seated beside a roughly hewn stone well, an older couple from the area speak quietly of their relocation to a concentration camp during the Second World War. As with all of Huyghe's documentary inserts in this film, this man and woman speak only of their past: their histories are reanimated by recollection. Moreover, it is difficult to distinguish these interludes of the "present-past" from Pasolini's original script—not only because of Huyghe's careful fidelity to Pasolini's cinematic "vocabulary," as he called it, but also because of the sequencing of scenes. The footage of the residents reminiscing, for example, segues immediately into a remake of a Pasolini scene in which a group of teenage boys dance outside a gas station, before racing down the dusty road to chase after a bus. In Huyghe's version, the sound track and the movements are updated, but the scenario remains the same.

In addition to the documentary recollections, Huyghe also scripted new scenes that were dropped into the storyline. At one moment, a pickup truck drives around and around in a parking lot at night, headlights tracing a tight circle in the darkness, accompanied by a voice-over of a man shouting repeatedly, "Rosetta! I love you!" Later, on the ground of a concrete soccer stadium, a young man draws a large circle of chalk beneath his feet. "The ground is mine," the title reads, "and no-one plays." An absent game begins on the empty field. There are no players, but the camera movements and editing resemble those of sports journalism, quickly cutting back and forth across empty space. On the sound track, crowd noise is matched to invisible action. Dusk approaches. Oversaturated with color, the green grass of the playing field sparkles through the haze of a sun shower.

The image fades to black, and again we are met with aerial shots of half-finished homes, lined up in rows like an urban graveyard. The camera pauses on a hastily scrawled sign: *Skeleton Res. 1969*.[59] On the ground next to a dirt road, a pile of bones smolders in a makeshift fireplace. The mise-en-scène and editing of these shots replicate precisely those of *Uccellacci e uccellini*. In place of the crow's body, cooked and consumed by Davoli and Totò in Pasolini's script, are the remains of the donkey. The subtitle reads: "It always ends like this. This, our little story about *Uccellacci e uccellini*." In a final long take, Ninetto and Cicillo walk back down the road through the lugubrious industrial ruins, their bodies traveling away from the still camera, absorbed back into the landscape, replicating the movements that opened the film.



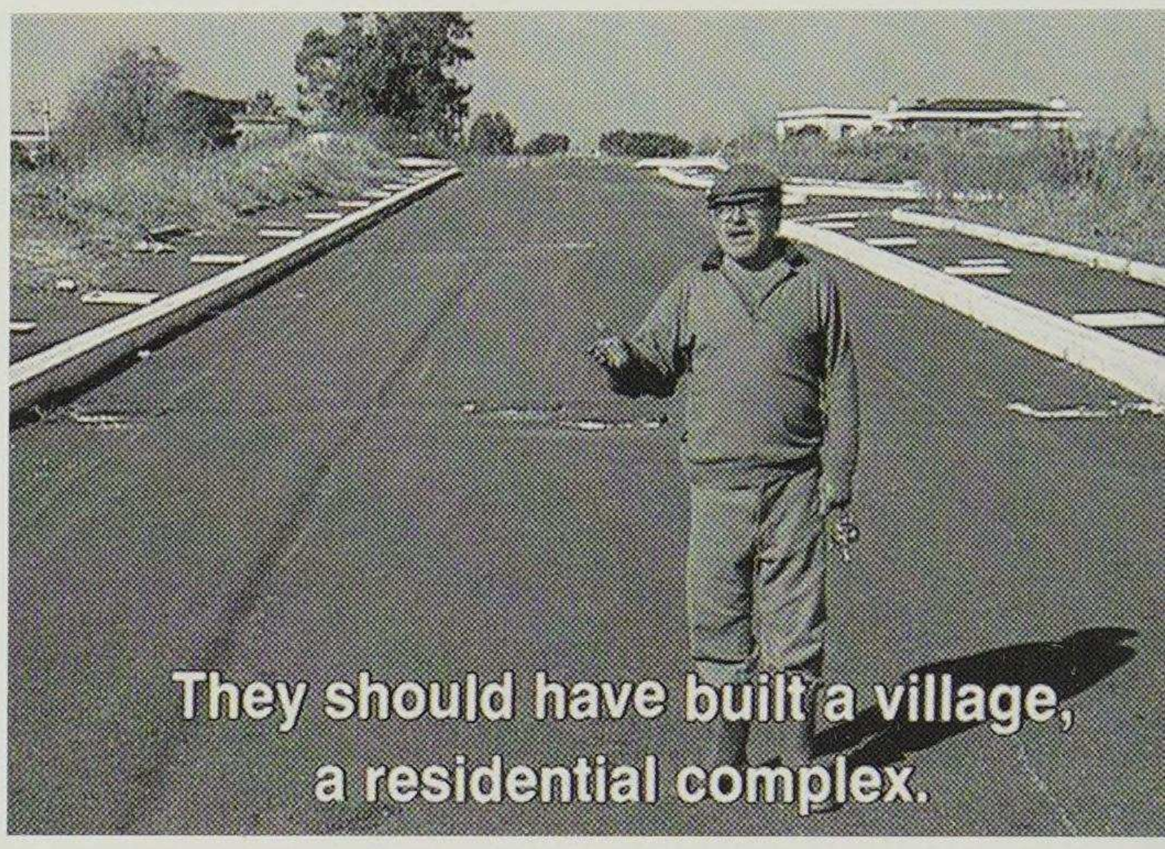






Figure 2.10
Pierre Huyghe, *Les Incivils*, video projection, Beta SP, 40', 1995.
Composite image courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

TALKING TO THE BIRDS: LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF CONTEXT

Les Incivils is an exercise in learning how to talk to the birds. As Huyghe later remarked,

> What is interesting about St. Francis of Assisi—that . . . comes out of Pasolini—is this idea of speaking to the birds . . . before speaking to the birds you have to first learn the language of the birds. So you have to learn the language of the context before you can speak to the context. . . . I'm interested in the *mécanique*.[60]

For Huyghe, learning this language was not simply a matter of style, of enunciating phonemes or monemes, but of treating both the visual grammar of Pasolini's film and its *content* as equally important to the language process. The film's context, which spans from the 1960s of Pasolini's time to the landscape of contemporary Italy, is marked both by the cinematographic language of *Uccellacci e uccellini* and the recollections of the residents that now inhabit Pasolini's original locations. In this, Huyghe radically departs from *Remake*'s frame-by-frame replication to instead produce a translation with gaps, additions, and mistakes. These tactics put into practice Pasolini's earlier claim that the smallest marker of a film's composition is not the "shot," the script, the point of view, the mise-en-scène, or even the philosophical ideas that motivate the narrative, but rather the material reality of the objects and people in front of the lens. In the 1960s, Pasolini argued passionately that "no matter how detailed the shot, it is always composed of various objects or forms or acts of reality."[61] Pasolini called these units "kinemes," a term adapted from his earlier writing on visual semiotics. As he claimed,

> In reality, we make cinema by living, that is, by existing practically, that is, by acting. *All of life in the entirety of its actions is a natural, living film; in this sense, it is the linguistic equivalent of oral language in its natural and biological aspect.* By living, therefore, we represent ourselves, and we observe the representation of others. The reality of the human world is nothing more than this double representation in which we are both actors and spectators: a gigantic happening, if you will.[62]

If cinema is produced via pragmatic existence, and material objects are the smallest components of a film, then cinema, according to Pasolini, is "*nothing more than the 'written' manifestation of a natural, total language, which is the acting of reality.*"[63] Pasolini designed this thesis as both a contribution to and a

condemnation of the then highly fashionable discourse of semiotics, as pioneered by Ferdinand de Saussure and adapted by the French film theorists André Bazin, Jean Mitry, and, most specifically, Christian Metz.[64] This was an intellectual climate, as the Italian critic Fabio Vighi has noted, within which "the concept of reality was rapidly losing its ontological status, and any representational practice that rested on a fixed and commonly shared understanding of a pre-existent real was unsympathetically dispensed with."[65] Pasolini's response to Christian Metz—and he was one of the first writers to respond to Metz's theories publicly—was an emphatic refutation of the supposed "non-existence" of the real. "I believe there is a reality to evoke," he wrote, "indeed, we are guilty if we fail to evoke it."[66] Pasolini's belief in life as a "double representation" was not fuelled by pessimism, like the later writings of Baudrillard, but was rather directed toward "evoking" the potential for action in the crossovers between the observer and the observed.

To anyone with even a cursory familiarity with 1980s postmodernism and the vast body of literature on mediation, remediation, and simulation produced during this time, Pasolini's comments may appear anachronistic. Many thinkers are now acclimatized to thinking of the Real as a construct, and as such interchangeable with either the mirror or the screen, depending on critical affiliations. But Pasolini's commitment to maintaining a lower-case reality was not naïve. Formulated with an absolute awareness of opposition, Pasolini's ideas evolved in a manner similar to Guy Debord's. We may recall Debord's bemused reaction toward academics who "are not at all convinced that everyday life exists because they haven't encountered it anywhere."[67] Or, as Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev observed, "Most artists and thinkers in the 1980s had made peace with the notion that we live in a society of simulacra. Why, then, did Huyghe so radically disagree? The simple answer might be that those ideas did not correspond with his personal experience."[68] Christov-Bakargiev traces this understanding back to Huyghe's early childhood, noting that Huyghe remembered "being allowed . . . to sit with his father in the cockpits of the planes he flew for a commercial airline—actually witnessing the sites of Los Angeles from above during a nocturnal landing rather than simply watching them in *Blade Runner* like most children."[69] Although this is a rare moment of biographical insight in the commentary on Huyghe, I suggest that his attention to the dialectics of reality and fiction also resembles the historical materialism at work in Pasolini's films. Pasolini's "filmic writing" is grounded in sociohistorical terrain, and designed to make legible the history of signs. As film theorist Giuliana Bruno has argued, "Pasolini's heretical empiricism is a concern for the mark of social practice and historicity in the very articulation of film language as well as theoretical discourse itself."[70] Huyghe's work is similarly marked by the awareness that physical material (such as landscapes, people, the subjects

in front of the lens) is always caught up in the passing of time, and that the camera might be used to expose the traces of its history.

However, where Huyghe departs from Pasolini's ideas (and Metz's theories more generally) is in his tacit acknowledgment that the "smallest markers" of a film's material composition also have a future—that is, their life extends beyond the activation of a shutter, beyond the point that a strip of celluloid is processed, edited, and screened. As a consequence, Huyghe has explained, "we could consider a film being in suspension until someone decides to use it, it could become a program to be replayed, a temporary form of existence, a reality generator."[71] Reciprocity between representations and representors suggests that representations can be used to effect reality, just as reality acts as a support for representation. Huyghe here extrapolates from Pasolini's *Heretical Empiricism*, in which Pasolini outlines his argument for the "written language of reality." Huyghe has returned to this phrase frequently over the past decade. In an interview with George Baker in 2004, Huyghe remarked:

> Pasolini had this famous sentence: "Cinema is the written language of reality." If this is true, then it becomes possible to imagine taking up this language to effect reality. For Pasolini, it was the "sequence shot" that was the capture of reality, but it was then in the editing that one arrives at a "written language of reality." The editing is a sentence and one sequence shot is just a word. . . . And what then becomes crucial is to imagine all the possible sequence shots on the real, the multitude of subjective points of view.[72]

Huyghe first singles out Pasolini's "famous" sentence for its poetic invitation "to imagine . . . the multitude of subjective points of view." However, there is a secondary reference hidden behind this exuberance. Huyghe conflates Pasolini's essay on the written language of reality with another text: Pasolini's 1966 essay "Observations on the Long Take."[73]

In this essay, Pasolini sketches out a hypothetical outline of a film that might combine all of the possible angles and perspectives on one singular event. The assassination of President Kennedy serves as an example:

> Consider the short, 16 millimetre film of Kennedy's death. Shot by a spectator in the crowd, it is a long take, the most typical long take imaginable. . . . In this, the only possible film of Kennedy's death, all other points of view are missing: that of Kennedy and Jacqueline, that of the assassin himself and his accomplices, that of those with a better vantage point, and that of the police escorts, etc. Suppose we had footage shot from all those points of view, what would we have?[74]

In place of the single, subjective "long shot" or "sequence shot" that stands in for the event, Pasolini imagines a montage, a collection of multiple points of view captured by numerous cameras simultaneously. From this montage, which was not conceived as a literal splicing together of sequences but more like an interrelated collage of footage, Pasolini surmises that the viewer could enter into a multiplication of presents, "as if an action, instead of unwinding before our eyes, were to unwind many times. This multiplication of presents abolishes the present, empties it, each present postulating the relativity of all others, their unreliability, imprecision, and ambiguity."[75]

Unreliability. Imprecision. Ambiguity. These qualities were also foregrounded in *Les Incivils*. The project engaged Pasolini's proposal for a multitude of subjective points of view by juxtaposing different narrators and perspectives. This activity was firstly pragmatic and physical, as indicated by Huyghe's description of Ohanian's camera work: "to film one point, then turn around, and film what's behind you, or the guy over there that's watching the film being made."[76] But it was also conceptual, in its concerted attempt to multiply time. Pasolini referred to this kind of "temporal multiplication" as "writing the historical present," and identified it as a symptom of montage. "As soon as montage intervenes," he notes, "the present becomes past, a past that, for cinematographic and not aesthetic reasons, is always in the present mode."[77] The genealogy for Huyghe's conceptualization of the "open present" could not be clearer. Huyghe has digested Pasolini's philosophies, just as Ninetto and Totò chewed through the flesh of the crow, forever after condemned, in some way, to repeat his actions as if their own.

The duration of *Les Incivils* extends well beyond its forty minutes of screen time. It stretches outward from the unfinished houses in the Mediterranean, through *The House or Home?*, the ATL, and the casting session, to take in the lives of Pasolini, Huyghe, and Davoli. The vectors of numerous geographical, biographical, and temporal zones are pulled taut. It would be a mistake to reduce *Les Incivils* to an exercise in philosophy. The film certainly set out to test Pasolini's ideas, but it was also altogether too steeped in Huyghe's own particular brand of aesthetics, too enlivened by time travel, and too caught up in the romance of its own production to pass for dry illustration. Indeed, Huyghe has frequently eschewed his role as illustrator, remarking in 2000:

> Articles about my work often discuss three things: cinema, appropriation, and deconstruction. Cinema is something I went to for many reasons, questioning time and the role of the actor. I have never considered [my methodology] to be appropriation. And it is not deconstruction, which places the artist as an analyst and the work as a commentary.[78]

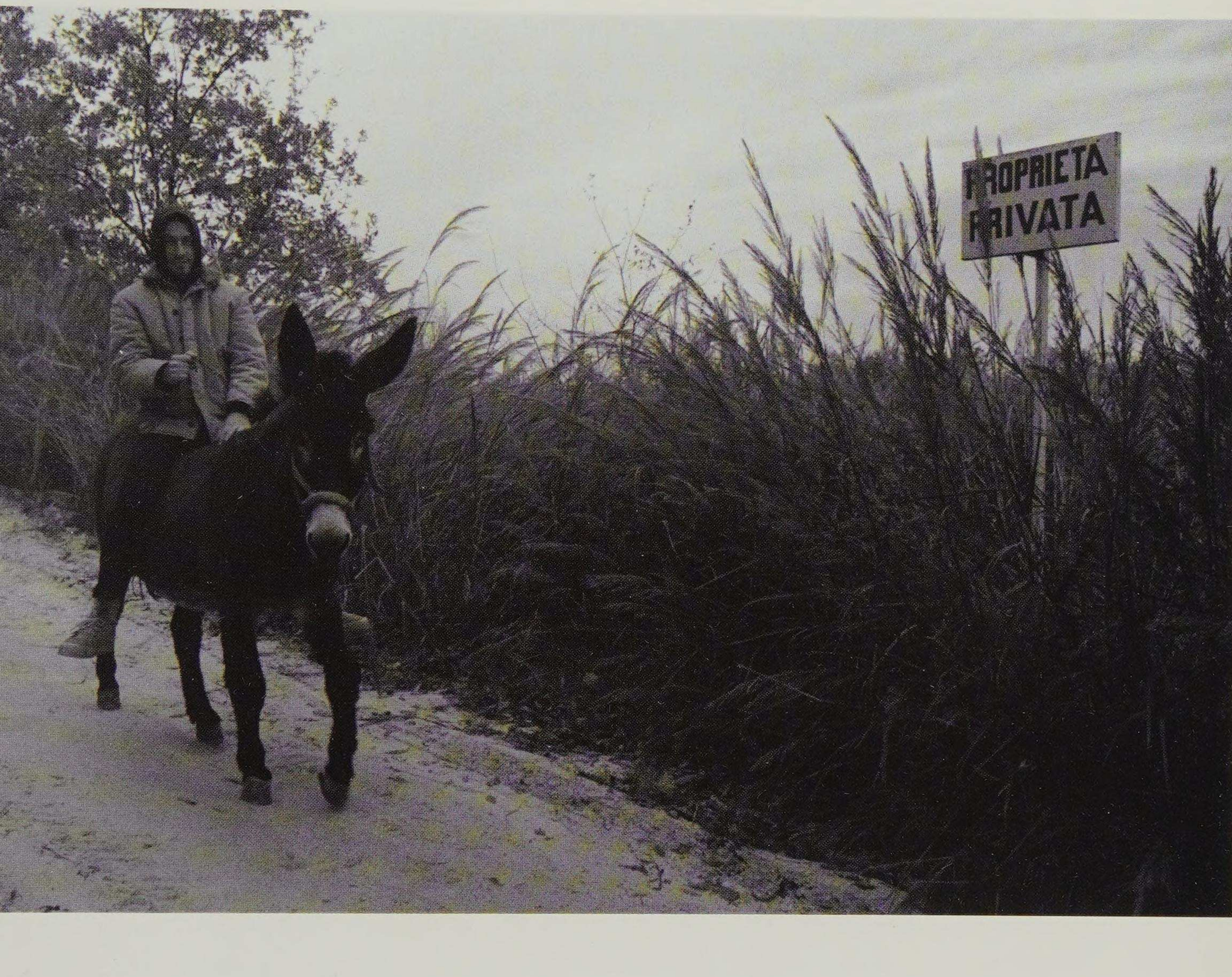


Figure 2.11
Pierre Huyghe, *Les Incivils*, video projection, Beta SP, 40', 1995.
Production still courtesy Pierre Huyghe.



Figure 2.12-2.13
Pierre Huyghe (with François Roche), *Chantier permanent*, location photograph, 1993.

In *Les Incivils* Huyghe's preservation of Pasolini's absurdist humor and existentialist satire is accompanied by a sense of wonder that at times verges on the sublime. In Huyghe's descriptions of the work, this emotional cadence is subdued. His explanations of process, technique, and concept tend toward the analytical, subjugating the affect of the film beneath distanced analysis. It is easy to forget, reading Huyghe's measured prose, the film's lyrical revelation of details. Its story is remembered more easily in fragments: the impeccable choreography of a flock of swarming birds, the skeletal houses soaked in the golden light of dusk, the absent soccer match, the young men dancing without a sound track outside a 1960s gas station. The lines on Ninetto Davoli's face as he runs through a script he last performed over twenty years earlier before he turns, grinning, to face the camera once again.

Huyghe's "one big project" of the mid-1990s was crucially dependent on the concepts of freed time and the open present. Although these ideas emerged as an attempt to address discrepancies between the nonspecific durations of particular artworks and the temporality of the museum, they were also designed to facilitate a nonproductive time so as to expose the pretenses of an industry in which free time is only recognized as a by-product of commercial productivity. In *Les Incivils*, the significance of the temporal dimension is emphasized by Huyghe's positioning of his work against the backdrop of temporal propriety—an important motivation behind Huyghe's double turn toward the unfinished architecture of the Mediterranean and to the structure of the remake. These forms were appealing not simply as representations of the open present, but for their capacity to materialize freed time, a time "open to any and all incidents that might occur."[79] Evidently there's more at stake here than that simple inversion of museological infrastructure flagged during the initial founding of the Association des temps libérés. Some pause should also be given before packaging the open present as solely a refusal of the finished, fetishized commodity. By the time Huyghe had completed *Les Incivils*, that myth of external perspective had fallen through time to become something else altogether. I propose that we consider Huyghe's project more simply: as a means of figuring out how to address one's place in history, of coming to terms with ontology as duration and experience as flux. This is a poetics of faltering construction that works against the dominant time codes of postindustrial economies. It is a matter of asking, as Huyghe has said, "How do you want the present to be drawn?"[80] Or, in other words, if you could be an architect of time, what kind of house would you live in?



CHAPTER 3
A MOVIE NAVIGATED BY STOPS

If you want to change the rules, you have to go back to the way they are produced.

Pierre Huyghe, 2007[1]

In 1996, after completing *Les Incivils*, Pierre Huyghe was invited to undertake a three-month residency at the École Municipale des Beaux-Arts, Collège Marcel Duchamp, Châteauroux. When the time for his exhibition came around, Huyghe closed the gallery, rented a bus, and went on a holiday accompanied by twenty students from the school. The sign on the gallery door read: "En Vacances (Gallery closed for the duration of the exhibition)." The excursion lasted for three days and followed a route Huyghe was familiar with from his childhood. Departing from Châteauroux in the darkness before dawn, Huyghe drove south, through the village where his grandmother lived, and on to Spain. En route, the students watched films selected by Huyghe that addressed the theme of doubles, including Andrei Tarkovsky's *The Mirror* (1974) and Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* (1980). "We navigate between a movie interrupted by stops," Huyghe said, "and stops interrupted by a movie."[2] He called the work *Extended Holidays* (1996).

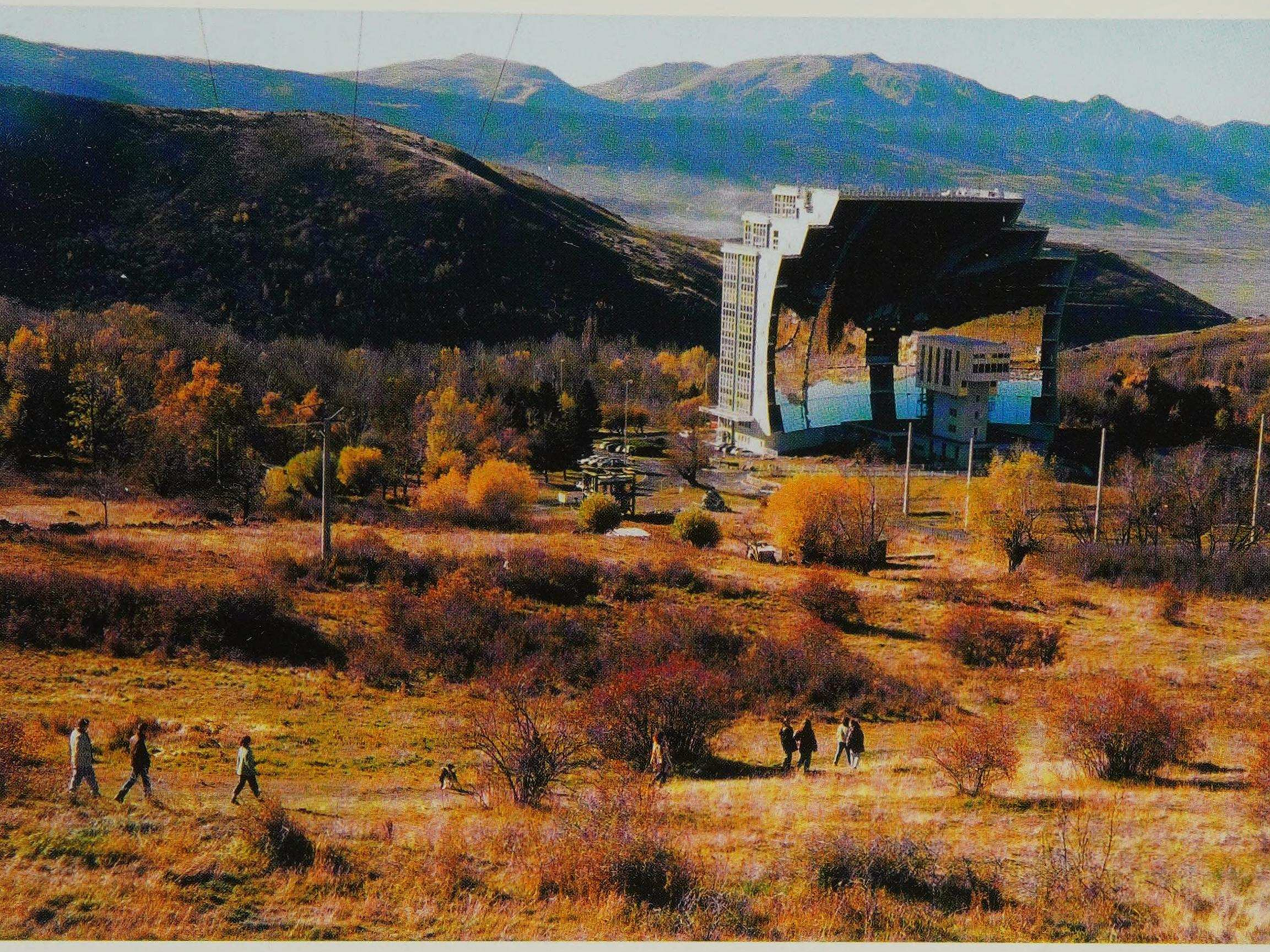
Extended Holidays ushered in a new phase of Huyghe's practice that expanded his prior investigations into time and cinema. Huyghe spent the majority of 1996 and 1997 sifting through the relations between sound, image, language, and temporality, subjecting these elements to endless tests and rearrangements. The trick was to proceed by elimination: to single out the active agent by figuring out what might be missed by the host. Sound was a primary carrier for this inquiry, as seen in works such as *Bruxelles–le Caire Soundtrack* (1996), *Dubbing* (1996), *Parallel Time Soundtrack* (1996), *Les Passagers* (1996), and *V.I. Antiope* (1997), a film without pictures constructed from text, sound effects, and music.[3] In these works,



Figures 3.1-3.2
Pierre Huyghe, *Extended Holidays*, event, 1996.

Huyghe's use of audiovisual postproduction techniques (such as dubbing, subtitling, and voice-overs) points to the gaps that arise when translating sound into image or image into text. In order to move forms through different hermeneutic formats, Huyghe engaged the protocols of translation. This tactic was both a bid to "think otherwise" and an attempt to learn the governing principles of what Jacques Rancière has called "the perceptual regime."[4]

Most of Huyghe's projects during this time could not have been completed without the theoretical groundwork undertaken by poststructuralism and semiotics in the 1970s. Equally important was the filtration of these discourses through the practice of both European and American conceptual artists such as Douglas Huebler, Allen Ruppersberg, Allan Kaprow, Michael Asher, Daniel Buren, and John Baldessari in that same decade. This is not to imply that Huyghe's work of 1996 and 1997 was *about* cinema, semiotics, or deconstruction: no more so than Paul Cézanne's still-life paintings were about apples (as Huyghe has said, "When people talk about Cézanne's paintings, they don't pay too much attention to what



kind of apple he is painting, whether it's a Granny Smith or whatever, because that's not the point").[5] Rather, Huyghe was testing out the *formatting* of events, and the roles of sound and image in that process.

It was within this context that microphones could become cameras, transcripts could be broadcast, and actors might double as sound tracks, in the manner implied by Philippe Parreno when he suggested in 1996 that, "after disposable cameras, someone should market disposable sound recorders. Listening to the sounds of a trip is as beautiful as looking at pictures of the landscape. The difference is that sound brings back the experience of a trip. Space is not lived if it is not traversed by duration."[6] The idea of disposable sound recorders elevates the temporal experience of the journey, implying that duration is eliminated in the production of static photographic excerpts. Parreno attributes an experiential, phenomenological quality to sound that is absent from the still image. It is an observation born out of Parreno's understanding of the relation between memory and space. This connection was also a central concern for Huyghe.

Although Parreno was aware of Huyghe's thinking around these issues, he was one of the very few to note its significance to Huyghe's broader practice. The critical deficit can be attributed mainly to the influence of Nicolas Bourriaud on the reception of Huyghe's work in the mid-1990s. While Huyghe consistently discussed alternate recording procedures and aspects of cinema, sound, and translation in interviews, Bourriaud instead zeroed in on what he called the "relational qualities" of Huyghe's work. It was Huyghe's perceived commitment to a "relational aesthetic" that prompted Bourriaud to enlist his participation in the group exhibition "Traffic," held at Bordeaux's contemporary art museum in the early months of 1996.

"Traffic" was, in many ways, one of the landmark exhibitions in France in the 1990s, not least because it provided the first (and to date the most comprehensive) survey of Bourriaud's then relatively new model of *esthétique relationnelle*.[7] The exhibition showcased a broad spectrum of work by established artists outside of France, including Vanessa Beecroft, Gillian Wearing, Kenji Yanobe, Jason Rhoades, Liam Gillick, Gabriel Orozco, Jorge Pardo, Rirkrit Tiravanija, and Maurizio Cattelan, as well as a solid representation of French practitioners. Bourriaud's catalog essay notes that the artists were chosen for their engagement with the "relational realm" and their interest in "social methods of exchange, interactivity and communication processes." In Bourriaud's words:

> Nowadays, we live our utopia on a subjective, day-to-day basis, in the real time of tangible and intentionally fragmentary experiments. The artwork is presented as a social interstice within which these experiences, and these new "possibilities of life," turn out to be feasible. It would seem more pressing, here and now, to invent possible relationships with our neighbours than to hold out for brighter tomorrows. That's all there is to it, but it's an awful lot.[8]

Much of Bourriaud's text was directed toward countering certain "misconceptions" concerning art in the 1990s (particularly the so-called "return to" conceptual art practices of the 1960s), while also generating a catalog of artists who ostensibly produced work from "the same stuff of which social exchanges are made." Pierre Huyghe emerged as a primary candidate for the curator's relational model. Bourriaud introduced Huyghe as an artist who "summoned people to a casting session, made a TV transmitter available to the public, and showed a photo of men at work just a few yards from their worksite."[9] Although Bourriaud admitted that this bio "bypassed all content," it is nonetheless clear that the curator's interest was sparked by *what* Huyghe was doing rather than the *why*, *how*, or *when* of his specific works.[10]

For "Traffic," Bourriaud exhibited video excerpts from *Mobil TV* (1995) alongside Huyghe's theatrical performance and sound work *Multiscénarios pour*

une sitcom (1996). Bourriaud also facilitated, outside the museum, Huyghe's satellite project *Les Passagers* (1996). *Les Passagers* was very similar in format to *Extended Holidays*, and began with an open invitation for exhibition visitors to embark on a bus tour of Bordeaux with Pierre Huyghe as their guide. Rather than screening fiction films on the bus as in *Extended Holidays*, the passengers were to watch pre-recorded footage of the same route that the bus followed. As Huyghe described it,

> A specific route is filmed by day, punctuated by events and little subsidiary scenes performed by actors. After nightfall, the bus follows the same route taken in the day. Passengers can follow the film on a monitor. The bus tries to synchronise its speed with the progress of the pictures, but is always either behind or ahead, rarely coinciding with them. During the course of the journey, the passengers find out what is about to happen or what has just happened by comparing what is outside the bus to related reference points in the film. The narration is directly linked to the map; the passenger moves on in the film's time. The passengers are travelling through time as it progresses on the road in front of them, corresponding to space. The image serves as a link between the two.[11]

Huyghe's description bears a strong resemblance to the proposal for *Extended Holidays* but it also, perhaps more significantly, reconsiders many of the issues raised earlier by *Les Incivils* and *Trajet*. The tropes of spectacle and journey were again positioned so as to draw out the dialectic between image and experience. Moving through Bordeaux in the early evening, the passengers' journey was refracted through two screens: the window, offering a view of the present, and the television, on which the image of the past was projected. One of the passengers on the bus later reported that the "images were strangely situated halfway between documentary (its contextual value) and the narrative structure. The journey, with its various unforeseen events (red lights, reductions in speed) created . . . temporal disjunctions."[12] Despite the significance of time, narrative, and cinema in this work, in the catalog for "Traffic," Bourriaud focused on the same qualities discussed in his subsequent theory of *esthétique relationnelle*: the "tendency to draw inspiration from everyday life," the "focus upon small-scale models of communicational situations," and the generation of "relations between people."[13]

Following the translation of Bourriaud's *Esthétique relationnelle* into English in 2002, Huyghe was rapidly tagged as a "relational artist," and he has been dogged by the label ever since.[14] Yet while European and American critics and curators enthusiastically debated the pros and cons of "relational art" in the early part of the decade, Huyghe did his best to distance himself from the term, as did the majority of artists Bourriaud initially took under his wing. When BBC Four

commissioned a documentary on relational aesthetics in July 2004, for example, English director Ben Lewis noted that many of the artists whose reputations were advanced by Bourriaud's exhibitions and writings "refused to be interviewed, denied they were relational, or once interviewed, tried to ban *Art Safari* from showing their work." Lewis continued:

> I was completely amazed that [whether they belong to the relational aesthetics movement] was a very off-putting question for many artists. A lot of them refused point blank to be in the film and British artist Liam Gillick was absolutely livid with me. He was furious about that line of questioning. He thought it was superficial and trivial.[15]

Although artists' rejections of externally imposed labels is hardly novel, Lewis's experience inadvertently highlights a real problem with current analyses of relational aesthetics: the widespread inability to separate the critical value of Bourriaud's propositions from the enormity of his curatorial influence. This chapter revisits Bourriaud's initial treatise on relational aesthetics in order to interrogate its relevance to Huyghe's practice and to establish a reconnection between Bourriaud's ideas and the original context in which they arose. In recent years, this context has been deleted from critical evaluations of relational art, almost without exception, with the regrettable effect of obscuring the value of Bourriaud's spatio-temporally specific observations under a mountain of ahistorical mythology.

NICOLAS BOURRIAUD'S RELATIONAL AESTHETICS

There are several inconsistencies with the internal logic of Bourriaud's initial relational model that require clarification. The first and most straightforward is this: while rejecting outright any grouping of artists on the basis of style, iconography, or themes, Bourriaud nonetheless resorted to numerous generalizations about contemporary art in order to validate his argument. "Present day art," he wrote, "is striving to produce situations of exchange, and relational space-times."[16] Although all of the artists featured in "Traffic" were from first-world economies, primarily Western Europe, the United States, and Japan, there was no consideration of the context in which the artists were working or in which their art was most frequently exhibited. Moreover, constructs such as society, history, and culture were portrayed as homogeneous throughout the text—disregarding those artists for whom "the legacy of the 20th century avant-gardes" is irrelevant at best, and imperialist at worst.

The second difficulty emerges from an unresolved tension between what Bourriaud called "present day art" and modernist art practice. "We are dealing here with a group of artists," he argued, "which for the first time since the emergence of Conceptual Art in the mid 1960s, in no way seeks support from the reinterpretation of a past aesthetic movement." He continued: "Relational art is not the revival of a movement or the comeback of any style. Its basic assumption—the realm of human relations as a setting for the work—has no example to follow in art history."[17] Although numerous examples of early participatory and collaborative art make appearances in Bourriaud's essays, the conceptual or historical relevance of these to contemporary practitioners remains undisclosed. But stranger still is Bourriaud's attempt to account for the contemporary character of "1990s art" (an art that seeks no support from the past) with recourse to a *continuation* of modernism: "Today's art is fairly and squarely taking up the legacy of the 20th century avant-gardes, while at the same time challenging their dogmatism and their teleology."[18] Bourriaud justified this claim by insisting that whereas modernism "proceeded by way of separations and contrasts, readily disqualifying the past in favour of the future," today "people no longer try to progress by way of conflictual clashes, but rather by the invention of new combinations."[19] Artists, art critics, and curators were as such all likened to the figure of the DJ, an idea later fleshed out in Bourriaud's 2002 book *Postproduction Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World.*[20]

Although Bourriaud's remarks about changing artistic intentions at this time were accurate, conflicts between a desire for novelty on the one hand (what's contemporary about contemporary art?) and historical validation on the other remain unresolved, occluding the place of both modernism and history within the text. Bourriaud has elsewhere described history as a series of "relics and fetishes," betraying his critical distance from thinkers such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Rancière. Moreover, at the time of "Traffic" he seemed unaware that the "reconsideration of space-time relations" undertaken by artists such as Huyghe was in itself a historiographic project that in no way viewed the past as terminal.[21] Bourriaud's essay acknowledges a plurality of modernities ("modernity cannot be reduced to a rationalist teleology"), but at the same time consistently reaffirms the supposed teleological essentialism of modernist avant-garde artists, as if that category required unified preservation in order to posit the difference of the now. And although the political potential of relational practice is raised (under the rubric of "open structures"), discussion is limited almost solely to questions of form: the artistic "strategy" of "including the other," for example, by way of "interactive" forums is construed as the endpoint of an aesthetic process, an update of Michael Fried's vision of minimalist theatricality rather than either an issue for postcolonial critique or a response to specific politico-economic conditions.[22]

These problems arise from Bourriaud's double attempt to catalog a fairly modest set of affinities between artists, observed in his capacity as a critic and curator in the mid-1990s, and to produce a manifesto on the state of contemporary artistic practice that was meant to be global in scope and revolutionary in fervor.[23] This in itself is not a new strategy for curators. Bourriaud was treading a path well worn by curators such as Seth Siegelaub in America and Harald Szeemann in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. In Szeemann's early survey exhibitions ("When Attitudes Become Forms," 1969, and Documenta V, 1975) the exhibition-making process was presented as a "reality generator" rather than a mode of documentation: "This was a new way of doing shows," Szeemann recalled in 1996, "not only documenting a world, but creating one. Artists were especially comfortable with this approach."[24] Pair this with Bourriaud's similar remarks in the "Traffic" catalog, published the same year as Szeemann's interview: "Present-day art does not reproduce the world that it has been taught. It tries to invent new worlds, taking human relations as its material."[25] Like Bourriaud, Szeemann was well known for promoting conceptual artists for whom "work" doubled as form and content, and performative inflections were privileged. Moreover, Szeemann was aware that in this invention of new worlds, the role of the curator was redefined, initiating a legacy of curatorial practice that facilitated Bourriaud's own activities in the 1990s.[26]

However, whereas Szeemann traded in concepts such as invention and, by extension, novelty, Bourriaud clearly recognized that by the mid-1990s the integrity and efficacy of such terms had become problematic. Perhaps as a response to this, Bourriaud has since made several attempts to deny the "manifesto-esque" quality of his initial texts: "The idea of a manifesto is totally related to the idea of newness and novelty. Instinctively I find it ridiculous. I wouldn't be able to explain why, but it's out of purpose for me. I'm not trying to relate [relational aesthetics] to the old form of the manifesto. I didn't think about it."[27] While it may be that Bourriaud did not purposely direct the format of his propositions, the tone and the scope of "Traffic," particularly in its tendency toward generalization and its insistence on quarantining the art of the 1990s from all that had gone before (with an eye toward future horizons), pushed Bourriaud's analysis into the very territory that he has since so strenuously fought to disavow.

Moreover, there *were* a great number of new and highly specific economic, social, and aesthetic factors that emerged in the 1990s that facilitated the development of both "relational art" and Bourriaud's identification of its aesthetic tropes. Although a detailed analysis is not necessary here, four interrelated factors can be briefly flagged.

First, the red tape that had previously cordoned off artists from curators had finally unraveled; curatorial workshops joined the curricula of numerous art

schools, and major institutions were more than willing to commission well-known artists as guest curators. In France, curators such as Eric Troncy were abdicating their traditional functions altogether in order to free up responsibilities to artists. As Troncy noted in 1997, "The crucial aspect of this method lies in the determination to delegate to the artists the collective responsibility for the exhibition in its entirety."[28] Among Huyghe's generation, the testing ground for this methodology was "Ozone" (1989), curated by Troncy at the Contemporary Art Centre in Nevers. Here the artists were invited, as Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster recalled, "to do fifty percent of the work."[29] By 1997, the percentage was far greater, as the exhibition-making process began to be regarded in and of itself as an artistic collaboration.[30]

Second, many artists working in the first half of the 1990s had already been forced into independent exhibition management by the widespread closure of galleries in the face of economic recession and the resultant downturn in contemporary art sales (most notably in France, Germany, and North America). Huyghe has commented positively on his productions prior to signing with Roger Pailhas, noting that the lack of institutional support pushed him to think and work outside the white cube, but he also clearly recalls this period as a time marked by economic crisis.[31]

Third, mainstream exhibition practices in the West were at this time sliding toward a supposedly more "open" format, whereby curators persistently advocated a commitment to dialogue, community interaction, and participative encounters. In Chicago, we recall that Mary Jane Jacob was promoting site-specific and community-based contemporary art through projects such as *Places with a Past* (1993) and *Culture in Action* (1995); in Moscow, curator Viktor Misiano was developing a model of "performative curating" (or "operational realism") that he later likened to Bourriaud's relational aesthetics.[32]

Fourth, the 1990s was the age of the digital network. The dot.com boom, historically coincident with "Traffic," sparked numerous analyses of the parallels between the "open" community of the Internet, a so-called naturally democratic medium, and the field of contemporary artistic production (and we need only look to Google China for an easy deflection of the link between democracy and net culture).

Clearly, this background sketch does not address either the wider political frameworks for these shifts, or their manipulation by the artists in "Traffic." The question I want to ask here is rather more specific: in light of these factors, can relational aesthetics provide a productive means of accounting for Huyghe's work of this time?

The answer is yes, but only as one point of departure. As Liam Gillick reminded Claire Bishop in 2006, Bourriaud's theory itself "was a direct product of a specific and ongoing debate . . . the result of informal argument and disagreement among Bourriaud and some of the artists referred to in his text."[33] The idea emerged

out of a series of curatorial observations and conversations that came to a head in the staging of "Traffic." So although there are similar issues at stake in both Huyghe's practice and Bourriaud's curatorial foci (recycling, postproduction, open temporality, collaborative practice), the overemphasis on the "relational" aspects of Huyghe's work in subsequent years has prevented a comprehensive investigation into what Huyghe was doing at this time, and why. Bringing people together to develop "a series of relationships" was indeed at the core of works such as *Mobil TV* and *The House or Home?*, and Huyghe's engagement with the public sphere did inform a large portion of his projects in the early 1990s. But for Huyghe both the "social" and the "public sphere" were highly problematic constructions, and the generation of encounters was not the main impetus for his collaborations. The interactive qualities discussed by Bourriaud are symptoms of, not primary motivators for, Huyghe's interrogation of temporal formatting. So if Bourriaud was focused on effects (the *what*, and possibly the *where*, of contemporary art), Huyghe remained committed to interrogating the *how*, the *why*, and the *when* of representational structures. It is largely due to this difference of emphasis that the details and contexts of Huyghe's individual projects of the mid-1990s are beginning to fade from critical memory.

FROM RELATIONAL AESTHETICS TO THE PERCEPTUAL REGIME

If Bourriaud's model of contemporary artistic practice is deemed of limited use, then an alternative framework is needed. I suggest that Huyghe's work of the mid-1990s—the same work deemed relational by Bourriaud—was seeking to demythologize the ideological functions of what Jacques Rancière has called "the perceptual regime."[34] Huyghe was also, as with his earlier projects, attempting to situate his work within a model of time that did not coincide with "normative" industrial production, in particular that of the commercial film industry.

In 1997, Huyghe outlined some of these concerns in a statement titled "The Silent Voice and the Story's Landscape":

> The apparition of cinema coincides with that of industry, editing is similar to the rhythm typical of mechanized work, and the narrative tension is imitative of the ideological view of the modern project. What do I perceive? A monolithic construction of history that does not address marginal concerns. . . . The consideration of different models could lead to the problem of living history in the present, of finding a way of dating it differently and freely using it in order to find one's own time.[35]

Here, Huyghe posits that the exclusions of the film industry (those aspects that do not conform to the rhythm of mechanization) may be harnessed in order to access freed time. Finding a way of dating time differently, or considering models that do not conform to monolithic visions of history, may hypothetically generate a time apart from industry and linear sequencing. Significantly, in Huyghe's work these industry time codes appear synonymous with those of mainstream Hollywood cinema.

It is then particularly telling that cinematic protocols and sound-recording practices became central to Huyghe's work at this time. Sound is largely an unheard element of modernity: the aural dimensions of modernization are often silenced by recapitulations of the hegemony of the visual, or in Erwin Panofsky's terms, the shift from haptic to optic perspective coincident with the industrial era.[36] At a basic level, this effect is keenly felt when watching commercial movies. As sound theorist Alan Williams has observed: "Spectators do not notice 'good' mixing, aural perspective, sound edits and so on, but they are painfully, physically aware of 'bad' execution of these techniques."[37] A set of values informs the inaudibility of sound work. Like the invisibility of the image track in classical narrative cinema (the product of seamless montage), legibility is dependent on representational conventions. In Jean-Luc Godard's films from the 1960s, for example, these kinds of conventions were the subject of numerous cinematic games: think of the drum solo that accompanies the long tracking shot in *Weekend* (1967), or the sound track to the café scene in *Bande à part* (1964), where the conversation is rendered inaudible by the intrusion of background noise. Sonic distractions are also a key element of Luis Buñuel's cinema—as in the sequence from *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie* (1972), in which the camera engages in an amusingly relentless search for the source of the sound track. Like Godard and Buñuel before him, Huyghe's shuffling of qualities "proper" to sound and image was both dependent on and rebelled against established norms. These directors understood that in order to work against representational conventions, an understanding of the rules was essential. Huyghe further recognized that these rules were compiled from a history of contingencies and accidents.

In the twentieth century, the development and usage of recording apparatus emerged out of a vast body of aesthetic and technological experiments and mishaps, dictated partially by trial and error but also by the prerogatives of the market and the availability of technology. When *The Jazz Singer* (1926) premiered as the first talkie in New York in 1927, film producers, directors, editors, actors, and studios were still only just beginning to come to terms with the impact that sound was to have on the future of cinema. Particularly in Hollywood, the commitment to linear narratives and hermetic screen worlds needed to be completely rethought following the integration of sound and image. And the solutions proposed were

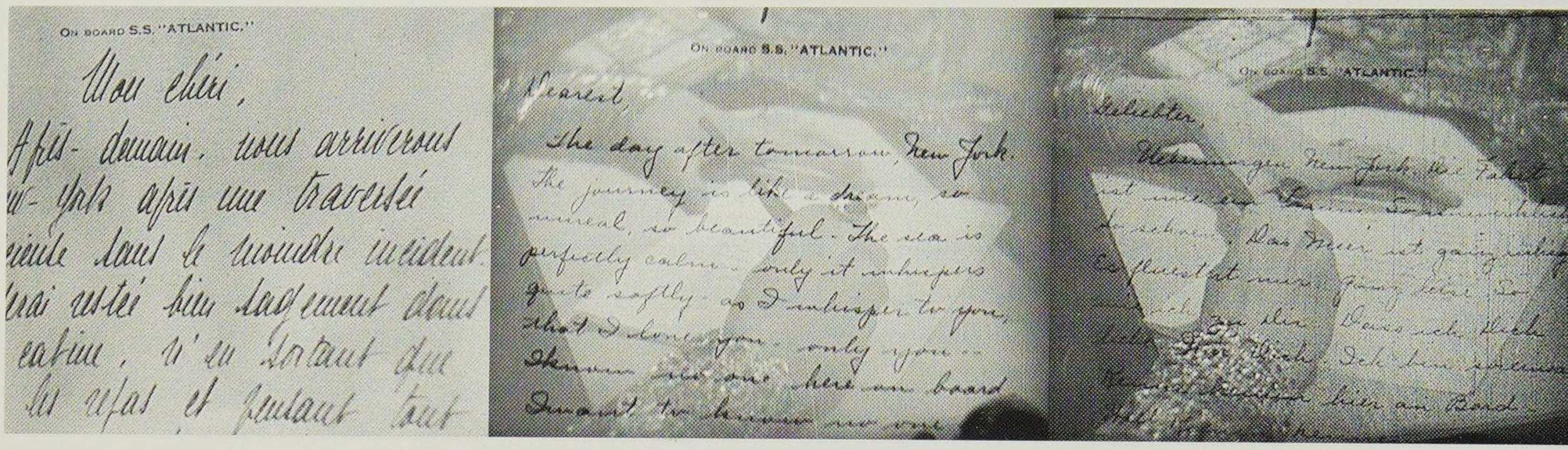


Figure 3.3
Pierre Huyghe, *Atlantic (versions multiples)*, triple simultaneous video projection of E. A. Dupont's *Atlantic* (1929); 35 mm film transferred onto Beta Digital, 1997.

radically different to those in, for example, Europe or Japan. Indeed, during the conversion era of the 1930s (when the film industry was in the process of converting to sound) differences between production techniques across the globe were exacerbated due to uneven technological distribution, language barriers, and a widespread reluctance to relinquish a domestic aesthetic.[38]

Differences between national production later formed the basis of Huyghe's 1997 three-channel video projection, *Atlantic (versions multiples)*, which simultaneously screened three versions of E. A. Dupont's film of the final journey of the *Titanic* (in French, English, and German). Over time, the multilanguage projections went out of sync due to differences between the three versions: changes to the script, the difference in dialogue delivery, and, on occasion, the insertion of new scenes and material designed to render the films more palatable to domestic audiences.[39] Idiosyncrasies like these have now largely been ironed out by the homogenization of technology, the amalgamation of manufacturing companies, and the elimination of consumer competition in the "globalization" of production. Huyghe, it seems, would like to question this process of homogenization, and consider whether such mandates also extend to historical knowledge. It is not the spectator's experience of cinematic sound that is the major point of interest here. Of much greater significance are the questions raised by listening carefully to the context of production. Under these conditions, the properties of the media, their treatment in individual works, or the specific operation of technological devices become rather less important than the factors that govern their application and appearance.

It was no coincidence that Huyghe's work immediately following *Les Passagers* tended to veer away from the screen, maintaining the cinematic apparatus as a kind of trace. *Multiscénarios pour une sitcom*, for example, forfeited the screen for the stage, and took the form of a performance staged during Bourriaud's exhibition "Traffic." The products of cinema here become prompts for the shared activity of translation. Huyghe instructed groups of actors to recite extracts from a variety of post-script scenarios adapted from seven feature films.[40] The films selected were *2001: A Space Odyssey*; *The Exorcist 2*; *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle*; *Petit à petit*; *Doctor Jerry and Mister Love*; *Persona*; and *Opening Night*. As with the movies screened on the bus in *Extended Holidays*, all of these scripts dealt with the theme of doubles. During the performance, the cues for each reading were staggered, resulting in polyphonic overlap. As Huyghe explained, "The extracts from the scenarios overlap, sometimes in a dialogue with each other. Thus the characters in Godard's film *Deux ou trois chose que je sais d'elle* respond to those in *Dr. Jerry and Mister Love*. The films themselves become characters."[41] A post-script transcription of the performance was published as a booklet, and distributed with an audio recording on CD.[42]

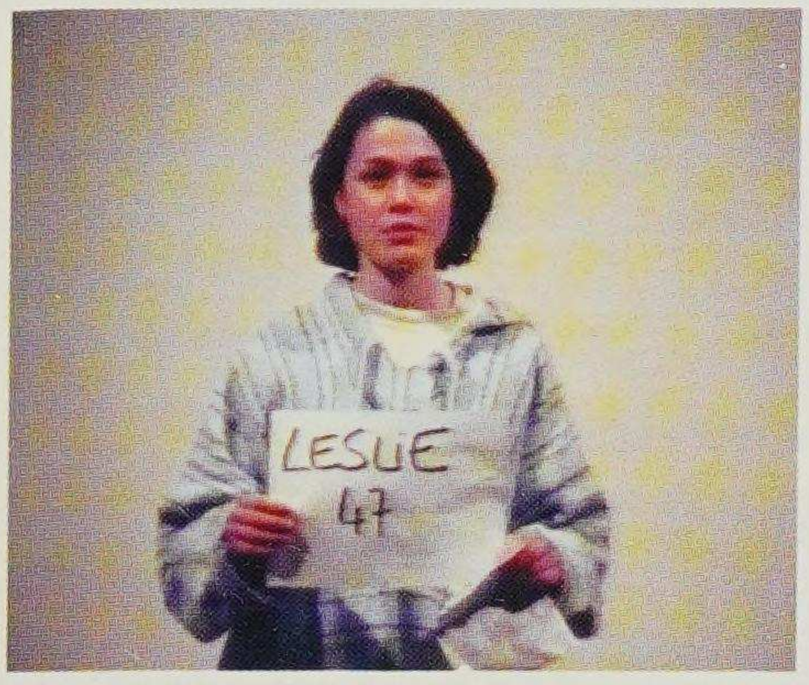


Figure 3.4
Pierre Huyghe, *Multiscénarios pour une sitcom*, event and casting session, 1996.

From one perspective, *Multiscénarios* can be read as a pragmatic, almost straightforward attempt to address those "models of history" outlined in Huyghe's silent voice statement. Philippe Parreno has further suggested that Huyghe's recital of that which was once "closed" (the postproduction scenario) was not intended to signal a "structural shift from yesterday's linearity to today's hypertextuality," but was rather a "search to understand what these narratives can produce."[43] However, where Parreno speaks in the positive, Huyghe's trajectory is often charted in the negative: around what is not produced, what is missing, toward the exclusions.

Shades of this endeavor can also be found in artist Carsten Höller's philosophy of "producing against":

> Production is so much about exclusion: excluding all the other things that could be done or excluding all the other ways that something could be done. . . . Our current political environment—at least in Western Europe—feels like a giant buffer ready to neutralise any alternative that might develop and challenge the status quo. It could also be said that the whole thing has recently developed in such a way that it needs these "alternatives" to keep going, as it is clearly of a predatory nature. Thus the whole idea of producing against is now very much a part of our environment.[44]

Höller here critiques the seemingly infallible link between production and exclusion, pointing to the smothering of alternatives by standardization. Alternatives may be developed, he suggests, but as soon as a pocket of resistance is recognized it is in danger of being sucked back into the system, similar to the way that the counterculture was anaesthetized for commercial exploitation in the 1960s. Oppositions are absorbed by the status quo and, most significantly, the status quo relies on opposition in order to survive. Huyghe and Höller share a similar philosophical outlook and have collaborated several times. This notion of "producing against" is a major point of connection between their praxes, as is their mutual awareness of the spectacle's "predatory" qualities. But whereas Höller acknowledges that, in the absence of an avant-garde, "producing against" is paradoxically both desirable and futile, Huyghe has refused to dismiss the real possibility of altering the state of play. As Huyghe remarked in 2007, "If you want to change the rules, you have to go back to the way they are produced."[45]

One means of implementing such a return can be found in the writings of Jacques Rancière. In 2004, Rancière argued that "the visibility of a form of expression as an artistic form depends on a historically constituted regime of perception and intelligibility. This does not mean that it becomes invisible with the emergence of a new regime. . . . The possibility of the new system [does not coincide]

with the impossibility of the former system."[46] Rancière's advice in the face of these regimes is "to try at one and the same to historicize the transcendental and to de-historicize these systems of conditions of possibility."[47] Philippe Parreno was promoting a related approach to Rancière's, with rather more minimalist rhetoric, when he offered his proposal for disposable sound recorders as a commentary on Huyghe's work. Here, the normative pairing of memory with image was questioned and made strange. This is one way of dehistoricizing the regimes of perception while keeping the contexts of production in the line of sight: like moving a set of temporal goal posts, or going back to a point in time when the rules of the game were only just beginning to crystallize.

In 1996, the "systems of the conditions of possibility" were very different from those in, say, 1864, when the French photographer Nadar first put forward the idea for a sonic fixative. Nadar published two treatises on the possibility of a *daguerréotype acoustique* some years prior to the invention of the phonograph, in which he describes a "box within which melodies are fixed and retained, just as the darkroom seizes and fixes images."[48] This statement was written before the link between memory and optics became a commercial tool for companies such as Kodak—before the image, to paraphrase Walter Benjamin, became the headstone of modern history. When Nadar initially dreamed of the sonic induction of experiences, there were no commercial protocols in place by which to judge the "appropriate" usage of sound and image. For Huyghe, to take a slice out of this period and map it onto the present may have been a way to counter the "monolithic histories" of contemporary representational institutions. Alternately, it would also provide a good opportunity to learn the rules of the game.

Bruxelles-le Caire Soundtrack, for example, unfolded from a chance meeting between Huyghe and a passerby on a street in Brussels. From this random encounter, a deal was made. In exchange for one return airline ticket from Brussels to Cairo, the passerby agreed to bring back a sound recording of the entire duration of his journey. Huyghe recalled:

> I established a relationship with this person, above and below this reality, in which he is the main protagonist. This is the starting point for a process whose progress eludes me and whose subsequent rendering makes me a mere listener. It is a role reversal from experience to reception. Although the recording corresponds to the chronological sequence imposed by the journey, this audio material constitutes a montage, the basis of a scenario.[49]

The passenger chose the destination, and Huyghe provided the ticket. The audio material gathered during the trip ran to nine cassette tapes, each ninety minutes

long. The sound track was first exhibited at Galerie Mot & Van den Boogaard, in Brussels, in February 1996, one month before the close of "Traffic." The recording was transmitted via headphones and, due to its length, was experientially non-eventful and accessible only as fragments (the duration of the recording ran well beyond the exhibition's visiting hours). Huyghe also displayed the airline ticket at the gallery as a secondary representation of the passenger's experience. Huyghe's doubling of formats played on the arbitrary equivalence between the duration of a journey and the time it takes to travel. Whereas a sound recording always translates a past moment into the present, tickets can be either promises to the future or clues to what went before, depending on the temporal vantage point.

Similar effects were cultivated by *Parallel Time Soundtrack* (1996), a rerecording of a transcript of a conversation between Huyghe, Philippe Parreno, and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster about their project *Temporary School*. Here, the background noise of *Bruxelles-le Caire* was superseded by a focus on the voice, pulling the object of translation away from a spatiotemporal duration and into the semantic field. In *Parallel Time Soundtrack*, three actors were employed as stand-ins for the artists. Given that the actors had no knowledge of the tone or emotional tenor of the original conversation (unlike those performers in *Multiscénarios pour une sitcom*, there was no prior filmic source that could influence their interpretation of the script), the interpretive gap between the aural and written data was increased. The recording of their performance was accessible via headphones in the gallery, and accompanied by a video projection of a subtitled version of the dialogue. In the transition from the written to the spoken word and back again, the meaning of the text was scrambled. The gaps in translation signified the experiential movement between perceptual formats (sound and image). Huyghe figured this oscillation spatially and temporally. While anyone in the gallery could watch the subtitles on screen (the text was a shared, visual experience that was encountered immediately on entering the gallery space), the audio component was solitary and private (only a limited number of headsets were provided).

By way of this gap and the layering of sensorial data, it could be argued that Huyghe was attempting to manufacture an audiovisual archive in which the authors' words reappeared without quotation marks in the speech of the actors. This strategy emulates that of "free indirect discourse," a term originally developed in literary criticism. Free indirect discourse occurs when an author writes "in character" without explicit acknowledgment. It is recognizable by changes in style and diction, and issues from a syntactic alliance between the tenses of indirect discourse and the tone and syntax of direct discourse. It is, in other words, a temporal hybrid. Huyghe had encountered analyses of free indirect discourse in the writings of both Pasolini and Deleuze.[50] However, as Deleuze once said, "talking isn't seeing," and if the

gap between the utterance and the word is irreconcilable, then "this means that we can't solve the problem of knowledge (or rather of knowledges) by invoking a correspondence or conformity of terms. You have to look elsewhere for what links and weaves them together."[51] Although the pairing of the visible and the aural disrupted semantic correspondence in *Parallel Time Soundtrack*, there was one element of the work that did stage a kind of reconciliation between the fault lines of perception. This factor was invisible, "elsewhere" in the manner implied by Deleuze, random and uncontrollable. It can be described as the "silent voice."

As Huyghe has explained, "Watching a subtitled film gives rise to a confrontation between my silent voice which is reading, and the external voice I am listening to. The text projects an acoustic image which becomes a specific mental picture, vague and yet shared."[52] The "silent voice" was also central to Huyghe's installation *Deux conversations* (1996), which was exhibited—for the first and last time—at the 1996 Lyon Biennale. Huyghe's artist's statement read:

> As you enter the room, you hear a soundtrack that is made up directly of voices from telephone conversations intercepted by a scanner and simultaneously broadcast into the room. What you see is a blank screen onto which [40 slides of] subtitles are being projected. These subtitles form a five-minute loop of an extract from [the French version of] *2001: A Space Odyssey* in which Dave Bowman, outside the space ship, tries in vain to persuade the onboard computer HAL to let him back in. There is interference between the two conversations, the one you read on the screen and the one you hear. There are two times, one fictional in a loop which makes it permanent, and one instantaneous and broken, taken from real life. In this confrontation the narration is continuously renewed.[53]

The covert interception of telephone conversations was live, and as in the first pirate version of *Mobil TV*, infiltrated corporate networks. Conversations of Lyon residents were mixed during the broadcast and accompanied, in a sardonic play on communication breakdown, with the transcript of Dave Bowman's repeated exhortations ("Open the pod bay doors, HAL, open the pod bay doors . . .").

DUBBING AND *DOUBLAGE*

Huyghe's sound-based projects received little critical attention and were rarely exhibited more than once. Apart from minimal coverage in the French press, there are no reviews in English of the exhibitions in which they appeared. In part, this

can be attributed to their specific linguistic orientation: despite the English-language titles, Huyghe had evidently designed the pieces for domestic consumption. But I would also suggest that Huyghe's attempt to signify immaterial discourse (that is, the production of mental images and mind speech) was still in a developmental stage. Although Huyghe was working simultaneously on numerous projects that used subtitles and audio components in 1996, in retrospect these projects now appear as blueprints or test patterns for his major audiovisual installation, *Dubbing* (1996).

Dubbing drew on many of the aesthetic and conceptual elements of Huyghe's earlier sound-based productions. The work also specifically engaged with a set of experiential effects that Huyghe had observed through his use of subtitles. He now came to realize that, whereas "silent films [give] free reign to the multitude of mental voices which the viewer imagined, or, more precisely, that his silent voice harmonised, talking films mean he is proffered just one."[54] These observations led to an investigation of the protocols of *doublage* (dubbing). In English, only traces of the etymological link between dubbing and doubling remain, but in French the connection is immediate. The doppelgängers that populate Huyghe's filmic sources—the doubling of language that arises from pairing aural and written formats, the doubling of actors and interpreters, the doubling of time—guided his research into *doublage*. In French, a "dubber" is known as *un comédien*, and dubbing artists belong to the professional category of workers known as *les intermittents du spectacle*: workers who are employed on a contractual basis of specific duration in the making of cinema, television, theater, and other performative, audiovisual productions. The connections Huyghe draws between these different fields are in part motivated by linguistic structure. We might, for example, describe Huyghe's conceptual approach as associative, as it stems from word play, but it is not "free associative," in that the movement from one word to the next is far from random: the links between words are not generated unconsciously but issue from their specific cultural uses and accepted definitions.

In terms of production, *Dubbing*, like *Remake*, was executed pragmatically and with technical simplicity. The film opens in a recording studio, where a group of dubbing actors are seated in front of a projection screen. As the lights dim and the movie begins, the camera remains focused on the performers, their faces lit by the flickering of the screen and two stage lights positioned off-screen. The effect is bizarre, and at times disturbingly comedic. None of the dubbing artists bear any physical resemblance to the characters in the original movie and they make no attempt to "act" in their delivery of the lines. Faces are animated only when the mouth is opened to scream, laugh, shout, cry, or speak. All animation seems involuntary. In the pauses between vocalizations, the performers wait quietly.



Figure 3.5
Pierre Huyghe, *Dubbing*, Beta digital, 120', 1996. Collection Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

Dubbing is not a straightforward documentary about postsynchronization techniques. Huyghe has explained that,

> unlike a traditional dubbing process, where each voice is dubbed separately, *Dubbing* brings together a total of 15 dubbers for the entire duration of a film. Like instruments in an orchestra, they represent all the voices that make up the original film. The performers speak, attempting, at the same time, to read the dialogue which runs past on the rhythm strip located under the film.[55]

The script Huyghe selected for *Dubbing* was a translation of American director Tobe Hooper's *Poltergeist* (1982). *Poltergeist* is a classic haunted house thriller in which evil spirits infiltrate a family home through the static on their television screen. In *Dubbing*, Huyghe displaces Hooper's film with images of "off-screen space" (*l'hors champ*).[56]

As with all dubbing scripts, Huyghe's text underwent several rounds of translation before it reached his actors. The first step of postsynchronization is

to ensure that the translation of dialogue is both true to the original meaning and sympathetic to the cultural requirements of the intended audience.[57] Secondly, sound must be matched to the action: lip-syncing in a different language exerts a heavy toll on semantic fidelity as words are selected on what could be called an aesthetic basis (the look of the mouth in movement privileges phonetic rather than conceptual equivalences). Thirdly, if the film is also to be subtitled after being dubbed, the timing and the rhythm of the words are further regulated by the conventions governing the appearance of the text on screen. As one Parisian subtitler said, "Rules apply, some iron-clad: one character per two frames, less than forty characters per line (spaces and punctuation included), no more than two lines per subtitle, and *never* go over a cut."[58] Finally, although all of these conventions are dependent on geocultural "norms," the approaches to postproduction are varied, even within national borders. For example, as sound theorist Rosa Agost has noted, in Spain the "existence of different cultures means that the norms for each linguistic community, the norms of translation, are different in each case."[59] Still, aesthetic and semantic conventions for subtitled and dubbed movies have become increasingly standardized. Canadian film director Atom Egoyan revealed that, "when [director] Claire Denis asked the subtitler if the text could be presented with missing letters or words—to reflect the viewer's experience of partial comprehension—she was told it would be impossible. The orthodoxy stated that 'either we have subtitles or we don't.'"[60]

In *Dubbing*, the written script scrolls past at the base of the screen. Thus we not only watch the dubbers engaged in their task, but we also are privy to the visual information that they see as they work (in Huyghe's words, "the viewer, mentally reading the writing which runs mechanically past, assumes the role of the missing actor, dubbing the film with his own voice").[61] Outside of post-production studios, the most common use of rolling subtitles like these is on televised news broadcasts, particularly as institutionalized by the American media network CNN during the 1991 Gulf War.[62] The strip of data that provides information in addition to the speech of the talking head (the headlines in real time, "breaking news") is usually preceded by a state of crisis (as with the live broadcasts of the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, for example). In this context, the text signals a *lack* of time—the urgency to communicate overwrites the imperative for scripting: breaking stories are reduced to fifteen words or less and are continuously updated for live consumption. These rolling titles are not aligned with the image but run before and ahead of the broadcast content, in much the same way that Huyghe's passengers through Bordeaux traveled *with* the picture of their journey on the bus, but were not synchronized with its progressions. In Huyghe's *Dubbing*, however, the text is fixed to a time code that ticks in sync with the dialogue: all dialogue is

guided by this coding that has been carefully worked out in advance of the dubbing session. The text *precedes* vocalization. Translation occurs in and out of language, extending to its structural arrangement.

It is here that the significance of characterization comes into focus. Not simply an individual player in a story, a character can function as a structural element of narrative. The Russian structural theorist Vladimir Propp was acutely aware of this, and organized his typological study of characterization according to the function, or more specifically the action, of characters in Russian fairy tales. A character is a conglomeration of acts—of activities that engender effects. A character can be "real" or "fictional" and in some circumstances, as in *Multi-scénarios pour une sitcom*, films can become characters, too. In 1966, Roland Barthes wrote that "innumerable characters in narrative can be subjected to roles of substitution, even within one work one single figure can absorb different characters."[63] The way in which these absorptions are figured is contingent on what Barthes calls a "narrative situation": a body of protocols that normalize and thus determine the appearance and consumption of narrative (an equivalent to Rancière's "perceptual regime"). In *Dubbing*, the narrative situation is off kilter. The protocols have been breached, resulting in an interchangeability between characters, actors, and interpreters (a conflation already at work, we can recall, in Huyghe's billboards). An uncanny erasure is perpetrated: qualities that should be present are missing, while additional connotations emerge. The characters in *Dubbing* appear both on screen and off; their activity is gestural but their effects cannot be gauged. Similarly, the interpreters appear both on screen and off, their activity is translation but the object of translation is hidden. The actors are professionals but they do not act. They mouth. And when their mouths are shut, they are still.

The peculiarity of these effects can be put down to a disconnect between the execution of the narrative function and the story world: a disconnect that Fredric Jameson might have called a breakdown between the relation of the signifier and the signified. There is an existential imperative that arises from this mire. Like the lethargic amateurs in *Remake*, the actors in *Dubbing* are missing in action (and we might recall here the relation between *lethargic* and the Greek *Lethe*, the name of the river in the mythical underworld of Hades, whose waters, when drunk, cause amnesia). In his brief consideration of the mutability of the interpreter in Huyghe's work, Jean-Christophe Royoux notes that this disconnect from "both person and character, from the real individual in relation to the functions that he interprets or, more simply, executes, is not merely the source of original arrangements, playful and creative, for the subject. It is also, today, a source of reality that he must endure. Via the question of the interpreter and the concrete devices he



Figure 3.6
Pierre Huyghe, *Dubbing*, Beta digital, 120', 1996.
Image courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

operates, the question being asked is about the 'human,' as opposed to thematic, status of representation."[64] Royoux's observations led him toward Jean Baudrillard, through the definition of simulacrum, and into a reading of Huyghe's practice as "the transformation of reality into fiction."[65] My reading takes a different path, one that leads back to the recording studio—to the technicians, engineers, subtitlers, and translators that have been grappling with the existential effects of their practice since the screen was wired for sound.

Henri Béhar is a subtitler who lives in Paris. He has titled more than one hundred French- and English-language films since he began working in the industry in 1983, and has come to regard his profession as a form of cultural ventriloquism. "Our task as subtitlers," he explains, "is to create subliminal interfaces in sync with the mood and rhythm of the movie so that the audience isn't even aware it is reading. We want *not* to be noticed."[66] The sacrifice of visibility for mood and rhythm, a rhythm determined by industry protocols, was what Huyghe was reacting to when he wrote his statement on the silent voice.[67] As we recall, Huyghe suggested that alternative models ("living history in the present") might provide a means of finding one's own time in a countermove to the production of "monolithic histories." Huyghe then plugged directly *into* industrial rhythm and adopted the tools *and the time codes* by which speech is monitored and modified. His goal was in opposition to the invisibility promoted by Béhar: by conspicuously subtitling and dubbing sound and image in the same language, Huyghe's authorial voice is amplified and dispersed. The excess of narrative information serves no semantic purpose other than to expose the fallacies of a "single" story or utterance. However, it also extinguishes connections between the multiple and postmodernism's *multiplicity* by linking the appearance of the multiple back to modern industry, to a period when mainstream cinematic production was informed, in Huyghe's words, by "Taylor's system of parcelling and repeating tasks in order to exploit working time more efficiently."[68]

Huyghe's character-actors are not freed. They speak as if possessed, animated as if by a puppeteer. The spectators, however, are presented with a measure of temporal agency, a priority clearly indicated in Huyghe's original proposal for the work. Initially, *Dubbing* was intended as part of a trilogy, with each film showing a different component of the translation process across separate rooms of a gallery. In the first room, the dubbing artists would have been screened; in the second, the producers of the sound effects; and in the third, the orchestra. The layers of dialogue, sound effects, and music were to be moderated by the viewer's movement through the space. "By moving around," Huyghe explained, "the listener modulated the sound interference and created his own sound track."[69] Even in the final version of *Dubbing*, however, Huyghe did not

enact this kind of audience agency *on screen*. It was never "pictured." It was evident only *around* the image. The concern is to work with the *image in time*, not the time in the image.

Royoux was right. The "human" status of representation is critical to this project, but in considering both the possessed and the possessors of the perceptual regime I am not convinced that Huyghe's work cedes to the inhumanity of representational paradigms. His position appears closer to Žižek's than Baudrillard's, and the differences are key. Žižek's writings are underpinned by a belief that the "hard kernel of the Real" may, at points, "shine through reality," and that the repressed elements of fictional scenarios (the "lies" of representation) may shed light on what Žižek calls "the Truth."[70] Baudrillard, who is highly suspicious of words such as Truth, advocates a delirious poetics of knowledge and encourages the production of unintelligibility as a critical response to the unintelligibility of the contemporary world. What is important is that despite their differences, both these thinkers appear to agree that there is a "secret component" at the core of what it is to be human. Baudrillard calls it the "vital illusion" and expounds that the "same is never identical to the same": "We are never exactly present to ourselves, or to others. Thus we are not exactly real for one another, nor are we quite real even to ourselves."[71] Žižek, following Lacan, distinguishes between reality and the Real and writes, "On account of [the Real's] traumatic, excessive character, we are unable to integrate it into (what we experience as) our reality, and are therefore compelled to experience it as a nightmarish apparition": this is the real as spectral, as fiction.[72] Žižek suggests that this process can on occasion be recognizable, that it cannot be manufactured, and that its appearance is oblique.[73]

Huyghe, on the other hand, has repeatedly stressed that his goal is not to recognize the fictional in the real but to extend fiction into reality. He starts from preexisting fictional elements, drags them out into the "desert of the real," and exposes them both *to* reality and *as* reality. In effect, this is a form of power play. Its strength lies in negation and not in a celebration of the workers behind the spectacle or a revelation of the unseen to conciliatory effect. As Nöel Ravaud has observed: "Pierre Huyghe, with *Dubbing*, puts the ventriloquist phantoms of the image to work . . . the function of these people is written and defined, localizable, identifiable: they are the doublers of cinema."[74] But the localization of *on screen* elements generated a feedback effect in the critical responses to *Dubbing* that was actually in opposition to the mechanics of the piece. This narrow critical agenda was seemingly exacerbated by *Dubbing*'s explicit qualities: visually, it was very simple and it appeared to have easily accessible conceptual handles. For although the dubbing artists were certainly "identifiable," their function in the schemata of production was comparable to the tip of an iceberg and, as I have been arguing, it

was the iceberg and not the tip that was the subject of *Dubbing* and of Huyghe's other audiovisual works of the mid-1990s.

What emerges—in the works of this time, as well as in Huyghe's writings—is a multifaceted critique of the formatting of events. In adopting the codes of industry, Huyghe is confronting the politics of legibility. The results are occasionally absurdly comedic, as with *Dubbing*, but there is also a sinister, steely thread that runs through these projects (the surveillance-style, phone-tapping paraphernalia used in *Deux conversations*; the enforced passivity required from *Les Passagers*; the pre-scripted voices of *Parallel Time Soundtrack*). Huyghe figures the production of subjectivity within his texts by pointing to its controlled appearance within specific markets and in specific formats. The subjectivities communicated on screen or through sound waves are not generated from within: they are inscribed from without. Huyghe's subjects are vessels whose speech is mapped out and whose movements are coded in time.

A strange paradox is at work. On the one hand, we have representations that undo formats and collapse the typologies of actor, interpreter, and character by playing on the concept of the multitude (with Taylorist rather than postmodern connotations intact). On the other hand, we have an insistence on the singularity of the spectator's "silent voice": the singular activity of communication and an attempt to liberate time from "monolithic" constructions of history.[75] The coexistence of these tactics implies that no word or image is ever truly "shared." The experience of a text is always subjective; a sound or an utterance is not replicable in different contexts. Why? Because meaning emerges only in the *event* of communication. Things cannot be made to stand in for other things. As Mikhail Bakhtin stated: "In the living word the message is created for the first time in the process of communication and there is, in fact, no code."[76] We navigate between a movie and stops, between stops and a movie. In this space our participation is required not as subjects, but as *apertures*—as gates that stop the light and dilate duration in the production of an exposure.



Figure 4.1
Pierre Huyghe, *Blanche-Neige Lucie*, S-16/35mm film, stereo, 4', 1997. Production Anna Sanders Films.

"My first encounter with Snow White goes back to my childhood, when the film came out in 1938. I sang 'Some Day My Prince Will Come' at a school party. My second encounter took place in America, where I was making musical comedies. I was invited to sing at the inauguration of a large Hollywood hotel; all the stars were there. After my performance I was placed at Walt Disney's table; a delightful man, very attentive. Then in 1962, I auditioned for the voice of Snow White. I learned quite by accident that they hadn't found a singer; we had a few auditions and the next day I was chosen for the lead singing role. It was the most beautiful dubbing I've ever done. Snow White's voice is a light soprano but not too lyrical, a small resonant voice, childlike, fresh but not too technical. The drawing and character were the inspiration for playing the role. I recorded the song wearing headphones; I had the original voice in my ear. I liked hearing the feedback of the voice. It's disconcerting, but I got used to it. It's a little guide that helps you to follow the musical structure. When I gave my voice to that character, that beautiful little princess, graceful and innocent, I was Snow White, completely! Today when I watch the film, I have a strange feeling: it's my voice and yet it doesn't seem to belong to me anymore; it belongs to the character and the story. Recently I learned that Disney kept my voice for the new version. At first I was very happy but then I realized that there was a problem: imagine, in thirty years my voice has been used for all sorts of things. It's my voice after all! I got involved in a court case to protect my rights for the use of my voice; this happened to coincide with the interpreter's strike. People were touched by this event. I remember during the demonstration an American artist shouting to me, 'Hey Snow White . . . I'm with you!'" *In November 1996, Lucie Dolène the interpreter of Snow White won her case and regained the ownership of her voice.*

CHAPTER 4

FIGURES OF SPEECH

The history of author's rights moves from the king to the printer to the publisher, then from the publisher to the authors, and today, from the authors to the characters.

Philippe Parreno, 2003[1]

Following the completion of *Dubbing*, Huyghe began to direct his attention toward legislation designed to protect subjects in the representational realm, in particular copyright and moral rights laws in France and the United States. Huyghe's films *Blanche-Neige Lucie* (1997) and *The Third Memory* (1999) both feature actors who were involved in legal battles with film production companies over the rights to their images and, by extension, their histories. Although Huyghe had already sought legal recognition of his practice when he officially registered the Association of Freed Time in 1995, he had also continued to embark on pirate ventures designed to subvert normative channels of production and distribution (*Mobil TV*, *Parallel Time Soundtrack*). By 2000, Huyghe was seeking assistance in implementing statutory changes to French legislation and enlisted the services of legal advisors in the production of his collaborative project *No Ghost Just a Shell* (2000). This collaboration culminated in the assignation of copyrights to a fictional character that Huyghe and Philippe Parreno had purchased, thereby producing a sign that could regulate its own reproduction. It was a first in the history of representation. This chapter begins by briefly reviewing the legal constitution of subjects and images in France in the 1990s. It asks: Where does a sign end and a person begin? How is the distinction policed? And what might be gained by accessing a space in between?

These questions cannot be addressed purely with recourse to torts, articles, or acts. They also resonate against those models of "evental relations" that Huyghe had encountered some years earlier in the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin. Juxtaposing Bakhtin's thoughts on dialogism, polyphony, and speech acts with the clauses

of copyright law may at first seem incongruous. Bakhtin's theories are radically separated in time and space from the mandates of contemporary legislation—there is evidently a significant difference between Bakhtin's philosophical and ideological perspectives and those of the World Intellectual Property Organization or the French International Code for Intellectual Property. However, by drawing on both legally prescribed formats and Bakhtin's model of dialogism, a clearer picture of Huyghe's engagement with historiography can emerge. This argument proceeds from the hypothesis that history unfolds as both a state of production and a system of distribution. Producing history might then rely on existing production values (or jurisprudence) but the system of dispersal is always contingent on factors that cannot be accounted for within representational formats. In Huyghe's words: "History is generally inscribed in a certain way, it is 'logotyped,' leaving in the shadows a certain complexity which cannot be described, a counter-narrative, which is the obtuse meaning defined by Roland Barthes in his essay 'The Third Meaning,' a representation which cannot be represented."[2] This chapter tracks this line of thought across five years of Huyghe's practice. It terminates in a fireworks display off the coast of Miami in 2002. The destination is a sign called Annlee. For the moment, our narrator is Snow White.

SNOW WHITE: I WANT MY VOICE BACK

Paris, November 1996. Lucie Dolène, the actress who dubbed the voice of Snow White for the French version of Disney's film, is attempting to sue the Walt Disney Corporation and Gaumont Buena Vista International for the rights to the reproduction of her voice. She received no credits in the film, nor had been paid any royalties for subsequent rereleases. Huyghe recalled, "I was in my studio, I turned on the radio and I heard this voice. The voice was saying: I want my voice back. And it was the voice of Snow White, a character, attacking her creators."[3] Dolène won the case and was awarded over $20,000 (U.S. dollars) in royalties and $6,000 in damages.[4] Shortly after the verdict was announced, Huyghe contacted the actress and requested her participation in the making of a three-minute "documentary" about her situation. The film was to address both "how the tools of her trade—the voice and its interpretation—are related, and the distribution of this work—its import and export."[5] Huyghe named the project *Blanche-Neige Lucie* (Snow White Lucie). "Lucie Dolène," Huyghe said, "was exactly what I was looking for. She is an interpreter, one who reads the script, but she's never been inside the image."[6] Huyghe gave that voice an image.

Although Dolène's case broke no new judicial ground, the proceedings very clearly positioned the relationship between the voice (speech) and the subject (identity) as an issue of legal propriety. As with *Dubbing*, in *Blanche-Neige Lucie* there was a jarring schism between the "character" (remembered by Dolène and viewers alike as that "beautiful little princess") and the figure of the elder actress on screen. Huyghe's film also conspicuously framed Dolène's performance as a staged event. *Blanche-Neige Lucie* opens in a darkened production studio. Slowly, the lighting rig is lifted up to the ceiling and the room is illuminated. Tripods and recording equipment are stacked haphazardly against the walls; a chroma-key backdrop masks half the stage. The subtitles appear almost immediately, before Dolène's appearance on camera. Rather than restoring Dolène's speech to the screen, in *Blanche-Neige Lucie* the story is told only through subtitled text. The spoken word is entirely absent. When the actress first appears, she is silent and faces the camera while the text, which has arrived without her, appears as subtitles at the base of the screen. During the continuous, three hundred and sixty degree pan around her body that spans the duration of the film, her gaze never leaves the lens. It is well into the film before the actress opens her mouth. At first, the sound is tentative, full of hesitations as if trying to find or remember itself. Dolène hums the tune softly before singing a few lines of the chorus. She finishes her song before her subtitled story is complete and is silent. The last shot of the film replicates the first, except the actions run in reverse—again, the studio is pictured with Dolène absent from the screen. After the final line of the text ("In November 1996, Lucie Dolène the interpreter of Snow White won her case and regained the ownership of her voice"), the lighting rig is lowered and the room returns to darkness.

Putting characters in proximity with their images was already part of Huyghe's broader project (most notably in his billboard series), but here a new element entered his thinking: the legally defined relationship between subjects and their representations. Huyghe's investigation was enfolded in the specifics of French law. In the scope of international policies on authors' rights, continental European law (especially in France and Germany) is unique for the extent of its statutory protection of both the author's *and the performer's* rights. The protection is proper to the French determination of "moral rights" as a component of the *droit d'auteur* ("right of the author"). Even if authors do not hold the copyright to their products, their "moral rights" are legally inalienable. "Moral rights" covers four interrelated areas: the right of withdrawal, the right of attribution, the right of integrity, and the right of disclosure (the right to remain anonymous).[7] Together, these rights constitute the control that authors and performers retain over their work. At a basic level this extends to the right of naming, the right to



Figure 4.2
Pierre Huyghe, *Blanche-Neige Lucie*, S-16/35mm film, stereo, 4', 1997.
Production Anna Sanders Films.

control modifications to individual works, the right to withdraw works from the public domain, and the right to protect the author's reputation and integrity in the use, reproduction, and performance of works. Under these terms, an author and a copyright holder are differentiated.[8] The legislation emerges from a legal understanding of the work of art as an extension of the artist's "personhood" or personality, as stipulated in the Berne Convention Act of 1928.[9] Because the work of art is legally considered an extension of the artist's persona, the adjudication of copyright issues in relation to both authors and works proceeds from similar legislative frameworks.

There are several tiers of identification or propriety at work in *Blanche-Neige Lucie* that reflect these statutes. First, Dolène won her case on the basis of a recognized affinity between persona and product. Second, her decision to go to court was motivated by her identification with the *character* of Snow White and their shared history (although Dolène gave her voice to the princess, the princess had also given something to Dolène: "I was Snow White, yes absolutely!").[10] As writer Maria-Christina Villaseñor asked, "Where does the true ownership of this Blanche-Neige/Lucie voice lie: within a corporation, a fictional character, an actor, the popular audience, a sound track, a larynx?"[11] Huyghe explicitly gestured toward this issue of propriety by running together both proper names in the title of his work. Following Dolène's victory, Huyghe legally would not have been able to use her voice (or her name) without her permission. It is important to remember that her case was feasible only within a specific context: in different circumstances, both Dolène's lawsuit and a film such as *Blanche-Neige Lucie* may have faced additional challenges. Outside of the European Union, priority may be granted to copyright holders rather than to authors or performers. In the United States, for example, (successful) artists are rarely the copyright holders of their own work and neither are they protected by a code of moral rights. For example, when the American director David Lynch wanted to use Bobby Vinton's original version of the song "Blue Velvet" in his 1985 film of the same title, Vinton's assent was of no consequence. Although the singer was not opposed to Lynch's use of his song, he did not hold the relevant permissions. The production company making the film had to go through CBS Records, whose price for the track was so high that Lynch and the actors had to accept pay cuts in order to meet budget requirements.[12] In France, Vinton theoretically would have been able to challenge CBS if he wanted to personally hand over the rights to reproduction.

The final tier of identification with French statutes in *Blanche-Neige Lucie* is the bind between Huyghe and Dolène. The two are linked by their shared working status as *intermittents du spectacle*, meaning that their working conditions and rights as workers are legally the same. There is a mirroring here between

Huyghe's own working time and the time of his subjects. Huyghe later reflected, "As I had already begun to explore in *Dubbing*, I record people whose work is linked to the entertainment. They are leisure time workers. I question people from a zone that could appear close to mine. To question this transition zone you have to understand the politics of visibility."[13] Intermittent workers have a particular bearing on Huyghe's interest in both this transitional zone and his work with freed time. Dubbing artists, film producers, directors, actors, and workers involved in the entertainment industry are the "flex workers" of cognitive capitalism (flexi-time). Their labor is not predicated on the eight-hour day but is mobile and intermittent.[14] Under a Fordist economy, divisions between free time and work time were codified. Workers clocked in and out of specific venues, and were hired on the basis of specialist labor skills regarded as separate to their personalities. For the intermittent worker, the coding is opaque. Determining when the working day is over or when work starts or begins is no longer necessarily a matter of simply looking to the time sheet.[15]

In a market that values subjectivity as a primary product, the ability to divorce one's subjectivity—not just one's time—from work is impeded. As the Dutch activist collective Green Pepper has remarked, "If one's own subjectivity is precisely what is demanded for the job, it becomes increasingly difficult to identify whether one's own interests, education, and social relationships are relevant to the production process itself. Whilst the whole of one's life is actually put to work, it is only the part of life that is spent 'at work' that is paid for."[16] The observation feeds into Antonio Negri's model of liberated time, which was based on reclaiming the gap between "time-as-measure" and the "time-of-life."[17] Arguably, the "negative labor" demanded by Negri's paradigm is seriously compromised if the aporia implodes into a vanishing point. The class of intermittent workers is not the only working sector in which the force of this transition is manifest: writers such as Paolo Virno and Maurizio Lazzarato have long recognized that the closure of the "gap" between time-as-measure and time-of-life is integral to the structure of liberal capitalist production. Definitions of propriety (for example, who you are, which is partially dictated by what you legally own, inclusive of personality rights) are predicated on production (what you make, how it is distributed).

Although Huyghe was aware of these specific economic and political circumstances, his decision to contact Dolène was not tied to a desire for activist reform. And neither did he regard his film about Dolène's story as a form of "ownership": this premise was clearly rejected by Huyghe's later work, *I Do Not Own Snow White* (2005), one of a series of neon sign disclaimers that Huyghe produced in 2005 and 2006. Huyghe's neon phrase immediately conjures a mental image of Snow White even as the individual's propriety of that image is negated. The

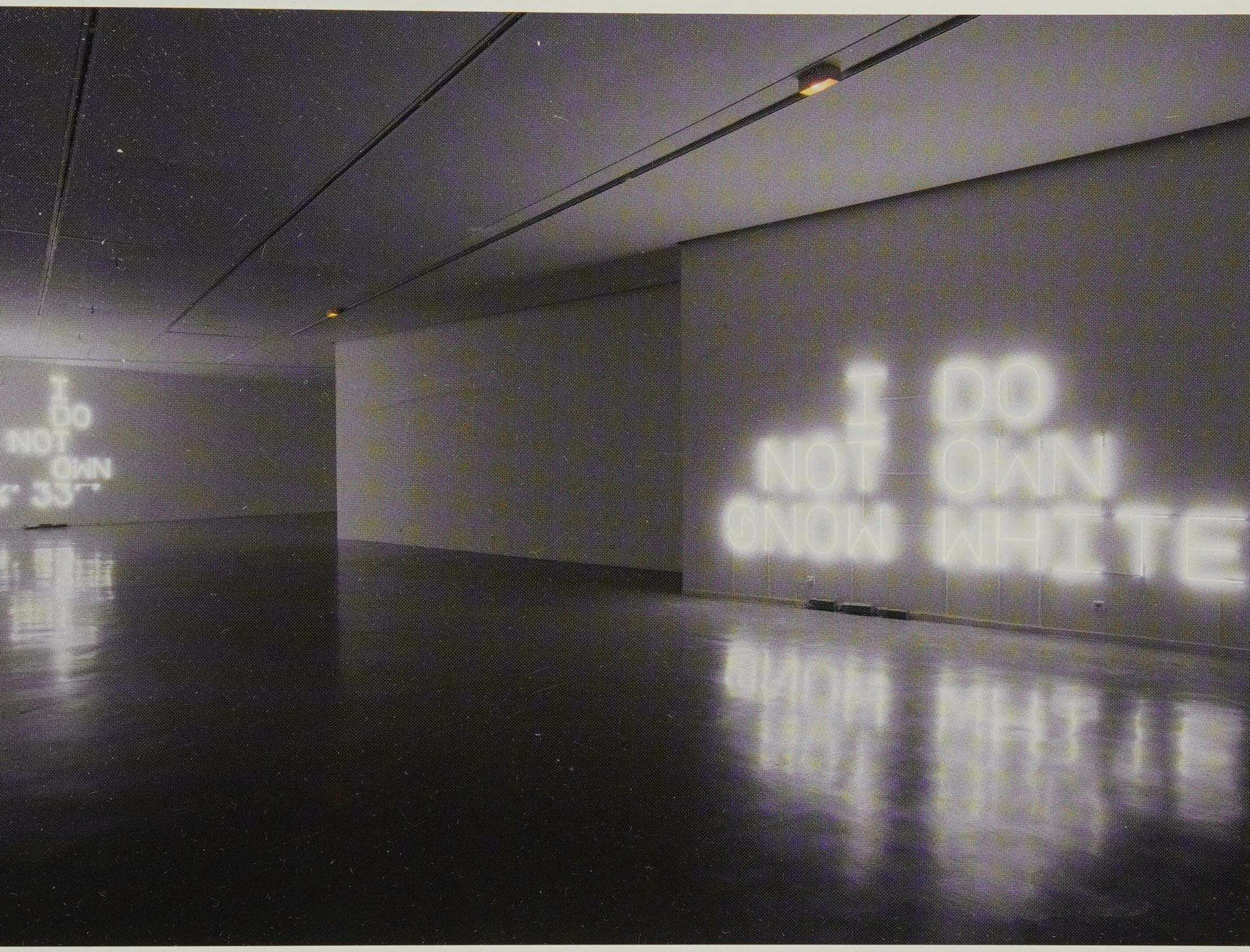


Figure 4.3
Pierre Huyghe, *I Do Not Own Snow White*, disclaimer, signage system designed at M/M (Paris), white neon lights, 3.2 × 11.9 m, 2005. Installation at Tate Modern, London, 2006. Image courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

statement is both serious, insofar as it insists that Lucie Dolène's appearance in Huyghe's work does not mean that the artist is the owner of Snow White, but it is also subtly humorous, in that the sign does actually serve as a nonvisual "representation" of both Huyghe's earlier work and the mythic narrative of the fairy tale. Similar disclaimers on property rights also underpinned *Blanche-Neige Lucie*. Their presence can be linked, I argue, back to the models of speech acts and eventual relations that Huyghe had encountered in the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin.

SPEECH ACTS AND POLYPHONIES: MIKHAIL BAKHTIN'S DIALOGIC REALM

Bakhtin's writings on language and speech have a curious but definite pertinence to the infrastructure of contemporary capitalism. Bakhtin viewed communication as a state of production. Meaning, he argued, was an "evental relation" and as such could never be embedded or held within any phoneme, kineme, phrase, letter, or, by extension, product. According to this epistemology, all content resides in the distributive space between speaker and receiver; reader and writer; producer and consumer. Dispersal was for Bakhtin contingent on context, inflection, and "emotional-volitional tone": the manner in which information is delivered, the words that precede and the ones that follow, all have a role to play.[18] Bakhtin also admitted a crossover or diffusion in the dialogic spectrum, leading to a theory of production that finds a parallel in contemporary discourse on "prosumers."[19]

Much can be gained from a review of Huyghe's practice in relation to a Bakhtinian paradigm—not least because the experiential qualities of Bakhtin's communicative model productively illuminate Huyghe's interest in producer-consumer relations as a specifically *temporal* problem. Bakhtin's understanding of communication as an event should be differentiated from that of viewer response criticism, or Barthes's conception of the reader as a "tissue of quotations" soaking up and reordering the inscriptions of others. According to Bakhtin, lived experience is a combination of the "ongoing event" (similar to historian Fernand Braudel's conceptualization of the *longue durée* or Negri's "time-of-life"), and "thought-deeds" or integrated units of action (understood as both mental and physical).[20] For Bakhtin, the coexistence of these facets splits the world into two: "one world in which the acts of our activity are objectified and the world in which these acts actually proceed and are actually accomplished once and only once."[21] Because of this duplicity, a participant in a deed or act cannot understand it logically, objectively, or as a whole, but only in singular fragments ("he sees *this* sky and *this* earth and *these*

trees and *this* time . . . that is, not the abstract law of his act, but the actual concrete ought conditioned by his unique place in the given context of the ongoing event").[22]

The situation is similar for the intermittent worker whose position potentially fuses the ongoing event of life and the ongoing event of work. If work under the aegis of liberal capitalism can be regarded as an "evental relation," and if the event cannot be transcribed in theoretical terms without destroying its character as an event, then so too must immaterial labor detonate prior assumptions about the rhythms of industry. For Bakhtin, however, the problem was not related to economics per se but rather to the possibility of apprehending an event without recourse to the potentially destructive realm of representation (a methodology that holds some parallels with Huyghe's).[23] One option was to focus on "not the world produced by an act, but the world in which that act becomes answerably aware of itself and is actually performed."[24] For Bakhtin, the split worlds of experience and account were seen to mirror the relation between grammar and speech: "Emotion, evaluation and expression are foreign to the world of language and are born only in the process of its live usage in a concrete utterance."[25] This is what Bakhtin called the "dialogical" realm. As Ken Hirschkop has noted, dialogism for Bakhtin was not merely a description of the speech act but was also "a philosophical idea, a characterisation of our experiences of meaning and a shorthand answer to the question, what happens when one understands something expressed?"[26] Dialogism effectively displaces meaning from the effect of an action (as somehow outside the event) toward its *trial* in specific circumstances. Action equates to awareness through performance, as it is only through performance that an act becomes answerable to itself.

Dolène's case against the Walt Disney Corporation offers an oblique perspective on this problematic. A trial is both a performance and an event; the parameters are scripted but the outcomes are unpredictable and (theoretically) uncontrollable. The legal trial, in which evidence and judgment are submitted orally, through words already marked by precedent and protocols, displays certain dialogic qualities. These qualities have a history. In France, the legal significance of the voice in courts of law was officially registered in the eighteenth century. In an attempt to counter the corruption of the *Ancien Régime*, the Law of 16–29 September 1791 decreed that "the interrogation of a witness must always be carried out by the living voice [*de vive voix*] without writing down the testimonies."[27] Contemporary jurors are instructed similarly: "The orality of the debates is the fundamental rule of court. This rule decrees that the court can form its conviction only on the basis of the elements orally and contradictorily debated in the court."[28] Written depositions are only accessible in court after the oral testimonial has taken place. The voice comes first; the word, second.

This model of the trial is in alignment with the accountability and answerability espoused by Bakhtin. However, the case of Lucie Dolène amounted to a legal acknowledgment that the intangible properties of tone—the "grain" of the voice—can be considered a form of property and are as such governed by codes of practice very much in opposition to contingencies of dialogism. The rights to dispersal bestowed on Dolène by her legal victory neutered the qualities Bakhtin considered intrinsic to the voice (and meaning). The contingencies of distributive space, inflection, and tone—the principles of dispersal—were fixed by protocols.

So although the fractures between content and meaning, speech and grammar, are a significant point of connection between Bakhtin's and Huyghe's praxes, Huyghe's distance from Bakhtin is discernable on several counts.[29] First, Bakhtin's primary focus in his theory of dialogism is on literature and the transcription of the spoken word; for Huyghe, the formats continuously shift (from stage to screen, from script to situation). Second, Huyghe's employment of the "objective sphere" is positioned as a means of cradling entirely subjective, singular experiences—the "split between worlds" is not so pronounced as with Bakhtin. Third, Huyghe's work consistently positions this split as an issue for history and temporal formats.

While making *Blanche-Neige Lucie*, Huyghe embarked on several other ventures that illustrate these claims. All of the projects were invested in disseminating knowledge, seemingly born out of an understanding that prefabricated time, although not wholly divorced from the idea of the utterance, was an inadequate means of illuminating those shadows of historical knowledge discussed earlier by Huyghe. For example, in the months preceding the exhibition of *Blanche-Neige Lucie*, Huyghe established a temporary school with Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster: like *Mobil TV*, the school was intended as an itinerant tool for knowledge dispersal.[30] Around the same time, Huyghe co-founded the film production company Anna Sanders Films.[31] *Blanche-Neige Lucie* was the first film released by this company. Anna Sanders Films then facilitated the publication of a collaboratively produced magazine, *Anna Sanders: l'histoire d'un sentiment* (1998). This text served multiple purposes, but it can chiefly be understood as a representation of its producers, a group exhibition, and a portrait of an imaginary character.

Anna Sanders was the first fictional character Huyghe worked with that was not a remake of an already-existing source (the second was a sign called Annlee, and the third a penguin named One). Anna Sanders's characteristics were detailed in fragments. Her name appeared fleetingly in texts and across photographs of empty rooms, sandwiched between articles on neoliberalism, screen theory, and housing estates. Her face was never pictured. The last page of the publication was literally torn out (the end of this text is always elsewhere). On a sticker across the magazine's cover, this disclaimer was printed:



Figure 4.4
Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, *Anna Sanders: l'histoire d'un sentiment*, magazine, 64 pages, 21 × 28 cm, 1996–1997. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

> Anna Sanders is not the person you can catch the glimpse of on this cover. You are not going to see any pictures of her, but nevertheless she will always be present, in the choice of articles and pictures—in the graphic design. Anna Sanders is the character from a movie temporarily called "The Story of a Feeling." So this is a proposal for a magazine and it is at the same time a synopsis approach. The forthcoming issues will be named differently, presenting the other protagonists of a story, giving you the possibility of beginning to read a film.[32]

The double function of a synopsis-proposal was similar to the operating system of *Chantier permanent*: a collection whose serial dispersal was leveled with the state of production (incomplete architecture, temporal duplicity). In this case, however, the character is pervasive—she is everywhere and nowhere. She is unrelated to specific forms of construction but behaves rather as a frame (or an aperture).

From the texts inside the magazine, it becomes clear that Anna Sanders also fulfilled an allegorical function for her creators insofar as she allowed Huyghe and Parreno to formulate a kind of statement of liability in the name of a fictional enterprise. Her constitution, as it is worded, comes close to a definition of their praxis. "A character," they wrote, "is hard to pin down . . . it is multiple and movable, disembodied. A reincarnation. Imagine a network of relationships forming a self, an otherness. This isn't a story of space."[33] It was a story of time. Anna Sanders's appearance was to be serial, as in a sitcom, and she would be known only as a sentiment (or an utterance) tied to the moment of her dispersal. The zone she haunts belongs properly to the "and" space conceived by Deleuze, a zone that can also go by the name of the ellipse. In a world of production in which gaps are seemingly in short supply, Anna Sanders was supposed to slip through the cracks.

JUMP CUT: ROLAND BARTHES'S THIRD MEANING

Grappling with the "in between" has long been a cornerstone of Western philosophy. For Henri Bergson, the issue was phrased in terms of duration and time—the subjective experience of temporality versus its manifest, ostensibly objective impositions. In Mikhail Bakhtin's writings, the in between is construed as a symptom arising from the order of language: it emerges out of the split worlds of grammar and utterance that for Bakhtin mirrors the disjunction between experience and account. When Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari came to their consideration of the AND space in the 1980s, this too was positioned as a figure of speech with ontological consequences.[34] In French, *est* and *et*—*is* and *and*—are phonetically indistinguishable.

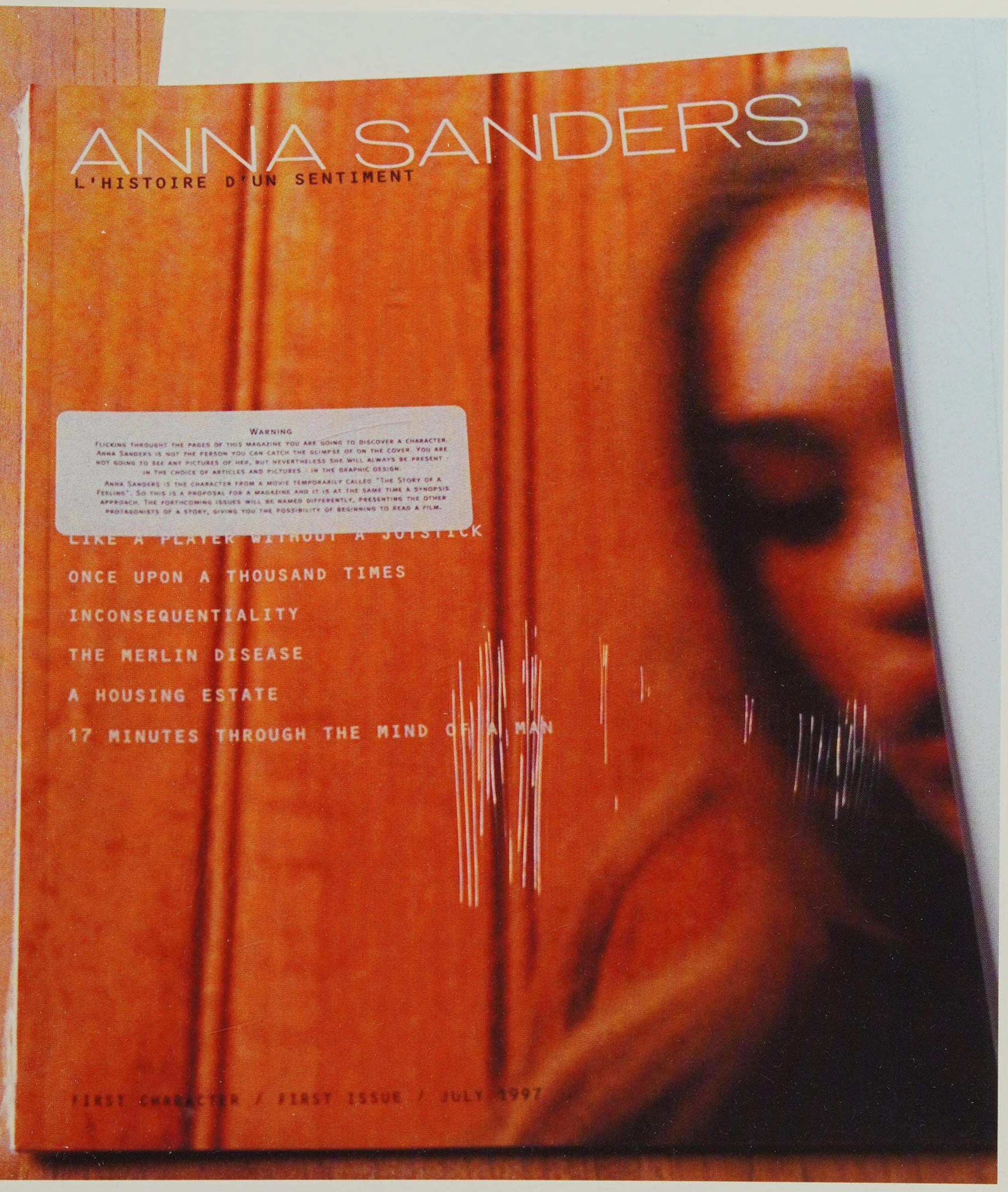


Figure 4.5
Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, *Anna Sanders: l'histoire d'un sentiment*, magazine, 64 pages, 21 × 28 cm, 1996–1997. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

When spoken, it is only in context that their meaning is clear. In describing the rhizome as an "and" space, a connector between uncertain fixities, the duplicity of being and conjunction was central. "AND is less a conjunction," Deleuze and Guattari wrote, "than the atypical expression of all the possible conjunctions it places in continuous variation."[35] Although Huyghe was familiar with these discursive permutations, his entry into the terrain was primarily through the writings of Roland Barthes. In France in the 1970s, Barthes was also thinking about the in between in relation to cinema, movement, and time. He published a short treatise about it in 1977, and called it "The Third Meaning." When Huyghe came to this text some decades later, he found it immediately congenial to his own line of thinking.

According to Barthes, the third meaning, or the "obtuse meaning," of a text is carried by the "significance" of an image. Barthes uses these terms to account for the subjective experience of the viewer or reader when faced with elements that escape signification (these elements are described as "smooth and elusive, persistent and fleeting"):

> The [third meaning or] obtuse meaning is not in the language-system (even that of symbols). Take away the obtuse meaning and communication and signification still remain, without it, I can still state and read . . . the filmic is that in the film which cannot be described, the representation which cannot be represented. The third meaning—theoretically locatable but not describable—can now be seen as the passage from language to significance.[36]

This is a somewhat convoluted way of admitting that there are factors at work in the process of reception that exceed denotative or connotative components. The third meaning may also be read as a corollary of Bakhtin's "evental relation," as it too emerges in a trail of communicative gestures. However, there is a problem with Barthes's model that is absent from Bakhtin's. Although both Barthes (in this instance) and Bakhtin (more generally) disavow the existence of a hermeneutic code, Barthes nevertheless presumes that the "third meaning" is somehow located in the text itself and can as such be shared: "If you look at the images I am discussing, you can see this meaning, we can agree on it 'over the shoulder' or 'on the back' of articulated language. We can do without language yet never cease to understand each other."[37] Barthes's certainty as to the shared accessibility of a nondescriptive element has no empirical foundation, and being outside language is very difficult to write about, as Barthes also admits. Huyghe was nonetheless fascinated by Barthes's description of the indescribable, and in two of his films subsequent to *Blanche-Neige Lucie* he refigured the third meaning as a quality proper to the ellipse.

Ellipse is French for "jump cut"—an edit in cinematic montage where two sequences are spliced together in such a way that time lag is made noticeable. In mainstream cinema, the ellipse is prominent when it comes to compressing travel. An actor boards an airplane in Barcelona, for example, and in the next frame is pictured on the tarmac at Heathrow. The temporal compression is naturalized by recourse to a caesura in the linear course of events. "For the reader of the text," Huyghe has noted, "it signifies a momentary loss of his relationship with the character. But the event or character have not disappeared. They are simply elsewhere in space and time," in much the same way that Huyghe's gallery closure during *Extended Holidays* moved the exhibition elsewhere. In his 1998 film *L'Ellipse*, Huyghe took a jump cut from an existing film and pulled it apart. The source was German director Wim Wenders's 1977 feature *The American Friend*. There is a moment in Wenders's film where the character of Jonathan, played by Bruno Ganz, is standing in an apartment building on one side of the Seine, talking on the phone to a man in an apartment across the river. In the next frame, he is pictured inside the apartment across the river, about to be blackmailed into committing a murder. Some twenty years after the film was made, Huyghe filmed Bruno Ganz retracing the steps he took from one side of the jump cut to the other, across the bridge over the Seine.

L'Ellipse was installed across three screens and the thirteen-minute narrative progressed from left to right. On the left was the sequence from Wenders's film. As Ganz leaves his hotel room, the screen fades to black. The new footage taken by Huyghe appears on the center screen and the much older Ganz walks in one ten-minute take through the ellipse. Halfway across the bridge, Ganz turns to the camera and says, "Hi. How is life?" (According to Huyghe, at this moment Ganz was no longer in character; he was playing himself).[38] When Ganz completes his journey and reaches the hotel on the other side of the river, the final screen is activated and Wenders's narrative takes up where it left off. Huyghe wrote:

> The actor's presence is linked to the acting. It cannot be described, it has this same relationship that the filmic has with the film. A phantom is a character from the in-between, trapped on a bridge between two banks, in a suspended time. *L'Ellipse* is the story of a phantom who, in actual reality, comes to haunt a gap that is missing in the narrative, one that has been built up in the memory of the spectator. It's the story of an actor who wanted to be present in the memory of the narrative that is mentally interpolated by the audience.[39]

Huyghe intended for Ganz to fill the gap that would previously have been glossed over or filled in mentally by the viewer (in this respect the project echoed the sonic

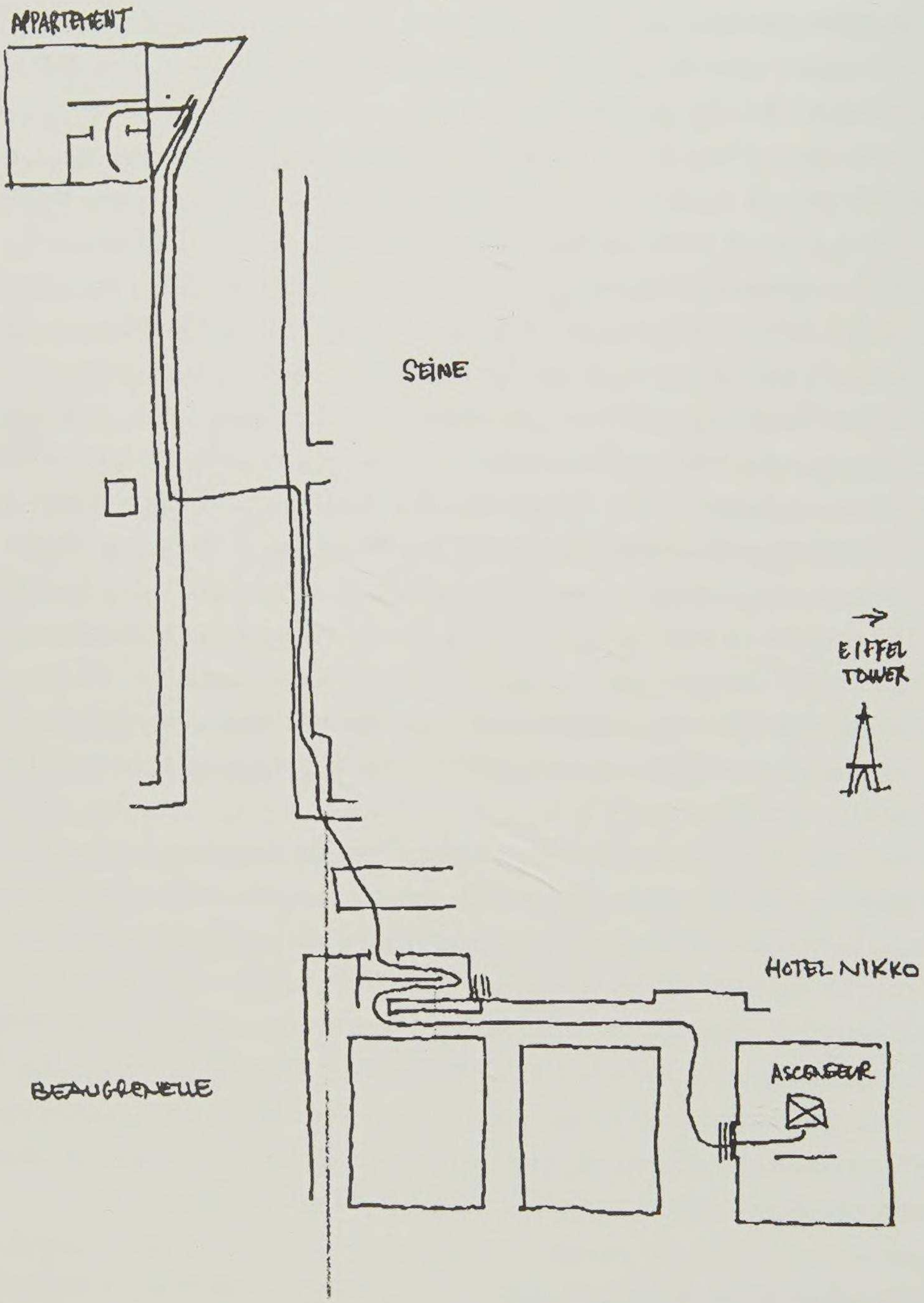
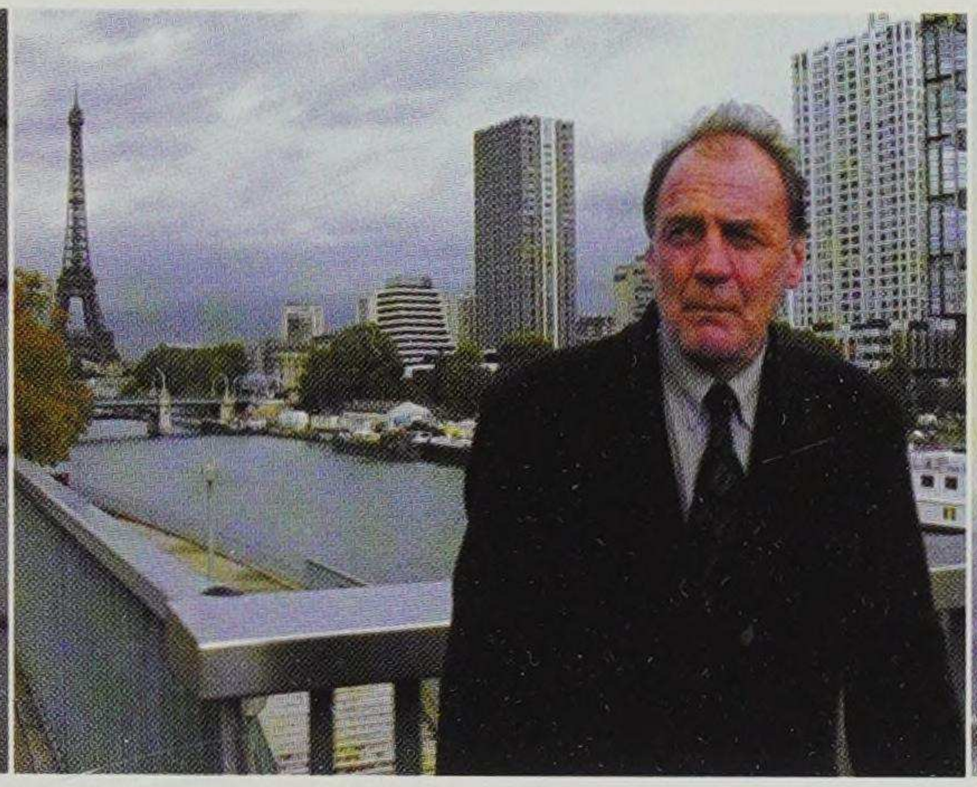
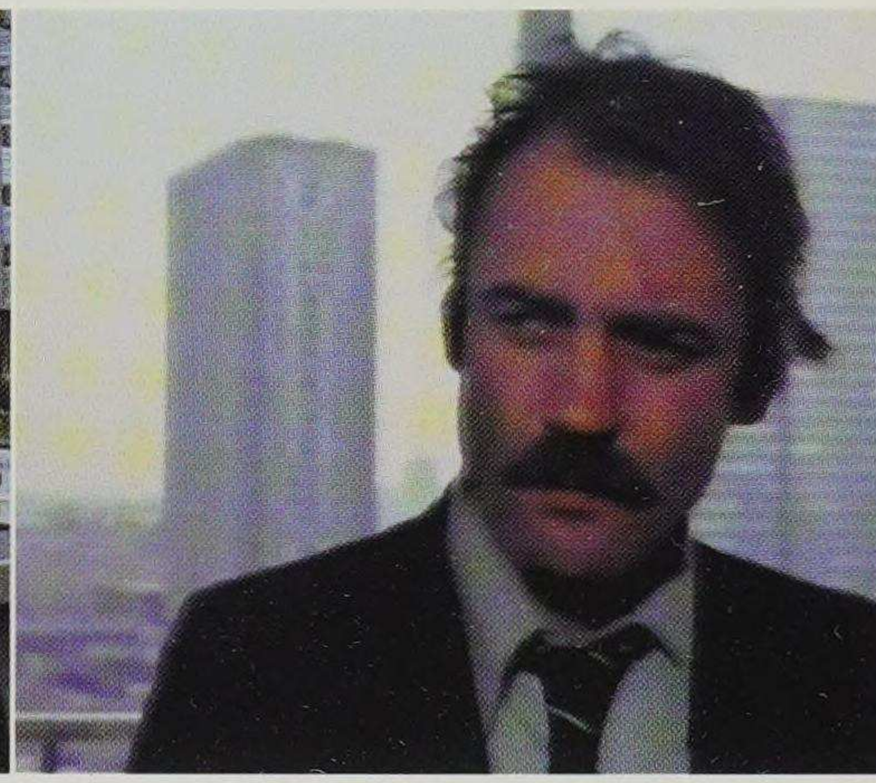


Figure 4.6
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Ellipse*, production diagram, 1998. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

Figure 4.7 (opposite)
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Ellipse*, triple video projection, S-16 film transferred to Master Beta digital, 13', parabolic screen, Paris, 1998. Composite image courtesy Pierre Huyghe.







journey recorded in *Bruxelles-Le Caire Soundtrack*). It was not the ellipse or the jump cut itself that Huyghe looked to as a marker of Barthes's "third meaning." For signs of this we must turn first to the body of Bruno Ganz as we watch him pace through space as if navigating a memory, and then to the time restored to the image: the time lag embodied by the actor and the changed context of the urban surrounds.

Even those unfamiliar with Wenders's film would be able to make sense of *L'Ellipse*. Almost every jump cut can theoretically be opened up in the same way. However, there are several qualities specific to *The American Friend* that may have captured Huyghe's particular attention. First, the film is an adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's novel *Ripley's Game* (1974). Second, it was shot in two countries, Germany and France, and the dialogue is in three languages (in the export version, the German and French are subtitled). Each viewer, depending on context, receives the film differently. This gathers weight when we consider Huyghe's vested interest in the history of multilanguage versions, and also that he had earlier produced two versions of *Blanche-Neige Lucie*—one with French and one with English titles. Huyghe considered the English-language version inferior because, unless the viewer spoke both French and English, the "silent voice" of the viewer could not mirror the process by which Dolène had dubbed the original song (the "little voice in her ear"). If only one language is understood, the doubling of the interior monologue over Dolène's song is missed. Third, in *The American Friend* Wenders employed a host of (American) film directors as extras in the cast, including Nicholas Ray, Sam Fuller, and Dennis Hopper. Like Dolène, these directors were interpreters that had for the most part "never been inside the image." And finally, Wenders frequently selects his locations for their personal associations or histories. On several occasions he has used particular buildings or regions simply because they appear in other films close to his heart, as with one shot in

The American Friend that he deliberately set in the laneway outside the apartment used in Bernardo Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* (1972).[40] For *The American Friend,* Wenders filmed the scenes in Hamburg on location in an old harbor area that was in the process of being razed by urban developers. Wim Wenders and Dennis Hopper later reflected on the location:

> *Dennis Hopper:* I was so impressed with the way you took that whole area that was going to be torn down and used it, it's the last record of that area. There was something very mysterious . . . I remember the little kid running through the buildings. It was desolate, isolated, kind of lonely . . .
>
> *Wim Wenders:* It was a haunted place. A lot of the buildings were already missing.[41]

Huyghe's attraction to the Parisian location in the movie was based on a similar aesthetic and state of construction. The district of Beaugrenelle where Ganz crosses the river was, in Huyghe's words, "built in keeping with the transformations being introduced into town planning at the end of the 1970s and marking the end of the new town policy (the so-called *grands ensembles*)."[42] In *L'Ellipse,* the developments are recorded by the contrast in Huyghe's and Wenders's backdrops. The city, not only Ganz's body, is a marker of time.[43]

FROM THE THIRD MEANING TO THE THIRD MEMORY

After the completion of *L'Ellipse,* Huyghe again activated Barthes's conception of the third meaning as the conceptual platform for his dual screen projection piece *The Third Memory* (1999–2000). This film combines a real event, its fictional remake, and a first-person recollection of its occurrence. The event in question was an attempted bank robbery by the young American John Wojtowicz and his friend Salvatore Naturale on August 22, 1972, in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. The heist did not go as planned. The alarm was triggered. Hostages were taken. Cops arrived in droves. Wojtowicz and Naturale engaged in a standoff with the police that lasted all night, surrounded by a flood of media whose live broadcasts interrupted President Nixon's televised nomination speech. Washington called in the FBI who negotiated a deal with the robbers before fatally shooting Naturale, arresting Wojtowicz, and setting the hostages free. Wojtowicz was sent to prison and released on parole in 1979. The American director Sidney Lumet later picked up the story as the basis for

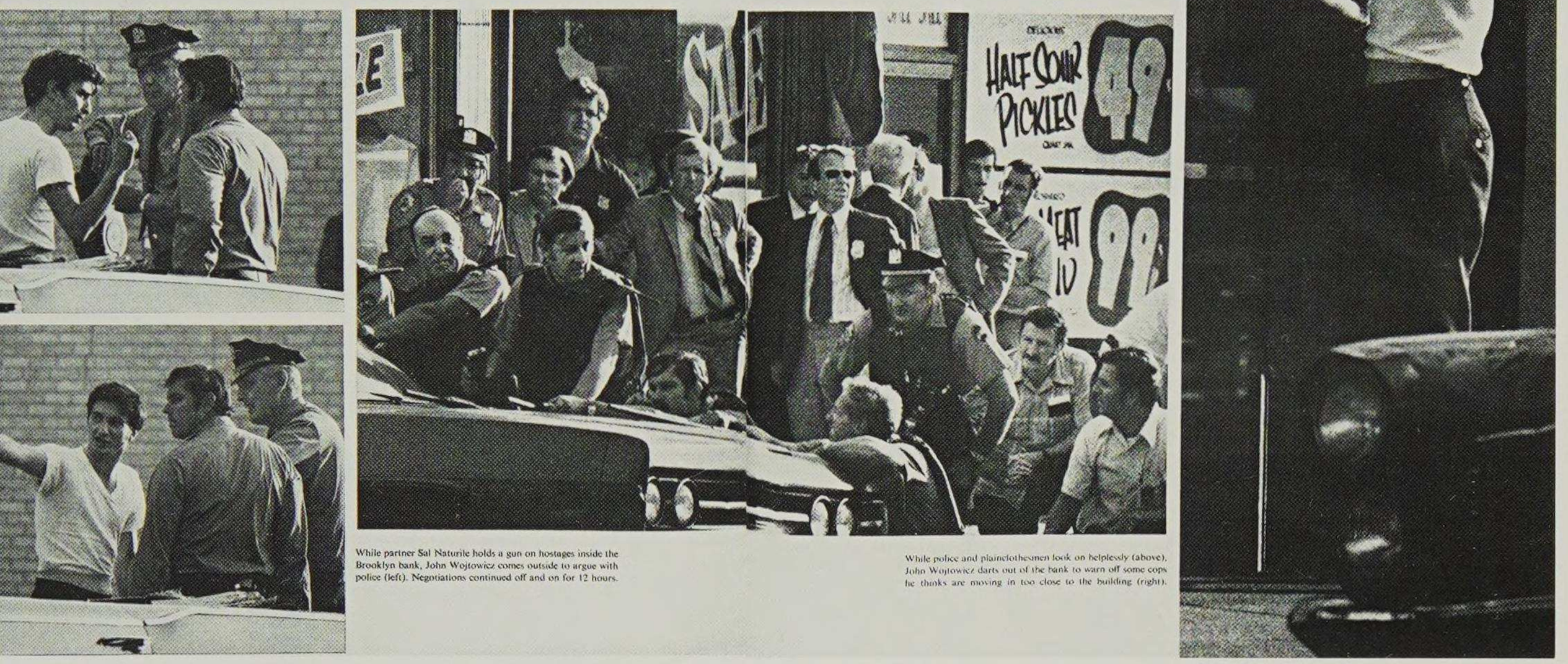


Figure 4.8
Pierre Huyghe, *The Third Memory*, 1999-2000. Newspaper clipping courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

his 1974 feature film *Dog Day Afternoon* and cast Al Pacino as Wojtowicz. In 1999, Huyghe traveled to New York to try to locate Wojtowicz and invite him to reenact his version of the story.

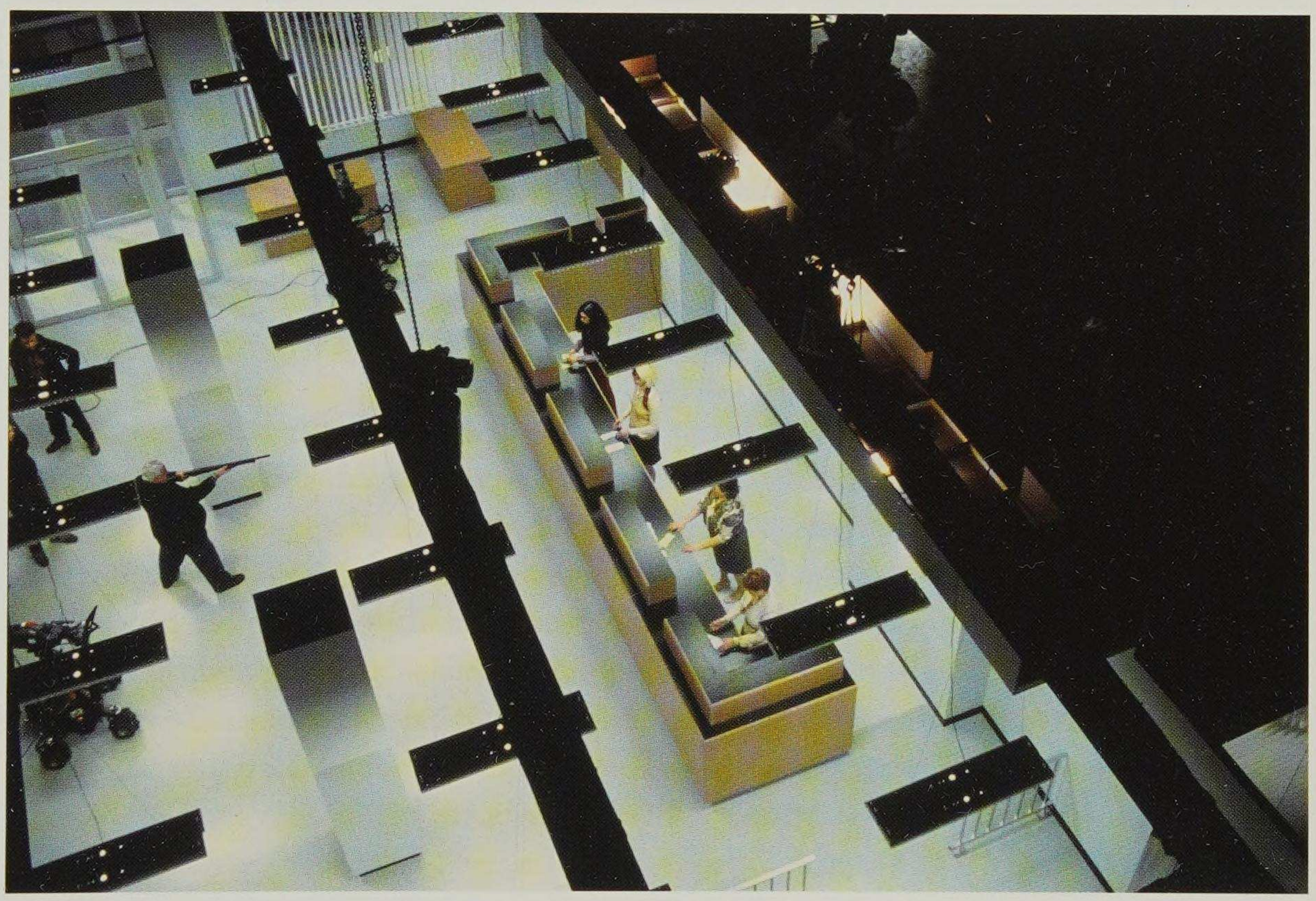
As Huyghe recalled, "There were many interpretations of [Wojtowicz's story] in newspapers, and from these reports they made a scenario, then a script, and then a film [*Dog Day Afternoon*]. During all this time, Wojtowicz was in jail and there was a confusion between what he actually did, what he did according to the press, and the events described by the film. I decided to ask him to explain how it happened."[44] In 1999, Huyghe knocked on doors in the streets of Brooklyn until he eventually tracked down John Wojtowicz in the house he was living in with his mother. Huyghe then invited the middle-aged ex-con to go to Paris to reenact his own account of the events of August 22, 1972. Wojtowicz needed little persuading. The action was set in a life-sized re-creation of the bank featured in Lumet's fictional version of the events (not the "real" bank). As with *Blanche-Neige Lucie*,

Huyghe designed the environment to look like a stage. Lighting rigs and camera operators appear in several of the shots, the walls seem flimsy, the lighting theatrical. According to Huyghe, the piece was "about the memory of this person, the re-enaction of a memory. When I do this work, . . . it is never about referencing or deconstructing a film. . . . It is about how you create an image and have that image represent you."[45] The set of the bank was built to scale in a studio in the Paris suburb of Stains. In the United States, John Wojtowicz was not the copyright holder to his story. In order to reenact the event of his life, he had to go to France.

The Third Memory opens with the generic FBI warning against copyright infringement. The text is accompanied by a voice-over: "I tell the FBI to go fuck themselves. . . . It's been twenty-eight years since I've been fighting Warner Brothers to try and get my money back. They keep giving it to the hostages while I'm a millionaire living on welfare. My name is John Wojtowicz; I'm the real Sonny Worcek and I'm the one that you see in *Dog Day Afternoon*." The film premiered on the occasion of Huyghe's first solo exhibition in New York, "Even More Real Than You," at Marian Goodman Gallery. The location is significant given that *The Third Memory* could have potentially faced copyright infringement penalties if it was produced in the United States and, as the FBI warning stipulates, the period of incarceration would have been similar to the sentence that Wojtowicz served for the robbery. Dolène's lawsuit against the Walt Disney Corporation then succeeded where Wojtowicz's continued attempts to reclaim his story from Warner Brothers failed. Daniel Birnbaum later noted (in the first feature article on Huyghe's work in *Artforum*): "Wojtowicz is not trying to become Snow White. All he claims are the rights to himself."[46] But the difference between Wojtowicz and Dolène is not quite that straightforward, given that Dolène conceived of the character of Snow White as an extension of herself, and Wojtowicz's actions at the crime scene were inflected by Hollywood's image of the mob. As Huyghe's film demonstrates, neither Wojtowicz's "self" nor the details of his story are or were ever entirely his own. Not only was Wojtowicz's original conception of the robbery influenced by Al Pacino's performance in *The Godfather* (1972) (which he and his partners viewed on the morning of the bank robbery as a kind of motivational manual), but Pacino's interpretation of the character later affected Wojtowicz's reenactment of the siege. This fiction also incurred significant consequences for Wojtowicz's real life. When Wojtowicz and his fellow inmates first saw *Dog Day Afternoon* in prison, the latter did not take kindly to Lumet's insinuation that Wojtowicz had "sold out" to the FBI. As a result, Wojtowicz had to endure the very real, physical consequences of this fictional twist of narrative: as Huyghe explained, "Because of this one sentence







Figures 4.9-4.10
Pierre Huyghe, *The Third Memory*, Beta Digital, 9'46", 1999-2000.
Composite image courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

[in the movie], Wojtowicz was threatened in jail; they tried to kill him for betraying his friend, but it was pure fiction."[47]

Huyghe's film addressed both a legal framework in which actions are prohibited in the name of protection, and a fictional context that prompted activity. Although this is a clear example of Huyghe's interest in extending fiction into reality, *The Third Memory* also points to the consequences that this process holds for language. As Wojtowicz directed the amateur actors Huyghe had hired to play the bank tellers, bank manager, the FBI, and the cops on the set of the bank, his tenses were scrambled. Wojtowicz described his actions of the past in the present tense ("I say to the sergeant. . . . Then you say 'Drop the shotgun you lousy cocksucker,' say the words . . . I walk outside. . . . In *the real movie* the cops fire on us and we have to shoot back at them") and on several occasions he also gestured toward "future" events, that is, events following August 22, 1972. In these instances, the dialogue is punctuated with shifting pronouns and delivered with no fixed address: "I want you to remember one thing. Once we walk out that door we're making history. No matter where you go, no matter who sees you, your friends and family are gonna remember that day. August 22, 1972."

The temporal shifts in Wojtowicz's language were mirrored in Huyghe's montage of images taken from different time zones. Across both screens of the installation, Huyghe's footage was interspersed with footage from *Dog Day Afternoon*. Like Wojtowicz's dialogue, the imagery was infected with a temporal interchangeability. Huyghe also constantly rearranged the placement and timing of his footage in the editing of *The Third Memory*. The same sequence was frequently shot from different camera angles and screened simultaneously side by side. Events did not unfold in a linear sequence. The same principles of montage governed Huyghe's installation of the work. In exhibition, Huyghe surrounded his footage with a selection of archival material relating to both the press coverage of Wojtowicz's robbery and *Dog Day Afternoon*—including the original film poster and the fictional "minidrama" of the robbery printed in *Life* magazine in 1972. On smaller monitors outside the installation space, Huyghe screened the original television interviews conducted by both Wojtowicz and his former boyfriend after Wojtowicz's parole. Viewers literally had to walk through these fragments in order to reach Huyghe's film. It was this multiple feedback effect between the different media accounts that later prompted Huyghe to characterize *The Third Memory* as "perhaps the most straightforward, the most didactic of all my works. The first time I saw it myself," he said, "I was sure it should be shown in the Education Department of museums."[48]

Why is it then that critical interpretations of this work have been so varied? On the one hand, writers such as Jean-Charles Masséra and curators including Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Molly Nesbit, and Hans Ulrich Obrist consider

The Third Memory particularly, and Huyghe's work more generally, as a parable of agency. Masséra writes:

> Pierre Huyghe seems to have set out on a path where the aesthetic of appropriating an alienating form (the cinema) gives way to an enterprise (an attempt) of reappropriating the representations that speak in our place and name, an enterprise where the subject represented—or figured—is invited to take back his place at the very heart of the spectacular machinery that has dispossessed him of his own identity. . . . An invitation to comment on his own gestures and deeds, to reappropriate them, to speak up once again, to regain his own image.[49]

Conversely, historian Tom McDonough and a good number of artists in Huyghe's circle have resisted alignment with missives of recuperation.[50] We may recall, for example, Huyghe's espousal of non-locatable energy, Parreno's trafficking in ambivalence, and Höller's harnessing of doubt. Although the tension between these positions is productive, there are certain aspects of the recuperative reading that can be discounted outright. The idea that one can regain one's own image may unfold as an invitation in Huyghe's practice but it is never a given, just as the theft of an image will not necessarily erase identity. Reappropriation cannot be brought about simply by returning to a space or a time and reenacting past gestures, because such gestures are irrevocably shaped by their shared remembrance and circulation outside the self and outside the moment of their initial enactment. The stability of categories such as image and self, critical to the recuperative missive, are instead stripped back and stretched out. The questions raised then probe much deeper than existing critiques have acknowledged. What is a "self"? What is a "character"? What is an "image"? What is a "history" and how is it made? If these questions are to retain significance they must remain open. They must persist as inquiries wherein every answer is coupled with an ellipse. These are problems that can be classified, in other words, as organisms, whose patterns are discernible over time.

SHELLS AND GHOSTS: THE ANNLEE PROJECT

Every organism relies on a certain context for its existence. In Huyghe's first exhibition at Marian Goodman in New York, the context for *The Third Memory* was provided by a second video projection piece entitled *Two Minutes Out of Time* (2000). Unlike *The Third Memory, Two Minutes Out of Time* was not pedagogical. The story of its production was not manifest in its installation or on screen. Neither

was it containable within the gallery walls. It is little wonder that reviewers were puzzled, with most articles on the exhibition sparing only a sentence or two for the work: "*Two Minutes Out of Time*," one critic wrote, "depicts an animated figure speaking in the voice of a little girl. It's intriguing and points to a race of cyber-beings who may one day people the airwaves."[51] Michael Rush described the piece as "exquisite" and as "full of wonder and pathos" and left it at that.[52] Both writers missed the gist of the piece, but perhaps this was understandable for it was here, in an exhibition entitled "Even More Real Than You" in the winter of 2000, that Annlee made her first appearance in the United States.

A sign waiting to be dropped into a story, a frozen picture—that was how Huyghe and Parreno first thought of Annlee when they found her in a Japanese manga agency catalog in the year 2000.[53] Huyghe and Parreno bought the "shell" of Annlee's character for 46,000 yen from K-Works, a Japanese design company that specializes in providing stock characters for cartoons, comics, and video games. A bundle of data with no psychological background, defining characteristics, or special abilities, Annlee was one of the cheapest characters available. She was also, as Parreno noted, free from copyright prohibitions: "We could have looked for a Disney character, but the copyright problem is not the same with Disney, which has total control over its characters, especially over those that have never been used."[54] After purchasing Annlee, Huyghe and Parreno used her data as the basis for their collaborative project *No Ghost Just a Shell*. Annlee's "shell" was made available to a selection of artists who were invited to use the sign in any way they wished. Participants included Joe Scanlan (who contributed a DIY, Ikea-style coffin), Angela Bulloch and Imke Wagener, Liam Gillick, Jorge Pardo, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Lili Fleury, Molly Nesbit, Kathryn Davis, Henri Barande, François Curley, Melik Ohanian, Pierre Joseph and Mehdi Belhaj-Kacem, and Anna Lena Vaney (the co-producer of Anna Sanders films). The instructions were as follows: "Work with her, in a real story, translate her capabilities into psychological traits, lend her a character, a text, a denunciation and address to the Court a trial in her defense. Do all that you can so that this character lives different stories and experiences. So that she can act as a sign, as a live logo."[55] Annlee's face adorned posters and wallpaper; it blazed across windows in neon light and emerged in the design of spaces, drawings, photographs, paintings, installations, and, most frequently, in digital animations. A live logo; a company sign: these were the qualities that in the 1980s Huyghe had located in the stripes of Daniel Buren, the eagles of Marcel Broodthaers, and in the Dauphin company billboards. But unlike these earlier incarncations, Annlee's "branded aesthetic" appeared between the work of others, much in the same way that the character of Anna Sanders was manifest in the design and layout of the magazine.[56]



Figure 4.11
Pierre Huyghe, *Two Minutes Out of Time*, Beta digital, 4', 2000. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

Once the rules of engagement were set, Huyghe and Parreno established a system for the dispersal and exhibition of the work. Hans Ulrich Obrist summarized the trajectory as follows:

> In 2000, Annlee appeared in Geneva at the MAMCO, then in Paris at the Air de Paris, Marian Goodman and Jennifer Flay galleries; then in Berlin, and Liam Gillick's piece was shown for the first time in the hall of the Tate Gallery. Very soon, Annlee was presented in group exhibitions, at biennials, in Istanbul, Yokohoma and Sydney, depending on the ever-changing conditions of display: Pierre's film only, or Philippe's, Philippe's film and Pierre's film, Pierre's two films, Philippe and Dominique together, etc, until the show "No Ghost Just a Shell" at the Zürich Kunsthalle brought together all the projects of 13 artists.[57]

Obrist likened the endeavor to an archipelago: a nonlinear scattering of zones. The temporality that emerged out of the sequencing of exposures—the intermittent illumination of separate elements in divergent locations over a period of three years—was a continuation of Huyghe's ongoing attempt to work with "freed" time. Freed from the time codes of finite exhibitions, viewers may have encountered the work in *No Ghost* in multiple venues, seen the same pieces in different settings. But as "freed" as her temporality may have been, Annlee's visibility was still determined by the commercial interests of her multiple owners (hence her appearance in Parreno's gallery, Pierre Joseph's gallery, Gillick's gallery, and then at Marian Goodman, New York). When the project was finished, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven acquired the entire exhibition.

Just prior to this purchase, Huyghe and Parreno (with the assistance of lawyer Luc Saucier) drew up a contract that reassigned the rights to the character back to itself. It was the first time in the history of representation that a sign was rendered legally responsible for the rights to its own reproduction. In order to validate the action, Annlee had to be registered as a company. The contract stipulated that

> the acquisition of ANNLEE is in line with a poetic plan consisting of liberating a fictional character from the realms of representation. To this end, Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno today wish to give up the rights that they hold to her. In order to ensure that the rights to ANNLEE belong to the company itself and do not fall into the public domain, a company has been formed today called ANNLEE.[58]

Although it did "liberate" Annlee from the cultural sector, the contract was also effectively her death warrant. The works produced prior to the assignation could be exhibited at the discretion of their respective authors, but Annlee's image would be barred from appearing in any new productions. Hypothetically, if Annlee was used as the basis of a new work, she could sue. But a virtual entity such as Annlee has no agency, and law is only effective if it can be tested. Neither can any contestation arise if Annlee's image does appear in the future. The assignation of rights clearly does not confer the potential to act on them. "It's enough to create an identity," Parreno has said, but what kind of identity is just a shell? Equipped with all the legal paraphernalia she needed to make herself visible, Annlee's ability to act on that potential remained a fiction. "The legal contract," Huyghe explained, "is a bit like Duchamp's stalemate in chess: a situation where you can't lose but the other can't win either."[59] If agency is then not a critical factor in determining legal propriety, what distinguishes a fictional character from a legally defined subject?

This question is particularly pertinent given the now widespread amalgamation of actual and virtual subjectivities in contemporary society. We can think about this in terms of "image politics," which at a basic level relies on the transformation of politicians into celebrities and vice versa (the election of Arnold Schwarzenegger as governor of California in 2003, for example) and on the wholesale adoption of virtual platforms as primary political tools (the critical role of television, online campaigns, and visual media in the distribution of propaganda).[60] But we can also think about this crossover between the virtual and the actual more precisely as an issue of control. Is Huyghe's interest in "extending fiction into reality" cast in a different light if we consider, for example, that in the United States the government's primary recruitment tool for the Army is a computer game? Available free online and emblazoned with slogans such as "Liberate the Oppressed" and "Empower Yourself," *America's Army* is hosted on Pentagon servers and has

been downloaded by more than seven million users. According to the designers, almost all new recruits into the U.S. military between 2001 and 2007 were avid gamers.[61] But if in America the virtual world is perceived as the ultimate training ground for combat, in South Korea, by contrast, the skills acquired by professional gamers are seen as directly transferable to working the stock market. The ability to act with substantive speed, to make decisions rapidly, and develop advanced hand-eye coordination is crucial to stock market trading, and many South Korean professional gamers are head-hunted by the multibillion-dollar finance industry when they retire in their mid-twenties.[62]

Although these crossovers shed some light on the historical milieu in which Annlee emerged, the contributors to *No Ghost Just a Shell* addressed the difference between characters and subjects with greater specificity. The majority of participants broached Annlee's condition by considering her constitution as an utterance, in the Bakhtinian sense of the term. Annlee was not simply an image. She was also made to speak. Her speech was polyphonic, and her mouth was filled with quotations. Rirkrit Tiravanija pictured Annlee reading a section of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*; Molly Nesbit offered a poem after Mallarmé; Liam Gillick enunciated Annlee's words through alternate voice-over and lip sync. Annlee's soliloquies were predominantly in the first person and almost all the texts written by the artists conspicuously featured her name. "My name is Annlee!" wrote Parreno. "It's a common name," added Huyghe. "As sure as my name is Annlee," warned Gonzalez-Foerster, "you will all be sent to a place of no return!"

A proper name, as Michel Foucault knew well, is a tool of power. In order for Annlee to be granted the rights to her own image, she was legally required to receive a name. When explorers chart new territory, the seemingly irresistible urge to name emerges both out of a desire for historical presence and the need for future legibility. The bestowal of a name, as Michel de Certeau has noted, "makes future operations possible."[63] A name allows labor to be undertaken and space to be organized: "the naming transforms geography into the unfolded map of memory."[64] In Certeau's words:

> [Names] make habitable or believable the place that they clothe with a word (by emptying themselves of their classifying power, they acquire that of "permitting" something else), they recall or suggest phantoms (the dead who are supposed to have disappeared) that still move about, concealed in gestures and in bodies in motion; and, by naming, that is, by imposing an injunction proceeding from the other (a story) and by altering functionalist identity by detaching themselves from it, they create in the place itself that erosion or nowhere that the law of the other carves out within it.[65]

Certeau writes of place names, but the tropes are transferable. Annlee—an imposed injunction, an alteration, a recollection of phantoms (but no ghost); a cloak of identity that denies its masking function (just a shell). However, in opposition to copyright laws that demand a signature in order to close a text, Certeau insists that naming does not necessitate closure but rather initiates progress, insofar as it allows something else to happen in the future. A name can be used as a doorway or a key pass, but to name something is also to contain it and format it. A name leaves traces.

No Ghost Just a Shell may have been baptized in alignment with Certeau's invitation to "future operations" but it was only after the signatures of others had been appended to Annlee's image that the sign was granted its rights. Huyghe and Parreno's decision to withhold Annlee's "freedom" until this time recalls aspects of the historical relation between copyright and censorship in France. The obligatory attachment of a signature to a text emerged in Paris in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution.[66] The first copyright law, which enforced the link between names and works, was not passed as a means of protecting the artists or authors. It was designed to facilitate censorship. Prior to the Revolution, the French publishing industry was controlled and regulated by guilds. When these guilds were axed due to their connection with the monarchy, Paris was inundated with a flood of "anonymous political, erotic, theological and clandestine literature of every kind."[67] In order to restore control over the publishing market, in 1793 the national assembly passed a law that mandated the inclusion of the actual name of the author in every text printed. From this, historian Carla Hesse has concluded that "the first revolutionary effort to give legal recognition to the author's claim on the text, then, was not a grant of freedom to the author but the imposition of accountability and responsibility. Politically, it formed a part of a conservative pro-order move, a police measure. The law made the author legally accountable for the text by defining it as his property."[68]

Controversial content was eliminated. Texts were locatable, effectively blocking the anonymous circulation of information. The naming of texts then also directly contributed to the demand for a black market. Pirates were back in business.

In the year of Annlee's birth, several centuries after this inaugural copyright act was passed in France, a group of software designers and artists held a meeting in Paris to discuss their concerns over what they saw as the oppressive and reductive effect of copyright laws over creative practice. This group called themselves Copyleft Attitude, as inspired by the American programmer Richard Stallman who wrote the 1985 "GNU Manifesto" against the copyrighting of open source software (in Stallman's words, "Copyleft: all wrongs reserved").[69] Copyleft Attitude gave rise to an association called Art Libre (Free Art) that lobbied for

changes in copyright laws and successfully introduced its own "copyleft" license known as the Free Art License in the year 2000. This license can be accessed by all persons seeking authorization to "copy, distribute and freely transform" works of art while respecting the rights of the originator. "Far from ignoring the author's rights," Art Libre proclaimed,

> This license recognises them and protects them. Whereas current literary and artistic property rights result in restriction of the public's access to works of art, the goal of the Free Art License is to encourage such access. The intention is to make work accessible and to authorise the use of its resources by the greatest number of people: to use it in order to increase its use, to create new conditions for creation in order to multiply the possibilities of creation, while respecting the originators in according them recognition and defending their moral rights.[70]

The opening gambit of the Annlee project seems close to the spirit of open source or copyleft doctrine (the free offering of a sign for transformation, Certeau's "future operations").[71] But Huyghe and Parreno's decision to pull the plug on Annlee by recourse to standard copyright legislation blocks this reading. Their contractual assignation of her rights as a prohibitive venture points more toward the relation between copyright and censorship (familiar to postrevolution Paris) than to a contemporary culture of shareware. Huyghe is aware of these permutations and has refused to cast his negotiations with the law in dualistic terms: "It's not a question of erasing the author. An author doesn't boil down to a copyright. It's not a question of being anonymous. I can say 'I,' you can say 'I' and we can both say 'We' and then both I and We can go and do something. And it's not a question of saying, 'It's an open system.' It's not a copyleft, but it's also not a copyright."[72] Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev has considered this attitude in relation to Huyghe's interest in the idea of "being" as a state of translation: "The state of being that's most interesting to Pierre is that of an in between zone, which is neither himself nor the collaborators, not the collaboration or the individual, not rigid, but in between the I and the we—a very free notion of collaboration which is essentially the materialization of an intention."[73] The ambiguity generated through this approach is most clearly encompassed by the multiple readings of the project's title.

No ghost, just a shell. Huyghe could have been mining Certeau: "A solitary shell, thrown into orbit in an excess of speed, trapped in endless circumnavigation, never again to fall to earth."[74] But the phrase is actually a signpost to Mamoru Oshii's 1995 animated manga film *Ghost in the Shell*.[75] In Oshii's sci-fi future, a "ghost" is the only aspect of a cyborg that permits its classification as sentient

life. In a world populated by techno-organic subjects, the legal and social hierarchy between subjects and products is only maintained via the presence of ghosts. The film's protagonist Major Kusanagi, for example, possesses an organic human brain and outer skin but her "body" is animated by electronics. Kusanagi's mind is referred to as a "ghost" that inhabits her synthetic system (or shell). Like the characters manufactured by K-Works, shells without ghosts hold no rights and are to be used and abused as their manufacturers and owners see fit. Although *Ghost in the Shell* initially promotes a stable definition of self through the demarcation of the synthetic from the techno-organic, this assurance is quickly undone by the introduction of the Puppet Master. A sentient, fully synthetic hacker, the Puppet Master operates without a ghost. As Kusanagi muses: "What if a cyber brain could generate its own ghost, create a soul all by itself? And if it did, just what would be the importance of being human then?" After being captured by the authorities, the Puppet Master attempts to make a case for political asylum as a sentient being by pointing to the similarities between electronic archives and human memory:

> DNA is nothing more than a program. Man relies on his genes for a memory system. Man is individual only through his intangible memory. Memory cannot be defined, yet it defines mankind. The advent of computers and the subsequent incalculable accumulation of data has given rise to a new system of memory and thought parallel to your own. Humanity has underestimated the consequences of computerization.[76]

Neither ghosts nor shells are essential for the Puppet Master's survival. Posing a problem similar to that generated by the replicants in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), the Puppet Master's claim to asylum radically destabilizes the classifications of "life." The law's capacity to distinguish subjects from nonsubjects is disabled.[77]

What is the place of puppetry in this blurring of relations? Puppetry is related, conceptually and historically, to ventriloquism: the ability to talk through another, to be able to express certain gestures or qualities that the puppeteer might perhaps be unable or does not wish to share in person. On the one hand, puppets are tools or slaves under the control of their "masters." On the other, they have also served as vehicles of free speech. The first images to be sent through the air for televisual broadcast by one John Baird, of England, depicted the disembodied head of a ventriloquist's dummy mouthing the words of its absent master.[78] What television and ventriloquism share are a privileging of distance in the production of power, a deferral of responsibility from the speaker to the message, and a relocation of meaning away from the medium. However, in early ventriloquist performances, an imperfect mirroring between dummy and master was used to

political advantage, as dolls were used to sneak subversive content past censors.[79] The dummy was caricatured as an independent entity that loudly belittled its master—permitting the ventriloquist to speak his mind through the mouth of an other. But what happens when the puppet is surrendered into someone else's hands, or is used as the mouthpiece for multiple persons?

Huyghe is clearly not the only artist to have confronted these questions. When Parreno and Tiravanija produced ventriloquist dummies of themselves for an exhibition in 2003, Parreno said it was "so I could talk through him and he could talk through me."[80] Puppets appeared in two of Parreno's works from the 1990s: in 1996 he used puppets to narrate a story by Dante, and he co-produced a puppet show for the 1998 exhibition "A Trial of Pol Pot" at Le Magasin, Grenoble. This collaborative enterprise was described "not as an attempt to document a specific historical event, but an examination of how criminal identities arise and the way they are covered by the media."[81] Huyghe also later used puppets as the basis for his "puppet opera" *This Is Not a Time for Dreaming* (2004), in which Huyghe played the role of both the puppeteer and the puppet (the title is ironic, in that Huyghe is definitely in favor of finding the time to dream).[82] Tiravanija and Parreno also included puppets in their exhibition at Friedrich Petzel gallery in New York in 2006.

The ghost of the Puppet Master, particularly as it appeared in Oshii's film, is interspersed throughout these projects. It appears in reaction to the commodification of identity and points toward the problems that occur when identity becomes a form of property: something that can be "owned." This reaction is inseparable from a contemporary cultural milieu in which not only intellectual property but colors ("Cadbury's purple"), words, smells, DNA codes, and even actions (the "Toyota jump") can all potentially be patented by corporations and barred from unauthorized use in the public domain.[83] The figure of the puppet is an apt vehicle to investigate the politics of control, in that it always begs the question: who is pulling the strings?

In 2003, David Joselit remarked that conceiving of identity as a form of property "does not mean simply asserting the identity one possesses, but rather questioning why we should experience the self as possession in the first place."[84] I suspect that both Foucault and Deleuze would have found something compelling in Annlee's transcendence of life and death through fiction. "Beyond knowledge and power," Deleuze has written, "there's a third side, the third element of the 'system' . . . an acceleration, one might say, that makes it impossible to distinguish death and suicide."[85] If this third side could be accessed, Annlee might be found there. Her function is to remind us that "authors do not boil down to a copyright" and that rights do not constitute agency.[86] Whatever soul this sign appears to have is a projection; both the empty sign and the image were circulated as possessions.

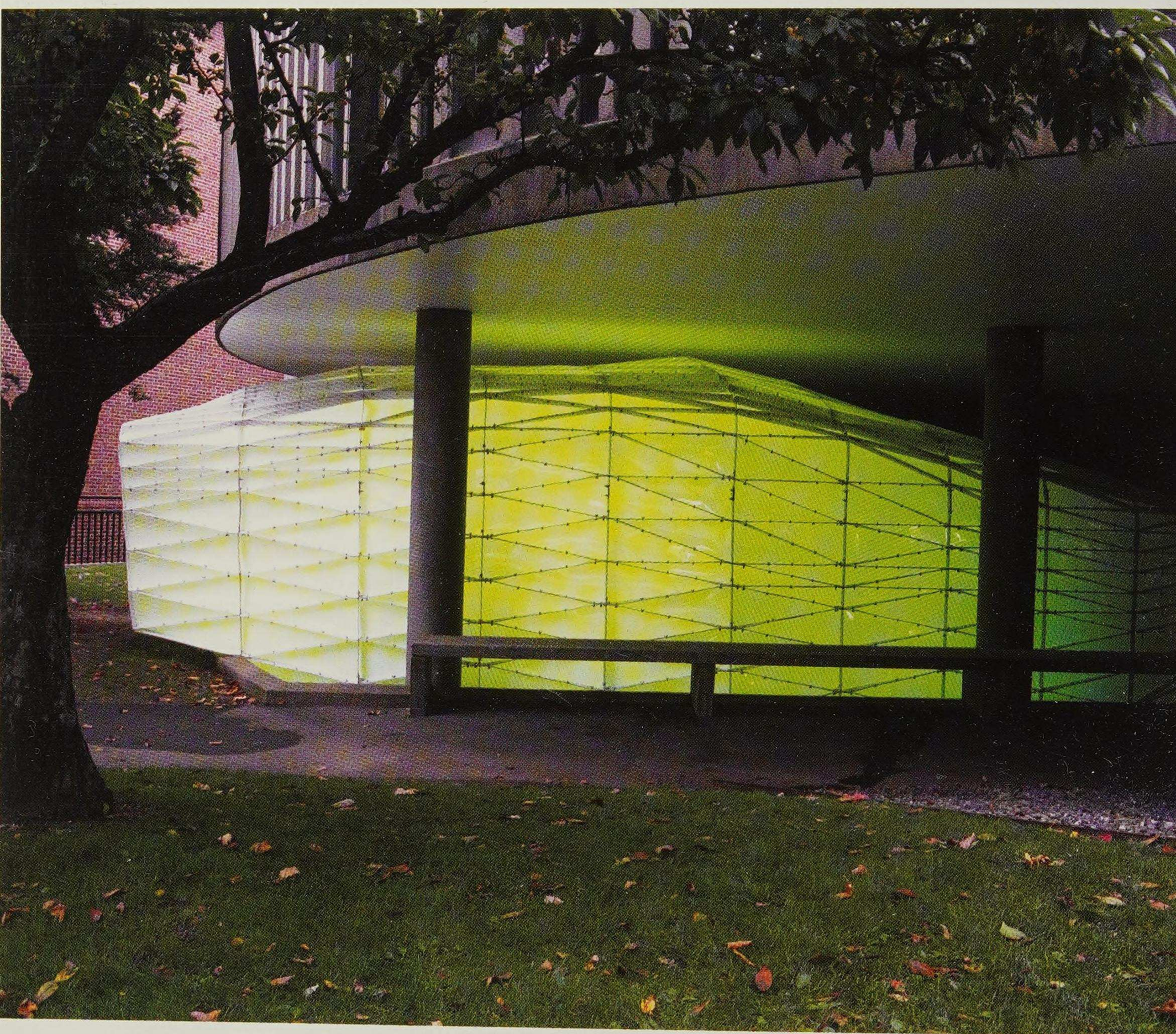
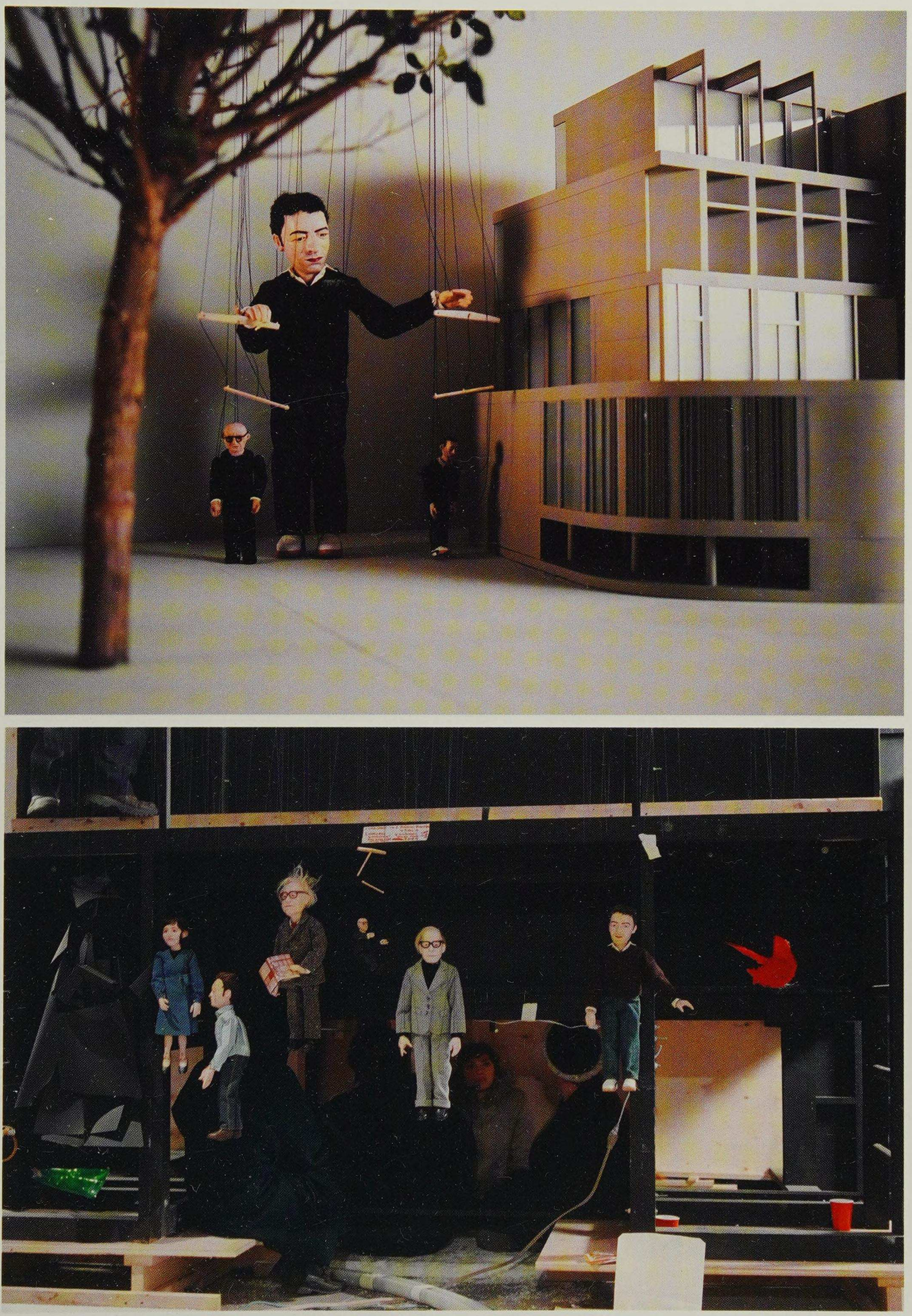


Figure 4.12–4.14
Pierre Huyghe, *This Is Not a Time for Dreaming*, live puppet play and super 16 mm film, 24', 2004. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.



"I am haunted by your imagination," Annlee tells us. "See, I'm not here for your amusement, no, you are here for mine!"[87] What, then, are we left with in this shell without a ghost, this state of exception?

This term is not used lightly. Political theorist Giorgio Agamben has pointed out that sovereignty is reliant on a "state of exception," a figure that is both "inside and outside the juridical order."[88] Agamben describes the paradox that arises thus: "The sovereign, having the legal power to suspend the validity of the law, is legally situated outside the law. 'The law is exterior to itself,' or rather, 'I, the sovereign, who am outside the law, declare that there is no outside of the law.'"[89] Only the sovereign is vested with the power to proclaim the state of emergency by which all laws are no longer valid. This is a paradoxical disclosure because, as Agamben has noted, the proclamation must be issued in a voice that transcends the law. It must emanate from a permanent state of emergency. The law is defined by what it is not (Bataille might have recognized this as transgression), leading Mladen Dolar to argue that "if the law always escapes us, this is not because of its transcendence, but because it has no interior. It is always deferred from one instance to another, because it is nothing but this movement of deferral, which can be seen as coinciding with the movement of desire."[90] If the law has no interior nothing can be outside it. The immanence of the law touches on transcendence; it relies on a doubling of transcription and speech, and its effects are either set by precedents (as with Britain's common law) or held in a constitution tested through trial (as in the United States).

The movement of desire and the movement of law, linked via a system of deferral. Does the traction hold? It would appear so. Although Huyghe and Parreno's project unfolded in the shadow of jurisprudence, it was desire that allowed it to move, that gave it life. Like the mirror in Snow White, Annlee was a projection around which the desires of all her owners might be tested, put on trial. "Is [*No Ghost*] a form of structural organization?" Hans Ulrich Obrist asked Huyghe. He replied, "It's even less structural than that. It's about desire. And that's probably why the story lasts. Each of us wanted, at a given moment, to be the author of the same story."[91] And this is where a secondary interpretation of the title begins to take shape. The poster for *No Ghost Just a Shell*, designed by M/M, pictured Annlee's face in tandem with an adaptation of the red and yellow shell from the Shell Group's company logo. As critic Rob Giampietro later noted:

> That great symbol of fuel, the Shell Oil trademark, an arbitrary sign, replaces the word "shell," itself an arbitrary sign. Arbitrary, perhaps, but essential to remember: I mean, wasn't our desire for oil part of what got us into this mess? And wasn't controlling others in order to save them part of it, too? It's hard to



Figure 4.15
M/M, *Annlee: No Ghost Just a Shell*, four-color silkscreen, 176 × 120 cm, 2000.

> know, and it's hard to say. There is nothing simple about [Annlee's] new life, but this may be what is beautiful and disgusting about it at the same time, what is so fundamentally true.[92]

"Beautiful and disgusting" and yet "fundamentally true": the description cuts to the quick of *No Ghost Just a Shell*. Like Annlee, the "great symbol of fuel" is a now privatized version of a once public icon. As the official Shell Web site proclaims, the company design was based on the pecten shell, which for centuries has represented the Christian pilgrimage to the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain. In iconographic terms, the Compostela shell signifies a meeting point, the end point of a process, and a pagan sign that brings people together.[93] It also represents a journey toward salvation. From medieval times onward, pilgrims on the Way of St. James were promised total absolution of all past sins. In the 1800s, the scallop shell was incorporated into the founder of Shell's family coat of arms in tribute to ancestral pilgrimages to Santiago in medieval times. Today, the red and yellow shell is a prime signifier for multinational corporate interests or global capitalist enterprise. Its appearance is primarily funded by the sale of oil. Although Huyghe did not, surprisingly, discuss the incorporation of the Shell logo with M/M before they submitted their design, he did later characterize *No Ghost Just a Shell* as a "pagan project made of paradoxes and compromises."[94] Such paradoxes and compromises were crystallized by M/M's explicit packaging of *No Ghost* in the mandates of both personal salvation (absolution) and corporate enterprise. These sentinels of desire stand on either side of the sign of Annlee and the flip side of their presence is, I suggest, melancholia.

In Japan, the country of Annlee's birth, melancholia of this quality might have been described as *mono no aware*: the sad beauty of transience; a sensitivity to the passing of things. We will encounter this feeling again but for now, you can see it in Annlee's face. This sign is precarious. It was not destined to live long. "I don't do it on purpose," Huyghe said to me, "it's not three measures of sadness and a pinch of loss. It's not deliberately romantic."[95] But Huyghe's protestations are muffled when we know that Huyghe and Parreno initially picked Annlee not only for her price tag but also because of her melancholic appearance. Her wide eyes and downcast expression were read as signs that seemed to point to an "awareness" of her limitations.[96] On the occasion of her death, Huyghe and Parreno celebrated with a fireworks display on Miami Beach, December 4, 2002. This was Annlee's last appearance before, in Huyghe's words, she "evaporated from the realm of representation."[97] In a light show above the water, thousands of tiny explosions (shells are also projectiles) traced a picture of Annlee's face. Huyghe and Parreno called the work *Smile without a Cat*. Like the Cheshire cat in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's*

Adventures in Wonderland (1865), the display was a disclosure of invisibility. The title also made reference to Chris Marker's 1977 film *Grin without a Cat.*[98] Marker's dense and scattered portrait of socialist revolution from 1967 to 1977 tracks the rise of the new left from Vietnam to China to Castro's Cuba. At the end of the film, the spirit is burned out and one wonders where the revolution went. The possibility of guerrilla warfare, as Marker's voice-over tells us, eventually becomes "a spearhead without a spear, a grin without a cat." Annlee's face, glittering in the skies above Miami: is this a memorial to impotence, the funerary rites of a stalemate?

I suggest that *Smile without a Cat* was more of an antimemorial, linked as it was to a project with such diaphanous threads of energy. The intention behind *No Ghost Just a Shell* may be recoverable, but *Smile without a Cat* exorcized its visual component. Annlee's denouement then relied on a decoy, a final act of evaporation. One might ask where the condensation collected. Parreno said, "We are speaking about an image, our relationship to the visible. What our project is trying to do is to seek out the hidden content, and thereby figure out a very murky relationship, like in a film by Melville, our very noir relationship with representation. Does it survive us? Or not?"[99] We can phrase this in other ways: Does history continue without an image? And who holds the rights to history? Huyghe and Parreno have tested the logic of this question and deemed it suspect. To enter into history you need shareholders, not certificates of propriety. So is it possible to move a historical image into the present? Chris Marker thought so, believing that an image can be tied to a moment but also made accessible through time (remember *La Jetée*'s story of a man marked by an image from his childhood). Annlee's story also persists despite her contracted invisibility. Its survival is directly proportionate to the care that Huyghe and Parreno took in developing the infrastructure of her image. In Huyghe's words, "The whole point is to ask how this sign [Annlee], which is at the lowest register of significance, can suddenly make history."[100]

No Ghost Just a Shell took advantage of a loophole in the system, but as with *Blanche-Neige Lucie* and *The Third Memory*, the project was legitimated by legal and economic channels already in place, in very specific locations that carried their own logistical challenges that could not be ignored (*le droit d'auteur* in France, the FBI's policing of copyright in the United States). The whereabouts of each of Huyghe's events informed their possible formatting, right up to the choice of the Japanese agency that offered characters without a copyright. However, despite the geocultural specificities of these rules of engagement, Huyghe's projects still slipped their knots to be dispersed as evental relations. Although Huyghe perceived this tactic as a refusal of dualisms (neither copyright nor copyleft), his work can also be seen to operate in an "and/both" framework. *No Ghost* moved through a copyleft framework, acquired a copyright, and was terminated in a





Figure 4.16-4.17
Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, *Smile without a Cat*, fireworks display, Miami Beach, 2002.

spectacular display that properly belonged offshore. Annlee's liberty ensured her invisibility, which was enforced through privatization. This move brought with it an enhanced capacity for censorship—with limited practical application if the object of detainment is as nebulous as a thought pattern or as fragile as an utterance. Huyghe's treatment of Lucie Dolène's case also paradoxically worked to "silence" the actress. Her actions were subtitled, the spoken word was absent from the screen, but her story was nonetheless communicated. In *The Third Memory*, John Wojtowicz's reenactment of the event of his life was likewise interpolated by fiction to such an extent that his tenses were scrambled. But if Wojtowicz and Dolène could not speak in time, Annlee's voice can issue only from a time before. Huyghe's concern was not to "set the record straight" but to ask, as Bakhtin did, how can we understand an event if we see only *this* sky, *these* trees, *this* time?

The ambiguity generated by this inquiry is crucial. No ghost, just a Shell™: a reenactment of dis-possession and alienation under the sign of capitalism? No ghost: a model not haunted but open to possession? Or, just a shell: are we dealing with a pure projectile? The greatest significance of Huyghe and Parreno's project was the way in which these possibilities were played out in the relation of the constituent parts to the whole. The overall structure of the piece preyed, almost perfidiously, on the perceived relation between "freedom" and "rights" in order to debunk both the agency of the subject and the totalitarianism of regulative bodies. From the most extreme perspective, the entire project might be construed as an elaborate act of prostitution, with Huyghe and Parreno cast in the role of pimps. Such a reading seriously compromises the philanthropic inflections read into the venture by critics such as Obrist and Karo, among others.

Although Huyghe's projects are not mandates, this does not mean that nothing definite emerges in their wake. Moving information through multiple formats, without forgetting the conditions of its inception, is one way of confronting the question of representation and the inability to inhabit the now, thus facilitating some possible participation in and understanding of the present. If working around the image (or working with the image in time, not the time in the image) has been a critical component of Huyghe's attempts to channel freed time, the intermittent workers featured in Huyghe's work continue to hail from a zone in which there is a potential fusion between the ongoing event of life and the ongoing event of work. Huyghe's subjects were all engaged in reclaiming aspects of their histories (speech, story, copyrights, rights to reproduction) that had found new lives elsewhere. Huyghe's address to their dispossession was not recuperative, but it was personal ("these workers come from a zone close to my own") and was motivated by an observed implosion of producers into products—Snow White into Dolène, Ganz into Jonathan, Pacino into Wojtowicz. Huyghe developed from this

state a philosophy of time, informed by the workers' positions in the labor market and their participation in the dialogic realm (the performance of speech acts). He also angled each work to extend fiction into reality, an operation with potentially problematic connotations given its appearance in corporeal and corporate power relations (image politics, stock market trading, virtual combat training, drone warfare). Although Huyghe's drive to understand the politics of the visible illuminated these steelier aspects, his work of this period was also tempered with the potential for something other, something utopian. Across the threshold of Huyghe's practice blinks a state of deferral: the "and" space mobilized by the deferred movement of desire and law. And . . . and . . . and . . . until we are left with nothing but a spark, an intention, and the trace of a shell in the sky. If meaning amasses in the ellipse, why not reopen the cut?





CHAPTER 5

INSIDE-OUT UTOPIA

October 16, 2002. Some two thousand miles north of Miami Beach and one month backward in time from Annlee's final appearance, Pierre Huyghe has just been awarded the Hugo Boss Prize at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. "Lucky Pierre!" ran the headline in *Time Out* magazine, but luck had little to do with it. Huyghe had already represented France at the 49th Venice Biennale the year before with his solo pavilion *Le Château de Turing*. He had also recently completed a major solo exhibition at Kunsthaus Bregenz in Austria called "L'Expédition scintillante" (The Sparkling Expedition). Both exhibitions were enthusiastically received in the European and American press and two of Huyghe's previously exhibited works were selected for the Hugo Boss Prize. At the award ceremony in New York, Guggenheim director Thomas Krens somewhat blandly praised Huyghe's ability to build bridges between pop culture and art. The real substance of Huyghe's exhibition at the Guggenheim was the way it played on the necessary relation between utopia and failure, a perspective neatly summed up by critic Tom Morton's observation that Huyghe was involved in "making the visionary visible."[1]

At the Guggenheim, Huyghe's work appeared as light spectacles that illuminated the residue of dysfunctional dreams. *Les Grands Ensembles* (2001) featured maquettes of a pair of Le Corbusier-style, modernist housing projects common to postwar urban planning in France. Captured by a still, tripod-mounted camera, the model buildings were set in a staged environment and swathed in artificial fog. A flickering light show unfolded in their windows, accompanied by a pulsing electronic sound track. Huyghe introduced the work as a parable of utopian failure:

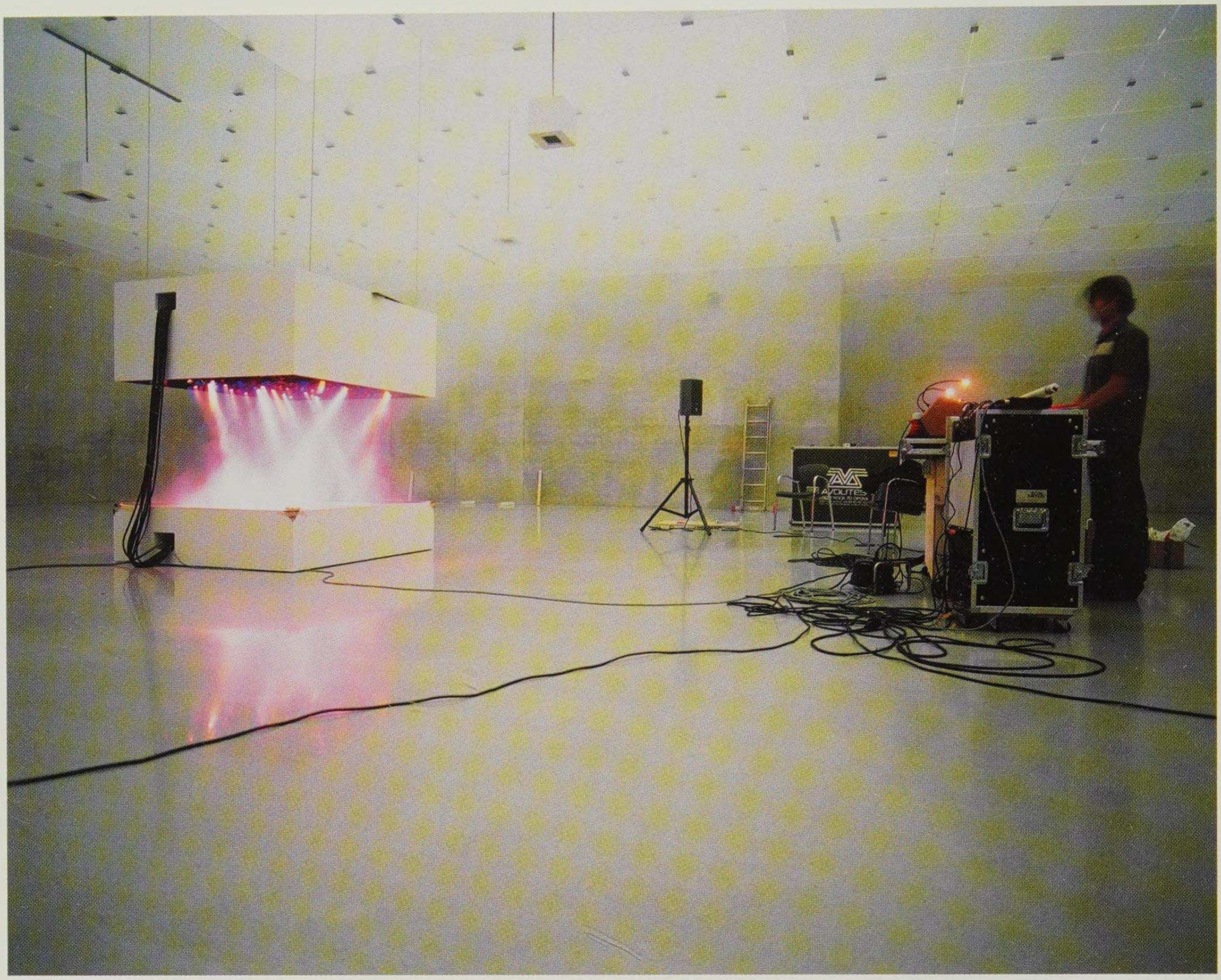


Figure 5.1
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante, Act II: Untitled (Light Show)*, light, wood, fog, sound, 2002. Production still courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

"These subsidized public projects ended up being an architectural and social failure. They were a corruption of Le Corbusier's social and architectural Modernist theory."[2] *Les Grands Ensembles* was installed in tandem with a music box, originally produced for Huyghe's exhibition in Bregenz. Entitled *L'Expédition scintillante, Act II: Untitled (Light Show)* (2002), this small, cubic structure was illuminated by a display of orange and pink lights that dappled the fog from its internal smoke machine. The light show was accompanied by a sound track of Erik Satie's *Gymnopédies* (1888), as orchestrated by Claude Debussy. *Untitled (Light Show)* was a domesticated, emptied-out version of the psychedelic spectacles staged during acid rock concerts in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Huyghe was thinking of the Velvet Underground's concerts, most probably those of Andy Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable series).[3] These pieces illuminated a void—an exposition of emptiness—through a distortion of utopian tropes.



Figure 5.2
Pierre Huyghe, *Les Grands Ensembles*, vistavision transferred to Digi-Beta, 8'13", 2001.

In the months directly following the Guggenheim show, Huyghe continued to work with ideas of utopia and failed dreams as a means of both presenting breaks in time and manufacturing a time outside of time. He began to characterize his pieces as fragmentary utopias, designed to counter modernism's tendency to twist the present so as to validate the future. "I don't speak of the failure of a utopia," he said, "but of the way it transmutes and negotiates in its relation to the everyday."[4] The false validation of the future by the present was disrupted by the addition of doubt, that sense of uneasy irresolution so central to the Annlee project. During a conversation with Hans Ulrich Obrist in 2002, Huyghe confessed:

> What's terrifying is the idea of self-satisfaction. Is there still the desire to change things? If there is a problem with the projection, then maybe the utopia gets embedded in something more concrete, something closer and more singular. . . . It's not so much something you project before yourself and towards which you move, but something you construct, while eliminating the conclusion from the very outset. Keeping only the dynamics, the desire, the potential.[5]

This chapter investigates the idea of utopian potential with respect to two of Huyghe's exhibitions: the installation *Streamside Day Follies* at the Dia Art Foundation, Chelsea (2003), and Huyghe's first retrospective, held at the Castello di Rivoli in 2004. The ghosts of both Le Corbusier and Charles Fourier haunt this analysis, as does Paul Ricoeur's theory of "constitutive utopia" and Mikhail Bakhtin's model of "carnival time."

UTOPIA AND THE HUDSON VALLEY

The story begins with an invitation, extended to Huyghe from Dia curator Lynne Cooke in 2002. Huyghe accepted Cooke's proposal to exhibit at Dia:Chelsea around the same time his work was nominated for the Hugo Boss Prize. Huyghe traveled to New York soon after, leaving his Paris studio in the hands of his assistants. Even before he had crossed the Atlantic, Huyghe already had conceived the commission as a multilayered enterprise. Aware of both Dia's critical role in art history and also of his own distance from the older generation of "Dia artists"—such as Dan Graham—Huyghe viewed the commission as an opportunity to make a temporal platform and as an excuse to "play with exhibition protocols."[6] He did not, in other words, want to confine himself to the space inside the gallery. "My interest," Huyghe explained to George Baker,

was not in creating an object that escapes the exhibition frame only to merge with the landscape in its scale, but to do this more in a temporal sense. My work would be precisely *in-between* . . . this place of meetings, signs, and corporations, which is the city, and nature. I wanted to base my action not on the production of a physical form but on an event. And yet . . . this event would have a kind of permanence not unlike Smithson's production of a material object like the *Spiral Jetty*. The event would not be a performance exactly, because a performance arrives and it dies.[7]

The direction that the venture finally took was partially inspired by chance. En route from a visit to Dia:Beacon in 2002, Huyghe drove past the town of Streamside Knolls, a recently established housing development at Fishkill in the city of Beacon ("I prefer to think of it as a village," Huyghe confessed, "but it's really a housing development").[8] Houses at Streamside were then priced in excess of three hundred thousand U.S. dollars and were designed primarily for families with a focus on "community values." The advertisements for Streamside Knolls distributed by the town's property manager, AVR Realty, are liberally dosed with pastoral idealism: "Step out your front door and take a deep breath. Smell the clean, crisp air. Feel the crackle of leaves and twigs under your feet. This is quintessential country living at its finest." At the time of Huyghe's initial encounter, the "crisp, clean air" was filled with the sounds of construction work. Many of the one hundred and three "country-style" residences had not yet been completed; the newly asphalted cul-de-sacs were still crisscrossed with bulldozers and the area was only half populated. In its half-finished state, Streamside Knolls resembled a fusion of the incomplete architecture of the Mediterranean and the "ready to wear" aesthetic of Celebration town.

However, it was not simply the construction-zone aesthetic of Streamside Knolls that captured Huyghe's attention. Its location in the Hudson Valley was also significant. The area was not only situated "in-between" nature and culture (as Huyghe had explained to Baker), but it was also endowed with a specific historical relation to utopia. Roughly two centuries before Huyghe's visit to the locale, this terrain around the Hudson River—and particularly the streams and forests of the Catskills—was the inspiration for the Hudson River School of painters. Founded by painter Thomas Cole in the early 1800s, the movement was one of the most influential schools of American landscape painting. Whereas Thomas Cole's early paintings were fueled by romanticism and a moral imperative to preserve "the scenic," his later works explicitly critiqued American imperialism by pitting nature against progress in allegorical compositions such as *The Course of Empire: Destruction* (1836). "In this age," Cole wrote,



Figure 5.3
Pierre Huyghe, *Streamside Day*, 35mm film and video transferred to Digi-Beta, 25', 2003. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

"when a meager utilitarianism seems ready to absorb every feeling and sentiment, and what is sometimes called improvement in its march makes us fear that the bright and tender flowers of the imagination shall all be crushed beneath its iron tramp, it would be well to cultivate the oasis that yet remains to us, and thus preserve the germs of a future and a purer system."[9] The same areas once viewed by Cole as prime for "cultivat[ing] the oasis" now constitute a portion of the most prized commercial realty available in New York State. The "country living" promised by AVR Realty was then premised on renovating the residue of a utopian dream.

The implications were not lost on Huyghe, who began his research on the Hudson Valley with these factors already in mind. In a letter penned in 2002, Nicolas Bourriaud relayed his interpretation of Huyghe's preproduction process in New York back to the artist. "Dear Pierre Huyghe," Bourriaud wrote,



Figure 5.4
Thomas Cole, *Autumn in the Catskills*, oil on panel, 18 5/8 × 25 7/16 inches, 1827. Collection Arnot Art Museum, Elmira, New York.

> You've been out on an expedition that began in early March and will last until next June, in order to collect information and experience a form of exploration. The expedition involves gathering data and at the same time inverting the cognitive mode that will format the data. The place you've chosen is neither really rural nor really urban. It is the East Coast of the United States.[10]

Huyghe's collection of data circled outward from the specific environs in which his event was to take place. Charles Fourier's models of utopian societies from the 1820s were unearthed and then recontextualized with respect to the failed integration of Fourierism in America in the 1970s.[11] Huyghe also paid a visit to Celebration town in Florida, and looked to paintings of the Hudson River movement, whose scenes of American arcadia feature prominently at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.[12]

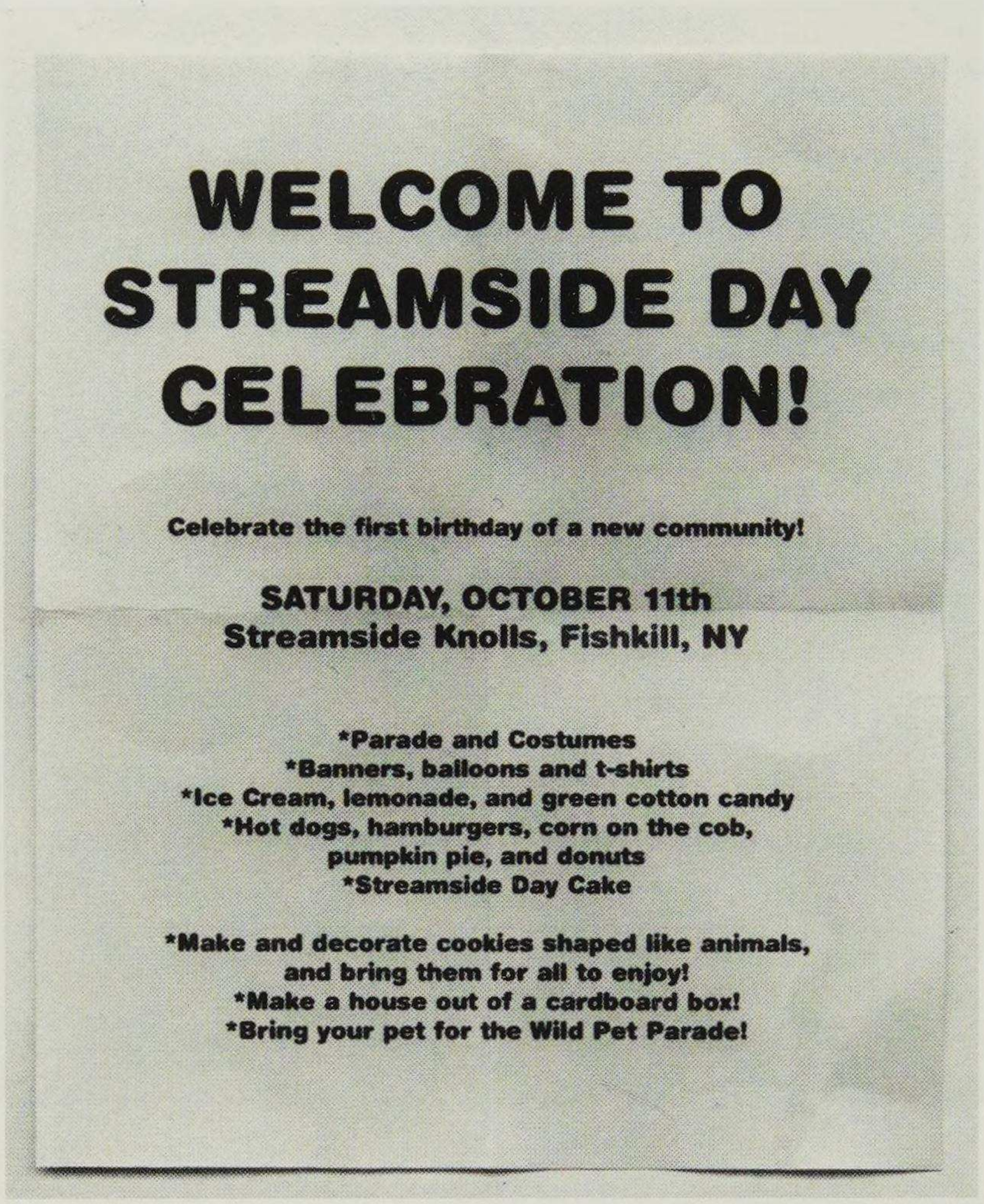


Figure 5.5
Streamside Day poster, 2003.
Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

Once he had commenced research and located his site, Huyghe put forward a proposal to the community of Streamside Knolls that he organize a festival in the town. The inaugural "community day" was to include a feast, speeches, a parade, and music. In developing the concept, Huyghe spent some time in the town meeting with locals, talking to the city council, and conferring with property developers.[13] Huyghe's proposal was approved by both commercial and residential sectors, and the Dia Art Foundation posted a public invitation to the event on the Beacon city council Web site. The notice was accompanied by Huyghe's introductory statement:

> We are in the year 01, at the beginning of a story which you are already a part of. Between the mountains and the banks of the Hudson River, a village is forming in the forest. Families are moving in, construction of streets and houses is almost complete, gardens are growing, and soon the playgrounds will be filled.[14]

The public "celebration" of this settlement process was intended to provide Huyghe with raw material for a new, quasi-documentary film. The press release stipulated that "this event will be photographed and recorded audio-visually. Your attendance will constitute your consent for the artist Pierre Huyghe and Dia Art Foundation to make use of such photographs and recordings, as they may depict you, for any purpose."

Although the festivities were billed as "free to all members of the public," turning up to Streamside Knolls on the day amounted to a waiver of image rights. On the other hand, participants were free to capture their own images of the event and, theoretically, recirculate them. Huyghe's film, *Streamside Day* (2003), which juxtaposes "documentary" footage (on digital video and S-16mm) with scripted, additional scenes, was presented in tandem with a specially engineered architectural "folly" in his New York exhibition at Dia:Chelsea in the winter of 2003.

On entering Huyghe's *Streamside Day Follies* in the pristine, spacious rooms of Dia's third floor, the gallery at first appeared empty. The only sign of Huyghe's presence was a drawing penciled on the wall opposite the entrance, a maze of string next to the figure of a young girl. Then, with a low whir and a click, the walls of the white cube began to move. Five large walls positioned around the gallery's perimeter began to advance along aluminum tracks mounted from the ceiling. Gliding steadily on preprogrammed trajectories, they curved around the edges of the connecting rooms. As the walls shifted, they exposed hidden drawings sketched out in thin, taut lines: a lake; an aerial map of a town; a parade of animals and children; a community center. Traveling away from these sketches, the moving walls turned to reveal mirrored coatings of iridescent emerald green. Reflections of the spectators were relayed as distorted, shimmering doubles in the sparkling surfaces. The walls eventually came together to form a polygonal enclosure in Dia's central room. Entering this folly through a narrow gap, spectators gathered to wait for the film to begin.

STREAMSIDE DAY: SCORE AND CELEBRATION

Streamside Day is a film in two parts. The first part, *The Score*, acts as a prelude to the second, *The Celebration*, a documentary-style portrayal of Huyghe's event at Streamside Knolls. The idea of the score and the scenario appear throughout Huyghe's works: the score is like a proposal for action or the guidelines for a future event. The scenario, on the other hand, encompasses the events or actions that unfold from the guidelines of the score (and there is more than a nod here to John



Figure 5.6-5.8
Pierre Huyghe, *Streamside Day Follies*, 5 moving walls, video projection, 35mm film and video transferred to Digi-Beta, 25', 5 color wall drawings. Installation at Dia Art Foundation, Chelsea, New York, 2003.

Cage).[15] In *Streamside Day*, the two concepts are distinguished by differences in cinematography and direction. Whereas *The Score* takes the form of a progressive, scripted narrative, the footage of *The Celebration* is based on improvisation and inspired by the random encounters of the day at Streamside Knolls. The two parts of the film are bridged by an intricately layered sound track, whose production was outsourced by Huyghe.[16] Spanning the entirety of the film's twenty-six minutes, the audio track serves to both heighten narrative tension and complement (rather than counter) the images on screen.

The Score opens in the half-light of dawn. Under a forest canopy, woodland animals venture forth into an idyllic realm: a rabbit, an owl, a fawn, and a raccoon. The fawn drinks from a clear stream, oblivious to the camera.[17] Cut from the woodlands to the suburbs and a Bambi look-alike wanders down an urban driveway to enter a new, empty residence, her hooves clicking quietly across the linoleum floor. Outside on the street, a group of apathetic kids play house with cardboard boxes. We join a family in a car, speeding out of the city down the highway toward the Hudson Valley. Their journey is intercut with brief, scripted scenes: in a field, twin children stand dwarfed by two massive, monsterlike trees; a swarm of bees gathers in the forest. "That's our house right there," says one girl, pointing to a miniature architectural model on a table in an otherwise empty room. Arriving in the town, the family unpacks its belongings, littering the street with discarded boxes.

Curator Lynne Cooke described this opening narrative as a "mythic kernel"; in Huyghe's words it was a "wildlife documentary that turns into a fable."[18] In the film, the transformation of documentary into fable is introduced with an intertitle—*The Celebration*. A fire engine, cars, and buses roll slowly into town, followed by a procession of revelers dressed in makeshift costumes and cardboard boxes. "The tree and the cardboard box," Huyghe has explained, "are the signs of this [new] tradition, just as a pumpkin stands in for Halloween."[19] The parade reenacts the settlement process, a ritual performance of incorporation. "Welcome to Streamside Day," the poster reads. Children in animal masks—similar to those featured in Huyghe's *La Toison d'or*—wander the streets like zombies. The sound track is saccharine, like an ice cream van jingle gone awry. Police watch from the sidelines, their faces lit by the flashing lights of emergency services. All dialogue is muffled. On a stage in front of an almost empty town square, the mayor begins her speech: "A great community spirit is starting," she announces, her audience distracted by the commencing feast nearby. Guests navigate through tables laden with "traditional" settler's fare, including corn bread, fairy bread, and a Streamside Day cake, heaping their paper plates with food. As the sky darkens, a fake moon rises above the houses like a giant balloon. A young man takes to the stage with an acoustic guitar; in front of a few idle spectators, he sings a folk song, described



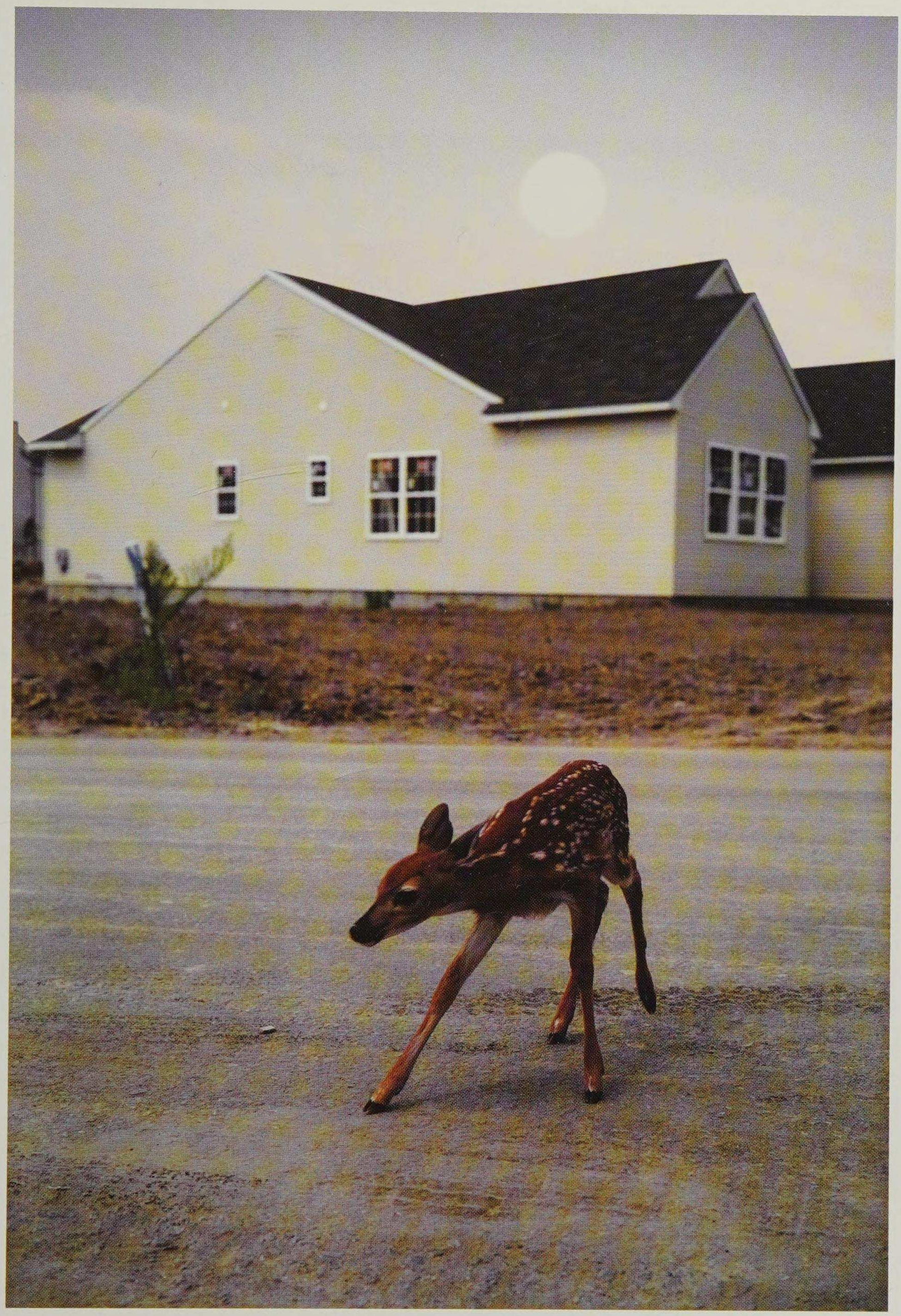


Figure 5.9–5.11
Pierre Huyghe, *Streamside Day*, 35mm film and video transferred to Digi-Beta, 25', 2003. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.



by Huyghe as "the hymn of the event": *a flower blossom, raising through the falling leaves, the day's just begun, light through the trees, this is the same light that falls in dreams. It's a Streamside Celebration.*[20] The tune is at once unbearably kitschy and strangely sincere, like a Julee Cruise song in a David Lynch movie.[21] As the day comes to a close and the town is left empty, the camera scans streets strewn with debris. Two moons—the full moon and Huyghe's inflatable balloon moon—hang lightly in the dusk. The fake moon flickers out and is pulled back down to earth. When the moonlight is doused, the walls of the screening enclosure immediately start to move. As the shelter breaks apart, the mirrored panels return to the gallery perimeter before the cycle begins once more.

In her *New York Times* review of *Streamside Day Follies*, critic Roberta Smith responded to Huyghe's work with ambivalence. The installation was paradoxically described as both "irksomely lightweight" and a "thought-provoking symptom of



Figures 5.12–5.13
Pierre Huyghe, *Streamside Day*, 35mm film and video transferred to Digi-Beta, 25', 2003. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

the art of the moment"—a moment that for Smith appeared synonymous with relational aesthetics. "*Streamside Day Follies*," she wrote, "is a prime example of the people-oriented, pop-culture conscious but still theory-driven branch of late Conceptualism that is sometimes called Relational Aesthetics."[22] Smith's biggest gripe was with the ambiguity of Huyghe's message. Evincing a preference for *The Third Memory*'s pedagogy to the "weak," "amorphous sociological musing" of *Streamside Day*, Smith construed the ambiguity of the piece as passive-reactionary. Huyghe was a "relational practitioner," Smith claimed, who encouraged both "artists and viewers to dwell in a passive, pop-culture zone where the rigors and realities of both making art and changing the world can be endlessly deferred." Smith naturalized a set of values that are in themselves historically determined, first assuming an unproblematic relation between deference and passivity and then (wrongly) implying that the production of art is somehow outside of popular culture, in a separate space full of rigor and reality. The review was, however, right about the ambiguity of Huyghe's work. Clearly, the project was neither an eco-conscious critique of urban sprawl nor a deadpan celebration of a new Arcadia. It was in precisely this disavowal of a visible agenda that I would locate the real strength of Huyghe's exhibition. As with *No Ghost Just a Shell*, Huyghe's play between an event and its history was critical: the form of operation, or its *mécanique*—the way that the piece behaved—carried the real substance of Huyghe's project.

It was from here, too, that the work's performance of sincerity was generated. There is a very particular relation, I suggest, between sincerity, utopia, and freed time in Huyghe's practice. By definition, sincerity eradicates facades: it is against the screen and on the side of "truth." Like the unfinished architecture of the Mediterranean basin, sincerity necessitates exposure and thus remains open to the potentials of risk. It is frequently perceived as a quality that cannot be manufactured but must be felt. However, if sincerity was once synonymous with an authenticity performed by the external display of internal emotion, in recent years this display has been codified to the point of potential replication. Sincerity has now been visualized. It is recognizable in the mise-en-scène of an event, a performance, or a film. As Jane Taylor has noted, "the concept of the 'sincere' masks its own discursive specificity and situates a particular set of assumptions about affect and truth as outside of cultural and political parameters."[23] A contradiction then emerges between sincerity as a performance and a projection's perceived link with the insincere. This contradiction disables the assumption that sincerity must exceed rationalization (because unadulterated) and therefore cannot identify itself (or, in Taylor's words, "anywhere sincerity names itself it ceases to exist"). In Huyghe's *Streamside Day*, the visual signs of insincerity are abundant. Faces are covered in masks and bodies cloaked in costume, while the story itself

unfolds through borrowed iconography (visions of a Disneyland Arcadia as filtered through the conventions of both Hollywood cinema and nineteenth-century landscape painting). Huyghe's tale resounds in clichés. What is then intriguing is that the sincerity of the piece persists, despite or perhaps because of its projective dimension. Its presence is registered as an element that exceeds recognition, a quality that belongs properly to no place and points toward utopia.

FROM UTOPIA STATIONS TO VISIONS OF EMPIRE

Although the visible signs of utopia in *Streamside Day* were replayed in Huyghe's incorporation of Hudson Valley-style pastoral iconography and iconographic references to a lost Eden, what is more interesting—and more significant—about this work is the series of ruptures it introduced within the construct of utopia itself. In order to understand the importance of these ruptures, it is necessary to take a brief detour through utopia's difficult history. The idea of utopia developed out of Thomas More's proposal for an ideal society, as outlined in his fictional work *Utopia* (1516). Since its inception, utopia has acquired numerous connotations—etymologically it means a "non-place," but the term has also been used to refer variously to arcadia, a return to a Garden of Eden, and as a signpost toward alternate realities. Utopia has also accumulated numerous pejorative connotations, particularly as a dismissal of less-than-pragmatic proposals for societal reinvention and as an index of totalitarianism.[24] Crucially, however, in its many guises utopia consistently reacts to present conditions in order to envisage alternate possibilities. It is this properly temporal aspect of utopia that resonates most closely with Huyghe's work, and one that distinguishes his engagement with utopia from that of other artists and curators who have been redefining utopian tropes in recent years.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, utopia became something of a curatorial catchphrase. The trend seemingly reached its zenith at the launch of the exhibition "Utopia Station" at the 2003 Venice Biennale. Curated by Molly Nesbit, Rirkrit Tiravanija, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Utopia Station" was designed both as a group show and as the first of an ongoing accumulation of "way stations" gathered around a loose affiliation of events, books, posters, ideas, and artworks. Looking back at the list of participants assembled for the exhibition, one might surmise that notions of utopia were *the* dominant concern for the majority of contemporary artists and art collectives (from the United States to Ukraine to Switzerland). But this would be, I think, a mistake. The large majority of contributions to "Utopia Station" were designed purposely for the project, and most were molded to fit

a specific aesthetic format: the poster. As the curatorial statement instructed: "Each present and future contributor to the Station is being asked to do a poster for use in the Station and beyond: wherever it can hang, it can go."[25]

The poster medium may have been selected for its capacity to index the signs of revolution (links to constructivism, the posters of 1968, or the Cuban Revolution), but as Susan Sontag noted in 1970, "Posters are not public notices. A public notice aims to inform or command. A poster aims to seduce, to exhort, to sell, to educate, to convince."[26] For Sontag, the poster was synonymous with the advertisement, in its aim to brand a specific cause. In the press release for "Utopia Station," Obrist, Tiravanija, and Nesbit positioned their project as a reaction to the political aftermath of the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. Specifically, the curators presented the exhibition as a partial response to President George W. Bush's address to a group of American cadets in 2002. "America," President Bush declared, "has no empire to extend or utopia to establish."[27] However, refusing a name is not the same as dismantling a paradigm, and Bush's subsequent handling of the invasion of Iraq in the media was rapidly shored up by frequent recourse to both empire-building and utopian rhetoric. In 2004, in a conversation with American journalist Ron Suskind, one of President Bush's senior advisers remarked,

> We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality—judiciously, as you will—we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors, and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.[28]

Nesbit, Tiravanija, and Obrist seemed to take literally Bush's disavowal of utopia, and parried with this question: "What is this refusal of utopia, the concept that presumes forward social vision?"[29] Many artists and thinkers have for decades been charting the fallout of utopia-as-failure, and raising the stakes of utopia's continued relevance in the process. How, then, are we to navigate the impacted history of utopian discourse, in order to better understand its malleable—some might argue irredeemably tainted—complexion?

CONSTITUTIVE AND PATHOLOGICAL UTOPIAS

One signpost can be found in the writings of French theorist Paul Ricoeur. In his lectures on utopia and ideology, Ricoeur offered a useful distinction between what he described as pathological and constitutive utopias. It is the "pathological"

element of utopia that motivates critics to scorn—utopia hangs on the precipices of dreams; it is impossible, unrealizable, idealistic, totalitarian, and, worst of all, dangerously escapist. However, according to Ricoeur, it is still possible to salvage from this discursive wreckage some potentially productive attributes. It is not necessary to banish the prospect of hope in the name of realism. By definition, utopia cannot be realized. Once this is accepted, two repercussions arise: anything that is realizable elides classification as utopian and, as a failed state, the impact of a utopian model is long-term in that it speaks to both the future and the present in a reactive tone. A constitutive utopia is then properly historical in that it always spins off a context and angles toward an as-yet-unrealized moment. Being very precisely situated against "that which actually is," a constitutive utopia is hypothetically able to investigate seriously "that which is not" and transmute it into a proposal for "that which could be."[30]

For hegemonic stability, this spells trouble, although perhaps not precisely the kind of trouble suggested by Theodor Adorno in his ruminations on utopian imaginings in 1964. In a conversation with Ernst Bloch, Adorno insisted that,

> whatever can be imagined as utopia, this is the transformation of the totality. And the imagination of such a transformation of the totality is basically very different in all the so-called utopian accomplishments—which, incidentally, are all really like you say: very modest, very narrow. It seems to me that what people have lost subjectively in regard to consciousness is very simply the capability to imagine the totality as something that could be completely different.[31]

Although Adorno's conception of utopia as the transformation of a totality is historically grounded, his observation grates against the pathological components of the utopian imaginary that are geared toward manufacturing a replacement totality. If acknowledging the pathological dimension of utopia is crucial—and I believe it is—then the "utopian accomplishments" of the twentieth century appear neither as modest nor narrow, as Adorno asserts, but can rather be said to encompass all proposals for alternate realities, regardless of their ideological stance.

Is it then possible to rescue utopia from the clutches of both idealism and totalitarianism and reinstate it as an inflection of indefinite possibility? More to the point, is this desirable? Clearly, Huyghe's utilization of utopia is in sharp contrast to the generative utopias of More, Charles Fourier, or even Marx and Engels in that it is not based on an "ought." There is no "should" or "must" delineated by Huyghe's work. It is not prescriptive. It is about preserving a sense of potential. I distinguish here between "utopia" and "utopian." The term "utopian" signals a commitment to the realization of a utopia, a refusal to submit to its necessary

relationship to failure. A utopia, on the other hand, is a non-place: a fiction, a radical break in time. A proposal of this quality leaves a residue of "something other": the possibility of the "not yet made" or the "not yet spoken." It is the stuff of desires and of science fiction. It constitutes a state of deferral, meaning that it is always extinguished at the moment of realization.

This is precisely the kind of deferral that so perturbed Roberta Smith in her appraisal of Huyghe's work at Dia. The utopian quality of *Streamside Day Follies* was in opposition to the utopias engaged by the Hudson River School of painters, in that, unlike the paintings of Cole and company, Huyghe's utopia was not predicated on reaching a state of holistic completion. Nor did it look backward to the Garden of Eden as a model for the future. His work was located in time and space: it was anthropologically and socially grounded. But it also partook in a mythmaking process: the construction of a fable, the inauguration of a festival. In playing up these dimensions in *Streamside Day Follies,* I suggest that Huyghe was taking advantage of established concepts of utopia in order to think through a fold in time.

This hypothesis may also explain, in part, Huyghe's interest in festivals and events. The time fold has a particular resonance with the temporal constitution of the festival. Festivals, as Mikhail Bakhtin observed, are time-markers, generated from a composite of sanctions and disavowals between hegemonies and the microdoctrines of communities. Bakhtin described the carnival as a temporary, periodic window of opportunity during which the participants might draw on "unofficial" or "wild" knowledge to stage an inversion of "official" culture.[32] Although the temporal and spatial locations of Huyghe's festival were important, the event itself could be said to have taken place in a time between times, a quality that is actually proper to the temporal constitution of both utopias and festivals. Moreover, as critical theorist Renate Lachmann notes, the appearance of these tropes in carnival rituals is "not actually directed against institutions, whose functions and forms are only usurped for one period of time, but rather against the loss of utopian potential brought about by dogma and authority."[33] The festival or celebration, Lachmann writes, "which is not aimed at work and production and produces only itself, also releases this utopian potential."[34]

Although Lachmann's scope is admittedly a little broad for my purposes, it acquires significance when we realize that Huyghe designed the celebration at Streamside Knolls as an ongoing project. It was intended to be an inauguration of a custom or tradition and not a one-off event. His hope was that the residents themselves would take up the notion of Streamside Day and continue it annually, "like Halloween," he suggested. However, the difference between Huyghe's new tradition and that of Halloween is that the historical foundations of rituals

such as Halloween—or Christmas or Easter—have almost entirely been elided by their commercial packaging. As Huyghe remarked, "We used to import goods, now we import traditions."[35] The Streamside celebration, on the other hand, was an invented custom designed for export. Instead of waiting for the imposition of the commentary, Huyghe manufactured his own image of the event, and provided a prefabricated set of emblems for its occurrence (the cardboard box, the light balloon, the theme song). In the gallery, the image of the event was spread across the installation—across the drawings, the film, and the mobility of the space of itself—as a means of generating a third commentary.

Although several pathways of analysis are available from here, two can be isolated for their immediate significance. Both are concerned with time. The first turns around the relation between commodities and historical knowledge, as encapsulated in this observation by the sociopolitical collective Retort: "Once upon a time what commodities promised was the future, above all. Now a whole (dominant) class of them exists to invent a history, a lost time of togetherness and stability, that everyone claims to remember but no one quite had."[36] It is only a short step, Retort argues, from the invention of founding narratives to the "nostalgia for the present"—"the stylised display of the latest fashions and accessories as if they already possessed the glamour of the outdated."[37] Although Retort is highly suspicious of this nostalgic turn, perhaps it need not be jettisoned so quickly. Its value depends on what kind of present is at stake. If we think of the present, as Retort seemingly does, as an eternal now, then the perpetuation of the present is undesirable, infected as it is with the potential for amnesia and the erasure of historical context. On the other hand, if we apply Retort's observation to the "open present"—the present that bends the thresholds of temporal continuity—how does the nostalgic turn hold up? To what extent, in other words, can Huyghe's model of the open present be said to sustain nostalgia? Or, to narrow the field of inquiry, how does nostalgia figure in Huyghe's exhibition at Dia?

Nostalgia is a knotty emotion. As architectural historian Nathaniel Coleman has noted, the term derives "from the Greek *nostos*, a return, combined with the Greek *algos*, pain and *algien*, to feel pain. Nostalgia is also akin to the Swiss-German *Heimweh* or homesickness, which is the original meaning of nostalgia. Taken together, these terms denote an intense longing for a home."[38] This definition links nostalgia to the idea of a traumatic return rather than to a passive sentimentality regarding the past. Under these terms, it would be almost impossible for nostalgia to survive in the "eternal present" if it is both predicated on that which once was and on the painful impossibility of return. The idea of "nostalgia for utopia" is then inherently paradoxical: in their temporal disjunctions, one term vetoes the other. However, if we pair nostalgia with the idea of *constitutive* utopia—which

has no place but is always generated as a historically determined reaction, which is both full of potential and yet is destroyed at the moment of its realization—we return to the circle of frustrated desire linked earlier with Annlee.

Streamside Knolls is a community predicated on replaying the past (evinced by its eco-tourist focus and adherence to "tradition," similar to that touted by Celebration town), but it is situated in a physical environment whose founding narrative is already defunct. Indeed, the town's very presence guarantees the interpolation of the past within a nostalgic frame. At the junction of this paradox, Huyghe established a new custom ("We are in the year 01," he wrote, "in a story you are already a part of"). In the gallery at Dia, the colonization was replayed *ad nauseam* and encountered achronologically (the spectator could enter the narrative at any time). The installation was finally pitched as the antecedent of prior art historical narratives—particularly the spatio-sculptural work of artists such as Dan Graham, for example, whose permanent pavilion on the roof at Dia was situated directly above Huyghe's temporary enclosure. Huyghe put this slightly differently:

> If artists in the 1960s and the '70s used to deal with this idea of event, performance, action—Kaprow, for instance—the representation of the event was not incorporated into the conception of the project. But now things have changed, and ultimately representation or images [have become] more important than real events. We can see this with the current war, we can witness the way the media twists an event, the way representation is dictating the event. Today, an event, its image, and its commentary have become one object.[39]

The sentiment is already familiar from Huyghe's earlier writings: it was present even at the time of *Through* in the mid-1990s. But it is from this perceived implosion between an event, an image, and its commentary that the second, properly art historical, avenue of inquiry unfolds.

In a 2004 article in *Artforum*, critic David Joselit begins his analysis of *Streamside Day Follies* by mounting a comparison between the "closed circuit" video works of the 1970s and the more common trope of "projection" in video installations from the 1990s onward. The delayed information circuits of 1970s video installations—such as those in works by Peter Campus, Bruce Nauman, and Joan Jonas, for example—have, according to Joselit, given way to a "more conventionally theatrical mode of spectatorship in which the audience remains outside the media feedback loop rather than participating as actors within it."[40] Joselit establishes his argument by first identifying formal tendencies and then subjecting them to a compare-and-contrast analysis. That these tendencies broach both the physical apparatus of display and the mode of narrative presentation is

justified by Joselit's focus on "sorting various aesthetic works according to historically specific notions of surface and space."[41]

This methodology permits Joselit to align the spectatorship demanded by contemporary video projection with that of Hollywood cinema and, somewhat surprisingly, modernist paintings. All three media, according to Joselit, promote a smooth, "planar" narrative, an image splashed across a surface that seems in opposition to the "interactive" qualities of earlier, closed-circuit video installations ("in video projection," the critic writes, "the viewer is made more passive both in her consumption of spectacular imagery and in her ability to intervene within the space of the screen").[42] But the passivity of spectatorship is swiftly problematized once Joselit concedes that video projections (or, more particularly, spatialized multiprojections by artists such as Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Doug Aitken, and Isaac Julien) are also capable of "undermining any illusion of coherent action" and may "disrupt a viewer's smooth absorption within a narrative."[43] Despite these "disruptions," Joselit persists in equating projection with a "loss of access," a somewhat troubling alliance because of its implicit presumption that spectatorship is determined by the medium and the mode of presentation, and as such remains unaffected by the viewer's kinaesthetic negotiation of disparate elements in any given work.

Pierre Huyghe's *Streamside Day Follies* is then of primary significance to Joselit "because it spans the antinomies of closed-circuit video and video projection and therefore offers an opportunity to evaluate the current status and potential of video sculpture."[44] This "potential" is, apparently, generated by Huyghe's pairing of a single-channel video projection with a mobile sculptural frame. For Joselit, the appeal of the juxtaposition rests on its capacity to sustain standardized formalist art historical discourse: *Streamside Day Follies* is "useful" because it is regarded as a discursive bridge that allows the modernist notion of the enclosed work of art to talk to the open text of postmodernism. But Joselit's statement is far from satisfactory: What, exactly, is the potential of "video sculpture," for example, and to what ends? Who presides over the possibility of that potential? And is Huyghe's work really a "video sculpture"? Nam June Paik may be said to have made video sculptures; Tony Oursler *does* make video sculptures; and the ZKM Centre for Art and Media in Karlsruhe held a major exhibition in 2003 called "Sculpture in Video," which was designed to push the definition of both video and sculpture—but I would not recommend tagging Huyghe's work with this label. Besides the fact that *Streamside Day* was predominantly shot on super-16mm film, and the projected image was only one part of Huyghe's architectural environment, attempting to fit the work into a bracket of "video sculpture" is problematic in three respects: it risks perpetuating the screen's

overestimated significance in the validation of an event; it groups Huyghe's work with that of other unrelated artists on the basis of media; and it downplays the project's conceptual engagement with utopia.

At this juncture, it would be tempting to jettison Joselit's ideas if it were not for a brief addendum to this article—also published in *Artforum*—in which Joselit's argument both picks up speed and heads in another direction altogether. In this essay, entitled "Commanding View," Joselit approaches Huyghe's work as a retort to the "blank vision" of media reportage, particularly that of journalists in Baghdad at the inception of the Iraq invasion in 2003. "The strangest image of combat in Iraq," Joselit writes, "was also the most normal: the virtually unchanging view of a Baghdad streetscape recorded from the hotel where most Western journalists were headquartered."[45] Unable to move, or disclose either their position or anything of substance about the events unfolding outside the walls of their media bunker, the journalists reported on the bombardment of Baghdad with an "unblinking eye" that registered "little more than an occasional flash in the sky." Traces of Jean Baudrillard's critique of the first Gulf War (1990–1991) are evident throughout Joselit's article, as is the suggestion that images—particularly televised images, in their capacity as projections—have a responsibility toward inflecting the complexity of events.[46] But whereas Baudrillard saw the media's conflation of the event with image as a side effect of the society of simulacra—leading to his infamous characterization of the first Gulf War as "bloodless"—Joselit argues that attention to both *the way in which the camera behaves* and where it is placed can combat the "blindness" of contemporary imperialism. "Blank vision," Joselit explains,

> in which little knowledge is gained but where time accumulates *ad nauseam*, is one of the most virulent tactics of contemporary imperialism . . . this sort of panoptic vision, which sees only itself wherever it goes, is one of imperialism's premier methods of neutralizing resistance, by wishing otherness away. The embedded eyes that broadcast this war deployed a type of violence just as real as the bombs they so often didn't record.[47]

The suggestion that both "imperialism" and the media's handling of the Iraq war are or were monocular is difficult to support. The media coverage of Iraq in 2003 and 2004 was quite different from that of the first Gulf War in 1991, during which the American network CNN was the only major news outlet to provide twenty-four-hour coverage of the conflict. And although the very large majority of foreign journalists in Iraq in 2003 were embedded, alternate media outlets were available. Witness the broadcasts of Al Jazeera, Indymedia, and Alternet, or alternately the

blogs, pictures, and clips produced by both Americans and Iraqis for dissemination on the Internet. How, then, to reconcile the presence of these conflicting perspectives with Joselit's claim that Iraqis were absent from the screen, or that media footage of the invasion was presented in a format similar to Warhol's 1964 film *Empire*? "Maybe if we had seen a few Iraqis on the screen," Joselit writes, "or even a blink of the eye, this immoral war would have begun to erode sooner."[48] The question here is: which screen? By the time his article was published, even American military commanders were aware of the difficulty of controlling the media's perspective on the war, or regulating the overflow from soldiers' private archives into the domain of the Web.[49]

Despite these reservations, I still support Joselit's insistence on the need to foreground "the particularity and contingency of the camera's position at the moment of recording and the projector's location at the moment of presentation."[50] I also agree with Joselit's suggestion that Huyghe's work at Dia was attentive to the conditioning of perspective. Huyghe's layering of image, event, installation, and proposal did indeed prize apart the conflation of image, event, and related commentary that is perpetuated within certain media circuits. But Huyghe's project was not solely designed to highlight the contingencies of camera position or projection space: the work also deliberately incorporates protofilmic and postfilmic elements. With "protofilmic" I refer not only to the prior staging of the event itself but also to the work's capacity to respond to both the particularities of the institution (the Dia Art Foundation's affiliation with land art and earth works in the 1970s and its preference toward commissioning permanent structures) and the history of the material placed in front of the lens (the Hudson Valley and the discursive permutations of utopia). By postfilmic, I refer to Huyghe's incorporation of postproduction possibilities: the continuation of a narrative beyond the moment that the camera stops recording or the projector is turned off. Instead, then, of subscribing to Joselit's suggestion that "the media eye wake up and move around a bit," perhaps it is more important to remember that the screen has its limits and that there is time beyond screen time. If, to quote Huyghe, "an event, its image, and its commentary have become one object," then questioning this conflation is critical, as is taking responsibility for locating its blind spots.[51] The "media eye" is not the only window onto the world, and neither is the camera necessarily the most efficient tool for gesturing toward the histories of the material placed in front of the lens or the contingencies of the space in which the image is presented (two concerns already addressed by Huyghe's earlier work, *Les Incivils*). We then need to go back a little further in time to find the precedents for *Streamside Day*. We need to return, I suggest, to Robert Smithson's work with non-sites in the 1970s.

NON-SIGHTS AND NON-SITES: ROBERT SMITHSON AND PIERRE HUYGHE

When Dennis Oppenheim asked Robert Smithson to elaborate on his concept of the non-site in 1973, Smithson replied, "It is a map that will take you somewhere, but when you get there you won't really know where you are. In a sense, the non-site is the center of the system, and the site itself is the fringe or the edge."[52] Huyghe has learned much from Smithson's site work. *Streamside Day Follies* could even be described as both a non-site, as in a non-place (not the location where the material was gathered), and a "non-sight," because, as Smithson noted of his own work, "in seeing it one is not seeing the site/sight to which it refers. We are not there, and we are not seeing it, we are reconstructing the inability to see."[53] Although Huyghe does not share Smithson's belief in the possibility of making work at the "fringe" (Huyghe described his own work as "no longer in the middle of nowhere, no longer subject to this fascination of the Earth artists with the empty desert"),[54] there are formidable similarities between the artists' philosophies. Smithson's writings and artworks were consistently marked by a deep passion and sensitivity for the workings of time. As an advocate of both "mirror trails" and vertiginous perspectives, Smithson referred frequently to both "time crystals" and the "forking paths" of Borgesian time in his interviews, essays, and individual projects.[55] He also consistently sought to find material equivalences for temporal displacements and was particularly interested in representations of "pre-history," entropy, and the paleolithic—representations that emerged in the crystallization of temporal pockets.

Moreover, in both Smithson's and Huyghe's work, the dialectic of vision and blindness is always complicated by historical perspective. In describing his working process in 1970, Smithson spoke of a diachronic movement across seemingly incommensurable periods of time:

> I take a map from pre-history, and then map it out on an area. In the non-sites, the material would be subtracted from this ground, digging out the material. Then you might also have mirrors. This kind of material goes back and forth through photographs, back to some kind of rectangular setting. So you have this context set up, you have a set of viable limits which can just expand indefinitely, like a ratio system, but within it you can do all kinds of different things. Once that is established, a lot of different people can move in and do their thing.[56]

Parallels with Huyghe's methodology are striking. Consider, for example, Smithson's "map from pre-history" as a partial corollary to Huyghe's engagement with

the Hudson Valley site, or compare Smithson's use of mirrors (as a means of moving material "back and forth") to the mirrored walls of Huyghe's *Streamside Day Follies* or the projection of Huyghe's event through an echo chamber of formats (drawings, film, festival, architecture). And although Smithson spoke of "excavating" the imposed map of prehistory while Huyghe considers his activity on site as a "founding gesture," both artists work with the chains of presentation-representation-presentation as a means of referencing something that can be imagined, but that does not have an image (a non-sight, a utopia, a temporal rupture).

There are, however, distinctions between Huyghe's philosophies and Smithson's, and two in particular are crucial. The first is related to narrative structures; the second to the relation between "inside" and "outside." In *Streamside Day*, Huyghe's deployment of an easily recognizable narrative format is bisected by his interest in rituals. "Capitalism," Huyghe has written, "is based on rituals; it needs stories to be told in order to exist . . . in a consumer society the place of the product and the stories you tell around it are actually what make the product the product":[57] hence, images are equated with captions; objects are marketed as lifestyle choices. Smithson's focus was different, and was actually closer to the kind of historical materialism at work in Huyghe's earlier pieces, particularly *Les Incivils*, where the film extended to encompass the landscape and the histories of its residents.

Although the "stories" told in Smithson's work can be seen to have a ritualistic component in their demarcation of procedure and repeated gestures, Smithson also seemed to assume that certain materials are naturally conducive for signaling particular (symbolic or philosophical) intentions. Salt, crystals, basalt, ice, mud, mirrors, tar: in Smithson's works, the hermeneutics of these elements are partially embedded in their actual physical structures, as if on a molecular level. But "salt" and "crystals" and "mirrors" also function as symbols in a pantheon of Smithson's own invention, a pantheon that also includes time, entropy, and history. The meaning of Smithson's forms, in other words, is not carried solely by their distribution, or by the stories woven around the forms. In contrast, when Huyghe speaks of stories replacing and determining products, he does not exclude his own works from this process. The invented mythology of Streamside or Huyghe's continuous regulation of slogans, logos, and signs (Annlee) react to and are engendered by flows between narratives and objects. The "myths" in Huyghe's works are narrative strategies or ways of telling stories that demonstrate the relation of speaking subject to the subject—not as a means of sidestepping power relations but as a way to engender feedback loops within a given system.

The second difference between Huyghe's and Smithson's philosophies touches on distinctions between inside and outside. Whereas Smithson sought to disturb the alignment of his exhibited material with its sites of origin, Huyghe

complicates Smithson's vision of incompatibility (non-sights) by suggesting that inside and outside might be folded. One clear example of this can be found in Huyghe and Roche's proposal for the community center at Streamside Knolls. The "center"—to be co-designed by Roche and Huyghe as a permanent structure for the town's residents—was to serve as a physical, ongoing reminder of the event's induction into the community. Huyghe outlined two possible scenarios for the building: the first characterized the structure as a "breathing organism," whose specificity "lies in its faculty to react to the community's own ability to celebrate its own existence."[58] Huyghe and Roche intended for the hall to be accessible only "on the occasion of the celebration, as in certain clockwork mechanisms."[59] The second synopsis envisaged the hall as located outside the town in the center of the forest: "forest of myths, of origins, playing out the complexity between what is within, without, on the edge, in various movements. One must imagine a portion of territory in a cage, not like a zoo but like a place where the animals within are the same as those without, although domesticated."[60] Huyghe's equivalences between humans and fauna, the forest and the town, break down distinctions between natural and artificial. Huyghe suggests that although there is a border around the cage, inside and outside are both constructed and interchangeable.

The dialectic rather than the dualistic treatment of these concepts follows a pattern familiar from Huyghe's approach to the relation between "reality" and "fiction": a relation also addressed in the two-part structure of *Streamside Day* (score and celebration). The community center—designed to embody these complexities—was described as "a fold" (we can recall Huyghe's interest in Deleuze's and Leibniz's writings on the subject) and was to be located in the forest "between a here and now situation and a naturalist artificial construct."[61] In the installation at Dia, this intention was represented by the tangled maze penciled next to the door. The cyclical trajectory of the event's possible return was echoed in the continued construction and deconstruction of the temporary screening room at the center of the gallery. For a certain period—the time of the film—the gallery became "the outside" while the enclosure sustained an artificial interior.

When Huyghe speaks of manufacturing a territory in a cage where the animals inside and outside are both the same, he is in effect referring to systems of knowledge and hierarchies of perception. The cage is like a format: a cliché or a frame already produced that is validated by re-presentation. The territory is the intervention within that format, the laws of arrangement that determine the format's behavior. The contrast between wild and domestic fauna relates directly to Huyghe's distinction between wild and domestic knowledge. Huyghe has on several occasions spoken of his preference for knowledge that resists formatting. In conversation with Hans Ulrich Obrist in 2002, Huyghe stated:

I find that knowledge is something which is often domesticated. Thinking that manages to escape domestication is rare. Ways of thinking that don't get formatted interest me. When I say "wild," I mean something for which you can't make an image. Knowledge gets smoothed out because it has to be transmitted. As soon as the knowledge goes through a format, it becomes domesticated. Wild knowledge can't easily be categorized.[62]

Huyghe expresses regret for the smoothing out of rough structures and insists on the need to preserve the irresolution of an idea. Philippe Parreno has articulated a similar concern, admitting that the projects he is most interested in are those that brim over "either because they contain many more ideas than forms, or many more forms than ideas. These are moments of irresolution, moments of imbalance which continue to fascinate me. In fact, I am much more interested in proceedings."[63] Huyghe's interest in "wild knowledge" is similarly invested. Although "wild knowledge" may not be locatable, its presence is registered in Huyghe's practice through the concept of freed time and through utopia.

Freed time—as a proposal for unproductive time and as a temporal threshold—can be regarded as a response to the totalizing presence of the "cage." Utopia, on the other hand, signals the nonlocatable quality of potential: its function is similar to the desire and the deference generated by *No Ghost Just a Shell*. In Huyghe's work, both freed time and utopia are kept in a state of continuous construction. This is why, I suggest, Huyghe and Roche did not actually build the community center: this physical irresolution is what Huyghe meant when he distinguished between the spatial permanence of *Spiral Jetty*, as a physical monument, and the *temporal* permanence of the ritual in Streamside's future, which remains a rough idea: a memory of a sketch on a New York gallery wall.

Huyghe's exhibition at Dia closed on January 11, 2004. Before the installation was dismantled, Huyghe had already initiated another project that elaborated on the relation between inside and outside, sites and non-sites. This project was undertaken as a commission for the Castello di Rivoli, in Turin, as offered to Huyghe by curator Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev. The new work was to complement Huyghe's first solo retrospective exhibition, held at the Castello from April 21 to July 18, 2004. As with his project for the Dia Art Foundation, Huyghe intended to design a site-specific event as the basis of this commission. Unlike the Streamside Day festival, however, this event was not intended to be repeated, and it was completed on the grounds of the castle itself. Huyghe approached the site of his event by turning first toward its past associations: in this case, the symbolic and social histories of the institution itself.

CASTLES IN THE AIR: HUYGHE'S RETROSPECTIVE AT CASTELLO DI RIVOLI

For over five hundred years, the Castello di Rivoli has been locked in a near perpetual cycle of construction and restoration. Located on a hilltop overlooking the Susa valley and the town of Rivoli, the site was originally home to a medieval castle. In 1693, the castle was torched by invading French troops and partially destroyed. This act was the first in a series of destructions and reconstructions that lasted for three centuries and ceased only in 1978, when the regional council of Piedmont affirmed a proposal for the building as the region's first museum of contemporary art. The baroque grandeur of the original structure was to be restored, and complemented with new "white cube" additions. This proposal was the first in the building's architectural history ever to be brought to fruition.

In planning his exhibition, Huyghe spoke extensively with Christov-Bakargiev about the history of the site and the building. Their conversation ranged from haunted castles to gothic romance, from light spaces through dark cubes to processions and rituals. Huyghe's work at the castle was to touch on all these things. Christov-Bakargiev wrote: "In traditional popular culture, castles are haunted, possessed by the ghosts of past lives. . . . Huyghe imagined what the boundaries of the Castello would be like if they were more malleable and fragile, more open and reactive to what goes on in the 'outside world.'"[64] This imaginary scenario expanded into a desire to "explore the relationships between outside and inside the institution, the castle on top of the hill and the life around and below it." Christov-Bakargiev suggested that "this development connected more readily with Huyghe's commitment to celebrating daily experience and to exploring how fiction can generate a new reality, rather than disempowering and alienating individuals in the realm of virtuality."[65] The form that was to represent these concerns was a paper balloon, a replica of one of the Castello's internal gallery spaces that could float through the air, through the streets to the castle. The "balloon/parachute" was, in Christov-Bakargiev's words, "both a metaphor of the space of the museum and a real box in a gallery space, a phantom rising out of the space, like a memory or an intention."[66]

When I first encountered this phantom structure, it was in its incarnation as a gateway into Huyghe's exhibition on the third floor of the Castello. Stationed outside the entrance to the show was a security guard, who requested that I remove my shoes. Venturing forth with bare feet, I wandered into a sparsely hung room. A single photograph was pinned to one wall, depicting a crowd of people holding the strings of an enormous paper balloon in the piazza outside the castle. The site where the photograph was taken was clearly visible from the window. The image

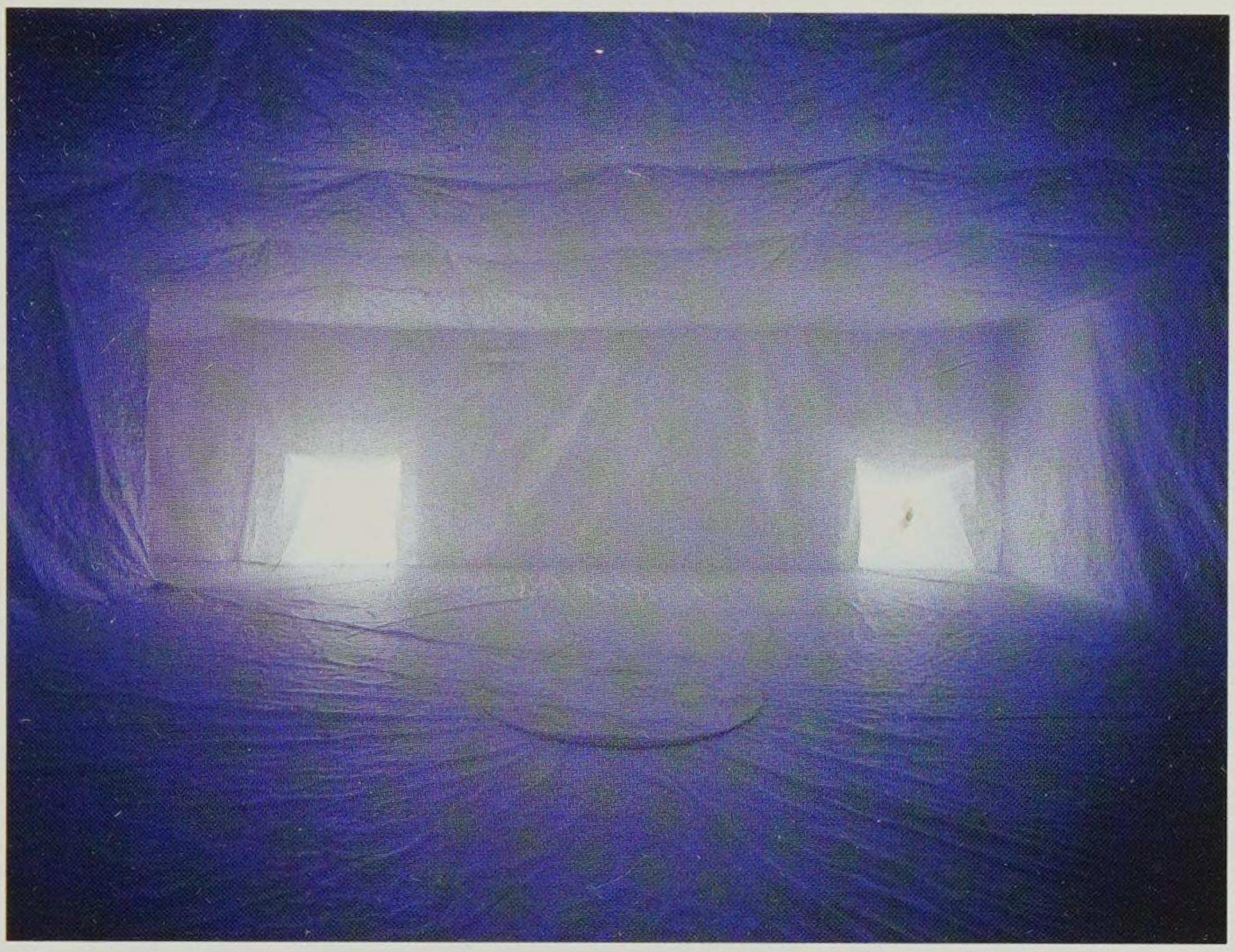


Figure 5.14
Pierre Huyghe, *Float*, inflatable structure for procession, 2004.
Courtesy Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea.

was juxtaposed with five colorful drawings that were all seemingly based on the event shown in the photograph and composed as if by children. On the floor was a pile of placards, some left blank and others graced with additional drawings of castles and balloons. In the far corner of the room was a large, white cardboard box. The bottom of the box was covered with tangled balls of string: five different threads stretched up and out of the cube, spangling the space and leading like a web to the doorway of the adjacent room. Stepping through the doorway, the first impression was of the texture of the soft paper floor under my bare feet. The second was the dreamlike quality of the evenly diffused, natural light that flooded the large space. The entire room was made of paper: a full-scale, empty, room-shaped paper balloon. Huyghe called the piece *Float*.

Before this structure came to line the gallery walls, it had already been the subject of numerous representations. Several months before his exhibition opened, Huyghe and the Castello di Rivoli informed a selection of primary schools in the area of the upcoming event. The children were told of the parade and the procession of the balloon through the streets, and were invited to draw a picture of what they thought this might look like. On the day of the parade, the community

and the school children gathered at the Castello to bring the idea into play. The paper room was gradually inflated on the grounds outside the museum (a specially manufactured, nonporous lining facilitated this process). The crowd then worked in teams to attach colored strings to the edges of the inflatable room before leading it back toward the museum. New drawings of the event were also produced on site, on the placards that Huyghe later included in the exhibition. As Christov-Bakargiev explained, the drawings on the walls, "the ones that look more like traditional balloons," were completed before the event: they were the imaginary representations or "pre-visions" of a story that the children were told. The drawings on the placards, in contrast, were produced on the day of the event itself, "so you could even consider it," Christov-Bakargiev reflected, "as a kind of experiment in how people project onto future events and how people remember events."[67] Only one photograph of the event was retained. As with the billboard pieces, for which Huyghe also produced only one image, this was the sole piece of photographic evidence made public after the event's occurrence.

Christov-Bakargiev described *Float* as an "event of public festivity, recalling the celebrations of modern life that took place in the late eighteenth century, when hot-air balloons would miraculously float through the air, landing in squares or parks."[68] However, the actual proceedings of the day appeared much humbler, less romantic than this description might allow, and followed an aesthetic more similar to the inflatables of Ant Farm in the 1960s and 1970s than to the spectacles of modernity in the 1800s.[69] Ant Farm's *Dream Cloud* (1969) seems a particularly apt precursor. This highly photogenic structure was fashioned from a sixty-foot-long military parachute. It was conceived as a blueprint for "kinetic architecture."[70] Ant Farm's *Inflatocookbook* (1971) was also full of diagrams for pneumatic, air-supported structures, intended to provide housing and shelter for America's "cowboy nomads." But whereas Ant Farm's drive was aligned with countercultural protest and in strict dialogue with environmental concerns, Huyghe's *Float* responded to a museological infrastructure and the museum's role as a timekeeper of objects. In this respect, *Float* recalls Huyghe's earlier work *Timekeeper* (1999/2001), for which Huyghe sandblasted one wall of the Vienna Secession—the original white cube—in order to reveal the layers of paint used in previous exhibitions over the years. The resulting "wall mural" resembled a cross section of a tree trunk: the circles of colored paint indexed the work completed by numerous different artists during the gallery's history.

This kind of museological focus is clearly discernible in the original concept for *Float*, in which Huyghe envisioned the inflatable carried in procession through the streets of Rivoli, up the hill to the castle, and then finally onto the museum grounds. This plan was soon shelved due to logistical difficulties.

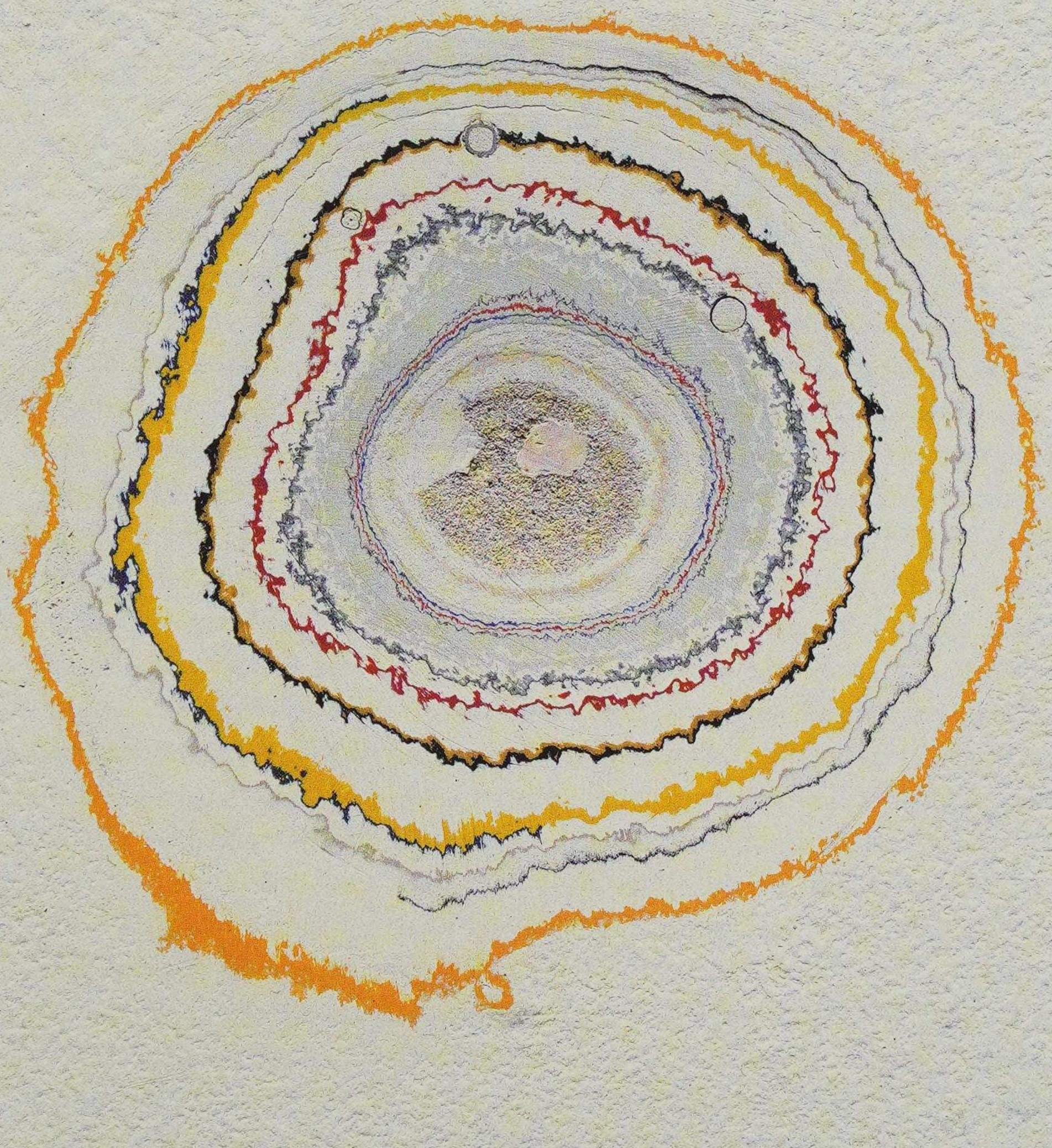


Figure 5.15
Pierre Huyghe, *Timekeeper*, wall mural of successive exhibition layers, diameter 20 cm, Vienna Secession, 1999. Transfer, 2001.

Christov-Bakargiev noted that "the choice was between making [the balloon] much smaller than the gallery so it could fit in the street or keeping it the same size as the gallery and having a shorter procession, and he opted for that. So it was a very short procession, only about a hundred meters!"[71] Huyghe's fidelity was to the aesthetic of the exhibition and to the topology of the space rather than to the event itself. With *Float*, a room in the castle—symbolizing not only authority and power but also the formatted time of the museum exhibition—was displaced in time and space before being returned, with the same dimensions but in soft, foldable material, to its point of origin.

Robert Smithson's words again come to mind: "I'm interested for the most part in what's not happening, that area between areas that could be called the gap," he explained to Allan Kaprow in the early 1970s. "A museum devoted to different kinds of emptiness could be developed. The emptiness could be defined by the actual installation of art. Installations should empty rooms, not fill them."[72] The importance of the "gap" to Huyghe's earlier pieces should now be clear, but with this work the aporia moves from a kind of metaphysical, cinematic time code (the jump cut or the ellipse) to a physical displacement of objects in space. The shift immediately pushes *Float* into dialogue with the tail end of modernism, inserting it into a lineage of artistic practice that might include Yves Klein's *Le Vide* (1958), Smithson's proposal for an underground cinema, and Kaprow's event-based enlivenments of the "museum as mausoleum."[73] Although Huyghe's "empty space" was still the emblem of an invented ritual, a movable structure born out of displacement, its major focus appeared to be on art making and museology. The potential sociopolitical implications of the work were arguably softened by this return to an art historical frame.

Moreover, if Huyghe potentially viewed *Float* as a carnivalesque "overstatement" of celebration ("an over-celebration leading to a point of rupture or change . . . to death and renewal through moments of transgression, as Bakhtin would say"),[74] it was difficult to recognize these qualities in the work itself. The children and the community were used as stand-ins or metonyms for the villagers and peasants that once lived at the base of the castle, while their perceptions of the event, translated into drawings, served as a litmus test for real and imagined scenarios. There is something very discomforting about the reduction of participants to symbolic valences, and whereas this discomfort was closer to the surface in *Streamside Day*, in *Float* the negative dimensions were papered over. In this, the piece was closer to the didactic juxtaposition of "before" and "after" previously encountered in *The Third Memory*, with its temporal inflection between stories, events, and images. The major difference, however, was that in *Float* the feedback loop between event and perception was condensed. The event and

the representation were brought closer in time and space (the site of the photographs was not only the site of the event but also the place of exhibition) and neither was the process of translation mediated by film or cinema, as with *The Third Memory*, *Remake*, and *L'Ellipse*. Huyghe instead turned to externally produced "pre-visions," inventing mythical stories of a future event and then collecting from the children the compositions of its imagined form. The juxtaposition of the previsualization with the postproduction documentation annulled temporal sequencing: there was no indication in the exhibition as to the context of the drawings' production, or the relation between the wall pieces and the placards. Every temporal relation had to be surmised through speculation, pieced together by spectators who had few clues to work with.

However, some of these problems are alleviated once *Float* is re-placed within the larger context of Huyghe's exhibition. The paper room was a gateway in the exhibition concourse that was both tied to a time before (literally, with string) and designed to anticipate the works in the rooms to follow. This anticipation was audible: while the room was empty of objects, it was deliberately filled with sound. Speakers placed just beyond the paper borders amplified the sounds from a selection of Huyghe's works in the show: the pulsing electronic bass from *Les Grands Ensembles*, for example, was overlaid with two of Annlee's many voices speaking from some space beyond. Distant fragments of Satie's *Gymnopédies* also streamed inward to merge with Snow White's lyrical soprano. Depending on one's familiarity with Huyghe's work, the audio served either as an aid to memory or a prevision: throughout the rest of the exhibition, spectators reencountered the fragmented sounds originally heard in the balloon.

The sonorous "ghosting" found a visual equivalence in Huyghe's projections. Moving from the light-space of paper to the darkness of the projection chamber, four of Huyghe's projection works were spaced evenly around the walls: *One Million Kingdoms*, *Two Minutes Out of Time*, *Les Grands Ensembles*, and *Blanche-Neige Lucie*. Although all four projections were simultaneously active, only one piece was visible and audible in its original form at any one time. The remaining works were obscured by a shifting haze of static or white noise. Huyghe produced the haze by retranslating his works—like a digital photocopy—and then layering the translation on top of the original image track. When the screens were ghosted, the audio also diminished to a whisper. Christov-Bakargiev explained:

> We talked about it, and he said things to me about the way memory works and how things come up and then recede back into the background. And then he decided to put a white noise through the projections. That haze is from the translation of his own works. That was probably the strongest mark he put

> on the installation, after the initial, abstract idea of having things come up out of the back of your mind and then recede.[75]

Each work was played in its entirety before the screen was blanketed in static. The movement of the display from work to work was randomly programmed. Spectators crossed from one side of the space to the other, chasing the images as they appeared.

Huyghe's installation was designed to circumvent some of the perceived problems with the format of the retrospective. Christov-Bakargiev declared in the exhibition catalog that "Huyghe's retrospective would not be a stultifying experience of memorialising and monumentalising, presenting one work after another in a succession of galleries."[76] Rather, the way in which memory operated—the ebb and flow of mental pictures and durations—was to inform the formal arrangement of Huyghe's past projects.

Huyghe had already developed alternate strategies for displaying his older works during his 1998 exhibition with Philippe Parreno and Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster at ARC/MAM in Paris, where he included a series of small video monitors depicting a talking head (framed like a news broadcaster) "narrating" the story of the exhibition (*La Narratrice*, 1998).[77] Parreno and Tiravanija also designed elaborate modes of presentation for their solo retrospective exhibitions. Parreno's exhibition "Fade to Black" at Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, in 2003, incorporated a series of phosphorescent silk-screen representations of his past events: these images glowed in the dark when the gallery lights were shut off ("each image recalls an event or an ephemeral work," Parreno wrote, "like a flickering memory").[78] Tiravanija's exhibition "A Retrospective (Tomorrow Is Another Fine Day)," at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam and ARC Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville in Paris likewise toyed with the retrospective format by presenting a series of full-scale, architectural replicas of the sites of Tiravanija's previous exhibitions. Responsibility for the narration of these empty rooms was transferred to a group of paid, specifically directed museum guides, who conducted regular tours to talk visitors through Tiravanija's exhibition history.

At the Castello di Rivoli, on the other hand, Huyghe's formalization of mnemonic tropes clearly resonated with the conceptual priorities of his individual works. On the floor outside the projection chamber was Huyghe and Parreno's *6pm*, a carpet woven with fictitious architectural shadows (or in Parreno's words, "traces of shadows projected through a window from an imaginary space").[79] Huyghe and Parreno described *6pm* as a "memory" of another exhibition space and "the beginning of a collection of exhibition spaces."[80] *6pm* was integrated into the carpet of the museum and paired with a small white television monitor that continuously screened Huyghe's 1998 film, *Sleeptalking*. This, too, triggered a memory of another

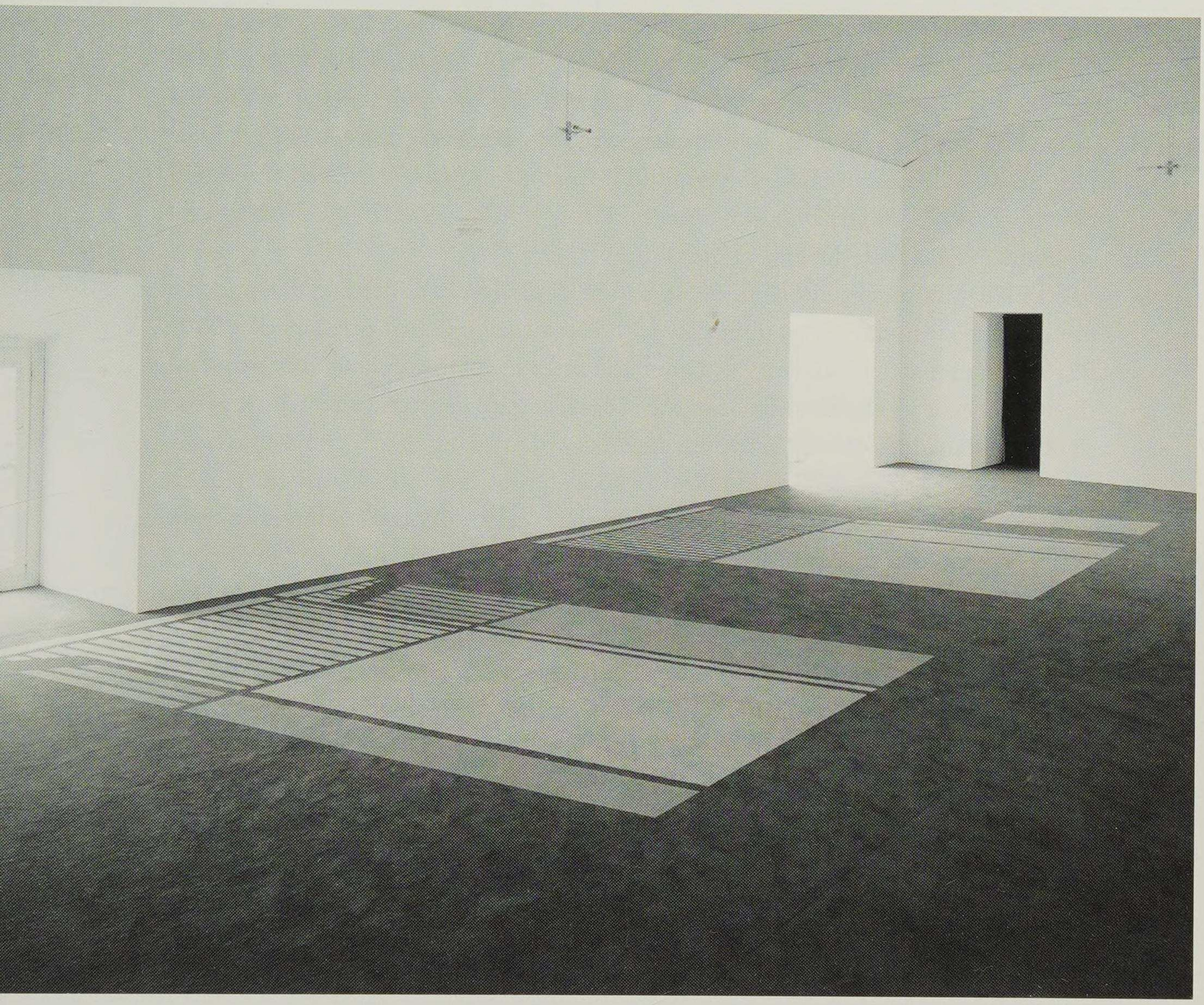


Figure 5.16
Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, *6pm*, carpet inlay, dimensions variable, 2001 and 2004. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

work and another time: Andy Warhol's film *Sleep* (1963), an eight-hour portrait of the poet John Giorno sleeping. In producing *Sleeptalking*, Huyghe contacted Giorno and made an audio recording of him speaking about his memories of the 1960s. Huyghe then refilmed Giorno sleeping in the same position seen in Warhol's film. In an extremely subtle, three-minute dissolve, Huyghe morphed the poet's now-aged face back into its former youthful image. And it is with this dissolve that we connect back with the idea of utopia.

Huyghe regarded *Sleeptalking* as the depiction of a utopia "through the mind of the sleeper."[81] In an interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist published in 2002, he explained that John Giorno "is a poet who talks about his dreams, very concrete dreams since they are the utopias of the sixties. I simply associated the idea of the dream with the idea of utopia, the unconscious with waking life."[82] The sound track to the piece was a recording of Giorno's spoken recollections: the memory of an interpreter. Like most of the voices in Huyghe's works, Giorno's references were again confined to events of the past. He recalled meeting Warhol at the Factory, hanging out with Allen Ginsberg in the Village, and going to acid parties in Central Park. The story jumps between times, moving from the 1960s to the 1970s and back again. At one moment the poet insists, like a true Cage disciple, that chance and accidents are critical to creation; in the next breath he describes the Beat Generation as a "media phantom," and accuses Ginsberg of dreaming up the whole idea for the press. Shot through with corrections and disclaimers, the voice-over details the feuds between different political movements of the 1960s that could come to no agreement as to the direction of the future or the shape of the present: "Everyone was arguing: the feminists, the socialists, the Vietnam vets, the lesbians, the communists, the Beats."[83]

Mostly, however, Giorno talked about Warhol, and the making of *Sleep*:

> Andy really didn't know how to make a movie because it was his first movie. . . . One would like to believe that it was Andy cutting lineal time by the repetitions, destroying the flow of lineal time. It was just Andy not knowing how to deal with it and wanting to make it. Already he had gotten so much publicity that he wanted to finish this fucking movie called *Sleep*, just so he could go on to other things and have the premiere. . . . If you do something, sort of by mistake, it can fit into a concept, like Pasolini can describe what Andy Warhol's movie is, and it's true: Andy cut real time, blah blah blah; but that was not Andy's intention. I have this idea that all great works of art are done by mistake.[84]

In the Castello di Rivoli, Giorno's memories were spatially linked to the silhouettes of *6pm*, while his words were forced to compete with the distant sound of

Erik Satie's *Gymnopédies* emanating from the space beyond. Spectators were lured toward this final room as if by an acoustic thread. It was here that Huyghe's music box from "L'Expédition scintillante" was placed, with its foggy trails of colored light spilling over the sides of the miniature stage. The echoes of Giorno's dream talk encroached on the play of light and music. At the center of the stage flickered a void. The epitaph to Huyghe's retrospective was a hallucinatory afterglow of emptiness. There was no suggestion here as to the suspension of disbelief.

And so we return to Huyghe's statement raised at the beginning of this chapter:

> If there is a problem with the projection, then maybe the utopia gets embedded in something more concrete, something closer and more singular. It's not so much something you project before yourself and towards which you move, but something you construct, while eliminating the conclusion from the very outset. Keeping only the dynamics, the desire, the potential.[85]

Huyghe's proposal to re-embed utopia in "something closer," something "more singular," should not be translated as a call for the cloistering of utopia in the metaphysical domain, segregated from the concerns of the material world. Rather, we are now in a better position to observe the contiguity between this idea and Huyghe's earlier investment in construction sites and the open present. As we recall, Huyghe's permanent construction site was a manifestation of a desire for an open-ended temporal threshold. It was designed to address the discrepancy between the time frames of particular artworks and the formatted temporality of the museum exhibition. It was also a nonproductive form intended to counter the subjugation of time by the world market (tantamount to exposing the pretenses of a leisure industry in which free time is only ever recognized as a by-product of commercial productivity, such that there is, to paraphrase Huyghe, no time for dreaming). And finally, it signposted a hypothetical achronology in which past and future might conjoin, thus defusing the problematic validation of the present by the past, or the future by the present (causality).

"Anything that can be easily located," Huyghe has said, "is soon ejected out of the game."[86] For Huyghe, staying in the game finds particular equivalence in the making of history. The game is like a substratum of historical knowledge. Huyghe's desire to participate—to play—necessitated learning the rules of the "perceptual regime" in order to divert their application (how to combat the replacement of the event with the commentary; how to develop a narration that might pass through formats). This inquiry developed pragmatic, legal ramifications for Huyghe during the late 1990s as he tackled the constitutional makeup of subjects

and images in order to ask: what makes the visible, visible? When Huyghe and Parreno staged their disappearing act and banished Annlee to a non-place, they approached this problematic by charting the trajectory of a once-visible sign. They came to it through a feeling, in other words, that was detached from an object. The focus was on distributed effects rather than hermeneutic systems, on dispersal and openness rather than hermetic concepts (hence the state of deferral and desire). In maintaining this focus, it became necessary to find temporary containers for noncontainable forces. Annlee was one such container. Utopia can be regarded as another, but one that required careful adaptation in order to be of use.

If it were not for the persistent, iconographic, and mnemonic traces of failed utopian models in Huyghe's individual works (Thomas Cole's edenic visions, the modernist housing estates of Le Corbusier, the utopias remembered in Giorno's sleep talk, the psychedelic light shows of the 1970s), it might have been tempting to forgo the sign of utopia altogether and develop a different nomenclature for this state of potential. But it is only by keeping the provenance in sight that the relation between Huyghe's work and historically contingent proposals for utopia may be brought to light. Paring down the idea of utopia and moving it away from projected outcomes or predetermined trajectories reveals a conceptual knot that has consistently marred the appearance of utopian tropes. If, as architectural theorist Nathaniel Coleman has argued, "utopias are typically thought of as requiring either a radical break in time for their establishment, or as a kind of perpetual stasis existing outside of time and necessity," then I suggest that in Huyghe's work utopias also have another dimension that derives from their capacity to react to the contingencies of the present, to fold moments or turn them inside out.[87]





CHAPTER 6

TOPOLOGICAL SYSTEMS: AN ECONOMY OF TIME

The extraordinary events and unlikely phenomena to which sailors bear solitary witness are not easy to record. The narrative must be precise, or it runs the risk of being taken for fabrication. For the maritime storyteller this would be unthinkable, as he and his story are inseparable. The truth, therefore, must be made believable. One way is to understate the story by weeding out exceptional details, however factual. Another option is to dress the truth in the costume of fiction by using those same details to elaborate the story. But on certain occasions, such as this one, none of these narrative mechanisms are sought.

The Association of Freed Time, 2005[1]

In a 2004 interview for the academic journal *October*, the American art historian George Baker quizzed Pierre Huyghe about his interest in topological systems. The tone, it seems, was terse. "I am not understanding," said Baker, "why there is this attraction to topology, to do with choosing a model of practice that has to do with translating one object into another type of object, one practice into another field of practice." "It's a way," Huyghe replied, perhaps with a hint of exasperation, "to translate an experience without representing it. The experience will be equivalent and still it will be different. When you translate something, you always lose something that was in the original. In a topological situation, by contrast, you lose nothing; it is a deformation of the same."[2] This chapter is bracketed by Baker's incomprehension of, and Huyghe's admittedly abstract justification for, this attraction to topological systems. For Huyghe, topology facilitates a form of temporal asynchronization concomitant to a kind of temporal freedom. By tracing this thread through Huyghe's work, it is possible to locate a conceptual grouping—we could think of it as a blinking sign—that has appeared at different intervals in Huyghe's practice since the early 1990s. First, however, a few definitions are needed.

Topology (from the Greek *topos*, "place," and *logos*, "study") is a branch of mathematics concerned with the qualitative relations of forms in space. Topologists are less concerned with the measurement of Euclidean properties (such as surface area, angle, and perspective) than they are with the relations between points in space and time. Two sets are topologically equivalent if one can be deformed or

folded into the other without tears or ruptures (hence, topology's popular description as "rubber sheet geometry"). Theoretically, as Philippe Parreno writes, this process "permits squaring the circle. A donut and a coffee cup are topologically equivalent because they describe the same space."[3]

The historical context for the development of *analysis situs* (topology) by mathematician Henri Poincaré in the 1800s was marked by a radical reconfiguration of both the conception of history and the philosophies of time. The aftermath of such historico-temporal innovations has since been addressed—with explicit reference to topology—by a small but dense selection of European and American artists over the course of the last century, including Marcel Duchamp, Roberto Matta, Dan Graham, Robert Smithson, Vito Acconci, and Stanley Brouwn. For the most part, these engagements with topology were responding to literature published outside the discipline of mathematics, in fields such as science fiction, art criticism, philosophy, and psychoanalysis. Freud was thinking about topology and the structure of the mind in the early 1900s; Duchamp was reading Poincaré's essays on algebraic topology and set theory in the 1920s.[4] The term cropped up repeatedly in American and British science fiction magazines published from the 1930s onward, and appears again in Jacques Lacan's lectures during the 1960s and the early writings of Gilles Deleuze.[5]

For Huyghe, however, the appeal of topological equivalences is founded on temporal rather than spatial capacities. In Huyghe's first major exhibition catalog of 2000, Parreno summed this perspective up when he wrote:

> Topology is a way of reading and interpreting the world that offers troubling correspondences almost everywhere. According to Leibniz, this aspect of geometry was used to determine the position of objects in relation to each other and to search for the properties which result from these positions. *In such work there is no need to either consider size, or to calculate it.* The topological transformation of a figure should occur without tearing or covering it, for if a figure must be completely broken in order to change into another, it has changed genres. The parameters and the coordinates of a situation can thus be displaced according to a situation that is new but topologically equivalent.[6]

Huyghe and Parreno had been discussing such displacements since the early 1990s, and the idea also cropped up in relation to Huyghe's performance *Trajet* (1992). But *Trajet* was merely a prototype for the kind of topological transformation that Huyghe was ultimately aiming for. He had not at that stage found an adequate means of generating "homeomorphisms." This may be because Huyghe was working with existing source material—producing remakes, copies, and parallel

narratives. But what would happen if one could preserve the sense of movement from the then to the now, without having to resort to appropriation? What would happen, in other words, if you could generate the same experience of movement through time while *inventing* the source material? How would this movement be recognizable? These questions are central to topology. Imagine: we have an object, and it is twisted through time to become another. The resulting form is not a replacement of the first, but *the same form*, albeit shadowed by its previous incarnation. Topology's refusal of progression is then paradoxically linked to structural change. A multitude of changes are enacted in topological sets, but there is no endgame or teleological governance. This is why a translation without loss is different from the idea of "high-resolution formats": irresolution is instead key, and leaves open the possibility for future alterations.

THE ADVENTURES OF A STRAIGHT LINE AND A CIRCLE

These concepts are not timeless. Their foundations are complex and are underwritten by shifts in the history of perspective that need only brief mention here. When artists first set to work on the formula for single-point perspective during the Renaissance, they quickly came to the realization that the straight line was not as it appeared to be. Any line, if followed for enough distance, will break into a curve. This proposition contradicted Euclid's premise that parallel lines never converge. As physicist Leonard Shlain has explained:

> In Euclid's system, space was unbounded and infinite. If an adventurer headed off in a straight line upon a Euclidean planar surface, it was certain that he would never be seen or heard of again, and that his journey would be endless. Not so in a non-Euclidean system: sooner or later, whichever direction an explorer travelled . . . he would arrive back at the place from which he started.[7]

In non-Euclidean space there are no parallel lines, only arcs. This paradigm shift presented a major stumbling block for proponents of teleological progression, as every journey undertaken could theoretically return to its point of origin. As Shlain noted, "For someone to imagine the shape of objects existing in a non-Euclidean world, he would have to acknowledge distortions not present in the visual Euclidean world of Western sensibility."[8] The recognition of convergence abrades the tessellated grid of perspective. The vanishing points mapped onto the picture plane by Leon Battista Alberti in the 1400s (and seemingly supported by the

"perspectival eye" of the photographic apparatus in the 1800s) were revealed as artifice.[9] This revelation had a significant impact on conceptions of time that in turn pushed history to the brink of a major transformation.

During the same period that European mathematicians began developing formulas that demolished distance (by abstracting the relations between points in time and space), so too did the relations between past, present, and future come under scrutiny in the broader cultural realm. In the 1870s, Dostoyevsky had Ivan Karamazov describe non-Euclidean space as heretical, remarking that "there have been and still are some geometricians and philosophers who doubt whether the whole universe . . . was only created in Euclid's geometry; they even dare to dream that two parallel lines, which according to Euclid may never meet on earth, may meet somewhere in infinity. I have come to the conclusion that since I can't even understand that, I can't expect to understand about God."[10] Edgar Allan Poe, Jules Verne, and H. G. Wells also "dared to imagine" sequences of temporality in which convergence played a major part, setting their novels in time zones that did not resemble either the historical or the imaginary, and producing narratives that confused temporal sequencing. In 1846, Poe began one of his essays on metaphysics with the declaration that "*Space and Duration ARE ONE*,"[11] a postulate that both Poe and Verne embraced in their fiction. As Michel de Certeau has noted, the "circumnavigation" of the globe staged by science fiction writers such as Verne and Poe in the nineteenth century was a "figure-type of a kind of itinerary of knowledge. The organizing framework is not the medieval one of ascension, nor that of the dictionary, which prevailed during the eighteenth century . . . the order of knowledge takes the form of a circular knowledge."[12] These writers moved within the accounts of others, basing their pilgrimages on information unearthed from elsewhere. Their project was one of reclamation and reconstitution: of producing translations that folded fact and fiction into one.[13]

This suggests that folds in space and time can be indexed by constructs other than mathematics, and also that shifts in space-time relations were likely linked to the development of topological systems by mathematicians including Georg Riemann, Leibniz, and Poincaré. Most pertinently, however, this genealogy productively addresses the correlations between Poe, Verne, and topology as they appear in Huyghe's work.

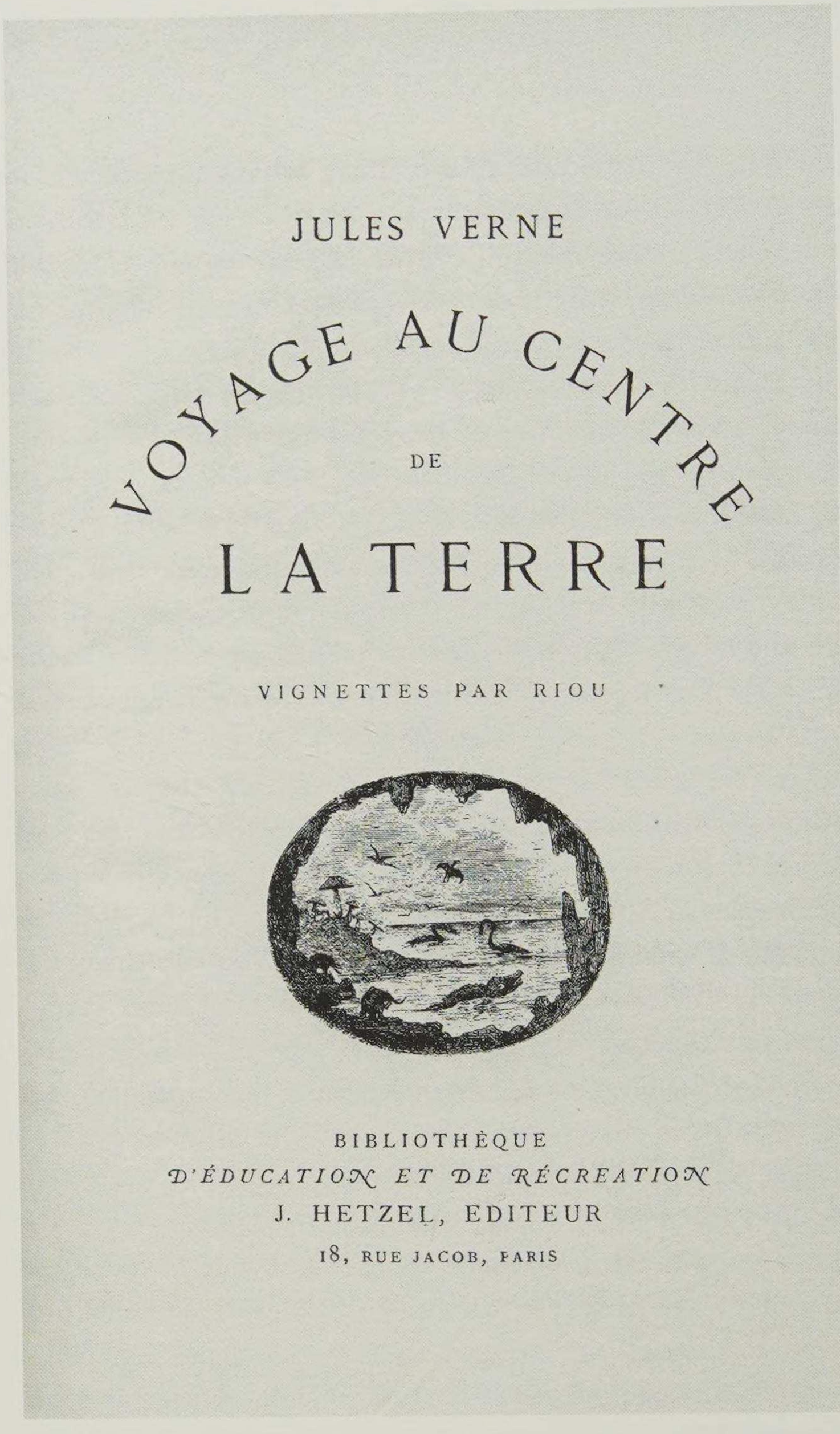
In the mid-1990s, Huyghe began scripting a scenario for a project based on Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1864). Verne's novel recounts the journey of Professor Lidenbrock and his nephew Axel through Iceland, toward an extinct crater, across a sunless sea, and into the innermost recesses of the Earth. Although Verne never traveled to Iceland, he familiarized

himself with the territory via written descriptions and artistic impressions in scientific journals and periodicals. The contract from Verne's French publisher stipulates the services and employment conditions for geologists and librarians, who were to provide Verne with the data needed to "validate" his fictional landscape.[14] Verne's continuous provision of meteorological and geographical detail in the novel was then for the most part an accurate record of the Icelandic terrain, albeit couched in a fantastical frame. The crater into which the travelers descend is still known today as the Snæfellsjökull volcano, located southwest of Reykjavik in the Snæfellsjökull Peninsula National Park. Moreover, Verne's remake of existing data was paralleled by the characters' journey in the narrative. Professor Lidenbrock and Axel retrace the steps of an ancient explorer, whose signals guide the travelers through the treacherous subterranean realm. The travelers' "remake" of a past journey was mirrored in Verne's construction of his novel.

A century after the English translation of Verne's book, the site again proved inspirational for the production of science fiction. A year before Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin took their historic steps on the moon, they trained at a NASA base in northeast Iceland, not far from the site of Verne's fiction. It was here on that same desert of cooled Icelandic lava that the first shots of a space-suited Armstrong, bounding across a lunar-like landscape, were captured. Verne's fictional account of the conquest of Earth's interior was refashioned as a projection of extraterrestrial activity. When the footage from Apollo 11 was broadcast back to Earth on July 20, 1969, its choreography had already been mapped out. The aesthetic of history was determined by "fictional" parameters.

This extraordinary interplay of science and fiction proved irresistible to Huyghe, who began thinking of Verne's novel as a "guide," a kind of discursive map, for the planning of his own project in Iceland. Although this particular project was never realized, the scenario re-emerged in Huyghe's digital animation *One Million Kingdoms* (2001). The prologue to the film is a brief, written précis of this historical background: "*The Journey to the Centre of the Earth* by Jules Verne begins in Iceland, the conquest of space starts there." The text scrolls slowly across the bottom of a black screen marked with diagrams of circles and lines, unmistakably recalling that now-famous epigraph to interspatial colonization: *A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away . . .*

The animation opens on a barren landscape, a bleak, digital composition rendered in basic gray scale. The outline of Annlee, sketched in blue neon, wanders through this terrain. As she walks, a voice-over is activated. Written by Huyghe, the text includes sections of Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth* recounted in the voice of Neil Armstrong, digitally synthesized from Apollo's original broadcast.


JULES VERNE

VOYAGE AU CENTRE DE LA TERRE

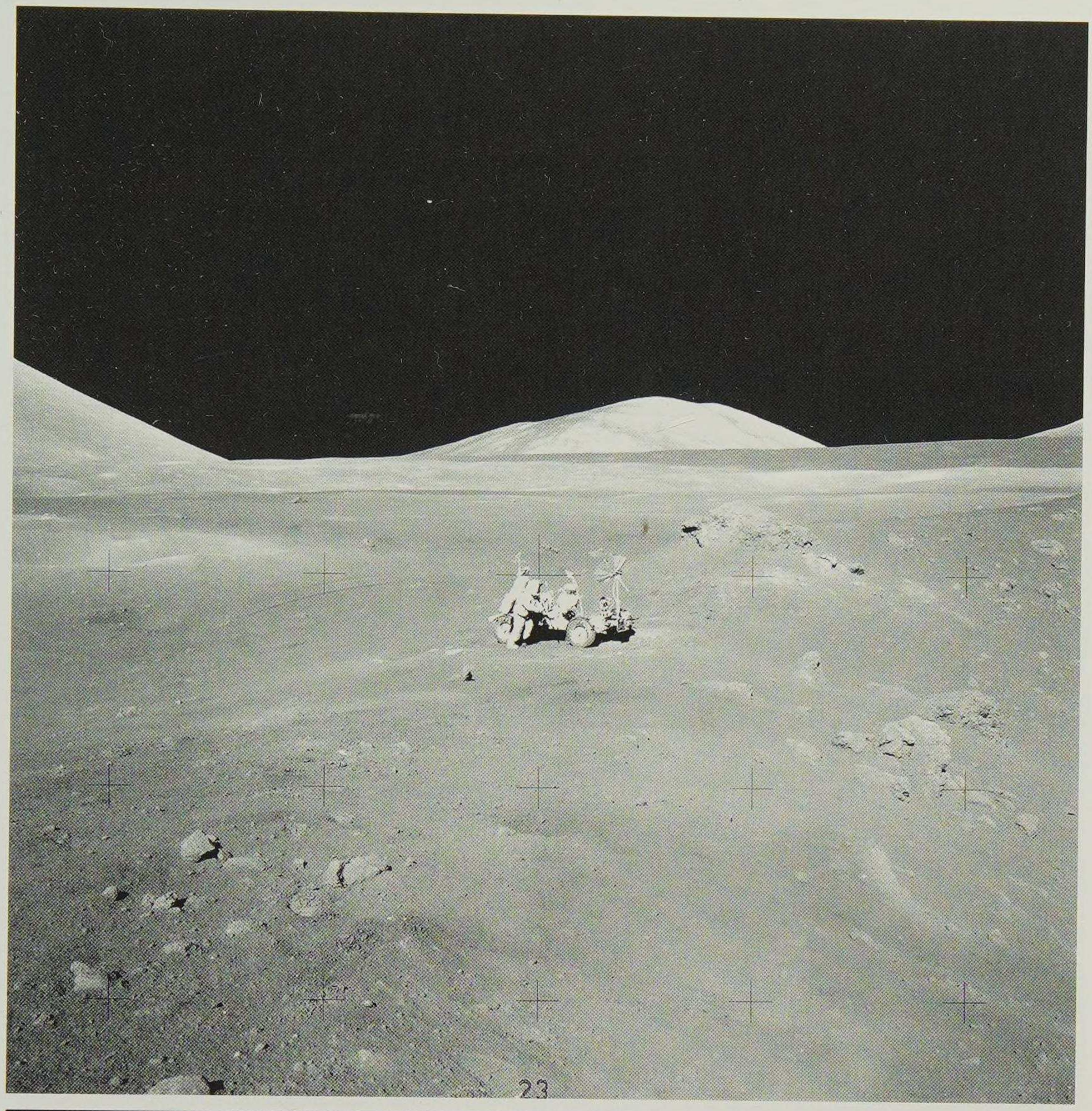
VIGNETTES PAR RIOU

BIBLIOTHÈQUE
D'ÉDUCATION ET DE RÉCREATION
J. HETZEL, EDITEUR
18, RUE JACOB, PARIS

Figure 6.1
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical*, 2002. Exhibition booklet with title page from Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

Figure 6.2 (opposite top)
Apollo 17 moon landing, December 1972. Courtesy NASA.

Figure 6.3 (opposite bottom)
Pierre Huyghe, *One Million Kingdoms*, Digi-Beta, 5.1, sound, 6', 2001. Courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.





The script has been wrenched from its historical moorings to speak uncannily in place of another:

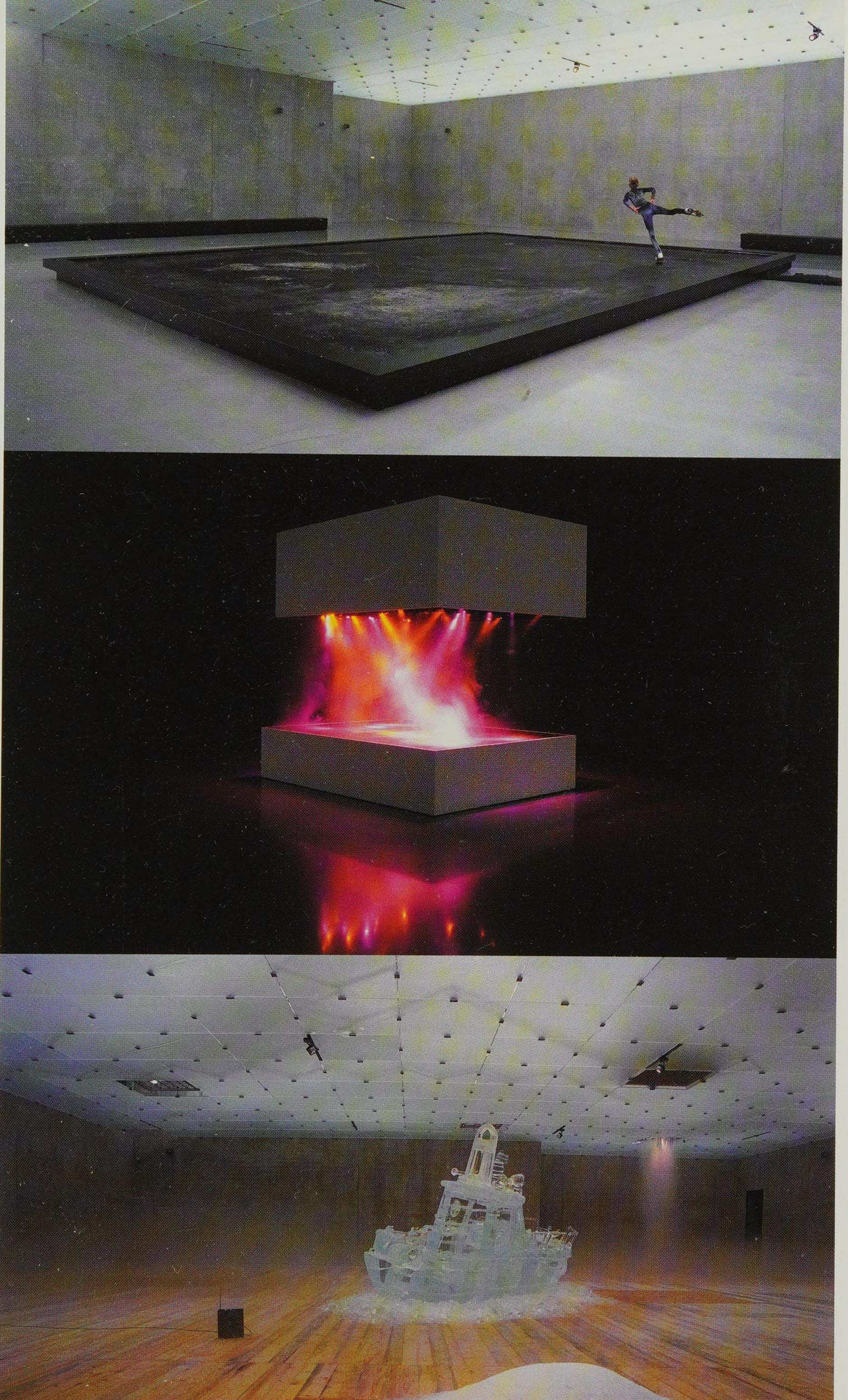
> On the moon, there is nothing but dust. The conquest of space, which was a dream until now . . . had become an illusion. And we are arriving in 1865 at the beginning of chapter 17. It's from here that we should end up in the centre of the earth. I had not yet looked down into the bottomless pit which I was about to plunge into. The fascination of the void took hold of me. . . . There is nothing so attractive as the abyss. Nothing, with the possible exception of the state of weightlessness.[15]

The vocal intonation conjures visual shifts in the landscape. Mountains and valleys are registered sonically and graphically, rising and falling as sound waves. The landscape does not have form outside the acoustic realm: ground is generated at the moment of speaking and relies on this moment for its existence. When the utterance falters, so does the terrain, but Annlee moves without hesitation in this fragile space. The map of her journey then becomes equivalent to the time of its production. Labor and document coincide.

WEATHER PATTERNS AND ICE BOATS: POE, VERNE, AND HUYGHE

In 2002, Huyghe extrapolated on this story for his exhibition "L'Expédition scintillante" at the Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria. The Kunsthaus Bregenz is a museum made of glass on the shore of an Austrian lake. "From the outside," architect Peter Zumthor wrote, "the building looks like a lamp. It absorbs the changing light of the sky, the haze of the lake, it reflects light and colour . . . according to the angle of vision, the daylight and the weather."[16] Although the museum has no visible windows, it is filled with natural light that emanates from the opaque glass ceiling. The three levels of exhibition space are spatially and architecturally identical. As Huyghe later explained, "When you visit this place, you have the feeling that the first floor, the second floor, the third floor [are] always the same. You see exactly the same place."[17] As a result, the only landmarks in the museum are the artworks themselves.

Partially in response to these architectural qualities, Huyghe decided to use the museum as a narrative for a project he had had in mind for a while. "L'Expédition scintillante" transformed the three exhibition spaces into platforms for a journey. On the first level was a large sculpture of a boat carved entirely from ice. During the course of the exhibition, the structure melted, its entropic forms



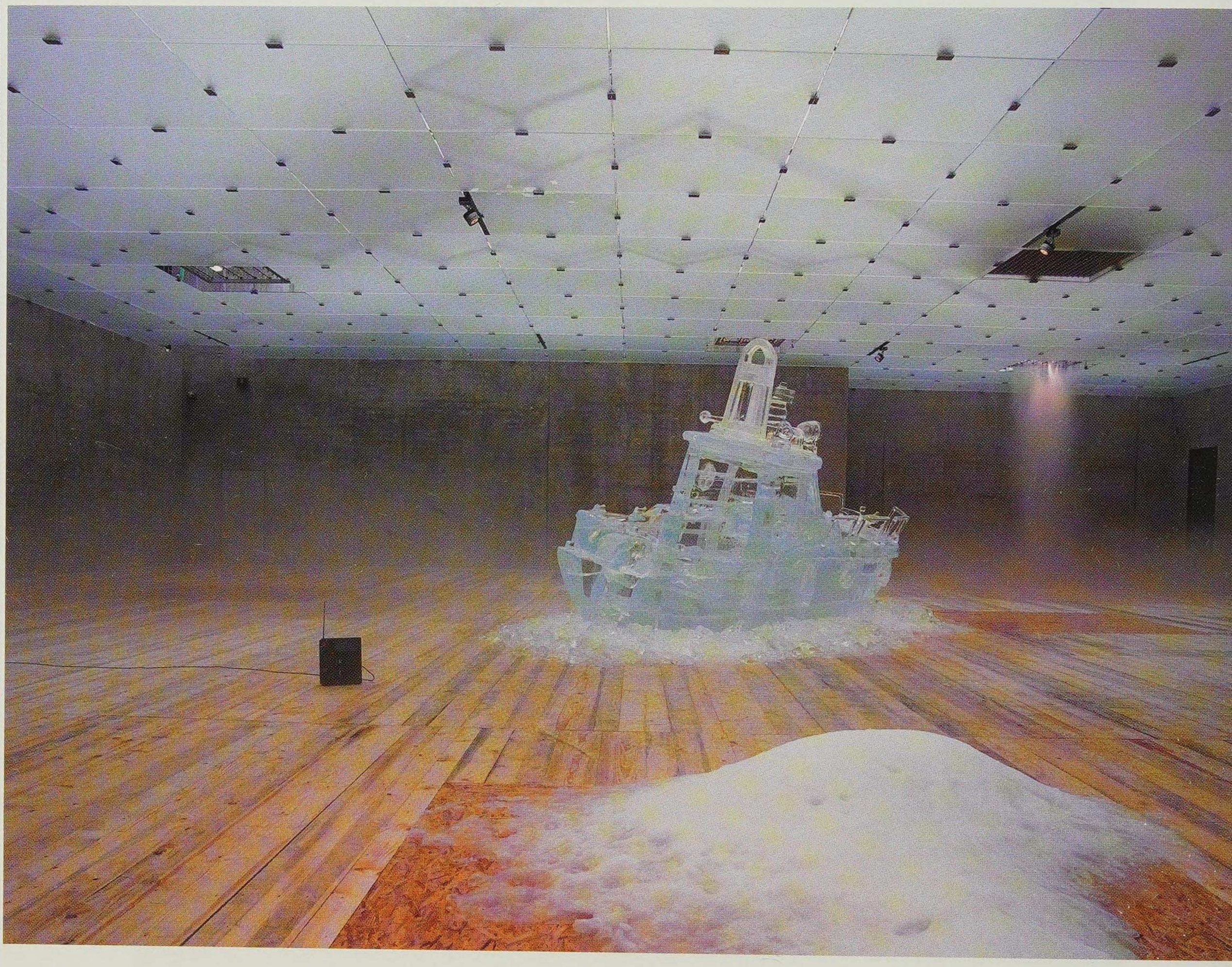


Figure 6.4 (previous page)
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical, Act 1, Act 2, Act 3*, 2002.
Composite image photo credit: KuB, Markus Tretter. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

Figure 6.5
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical, Act 1*, 2002.

momentarily resembling a frozen landscape before dissolving into a pool of water. The means to travel (the boat) visually doubled as the form of the destination. Around the melting boat, vents in the ceiling emitted a series of weather patterns: "real rain, real snow, and real fog," as Huyghe remarked. The subtle sounds of the falling rain and snow competed with a broadcast of John Cage's *Radio Music* from a small radio on the wooden floor. The second floor of the exhibition was dark, and housed Huyghe's music box, *L'Expédition scintillante, Act II: Untitled (Light Show)* (2002) with its curling smoke rings and Satie soundtrack. At the end of each cycle of Satie's *Gymnopédies* (1888), the lights were brought up, the fog ceased, and the room was bathed in a warm pink glow that emanated from what Huyghe referred to as the "sunrise/sunset ceiling."[18] On the third floor, Satie was replaced with Brian Eno, in a room dominated by a large, rectangular ice rink set with black ice. Small, specially produced books (Huyghe's story of the exhibition) were distributed around the perimeter for visitors to read.

Huyghe regarded the exhibition as "a visual scenario of a collective expedition."[19] It was premised on a proposal for "a journey to Antarctica, to a no-knowledge zone. But a synopsis or scenario is . . . the pre-production stage, so things are blurry . . . I tried to maintain this exhibition as frankly uncertain."[20] Huyghe described the first floor as a journey, the second as a meeting point, and the third as a combined "representation of this journey and this meeting."[21] The melting boat, the weather patterns, and the music box were related to the phenomenological elements of the trip (with hallucinogenic connotations attached), while the room with the ice rink and the reading material worked to reflect the journey just undertaken by the museum visitors.

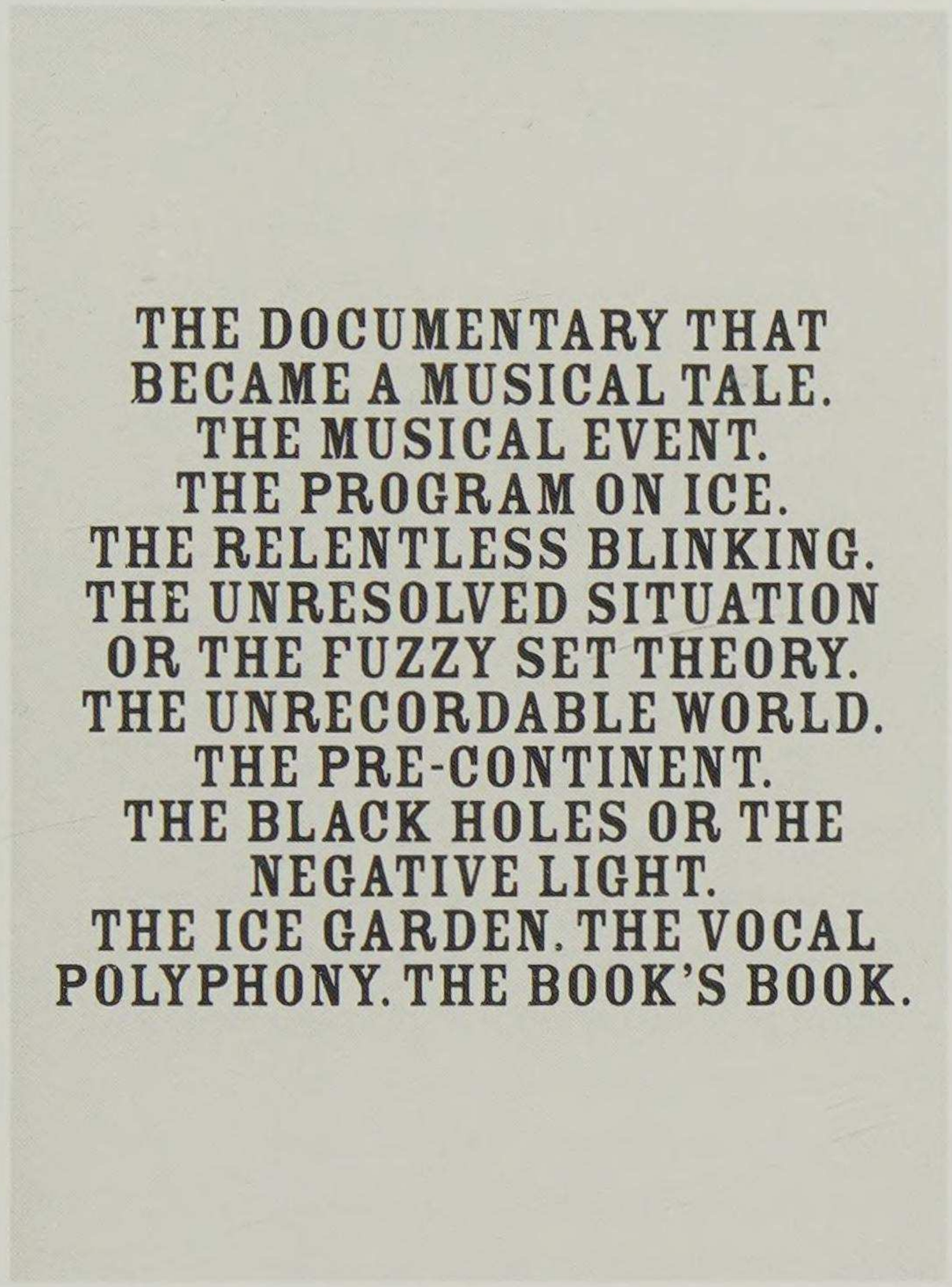
The three acts of the exhibition were mirrored by the three acts of Huyghe's exhibition booklet, and prefaced with this prologue: "The invention of a no-knowledge zone. The real means to discover it. The call of birds to Saint Francis. The poetic expedition." On the following pages, similar textual summaries are juxtaposed with a selection of reproductions in muted tones, including Giotto's fresco of *St. Francis' Sermon to the Birds* (1297–1299); Caspar David Friedrich's *The Arctic Sea* (1823–1824); a film still from Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977); two identical Antarctic landscapes with penguins; and a glossary pertaining to the classification of geographical features and the general principles of place-naming. Huyghe's texts were also supplemented by the title pages and prefaces from the French editions of Edgar Allan Poe's *Aventures d'Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) and Jules Verne's 1897 book *Le Sphinx des glaces*, which was composed as a kind of sequel to Poe's earlier novel.

Huyghe's book was both a map of the exhibition and an archive of its sources. The link between "L'Expédition scintillante" and the world of Verne and



Figure 6.6
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical*, exhibition booklet, detail, 2002.

Poe was particularly explicit. According to Huyghe, the scenario for his exhibition was based on the sea voyage recounted in Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. In the exhibition, the reference was initially indexed by the weather patterns produced on the first floor. In programming the cycles of snow, rain, and fog that cascaded from the ceiling, Huyghe first took a copy of Poe's book and underlined all the sections pertaining to weather. Whereas Poe's meteorological descriptions were used predominantly to portray his protagonist's state of mind, Huyghe instead gathered "all the weather from the book" and structured these passages into the following list: rain, fog, snow, fog, rain, rain, snow, snow, snow, fog, snow, rain, etc. (As Huyghe said, "It's a long journey.")[22] This data was then fed into a computer that was used to program the weather in the room by controlling



Figures 6.7-6.8
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical*, exhibition booklet, details, 2002.

the vents in the ceiling. The transcript of fictional weather was transposed into a sequence of data and used as a prompt for actual phenomenological effects. It was also translated back into text: a small chart of the weather patterns in Poe's book was affixed to one gallery wall.

The second point of connection between *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and Huyghe's exhibition emerged out of the metafictional qualities of Poe's text. *Pym* is a first-person, fictional account of a sequence of adventures experienced by a young stowaway (the eponymous Pym) after suffering a shipwreck on the Southern Seas. The introductory note to the novel is written by the character Pym, who details the pressure he experienced on returning from his adventures to publish a true account of his story for public consumption. Pym is at first

resistant to the idea, noting that the events are "of a nature so positively marvellous" that no reader could possibly take them for fact.[23] Eventually, however, the exhortations of a certain distinguished editor—one "Mr. Poe"—have their desired effect and a deal is struck between Poe and Pym (the author and his character).

Although Poe fails to persuade Pym to deliver a manuscript for publication, he does manage to solicit from Pym a "factual and precise" record of the events he had witnessed. After gaining hold of Pym's manuscript, "Mr. Poe" then generously volunteers to write up a narrative version for publication in his journal, *The Southern Literary Messenger*. Pym concurs, but not before stipulating two conditions: that the protagonist retain Pym's name and that "Mr. Poe" be listed as the article's author, "in order that it might certainly be regarded as fiction."[24] Two articles of this nature were indeed published in the *Southern Literary Messenger* under Poe's name in 1837.[25] By 1838, however, Gordon Arthur Pym had seemingly changed his mind about outsourcing his tale, and decided to write the third and final part of the narrative in his own words. The decision was purportedly based on the public's apparent disbelief of the story's fictional mantle. "I had then little to fear," Pym wrote, "on the score of public incredulity."[26] Poe's two articles and Pym's account were collated in a single volume, along with Pym's introductory note to the volume. This note concluded: "Even to those readers who have not seen *The Messenger*, it will be unnecessary to point out where [Poe's] portion ends and my own commences; the differences in point of style will be readily perceived."[27]

Although Huyghe incorporated fragments of this history into his exhibition booklet, it was also articulated in a performance at the museum. At intermittent intervals, the rink was occupied by a lone ice skater. As critic Tom Morton wrote: "Kicking up sooty crystals, she spoke of the re-inscriptions of Poe, Verne and Baudelaire [who translated Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*], but also the remaking, in the mind of the viewer, of "L'Expédition scintillante."[28] Similar to the preamble of *One Million Kingdoms*, the stories preceding the production of Huyghe's works were integrated back into the narrative through an utterance, and then matched with an equivalent form. This form was not resolved, but pointed to a future moment, generating a peculiar sense of antigravity. As Huyghe later explained to Mark Godfrey, "This exhibition is about going toward an *idée*, and trying to bring this *idée* into light. . . . It's a simple process."[29] Godfrey responded, "It's quite an undertaking for a show that's just a scenario for another work."[30] But it was precisely the conjunctions between future moments and past narratives that motivated Huyghe's project. The figure of the artist here appears cloaked in the guise of an adventurer, on course to chart what is perhaps one of the last great remaining frontiers of the known universe: time.

AVENTURES
D'ARTHUR GORDON PYM

PAR

EDGAR POE

TRADUCTION DE

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

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Figure 6.9
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical*, exhibition booklet with title page from Edgar Allan Poe's *Aventures d'Arthur Gordon Pym*. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

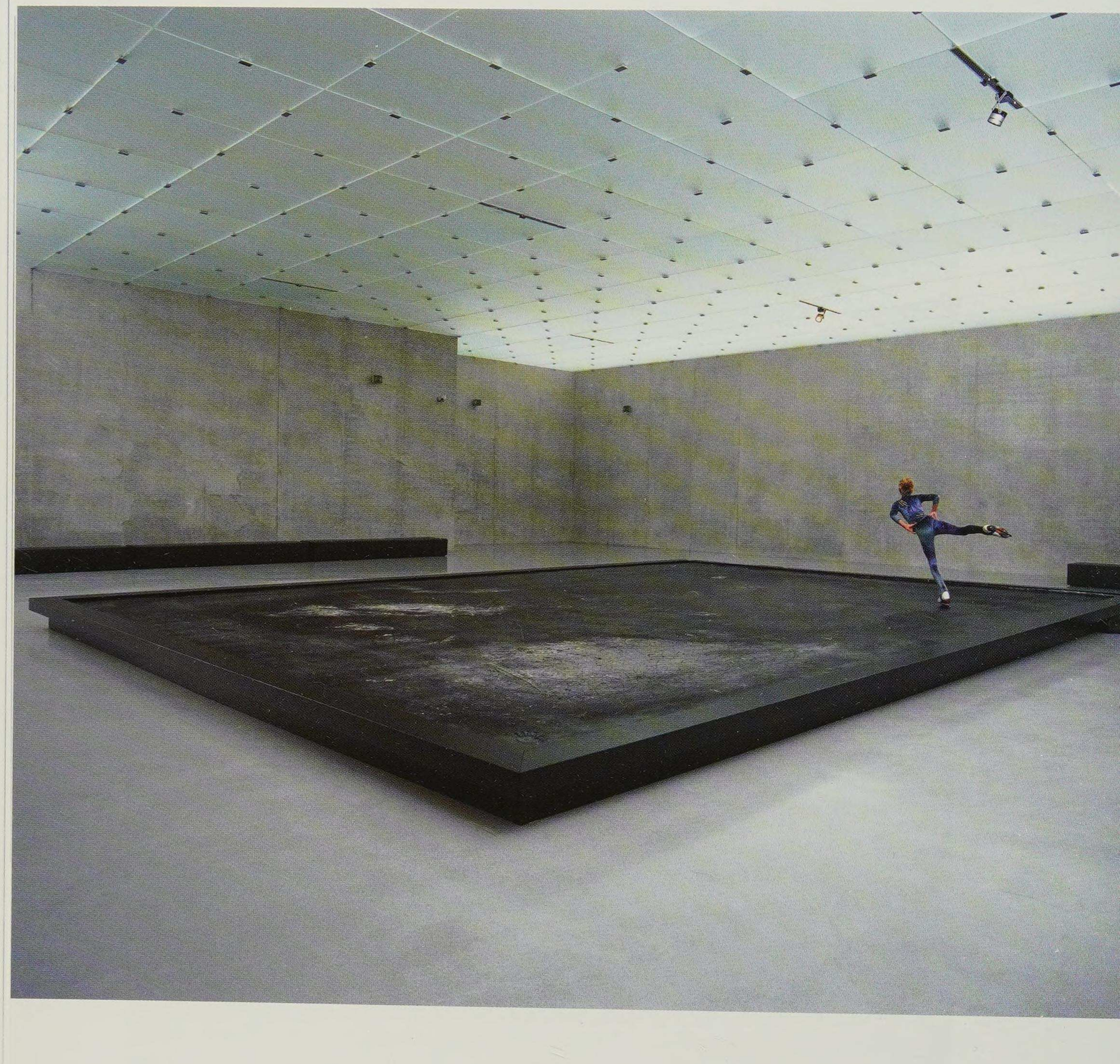


Figure 6.10
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical, Act 3*, 2002.

A JOURNEY THAT WASN'T: FROM ANTARCTICA TO CENTRAL PARK

Three years after his exhibition at Bregenz, Huyghe was given an opportunity to realize the scenario for the journey proposed by "L'Expédition scintillante." On February 9, 2005, Huyghe, accompanied by seven other artists and ten crew members, set sail from Argentina to Antarctica on a scientific research vessel. They left from the Port of Ushuaia. In Huyghe's words, this was the "edge of Jorge Luis Borges country."[31] Huyghe characterized his mission as a "search for no-knowledge zones where things have no names."[32] He was also on the lookout for a rare, albino penguin, said to inhabit such areas. As one American journalist reported, "Huyghe did his homework, even interviewing ornithologists to try to find the best place for a sighting of the strange, white bird, rarely seen in the wild."[33] Huyghe brought with him "experimental equipment meant to facilitate contact with the creature," and a portable radio transmitter that broadcast the "ship's log."[34] The journey took one month. The boat moved slowly past Cape Horn and the ice floes of the Drake Passage, toward the Polar Antarctic Circle and the Anagram Islands. The vessel was buffeted by storms: sails broke, systems froze, and the ship's computer was damaged, resulting in memory loss. For days the travelers were stranded on an ice shelf amid raging blizzards. When the storm passed, "the cloudy sky produced a milky green light that reflected off an icy ground, uniformly illuminating the air around them . . . the falling snowflakes appeared almost black against their luminous backdrop."[35]

After navigating through the pack ice, the crew eventually encountered land. Unloading their provisions and equipment, the group headed for shore. On the icy shelf, Huyghe set up a device to call the bird. This was a "machine specially designed to translate the island's shape into a complex sequence of sound and light, not unlike a luminous, musical variation of Morse code."[36] Huyghe called the machine Saint Francis of Assisi, a naming that spiraled back to the lesson learned in *Les Incivils* about the relation between language and context. "Through music and lights," Huyghe wrote, "the unknown place became a language unfolding temporally."[37] Huyghe's equipment apparently worked. The creature responded to the call.

When Huyghe returned from Antarctica, he organized a public performance of his experience that took the form of an operatic musical in Wollman Ice Rink, Central Park, New York. He called it *A Journey That Wasn't* (2005). On the night of the performance, the rink was flooded with water: black "icebergs" dotted its surface, illuminated by an array of theatrical lights that towered above the perimeter. Around one thousand people crowded on the bleachers at one edge of the rink, bathed in the misty glow of Manhattan's skyscrapers. The orchestra,



Figure 6.11
Caspar David Friedrich, *The Arctic Sea*, oil on canvas, 96.7 × 126.9 cm, 1823–1824. Collection Hamburger Kunsthalle. Courtesy bpk | Hamburger Kunsthalle | Elke Walford.

situated precariously on a stage surrounded by water, performed a score based on data Huyghe extracted from the topography of the island he found in Antarctica. The terrain was mapped out and given to the American composer Joshua Cody, who arranged a symphony in response to the island's topography. Cody's transposition was a wailing, droning, highly elaborate orchestration that peaked and asphyxiated in ominous spirals of sound. As the orchestra momentarily disappeared in the darkness and fog, there was a realization that this sound transmitted through the black was the sound of a place. Not the representation of a place, but a form that took responsibility for the process of its own production. An equivalence.

"The collective journey on a scientific sailing boat," Huyghe explained, "is . . . a search for an idea and a displacement. . . . I was trying to find a topological



Figures 6.12–6.14 (continued on following page)
Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, super 16mm and HD video transferred to HD, 21.41', 2005. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

system that would allow me to adapt this experience into the form of an opera."[38] The method was similar to that used at Bregenz, and Huyghe has referred to both exhibitions as landscapes translated into durations.[39] In Central Park, the duration of the score was equal to the time needed to hear the island. As the performance progressed, a psychedelic light show illuminated the rink. The elusive penguin appeared, dramatically backlit on the rocky outcrops. The entire event was filmed as it was performed live. Camera operators swarmed over the set; the smoke machine and mixing desks were prominent. Audience members doubled as extras in the film and witnesses to the event. History needs witnesses.

Huyghe's staging of the Antarctica project in Central Park was also made with full consciousness of the history of the park's development and design. This was a journey, Huyghe reflected, "through history, time, and a cloud of narratives."[40]



In the program notes, Huyghe wrote that "Central Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted as a collection of re-created landscapes. . . . It is an elaborate inner city landscape, a platform for myriad events to occur. . . . We are now at the southern ice rink of Central Park, sitting at the bottom of a vast glacier that melted millions of years ago, waiting for something to happen."[41] This last line appears to have been pulled directly from Robert Smithson's earlier text on Central Park, in which he referred to the park as the "world's first earthwork."[42] Originally published in *Artforum* in February 1973, Smithson's article begins: "Imagine standing on Central Park one million years ago. You would be standing on a vast ice sheet, a 4000 mile glacial wall, as much as 2000 feet thick."[43] Although much time could be spent unpacking Smithson's comments, what is important here is that Smithson's text provided the frame for Huyghe's engagement with the site. However, while Smithson insisted on the dialectic of a physical landscape (its history must intrude on the present in order for its entropic potential to be realized), Huyghe's project, although still stressing the materiality of the ground itself, preferred to use that ground as a platform to travel elsewhere.

A similar kind of site specificity was touched on in American art historian Miwon Kwon's 2004 book *One Place after Another*.[44] Kwon's treatise on site-specific art from the 1960s to the 1990s throws out an epistemological challenge to relocate meaning from within the art object to the contingencies of its context. The preference for phenomenology over Cartesian logic is stressed by both Kwon's methodology and the artists selected for analysis. Although Huyghe's work was not explicitly addressed in this text, Kwon's genealogy nonetheless offers a productive framework by which to approach Huyghe's attention to context. Kwon argues that early site-specific work "focused on establishing an inextricable, indivisible relationship between the work and its site, and demanded the physical presence of the viewer for the work's completion," as with, for example, Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* (1981) or Robert Barry's installations that were "intended not to be moved."[45] She then posits that the distinguishing characteristic of contemporary site-oriented art "is the way in which the art works' relationship to the actuality of location and the social conditions of the institutional frame . . . are both subordinate to a discursively determined site that is delineated as a field of knowledge, intellectual exchange, or cultural debate."[46] This contemporary tendency is linked back to the work of Smithson, Daniel Buren, and Michael Asher, who all made concerted attempts to expose discourse as a site and site as discourse in the 1970s. The site specificity of an artwork is then connected to its discursive location as much as it is to its physical or geographical location. Such site specificity extends the affect of any given site into the realm of language. This is a side effect of the equivalence made between map and territory, labor and document. This

is the terrain spoken in *One Million Kingdoms*, across the pixelated surface of a digital moon. It is also the zone that Huyghe set out to find in Antarctica, armed with both the hypothesis that it already existed and the mechanics to invent a fiction of a fiction if it did not. Such a strategy relies, as Mikhail Bakhtin would have understood, on the event of communication rather than the production of content frozen outside of context. The site is not a precondition for the work, but is generated in and by the work itself. It is realized at the moment of utterance. As such, it becomes absolutely bound to questions of time and duration. We still need time to understand space. But is the time this now takes equivalent to the duration of the journey itself?

The question can be approached by examining two key terms that appear repeatedly in Huyghe's writings in relation to topology: distance and singularity. Huyghe has on numerous occasions stressed the critical role of distance in his practice, noting in 2002 that "you have to produce a distance, that is, a path that must be walked in order to go from one point to another."[47] This is not an issue of geography, a yearning for faraway places or the remote.[48] Rather, it is a way of thinking about distance that would have been familiar to Robert Smithson in the 1970s. Huyghe has noted that "Smithson was one of the rare artists who understood that once you catch the reality somewhere else, you cannot just bring it back into the gallery and say 'Oh, look, there it is.' It doesn't work like that."[49] A topological transformation instead straddles the here and the elsewhere. But more importantly, topology builds bridges across time. It is based on an economy of time rather than an economy of space, because first and foremost topology addresses a sequence of temporal relations.

The temporal dimension of topology clearly informed the structure of Huyghe's project. After the performance in Central Park, Huyghe combined footage of the opera with footage taken on the Antarctic voyage to make a film that he also entitled *A Journey That Wasn't* (2005). The trope of distance was indexed not so much by the physical locations of the settings, but rather in the ellipses between links in a chain of production: the scenario ("L'Expédition scintillante" and *One Million Kingdoms*), the journey to Antarctica, the performance, and the film.

Huyghe's film opens on the shore of the unnamed island in a landscape of ice and snow. A narrator speaks:

> A show is being set up. A symphony orchestra is about to play the topography of an island in musical form. The experience of a journey prefigures a world already lost. It began with a postulate. We invented no-knowledge zones and the means to verify their existence. There was only one rule of the game: to resist the possibility of bringing it back. Here is the story of a tragic odyssey.[50]

The ice swells and pushes the horizon line upward, crushing space with unstable ground. The footage appears both heavily scripted and yet responsive to the context, while the sound track is an impeccably produced amalgam of live field recordings overlaid with digital effects. The film cuts to the ice rink in Central Park, where Manhattan's glowing skyline lends a *Blade Runner*-like ambience to the scene. Dark, highly cinematic close-ups of glinting brass instruments are paired with lingering shots of the conductor's hands moving through space. The light show begins slowly. White, blinking lights pan across the rink, starkly illuminating the silhouettes of the musicians. Cutting back to the cold, dazzling blue of Antarctica, the sound gathers in density. In a very long take, an orange-clad figure treks slowly through an interminably white landscape. The boat is just visible in the distance. Black rocks cut into the sky; a colony of penguins appears on some desolate plain. Like a name or a marker of presence, the footage moves to verify the exploration. Through the swirling snow, Huyghe's machine to call the creature begins to blink and hum. The albino penguin appears and hesitantly approaches the contraption. Standing on the shore, the bird calls to the sky. The sound is oversaturated: a vast electro-orchestral blitz. Elliot Sharp's distorted guitar line crackles across the mix.

When Joshua Cody started working on this sound track, its structure was at first dictated by Huyghe's topographic map of the island. Cody began by literally transferring the spatial parameters of the island onto registers of tone and amplitude. However, the piece soon developed from a literal translation toward the idea of a translation. The catalyst for this shift was the work of American composer Bernard Herrmann: specifically, his 1959 soundtrack to the film adaptation of Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Herrmann was a firm believer in the possibility of using sound to construct space, so that rhythm might become environmental while melodies were used architecturally.[51] This possibility was evidently appealing to Huyghe and Cody, insofar as the primary task was to translate physical space into a sonic duration. Cody explained:

> Originally I did a lot of transcriptions of the Bernard Herrmann scores. I couldn't get my hands on the score, of course nobody can. They're really, really hard to get. I was talking to this guy in Jersey who has them but would only lend them out for the duration of the performance, and I said, "Can I just take a look?" I just went over there and transcribed some of the chords and based some of the music on these chords that he uses. Dyads of chords, where the harmonies are suggested. And only one of those chords is in the present score: it's scored for two contra bass clarinets, I think, so it's so low that it's below the register of the piano. So I know what it is, but I don't think anyone else would recognize it.[52]



Figure 6.15
Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, super 16mm and HD video transferred to HD, 21' 41", 2005. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

Although Cody's orchestration follows Herrmann's low, massive bass lines and dyadic chord structure, the sound of the piece more closely resembles the work of French composer Iannis Xenakis. The reference is apt, as Xenakis consistently sought to translate geometric sequences into musical form in his compositions. As Cody remarked, "Sometimes I think of Xenakis and that kind of translating geometric curves and parabolas into sound, as a direct transposition. But when you look at a form, any kind of visual object, the question of translating that object into music can be done in so many different ways."[53] Huyghe added, "But if you try and translate an object or landscape into music, of course there's time, there's duration, and there are notes. The parameters are different. It's now more like a feeling of mapping."[54] Huyghe's sound designer, Romain Kronenberg, studied at the Centre de Création Musicale Iannis Xenakis in Paris and was well aware of these permutations.[55] In Kronenberg's hands, Xenakis's influence was exacerbated.

In the final moments of the film, the "feeling of mapping" discussed by Cody and Huyghe was given a visual counterpart. As the penguin appears in the ice rink, the luminous fog quickly builds into a *Ganzfeld*. The audio thickens in density and texture, lending an almost viscous quality to the sound of space. When the haze clears, a digital wire-frame diagram of the island is superimposed over the top of the ice rink. Slicing through the fog like a holographic projection, the white outline rotates quickly in the sky above the orchestra before the image finally cuts to black.

However, and despite this climatic superimposition, the equivalences drawn between the sonic duration of the island, its geographic contours, and the filmic representation of that island were not designed to level the exchange value of the constituent parts. Rather, Huyghe turned to the trope of distance in order to prevent the homogenous condensation of event, image, and commentary. This also explains why Huyghe's final film does not resemble a "document."[56] It now becomes clearer that translation without loss does not equate to taking one form and replicating it. In place of mimesis, Huyghe established a system that produced a "deformation of the same into the same" (a homeomorphism).

Moreover, every stage of Huyghe's project was dedicated to maintaining the singularity of the Idea. If we think of these two terms together—distance and singularity—we arrive at a correlate to Alain Badiou's writings on being and the event. Singularity is at the center of Badiou's project. "What any event reveals," he has written, "is that there was always something that had its own identity beyond the count."[57] For Badiou, the event is always unpredictable and includes singular elements that cannot be mapped or named: elements that Huyghe might refer to as no-knowledge zones. When Huyghe speaks of "displacing experiences," he comes close to Badiou's characterization of "evental relations." We could, for example, conceive of Badiou's reference to "something that had its own identity beyond the



Figures 6.16–6.17
Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, super 16mm and HD video transferred to HD, 21' 41", 2005. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.



count" as the singular material left over from the process of translation. This is the material Huyghe was using as a medium in *A Journey That Wasn't*.

It is then of some significance that Badiou has also considered topology as an operative force in understanding the unpredictable, unnameable aspects of an event. Badiou has explicitly referred to topology in relation to what he calls "pure presentation."[58] Pure presentation abstracts all reference to "that which" or "that which is": in other words, representation. And the only system by which pure presentation is realizable is, according to Badiou, mathematics. Only topology, Badiou wrote, "gives meaning to the idea that *a* is in relation with *b*, in a relation which is something other than the strict relation of an equivalence or equality."[59] To suggest a relation between *a* and *b* that is something "other" implicates an alternative discourse between subject and object. This interplay could be ontological—in the relation of subjectivity to objectification—and it can also be understood linguistically, as in Jacques Lacan's writings on topology.[60] Huyghe, however, navigated this terrain without explicit reference to either Lacan or Badiou. Rather, he was indebted to the French author Victor Segalen, who was writing at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Segalen's unfinished *Essay on Exoticism: An Aesthetics of Diversity* was composed in 1907 and published as a collection of notes some years later.[61] Rather than viewing the exotic as a reductive, colonialist fantasy, Segalen highlighted the value of the exotic as a means to access diversity across time: "Exoticism does not only exist in space, but is equally dependent on time," he wrote. "Exoticism is not an adaptation to or of something, it is not the perfect comprehension of something outside one's self that one has managed to embrace fully, but the keen and immediate perception of eternal incomprehensibility."[62] Exoticism is the knowledge of elsewhere, the ability to think otherwise.[63] For Segalen, exoticism encourages what he called "continuous translation," a process that echoes one's presence rather than blurts it out bluntly.

In *A Journey That Wasn't*, the movement between elsewhere and nowhere through a chamber of echoes is embodied by the penguin. Huyghe has variously referred to the penguin as a "beast" and an "alien," and has also conceived it as a kind of Trojan horse that carries the "idea" of the project as a whole.[64] The penguin's shape is then properly subordinate to its behavior: more important than its appearance is its ability to endure spatial and temporal displacement while maintaining the imprints of its past incarnations. In the first stage of the saga, the penguin appears as the object of the search, akin to Segalen's theory that exoticism is recognizable as a desire: a "search for something else."[65] In act two—the performance in Central Park—the penguin is the subject of the work and the object of the spectacle. Huyghe also drew an equivalence between the spectators and the



Figure 6.18
Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, super 16mm and HD video transferred to HD, 21' 41", 2005. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

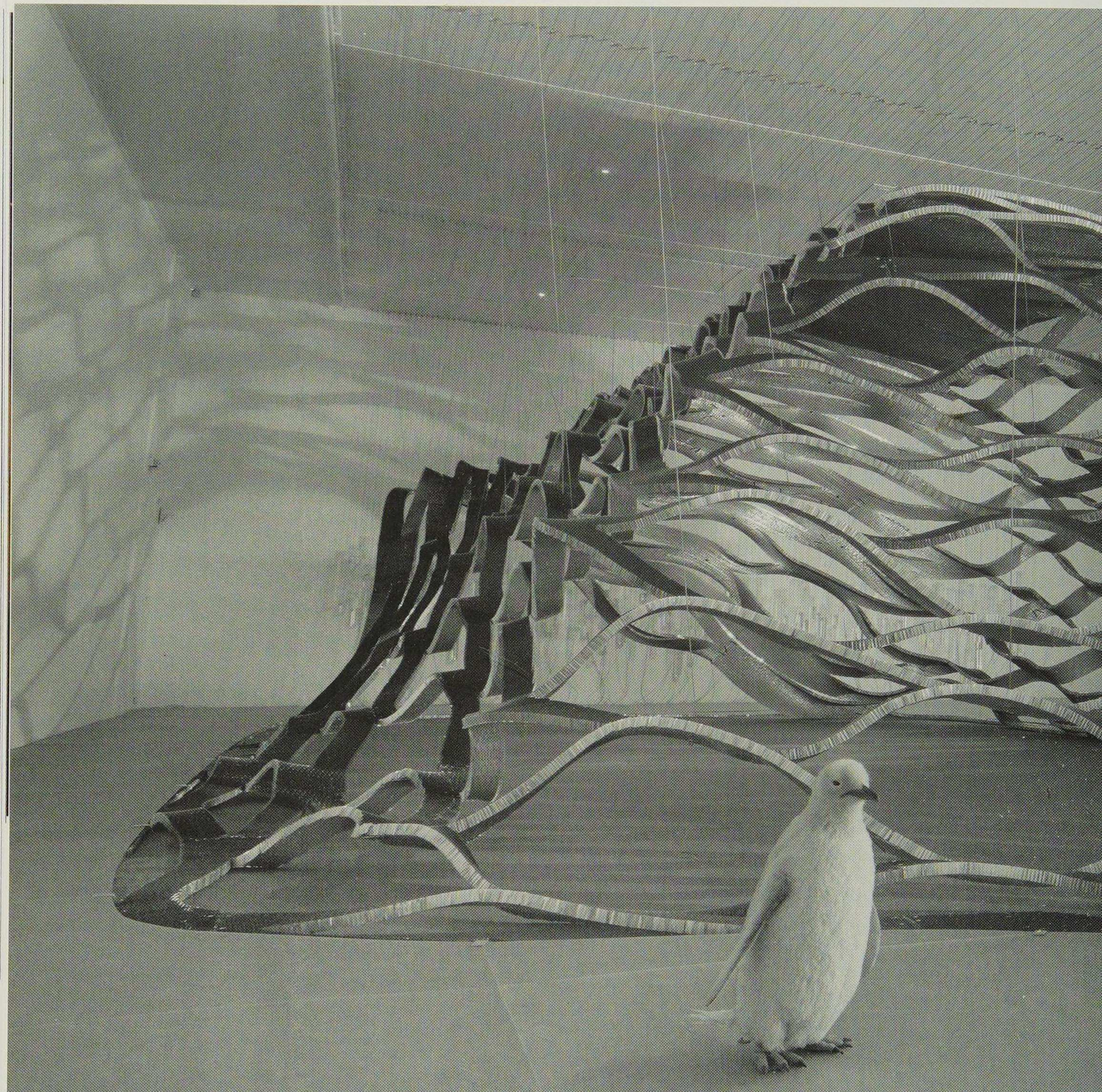


Figure 6.19
Pierre Huyghe with François Roche, *Terra Incognita/Isla Ociosidad*, aluminum honeycomb pavilion, 2005; Pierre Huyghe, *One*, animatronic, 2005. Installation view, MAM/ARC, Paris, 2006. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.



penguin—the light show initially set up to "call" the creature becomes the light that later hypnotizes the New York audience. In the gallery and in Central Park, spectators flocked to the spectacular display just as the penguin was attracted to the sound of its own island.

In the third act, however, Huyghe introduced a final element that atrophied the spectacle and cleared the stage for a tragic denouement. For his exhibition *Celebration Park*, in Paris and London in 2006, Huyghe included an animatronic model of the penguin alongside the film of the journey. This robot was housed in an architectural pavilion titled *Terra Incognita/Isla Ociosidad* (*Unknown Land/Idleness Island*) (2006), designed by François Roche. Roche's gray, sterile cage was based on a topological transformation of the island Huyghe found in Antarctica. Roche used the topography of the island to design a complex, aluminum honeycomb structure that was suspended from the museum's ceiling. The structure was counterbalanced by tubes of ice. If the ice melted, the pavilion would collapse. In the Paris exhibition of *Celebration Park*, the pavilion was walled off from the main gallery and viewable through a small opening cut into the wall. On the floor in front of Roche's pavilion was the penguin. With barely perceptible movements, the creature raised its wings, looked up to the viewers, and blinked. The beast was thus duly domesticated in a fragile, artificial environment akin to a colonial diorama. It was also given a name: *One*. The naming of the creature pays tribute to the local language of the museum. As Huyghe explained, "In Segalen's *Essay on Exoticism*, Otherness is absolute: it is 'the one,' irreducibly wild, the black monolith of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. *A Journey That Wasn't* is the history of a displacement towards a singular idea. The Robot is the idea."[66] Once the idea reaches the museum, however, it is put on ice and uncannily isolated in alien terrain. Huyghe's idea was made to inhabit a double landscape of both clinical confinement and the spectacularly wild.

Huyghe's naming of the creature's homeland—the unnamed island in Antarctica—generated similar tensions. Huyghe's earlier booklet for "L'Expédition scintillante" in Bregenz included a double-page spread on "General Principles in Place Naming" sourced from the official Antarctic Naming Committee:

> A geographical name primarily serves to distinguish the feature from all others; it should be unique in Antarctica. The principal purpose of a name is to supply effective and appropriate means of identifying the feature beyond doubt: commemoration of persons or events is a secondary consideration.[67]

Although the island that Huyghe found in Antarctica was technically unique (Huyghe's "discovery" of its singular inhabitant "verified" this criterion), its singularity did not prevent it from finding equivalences elsewhere. Huyghe had already

worked through similar issues of naming and propriety during the production of *No Ghost Just a Shell*: Annlee's name was applied to numerous different incarnations in a bid to trouble the ability to identify "beyond doubt" the constitution of the sign. In *A Journey That Wasn't*, naming worked against the concept of the "eternally incomprehensible" espoused by Segalen. In his exhibition *Celebration Park*, Huyghe mounted a wall plaque featuring the proposed name for his unnamed island outside the screening chamber of *A Journey That Wasn't*. The matte-black, stone tablet reproduced the proposal form from the UK Antarctic Place Naming Committee in black text. The document was signed by the Association of Freed Time, inscribed with Huyghe's New York street address, and dated November 2005. The name proposed to the committee was Idleness Island (*Isla Ociosidad*). In the section pertaining to the justification for the proposal (a required element on the application form), Huyghe wrote, "Ideas arise from Idleness."

Huyghe was not being arch, and neither was he alone in this proposition. Roland Barthes had made a similar proposal in the 1970s, in an interview that addressed the significance of idleness and laziness in relation to what Huyghe would have recognized as the temporal formatting of work practices.[68] Barthes outlined two forms of laziness, one pertaining to the procrastination that is necessary in order to work (Barthes called this a "shameful laziness") and the other to a "gloriously philosophical" form of laziness that stems from the individual's ability to take hold of their own time. A subject considered lazy does not "mark time" in a required way. Similarly, a subject is deemed idle if the subject's use of their own time is out of sync with established criteria for productivity. Both of these terms ("lazy" and "idle") are then morally laden and are freighted ideologically. Barthes asked, "Have you ever noticed that everyone always talks about the right to leisure activities but never about a right to idleness? I even wonder if there is such a thing as doing nothing in the modern Western world."[69] For Barthes, the prohibition against doing nothing is inseparable from the constitution of the subject, which in turn is bracketed by the dialectic of leisure time versus working in postindustrial economies. Idleness extracts the subject from their constitution in an economy. "In a situation of idleness," Barthes remarked, "the subject is almost dispossessed of his consistency as a subject. He is decentered, unable even to say 'I.' That would be true idleness. To be able, at certain moments, to no longer have to say 'I.'"[70] Although the connection between Barthes's ideas and Huyghe's notion of freed time is strong, the link is most obvious in two projects by the Association of Freed Time from 1999.

The Right to Laziness and *The Boycott Party* (both 1999) were presented, for the first and last time, in the exhibition "Le Procès du temps libre, part 1: Indices" (The Trial of Free Time, Part 1: Clues), at Gallery 1% in Copenhagen. *The Boycott Party* was a collection of postcards that advertised a celebration of Sir Charles

Boycott, who in 1880 "became the object of the earliest known effort to force a change of policy through a concerted refusal to communicate," and whose name was adopted in the campaign against him.[71] The postcards were distributed for free around the city, while in the gallery a large wall text—*The Right to Laziness, 1880*—was displayed with a photograph of a naked young woman lazing in a field of flowers (a clichéd vision of idleness).[72] The exhibition investigated a time that was not properly a component of work, rest, or leisure. Philippe Parreno's description of this time is worth citing in full:

> Rest allows the work force to reconstitute itself. Its time is included in the list of merchandise whose price determines salary. For leisure, it is different. If a basic salary pays for rest, it does not pay for leisure: only bonus salaries pay for leisure. So in the extra time paid for by extra salary, an entity grows that is radically foreign to leisure and rest, and that we can call Otium. *It is distinct from rest, which is merely necessary for the pursuit of work, and leisure, which is the inverted image of work/rest. This is the time in which we find ourselves: the time of free time, time for ourselves.* In all societies in which Otium exists, whether public or clandestine, this is the time of two important gestures: liberty and culture. Otium is more and more likely to take up time from leisure, which is itself taken from rest. *Le Procès du temps libre (The Trial of Free Time)* aims to prove how much all of these entities are foreign to each other, in turn supposing that before such a trial we admit how much we confuse them.[73]

In its ancient Roman usage, *otium* refers to leisure time but also denotes a value that is in opposition to business (*negotium*) and duty (*officium*).[74] The revival of the word maintains these connotations, insofar as his designation was designed to prove the distinctions between the different temporalities at work in contemporary neoliberal capitalist economies. Otium designates a mode of temporality that emerges *in excess* of the matrix of working time and leisure time. However, if the Association of Freed Time was optimistic about the possibility of using otium to expose the governance of contemporary time, I believe that the temporal conditions of immaterial labor and cognitive capitalism compromise this possibility. Further, I suggest that *A Journey That Wasn't* and Huyghe's naming of Idleness Island actively confronts such prohibitions. Although much of Huyghe's work stems from a desire to boycott models of established productivity and index freed time, it also reveals the impossibility of locating the object of its desire.

The search for true idleness can be regarded as a reaction against what Pierre Saint-Amand has called "the regimes that subjugate the body and coerce the individual, that normalize the subject through his participation in productive

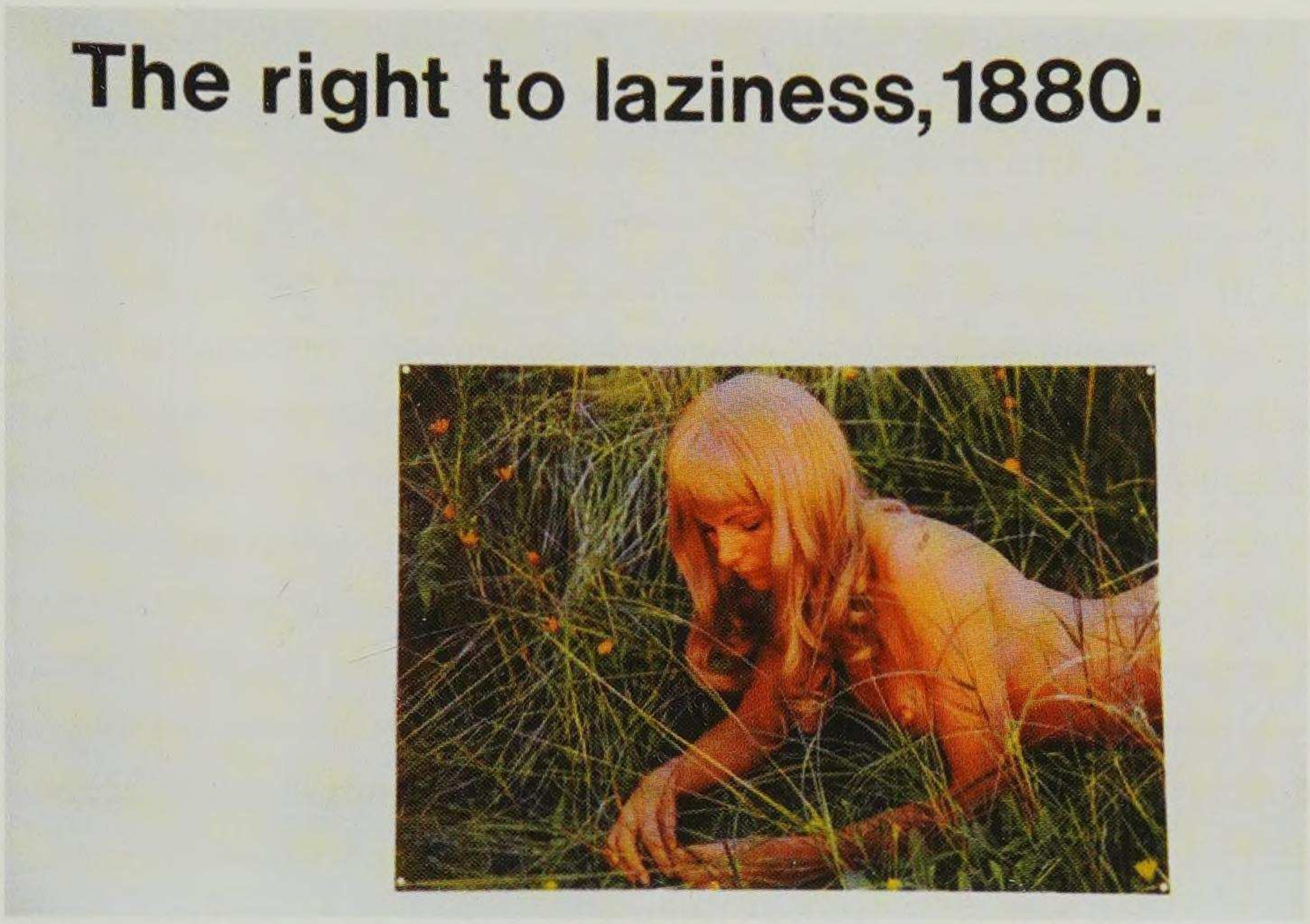


Figure 6.20
The Association of Freed Time, *The Right to Laziness, 1880*, letter transfers and photograph, 1999. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe and ATL.

life, through his accommodation of the world of necessity."[75] Huyghe's work is not freed of these regimes, but it does seek to reveal the conditions of their production. *A Journey That Wasn't* operated within the "official" domain: a scientific research vessel carried the travelers; the findings were presented publicly and then sanctioned by the Antarctic Naming Committee. In taking these elements as a frame, Huyghe was treading a fine line between critique and complicity. But as Huyghe has also argued, "Perhaps critique isn't the only thing we're looking for. Maybe singularity might be what we're after."[76] The implications of this shift are not yet known. It may, for example, be argued that there is an inferred complicity between Huyghe's attraction to topological systems and liberal capitalist economics. Huyghe has described *A Journey That Wasn't* as a "capitalist tale": the penguin as the monster of its own production.[77] However, his project is not a mimesis of economic exchange but a promotion of nonproductivity. Whereas Rosalind Krauss configures the dialectics of capitalism as turning around the double valence of exchange and proximity, Huyghe instead turns to the operators of distance and singularity.[78] Moreover, Huyghe founded his model of equivalences on a paradox that disables its capacity to function: if idleness is a necessary prerequisite for freed time, and the possession of freed time is

oxymoronic, then both freed time and idleness are always in a state of becoming. Neither can find resolution.

Huyghe's trip to Antarctica was undertaken not to capture a new form but rather to find a context for an existing idea (we might say that Huyghe had taken the penguin with him, metaphorically). Huyghe then worked topologically to ensure that "*a* and *b*," the markers on either side of the journey, remained singular, by refusing to level the exchange values of the constituent parts of the equation (the journey does not equal the film, the film is not replaceable by the opera: these acts are only equivalent because of their homeomorphic capacity). But despite Huyghe's harnessing of topology, there was still a strong melancholia that pervaded his project, a melancholic cadence that surged beneath its waves. Although the Idea moved through the wilderness, blinking on and off in different time zones and locations, it was still, in those fragile moments in which it appeared, held apart from itself, forced into a frame, and made to be still. The primary casualty of this enforced stasis is desire, and this is where the tragedy arises. In an interview with Tom Morton in 2006, Huyghe remarked that "when you bring back something, you are losing the alterity, the diversity, in the translation. You need to find a principle of equivalence; otherwise it's a tragedy."[79] Whereas Huyghe's exhibition at Bregenz sidestepped the possibility of tragedy by figuring the exhibition as a *proposal* for future action, in *A Journey That Wasn't*, "that which had been" was incorporated back into Huyghe's work in the form of the deracinated robot penguin and the baptizing of the unnamed. As in classical Greek tragedy, it was the fatal error or flaw in the Idea that determined the course of the narrative, and it was this flaw that cracked its facade.

TOPOLOGICAL HISTORICITY: FOLDING TIME

After Huyghe returned from Antarctica, the Association of Freed Time published an article on the journey in which reality was described as relative and subject to continuous reinvention. Huyghe's project was presented as one such reinvention, in which the travelers "would encounter islands and make them disappear, producing no-knowledge zones that would emerge wherever the capacity of language to seize reality would end. If language fails to recount the experience, an equivalence, topologically identical to the occurrence, has to be invented."[80] The inference that no-knowledge zones are properly outside of language uncannily echoes Gaston de Pawlowski's much earlier account of non-Euclidean space. In 1912, Pawlowski described the non-Euclidean aspects of the fourth dimension: "Words do not exist

that are capable of defining the strange, new sensations experienced. . . . When one reaches the country of the fourth dimension . . . one finds himself blended with the entire universe, with so-called future events as with so-called past events."[81] Although both Pawlowski and Huyghe appear to embrace the positive possibilities of these "strange, new sensations," Huyghe also presents the "blending" of the future and the past into an "eternal now" as potentially problematic, in its erasure of all historical specificities. Clearly, the material from other time zones that often resurfaces in Huyghe's works *holds onto and carries with it* the memory of its past. Huyghe's refusal to smooth over the splinters of history was explicitly foregrounded in his assertion that "it is impossible to catch the reality somewhere else and bring it back."[82] Huyghe's acknowledgment of the futility in attempting to represent or erase one form by recourse to another is clearly elucidated by the heterogeneity of topology over time.

Topological systems can fold time in such a way that the objects of transformation accumulate, rather than negate, the shapes of their past. Once the relations between points of transformation are viewed as temporal as well as spatial, a model of "topological historicity" emerges. This model necessarily foregrounds the value of context and looks to the content that accrues in temporal ellipses. It addresses firstly the way in which the past is engaged by the present and secondly the obfuscation of context over time. Topological historicity demonstrates that situations, narratives, and events have an irrefutable connection with particular times and spaces. We are no longer in the domain of the simulacrum or the palimpsest. The signifiers of topological historicity are decidedly not free floating; instead they consistently index the conditions of their appearance and the formats that govern their behavior. Moreover, topological historicity is based on equivalences rather than replacements. Every form is embedded with a past: the memory of what it once was and the potential for what it could be both remain charged. It is because of this heterogeneity over time that topological historicity remains receptive to the conditions by which a form is brought into being or apprehended at any given moment. By working on an open-ended state of productivity (one might call it rogue productivity), topological historicity then suggests that "progression" is determined by the shape of the structure: how many holes it has, what potential it has for movement. However, unlike structural*ism*, topological historicity might also potentially *look through* the conditions of production—the formats, to use Huyghe's term—to envision the potential for something other. This potential is tied to a conceptualization of time in which past, present, and future states are presented as singular possibilities in a multiplicity of times, as in Borges's garden of forking paths. Rather than supplementing Borges's web of chance, however, in topological historicity the possible trajectories for singular elements

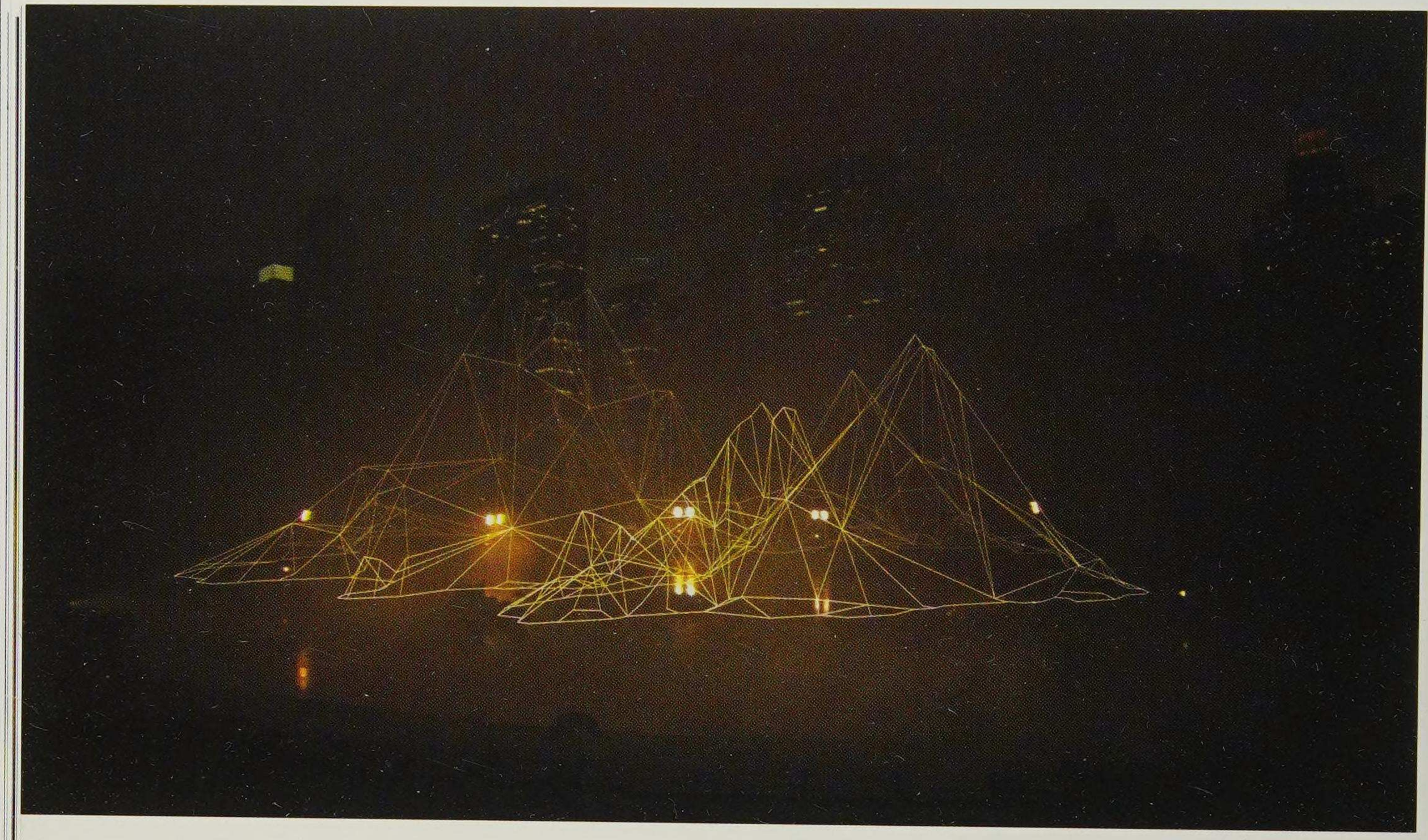


Figure 6.21
Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, super 16mm and HD video transferred to HD, 21' 41", 2005. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

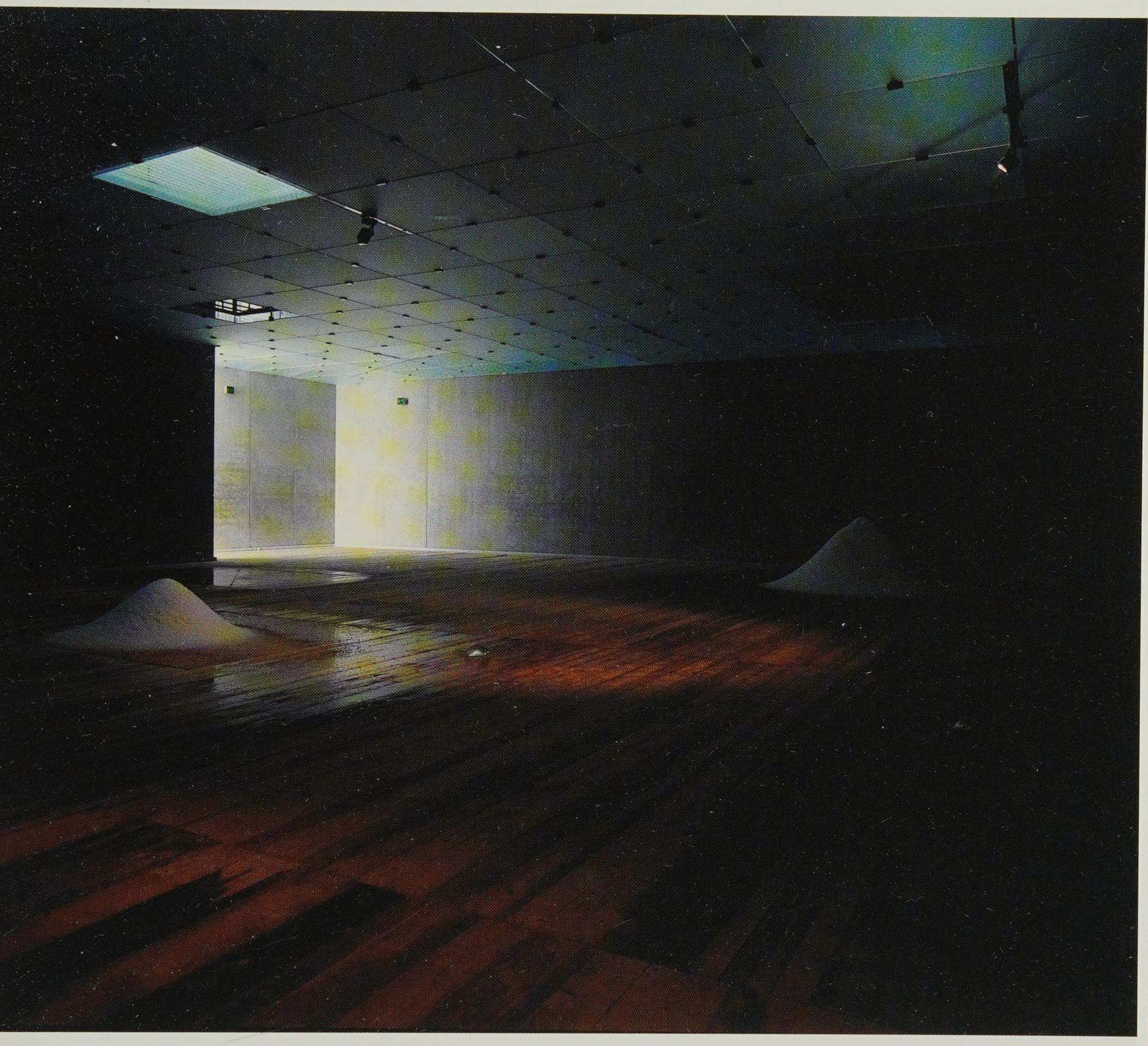


Figure 6.22
Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante: A Musical, Act 1*, 2002.
Installation Kunsthaus Bregenz. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe.

are predicated on folds rather than ruptures, and as such are bound to respect the singular integrity of any given form.

It is through its acknowledgment of different possible time codes that topological historicity enters into a dialogue with fiction. Its composition is predicated on that which is not (yet) known and on the "what ifs" of past trajectories. The kind of narrative conducive to topological historicity can properly be regarded as science-fictional, in that it combines the necessary with the contingent in order to identify alternate pathways. Huyghe has said, "By changing modalities, displacing the narrated and the narrator, the subject and the object, you change the course of history, and the means by which the course of history is governed and apprehended."[83] For Huyghe, changing the course of history is predicated not on ignoring the conditions of production (the narrator and the narrated are still players, but their roles may be altered depending on perspective) or on denying the imprint of the past (as in revisionist history) but on the premise of continuous transformation and the reconstitution of the past in the present.[84]

In Huyghe's work, the rules for transformation are suggested by the condition of forms within certain formats. The process is similar to that of origami. The origami artist begins with a clean sheet of paper: "By folding it in various complex sequences, the paper takes on a recognizable form that contains and is contained by the empty space the paper represented. Contemplating the process of origami reveals a truth that is difficult to imagine about Einstein's ideas concerning space, time and mass."[85] Origami exposes the plastic connection between space and mass, time and material, revealing that space and time are not containers in which objects are charted by reference to an imaginary tessellated grid. In topological systems, the premise is similar but the "paper" is properly a "manifold" that designates a set of points distributed in space and time.

If Michel Foucault saw the ruptures and breaks in historical knowledge as providing a new blueprint for historians in the 1970s, Pierre Huyghe's work suggests an alternate pattern for contemporary historiography. This pattern resembles the blinking signs and topological systems that pulse throughout Huyghe's practice. All visual and audible information is transmitted through waveforms. The appearance of continuity in waves of light and sound is predicated on perceptual parameters and the speed of the observer. Pulsations in signals are determined by altering time codes: if it were possible to travel through time at radically accelerated speeds, light could strobe and sound might be audible in bursts as the troughs in frequencies are altered. In conceiving the patterns of waveforms as analogous to historiographic analysis, it then becomes crucial to view "ruptures" as displacements instead of aporias in time and space. Data is not absent. It is either elsewhere or imperceptible. Waves of information are continuous, but their visibility is reliant

on exposure. The blinking signals that illuminate Pierre Huyghe's works—from *L'Ellipse* to *No Ghost Just a Shell* to *A Journey That Wasn't*—are indicative of shifts in space-time relations that can be perceived only through the alteration of time codes. The methodology for such an alteration can be found in Huyghe's Association of Freed Time, and it may be activated by working through folds—rather than fissures—in the open present. If structures can be folded they can also be unfolded and, most significantly, it is only once the creases of the past return to visibility that a new form might emerge.

NOTES

Introduction: In What Time Do We Live?

1. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, conversation with the author, Castello di Rivoli, June 2004.

2. Pierre Huyghe, "Note of Intent," in Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial* (Munich: Kunstverein; Zurich: Kunsthalle, 2000), 28.

3. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London: Routledge, 2002), 4.

4. Ibid., 31.

5. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

6. Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984), 20.

1 Early Work

1. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

2. Nicolas Bourriaud, conversation with the author, Sydney, June 2004.

3. Pierre Huyghe, in Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Pierre Huyghe: Collaborating on Utopia," *Flash Art International* 34, no. 225 (2002), 77.

4. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

5. Ibid.

6. Jean-Louis Ferrier, "Les Ripoulins amusent la galerie," *Le Point* 779 (24 August 1997), 70; trans. by the author.

7. Alain Vulbeau, "Les Tags, spectres de la jeunesse: Histoire d'une nouvelle pratique urbaine," *Annales de la recherche urbaine* 54 (March 1992).

8. René Ricard, "The Radiant Child," *Artforum* 20 (1981), 42–54.

9. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Stevan Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 102.

10. Armed with a spray can, Shafrazi scrawled "KILL LIES ALL" across the painting. The damage was not permanent, however, as conservators were easily able to remove the graffiti due to the varnish that covered the painting's surface.

11. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

12. Pierre Huyghe, in David Robbins, "Warm Science Fictions," in *Le Château de Turing*, exh. cat., French Pavilion, 49th Biennale of Venice (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2003).

13. Liliana Albertazzi, *Bismuth Huyghe Veilhan* (Milan: Galerie Fac-Simile, 1988), 5; trans. by the author.

14. Pierre Huyghe, *Bismuth, Huyghe, Veilhan* (Villeurbanne: FRAC Rhône-Alpes, 1989), 13–14; trans. by the author.

15. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005. See also Eric Troncy, "There Is Still No Such Thing as French Art," in *Images, objets, scènes: Quelques aspects de l'art en France depuis 1978* (Grenoble: Centre Nationale d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, 1997), 57.

16. Tom McDonough, "City of Cineastes," *Art in America* 94, no. 8 (2006), 61.

17. Nicolas Bourriaud, conversation with the author, Sydney, June 2004.

18. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

19. An alternative title to this work appears in the catalog for the exhibition "Traffic" (1996), in which the piece is referred to as *Chemin (tracé d'une bifurcation)*.

20. Pierre Huyghe, in Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, ed., *Pierre Huyghe* (Milan: Skira, 2004), 171.

21. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006.

22. Guy Debord, as cited in David Pinder, "'Old Paris Is No More': Geographies of Spectacle and Anti-Spectacle," *Antipode* 32, no. 4 (2000), 362.

23. Michel de Certeau, "Practices of Space," in Marshall Blonsky, ed., *On Signs* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 129.

24. Olivier Zahm's 1993 review of *Trajet* also brooded on its spectacular qualities: "The *Trajet* pedestrian provokes an encounter which is televisual, ubiquitous and instantaneous and poses the question, how can we position ourselves in a space which is moving and changing?" Olivier Zahm, "Trajet," *Purple Prose* 4 (1993).

25. Le Corbusier, as cited in Guy Debord, "Situationist Theses on Traffic," *Internationale Situationniste* 3 (November 1959). See also Ken Knabb, ed., *The Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981).

26. Debord, in ibid.

27. Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Malcolm Imrie (London: Verso, 1990), 113.

28. Philippe Parreno, "Evidences to Be Submitted to the Free Time Litigation," in Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial* (Munich: Kunstverein; Zurich: Kunsthalle, 2000), 35.

29. "With the development of capitalism, irreversible time is unified on a world scale. Universal history becomes a reality because the entire world is gathered under the development of this time. But this history, which is everywhere simultaneously the same, is still only the refusal within history of history itself." Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 113.

30. This is, as Huyghe has noted, more like "an Eastern conception, where time is determined by occasions, events, what occurs . . . where there is a temporality or a duration that is inseparable from the coming into being of a form"—seasonal time rather than calendar time. Pierre Huyghe in Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Huyghe, Pierre," *Interviews: Volume 1* (Milan and Florence: Charta, Fondazione Pitti Immagine Discovery, 2003), 478. Huyghe is here referencing the work of Sinologist François Jullien on Eastern conceptions of temporality and aesthetics. See François Jullien, "Interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist," in Nicolas Bourriaud and Jérôme Sans, eds., *Expérience de la durée: Biennale de Lyon* (Paris: Paris Musées, 2005), 58–64.

31. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

32. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 53.

33. Ibid.

34. Thomas Hirschhorn, "Interview with Okwui Enwezor," in *Thomas Hirschhorn: Jumbo Spoons and Big Cake* (Chicago: Renaissance Society and Art Institute of Chicago, 2000), 35.

35. Dirk Snauwaert and Bernhard Bürgi, "The Transformation of Reality, but Only if Mobilized," in Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial*, 167.

36. Dan Graham described his *Alteration to a Suburban House* (1978) as "a billboard that you would see from the highway advertising one of those houses." Graham related this idea of the facade-as-billboard to Robert Venturi, who was "doing houses where the facades were always taken from the surrounding houses as signage . . . the language of the surrounding house facades became part of the signage. . . . So it was like, if you see one billboard after another billboard after another billboard, that makes a kind of sentence, a kind of language." Dan Graham, in Hans Dieter Huber, ed., *Dan Graham Interviews* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 1997), 45.

37. Pierre Huyghe, "Des scenarios pour les temps libres: Interview with Françoise Chaloin," *Documents sur l'art* 9 (Summer 1996), 22.

38. Huyghe in Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 164.

39. Huyghe, "Des scenarios pour les temps libres: Interview with Françoise Chaloin," 22.

40. Olivier Zahm, "Openings Pierre Huyghe," *Artforum* 7, no. 35 (1997), 82.

41. A similar kind of conflation is addressed in Foucault's notion of the heterotopia. See Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16–17 (1986), 22–27. See also Benjamin Genocchio, "Heterotopia and Its Limits," *Transition: Discourse on Architecture* 41 (1993), 33–41.

42. Dan Graham's interest in the "just past" also comes to mind, who in turn has praised Gordon Matta-Clark's ability to "cut away and reveal the just past." Dan Graham, "Legacies of Critical Practice in the 1980s," in Hal Foster, ed., *Discussions in Contemporary Culture* (New York: Dia Art Foundation, 1987), 90.

43. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Althone Press, 1989), 82.

44. Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1988), 89–108.

45. Chromatic continuity between costume and profession was subsequently explored in Huyghe's 1995 series of digital photographs, *Les Affects*. The ten prints pictured workers along with their machinery, or a prop signaling their profession, in matching tones: the garbage man and his truck were both green, the grocer and his storefront orange, etc. As with the billboards, the direction of influence and agency are cast in doubt and if a print is seen in isolation, the point is missed. These prints were accessed courtesy of Galerie Roger Pailhas, Marseille, 2005.

46. Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, 84.

47. Alan Dunn and Godfrey Burke, *Liverpool Billboard Project* (Liverpool: Burke and Dunn, 1999), unpaginated; emphasis in the original.

48. Huyghe in Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 164.

49. Jorge Luis Borges, "The Garden of Forking Paths," in *Labyrinths* (London: Penguin, 1983), 53.

50. Huyghe, in Pia Viewing, "A Conversation between Pierre Huyghe and Pia Viewing," *Paletten* 41, no. 95 (1995), 18.

51. Pierre Huyghe, *Through*, three handwritten, A4 letters and envelopes, 60 x 100 cm framed; twenty-two magazines and newspapers, 1995.

52. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 175.

53. Huyghe, in Viewing, "A Conversation between Pierre Huyghe and Pia Viewing," 18.

54. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 211.

55. Ibid., 197–211.

56. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Continuum, 2001), 71.

57. Ibid.

58. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 173.

59. Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: Gilles Deleuze 1972–1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 55.

60. Zahm, "Openings Pierre Huyghe," 82.

61. Pierre Huyghe, exhibition proposal sourced from Galerie Roger Pailhas archives, Marseille, 2005. Huyghe refers to the project as both "Mobile TV" and "Mobil TV" in his writings.

62. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

63. Zahm, "Openings Pierre Huyghe," 82.

64. Melik Ohanian, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006. The author viewed the footage captured during the *Mobil TV* project at Galerie Roger Pailhas, Marseille.

65. Huyghe, in Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 157.

66. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005. One of the skits, entitled *War Games*, pictured Huyghe wheeling an empty shopping trolley around the empty museum from the perspective of the gallery's surveillance cameras. Huyghe also included Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962) in the broadcast material.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Joe Scanlan, "Let's Play Prisoners: Joe Scanlan on Video Art and Human Relations," *Frieze* 13 (1996), 65.

70. Ibid.

2 The Open Present

1. François Roche, "Note of Intent—François Roche, Architect," in Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial* (Munich: Kunstverein; Zurich: Kunsthalle, 2000), 28.

2. See *Celebration Town Blog*. Available at http://celebrationfl.blogspot.com/2004/05/welcome-to-celebration-florida.html

3. See Douglas Frantz and Catherine Collins, *Celebration, U.S.A.: Living in Disney's Brave New Town* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999).

4. Pierre Huyghe, in George Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," *October* 110 (Fall 2004), 95.

5. Pierre Huyghe, in Françoise Chaloin, "Des scénarios pour les temps libres," *Documents sur l'art*, no. 9 (1996), 24.

6. Pierre Huyghe, "Note of Intent—Pierre Huyghe," in Huyghe, *The Trial*, 33. This rejection of the readymade plan in favor of the incomplete scenario was a quality Huyghe shared with Claude Closky. Since the early 1990s, Closky has been critiquing the lamentable synonymity of ego and product in contemporary consumer culture, albeit with a measure of ironic savagery that shares little in common with Huyghe's works. See Jean-Charles Masséra, *Sex, Art and the Dow Jones* (New York: Lukas and Sternberg, 2003), 42.

7. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 33.

8. Pierre Huyghe, in Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, ed., *Pierre Huyghe* (Milan: Skira, 2004), 242.

9. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 33.

10. François Roche, *@morphous Mutations* (Paris: R&Sie, 2000). Available at http://www.new-territories.com/roche%20text.htm

11. Republished in Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial*, 28–29.

12. Huyghe, in Chaloin, "Des scénarios pour les temps libres," 30.

13. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

14. Pierre Huyghe, "The House or Home," in Huyghe, *The Trial*, 113.

15. Huyghe, in Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," 80.

16. This is the difference between Huyghe's open present and what Jürgen Habermas has described as the modernist desire for an immaculate present or enduring moment. According to Habermas, the aesthetic of modernism is rooted in a changed conception of time. The relentless, forward motion of the avant-garde, obliged to seek out ever more unknowable futures and conquer yet more unoccupied territory, is in Habermas's eyes a "glorification" of novelty that disguises an inability to get a handle on the present. He writes: "The new consciousness of time that finds its way into philosophy with Bergson not only expresses the experience of a mobilized society, it also articulates the longing for an immaculate and enduring present. Modernism, as a self-negating moment, is a 'longing for the true present.'" Jürgen Habermas, "Modernism—an Unfinished Project," in Bryony Cosgrove, ed., *Australian Biennale 1988: From the Southern Cross a View of World Art c. 1940–1988* (Sydney: ABC Enterprises and Biennale of Sydney, 1988), 67.

17. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 33.

18. Even this recent shift in architecture does not habitually recycle or use the traces of the past on site, but more commonly attempts for a concept-based evocation of history in built form. Moreover, "memory architecture" is only occasionally contingent on the physical environs of the structure—the work of Tadashi Kawamata and Daniel Libeskind being the notable exceptions. For a broader consideration of the "return" to memory and history in architecture during the 1990s, see James Young, ed., *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History* (New York: Jewish Museum, Prestel, 1994); Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2003); Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space: Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).

19. Roche, *@morphous Mutations*, unpaginated.

20. Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (London: Verso, 1995).

21. Smooth space was discussed in some detail throughout Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 2003). See also Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 198.

22. A comparison between the architecture of the incomplete and the character of the ruin helps to clarify Huyghe's investment in the former. The ruin is a structure that was once whole but whose use value has since expired. In contrast, the dwelling that remains in a permanent state of construction has no expiry date or teleology. Its potentiality thus remains unlimited purely because it is utopian: suspended without closure. A detailed comparison between Huyghe's interest in open structures and Gordon Matta-Clark's "anarchitecture" would enable closer investigation of these issues. For an excellent analysis of Gordon Matta-Clark's work, see Pamela M. Lee, *Object to Be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), and Gordon Matta-Clark, "Anarchitecture," *Flash Art* (June 1974), 70–71.

23. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 179.

24. Edgar Morin, as cited in Pierre Huyghe, "Recasting the Roles: Pierre Huyghe Interviewed by Jérôme Sans," in *Secession: Pierre Huyghe* (Vienna: Secession, 1999), unpaginated.

25. Ibid.

26. Antonio Negri, *Time for Revolution*, trans. Matteo Mandarini (London: Continuum, 2003), 120.

27. Pierre Huyghe, "Recasting the Roles: Pierre Huyghe Interviewed by Jérôme Sans," in *Secession: Pierre Huyghe*, unpaginated.

28. See Pierre Huyghe, in Julia Garimorth, Hans Ulrich Obrist, and Laurence Bossé, eds., *Celebration Park* (Paris: Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris/ARC; London: Tate Modern, 2006).

29. Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," 88.

30. Daniel Buren, "The Function of the Studio," *October* 10 (1979), 51.

31. Johannes Cladders, "Laboratorium Lascaux," in Hans Ulrich Obrist and Barbara Vanderlinden, eds., *Laboratorium* (Antwerp: Dumont, 2001), 116–118.

32. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 33.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Pierre Huyghe, phone conversation with the author, September 25, 2006.

36. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 113.

37. See, for example, Lucy R. Lippard, ed., *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

38. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

39. The methodology for *Remake* worked to archive the source material, in the manner of archiving discussed by Jacques Derrida: "The archive is not a question of the past. It is a question of the future itself, the question of a response, of a promise, and of a responsibility for tomorrow . . . the archive, if we want

to know what that will have meant, we will only know in times to come. Later on, or perhaps never." Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 16. By remaking Hitchcock's movie, one might even say that Huyghe grasped at that promised moment in which we might "know" what it was that has been preserved.

40. Pierre Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe in Concert," California College of Art Lecture Series, San Francisco, January 22, 2007. Available at http://bampfa.berkeley.edu/podcasts/atc/huyghe; transcript by the author.

41. Pierre Huyghe, in Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster and Pierre Huyghe, "L'État de chantier permanent," *Purple Prose*, no. 9 (Summer 1995); trans. by the author.

42. Jean-Christophe Royoux, "Free-Time Workers and the Reconfiguration of Public Space: Several Hypotheses on the Work of Pierre Huyghe," in Pavel Büchler and Tanya Leighton, eds., *Saving the Image: Art after Film* (Glasgow: Centre for Contemporary Arts, 2005), 180–200.

43. Sigmund Freud, "Screen Memories" (1899), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. Anna Freud and James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1953–1975), 3:299–322.

44. Sigmund Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, trans. James Strachey (London: E. Benn, 1966).

45. Hal Foster, "Obscene, Abject, Traumatic," *October* 78 (Autumn 1996), 109. See also Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the Turn of the Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).

46. Pierre Huyghe actually suggested as much in 1996: "Le film est dépouillé et apparaît donc par moment comme pornographique [The film is stripped and at times appears pornographic]," Pierre Huyghe, "Artist's Statement," in Nicolas Bourriaud, *Traffic* (Bordeaux: CAPC Musée d'art contemporain, 1996), unpaginated; trans. by the author.

47. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

48. Ibid. Huyghe may have been responding to the almost ubiquitous inclusion of *Remake* in exhibitions focusing on art and film in the late 1990s. Many reviews on *Remake* also concentrated on *Rear Window*, including Catsou Roberts, "Pierre Huyghe at Lotte Hammer," *Art in America* 86, no. 12 (1997), and Sue Taylor, "The Man Who Saw Too Much (Alfred Hitchcock)," *Art in America* 89, no. 6 (2001).

49. Huyghe, in Chaloin, "Des scénarios pour les temps libres," 28.

50. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 180.

51. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

52. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005. To "make time falter," or to open the present up to the past via the force of repetition, was also central to Douglas Gordon's 1993 video projection, *24 Hour Psycho*. The year that Huyghe produced *Remake* was also the same year that he was first invited to exhibit alongside Douglas Gordon—in "Moral Maze" at Le Consortium, and in Amsterdam at the exhibition "Shift" at De Appel. On the opening night of "Shift," Gordon staged a performance, dusting his lips with a truth drug and kissing his friends. See Saskia Bos, *Shift* (Amsterdam: De Appel, 1995).

53. Jean-François Lyotard, in his role as curator of the landmark exhibition "Les Immatériaux," described an American version of these architectural "gray zones": "When you drive from San Diego to Santa Barbara, a distance of several hundred kilometres, you go through a zone of 'conurbation.' It is neither town, nor country, nor desert. The opposition between a centre and a periphery disappears. . . . You have to change the car-radio wavelength several times, as you go through several different broadcasting zones. It is more like a nebula where materials (buildings, highways) are metastable states of energy. The streets and boulevards have no façades. Information circulates by radiation and invisible interfaces." Jean-François Lyotard, "Les Immatériaux," trans. Paul Smith, *Art and Text* 17 (1985), 47–57. This is precisely the kind of space that also fascinated Robert Smithson. See Robert Smithson, "A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey," in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 68–74.

54. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 113.

55. The show was called "Perfect!" at Galerie Mot & Van den Boogaard, and was curated by Georges Rey, who was lecturing on video and new technologies at Le Magasin, Grenoble, at the time. The author viewed *Les Incivils* courtesy of Galerie Roger Pailhas, Marseille.

56. Pierre Huyghe, email to the author, New York, February 2012.

57. In Pasolini's film, the text reads: "The road begins when the journey ends."

58. Huyghe, in Chaloin, "Des scénarios pour les temps libres," 22.

59. Of this transition, Huyghe has said, "I filmed a community residence that had been in a skeletal condition for more than 20 years, and I replaced that scene at the very moment of the death of an Italian communist. The meaning of this event is thereby activated." Huyghe refers to a moment in Pasolini's film in which the narrative is interrupted by the insertion of footage from Palmiro Togliatti's funeral. Togliatti was the leader of the Italian Communist Party and a long-term adversary of Pasolini: it was Togliatti who was responsible for expelling Pasolini from the party the basis of his sexuality. Pasolini was then twenty-six years old. When Togliatti died on August 16, 1964, over one million people attended his funeral in Rome. For *Uccellacci e uccellini*, Pasolini appropriated black-and-white newsreel footage of crowds gathered in the streets for Togliatti's funeral, and inserted it into his final edit. The travelers seemingly navigate around these images, not through them. In contrast, Huyghe's remake replaces this footage of the funeral with imagery of abandoned houses under construction. Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

60. Ibid.

61. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Heretical Empiricism*, ed. Louise Barnett (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 200.

62. Ibid., 205; emphasis in the original.

63. Ibid., 204; emphasis in the original.

64. See Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans. Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), and Christian Metz, *Language and Cinema*, trans. Donna Jean Umiker-Sebeok (The Hague: Mouton, 1974).

65. Fabio Vighi, "Beyond Objectivity: The Utopian in Pasolini's Documentaries," *Textual Practice* 16, no. 3 (2002), 507.

66. Pasolini, *Heretical Empiricism*, 200.

67. Guy Debord, "Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life" (1961), in Ben Highmore, ed., *The Everyday Life Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002), 37.

68. Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 401.

69. Ibid.

70. Giuliana Bruno, "Heresies: The Body of Pasolini's Semiotics," *Cinema Journal* 30, no. 3 (1991), 33.

71. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 114.

72. Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," 96.

73. Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Observations on the Long Take," *October* 13 (1980), 3–6. See also Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Observations on the Sequence Shot," in *Heretical Empiricism*, 233–237.

74. This essay was a major inspiration behind Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno's feature film *Zidane* (2006).

75. Pasolini, "Observations on the Long Take," 4.

76. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

77. Pasolini, "Observations on the Long Take," 4.

78. Jan Estep, "Action: An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," *New/Art Examiner* (July/August 2000), 33.

79. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 33.

80. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

3 A Movie Navigated by Stops

1. Pierre Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe in Concert," California College of Art Lecture Series, San Francisco, January 22, 2007. Available at http://bampfa.berkeley.edu/podcasts/atc/huyghe; transcript by the author.

2. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

3. Neither Galerie Roger Pailhas nor Marian Goodman Gallery are in possession of *Bruxelles-le Caire Soundtrack* or *Parallel Time Soundtrack*. Moreover, although a few photographs were produced for *Extended Holidays*, *V.I. Antiope*, and *Dubbing*, very little documentation has survived for *Les Passagers*. The author viewed *Dubbing* courtesy of Marian Goodman Gallery archives, New York.

4. Rancière uses this term frequently. For a good explanation, see "The Janus-Face of Politicized Art: Jacques Rancière in Interview with Gabriel Rockhill," in Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (New York: Continuum, 2004), 49–67.

5. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006.

6. Philippe Parreno, *Speech Bubbles* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2001); trans. by the author.

7. See Nicolas Bourriaud, *Esthétique relationnelle* (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 1998). See also Bennett Simpson, "Public Relations: Bennett Simpson Talks with Nicolas Bourriaud," *Artforum* 39, no. 8 (2001), 47, and Nicolas Bourriaud, "Real-Time Human Relations: Les relations en temps réel," *Art Press*, 219 (1996), 52.

8. Nicolas Bourriaud, "An Introduction to Relational Aesthetics," in Nicolas Bourriaud,

Traffic (Bordeaux: CAPC Musée d'art contemporain, 1996), unpaginated.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial* (Munich: Kunstverein; Zurich: Kunsthalle, 2000), 183.

12. Lionel Bovier, "The Cinematographic Paradigm," in John Armleder, ed., *Never Say Never: Art Today* (Zurich: Offizin, 1996), 20.

13. Bourriaud, *Traffic*, unpaginated. In a 1963 interview, Roland Barthes spoke of the absence of the "relational" mode in contemporary cultural forms. Barthes remarked, "There is a sort of resignation evinced by modern works when faced with the interhuman, the interpersonal relationship. The great movements of ideological emancipation, let's say, frankly, Marxism—have passed over private persons; doubtless things could not have been otherwise. No great ideology, no great utopia is responding to this need today. We've had a whole literature of science-fiction utopias, but the kind of micro-utopia that consists in imagining psychological or relational utopias simply doesn't exist. But if the structuralist law of the rotation of needs and forms applies here, we should soon arrive at a more existential art." Roland Barthes, "On Film," in *The Grain of the Voice: Interviews 1962–1980* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 24.

14. Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods (Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2002).

15. Ben Lewis, "Relational Art: Is It an Ism?," *Art Safari*, BBC Four, London, 2004.

16. Bourriaud, *Traffic*, unpaginated.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas and Sternberg, 2002).

21. Bourriaud, *Traffic*, unpaginated.

22. See Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," *Artforum*, no. 5 (June 1967), 12–23. An excellent analysis of Fried's notion of theatricality and "presentness" can be found in Pamela M. Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 37–51.

23. Molly Nesbit has said, "When Nicolas Bourriaud writes his book on relational aesthetics he is in effect picking up the threads of older questions of Marxist aesthetics and social relations in the arts . . . the threads of those questions about social relations as they have been worked into the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, or the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, or the talks he is having with his artist friends. Because he's in the thick of things, with Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno. It's a book written from inside the gaps of a larger, lived experience. It's not meant to exist as an analytical model, which I think worries some people on this side of the Atlantic now that it's been translated into English. It's not meant to be a 'theory.' It's not meant to produce a central, authoritative law complete with judges. But it is meant to relate a set of ideas, to move in the mix of a movement that keeps looking for the possibility of the ordinary, unalienated life, by any means necessary." Molly Nesbit, "Pierre Huyghe," Robert Lehman Public Lecture Series, Dia:Chelsea, New York, January 7, 2004. Audio recordings courtesy of Dia:Chelsea archives; transcript by the author.

24. Harald Szeemann in Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Mind over Matter: Hans Ulrich Obrist Talks with Harald Szeemann," *Artforum* 35, no. 3 (November 1996), 75.

25. Bourriaud, *Traffic*, unpaginated.

26. As critic Walter Grasskamp has argued, "*When Attitudes Become Forms* (1969) had already proved that not only artists but also art mediators can become stars of the art world if they present the right artists at the right time in the right context. Fascinated by the way modern artists work without commissions or reservations, Szeemann discovered the artistic sides of his activities as mediator and emphasized them—half art historian, half visionary, in his theoretical concepts also." Walter Grasskamp, "For Example, Documenta, or How Is Art History Produced?," in Reesa Greenberg and Sandy Nairne, eds., *Thinking about Exhibitions* (London: Routledge, 1996), 69.

27. Nicolas Bourriaud, in Stretcher, "Nicolas Bourriaud and Karen Moss," Stretcher / San Francisco Art Institute, October 18, 2002. Available at http://www.stretcher.org/features/nicolas_bourriaud_and_karen_moss.

28. Eric Troncy, "Discourse on Method," in *Surface de réparations* (Dijon: FRAC de Bourgogne, 1995), 53.

29. Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, as cited in Troncy, "Discourse on Method," 53.

30. The understanding of the exhibition as an artistic endeavor in and of itself has a rich history. One 1955 advertisement for an Independent Group exhibition at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts stated that "an Exhibit is a game, an artwork, an environment preplanned, individuated, verbalized by Richard Hamilton, Victor Pasmore, Lawrence Alloway, to be played, viewed, populated." Cited in Alex Coles, "Curating: Then and Now," *Art Monthly*, no. 275 (April 2004), 4. Huyghe's generation became familiar with artistic occupation of the exhibition format through numerous group shows held in France during the 1980s and 1990s, such as "A Pierre à Marie, une exposition en travaux," Paris, 1983; "Ozone," Centre d'Art Contemporain APAC, Nevers, 1989; "No Man's Time," Villa Arson, Nice, 1991; "Il faut construire l'hacienda," Centre for Contemporary Creation, Tours, 1991; "Domorama," La Criée Contemporary Art Centre, Rennes, 1993.

31. Huyghe, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006.

32. See Mary Jane Jacob, ed., *Culture in Action: A Public Art Program of Sculpture Chicago* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995), and Mary Jane Jacob, ed., *Places with a Past: New Site-Specific Art at Charleston's Spoleto Festival* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1991). See also Viktor Misiano, "Confidential Community vs. the Aesthetics of Interaction," in Irwin, *East Art Map: Contemporary Art and Eastern Europe* (London: Afterall, 2006), 456–465; and Claire Bishop, ed., *Participation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

33. Liam Gillick, "Contingent Factors: A Response to Claire Bishop's 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics,'" *October* 115 (Winter 2006), 96.

34. See the interview "The Janus-Face of Politicized Art," in Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 49–67.

35. Pierre Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe on His Work: Ateliers d'artistes de la Ville Marsiglia," in Thierry Ollat, ed., *Europarte: Cinque giovani proposte per la Fondazione Bevilacqua La*

Masa (Venice: Arsenale Editrice, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Venezia, 1997), 31.

36. See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). See also Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, trans. Christopher S. Wood (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; New York: Zone Books, 1991), in which Panofsky considers the relation between haptic and optic perspective.

37. Alan Williams, "Is Sound Recording Like a Language?," *Yale French Studies* 60 (1980), 52.

38. Charles O'Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound: Technology and Film Style in France and the U.S.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

39. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 88.

40. The post-script scenario is transcribed after a film's production, and includes only dialogue and stage directions.

41. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 42.

42. Neither this recording nor the booklet is listed in Marian Goodman's gallery holdings, and no copies were found at Galerie Roger Pailhas in Marseille.

43. Philippe Parreno, "Evidences to Be Submitted to the Free Time Litigation," in Huyghe, *The Trial*, 33.

44. Carsten Höller, "Carsten Höller Interviewed by Jessica Morgan," in Jessica Morgan, ed., *Common Wealth* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), 71.

45. Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe in Concert," transcript by the author.

46. Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, 50.

47. Ibid.

48. Nadar, as cited in James Lastra, *Sound Technology and the American Cinema: Perception, Representation, Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 44.

49. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 114.

50. See Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Heretical Empiricism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

51. Gilles Deleuze, "Life as a Work of Art," in *Gilles Deleuze: Negotiations 1972–1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 96.

52. Pierre Huyghe, "La Voix silencieuse et le paysage du récit," in Jérôme Sans, ed., *1 Minute Scenario* (Saint-Cloud: Association Le Printemps de Cahors, 1997), 32.

53. Huyghe also used the following excerpt from *2001: A Space Odyssey* in *Multiscénarios pour une sitcom* (1996): "Arrête, Dave! Arrête, Dave. Je t'en supplie, Dave. Dave? Arrête. Dave. Je le sens. Je le sens se vider. Ma mémoire s'en va. J'en sui certain." French postproduction script of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, sourced from Huyghe's studio archives.

54. Huyghe, "La Voix silencieuse et le paysage du récit," 32.

55. Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe on His Work," 33.

56. The displacement of the narrative off screen was also a feature of Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, a film full of hypotheses that are unsupported by visual evidence ("In which room do you think he cuts her up? The bathroom of course"). The descriptions of Thorwald's actions are predominantly verbal, spoken while the characters are pictured staring out of the window/frame. For the most

part, the camera rarely films anything by way of clues, and the narrative develops through connections between a series of absent (because unseen) events.

57. See Xènia Martínez, "Film Dubbing: Its Process and Translation," in Pilar Orero, ed., *Topics in Audiovisual Translation* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2004), 5.

58. Henri Béhar, "Cultural Ventriloquism," in Atom Egoyan and Ian Balfour, eds., *Subtitles: On the Foreignness of Film* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004). See also Abé Mark Nornes, "For an Abusive Subtitling," *Film Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (1999), 17–34.

59. Rosa Agost, "Translation in Bilingual Contexts: Different Norms in Dubbing Translation," in Orero, *Topics in Audiovisual Translation*, 67.

60. Egoyan and Balfour, *Subtitles*, 26.

61. Pierre Huyghe, "La Voix silencieuse et le paysage du récit," 33.

62. For a discussion of "rolling subtitles" in the American media see Eric Cazdyn, "A New Line in the Geometry," in Egoyan and Balfour, *Subtitles*, 402–420.

63. Roland Barthes, "An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative," *New Literary History: On Narrative and Narratives* 6, no. 2 (1975), 237–272.

64. Jean-Christophe Royoux, "Free Time Workers and the Reconfiguration of Public Space: Several Hypotheses on the Work of Pierre Huyghe," in *Saving the Image: Art after Film* (Glasgow: Centre for Contemporary Arts; Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University, 2005), 187.

65. Ibid., 188.

66. Henri Béhar, "Cultural Ventriloquism," in Egoyan and Balfour, *Subtitles*, 82.

67. Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe on His Work: Ateliers d'artistes de la Ville Marsiglia," 32.

68. Huyghe, *The Trial*, 88.

69. Ibid., 84.

70. Žižek wrote: "One should not mistake reality for fiction—one should be able to discern, in what we experience as fiction, the hard kernel of the Real which we are only able to sustain if we fictionalize it." Slavoj Žižek, "The Foreign Gaze That Sees Too Much," in Egoyan and Balfour, *Subtitles*, 291. See also Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

71. Jean Baudrillard, "The Murder of the Real," in Julia Witwer, ed., *The Vital Illusion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 80.

72. Žižek, "The Foreign Gaze That Sees Too Much," 291.

73. Adorno's letters to Benjamin explicitly address Benjamin's development of the dialectical image. See Theodor Adorno, "Letter to Walter Benjamin: Correspondence from Adorno to Benjamin," *New Left Review* 1, no. 81 (1973), 55–80. See also Cadava's poetic meditation on the dialectical image in the media landscape: Eduardo Cadava, "Lapsus Imaginis: The Image in Ruins," *October* 96 (Spring 2001), 35–60.

74. Nöel Ravaud, "Absentéisme et autres troubles de la resemblance," *Trouble Magazine*, no. 1 (Paris: 2002), unpaginated; trans. by the author.

75. Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe on His Work," 32.

76. Bakhtin as cited in Maurizio Lazzarato, "Dialogism and Polyphony," trans. Alberto Toscano, in Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, eds., *No Ghost Just a Shell* (Eindhoven: Van Abbe Museum; Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2003), 69.

4 Figures of Speech

1. Philippe Parreno, in Pierre Huyghe and Philippe Parreno, eds., *No Ghost Just a Shell* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2003), 24.

2. Pierre Huyghe, "Recasting the Roles: Pierre Huyghe Interviewed by Jérôme Sans," *Secession: Pierre Huyghe* (Vienna: Secession, 1999), unpaginated.

3. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

4. Reuters, "Disney May Be Grumpy: French Snow Due Dough," in *Variety Magazine Online* (New York: 1996). Available at http://www.variety.com/article/VR1117466026?refCatId=38

5. Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial* (Munich: Kunstverein; Zurich: Kunsthalle, 2000), 185.

6. Pierre Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe in Concert," California College of Art Lecture Series, San Francisco, January 22, 2007. Available at http://bampfa.berkeley.edu/podcasts/atc/huyghe; transcript by the author.

7. The entire act can be found online at www.legifrance.gouv.fr

8. See Article Six of the World Intellectual Property Organization's Performances and Phonograms Treaty, introduced on December 20, 1996, as cited in Cyrill P. Rigamonti, "Deconstructing Moral Rights," *Harvard International Law Journal* 47, no. 2 (2006), 358.

9. See Sam Ricketson and Megan Richardson, *Intellectual Property: Cases, Materials and Commentary* (Sydney: LexisNexis Butterworths, 2005), and Kate McNeill, "Art: A Form of Speech, but Not Like Any Other?," *The Drawing Board: An Australian Review of Public Affairs* 3, no. 3 (2002), 119–129.

10. Huyghe put it slightly differently: "This is the story of a person who had shared her voice with an imaginary character. But Snow White did not keep her word. It is a story about listening. Could [Dolène] trust a picture in the same way that Snow White trusted the witch? The happy ending is the fact that, by winning her case, she really becomes Snow White." Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

11. Maria-Christina Villaseñor, "Expansive Terrains: Pierre Huyghe," in *The Hugo Boss Prize 2002* (New York: Solomon Guggenheim Foundation, 2002), 66.

12. Frank Caruso (*Blue Velvet* producer), as interviewed in Jeffrey Schwartz, *Mysteries of Love* (DVD MGM/UA, United States, 2002).

13. Huyghe, "Recasting the Roles: Pierre Huyghe Interviewed by Jérôme Sans."

14. See Antonella Corsani, "Production de savoirs et nouvelles formes d'action politique: L'Expérience des Intermittents en France," *Transversal*, no. 4 (2006). Available at http://eipcp.net/transversal/0406/corsani/fr

15. See Thierry Baudouin, "Les Coordinations des métiers au territoire de la ville," *Eurozine* (August 2004). Available at http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-08-18-baudouin-fr.html

16. Laser Posse Sapienza Pirata, "The Cognitariat Rises across Neuropa: Intermittent Labor, Cognitive Work and the Dark Side of EU-style Human Capital," in *Greenpepper Magazine* (Amsterdam, 2005).

17. Antonio Negri, *Time for Revolution*, trans. Matteo Mandarini (London: Continuum, 2003), 125. See also Maurizio Lazzarato, "From Capital-Labor to Capital-Life," trans. Valerie Fournier, Akseli Virtanen, and Jussi Vähämäki, *Ephemera: Theory of the Multitude* 4, no. 3 (2004), 187–208.

18. Many of Bakhtin's surviving writings are translations of manuscripts written in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Most of the original texts were unfinished, their pages missing or damaged. Translators of Bakhtin's works consistently preface their volumes with disclaimers, pointing to their reconstructive roles and generative impact on the text. Bakhtin scholarship is further complicated by the questions that hang over the authorship and provenance of the manuscripts: his works were frequently left unsigned, published under the names of his friends, coauthored, or constructed out of dialogues between Bakhtin and his colleagues. The conditions under which Bakhtin's words now appear serve to support his philosophies on authorship and speech. See Craig Brandist, David Shepherd, and Galin Tihanov, eds., *The Bakhtin Circle: In the Master's Absence* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

19. On prosumers see Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams, *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything* (New York: Portfolio, 2006).

20. Pamela M. Lee provides a good précis of the *longue durée* in relation to artistic practice in *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 303–304.

21. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, ed. Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov, trans. Vadim Liapunov (Austin: Texas University Press, 1993), 2.

22. Ibid., 30; emphasis in the original.

23. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson, trans. Vern M. McGee (Austin: University of Texas, 1986), 122.

24. Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, 3.

25. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, 87.

26. Ken Hirschkop, *Mikhail Bakhtin: An Aesthetic for Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 16.

27. As cited in Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 109.

28. Excerpt from a guide for French jurors, as cited in ibid., 110.

29. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005. See also Maurizio Lazzarato, "Dialogism and Polyphony," trans. Alberto Toscano, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 58–73.

30. Aside from a manual, a series of photographs, and an exhibition, *Temporary School* had few material manifestations. It was initially intended to be an ongoing project designed to generate an alternate pedagogy, but the endeavor has since been shelved.

31. See Mathieu Copeland, ed., *The In Between: Anna Sanders Films* (Dijon, France:

Les presses du réel; Newcastle, England: Forma, 2003).

32. Philippe Parreno and Pierre Huyghe, *Anna Sanders: l'histoire d'un sentiment* (Paris: Anna Sanders Films, 1998), unpaginated.

33. Ibid.

34. "A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo . . . the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, 'and . . . and . . . and.' To establish a logic of the AND, overthrow ontology, do away with foundations, nullify endings and beginnings." Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 25.

35. Ibid., 99.

36. Roland Barthes, "The Third Meaning: Research Notes on Some Eisenstein Stills," in *Image, Music, Text*, ed. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana/Collins, 1977), 65.

37. Ibid., 61.

38. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

39. Pierre Huyghe, *L'Ellipse* (Porto: Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Portugal, 1998), unpaginated.

40. Wim Wenders and Dennis Hopper, "Director's Commentary," in Wim Wenders, *The American Friend* (USA 1977). Distributed on DVD in Australia by Madman Entertainment Pty Ltd.

41. Ibid.

42. Huyghe, *L'Ellipse*, unpaginated. What is Huyghe's fascination with the 1970s? Perhaps the attraction is something like Douglas Gordon's pull toward the 1960s in works such as *24 Hour Psycho* (1993) and particularly *Something between My Mouth and Your Ear* (1994), in which Gordon compiled a mix of pop songs from 1965 and 1966 that his mother might have listened to while he was in her womb. Huyghe's investment in the 1970s may draw on similar sentiments—I suspect he returns to the signs from these times not only for their integral role in French politics post-1968 but for their potential to act as a kind of biographical border map.

43. Huyghe's use of architecture as a historical marker is persistent. *Light Conical Intersect* (1997) was a film projection of the documentation of Gordon Matta-Clark's architectural "cut" *Conical Intersect* (1974), in Les Halles, Paris. The documentation was projected onto the space in which the original work was produced. Although the building in which Matta-Clark had staged his intervention had been torn down, Huyghe's reprojection of the film restored the spatial coordinates of the image. On Gordon Matta-Clark's original piece, see Lisa Le Feuvre, "The W-Hole Story," *Art Monthly*, no. 255 (April 2002), 12–15.

44. Adrian Dannatt, "Where Fact and Fiction Meet: Artist's Interview Pierre Huyghe," *The Art Newspaper* (New York, 2002). Available at http://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/article.asp?idart=4510

45. Ibid.

46. Daniel Birnbaum, "Stickup Artist: The Art of Pierre Huyghe," *Artforum* 39, no. 3 (2000), 133. This text formed the basis of Birnbaum's consideration of *The Third Memory* in his 2005 book *Chronology* (New York: Lukas and Sternberg, 2005).

47. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

48. Huyghe, in Dannatt, "Where Fact and Fiction Meet." Huyghe also commissioned Jean-Charles Masséra to write a text to accompany the exhibition. This book was a remake of Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* that paraphrased Debord's words in a reconstitution of Wojtowicz's story. Jean-Charles Masséra, *The Third Memory and La Leçon de Stains* (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou; Chicago: Renaissance Society, 2000).

49. Masséra, *The Third Memory and La Leçon de Stains*, 95.

50. Tom McDonough, "No Ghost," *October* 110 (Fall 2004), 107–130.

51. Jerry Saltz, "History Lesson," *Village Voice* 7, no. 47 (February 20, 2001), 67.

52. Michael Rush, "Pierre Huyghe at Marian Goodman," *Art in America* 89, no. 6 (2001), 122.

53. I refer to Annlee in the feminine for the sake of convenience, although as Huyghe has noted, "It's not a she, it's an it." Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 16.

54. Parreno, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 19.

55. San Francisco MoMA Press Room, "No Ghost Just a Shell: Press Release," 2003.

56. Pierre Joseph initiated a similar program designed to extend the life of characters in 1991: "The series of 'Characters to be reactivated' appears as living sculptures for the opening of the exhibition. During the exhibition, the living character is replaced by its representation, a unique print. These prints work as representations but also as tools as they are the certificates and instructions for the reactivations of the characters." Available at www.airdeparis.com/artists

57. Hans Ulrich Obrist, "How Annlee Changed Its Spots," in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 257.

58. Luc Saucier, "Assignation of Rights Contract Governing the Author of Annlee," in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 310–314.

59. Huyghe, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 24.

60. See Neil Postman, "Reach Out and Elect Someone," in Karen Jacobsen, ed., *Let's Entertain: Life's Guilty Pleasures* (Minneapolis: Walker Arts Center, 2000), 207–227. See also Joshua Gamson, "Celebrity, Democracy, Power, and Play," in ibid., 245–272.

61. *Gamer Revolution* (Red Apple Media: ABC Television, Melbourne), June 28, 2007. Transcript by the author.

62. Ibid.

63. Michel de Certeau, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 145.

64. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 105.

65. Ibid., 104.

66. Jan Verwoert, "Copyright, Ghosts and Commodity Fetishism," in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 187.

67. Ibid.

68. Carla Hesse, as cited in ibid., 186.

69. Art Libre, "Copyleft Attitude Free Art License," available at http://artlibre.org/licence/lal/en

70. Ibid.

71. Annlee's status as a "free offering" underpins Marko Karo's reading of *No Ghost Just a Shell* as a gift economy (in the spirit of Bataille and Mauss). See Marko Karo, "The Art of Giving and Taking: A Figurative Approach to Copyright Law," in Morten Rosenmeier and Stina Teilmann, eds., *Art and Law* (Denmark: DJØF Publishing, 2005), 112.

72. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

73. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, conversation with the author, Castello di Rivoli, June 2004.

74. Certeau, *Heterologies*, 147.

75. Oshii's title refers to British philosopher Gilbert Ryle's description of Cartesian dualism as the "ghost in the machine," "ghost" meaning the soul.

76. *Ghost in the Shell*, dir. Mamoro Oishii, 82 mins. (Japan, 1995). Transcript by the author.

77. When Hans Ulrich Obrist spoke with Jean-Claude Ameisen (a medical doctor and expert on programmed cell death) about the Annlee project, similar questions arose. "The problem with Annlee," Ameisen remarked, "is that it's very difficult to die when one is not alive. When it comes to it, the question is not is Annlee alive or not alive, but can something live without death being present?" Jean-Claude Ameisen, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 262.

78. Stephen Feeke, "John Logie Baird and Stooky Bill: Ventriloquism in Early Television," in Stephen Feeke and Jon Wood, *With Hidden Noise: Sculpture, Video and Ventriloquism* (London: Henry Moore Institute, 2004), 7.

79. David Goldblatt, *Art and Ventriloquism* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 54.

80. Philippe Parreno, *Fade to Black*, available at http://www.airdeparis.com/parreno/fade/fade.htm

81. Dean Inkler, "Défense de la lecture: Le Procès de Pol Pot," *Art Press*, no. 21 (2000), 1–6.

82. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006. See also Nancy Princenthal, "Reasons to Be Happy: Huyghe's Celebration Park," *Art in America* 94, no. 8 (2006), 125–131.

83. See David Redhead, *Products of Our Time* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2000).

84. David Joselit, "An Allegory of Criticism," *October* 103 (2003), 12.

85. Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: Gilles Deleuze 1972–1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 111.

86. Annlee's metaphysical predicament recalls that of the reporter David Locke in Michelangelo Antonioni's 1975 film *The Passenger*. Locke assumes the identity of a dead man, David Robertson. By stealing Robertson's passport, name, and diary, Locke seeks to escape from the dissatisfactions of his own life in which "every situation, every event, is translated into the same old codes." However, in following Robertson's diary and keeping his appointments, Locke is forced to acknowledge that the sum of a person always escapes legal constitution (a new name is not a passport to freedom) and that actions can generate effects without any mark of their significance.

87. Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 45.

88. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 23. Huyghe discussed this idea with Agamben when they met in Venice in 2005.

89. Ibid.

90. Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*, 166.

91. Huyghe, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 23.

92. Rob Giampietro, "The Problem with Posters," *Dot Dot Dot*, no. 7 (2003), unpaginated.

93. In Spanish, *compostela* also translates as the Milky Way. Luis Buñuel invoked the double meaning of the word in his 1974 feature film *The Milky Way*, based loosely around a group of pilgrims on the Way of St. James. Their journey is strikingly reminiscent of the time travels in Pasolini's *Hawks and Sparrows*.

94. Huyghe, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 24.

95. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

96. Huyghe, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 25.

97. Ibid., 26.

98. The original French title is *Le Fond de l'air est rouge*.

99. Parreno, in Huyghe and Parreno, *No Ghost Just a Shell*, 289.

100. "Tout l'intérêt est de se demander comment cette chose qui est au plus bas de l'échelle du signifiant peut, soudain, faire histoire." Pierre Huyghe, "Ann Lee: En quête d'auteurs, conversation entre Pierre Huyghe, Vincent Dieutre et Christian Merlhiot," in *Pointligne-plan* (2000). Trans. by the author. Available at http://www.pointligneplan.com/pierre-huyghe

5 Inside-Out Utopia

1. Tom Morton, "Bon Voyage: Tom Morton on Pierre Huyghe," *Frieze*, no. 74 (2003), 60.

2. Pierre Huyghe, as cited in Guggenheim Museum press release "The Hugo Boss Prize 2002."

3. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

4. Pierre Huyghe, in Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Pierre Huyghe: Collaborating on Utopia," *Flash Art* 34, no. 225 (2002), 80.

5. Ibid.

6. Pierre Huyghe, in George Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," *October* 110 (Fall 2004), 80.

7. Ibid.

8. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

9. Thomas Cole, as cited in Angela Miller, *Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825-1875* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 23.

10. Nicolas Bourriaud, in *GNS: Global Navigation System* (Paris: Palais de Tokyo, Éditions cercle d'art, 2003), 118.

11. See Charles Fourier, *Design for Utopia: Selected Writings of Charles Fourier*, trans. Julia Franklin (New York: Schocken Books, 1971).

12. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

13. Melissa Dubbin, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005. Dubbin was production manager for *Streamside Day*.

14. Pierre Huyghe, press release for Streamside Day, Dia:Chelsea, 2003.

15. Huyghe has made two works that respond directly to Cage. The first, *Carillon* (1997), is a windchime, each tuned chime corresponding to a note in Cage's piano composition *Dream* (1960), and the second, *Silence Score* (1998), was a musical notation of Cage's *4'33"* (1952).

16. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

17. Melissa Dubbin, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006.

18. Lynne Cooke, cited in Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, ed., *Pierre Huyghe* (Milan: Skira, 2004), 124. Pierre Huyghe, in ibid., 147.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. The song was composed and performed by one of Huyghe's assistants. Huyghe heard him improvising while he was making props for production and asked him to write an anthem based on his improvisations. Melissa Dubbin, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

22. Roberta Smith, "Waltzing Walls and Nature Denatured," *New York Times*, November 7, 2003, E30.

23. Jane Taylor, "Yours Sincerely: A History and Performance of Truth," conference paper, *AAANZ: Transforming Aesthetics*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, July 7, 2005. Author's lecture notes.

24. On the shifting discourse of utopia, see Jörn Rüsen, Michael Fehr, and Thomas W. Rieger, eds., *Thinking Utopia: Steps into Other Worlds* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005).

25. Molly Nesbit, Hans Ulrich Obrist, and Rirkrit Tiravanija, *What Is a Station?* (e-flux, 2003 [cited February 27, 2004]). Available at http://www.e-flux.com/projects/utopia/about.html

26. Susan Sontag, cited in Rob Giampietro, "The Problem with Posters," *Dot Dot Dot*, no. 7 (2003), unpaginated.

27. George W. Bush, in Jonathan Marcus, *America: An Empire to Rival Rome?* (BBC World Service Radio, January 26, 2004), available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3430199.stm

28. See Ron Suskind, "Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush," *New York Times Magazine* (October 17, 2004). Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/17/magazine/17BUSH.html

29. Nesbit, Obrist, and Tiravanija, *What Is a Station?*

30. Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, trans. George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

31. Theodor Adorno, as cited in Nesbit, Obrist, and Tiravanija, *What Is a Station?*

32. Bakhtin has written about festivals and carnivals in several of his essays, but the most detailed analysis can be found in Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

33. Renate Lachmann, "Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture," in *Cultural Critique*, no. 11 (Winter 1988–1989), 130.

34. Ibid.

35. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

36. Retort, *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War* (London: Verso, 2005).

37. Ibid.

38. Nathaniel Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005), 26. See also Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).

39. Pierre Huyghe, in Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," 83.

40. David Joselit, "Inside the Light Cube," *Artforum* 42, no. 7 (2004), 154.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. David Joselit, "Commanding View," *Artforum* 42, no. 5 (2004), 45.

46. See also Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton (Sydney: Power Publications, 1991).

47. Joselit, "Commanding View," 45.

48. Ibid.

49. Retort, *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War*, 187.

50. Joselit, "Commanding View," 45.

51. Pierre Huyghe, in Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," 83.

52. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 249. See also Gary Shapiro, *Earthwards: Robert Smithson and Art after Babel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 73.

53. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 177.

54. Pierre Huyghe, in Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," 82. This is arguably a misinterpretation of Smithson's work. As Smithson said in 1970, "I got interested in the indoor/outdoor dialectic. I don't think you're freer artistically in the desert than you are inside a room." *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 245. Huyghe's attempt to distinguish his work from Smithson's on the basis of Smithson's perceived commitment to space over time is also problematic.

55. Smithson produced a series of drawings and plans after Borges's story "The Garden of Forking Paths," including the drawing *Forking Island* (1971). Time crystals and mirrors also appear throughout Smithson's writings and works. See particularly Robert Smithson, "Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan," *Artforum* 8, no. 1 (September 1969), 28–33.

56. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 235.

57. Pierre Huyghe, "Garden Party," *Artforum* 43, no. 2 (2004), 144.

58. Pierre Huyghe in Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 147.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid. See also Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

62. Pierre Huyghe, in Obrist, "Pierre Huyghe: Collaborating on Utopia," 80.

63. Philippe Parreno, *Alien Affection* (Paris: Les presses du réel, Paris Musées, 2002), unpaginated.

64. Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 397.

65. Ibid.

66. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, conversation with the author, Rivoli, June 23, 2004.

67. Ibid.

68. Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 397.

69. See, for example, Constance Lewallen and Steve Seid, *Ant Farm, 1968–1978* (Berkeley: University of California Press, Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley Art Museum, 2004).

70. Felicity Scott, "Ant Farm," RMIT Architecture and Philosophy Lecture Series (Melbourne: Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, August 2007). Author's lecture notes.

71. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, conversation with the author, Rivoli, June 23, 2004.

72. Robert Smithson, as cited in Shapiro, *Earthwards*, 50.

73. See Jeff Kelley, ed., *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life: Allan Kaprow* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), and Robert Smithson, "A Cinematic Atopia, 1971," in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 138–142.

74. Huyghe, "Garden Party," 144. Huyghe was referring to Warhol's work.

75. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, conversation with the author, Castello di Rivoli, June 23, 2004.

76. Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 397.

77. This component of the exhibition was designed by M/M, who also designed the exhibition booklet for Tiravanija's "A Retrospective (Tomorrow Is Another Fine Day)," 2005. See Laurence Bossé, ed., *Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Pierre Huyghe, Philippe Parreno* (Paris-Musée: ARC Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1998).

78. Philippe Parreno, available at http://www.airdeparis.com/artists.htm

79. Ibid.

80. Parreno, in Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 58.

81. Huyghe, in Obrist, "Pierre Huyghe: Collaborating on Utopia," 80.

82. Ibid. See also Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 238–243.

83. John Giorno, in Pierre Huyghe, *Sleeptalking*, 16mm transferred onto video, 3 mins, sound recording 60 mins, 1998. Transcription of audio reprinted in Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 243.

84. Ibid. Warhol sustained the illusion of continuity in *Sleep* by splicing together multiple takes of the same subject—not necessarily in chronological order—from the footage he captured. The illusion of unchanging perspective is then constructed out of very small, irregular segments. As with a number of Warhol's silkscreens, the frames were subject both to the decay of extended copying and the pressures of reproduction. An understanding of this Deleuzian repetition-as-difference was also a

central concern for John Cage. An excellent analysis of both Warhol's method and his relation to Cage can be found in Branden Joseph, "The Play of Repetition: Warhol's *Sleep*," *Grey Room*, no. 19 (Spring 2005), 22–53.

85. Obrist, "Pierre Huyghe: Collaborating on Utopia," 80.

86. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

87. Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture*, 99.

6 Topological Systems: An Economy of Time

1. The Association of Freed Time, "El Diario del Fin del Mundo: A Journey That Wasn't," *Artforum* 43, no. 10 (2005), 297.

2. George Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," *October* 110 (Fall 2004), 81.

3. Philippe Parreno, "Evidences to Be Submitted to the Free Time Litigation," in Pierre Huyghe, *The Trial* (Munich: Kunstverein; Zurich: Kunsthalle, 2000), 36.

4. Barry Cipra, "Duchamp and Poincaré Renew an Old Acquaintance," *Science* 286, no. 5445 (November 1999), 1668–1669.

5. See Eric de Bruyn, "Topological Pathways of Post Minimalism," in *Grey Room*, no. 25 (Fall 2006), 32–63.

6. Parreno, "Evidences to Be Submitted to the Free Time Litigation," 35; emphasis in the original.

7. Leonard Shlain, *Art and Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time, and Light* (New York: William Morrow, 1991), 101.

8. Ibid.

9. See Hubert Damisch, *The Origin of Perspective*, trans. John Goodman (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), and James Elkins, *The Poetics of Perspective* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

10. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Constance Garnett (London: Penguin, 1999), 228.

11. This was the first line of Poe's 1846 essay on metaphysics. Reprinted in Edgar Allan Poe, *Eureka: A Prose Poem*, ed. Richard P. Benton (Hartford: Transcendental Books, 1973), 117; emphasis in original.

12. Michel de Certeau, *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 139.

13. The precursor for this new mode of narrative was Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, (1719). Edgar Allan Poe, in his 1836 review of a new edition of the text, praised Defoe's narrative for its "potent magic of verisimilitude," a quality that in turn was remarked on by Jules Verne in relation to Poe's own texts some years later. Edgar Allan Poe, as cited in Randel Helms, "Another Source for Poe's Arthur Gordon Pym," *American Literature* 41, no. 4 (1970), 573.

14. Certeau, *Heterologies*, 137. Certeau's analysis of Verne's writing process is fascinating. Verne instructed librarian Gabriel Marcel to "go back to the sources themselves and take only what comes from absolutely original documents," but the book figured as an intermediary between the imaginary and the collection: the process of fabrication was visible. Certeau writes, "Verne's travels are fictions

inscribed upon fictions of memory . . . the text is induced by these fragments (broken mirrors deforming the past they represent) but it displaces and transforms them in the fiction it generates by manipulating them."

15. Pierre Huyghe, *One Million Kingdoms*, Digi-Beta video, 5.1, sound, 6', 2001.

16. Peter Zumthor, *Kunsthaus Bregenz* (Bregenz: Hajte Cantz Verlag, 1999), 13.

17. Pierre Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe Public Art Fund Lecture," Tuesday Night Talks at The New School, New York, October 7, 2004. Transcript courtesy of the Public Art Fund.

18. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

19. Ibid.

20. Pierre Huyghe, "Moving Images: Pierre Huyghe," Tate Channel, February 14, 2002. Available from http://channel.tate.org.uk/media/2608043300. Transcript by the author.

21. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

22. Ibid.

23. Edgar Allan Poe, "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym," in *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), 748. As Huyghe later noted, "The narrative structure of this book is really important. Edgar Allan Poe makes us believe that someone has told the story as a true story to him. And this story was so amazing that he had to present it as a fiction to get people to read it. And then you go for the fiction, and at the end some chapters are missing, so of course it's never ending. I was thinking that it would be interesting to use it again as a departure point, as a guide to go somewhere. And I discovered later on that Jules Verne did exactly that with Poe, in a book called *The Ice Sphinx*. In the Verne fiction someone is trying to find the character lost in the previous book of Edgar Poe." Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe Public Art Fund Lecture," 2004.

24. Poe, "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym," 748.

25. Ibid., 749.

26. Ibid.

27. Reading these passages, it is easy to see why Borges found Poe's work so appealing. See André Maurois, preface to Jorge Luis Borges, *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Writings*, ed. Donald A. Yates and James E. Kirby (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), 2–3. Borges was also a great admirer of Jules Verne.

28. Tom Morton, "Bon Voyage: Tom Morton on Pierre Huyghe," *Frieze*, no. 74 (April 2003), 57.

29. Pierre Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe: Artist's Talk," Tate Channel, July 5, 2006. Available from http://channel.tate.org.uk/media/26654812001. Transcript by the author.

30. Ibid.

31. The Association of Freed Time, "El Diario del Fin del Mundo: A Journey That Wasn't," 299.

32. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

33. Randy Kennedy, "An Antarctica Sighting in Central Park," *New York Times* (October 13, 2005), E1.

34. The Association of Freed Time, "El Diario del Fin del Mundo: A Journey That Wasn't," 300.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Tom Morton, "Space Explorer: Tom Morton Interviews Pierre Huyghe," *Frieze*, no. 100 (June–August 2006), 57.

39. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

40. Pierre Huyghe, telephone conversation with the author, July 4, 2011.

41. Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, program notes, New York, 2005.

42. Robert Smithson, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape, 1973," in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 157–171.

43. Ibid., 157.

44. Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

45. Ibid., 12.

46. Ibid., 26.

47. As Huyghe said to Hans Ulrich Obrist, "I don't think it's a problem of slowness, but of distance. You have to produce a distance, that is, a path that must be walked in order to go from one point to another. And this path that must be walked . . . leads to a very different relationship with narration. It's the position of the narrator who takes a different path to bring back something else. The problem isn't whether he brings it back slowly or quickly . . . it plays on the permutations between the person whose story is told, the one doing the telling, and the one to whom it is told. . . . It's another way of producing and defining one's own temporality in relation to a context." Pierre Huyghe, in Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Pierre Huyghe: Collaborating on Utopia," trans. Brian Holmes, *Flash Art International* (July–September 2002), 80.

48. Pierre Huyghe, in Tim Griffin, with Claire Bishop, Lynne Cooke, Pierre Huyghe, Pamela M. Lee, Rirkrit Tiravanija, and Andrea Zittel, "Remote Possibilities: A Roundtable Discussion on Land Art's Changing Terrain," *Artforum* 43, no. 10 (2005), 290.

49. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

50. Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, super 16mm and HD video transferred to HD, 21'41", 2005.

51. Joshua Cody, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

52. Joshua Cody, in Joshua Cody, Pierre Huyghe, and Elliot Sharp, "A Journey That Wasn't: Pierre Huyghe and Joshua Cody," *Sonorama*, WPS1 Radio, New York, October 10, 2005. Transcript by the author.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Romain Kronenberg, conversation with the author, New York, October 2005.

56. Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe: Artist's Talk," Tate Channel, July 5, 2006.

57. Badiou writes: "We have seen that not every 'novelty' is an event. It must further be the case that what the event calls forth and names is the central void of the situation for which this event is an event. This matter of nomination is crucial, and I cannot go through the complete theory of it here. But it should be easy to understand that since the

event is to disappear, being a kind of flashing supplement that happens to the situation, so what is retained of it in the situation, and what serves to guide the fidelity, must be something like a trace, or a name, that refers back to the vanished event." Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. Peter Hallward (London: Verso, 2002), 72.

58. The concept is discussed in Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, trans. Oliver Feltham (London: Continuum, 2005).

59. Ibid., 69.

60. For an anthology of essays on Lacan and topology, see Ellie Ragland and Dragan Milovanovic, eds., *Lacan: Topologically Speaking* (New York: Other Press, 2002).

61. Victor Segalen, *Essay on Exoticism: An Aesthetics of Diversity*, ed. Stanley Fish and Fredric Jameson, trans. Yaël Rachel Schlick (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 18. Nicolas Bourriaud also addresses Segalen's idea of diversity in *The Radicant*, trans. James Gussen and Lili Porten (New York: Lukas and Sternberg, 2009).

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid. Deleuze also regarded topology as a means of "thinking otherwise" and drew a parallel between topology and Foucault's "new cartography" in *Foucault*, trans. Seán Hand (New York: Continuum, 2006), 39.

64. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006.

65. Segalen, *Essay on Exoticism*, 19.

66. Huyghe, "Pierre Huyghe: Artist's Talk," Tate Channel, July 5, 2006.

67. Excerpt from the Antarctica Naming Committee Guidelines, published in Pierre Huyghe, *L'Expédition scintillante* (Bregenz: Kunsthaus Bregenz, 2002), unpaginated exhibition booklet.

68. Roland Barthes, "The Right to Laziness," in *The Grain of the Voice: Interviews 1962–1980* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981).

69. Ibid., 45.

70. Ibid., 46.

71. The text on the postcards read: "In 1880, Captain Charles Cunningham Boycott was a land agent for an absentee owner in County Mayo, Ireland. Though the harvest had been disastrous, Captain Boycott refused to reduce rents and attempted to evict any tenant who could not pay in full. . . . The campaign against him was termed 'boycotting'." Reprinted in Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, ed., *Pierre Huyghe* (Milan: Skira, 2004), 179.

72. *The Right to Laziness* refers to the book *Le Droit à la paresse* by Paul Lafargue, written in the same year as the first boycott (1880).

73. Philippe Parreno, as cited in Christov-Bakargiev, *Pierre Huyghe*, 178; emphasis in original.

74. See J. P. Toner, *Leisure and Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 1995), and Jean-Marie André, *L'Otium dans la vie morale et intellectuelle romaine: Des origines a l'époque augustéene* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966).

75. Pierre Saint-Amand, "Barthes' Laziness," *Yale Journal of Criticism* 14, no. 2 (2001), 526.

76. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, New York, 2005.

77. Ibid.

78. Krauss wrote: "The structure in which two opposing forms of equivalence can converge in the object—that of exchange and that of 'proximity'—is a dialectical condition by which everything within capitalism is understood as invested with a double valence." Rosalind Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), 41.

79. Morton, "Space Explorer," 58.

80. The Association of Freed Time, "El Diario del Fin del Mundo: A Journey That Wasn't," 299.

81. Gaston de Pawlowski, as cited in Shlain, *Art and Physics*, 302.

82. Pierre Huyghe, conversation with the author, Paris, March 2006.

83. Ibid.

84. See Jacques Rancière on revisionist history: "The core of the revisionist formula in general is contained in a simple formula: nothing happened such as it was told. The nihilist version of the formula deduces from it that nothing happened of what was told, which comes down to saying that nothing happened at all. Although it is propitious to political provocation, the conclusion is suicidal for history, whose lot remains, in spite of everything, suspended at the minimum requirement that, sometimes, something happens." Jacques Rancière, *The Names of History*, trans. Hassan Melehy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 36.

85. Shlain, *Art and Physics*, 162–163.

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COVER: Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, 2005. Courtesy Pierre Huyghe and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris.

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