

Affective Slowness, the Web Films of Robert Croma

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Abstract

This article undertakes a reading of Croma's online videos, published via a blog, using a variety of theoretical frames. It uses Gilles Deleuze's (1986) "movement image" as a concept relevant to a specifically online and digital practice, with attention paid to the role of affect as an "interruption" within the cinema of the movement image to produce varying economies of the "slow". The implications and possibilities of this will be expanded upon, including a preliminary outline of how this work provides a template for an object orientated digital practice.

Key words

Adrian Miles, Movement, digital, slow media, Robert Croma, weblog, Gilles Deleuze, affect, web films

Privileged Poetic Instants

[1] My work to date has been mostly observational. I tend to react intuitively and think later. I suddenly find myself agitated (for unknown reasons) by a particular scene or narrative before me. I respond instinctively. It's only later that I come to see if I have anything I can hone into a final piece.

[2] I often have no idea why I'm videoing one particular thing over another. It just feels necessary to record. It's only at the editing stage that further and final creative processes (also considerably intuitive) come into play.

[3] Later (sometimes months later!), I will try to work footage into a kind of poem, seeing if I can make some kind of poetic and narrative sense from the video sketches I have. I then try to find where possible appropriate and complimentary sound(s) to accompany the images. As I once said, sound equals dream and dream is the province of poetry.

[4] I suppose what I'm saying is, I *feel* myself into the piece (R. Croma, personal communication, March 29 2012).

Slow Movement (1)

[5] The online work of Robert Croma combines observational and poetic documentary practice with digital post production to produce slowed “privileged instants” within what Deleuze (1986) describes as the “any-instant-whatever” (pp. 3–8). This slowing of the ordinary, ‘real time’ speed of the cinematic points to the machinic ‘camera eye’ celebrated by Dziga Vertov, while also opening on to an implicit humanism where the technological apparatus is placed at the service of the unveiling of a moment that is, and was, awaiting someone to notice. This slowing down is a documentary video practice not defined by narrative, or our normal expectation of duration, and allows these works to become “affect” videos.

[6] Writing and thinking about the online videos of Robert Croma has been a stuttering affair. I have wanted to write about them for some time, for a variety of reasons, and the participation in a symposium around ‘slow media’ (Blumtritt, Köhler, & David 2010) offered enough purchase to buy the attention to begin.

[7] The concept of slow cinema coincides with my recent research investigating the role of affect for a poetics of online video. This work wants to think about affect, via Deleuze’s *Cinema One*, to interrogate normative conceptions of narrative in online video practice, and to date has concentrated on the role of affect and the user within generative video authoring systems such as Korsakow (Miles 2013, 2014a, 2014b).

[8] This research is part of a larger task to use Deleuze’s cinematic philosophy, specifically his use of Bergson’s sensory motor schema, to define and describe the movement image and its three principal varieties of the perception, action, and affect images as a novel and productive reconception of interactivity more broadly (Miles, 2013, 2014a, 2014b).

Stuttering, Affective Writing

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[9] Who has the time or need for highly polished monuments? As an academic seeking a digital humanities my epistemological problem, now, is to invent, participate in, and perform systems and practices of knowledge making and engagement that expand outwards from the scribal and textual. The question for this academic practice is what might constitute such a making beyond more talking about things, in ever denser ways, confusing description and analysis — that is the domestication of things into what can be said — with discovery and wonder. As Bogost (2012) argues “wonder has been all but eviscerated from modern thought” (124), where wonder is not a puzzle to solve but “can suggest awe or marvel” (121)

[10] Here I want to use the small body of work created by Robert Croma as something to think with. The aim is twofold. On the one hand to investigate Croma’s work because it is good and deserves having something written about it. On the other there is something nascent in these films that participates in a particular relation between noticing, the reality of the world, and the digital that opens onto an interesting flatness where the films’ success arises from the equivalence of each of these terms within each film.

[11] This article then has two axes. One moves inwards thinking about this series of videos through a softly, quiet, hermeneutic analysis, in the process writing outside of the utopic technorationality of some new media scholarship that reads only as celebration, and the naivety of what cinema studies tries to say about the specificity and materiality of the digital and the network. The other is outwards, away from the films to “doing” theory and media making. This is realised in this essay’s recognition that it has its own affective gap between writing, argument, thought and the films, which is sketched stylistically here in a structural and didactic flatness and a disinterest in particular conclusions.

Slow Movement (2)

[12] Croma’s observational web specific video works are complicated, aesthetically sophisticated, and appear to know and embrace their place as intimate, network specific artefacts. These are films that aspire to the scale of the Web and do not aspire for the gallery wall or cinema screen, there is no default ‘full screen’ button, and they are comfortable nestling amongst the windows and menus of our computer

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screens. They are the sorts of things worth making and watching outside of, or aside from, the carnivalesque spectacular that is YouTube, and while not interactive participate in a different economy of movement to popular film and video, and the online avatars of these.

Flat Moments

[13] In *Cinema One* Deleuze details the early history of cinema as a particular type of image making in relation to other types such as painting and photography. For Deleuze (1986) the cinematic apparatus offers a “scientific” machine vision where the lens and film are indifferent to what it records. You point, shoot, and it records. Here “I” as a camera person may care about what is filmed, but the machine in itself doesn’t and so is an indifferently automatic procedure (4–8).

[14] This “any–instant–whatever” for Deleuze (1986) repeats science’s efforts at empirical objectivity where the imperative to observe neutrally (for instance in the notion of the random sample, or the use of standardised testing apparatuses and measurements to try to bracket off “interest”) is mirrored by the mechanical apparatus of the film camera (6). Twenty four frames a second, no matter what is in front of it. Each moment, for the recording machine, is the same as the previous and will be the same as the next. They are, in relation to each other, produced through a procedure of “flatness” (what Deleuze calls “equidistant instants”), and so, unlike an album of snapshots or a folio of drawings, and no matter what a human interlocutor may make of these film images, they form a series where any one is, in itself, equal to the others.

Posing

[15] Recognising that the film camera is in itself indifferent to what it records, Deleuze (1986) contrasts film to other image making practices. This indifference is unlike painting, where the time and effort to manually make means that what is painted is always in some sense posed, and that what is realised is in some manner a special moment that seeks to express or represent something quintessential about that which has been painted.

[16] Similarly, the early history of the photograph inherits these qualities through its use of the pose — modelled for example on particular forms of portraiture — reinforced by the slowness of early photography where a subject literally had to be held still to allow a photograph to be taken.

[17] The pose then is outside of everyday movement and time. The pose is not the informal, quotidian happenstance of actions in the world but carefully staged and framed to express and signify import, seeking to demonstrate that the posed subject expresses an essence that reaches outside of itself to tie the photograph into an imaginary grander history of other poses. This concept of the “pose” arises from an ideal form which expresses an essence reflecting a Platonic ideality that is always fallen in relation to the pose, image, and the world, what Deleuze (1986) characterizes as “*formal transcendental elements*” (4, italics in original) and a “privileged instant” (3–8 passim).

[18] The pose in the manner characterised by Deleuze then presents itself as a privileged moment outside of any actual moment, and this moment contains the idea that it matters precisely because it is separate from the everyday.

Accidental Moments

[19] Cinema’s economy of just recording, the film camera’s disregard for what it films, means that while it forms a series of “any-instant-whatevers” these contain the possibility of a privileged instant. This is the accidental exceptional (that is unexpected, unplanned and even surprising) moment that is captured as a consequence of indifferent recording, and can happen in photography and film. (This is the case in Muybridge’s famous horse photographs, and I am also thinking of an example like the sequence in de Sica’s *The Bicycle Thief* where the father and son run across a road. The boy takes a tumble, all helter skelter akimbo, and though I don’t know, the way he falls seems not with that second guessing of the staged fall. It is more like he ran as asked across the road, tripping, and the camera has caught the accident and de Sica kept it.) These accidental moments are privileged instants not because they are poses but because they become unveiled through the indifference of their recording, becoming a peak amongst the flatness of their surrounds.

Technology, Eye, Ecology

[20] Vertov remains a remarkable figure in the early history of the cinema for two, perhaps three, reasons. The first is the prolific variety of his writing, a mix of formal, informal, long and short. When collected (the preeminent collection in English is Michelson's 1984 anthology) you realise that it is a proto-blogging; polyvocal, informed, engaged and directed. The second is that he proposed a system of makers distributed across the country, each submitting brief agit prop films to a central site for national redistribution. This relied upon the most modern and fastest network of his time, the railroad, and today while we might judge this an industrial vision Vertov's model of distributed and aggregative making is closer to a pre-digital avatar of the internet and the sorts of service that YouTube now offers video. His prescience is impressive.

[21] Finally, the third way in which he matters is that in his most famous film *The Man With a Movie Camera* we see a veritable "camera thinking" where the images that the film is attracted to are the sorts of mechanical mirrorings that a camera would seek. Jenny wheels, governors, shutters, blinking, patterns of light and dark flying across the surface of the lens, an enormous catalogue responding to the constraint of the camera wondering to itself just what sort of machine it is, and where it lies in relation to all these other spinning, whirring, industrial wheels of modernism, near relatives of itself as vision, event, machine and movement. A film that indeed well illustrates Bogost's (2012) idea of the "Latour litany" (49) that "helps catalog material, conceptual, and fictional objects" (58).

[22] This third point, the way in which Vertov surrenders camera and film to its own flat ontology elegantly prises open the key interrelation of maker to technology that Croma also participates in, and lies between the banality of a strict technological determinism and the equally facile conceit that our technology's materialities are secondary and subsidiary to the superstructures of cultural power. (I am struck that it is only those that do not make digital things who seem to argue that technologies, whether the literally physical stuff we hold or the more wooly stuff of code, does not of itself matter.) *The Man With a Movie Camera* is perhaps more aptly than *A Movie*

Camera With a Man, as Vertov, in concert with the what and how of the profilmic (fast and slow motion, split screen, abstract variations of shot scale) and editing creates patterns of relation that is a cybernetic system consisting of maker, camera, editing, city, modernity, the electric, and revolution.

[23] This is a method that is an ecology of things, where “things” can be at any sort of scale whether they are object, event, action, or idea, and no term is privileged over another. Sometimes Vertov is more present, other times the machine, and this is the model for how to theorise and practice an engaged, critical, self-aware making that lies at the interstices of new technologies, material engagement and utterance.

[24] Here the problem is not what can I use this tool for, nor is it only how does this tool construct me (“everything looks like a nail to a hammer”), but something richer, arrived at through the decentring of the “me”. An ecology of things where what the camera wants is as much as what is at stake in the work as what Vertov thinks he wants. This synergy of machine and maker, technology and expression through Vertov is exemplary of a deeply situated, materialist media practice. Croma participates in a similar economy.

A Digital Spatial Mise-en-Scène (1)

[25] The flat method of Croma’s films, and particularly the use of mattes to direct attention and re-frame composition within a shot or sequence, requires a new term. It has some of the qualities of spatial montage, where the linear and temporal sequencing of shots is now simultaneous by showing two or more different sequences alongside each other in the same compositional frame (Manovich, 269–73). However, as this term is more accurately used to describe the placement of different videos adjacent to each other it is not quite adequate to what Croma effects through his use of mattes. Unlike the disjunction that spatial montage can achieve, Croma’s films have attributes of what is traditionally understood as mise-en-scène through its use of composition within the frame to construct a pro-filmic field. For now I am going to describe this as a “spatial mise-en-scène”, or the “digital spatial mise-en-scène”. In this phrase ‘spatial’ picks up hopes to suggest the implications of Manovich’s spatial montage while recognising that in Croma’s films visual separation and relations are established within the shot, hence ‘mise-en-scène’.

Three Premises

[26] I have three premises. The mechanical nature of recording which treats all instants as, in themselves, the same; the occasional, sometimes accidental capture via this indifferent recording of privileged moments — things that could not otherwise have been seen because of their ephemerality; and the application of digital post production effects as a spatial mise-en-scène to unveil these moments. It is the combination of these as a specific system of making that constitutes the milieu of Croma's films.

[27] This, it seems to me, is how to best approach the graceful, web specific cinematic practice of Robert Croma. The films are observational and poetic and preserve a quietness in relation to what is filmed so they are less an argument than the event of a moment offered in and for itself. These films, through watching, recording, slowing and reframing, reveal accidental moments of grace, charm and beauty, privileged instants amongst the any-instant-whatever. That the works are elegant and aesthetically sophisticated is not in question, and what comes to matter are their moments of 'unveiling', that time, certainly in what I think of as the best works (for instance Croma's 2009 *Connection at Passy*), when something unexpected or otherwise not visible, comes to be.

A Digital Spatial Mise-en-Scène (2)

[28] The pleasures and seductions of what the digital allows us to do, and the celebrations of the technology itself, risks becoming merely the digital cool. In Croma's films this is avoided through the film's flatness, a post-analogue digital field where there is no apparent hierarchy between the moment of recording and the later use of software systems and algorithms to work upon what has been filmed. This flatness sees the video file as an object that extends equally from the camera as source through to the application of a digital spatial mise-en-scène, compression and online delivery, where while there is a linear flow of steps each carries an equal force in the final film. None matters more than another, or is the precondition for the other. This is an affirmation of smallness (of screen, image resolution, bandwidth, data rate, time, and attention) and of an affective ethics of making. Each step

matters, in and for itself — hence the care of the observation as well as the craft of the effects and the blog — and also in relation and concert with each other.

[29] The effects applied in post-production are orientated towards a heightened mode of digital and spatial mise-en-scène that reframe attention and enframe what has been framed through its use of digital effects. These effects produce a post framing, after filming, through a species of montage that create spatial relations within a frame by dividing it into parts through the use of blur and mattes. The films become painterly, and the ordinary and everyday becomes grounds for the figuring of this carefully crafted spatial mise-en-scène “painting”. This is not the application of an industrial CGI practice to clean up, repair, paint out or embellish, nor it is the return to the privileged instant of the pose as these are veridical everyday moments recorded in situ. Here there is the presence of voice in the digital, of small steps and the careful application of effects to bits and pieces, bibs and bobs. The scale, always, is minor and sketch like, realised under the auspices of the hand made, becoming a slow digital craft practice.

Ontography

[30] Bogost (2012) in the “Ontography” chapter of *Alien Phenomenology* (35–59) appropriates the term “ontography” as a method to inscribe the density of the world. His is a method that participates in the recent turn towards what is I think ironically, and with complete deadpan humour, described as “Object Orientated Ontology” (OOO). This is a theory that argues that much of philosophy, critical theory and science, has in effect offered a Ptolemaic view of the world with the human insisting upon being the axis around which all else orbits. OOO, in turn, offers itself as a Copernican revolution where the human as an orientating, intending, and originating centre is shunted aside to grant self-sufficient object-hood to everything else. In OOO things of any kind or nature are understood to have relations between themselves, whether we are there or not, and the relations that happen between things are no more or less important than the relations that happen between people and things— or between human and human for that matter.

[31] In this reconception of objects and their relations Bogost proposes ontography as a way to approach the thickness of the world by creating catalogues of objects and their connecting and disconnecting into new and different collections or “units”. Here objects rule, but an object is never a single discrete thing but a constellation of particular relations, and as one constellation connects or engages with another it too becomes a new object or unit in itself. (For me this appears to be not very distant from my understanding of Deleuze’s Bergson and the way in which all things have facets or orientations which may or may not become addressed by the facets of other things, or as Deleuze (1986) says, “this acentred universe where everything reacts on everything else”, and shortly after when discussing Bergson in detail, he suggests “images act and react on all their facets and in all their parts” (61).

[32] This is easy to understand using cinema as an example. Here we have a unit, called a shot. The shot is a thing in its own right, perfectly whole — it does not need another part, piece, or fragment to be a whole shot. However, we can and do join one shot to another and this now forms a sequence, which is for all intents and purposes a new thing (this is what Metz (1974) outlines, using different terms and methodologies, in Section Three of *Film Language*). This sequence can in turn be joined to other sequences to make a film, which is also its own object. Similarly, there can be parts of a film, for example the “I could have been a contender” speech made by Brando in Kazan’s 1954 *On the Waterfront*, that is then reprised in Scorsese’s *Raging Bull* and Thomas Anderson’s *Boogie Nights*, which now in turn is its own new ‘contender’ object. As Bogost (2012) describes, ontography:

is a practice of exploding the innards of things — be they words, intersections, shopping malls or creatures. This “explosion” can be as figurative or literal as you like, but it must above all reveal the hidden density of a unit (58).

[33] Here the world is resolutely flat as there is no hierarchy or privilege within or between objects. In the “contender” object there is the Brando plus De Niro plus Wahlberg object. This flatness, not unlike the web and hypertext, lets all things be

equidistant from each other, and within this flatness we make peaks and valleys with what we will.

Croma and Ontography

[34] Croma's films are ontographic. In the density of their brevity expanded through observation, slow motion, and spatial *mise-en-scène* they reveal the thickness and density of the world. The films participate as objects that are not indifferent to the world — they do not have the anonymity of a surveillance project — but neither are they directed or uttered in the manner of fiction. Each film is its own object, and while there is seriality by virtue of their being collected together within a video blog, each is its own refrain without needing another.

[35] The films explode what they observe, through their mechanics of slowness, demonstrating the flatness of the relations between the parts within. For example, in "Connection at Passy" (2011a) it is Croma and camera and lens and one stranger and one stranger and the Metro and a platform and a train and a digital file and post produced mattes and time, and my screen, and my time, and the film brings these together as a constellation where all are what they are. It is flat, and this flatness slow.

Small Films

[36] Croma's films are not narrative. They are too directly observational and fragmentary to offer a story. This expresses a self confidence that they matter without needing the flimsy or filigree of a tale, and that the world offers things worth noticing of themselves if you watch, or better yet, just see.

[37] This point draws an almost straight line from Bazin, where a particular realism, coupled with his Catholicism, offered a vision of film making that became less about the imposition of a will upon the world (upon the screen, the camera, the story) than the revealing of what is immanently there, an ethics of looking to find what *is* there, already. A point adroitly made by Andrews (2011) when he advocates broadly for films that "aim to discover, to encounter, to confront, and to reveal" (xviii), and notes that Bazin's 'aesthetic of discovery' "stands at the antipodes of a cinema of

manipulation...it asks us to accommodate our vision to the conditions of visibility given by the world” (42).

[38] I can, of course, create narratives around these films, wondering who they are, why they are there, what they may be thinking, doing, and even what happens next. However, such stories are outside of the films, applied retrospectively to solidify what is fluid, and unnecessary in itself. They are, narratologically, description not narrative, causation and drive is suspended while story time pauses, closer to what Metz in his canonical taxonomy calls a “descriptive syntagma”. Except here story is always evacuated as the films, through observation and their spatial *mise-en-scène*, bring things into relation.

[39] Descriptive, small grained, partial, fragmentary and clearly of the world, where in many a privileged instant is revealed. It at this moment the small unfolds itself into ever expanding sets of relations. They are not lyrical, their happenstance and accidental everydayness eschewing the subjective declaration that lyric relies upon, instead these are films that spend their energy not in telling us how Croma feels but render visible things through an assemblage of place, stuff, lens, camera, Croma, software, and the web.

[40]They are, in Bogost’s terms, ontographic in the way they create and discover relations and conjunctions between places, people, events and moments that otherwise appear distinct, different, and distant. They are a list, made by observing and what is there and then drawing attention through their combination of slowness and masks.

Affect Images

[41] For Deleuze (1986), following Bergson, the world is an economy of action and reaction, where things act and react on each other in a multiplicity of ways. In this sea of action and reaction most relations and events are automatic to the extent that they follow what we can call the laws of nature (of physics, chemistry and so on). In these cases the relation of action and reaction is unconsidered, it just happens (think about ice in a glass of water and the relations between ice, water, glass, air, temperature gradients and so on). However, there is a special case of action and

reaction where an interval exists between each and this is where perception is situated. Perception is sensory, though still subject to actions and reactions, and is realised through motor actions. As Deleuze argues:

One passes imperceptibly from perception to action. The operation under consideration is no longer elimination, selection or framing, but the incurving of the universe, which simultaneously causes the virtual action of things on us and our possible action on things. (65)

Perception becomes this gap and this gap means that a reaction that may happen is no longer automatic and is now subject to some extent of choice. In this context there are now *possible* reactions in response to a perception. This interval, what Bergson describes as a “living image”, is used by Deleuze as the basis for his tripartite schema of cinema’s movement image as perception, affect, and action images. Hence this living image is “an in-between” (65) where affect “is what occupies the interval, what occupies it without filling it in...It surges in the centre of indetermination, that is to say in the subject, between a perception which is troubling in certain respects and a hesitant action.” (65)

[42] Perception images are those shots where we see what is to be noticed, where “we go from total, objective perception which is distinguished ... by simple elimination...it is the first avatar of the movement-image: when it is related to a centre of indetermination, it becomes perception-image”. (64.) Affect images, as we saw, are where a decision is being made, or more simply what happens between perception and action, while action images where we see the consequence of that decision realised as an action, where there is an “incurving of the universe, which simultaneously causes the virtual action of things on use and possible action on things” (65). We see the gun, the hero and the villain seeing each other see the gun, each weighing up what they think the other might do, and then watch both race to get it — notice, choose, do. In this constellation affect is not the need for a decision but is the enlarged interval between the action that is undertaken in response to perception where this action is inadequate or insufficient in relation to what the situation requires.

[43] Affect is then understood as a remainder, that which action in acting fails to dispel. For example, I see a snake and leap, yet still feel fear and anxiety even when now obviously safe, as my perception of danger is not resolved by the physical action of my leap. This excess becomes and is affect, and is how emotion is attached to perceptual events because emotion is defined as a perception and decision that is not fully realised, expressed or 'spent' through a motor action. In Deleuze's terms when we "absorb a movement instead of reflecting it, our activity can only respond by a 'tendency', an 'effort' which replaces the action which has become momentarily or locally impossible" (p. 66).

[44] For Deleuze, where a film is dominated by the affect image, it concentrates on the inadequacy or insufficiency of decision and action in the light of what is required. In his example of Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928) we have a narrative where the ending is not only inevitable, but is already known to the audience. This certainty is used by the film to expand upon the injustice, indignity, misogyny and sacredness of the experience of Joan by concentrating on the faces of the main protagonists precisely because there is no action that can change the outcome of her trial. Hence, the only possibility for the film becomes how to show the forever inability and inadequacy of any action to change this situation. Change through action is unavailable, and through this the film makes its case for the trial's illegitimacy in the context of religious (Joan's experience of the sacred as outside of the judicial and patriarchal understanding of the Church locates it firmly in the realm of affect) and sexual politics. That there can be no action that is adequate to this situation means the film becomes a study about the inadequacy of action in the light of what will happen. Hence we have faces, fragmented composition, and disjunctive editing.

Croma and Affect

[45] These qualities of slowness in Croma's films produce a series of works that have no 'external' causation. They are not narrative, and lack the demand of a point of view as they witness the world with humility, rather than impose intention upon it. They are moments and fragments that refuse to state, and disregard the edit as something suspiciously motivated by narrative cause and effect, becoming in this way exemplars of Deleuze's affect image.

[46] In the case of Croma's films their relation to affect is apparent in their lack of motivation and resolution. They open out the world through an intentional noticing, reiterated in the filming and again through spatial mise-en-scène, and sit in the stillness of wonderment about what might or could be, or could happen. They are only ever situated as a place and time before some act, in response to who knows what cause, elongating their indecision literally through slow motion, spatial mise-en-scène and the poetics of intentional noticing where there is the deliberate effort to "make a distinction, to create foreground and background, to distinguish some 'thing' from its surroundings" (Mason 2002, 32).

Post Personal

[47] These are small films, realised literally in their scale as web specific video, and aesthetically through what and how they are filmed. Their smallness expresses a quality of slowness that arises from the framing of the observed and observable. This smallness also extends from filming what is phenomenally near and everyday and includes the use of simple technologies such as a digital camera, available light, a small suite of post-production tools and the Web. These are films that do not feel obliged to say but do. You wait for each one to unfurl itself, sometimes arriving at its own distinct moment, its privileged instant, sometimes not, each approaching the condition of a still life, or even the miniature, where, as Downton argues "a small work requires this slowness of looking, the ability to consider detail, to muse on the relations between elements, to become absorbed, and to wonder (Downton 2004, 20), more than the boldness of the large, finished and self-confidently closed work.

[49] The individual films, and their collection as an ongoing and expanding whole, become a manifold of the slow. There is the patience of their collecting, the digital craft of their composing after the fact of their capture, a reliance upon the local, the call they make to the viewer to observe patiently and slowly, their physical scale, and finally in the quiet claim they make indirectly, of the world and of us. This is a post personal cinema, a cinema that curates affect viscerally through its combination of

the indifferent recording of the world and affect's crafted revelation through spatial mise-en-scène. It is a minor cinema that does not rely upon the imposition of the self via narrative or the deliberate construction of a diegetic field, where the personal participates as witness and, at best, co-creator, rather than source or destination. This is a slow, minor cinema that revels in the ready poetry of the world, already.

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