Spiraling Thoughts:

Transcribing the Images of Time and Memory

In the preface to his doctoral thesis, Henri Bergson remarks on the frustrating inadequacy of the medium in which he is forced to take up his philosophical project:

> We necessarily express ourselves by means of words and we usually think in terms of space. That is to say, language requires us to establish between our ideas the same sharp and precise distinctions, the same discontinuity, as between material objects. This assimilation of thought to things is useful in practical life and necessary in most of the sciences. But it may be asked whether the insurmountable difficulties presented by certain philosophical problems do not arise from our placing side by side in space phenomena which do not occupy space, and whether, by merely getting rid of the clumsy symbols round which we are fighting, we might not bring the fight to an end (*Time and Free Will* xix).

Bergson was a philosopher writing at the turn of the 20th century, a time when the relatively new discipline of psychology (and the beginnings of what would one day be termed "neuroscience") was still very much tied to philosophy and its methodologies. And at the same time, the study of the brain was forcing philosophers to take on the new questions that were arising about human consciousness, perception, and time. Bergson would lament throughout his life on the difficulty that written language presents when exploring these new terrains. This led Bergson to develop his own unique, if slightly ineffable, methodology he called *Intuition*, which

Gilles Deleuze—an always-ardent champion of Bergson—nonetheless describes as "one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy" (Deleuze *Bergsonism* 13).

And yet, eighty years after Bergson's thesis was published in book form as *Time and Free Will*, Gilles Deleuze's own doctoral thesis, *Difference and Repetition*, echoes in its own preface Bergson's frustrated remarks: "The time is coming when it will hardly be possible to write a book of philosophy as it has been done for so long" (*Difference and Repetition* xxi). In addition to inability of language to grasp many of the unique philosophical problems of modernity, Deleuze identifies another problem with traditional methodologies of philosophy, in that "conceptual philosophical thought has as its implicit presupposition a pre-philosophical and natural image of thought, borrowed from the pure element of common sense" (131). This "image of thought," Deleuze writes, might be thought a "dogmatic, orthodox, or moral image" that "already prejudges everything," and that it is in its terms that "everybody knows and is presumed to know what is means to think" (131). Similar to the contours of language nudging and pulling the way we think, philosophical presuppositions and methodologies can be equally confining and controlling. In short, as he sums it up succinctly in his last book, *What is Philosophy?*, "an era's image of thought is 'the image thought gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearing in thought'" (qtd. Rodowick 7). To escape the distortion caused by the image of thought, Deleuze argues that the "conditions of a philosophy which would be without any kind of presuppositions" would take as its point of departure "a radical critique of this image and the 'postulates' it implies," finding its "difference or its true beginning, not in agreement with the *pre-philosophical* Image, but in a rigorous

struggle against this Image, which it would denounce as *non-philosophical*" (*Difference and Repetition* 132).

It is here that Deleuze breaks ranks with classical philosophy by suggesting that the arts might very well present one way of struggling against the image of thought and exploring new philosophical terrains. He argues that "directors, painters, architects, musicians, and philosophers are all essentially 'thinkers,'" the only difference being that philosophers create concepts while artists create "'percepts' and 'affects,' which are particular to a given medium" but which can then be engaged conceptually by the spectator (Flaxman 3). In this way, philosophy can be released from the confines of the written word and take up the more pliable raw materials of other forms of expression. It is this reasoning that marks the beginning of a life-long obsession Deleuze would have with cinema. He sought to prove with two massive books, *The Movement-Image* (1983) and *The Time-Image* (1985), that the cinema can become a primary method of philosophical thought in the modern age, for its raw material is the very raw material of consciousness and thought itself: Time. Though it would take him many years to articulate this, a seed appears in the same preface of *Difference and Repetition* in which he first bemoans the various problems and distortions of philosophy: "The search for new means of philosophical expression was begun by Nietzsche and must be pursued today in relation to the renewal of certain other arts, such as the theatre or the cinema" (*Difference and Repetition* xxi).

This proposition of course incited much controversy in both film and philosophical communities, and continues to do so today. Deleuze scholar D.N. Rodowick suggests that "philosophers may suspect there is little substance here, and

film scholars may feel this is a throwback to a period of film study best left forgotten"
(Rodowick x). Indeed, much of film theory has moved away from arguments of
medium-specificity, which propose that cinema offers an essence that is entirely
unique from other forms of expression. Noel Carroll argues that all new art forms
"undergo an initial phase in which [they] attempt to legitimize [themselves as art] by
aping the conventions, forms, and effects of pre-existing arts," and proposing a
"range of autonomous effects" which it alone has access to (Carroll 3). Thus we see
much of early film theory attempting to develop grand ontological models that set
film apart as its own art. However, as Carroll points out and as film theory has
gradually accepted, medium-specificity arguments are often ultimately unfounded,
and can instead be seen as socio-political attempts at legitimization. Moreover, these
arguments can "exercise a tenacious grip on the imaginations of artists and theorists
alike," limiting them to a certain way of thinking (or image of thought, as Deleuze
would put it) (Carroll 25).

    Deleuze comes at it from a different angle. He is not a film theorist, nor a
filmmaker, but a philosopher, and he approaches film always as a philosopher. He is
not defending the medium of film by endowing it with a unique essence; rather he is
hijacking it, reappropriating it for his own purpose. In a 1986 interview, Deleuze
himself makes this clear:

> I was a student of philosophy, and although I wasn't stupid enough to
> want to create a philosophy of cinema, one conjunction made an
> impression on me. I liked those authors who demanded that we introduce
> movement to thought, "real" movement (they denounced the Hegelian

dialectic as abstract movement). How could I not discover the cinema, which introduces "real" movement into the image? I wasn't trying to *apply* philosophy to cinema, but I went straight from philosophy to cinema. The reverse was also true, one went right from cinema to philosophy…. One naturally goes from philosophy to cinema…. The brain is the screen. (Interview 365).

Through this paper and my film, I hope to argue Deleuze's position, that cinema represents a preeminent domain for philosophical expression precisely because it is the closest analogue to consciousness itself. The screenplay that accompanies this is only a blueprint for the film I hope to embark on. Certainly a screenplay is not cinema and very much falls into the same problems of the written word that Bergson and Deleuze discuss—however, I include it here as a first step toward a finished film that attempts to express certain philosophical notions, in hopes to self-consciously illustrate the potential of cinema for expression of this kind. In a somewhat ironic gesture, the philosophical concepts I attempt to explore in my film are the very ones underlining much of the psychology/philosophy of perception and memory that act as the foundations for Bergson's and Deleuze's respective philosophies (and much of modern day neuroscience).

For the remainder of this paper, I would like to explicate further Deleuze's way of thinking about cinema and to explain how my artistic choices attempt to fall in line with this. I will first provide a general background of the Bergsonian conceptions of image, movement, and time that underscore Deleuze's thinking. I will then explore how Deleuze employs and furthers Bergsonian thought and how this naturally leads

to the cinema. Finally, I will explain the main thrust of Deleuze's cinema books and how it brings us to our ultimate conclusion, that cinema is an apt philosophical tool in the modern age. The second part of this paper will be an explication of the philosophical concepts my film attempts to produce, borrowing concepts from Bergson, William James, and Michel Foucault. I will conclude by exploring what Deleuze's concepts mean today in our digital culture, and what the future may hold for them.

In the Bergsonian universe, matter is an aggregate of images. What is meant by image? In his seminal book, *Matter and Memory*, Bergson attempts to produce a metaphysics situated between idealism and realism, which, he argues, both stray too far from reality. Rather, Bergson uses the concept "image" to describe "a certain existence which is more than what which the idealist calls a *representation*, but less than that which the realist calls a *thing* – an existence placed halfway between the "thing" and the "representation." (*Matter and Memory* 9). On one hand, an object I perceive has a definitive existence in itself; on the other hand, "it is pictorial, as we perceive it: image it is, but a self-existing image" (10). Not only is the object I perceive changed (in my perception) by the way in which I view it (angle, distance, lighting, etc), but it is also innately tainted by my memory, which is another issue Bergson spends much time on. But first, it is important to recognize the importance of a special kind of image: my body.

According to Bergson, an inanimate, unperceived image in the universe "acts through every one of its points upon all the points of all other images, [transmitting] the whole of what it receives, [opposing] every action [with] an equal and opposite reaction, to be, in short, merely a road by which pass, in every direction, the modifications propagated throughout the immensity of the universe" (36). An object unperceived contains in it every possible representation it can have, but these are "always virtual…being neutralized, at the very moment when it might become actual, by the obligation to continue itself and to lose itself in something else" (36). But when our body perceives an object from its particular place in the universe, we break down this infinite amount of virtual representations and "obscure some of its aspects" so that we are left with a representation that "[detaches] itself from [others] as a *picture"* (36). What is the basis for the particular picture we are able to perceive?

To start, Bergson writes that living beings in the universe can be thought of simply as "centers of indetermination." Unlike inanimate objects which "pass…the modifications propagated throughout the immensity of the universe," my brain allows me to delay an automatic reaction to external stimuli—it allows me to choose an action, to formulate a response during an interval consciousness constructs. In short, this interval is the "location of a process bringing ever more numerous and distant points in space into relation with ever more complex motor responses" (Rodowick 87). And because of this, my body is a "center of action" in the universe. It is different from other images in that it can freely act on them. Thus, while matter is an aggregate of images, the perception of matter, according to Bergson, "is these same images referred to the eventual action of one particular image, my body" (22). Our

image of matter, then, is nothing more than "a measure of our possible action upon bodies: it results from the discarding of what has no interest for our needs, or more generally, for our functions" (38). All images reflect back to my body its eventual influence: what I can affect, or use. This is how Bergson formulates the universe and perception of the universe—"to perceive all the influences from all the points of all bodies would be to descend to the condition of a material object. Conscious perception signifies choice, and consciousness mainly consists in this practical discernment" (49). As a result, we can then see how perception is "undoubtedly interlaced with memories" and that it "ends by being merely an occasion for remembering" (66-67). William James echoes this with his theory of preperception— that, "half of the perception" of, say, the chair in front of me is my mental image of the chair, either in the form of a recollection of the chair itself if I've seen it before, or of my aggregate Image of "chair" (James 287). Bergson puts it similarly: "With the immediate and present data of our senses, we mingle a thousand details out of our past experience" in determining possible actions to an image (33).

Thus, Bergson gives us a universe made of images. The images we perceive are those that have interest to our bodily functions. A human may observe an object and see only the natural light spectrum, while a snake perceiving the same object sees only the infrared spectrum of light. This infrared image is useful for the snake, but not as useful for a human, thus the difference. Bergson stresses that these different images are not independent representations created in our minds—rather they are part of matter itself, part of the virtual array of all possible representations an object has. And intrinsic to the processes of perceiving particular images in which my body can

act on is memory, which acts as the bridge between the exterior world and my inner world of past experience.

Throughout Bergson's conception of perception and the universe of images, we find that "the most basic image is the movement-image" (Schwab 110). Deleuze boils down in a basic sense the core of Bergson's viewpoint: that "movement has two aspects. On one hand, that which happens between objects or parts; on the other hand, that which expresses the duration of the whole" (*Movement-Image* 11). The first typifies the traditional view of movement as seen by mechanics and human intellect, the motion of one object across a line of space; but according to Bergson, this is a false movement, relegating motion to "an abstraction or a symbol" (*Matter and Memory* 202). For in reality, "movement is distinct from the space covered. Space covered is past, movement is present, the act of covering" (*Movement-Image* 1). In other words, it is never a being (as in, that there is movement), but a becoming— never measurable or dividable. However, in the traditional view, movement can be *infinitely* divided up into smaller and smaller movements (hence Zeno's Paradox and the myriad of other space and time paradoxes). Real movement itself then, according to Bergson, "is rather the transference of a state than of a thing" (*Matter and Memory* 202). Real movement itself is not summed up, for instance, by the motion of my finger moving closer to my keyboard and *decreasing the distance* between them (this is an intellectual abstraction for the sake of measurement). Rather, it is the *system*, the whole that contains the keyboard, my finger, and everything else, which is *changing*, which is moving.

To help clarify this, Bergson's conception of time, Duration (*durée*), is needed. Duration is pure becoming, is change itself, and cannot ever be divided into smaller pieces. His best metaphor for it (though necessarily imperfect) is that of a rubber band being stretched from a single point outward without stopping, so that it could never be divisible because it is always changing—Duration, then, is pure mobility; it is the *motion* of the elastic, not the measured space over which it stretches. Duration solves many of the traditional paradoxes of space and time because it separates time from the spatial conception people traditionally have of it and relegates it to that of something beyond space, something synonymous, in the end, with consciousness. Thus we have a number of equivalents: Consciousness = Duration, Duration = change, and change = movement itself.

There are many important implications to this. First of all, to return to the traditional view of movement, as an abstraction which occurs in the intellect. The intellect always works in the past (with what I just saw, not what I am presently seeing), and views things as immobile sections. Ironically, Bergson uses the metaphor of the cinematic device to illustrate this. In cinema, he writes, a camera translates real movement itself into a bunch of immobile instances (typically 24 frames a second), and then these static frames are put into a projector that adds an abstract movement to them, thus giving the illusion to the audience that they are watching real motion. The intellect works in the same way. It takes real movement, breaks it down into immobile, divisible instances, and then reconstitutes the movement. As Bergson states, "instead of attaching ourselves to the inner becoming of things, we place ourselves outside them in order to recompose their becoming artificially. We take

snapshots, as it were, of the passing reality...." (*Creative Evolution*, 306). The cinema is certainly a useful metaphor here, but we shall see later how Bergson is mistaken in his view of the cinema (in large part due to the fact that he was writing before the cinema grew into itself, as Deleuze will explain).

Bergson then points out that it is only *intuition*, which is in the present, that can fully communicate with pure movement-in-itself. It, like the present, is pure becoming. Now, even when we try to grasp this, we of course must intellectualize, so that, as Deleuze says, "whether we would think becoming, or express it, or even perceive it, we hardly do anything else than set going a kind of cinematograph inside us" (*Movement-Image* 2). But this point, that "we touch the reality of [an] object in an immediate intuition," and not intellect, is among the key things Bergson stresses and acts as the foundation of his methodology. (*Matter and Memory* 77).

Another implication of Bergson's conception of movement and Duration is that we get an answer to a problem that has long bothered both philosophers and scientists (and particularly Bergson). As he sums up, if you separate consciousness from the outside world, you have "two different worlds, incapable of communicating otherwise than by a miracle—on the one hand, that of motion in space, and the other hand, that of consciousness with sensations" (*Matter and Memory* 202). But Bergson's concepts attempt to do away with this problem, equating real movement to "quality [mental sensation] itself, vibrating, so to speak, internally, and beating time for its own existence through an often incalculable number of moments," which thus "cannot be without some likeness to the continuity of our own consciousness" (*Matter and Memory* 202-203). Again, real movement is not the movement of a

single object or part, but the change of state of a whole system. It is the representation of Duration. Consciousness, then, must be included as a part of this system; and consequently, it must be viewed as fundamentally interwoven with reality, with movement itself.

There is little difference for Deleuze between the moving image on a screen, and movement in the real world. In this respect, he finds agreement in modern film theory, particularly with Christian Metz, who writes that "because movement is never material but always visual, to reproduce its appearance is to duplicate its reality… one cannot even 'reproduce' a movement; one can only re-produce it in a second production belonging to the same order of reality, for the spectator, as the first" (Metz 9). However, Deleuze's conception of movement in cinema remains Bergsonian, and for that reason, breaks away from Metz and other film theorists.

As Deleuze writes in his cinema books, although Bergson's cinematographic analogy was used to understand false movement, Bergson did not give a close-enough examination to the cinema (still in its infancy during his lifetime) and therefore was unable to see that the cinema actually exposed what Bergson himself exposed in his writing: the movement-image. Although Bergson's original analogy is still a helpful tool in understanding the intellect's relationship with movement, it is not an adequate description of the reality of cinema. Rather than presenting to us the individual photographs that make up a filmstrip, the cinema actually presents us with "an intermediate image, to which movement is not appended or added; the movement on the contrary belongs to the intermediate image as immediate given. It gives us a

section, but a section which is mobile, not an immobile section + abstract movement" (*Movement-Image* 2). Animated film is perhaps the easiest in which to grasp Deleuze's concept. As with Bergson's treatment of real movement in itself, in the animated film the "drawing no longer constitutes a pose or a completed figure, but the description of a figure which is always in the process of being formed [becoming] or dissolving through the movement of lines and points," thus the cinema "does not give us a figure described in a unique moment, but the continuity of the movement which describes the figure" (*Movement-Image* 5). In other words, we are presented with blocs of space-time as "a mobile section of a whole which changes, that is, of a Duration or of a 'universal becoming'" (qtd. Rodowick 86). But cinema's production of the movement-image is only part of the story, and it is with the direct engagement with the *time-image*, "the phantom which has always haunted the cinema, but [which] took modern cinema to give a body to this phantom" where the cinema cements itself as a mechanism able to produce thought.

In order to grasp this, one must understand that for Deleuze, "films and their constituent signs have no definition outside of film history," and that cinema is "defined by film history (practice) itself," not the application of "some abstract theory from outside" (Kovács 157). This is why, for instance, Bergson "failed to notice that, far from refuting his thesis, film constitutes its most positive demonstration"—for the fact is that "his theorization appeared at the cinema's earliest moments, that is, when its techniques had yet to fully unfold" (157). Deleuze argues that "a new kind of image is born" in post-Word War II cinema, which we can locate clearly in Italian Neorealism (*Movement-Image* 207). Before this, the images of cinema were

completely bound to narrative; there is always action, always a forward motion driven by plot. The characters are constantly "doing" and the camera is constantly following their actions, as if innately tied. There is no reading of the image needed, simply a viewing of the action. But beginning primarily with Neorealism, Deleuze writes:

>…the sensory-motor schema is no longer in operation, but at the same time it has not overtaken or overcome. It is shattered from the inside. That is, perceptions and actions ceased to be linked together, and the spaces are now neither co-ordinated nor filled. Some characters, caught in certain pure optical and sound situations, find themselves condemned to wander about or go off on a trip. These are pure seers, who no longer exist except in the interval of movement, and do not even have the consolation of the sublime, which would connect them to matter or would gain control of the spirit for them. They are rather given over to something intolerable which is simply their everydayness itself. It is here that the reversal is produced…(*Time-Image* 40-41).

The reversal is this: "a time-image has subordinated movement" (22). According to Deleuze, "time is no longer the measure of movement but movement is the perspective of time: it constitutes a whole cinema of time, with a new conception and new forms of montage….[in which] sound as well as visual elements of the image enter into internal relations which means that the whole image has to be 'read,' no less than seen, readable as well as viewable" (22). Thus, not only do we now have a cinema that fully produces Bergson's conception of movement and Duration, and, consequently, consciousness—as "consciousness is the constitutive element of both

the new image and cinematographic history" (Kovács 156)—but we now have a cinema that is released from the simple sensory-motor schema and must be read, conceptualized, engaged with our own thought, as the thought of two debating philosophers might be engaged. We have a cinema intimately connected with thinking. Deleuze further writes:

> Even when it is mobile, the camera is no longer content sometimes to follow the characters' movement, sometimes itself to undertake movements of which they are merely the object, but in every case it subordinates description of a space to the functions of thought…. Hitchcock's premonition will come true: a camera-consciousness which would no longer be defined by the movements it is able to follow or make, but by the mental connections it is able to enter into. And it becomes questioning, responding, objecting, provoking, theorematizing, hypothesizing, experimenting, in accordance with the open list of logical conjunctions ('or', 'therefore', 'if', 'because', 'actually', 'although'…)… The image has freed itself from sensory-motor links; it had to stop being action-image in order to become a pure optical, sound (and tactile) image (*Time-Image* 23).

In short, we can say that for Deleuze, the cinema does not merely represent thoughts or modes of thinking, but "is thought itself, the image of thinking," making visible "the fundamental prelinguistic mechanisms and contents of thinking," for the very fact that "thinking is inseparable from time, and modern cinema creates direct images

of time, images divorced from practical [sensory-motor] relationships and determined only by 'optical and sound situations'" (Kovács 162).

What does this mean for philosophy? Well, for Deleuze, one of the preeminent philosophers of the 20th century, it is clear that his "two books on cinema are…at the very heart of [his] thought" (Alliez 295). He hoped to escape the confines of traditional language and traditional "images of thought" and produce concepts more mobile, more honest, more tangible. Cinema was his answer: it gives us "ontological thought that enables us to 'reach "another" perception,' which is also the genetic element of all perception" (Alliez 294). Because a film is a "sculpture in time" (to use Tarkovsky's phrase) and because our consciousness is itself the ceaseless continuation of Duration, then we are able to converse with cinema without words, without images of thought. It frees us from conventions and allows us to engage thought without translation. As Jean-Clet Martin has remarked:

> It is this ravine of the image that opens between thought and being that Deleuze has us discover through his books on cinema, no less in his detour through Bergson and Leibniz. From this entanglement of the mental landscape that the monad unfolds, and from the cerebral texture of the world inaugurated by cinema, is born the image of thought as Deleuze unfolds it in his essay on philosophy as plane of Nature, the plane that grasps being and thought on a common diagram of immanence (Martin 83).

Of course, certainly the cinema presents its own set of conventions and clichés. But it also presents us with a unique standing among the arts, for 1. We have seen the

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demise of medium-specificity arguments about cinema precisely because it has been nearly impossible for theorists to agree on its conventions over time, and 2. It is a medium itself that has been "self-consciously created," and as such, is constantly changing to meet what our desires want it to be (Carroll 3).

Indeed, we can perhaps say that there is yet another factor in choosing cinema as a method of philosophical expression: its ever-changing nature in both form and content make it, as an art form, not a stable being (as in, "this, here, is cinema"), but a becoming (constantly shifting on the back of the simple statement, "perhaps I can make cinema be this for me"). In fact, many writers remark that Deleuze's project is becoming clearer in today's digital age. According to D.N. Rodowick, for Deleuze, "the semiotic history of film is coincident with a century-long transformation wherein we have come to represent and understand ourselves socially through spatial and temporal articulations founded in cinema, if now realized more clearly in the electronic and digital media" (Rodowick xiii). And András Kovács writes that "What Deleuze underlines and conceptualizes vis-à-vis modernism are the very features that the digital culture of the 1990s has blown up and popularized to incredible proportions…" (Kovács 169). Thus, we see that not only is cinema useful for philosophers, but that it has become the method for us, as a society at large and in our own specialized communities, to understand and to articulate ourselves; to engage with problems or ideologies; to formulate responses or ways of seeing; to, in short, think outside of ourselves, in hopes of touching others.

I can't help but be reminded now of André Bazin, that ever-lurking deity of film theory, and an essay called "The Myth of Total Cinema." He writes:

The cinema is an idealistic phenomenon. The concept men had of it existed so to speak fully armed in their minds, as if in some platonic heaven, and what strike us most of all is the obstinate resistance of matter to ideas rather than of any help offered by [scientific and industrial] techniques to the imagination of the researchers (Bazin 17).

Is it true, that a "myth of total cinema" has existed in the minds of humans all along, and took only the slow development of industrial mechanisms that make it possible to rear its head—that all art forms prior to it were only attempts at reaching the cinema, at attaining "an integral realism, a recreation of the world in its own image, an image unburdened by the freedom of interpretation of the artist or the irreversibility of time" (21)? Bazin goes on to write that "the real primitives of cinema, existing only in the imaginations of a few men…are in complete imitation of nature. Every new development added to the cinema must, paradoxically, take it nearer and nearer to its origin. In short, cinema has not yet been invented!" (21).

Bazin wrote this essay on the cusp of the Neorealism movement, that great shift in cinema according to Deleuze. Certainly it can be said that part of what was fueling this shift from movement-image to time-image were the technological advancements that made film cheaper, cameras smaller, and sound less of a hassle—so that we *could* wait with a character, exist with a character, think with a character. There is no longer the economic necessity to stick with action and plot advancement. So perhaps here we see an example of Bazin's total cinema becoming more real due to technology finally catching up to our imaginations. And perhaps, too, we see it

happening today, with digital possibilities that truly expand what cinema can be, where it can go, and who can yield it. The cinema has yet to be invented.

We use cinema quite clearly to mark where we are, what we are thinking, and where we are going; and conversely, it is very much a driving force in all of these—it is integrally involved with what a human being *is* in the modern world. Consequently, cinema should no longer be thought of only as an entertaining force for the masses (which it is), or means of expression for artists (which it is), but as a unique and necessary space for philosophy in the 21st century.

I hope to make a film that takes up this project, or at least demonstrates how it might be done. Included with this paper is a draft of the screenplay, necessarily only a part of the picture, but helpful in understanding what I'm attempting to do. The primary philosophical topic I take up is representing memory as it is theorized starting at the turn of the 20th century and continues today in scientific studies of the brain. Along the way, I also attempt to both represent the identity of a character at time when the nature of identity is constantly shifting, and to convey the inner subjection and turmoil of a character as a result of modern-day mechanisms of control.

As Bergson himself writes, "Memory, inseparable in practice from perception, imports the past into the present, contracts into a single intuition many moments of Duration, and thus by a twofold operation compels us, de facto, to perceive matter in ourselves, whereas we, de jure, perceive matter within matter" (*Matter and Memory*

73). In my film, which centers around the perception of the character Sam, I preface every new scene with a barrage of memories. The scene unfolds as memories of Sam's past unfold, bringing her to the present. All these memories, however, are intricately tied in with her present perception. For instance, the first present-day scene of the film involves Sam and two of her friends in a cold alley outside a bar. Her two friends are smoking cigarettes, and one (Alisha) is video-recording Sam for an art piece she is working on. This scene unfolds, however, through a series of brief memories of Sam's: her, as a child unknowingly being video-taped by a home movie camera at a party; writing a message on a foggy school bus window on a cold day; pretending to smoke cigarettes with friends using stick and exhaling white breath produced by the coldness; a guardian shutting a window next to her bed. This echoes a common philosophical notion of modernity: that there is no such thing as a present separated from the past, from memory. Not only is this idea reflected in philosophy (i.e. Bergson) and psychology (i.e. James)—both contending "that any sensation, no matter how seemingly elemental, is always a compounding of memory, desire, will, anticipation, and immediate experience" (Crary 27)— but in the literature of modernity, especially in writers who took up the "stream of consciousness" style. In the following passage from her book *Orlando*, Virginia Woolfe sums up things very similarly to James and Bergson:

> …the most ordinary movement in the world, such as sitting down at a table and pulling the inkstand towards one, may agitate a thousand odd, disconnected fragments, now bright, now dim, hanging and bobbing and dipping and flaunting, like the underlinen of a family of fourteen on a line

in a gale of wind. Instead of being a single, downright, bluff piece of work

which no man need feel ashamed, our commonest deeds are set about with

a fluttering and flickering of wings, a rising and falling of lights (Woolfe

78-79).

As this is constantly occurring with each new scene, I also attempt to use it to

express modern notions of identity and a sense of the crisis Sam is going through.

Throughout the film, Sam undergoes a transformation from upstanding representation

of a modern, normalized American 20-something woman to someone who slowly

transitions to an almost non-expression of identity. At the same time, her memories

only rarely contain her as the principle subject. Rather, they often involve people of

different races, genders, and classes in her place. This is in line with modern

conceptions of remembering and perceiving childhood. Sam cannot ever truly

remember or occupy her childhood, for "the child becomes a time-space made

available for occupation by the (adult) subject" (Castañeda). So instead, she writes

into her memory her own present-day thoughts and conceptions to go with the

sensations remembered from these moments.

In addition to this, Sam's current sense of self deteriorates through the course

of the film. Much of this is due to what Foucault calls the "age of the infinite

examination and of compulsory objectification" (Foucault 189). We are constantly

examining ourselves, constantly making sure the way we act and signify ourselves

falls in line with the particular norms we are surrounded by. There is a penalty to not

conforming, to not acting properly, and this "perpetual penalty that traverses all

points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares,

differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it *normalizes*" (183). Deleuze himself later adapts Foucault's points to the globalized digital age, in which he modifies "Foucault's disciplinary societies into 'societies of control,' in which the combination of a global market, information technology, and the irresistible imperative of 'communication' produces continuous and unbounded effects of control" (Crary 76). I attempt to make it clear that the unraveling of Sam's "sanity" is due to the extreme degree of self-consciousness and self-examination she sees throughout those around her and in the very function she is given as a worker making smartphone "apps." Soon, she can't help but focus solely on this, solely on the continual construction of selves and purposes in order to fit pre-ordained identities and the norms that go with them. Everyone is an actor, and what's worse: no one bothers to pretend this isn't true. The sad falseness of modern communication is what causes Sam to completely forgo attempting to keep up any identity at all. This, coupled with the hyper-reflexive society at large and its obsession with the apocalypse, is what, in the end, prompts Sam to simply give up, to simply stop moving.

There are other things my film attempts to do, but I think it would be wrong to list them here. Rather, let the film itself communicate these to you; allow yourself not only to think about it, but to think *with* it. Of course, the film does not yet exist, though I hope to begin production on some semblance of it soon. You can read the accompanying screenplay to get an idea of what I am shooting for, but I wouldn't recommend it. Actually I don't consider it very good. It is rushed, too preachy, and honestly pretty boring. This will be my excuse: the cinema Deleuze most often

champions is not a pre-written cinema. Quite literally, the films that put the time-image on display are often unwritten (that is, not following a rigid script)—rather, they are thought up in production within the collective of director, cinematographer, actors, production designers, and editors. The format of the screenplay, in fact, represents a true paragon of the limitations of the written word. It necessarily deals only with action. There is no way (and, indeed, any attempts are strictly forbidden) to *wait* with a character—to have an *interval*. And yet, an initial screenplay is considered a necessary step toward the production of a film—but only a step. I hope to refine the screenplay in its current form so that it can better serve as a source of ideas during the production of the film, and perhaps as a skeleton for its narrative structure. But I do not want to express myself by means of words and think in terms of space, to allude back to Bergson's preface. Rather I want to take up the task of thinking in time, and so I turn to my *caméra-stylo* and focus in on the easel of time and ourselves: cinema.

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