Pepita Hesselberth

It's about Time (Or Is It?) Warhol anno 2007

Absztrakt

In this paper I focus on the audiovisual work of Andy Warhol as it was presented in the Warhol exhibition "Andy Warhol: Other Voices, Other Rooms" which took place in Amsterdam in 2007. By investigating the self-reflexive play with cinematic temporality performed upon the viewer I wish to address how a (sense of) "self" emerges from the multiple temporalities and non-spaces as they are both present in Warhol's films and re-presented in the 2007 exhibition, a "me" that is at once extruded and imploded. With his calculated distance and his passionless presence, I will argue, Warhol managed to suspend his affective response as an observer, and in doing so his films enable the viewer to enter into his transactions of art. The films, especially in this exhibition-as-setup, however, do not open up an unknown world for us, but refocus (or rather: "re-scale") our own familiar but paradoxically unrecognized one. Closing in on the pro-filmic reality and slowing it down, the camera's gaze forces the beholder at a distance, complicating the double spatiality of the close-up as expounded by Mary-Ann Doane.

In the paper I thus focus on the specific - self-reflexively explored - relation between the "subject" of the exhibition (Warhol) and the "subject" in the exhibition (the visitor/"me"), around the notions of a Deleuzian "pulsed" temporality, an "inside-out" Bazinian cinematic ontology, and a re-scaled subject-object division (in Doane's sense of scale). In doing so I seek to identify the media-infused ways of world-making that challenge and change our sense of time and space, and consequently, how these shifting parameters of time and space in their turn redefine our sense of "being-in-the-world."

Szerző

Pepita Hesselberth

I am currently writing my dissertation, under supervision of Thomas Elsaesser in Amsterdam and Ulrik Ekman in Copenhagen, entitled Chronoscopy: Performative Sense-Making in Contemporary Mainstream Film and Time-based Media. For this project I received a Fellowship

within the area of "Philosophy, Cinema, andCultural Theory," co-hosted by The Copenhagen Doctoral School in Cultural Studies, Literature and, the Arts (CDS) and The Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA). Between 1999 and 2007 I worked as a lecturer and junior researcher at the universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht, where I have coordinated and thought many courses, and supervised students at both BA and MA level. During that period I also edited, together with Thomas Elsaesser, a textbook entitled Hollywood op Straat: Film en Televisie Binnen de Hedendaagse (Audiovisuele) Cultuur (Amsterdam UP, 2000).

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In this paper I focus on the audiovisual work of Andy Warhol as it was presented in the Warhol exhibition "Other Voices, Other Rooms" which took place in Amsterdam in 2007 [1]. This exhibition should perhaps be considered a work *on* the work of Warhol. Although on the one hand the exhibition positioned Warhol within more or less conventional paradigms of artistic intention and 'factory' historicism, on the other hand it also framed his work as an explicitly contemporary event in at least four ways.

First of all, the exhibition was programmed parallel to another exhibition entitled Scenes and Traces, which featured numerous video works from, among others, Douglas Gordon, Pipilotti Rist, Nam June Paik and Bill Viola [2]. The reciprocal contamination of the exhibitions prompted a modern-day comment on Warhol's play with time and its medium-reflexivity.

Second, the museum's website provided the curious visitor with an "impression of the Warhol exhibition," in which a seemingly amateur camcorder navigates with speed through the exhibition, turning it into an almost impressionistic blur with some recognizable details. The camera does not hold, it never reveals, it only moves from one screen to the next, from one room to the next, never fixing its position, its gaze, except for some rare occasions at the end of the clip when the camera does not pan or tilt, but zooms in and out of details. The feel to it is that of a present-day pervasive media landscape in which we can navigate audiovisually, i.e. tooled up with a camera of our own (despite the fact that the exhibition itself explicitly prohibited the use of cameras) [3].

Third, for the exhibition both films and television programs were transferred onto dvd before being put on display. This intervention has major implications for the much-debated materiality of the works. It not only collapses the differences between Warhol's films and television programs, as well as between his work and later art films and videos now being distributed on electronic carriers (and screened at the parallel exhibition). It also neutralizes the particularity often attributed to the material base of especially Warhol's early films (Koch, Lee, Taubin). As very little happens in these films we are left to decipher the physical movement of the projected film, witnessing as well as anticipating the gradual (past and future) deterioration of the film through repetitive screenings. Here it is the odd (in)visibility of the lossy compression algorithm that situates the exhibited Warhol films explicitly in the present. It was like watching Nam June Paik's looped empty spool of 16mm film Zen for Film (1962-64) on Youtube – the uncanny experience of watching an empty white "film" screen rendered digitally [4].

And finally, the audiovisual arrangement of the exhibition itself similarly (re)inscribed the work of Warhol with a media-infused contemporaneity hard to overlook. To be sure, the exhibition did not preclude a chronicled "reading" of the material as signs of their times. But it also incited a different sensation, of navigating a present mediascape, of being thrown back and forth between the past the works "represent" and the contemporaneity of their arrangement. Addressing the Warhol exhibition as a quintessential *contemporary* media phenomenon, then, helps me to anchor the beginnings of the tripartite argument around the interlacing of *temporality*, *performativity* and *subjectivity* within present-day media culture that I wish to develop here.

Detour

In this study I speak of *ontology* rather than *epistemology*, because, by looking at a select corpus of media phenomena, I primarily aim to understand how our media-saturated world is constituted, i.e. what world it is and what is to be done in it, rather then how and what we may come to know about it. I do not mean to convey a taxonomy of what exists, the order of things. Rather, I seek to identify the media-infused ways of world-making that challenge and change our sense of time and space, and consequently, the way these shifting parameters of time and space in their turn redefine our sense of "being-in-the-world". For it is here, at this (perhaps meta-) ontological level, that temporality, performativity and subjectivity intertwine.

This view on the ontology of cinema is closer to Bazin's celebration of mainstream cinema's potential of an "integral realism," than to the view of his materialist opponents. For Bazin the ontology of the photographic image, and by extension the cinematic image, was identical to the ontology of the pro-filmic image. According to his view the natural process of registration transferred the being of the pro-filmic event to the being of film, cancelling out the irreversibility of time along its way [5]. Historically as well as theoretically, Peter Wollen asserts in his article "'Ontology' and 'Materialism' in Film," the aesthetic and theoretical concern for the ontology of cinema passed from this belief in the possibility of an "objective" reproduction of a pro-filmic object or event, to a reflexive exploration and demonstration of the material properties, processes and structures of the filmic support, that challenged its reproductive and illusionistic potential (Wollen: 193).

Wollen foregrounds two versions of materialist critique that are often juxtaposed. First, the modernist current of the American avant-garde aims to negate reproduction by reducing non-cinematic codes "to their material – optical, photo-chemical – substrate ('material support') to the exclusion of any semantic dimension other than reference-back to the material of any signifier itself" (197). Ontology here is reintroduced through the self-referentiality of the *film-object*, "so that film is about its own material or structure" (199). A second, post-Brechtian form of materialism, associated mainly with French auteurs such as Godard, is concerned with the subversion of the conventional codes of cinema and the "de-structuration" of the beholder (196). According to this

view it is not the intentional subject but the ordering of the signifiers (*style*) in the *film-text* that determines the production meaning. Signifiers are thus privileged over signifieds. (The distinction between film-representation, the film-object and the film-text is Wollen's.)

The shift in focus from the *ontology* to the *material/ materialism* of film, as discerned by Wollen, reveals a shift from what I would like to call an *outside-in* view on the relation between cinema and world (cinema as integral representation of "reality"), towards an *inside-outside* view (cinema as a "self-enclosed world," a distinct inside from the world outside). To this, I argue we must add a third, *inside-out* view (that partially returns to Bazin's outside-in view), if we want to account for the (con)fusion of the now contested categories of both "cinema" and "world". In this paper (and book-in-progress) I therefore adopt Bazin's view on the ontology of the moving image, which resides in the conflation of the filmic and pro-filmic "reality" instead of relying upon the objecthood or language of the cinematic "text" alone. Unlike Bazin, however, I maintain that in the media-saturated world we inhabit today, media and "reality" have merged so that media no longer solely mediate "reality," but have become a "first reality".

Other rooms

The Warhol exhibition contained three main sections – entitled *Filmscape, Cosmos* and *TV-Scape* – all surrounding the adjacent main entry hall *About Andy*. The entry hall comprised a red carpet, stroboscopic flashlight, The Velvet Underground & Nico's "I'll be your Mirror," many photographs and clips arranged in chronological and thematic order, four documentaries on Warhol and two giant mirrors. This was one of the most bizarre confrontations of the exhibition: seeing myself in one of those giant mirrors behind which I expected another room, another space, another film or even another time, but certainly not myself standing right there, right then, at odds with my surroundings. (I'l
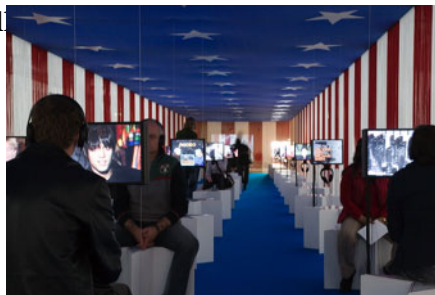

Fig 1 TV-Scape, Andy Warhol – Other Voices, Other Rooms, 12.10.07 – 13.01.08, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Photo: Gert Jan van Rooij

The *TV-Scape* (Fig 1) comprised a draped platform with numerous television screens on which Warhol's television productions, mainly interviews with the famous and the unknown, were presented synchronically. The room initially resisted the investment of time, of sitting down, staying put and confronting for example Fran Lebovitz's cynicism, the male model's life story, or

even Warhol's own boredom with his subjects. When I entered the room for a second time, however, the *TV-Scape* called for an extended investment of time, quite different from the one required in the *Filmscape*, as it was impossible to get an impression of what was going on without actually sitting down, uncomfortably on pillar-chairs with headphones, facing a flat screen that on the flipside faced yet another visitor. Instead of allowing the visitor the distracted viewing position (or if you will, the *flânerie*) of the living room, the makeup of the room full of small screens was such that despite their multitude the single screens held the viewer in place, demobilised the visitor. Each television set had its own chair and pair of headphones, inviting the visitor to sit down and watch a clip, fragment or slot of television in isolation amidst the crowd, as if the curators thought television a less wearisome medium than cinema (and the programs less boring than the films) [6].

The gallery called *Cosmos*, described as "the heart of the exhibition" on the museum's website, consisted of Warhol's famous icons, *Factory Diaries*, and objects from his *Time Capsules*, a serial work made up of drawings, photos, newspaper clips and magazines, source images for art-work, exhibition catalogues, correspondences, rare archive material and audio fragments that were originally stored in sealed cardboard boxes but are now put on display. The result is an eclectic *bricolage* of media clips of a specific time and age that "highlights the master's thinking and way of working" (Stedelijk Museum, online). As my main interest in the exhibition lay not so much in Warhol's persona but in his famous and infamous time based endurance (con)tests, I skipped through the Warhol *Cosmos* with a distracted curiosity. The amount of information stuffed onto and into pillars and walls was overwhelming and the details largely escaped me, except perhaps for the video in which Warhol t

Fig 2 Filmscape, Andy Warhol – Other Voices, Other Rooms, 12.10.07 – 13.01.08, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Photo: Gert Jan van Rooij

The section *Filmscape* (Fig. 2) featured films such as Screen Tests (1964-1966), Sleep (1963), Blow Job (1963), Chelsea Girls (1966), Empire (1964), Outer and Inner Space (1966), Kitchen (1965) Henry Geldzahler (1964) and Mrs. Warhol (1966). Of these films only the Screen Tests were projected in a separate room, one on each of the four walls (Fig. 3a & 3b). These *stillies* (as opposed to movies), as Warhol tended to call them, feature static close-up, portrait-performances sketched out over time, of factory visitors with "star-potential," each lasting three minutes (Angell: 2002).

The other films were projected on a vast number of screens in the larger space of *Filmscape*,

arranged in such a way that one could hardly watch a film without simultaneously seeing another, either from the corner of one's eye, or in the reflection of, or even through, the partially transparent silver screens (Fig. 5a & 5b). *Filmscape* thus encouraged anything but the one-on-one viewing that characterized *TV-scape*. Instead it resisted an isolated viewing, isolated in the sense of both private (being alone when watching something) and single (watching a single film/ clip on its own). The very fact that the museum had organized a compensatory successive marathon cinema screening of the films stipulates the relevance of this different way of presenting the films.
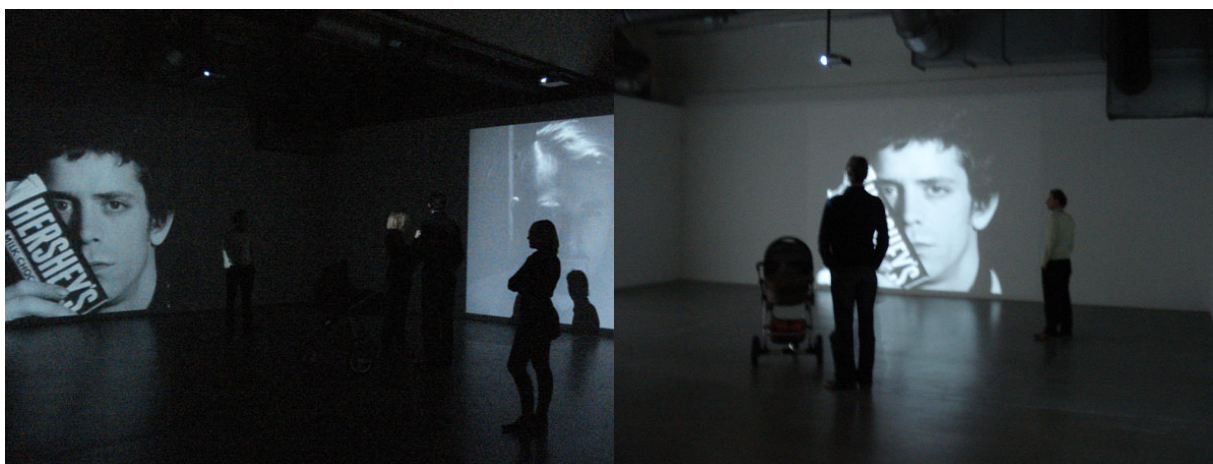

Fig 3a Screen Tests, Andy Warhol – Other Voices, Other Rooms, 12.10.07 – 13.01.08, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Photos Pepita Hesselberth

Fig 3b Screen Tests, Andy Warhol – Other Voices, Other Rooms, 12.10.07 – 13.01.08, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Photos Pepita Hesselberth

The interrupted viewer position often associated with television's flow and its repetitive, fragmentary and redundant mode-of-address was thus retained for *Filmscape*. While the configuration of the two media spaces on the one hand upheld and even accentuated the opposition between television's individual and cinema's collective mode-of-address, it reversed the conventional opposition between the television viewer's potential itinerancy and the cinema spectator's typical immobility. Where the *TV-scape* made the visitor to sit down, the "flow" of images in the *Filmscape* – due to its composition and the rhythmic and monotonous makeup of the filmic material – invigorated the viewer's wandering and distracted glance [7]. Its result was as affecting as it was ungraspable.

Fig 4a&b Reflections, a) Seeing through b) Mario Banana reflected in Camp. Andy Warhol – Other Voices, Other Rooms, 12.10.07 – 13.01.08, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Photo: Pepita Hesselberth

Fig 4a&b Reflections, a) Seeing through b) Mario Banana reflected in Camp. Andy Warhol – Other Voices, Other Rooms, 12.10.07 – 13.01.08, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Photo: Pepita Hesselberth

Weighed down by the high contrast of the black and white imagery and multiple screen projections I sit down on one of the odd-shaped uncomfortable couches somewhere in the middle of the room. On my far right I see the once famous but now camera-shy artist Paul Swan dancing, rehearsing, hiding, dancing again, performing (Paul Swan, 1965). Close to me on my left, a camp-lady swings as the camera zealously zooms in and out. Behind it somewhat to the right a man dressed like a woman, is peeling, eating and blowing a banana, *as if* in flow motion, in black and white (Mario Banana, 1965), and in color (Mario Banana, 1964). On the far left wall, a multiplied androgynous being is flirting with the camera (Outer and Inner Space, 1966 – Fig. 6). On my right Andy's mother is ironing (Mrs. Warhol, 1966). Her clattering voice reaches me from above, where apparently a speaker is located. I get up and walk around. I witness curator Henry Geldzahler looking straight into the camera, stubborn, bored, self-conscious, uncomfortable (Henry Geldzahler, 1964). Geldzahler faces the unchanging and motionless hour-long image of the Empire State Buil[...] my left, John Giorno is sound a[...]

The young androgynous being appears to be Edie Sedgwick in a double screen projection called Outer and Inner Space (1966). Within each screen she is doubled again as she almost faces the monitor to her left which transmits video-images of her face in profile and looking straight into the camera (seemingly looking at her). Her gaze into the camera is unchanged, yet at the same time magnified miniscule gestural movements suggest – if perhaps only momentarily – changes, inscribed in the smallest visible unit of time, captured on film [8]. I could not make out what she was saying as all voices and all sounds, of all screens – or so it seems – were in disarray.

The sound was transmitted via a high-tech sound-beaming system, which relayed the sound of each individual film to the predicted position of the viewer when watching that particular film. Apparently I did not follow the invisible yet expected yellow brick road, which is not to say that I did not notice the pattern of walking in and out of reach. Rather it means that even when I did notice the sound hovering above my head, I was too distracted by the cacophony to fully hear what it was saying ("representing"). As a consequence, the films became illegible in themselves, words and sounds turned into noise, and the images were of interest only in their confrontation with each other and with each other's temporality. Detail was subordinated to as well as magnified through scale.

Scale and Detail

This situation invoked, by contrast, the question of the status of the detail. In her article on detail and scale in the cinematic close-up Mary Ann Doane argues that "[t]he semiotic status of the close-up seems to bear within itself a structuring contradiction, [...] between detail and totality, part and whole, microcosm and macrocosm, the miniature and the gigantic" (107-108). On the one hand, the legibility of the close-up, she claims, is intimately linked with its lack of autonomy: it is the pressure of narrative, of the look, culminating in the close-up that forces the close-up into "decipherability". On the other hand the close-up foregrounds details, contingencies, idiosyncrasies and it expands the time of the moment at the expense of linear narrative time, transforming the screen, momentarily, into a surface, a mere image. Because of the hyperbolic nature of the close-up it abstracts its subject from its surroundings, the face from the body, the object from the mise-en-scène. In a sense, Doane writes, a close-up is always "an autonomous entity, a fragment, a "'for-itself'" (90).

This confusion between detail and totality, according to Doane, reveals a theoretically maintained division between two spaces: the space of the narrative, and the space of the audience. Seen from the perspective of the narrative space the status of the image is one of detail. Seen from the space of the spectator, however, the close-up constitutes itself as a momentary totality, an autonomous

entity. Traditional film theory has insisted on classical cinema's tendency to work towards the annihilation of spectatorial space, putting the narrative world forward as the only one. The celebrations of the close-up as entity "for itself" by theorists such as Balazs, Deleuze and Epstein, conversely must be read as attempts to reaffirm the spectatorial space, to break open the seemingly self-enclosed space of the diegesis of traditional film theory.

According to Epstein, the close-up figured as the privileged site for the (experience of) *photogénie*, a concept designed to account for inarticulable enhancement of an object or being by photographic or filmic reproduction. For Bela Balazs "The close-up underwrites a crisis in the opposition between object and subject" (94), because it is anthropomorphic, while at the same time it tends to transform the very *locus* of subjectivity, i.e. the face, into a series of objects. Finally, Deleuze reasons that the close-up raises its object to the state of Entity. A Deleuzian affection-image, the close-up provides the beholder with a surface that is both sensible and legible, and, in Deleuze's view, intense.

By explicitly linking close-up to both detail and scale Doane draws attention to the interlacing of ideologies of interiority and public space, as well as to the desire to develop a theory of cinema that can account for cinema's transmission of affect. For, Doane argues, the "celebration of the close-up is also an attempt to reassert the corporeality of the classically disembodied spectator" (108). This is so because scale can only be understood in relation to the human body.

Punctuation

How to phrase what I seek to understand here, in that temporal disarray made even more intense by a play with scale? I am tempted to use the word *vantage point*, even though it refers to notions of perspective, vision, position and point of view, whereas I am looking for a way of thinking a vantage point in terms of time, a temporal situatedness that is other than just an ephemeral "now," in the sense that it also would entail a sense of direction, duration (as an equivalent of scale and distance?), and tempo.

The transfer of the concept of vantage point from space to time can be argued through, precisely, the ontology of the moving image. Referring to panoramic stereo cards and what she calls filmic postcards (static shots of moving images, e.g. a waterfall) that "depict geographically significant locations, meaningful for their capacity to offer a point of view, the spectacle that results and the moving effect," Nanna Verhoeff in her book *The West in Early Cinema* speaks of "punctuated places". *Punctuated places*, Verhoeff writes, are

> places with a name that signifies the direction of a look to other places. It is punctuated because it is a 'starting point' of a look elsewhere: [...] the camera *points at*, or rather *from* a specific spot that is emblematic for its vantage point (264).

Verhoeff illuminates the subtlety of what she is looking at by means of a temporal term applied to a spatial issue. Conversely, I find it useful to deploy spatial terms to account for a temporal phenomenon. In the case at hand, the terminological crossover leads to the following insight. Our place, our position in the exhibition room is always *punctuated* in the triple sense of the word: as, firstly, our gaze is punctuated by the screens – some nearby others more remote – *we* are, secondly, punctuated, interrupted, by the rhythms of the films, which, thirdly, emphasize, punctuate, their own temporality and its inherent relationship to the viewer. Moreover, our vantage point is mobile, despite its momentary suspensions when we stand still or sit down, as we (are likely to) wander around in the room full of projections. The section's title suggests as much. As we physically or virtually navigate through the filmscape, the images contaminate each other, in part sequentially, yet quite differently than in the case of a successive screening. For, it is not they but the visitors who "sequence" them.

This argument leads me to posit the following generalization regarding the specificity of exhibitionary installations of moving images. Neither representation nor spectator is held in place by a fixed vantage point. It is in this sense that the parameters of the multimedia exhibition differ from both those of the classical museum with its still images and moving spectator, and those of the classical cinema characterized by its moving images and the stillness or immobility of the spectator. With its combination of moving images and moving viewers – a multiplied variation on the parameters of domestic television – the multi-media installation resembles the modern cityscape primed with media façades and urban screens.

Moreover, the merger of the exhibition's self-reflexive subject matter with the out-of-the-corner-of-one's-eye perception of either a detail or another screen, I will argue below, entails a different mode of viewing. It pulls the visitor's perception out of the perspectival grid, as it enhances the tension between scale and detail, between spectatorial and narrative space as Doane argued. Both embedded in and situated by the multi-media dispositif, the spectator is punctuated in three additional ways. First he is punctuated by what he adds to the image, second by the way which he is affected by the image-as-totality, and third by the (image-as-totality)-as-detail of a space-time continuum that encompasses both images and "world" [9].

What our view brings to the each projected image is contingent, random within the fixed parameters of the space, as our view oscillates between the various screens. The passage of the void between the screens by the "thinking eye" with which we add up the images, pricks – punctuates – the visitor like the Barthesian *punctum*, "at once brief and active, […] by chance and for nothing" (Barthes: 49, 42). The *punctum* has the power to expand a tiny shock into a timeless time, generating an intense immobility in (and not necessarily of) the beholder. The films contaminate each other's content, but more importantly they contaminate each other's temporality. They do so, again, in a number of ways. One is historical. Their various dates of origin merge into one historical "era" (the sixties), without resulting in a historical flatness: a glimpse of factory-life, its drags and artists, and their mundane conversations may seem more

dated than the ambiguous multifaceted and experimentally quartered talking head of Edie Sedgwick, or the static grainy picture of the Empire State Building, which due to its visible technicality almost looks retro.

The films also contaminate each other's temporality on a different plane, on that of rhythm and duration. Rapidity and stasis not only direct our attention, but also comment on each other, and more particularly on their shared belonging to the same time-manipulating medium: projected film. And it is on this plane that the images, particularly in their joint projection, affect our sense of temporality, and as such our being in time.

On time

It is only at this point of my visit that I realize that the exhibition has provided me with a means of temporal plotting. This is important in that exhibitions try to combine narrative and plotting with the freedom of the flâneur or the cumulative superimposition of spaces with the linearity of the walk (see for example Païni, Friedberg). Writing about The Andy Warhol Museum in 1997 Patrizia Lombardo observed that the images in the exhibition were explicitly accompanied by dates. She ponders: "How can we forget time?" (37). Anno 2007 the Warhol exhibition in Amsterdam equally prohibits us to forget time. But here, it is not necessarily historical time that we are pressed to traverse. Rather, it is the ambiguous chasm between clocked time and a sensed time, the interplay between the body clocks of the exhibition, the various screens and the beholder. For in addition to the temporal structure of the traditional archive, the 2007 exhibition has adopted one of the most basic mechanisms of cinematic narrative time, known as the deadline structure. I will now explain how this works.

Below each screen a digital clock – reminiscent of an alarm clock, black with bright digits – displays the remaining time of the projection. Some promise a quick resolution, a liberation from the capturing tedium that is remarkable for so many of the films. Others proclaim a duration that extends far beyond closing hours, circumventing the institutional limits of the exhibition itself. It is like walking down Amsterdam city centre, where many of the city traffic lights are now provided with similar countdown clocks to prevent impatient pedestrians from crossing the street. We are reminded of our haste, our impatience: even though it may feel as if we have to wait endlessly, we now know that it hardly ever takes more than say 60 seconds. Yet whereas the stop-sign countdowns are always of short duration, for our good manners should not be challenged too much after all, the countdown clocks in the Warhol exhibition display not seconds but minutes and hours.

The clocks announce both the film's anticipated ending, as well as the installation's restarting of the film. And yet they herald neither beginning nor end at all, but a situatedness in time, a temporal demarcation that does not need a beginning nor an end, but equally collapses past and

future into an eternal now. The clocks provide us with yet another map of temporalities, a multiple timetable, a scheme that is in accordance with a rationalized, standardized time. The countdown clocks give us the opportunity to look away, to walk away even, and to return, to linger and to anticipate. It is also precisely here that we are allowed the opportunity to teleport through time, in our remembrance of earlier points in time, and in our speculations about the possibility of change over time when watching for example Sleep and Empire.

Perpetual Presence

My main interest in the exhibition, as stated, lies in the significance of the Warhol.07-performative experiments with cinematic time, in my quest to understand the relocation of the subject within a culture in which technological and time based media predominate. Warhol's work, especially early films like Eat, Sleep, Blow Job, Henry Geldzahler, and Empire, are in themselves of interest precisely because of their much-debated manipulation of cinematic time.

Pamela Lee for example, in her book on *Chronophobia* – the agitated critical and artistic obsession with time and its measures in the sixties – states that the brilliance of Warhol's early films lies "in their *seemingly* literal relationship to time" (279). According to Lee, Warhol's ambiguous relationship to time – ranging form his fifteen-minutes-of-fame conviction to his cinematic endurance tests – suggests "a kind of irresolvable grappling with finitude and the infinite, the push pull tension between the utterly mundane gestures of daily life set against the blank expanse of something yet to come" (279)

In order to rethink the art and technology nexus of the sixties Lee takes up Hegel's warnings in *The Encyclopedia Logic* against a "bad infinity," the endless repetition within critical reasoning, which he regarded as a "bad negativity since it is nothing but the negation of the finite" (Hegel, quoted in Lee: 277). The notion of a "bad infinity" also surfaces in concerns with the question of history among critics, historians, philosophers and artists since the 60s. In *The Postmodern Condition* Lyotard for example challenged the determinism that underwrote the grand narratives of the time. His notion of history facilitated a relationship to time, which presaged a notion of infinite potentiality typical of to postmodernism (Lee: 261-262). Similarly in *Futures Past* philosopher of history Koselleck foresaw the rise of a "futureless future" with the secularization of time: a conception of the future as no more than an endless iteration of the present. In terms of history the notion of a bad infinity thus "represents a failure to transcend the immanence of one's own historical moment" (Lee: 277).

Yet what happens in the films of Warhol, Lee suggests, is that this "bad infinity" is reworked into a critical comment on coeval questions concerning time and technology. It epitomizes the "timeless time" of capital and labor within network societies (Castells). The uneventfulness of the films, with their endless repetitions and "too much presentness," comments on what it is like to work *with* and *within*

the conditions of a perpetual "now," while at the same time thrusting the viewer forward, challenging him/ her to anticipate on what is yet to come (Lee: 277-278). That anticipation is ontologically anchored in both the materiality of the filmstrip, deteriorating with each successive screening, as well as in the affective engagement of the viewer's body, uncomfortably awaiting the films' end. The films thus stand as an "allegory for time located elsewhere: not only the time of its audience, engaged in business other than that of watching, but the future, anticipated in making one's escape from the theatre" (287; on Empire in particular).

Passing Time

Warhol's films are surrounded by an air of technical illiteracy, and a feigned withdrawal of the artist's hand. Warhol cultivated his absence as a director during shootings, culminating in the occasions where he switched on the camera and walked out of the room (e.g. Henry Geldzahler). This strategic absence raises the question of intentionality, especially when framed in an exhibition like this, where Warhol's seeming absence offers a critique on the teleological design of the exhibition itself, on the life story that forms the red thread in the main entry hall "About Andy". As Callie Angell, curator of the Warhol Film Project at the Whitney Museum remarks, Warhol's early film production is reduced to the basic elements of the medium: a single shot, a stationary camera, and a single preconceived action [10].

But this seeming illiteracy, we know, is in fact deceptive. Warhol did control his images, to a large extent through his manipulations of (cinematic) time and his experimentations with the technologies he used. In Sleep for example, the "real time" recording of his (ex)lover's sleeping body, lasting for over 5 hours, is actually faked. In fact, P. Adams Sitney observes in *The Visionary Filmmakers,* "only half a dozen shots are seen for over six hours". In order to attain the elongation of the fixed frame, Warhol "used both loop printing of whole one hundred four takes (2¾ minutes) and, in the end, the freezing of a still image of the sleeper's head". Each new cartridge was shot from a different (static) position and then used twice in the serial composition "that consolidates its quiet, implosive strength by numbing itself in the paradoxes of movement and stillness" (Quoted in Koch: 36).

Furthermore, even though the film seems to frame "time as it passes," Amy Taubin asserts, real time is actually cancelled out by projecting the film at silent speed (16 fps) while shooting at sound speed (24 fps), or by projecting sequentially shot reels simultaneously or superimposed. The result is a barely perceptible slow motion so characteristic for many of the early Warhol films. As the clock ticks, the film "unwinds at a pace that's out of sync with the rhythms of the viewer," a disjunction that is also manifest in the topic of the film: sleep (29). "What is sleep, after all," Stephen Koch writes, "but the metabolic transformation of the entire experience of time, our nightly release from the clock's prison, filled and flashing with the dreaming motions of the mind and yet an immobility, a quietude in which seconds and hours are confounded" (40).

Empire (8 hours and 5 minutes at 16 fps) conceals a similar manipulation of "real-time" at the level of both film track and projection speed. In running a static image of a motionless building for over eight hours, the film displays an odd tension between time and immobility, as the subject of Empire – the Empire State Building – contrary to the film itself, does not move. Time in Empire, critic Gregory Battcock observes "is distorted, perhaps, simply by its not being distorted when one would reasonably expect it to be" (Battcock, quoted in Lee: 263). We are left, not so much *watching* ourselves watch, but rather *sensing* ourselves "watching," enduring the films capturing tedium [11]. This sensation ultimately alternates or even intertwines with another, namely the fact that in its monotonous display we are confronted, not with what the image "represents" but rather, with the filmic materiality that "presents" us the image. As Roy Grundman puts it:

> the viewer's observation of the profilmic object is gradually supplemented, perhaps even largely replaced, by an exploration of the material property of the filmstrip itself with its chemical irregularities, blemishes, and varying degrees of graininess (6).

Thus, with its unique combination of stillness and motion, the film, according to Lee, is "both *representation* and *experience* of duration, both subject and object," as it wavers "between the literalness of real time experience by the viewer, its manipulation by Warhol as representation, and the projection into the future as constructed by the medium" (280-281).

Chiasmatic Visibility

It is in the latter sense that this, and other Warhol films differ from the structural avant-garde films of his American contemporaries, such as Stan Brakhage. This is significant because it underscores the distinct deictic markers that in part make up the particular diegesis of Warhol's films, especially as staged within the design of the multimedia museum. *Diegesis* here is understood in Thomas Elsaesser's sense, of a regulated interaction between or articulated form of space, time, agency and subject, through which moving images constitute a world (Elsaesser, 2006: 216-217). The difference has to do with the earlier made distinction between the inside-outside and inside-out view on cinema's ontology. For, as Annette Michelson has pointed out, the difference between the assertive editing of Brakhage (inside-outside) and the long takes of Warhol (inside-out) reveals a difference between a cinema that presupposes the predominance of subjectivity, and a cinema postulated on its dissipation (93-95) [12].

Brakhage's films are characterized by a rapid and hyperbolic fluidity of images that disclose to the spectator something relating to his being or world, by transforming the spatio-temporality on which their subjectivity is built. In contrast, Warhol's films foster a different kind of temporality that eliminates subjectivity altogether. It is a time of undifferentiated distension, contemplation and expectation, for "[t]hat time, punctuated only by the flares of successive reel endings, is also time to wonder: 'What's going to happen? Do I have time to go and buy some popcorn? [...] how

long, oh Lord, how long?" It is a carnivalistic time according to Bakhtin in that it "abolishes the dividing line between performer and spectator, since everyone becomes an active participant and everyone communes in the carnival act, which is neither contemplated nor, strictly speaking performed by it; it is lived'" (Bakthin, quoted in Michelson: 101-102) [13].

Anno 2007 Warhol's films, I would argue, produce a *chiasmatic visibility* to the one Hugh J. Silverman (drawing on Merleau-Ponty) discerns in Warhol's serial paintings. In many of Warhol's paintings faces and names of pop icons and commonplace commodities – whose identity lies not in their uniqueness or singularity but in their everydayness, their "knownness," – are multiplied and endlessly repeated. Thirty-two *almost* identical cans of Campbell soup, 210 Coke bottles, 20 Marilyn Monroes. Repetition transforms their centrality, the uniqueness of the icons and commodities on display. But once on canvas the impact is even more radical. The presentation of the almost-identical-images side by side reminds one of film frames, Silverman states, which, however "all happen at once". What makes these serial paintings effective is their *juxtaposition.* Silverman writes: "There is no priority between firstness, secondness, thirdness and so forth. There is no succession. There is no first and last. There is only top, bottom, side, middle, and so on – all given at once, in the same frame, but as multiple frames" (201).

Instead of offering a bombardment of signs, the repetition and juxtaposition of these almost-identical-images foregrounds the act of repetition itself, which although obtrusive within commodity culture, usually remains unnoticed. More importantly, the repetition and juxtaposition decenters the traditional ocular perspective and highlights the margins, the frame itself, where the unrepresentable breaks through to the surface of the presented. Pulled together by their likeness and pushed apart by their differences, the space "between" the images is opened up. These are the places *of chiasmatic visibility*, Silverman contends: the places where the *écart*, i.e. the reflection the body effects upon itself, can be identified. Here seeing and seen, and touching and touched become reversible. This is the space where the viewer is pulled into the image and identifies (with) his or her culture.

In terms of the cinematic venture of the Warhol exhibition, it is precisely in the iteration and prolongation of almost-identical-images in time, as well as their simultaneous presentation at one-and-the-same-time within the *scripted space* (Klein) of the exhibition, thus "between" the images, that the difference between the time of the screen and that of the audience collapses. The resulting confusion of the traditional temporal frame of reference pulls the spectator into a Deleuzian "pulsed time," a sense of time that has neither end nor beginning. In the endless repetition, circulation and duration of the moment the ephemeral is reworked into timelessness (Billeter: 15). I would argue that this is not a momentary state-of-being but one that is in keeping with the way in which we inhabit our contemporary media-saturated world.

Jegyzetek

1. "Andy Warhol – Other Voices, Other Rooms" 12-10-07 – 13-01-08. Guest-curator Eva Meyer-Hermann, scenography Chezweitz & Roseapple, Berlin. Stedelijk Museum CS Amsterdam, Oosterdokskade 3/5, 1011 AD Amsterdam Netherlands.

2. "Scenes and Traces – From the collection design, photography & video" 7-4-07 – 25-11-07 Stedelijk Museum CS Amsterdam, Oosterdokskade 3/5, 1011 AD Amsterdam Netherlands.

3. On the wider debate about the future of scripted spaces, whether in walk-through or click-through environments, see Klein (2004). On distinction between *narration* and *navigation* see Elsaesser (1998: 217).

4. Nam June Paik's Zen for Film (1964) is a film without images, a looped 16mm blank filmstrip on which only the gradual and unrecoverable degradation of the physical material of the film through projection and particles of dust can be discerned. Nick Kaye has written persuasively about this film and its "*plurality* of times" in his book *Multi-Media* (Kaye: 51-52).

5. Bazin considered language, i.e. the intervention of human agency, as a formal surplus that needed to be reduced as much as possible in the passage of the pro-filmic to the photographic image (Wollen: 191-192).

6. A critical perspective on what the author condenses under the heading "glance theory" – or the theory on distracted domestic television viewing, associated with theorists such as Raymond Williams, John Ellis and Marshall McLuhan – can be found in Caldwell (1995).

7. I am aware of the fact that this division and alteration of viewing positions, modes of address and public and private screens deserves closer attention. For now I limit myself to addressing the various reversals between mobility and immobility, of both the gaze and the body. On "gaze theory" and television's fragmentary nature and mode of address see Caldwell, Ellis, Feuer, Fiske, Hirsch and Newcomb, Kaplan, Williams.

8. Regarding *Blow Job*, curator José Roca wrote the following: "Being the site where all senses coexist, a face is also a metonymy for the self and is thus an image charged with (many) subjectivities" (online).

9. This first punctuation resonates with Barthes description of the *punctum*: "this element which rises from the screen, shoots out of it like an arrow and pierces me […] It is what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there" (Barthes *55*). To this I will return shortly.

10. Two of these three basic elements mentioned by Angell return in Patrick Smith's lengthy account on what he considers to be the distinctive self-referential cinematic tropes Warhol imposes on the beholder: the *static camera*, the *long take,* the *strobe cut*, and *zooming as zooming*. Together, Smith writes, these produce an "insistent vision of another reality" (103).

11. The echo of Jim Collins' "Watching Ourselves Watch Television" is on purpose.

12. Annette Michelson explores this transition in Kleinian terms as a transition of "the primacy of the part object to that of the whole object". See pages 96-97 and 106 of her paper.

13. For further reading on Bakthin also see Esther Peeren, *Intersubjectivities and Popular Culture: Bakhtin and Beyond. Cultural Memory in the Present.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.

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