How Cinema Surrounds Us:

The Psychology of Psychogeography in the Works of Sofia Coppola

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Abstract

The settings and spaces presented to the spectator by a film can be some of the most memorable and pleasurable elements of cinema. While the affective turn in screen theory has moved towards a consideration of an embodied spectator, there is still little consideration of how the spectator experiences filmic space. Moreover, although there is significant evidence that many elements of this interaction occur at a neurological level, few scholars have taken this into consideration. This dissertation aims to address these gaps by engaging contemporary film theory with recent areas of psychological research. By juxtaposing these two bodies of knowledge in an analogic flow, new ways of understanding how the spectator interacts with a cinematic world emerge. Taking the work of Sofia Coppola as a case study, the thesis builds on Giuliana Bruno’s account of the psychogeography of cinema, and demonstrates that the perception of filmic landscapes is a neurally embodied, intimate and intersubjective practice. The major findings presented concern the ways the perception of cinematic psychogeographies mirror, incite and operate upon the neural underpinnings of consciousness. The research also interrogates how a spectator constructs personal relationships with film spaces, how these spaces change our perception of the material world, and how this might impact on the study of film spectatorship. The personal construction of film spaces indicates a direct and neurally intimate relationship between text and spectator. This thesis tenders a possible (and currently unexplored) avenue for the study of spectatorship that reflects this relationship.
Declaration

This is to certify that:

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD,
(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
(iii) the thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signed:

[Signature]
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Introduction

One of the inspirations for this research came in the form of a psychology experiment that a colleague was running which explored artificial mood alteration. In order to induce happiness, participants were shown a scene from Sofia Coppola’s *Marie Antoinette* (2006).¹ The scene’s appeal was considered so universal that viewing it was deemed an empirically sound method of mood alteration. The clip, taken from the film’s third act, does not require the audience to know anything of the narrative; it depicts the simple visceral pleasures of the titular queen’s pastoral escape to a chateau set in idyllic woodlands. Using an aesthetic typical of Coppola’s canon, the camera lingers on shots of daisies, ladybugs and gently grazing sheep while the sun shines through trees and grass. The soundtrack is soft and diegetic, overtly positioning the spectator within the boundaries of the frame while eliciting a sense of calm. It is an intensely soothing, sensually engaging sequence. What struck me was *what*, exactly, it was transmitting to its audience. The clip has no indication of character, no internal narrative or other identificatory point for a spectator. Its allure comes from the landscape it articulates before the eyes of the viewer, a landscape made rich with emotional tenor through the *mise-en-scène*, sound and lighting. This was a clip which displayed one of the most powerful, yet under-researched joys of spectatorship: the emotionally affective spaces of cinema.

What truly inspired this dissertation was *not* that psychologists were using filmic landscapes to induce emotional responses, but the reason *why* they were using them. Researchers deemed the capacity of the clip to affect the viewer as one that existed outside of cultural bias, language fluency, or age. Having no dialogue, the film’s characters exist without any narrative context, and therefore are unlikely to be considered a point of identification with any of the research participants. The short clip, outside of the film at large, could not be comprehended

¹Unfortunately, this particular experiment was rejected for publication. However, the scenes were selected by my colleague on the basis of Lisanne Jenkins’ and David Andrewes’ suggestions for “emotional” film clips, in “A New Set of Standardised Verbal and Non-Verbal Contemporary Film Stimuli For The Elicitation Of Emotions” *Brain Impairment* 13:2 (2012), 212-227.
intellectually. The moment’s appeal lies entirely in the spectator’s affective experience. For the research team, this was a mode of mood alteration that could be used harmlessly and pleasurably, but most importantly one that could be used without engaging factors that might cloud the empirical validity of the participant’s emotional response.

This anecdote presents a quandary for the contemporary study of cinematic landscapes, so much of which considers the spectator as a subject who responds to a culturally mediated text. While cinema is an inextricably cultural medium, it is also created using elements of stimulus that appeal to our basic modes of perception. Much of the existing literature considers the landscape as a distinct set of codes, and the (often assumed) spectator as a recipient of these coded representations. This line of research is undeniably important in understanding cinematic spaces. However, it is one that focuses more on the cultural implications of the experience of cinematic landscapes than the phenomena of their reception. The affective and emotional impact of cinematic spaces and landscapes upon the spectator is a small — though currently growing — subset of the field. As scholars of cinema, considering the ways that the landscape in film could be received is crucial to our understanding of the experience of the spectator. To fully comprehend why cinematic spaces are so affecting requires an approach that considers both the way that an individual spectator’s response is being elicited, while still being able to make general statements that resonate with the text. Thus in order to fully comprehend the ways that cinematic spaces affect the spectator, this dissertation incorporates important considerations from psychological research in an effort to study a spectator’s phenomenological response.

I acknowledge that foundational authors in apparatus theory (such as Christian Metz and Jean Louis Baudry) take a position that considers the spectator to be in a state of experience that exists outside of culture. However, these ideas are founded within a psychoanalytic tradition that still integrates a great deal of cultural theory into its claims. As my project is to consider elements from Coppola’s films outside of their cultural production, apparatus theory has proven to be an important yet unsuitable approach. I refer specifically to the work of Sergei Eisenstein in his essays on film form (Film Form, London: Harcourt, 1949). Simon Schama’s interdisciplinary work on Landscapes in Landscape and Memory (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), Denis Cosgrove’s Marxist interpretation of landscape representation in Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984) and Manthia Diawara’s “Black British Cinema: Spectatorship and Identity Formation in Territories.” Public Culture 3:1 (1990): 33–48.

For example, some of the works I do not refer directly to within the dissertation (due to their slightly divergent approach to my topic) that present compelling analyses of filmic landscapes as emotional and affective stimuli are David B. Clarke’s The Cinematic City, (London; New York: Routledge, 1997) and Robert Shannan Peckham’s “Landscape in Film” A Companion to Cultural Geography eds J. S. Duncan, N. C. Johnson and R. H. Schein (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 420–429.
My research aims to bridge the gap between theories of spectatorship and filmic psychogeography and recent ideas from psychological research. The major theoretical frameworks of Sobchack’s phenomenological spectatorship theory, Bruno’s psychogeography and the various psychological research papers engaged here become more than their claims by being analogically joined through their relationship to the spectator’s experience of the texts. The juxtaposition of these fields and the various tensions and assertions that each makes allows new ways of understanding the cinematic landscape to emerge. Art historians interested in psychology have taken this approach (as is chronicled in John Onian’s *NeuroArtHistory*) since Pliny the Elder, yet many of the works on cinematic space do not engage with the brain’s reception of such spaces. While the cultural impact of cinematic landscapes is an important part of their theorisation, it is by no means the only element worth considering.

Combining the philosophical and the psychological is not without its problems. For an exceptional critique of the recent incursion that eye-tracking and psychological theory has had in film studies, I would refer interested readers to William Brown’s article “Politicizing Eye Tracking Studies of Film”. Brown’s main concern is that by focusing on scientific methods, theorists run the risk of claiming an apolitical approach, while ignoring the inherent politics relevant to both the production of cinema and the underlying history and philosophy of science. My aim in this dissertation is not to depoliticize cinematic landscapes or Coppola’s films, both of which have considerable levels of cultural mediation. Instead, I offer this treatise as one possible approach of many — an approach which reveals important elements of the spectator’s response that might otherwise go unnoticed.

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5Although it is only with contemporary imaging technology that NeuroArtHistory has taken its current form. John Onians, *NeuroArtHistory: From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki* (Cambridge: Yale University Press, 2008).

This dissertation positions the spectator's relationship with the cinema as a fundamentally spatial one. Taking the work of Sofia Coppola as a case study, I build on Giuliana Bruno's account of the psychogeography of cinema, and demonstrate that the perception of filmic landscapes is an affective, embodied, intimate and intersubjective dialectic between spectator and screen. This dialectic, I further contend, is founded on the processes of cognition, consciousness and human visual perception. The major field of exploration is the ways that the cinematic psychogeography Coppola articulates, uses, mirrors, incites and operates upon the neural underpinnings of consciousness. By mirroring cognitive function and bombarding the senses, I argue that cinematic spaces surround the viewer, constituting a sensual archive of places and providing us with compelling insights into how we neurally experience our environment.

**Understanding the Terrain: Textual and Theoretical Background**

In the consideration of how a cinematic landscape might affect the viewer and in so doing surround them, Sofia Coppola's body of work provides us with five feature films that are visibly fascinated with, and communicative of, travelling to new landscapes and the domestic spaces her characters populate. This dissertation specifically examines *The Virgin Suicides* (1999), *Lost in Translation* (2003), *Marie Antoinette* (2006), *Somewhere* (2010) and *The Bling Ring* (2013). In Coppola's canon, the spatial settings are key elements of the film's visual allure, and often articulate important elements of character and story. There are common threads of spatial relationships throughout all of her texts, such as the desire to have one's subjecthood be altered by a landscape, as seen in *Lost in Translation* and *The Bling Ring*, or feelings of claustrophobia, confinement and alienation as in *Marie Antoinette* or *The Virgin Suicides*. Coppola's work was

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*It also bears mentioning that this dissertation considers a fundamentally cinematic experience. While I acknowledge that different viewers will access Coppola's films on different screens and platforms, and that this will have myriad different effects in those contexts (an issue I consider briefly in chapters three and eight), ultimately, an in-depth analysis of how platforms alter the spectator's experience is beyond the current limits of this research project.*
also selected as the case study of this dissertation due to its “openness” within Leo Braudy's ontology of the open film.

Braudy’s account of film form posited two kinds of cinematic worlds: the closed form, a hermetically sealed stage wherein the film seems to exist solely to be looked at; and the open form, an outwardly focused world which seems to carry on whether the viewer watches it or not, a centrifugal force that moves out towards the spectator. In Braudy’s open form, the camera cannot be identified with any one character’s view, and from this stylistic openness there comes a semantic openness. The open film, according to Braudy, is one that accepts and celebrates multiplicity in subjects. Coppola’s work sits firmly within the category of open form. Her canon is explicitly situated as a style of cinema which constructs landscapes and worlds that invite the viewer to participate in the experience. Her main characters are rarely given shots that are legibly from their point of view. In fact, as many of her main characters are famous in capacity, Coppola seems to prefer to create films that observe, rather than create moments of identification. The spectator’s desires are often frustrated, subverted or problematised by what the camera does or does not show. This tension demonstrates that, within Coppola’s body of work, the film does not exist for the spectator, but the spectator is welcome to watch in any case. This further aligns her work with the open form, a series of texts that display a cinematic world of multiple subjectivities which implicitly carries on away from the spectator’s gaze.

In a consideration of spectatorship that combines affect theory with neurological research, Coppola’s focus on aesthetics over dialogue allows us to observe how images impact upon the viewer prior to considerations of cultural mediation. Coppola’s oeuvre largely attempts to communicate through images over words or, as her critics have often argued, style over substance. Her script for Lost in Translation is a scant 63 pages, while the film itself goes for

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9 Ibid, 44-51.
10 This is a common theme within the reviews of Coppola’s less popular work, such as Marie Antoinette and The Bling Ring. In her review of Marie Antoinette, critic Joanne Kaufman described the film as “absolutely sumptuous, but is, ultimately as substantial as a
nearly two hours, a quirk of her creative process also found in *Somewhere* (44 Pages, 1 hour and 38 minutes) and *The Virgin Suicides* (110 pages, 1 hour and 37 minutes). Even within her longer scripts, dialogue is largely absent. Since the project of this dissertation is to move away from semiotic or psychoanalytic understandings of the spectator in favour of a phenomenological account, a filmmaker whose canon largely forgoes language in favour of affective cinematography is an ideal case study. Within the subjective experience of the landscape, spaces constitute a temporary phenomenological reality for the spectator. They reach out through the affective and neurally excitative lures she embeds within the screen, altering and framing the spectator’s experience. There are moments within Coppola’s canon that can speak to a viewer without relying on that spectator to identify with particular characters or viewpoints. One of the aims of this dissertation is to find pathways into a theory of spectatorship of cinematic landscapes that does not bend the definition or assumed personage of the spectator to the theorist’s will, and consequently Coppola’s body of work provides a rich ground for discussion.

This dissertation considers Coppola’s canon through the theoretical lens of psychogeography: a term which denotes spaces that are invested with the emotional and sensory experience of individual subjects. The major theoretical influence of this work is the movement of the concept into film theory through Giuliana Bruno’s *Atlas of Emotion*. However, the term is not her invention. The transformation from “space” to “place” through emotion was initially outlined by French neo-Marxist Guy Debord, who dubbed the enriched cartography of emotional landscapes “psychogeography”. Building from Walter Benjamin’s theory of the flâneur, Debord


11 Classical Hollywood cinema ordinarily conforms to a rule that each page of the script should equate to a minute of screen time. This rule was formalised and made more popular by its featuring in a number of screenwriting manuals, as argued by Steven Price in *A History of the Screenplay* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).


categorises the project of psychogeography as “the study of the precise laws and specific effects
of the geographical environment ... on the emotions and behaviours of individuals”.14 His
account emphasises “the path of least resistance which is automatically followed in aimless
strolls” and characterises the individual explorer as the master and creator of an emotionally
affecting environment.15 *Atlas of Emotion* maps the psychogeography imbued in a number of
works of art, literature and film. By moving a camera through the space, Bruno argues that a
filmmaker can erect an immaterial landscape that we explore as the camera does.16 Bruno’s
interest in immaterial or representational environments also lowers the importance of the
individual as a creator within the environment. That quality she leaves largely in the hands of
the representational object’s architect. This position leads to a number of concerns within her
conception of how a spectator receives and understands psychogeography, a position that I
unpack throughout the course of this dissertation.17

It is also important to note that there is little commentary from Bruno’s work on the kinds of
contact that the spectator might experience with the landscape, which limits the capacity of her
ideas to be applied more broadly than in *Atlas of Emotion*. Thus this dissertation tenders several
possible forms of impact, interplay and mediation between spectator and screen that may allow
her conception of “psychogeography” to be more broadly understood. Because of this
dissertation’s interdisciplinary approach to the material, the findings presented will both
validate Bruno’s initial account while discerning multiple ways in which the psychology of the
mind alters the psychogeography of the spectator.

Many of the scientific theories tendered herein are noteworthy because they problematise the
traditional conception of consciousness, which in turn problematises some of the relevant

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14Debord, “Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography”, 23.
15Ibid. It is important to admit that Debord’s relationship to his personal definition of psychogeography is a complicated one, as the
author later rejected many of its basic outlines as “a typical drunken monologue” in his film *A Critique of Separation*. Guy Debord,
contemporary literature's conception of a spectator. The discovery of the missing half-second, of
mirror neurons, and of saccadic masking all point towards the fact that our conscious
experience as beings-in-the-world is fundamentally immanent to our brain's own operations.
This dissertation follows Patricia Pister's line of argument (and those of Sobchack and Merleau-
Ponty before her), that instead of a Cartesian conception of our conscious mind being the
‘control centre’ of our experience, these discoveries reveal that Merleau-Ponty's
phenomenological account of the mind may prove a more sound foundation for the
understanding of sensuous mediums like cinema. ¹⁸ Thus my analysis considers the exchange
between the immaterial screen, the material spectator, and what occurs during this moment of
convergence.¹⁹ I further contend that our impression of film is formed by the rhizomatic
collision between neural architecture, affective sensation and the spatialised experience of the
spectator.

My approach to the spectator in the present work is drawn primarily from architectural and
film scholarship that considers the phenomenological capacity of cinema. The dissertation's
primary phenomenological theorist is Vivian Sobchack. In Sobchack's philosophy film has the
power to affect the viewer because it appeals to our senses by both direct and indirect means,
creating a para-sensory experience comparable to synaesthesia.²⁰ To Sobchack, an ideal film-
viewing experience contains no intellectual detachment between the audience and the film. One
of the key aspects of Sobchack's phenomenology is the dialectical nature of the film-viewing
experience. She rejects theory derived from Lacanian psychoanalysis such as the work of Metz
and Baudry, because these authors' conception of a self-aware subject rely heavily on a
Cartesian perspective, and ignore the nascent logic of perception within an embodied subject.²¹
Sobchack aims to correct this oversight of the spectator's embodied experience by addressing

¹⁹Following from Deleuze and Massumi, I use material within this dissertation to refer to existent phenomena, as opposed to abstract concepts. Massumi, Parables for the Virtual, 5.
²¹Ibid, 121.
how the experience of watching a film will always necessarily involve “a primordial human subjectivity that anonymously provides the ground upon which the Self is built”. Consequently, her ideas present an important addendum to the work of many theorists who consider cinematic landscapes (Bruno included), who consider spectators to be spatialised, yet do not fully consider the degree to which they are embodied.

The implication of this, and one that follows into Bruno’s work, is that the spectator is not addressed as a discrete entity, but simply as a massed audience who is “moved” by the film and its landscape. Bruno does touch on the haptic qualities of spectatorship theory; however, she does not fully acknowledge that these positions rely on a person’s discrete phenomenological presence. It is this exact kind of omission that Sobchack actively seeks to overturn. Thankfully, the theories of Bruno and Sobchack are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as Sobchack’s project in *Address of the Eye* is to help carve out space for multiplicity within film theory. This dissertation bridges these two works by applying Sobchack’s theories around an embodied spectator to Bruno’s understanding of filmic space. Phenomenological film theory holds another key element of the puzzle that is psychogeography: it can explain how the immaterial space created by cinesthetic spectatorship can be interlaced with sensory experiences, emotions and memories.

As argued by Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, the defining features of a psychogeography are its sensory and tactile features, and what memories and emotions they elicit from a spatial explorer. This dissertation problematises the current conception of a spectator’s experience of film, and so necessarily refers to the works of Laura U. Marks, an author whose ontology of spectatorship allows for discrete embodied experiences. Marks’s *The Skin of the Film* posits that

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film’s ability to affect the body stems from the sparking of a sense-memory.24 Marks’s work on the cultural impact of transnationalism, diaspora and foreign-ness brought her to see cinema's ability to inspire and hold cultural memories, and she argues that like an insect caught in amber, film could capture and replay the texture of a sensory memory.25 Thus Marks’s ontology of spectatorship is also engaged in order to put forward an account of cinematic psychogeography that satisfies its original conception: a space experienced through the senses and suffused with emotion and memory.

Drafting a Map: Methodological Background

My task in this project is to navigate the complex conundrum of discussing a spectator placed within a cinematic space — an inherently individual experience — while preserving the capacity to argue a point resonant with a general audience of many spectators. Since the multiplicity of subjects is a problem that must be addressed, it is necessary to then consider film spectatorship from two key theoretical principles: the work of authors who acknowledge difference and multiplicity (such as Marks), and the empirically suggested aspects of perception that each spectator has in common. Within this dissertation, these concerns are avoided by taking an approach that joins theorists who consider the spectator to be fully embodied (such as Brian Massumi, Vivian Sobchack, and Laura U. Marks) with neuroscientific research. In order to do so, this dissertation analyses the spectator at two points in their experience of the film. First, at the point of comprehension, the post-conscious understanding wherein the film's gestalt allows the viewer to appreciate it; and second, at a point prior to this, occurring at the pre-conscious moment of perception itself.26 I explore a point in spectatorship where the brain is receiving

26This approach has obvious parallels to the psychoanalytic school of film theory. However, as has been pointed out by Vivian Sobchack in Address of the Eye, this mode of analysis comes with several sets of problematic presumptions about the manner in which the subject “sees” themselves as a spectator (p116). Her work breaks from Lacanian philosophy in order to follow the phenomenological ideas of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a decision that this dissertation has similarly made in order to avoid the Lacanian understanding of a subject. In lieu of this methodology, I instead aim to consider alternate ways of conceptualising this
information, but not yet sorting it into conscious sensation. Brian Massumi has already considered this quirk of consciousness, which he dubbed “the missing half-second”, and further argued that it was within this missing half-second that intensities act upon the subject. My analysis takes place both during and after Massumi’s missing half-second, in the sense that it considers how the unconscious mind’s processing of visual stimuli might alter and impact upon our conscious perception and comprehension of cinema.

While it is a work that sits within affect theory, this dissertation considers the ways in which the pre-conscious aspects of perception might alter the embodied experience of the spectator. Although this dissertation is firmly within the affective and phenomenological school of film theory, I have also incorporated a cognitive-based approach to understanding the spectator. Each chapter considers elements of the experience of a specific film through two lenses: the theoretical and the psychological. Each facet informs and interlaces with the other, both in the sense of interdisciplinary study and in the design of my argument. This approach is necessary for the current task for two reasons: the first being the undeniable impact that certain facets of perception have on the way those spectators might perceive cinematic spaces; the second being the specific ways that Coppola’s films play upon these perceptual tendencies. In my research into the neurological operations of visual processing and empathy, it became clear that the brain is not particularly good at defining different viewing positions, or different boundaries of the self. The viewing mechanisms for film still rely on the eye to grasp where exactly we are being virtually placed within the landscape. Moreover, our brain does not necessarily know that our eyes are watching a film. This element of the real, hidden behind our conscious comprehension of a film, can build a bridge between the impetus to understand spectator response and the limitations of the field thus far. The research also interrogates how a spectator constructs

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28 Ibid, 29.
personal relationships with film spaces, how these spaces change our perception of the material world, and how this might impact on the study of film spectatorship. The personal construction of film spaces indicates a direct and neurally intimate relationship between text and spectator built at the moment of perception.

This project considers how the cinema and cinematic landscapes are “thoughtful”, or rather are objects of the brain’s perception (and thus are in their own way, “thoughts”). In this work, I argue that the preconscious mechanisms of our brains are a fundamental part of spectatorship, characterising the brain as an organ like the heart which has uncontrolled responses to the cinematic stimuli. Resistance to claims made under this methodology are understandable, given that no spectator can “feel” their brain’s unconscious actions. Consequently this dissertation repeatedly refers back to clinical research, in an effort to understand better how the brain’s operations alter the way we perceive film.

The question of how film is “thoughtful” is one that has already been partially answered by two of the biggest influences on this dissertation in terms of methodology and design: Barbara Maria Stafford’s *Echo Objects*, and Patricia Pisters’ *The Neuro Image*. Each work considers the “cognitive life” of media through the dual lenses of cultural critique and empirical scientific research. In *Echo Object*, Stafford uses an analogical method of contrasting science and art criticism to consider the ways in which spatialised media can reveal to us how our brains work. The key intersection between neuroscience and screen theory, the point of analogic equilibrium, is in the rhizomatic quality of the brain. This is an idea first emphasised by Patricia Pisters, and one this dissertation continually underlines. The brain, as Pisters points out, makes connections in a rhizomatic pattern, colliding neurons where it needs to. A single section cannot be privileged over another, as recent discoveries into the brain’s capacity to form

33Ibid, 15.
and reform connective strands reveals. This dissertation follows Pister’s work in the creation of rhizomatic ideas, in the sense that it considers information from multiple disciplines without necessarily privileging either.

Due to the complex nature of exploring the neurological within the philosophical, my methodology is also heavily influenced by the analogical model set out by Stafford in *Visual Analogy*. In this work, Stafford underlines that analogy is a fundamental tenet of cognition, and one that arises wholly from the body. To understand the world through proportional relations is the primary mode whereby humans perceive their environment. Analogy, by Stafford’s definition, is an attempt to discern the relational properties of two different objects. While analogy is most often used to gain insight by finding similarities between two unrelated bodies, it is ultimately a methodology that oscillates between sameness and difference, in order to better understand both bodies. My project is to explore the relational properties of fragments of the spectatorial experience of cinematic space. It is in trying to discern "the proper relations of parts to a whole" that an unmediated analysis may be found. This dissertation uses Stafford’s model in an attempt to demonstrate how film’s landscapes are similarly "thoughtful".

In *Visual Analogy*, Stafford also points out that the concept of analogy has been pulled in uncomfortable directions. She considers the long unspooling of symbols in semiotics, and the bitterly didactic nature of quantification. These are problems encountered when analogy is sought for comparison. Instead, she claims, analogy must be a fluid process of oscillation, with a gentle aim to reach a point of homeostatic understanding. It is with this concept of analogical theory that I proceed. The scientific data presented here is not intended to be an aggressive validation of the screen analysis. Instead, I offer it in the hope that it will provide a counter-

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36Ibid. xvi.
37Ibid. 8.
38Ibid. 9.
weight to the cinematic texts being analysed, a necessary and important context that, when engaged, helps us understand the spectator better. This dissertation’s structure is derived from the same system of analogy as its methodology. All but the final chapter hold a scientific discovery against a current philosophical idea about psychogeography and film spectatorship, hoping to illuminate an inner resonance that can increase our understanding of the film viewing experience. If cinema sits at a precipitous intersection between actual and immaterial, transcendence and immanence, then analogy is a productive lens to inquiry.

**The Chapters**

Following this introduction is a literature review in order to contextualise Bruno’s conception of psychogeography within contemporary film and spatial theory. The review reflects on the major current literature on cinematic landscapes and spaces, to reveal an underlying concern within the field’s various conceptions of the relationship between spectator and screen. These issues lead the chapter into brief, broader discussion on certain tensions within spectatorship theory, which in turn underscores my conclusion: that a theory of cinematic space must also include a spatialised spectator. Having established the need to consider cinematic space as a psychogeography (a school of thought which necessarily spatialises the spectator), I outline the historical framework that Bruno builds her account on, and then consider how this line of reasoning also has a difficult relationship to the spectator due to the perceived immateriality of cinematic space. Thus finally, I summarise some of the prominent works in cognitive film theory that aim to materialise the spectator’s experience in an attempt to analogically join these two disciplines.

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41 These concerns also lead to the conclusion that a theory of cinematic space must include an embodied, spatialised spectator. However, this discussion has been left for the fifth chapter of the thesis, in order to avoid truncating the considerable body of phenomenological and affect-driven theory within film studies.
By comparing these two schools, the chapter reveals five key areas within an ontology of spectators and psychogeography that need to be addressed: the role of the frame in dividing (or as I contend, failing to divide) immaterial and actual spaces, the role of particular aesthetic articulations of space in the spectator’s perception, the role of cinesthesi within the spectator’s experience, the role of empathy in creating emotional spaces and the overall impact that cinematic spaces have upon spectator’s after the film is over. These areas are then addressed within the following chapters.42

Following the conclusions of the literature review, the third chapter problematises the role of the “frame”, a recurrent convention within the discourse on cinematic space that aims to demarcate the immaterial space of film with material environments. By explaining how the frame is blurred, punctured and intruded upon by the spectator, the chapter emphasises the impact that filmic landscapes have on the psychogeographic definition of material space. Taking Los Angeles and its depiction in The Bling Ring as a case study, the chapter explores how the film world and the real world intersect or permeate each other, and how this alters our personal psychogeography. The protagonists of the Bling Ring exist in a state of perpetual longing to enter into the virtual image of Hollywood, a desire born from their physical proximity to a “film-esque” landscape. In essence, the titular ring experiences a blurred boundary between immaterial and actual landscape, one that aligns with a spectator’s own confusion within the cinematic experience. The chapter considers how the psychogeography of the characters is formed and articulated by the media sphere they exist within, and how this, in turn, becomes formative for the audience. The capacity for film to overlay, shape or change our personal psychogeography is a crucial aspect of the cinematic experience, and examining how this occurs in the works of Coppola is a vital contribution to the study of her oeuvre.

42This dissertation is necessarily narrow in scope. However, this has left certain prescient areas of Coppola’s canon without commentary. Chief of these is the impact of culture and ideology on the spectator. I do not ignore this area because I think it unimportant; however, my aim is to consider how the subject may be affected by the screen at a moment in time prior to this ideological lens. It should also be noted that the both gender politics of Coppola’s work and her role as an auteur have been largely left unexplored. This is in spite of the fact that Coppola has often been described as an auteur, and that the virtual worlds of Coppola’s work are explicitly feminine spaces. For readers interested in discussions on these aspects of her work, I would recommend Pam Cook’s “Portrait of a Lady: Sofia Coppola,” Sight and Sound 16:11 (2006), 36-40 and Todd Kennedy’s “Off with Hollywood’s Head: Sofia Coppola as Feminine Auteur.” Film Criticism 35:1 (2010), 37. A particularly relevant paper that takes a psychoanalytic approach to Coppola’s landscapes is, Bree Hoskin’s “Playground Love: Landscape and Longing in Sofia Coppola’s The Virgin Suicides.” Literature/Film Quarterly 35: 3 (2007), 214-221.
psychogeography is considered through two lenses: Deleuze's theory of repetition and difference, and the neural mechanisms and architecture of learning.

Through the lens of Deleuzian philosophy, Coppola's film is revealed to be brimming with moments of repetition, expectation and difference. In the film, the character's expectations are shown to be drawn from repeated exposure to the screen image of Los Angeles, only to be eventually subverted by the reality of criminal activity. These moments of repetition, expectation and subversion are transmitted between spectator and screen. The images of Los Angeles that the film critiques are also images which it creates within the audience. I go on to suggest that Deleuze's account of the power of repetition is perhaps more resonant than it is currently considered to be, because of the way in which the brain forges knowledge and memory. Film, I argue, actively plays with the mind's insistence on grouping and framing our memory through the lens of expectation and repetition. I further outline how the neurological process that makes us capable of learning has significant impact on our experience of environments both cinematic and actual, thus creating moments of potential collision between the virtual filmic place into the actual referent landscape. By repeating the media sphere's representation of Los Angeles, the film creates a frame of expectation that the spectator overlays onto their own psychogeographic impression of the city. The intrusion of small screen and camera technology into the Los Angeles depicted in *The Bling Ring* is used to map how the proliferation of screens has led to an enriched cartography in the material world. The shift and shaping of our psychogeographic impression of places depicted in films, I argue, stems from a dissolved boundary between spectator and screen. This boundary is threatened specifically by the repetition of images, and the consequent expectation this causes within the viewer. This dissolution of the frame as a divisive principle between material and actual spaces represents the first point wherein cinema begins to surround the spectator.
Having demonstrated the impact that filmic landscapes can have on how a spectator sees the material world, the fourth chapter considers how cinematic spaces are articulated, which further envelopes the spectator into the film’s world. Of particular interest is Coppola’s specific visual style, one quite distinct from the “touring” camera that is usually the central focus of discussions around filmic spaces. This chapter opens up how, exactly, filmic landscapes are able to surround the viewer through a consideration of the psychology of visual processing. Bruno’s conception of psychogeography links cinematic space with architectural space through Eisenstein’s theory of montage, within the chapter I extend this link further by considering how the spectator’s visual processing and cognition impact how they receive spaces articulated through montage forms. I argue that the aesthetic of my case study, *The Virgin Suicides*, forces the viewer to construct a fictional geography that is necessarily made more intimate by the process of its construction. I further contend that the intimacy with which Coppola crafts the world of *The Virgin Suicides* marks a disjuncture from traditional views on the landscapes of film. This split is one which stems from the “open form” style that Coppola affects, wherein the spectator is invited to actively participate and engage with the affective and neurally intimate lures within the text.

The chapter considers whether fragmented spaces such as those Coppola creates are as affecting as spaces shot with a mobile camera, the latter being the major focus of the literature on cinematic space. I consider two areas of psychological research: saccadic masking and the illusion of visual constancy. Understanding exactly how the spectator “sees” space demonstrates that Coppola’s settings are communicated in such a way as to mirror the neural processes of consciousness. The intersubjective relationship between spectator and screen space is thus revealed to be one operating on a neurally intimate plane. This construction indicates a direct and intimate relationship between film text and audience, helping to further articulate the blurred boundaries between spectator and screen, and thus further placing the spectator inside the frame.
As the fourth chapter considers the degree to which the spectator is spatialised when viewing films, the fifth considers the degree to which they are sensually embodied. I begin by discussing the specific issue within much of the contemporary discourse around cinematic landscapes (though not necessarily psychogeography) which posits a spectator who is spatialized but not necessarily regarded as embodied within the landscape. I demonstrate that the immaterial, phantom sensations of film are perceived by the brain as material sensation. *Marie Antoinette* is tendered as a case study due to the titular character’s desire to find emotion through sensation, a desire that the spectator shares. These aligned intentions between spectator and screen provide a space to discuss how the affective experience of the film’s landscape can be translated by the spectator into an emotional response. Following Sobchack’s phenomenological model of “cinesthesia”, the manner in which the spectator touches the immaterial landscape is revealed to be a fundamentally intersubjective process. This means that cinema provides the spectator with the opportunity to experience the space without fully revealing the immateriality of the film experience, a fundamentally intersubjective exchange. It is through this collision between the immaterial landscape and the material experience of it that the spectator is able to build their own psychogeographic impression of the landscape, one wherein memory and emotion is then interwoven with the space. This space, I argue, is one that the spectator explores both spatially and sensually, leading to a wholly embodied experience that surrounds the spectator.

The capacity for a psychogeographic landscape to create or move the spectator into emotion is one that can be observed throughout all of Coppola’s texts. However, *Marie Antoinette* is one of the few where the spectator’s desires often align with the diegetic needs of the characters on screen. Following the fifth chapter’s inquiry into the haptic brush of spectator and psychogeography, the sixth chapter considers how empathy plays a key role in the creation of emotional experiences within cinematic space, thus furthering the space presented by film as a psychogeography. Coppola’s body of work has a significant and demonstrable interest in the
experience of empathy, a necessary theoretical relation to intersubjectivity. In Chapter Six I argue that *Somewhere* is unique within her canon, as it actively rewards viewers who connect empathically with characters who are unable to feel. The spectator is set at odds with the desires of the characters within the film: the protagonist seems incapable of empathy or connection though he wishes to, and the spectator wishes to empathise yet cannot. I argue that Coppola creates an unusual form of empathic connection between spectator and screen, by creating moments of synchronous affective intensity. I argue that Coppola uses specific aesthetic conventions (such as framing, close-up and shot/reverse-shot) in order to entrain the spectator to the affective intensities of her characters, which in turn transforms the film into sites of emotional contagion. In so doing, she transforms her affective images into emotional psychogeographies.

This chapter explores how Coppola creates an “unruly” empathy between spectators and the characters which populate Coppola’s landscapes. The use of facial close-ups reveals to the spectator a topography rich with emotional intensity, one whose intensity is accessible to the viewer through the engagement of their mirror neurons. The role of mirror neurons within emotional contagion is more thoroughly unpacked, as is the role of on-screen characters in populating the psychogeography of a film. Building on the affect theory of Brian Massumi, I argue that landscapes and places engage the spectator into an intersubjective affective interplay, and thus constitute the spectator beyond themselves. This unruly empathy is a key element of the psychogeographic experience, as it allows the spectator to both acknowledge their own subject-position, as well as the multiple subject-positions represented on screen. The boundaries between spectator and screen are thus further blurred by being constituted outside one’s self. I then consider how *Somewhere* echoes this impact by eliciting the spectator’s ingrained empathic response. It is this intersubjective exchange of affect, I argue, that allows the

film to elicit empathy from Somewhere’s atmospheric apathy and produce a psychogeographic landscape that feels in sync with the spectator.

Chapter Six presents a slight shift in focus to the key research aim of the dissertation. However, this shift is entirely necessary. As the previous chapters consider the ways in which the spectator is invited into the frame of Coppola’s films, it is important to finesse the manner in which the spectator exists within this frame. This chapter outlines how the spectator is not in a process of identification with characters within the frame, but rather is a discrete subject that experiences the events within the frame (and in so doing, enters into the frame). Chapter Six considers empathy not as a way of experiencing someone else’s experience through identification, but through the same modes of emotional connection and mirroring that exist in the external world. It is through this everyday form of empathy that we can begin to understand that the spectator, once placed within the frame, operates within the cinematic world in a manner analogically to the material world. Thus the spectator remains a discrete entity while being engaged in intersubjectivity, in much the same way we engage intersubjectively with other people every day.

Having established the manner in which cinematic landscapes are articulated to, touched and felt by the spectator, the seventh chapter’s primary objective is to consider the overall impact that the psychogeographic experience of an immaterial place has on a spectator. In order to find paths that elucidate how the spectator and the landscape interact as a whole, I have created an analogical link between filmic landscapes and monuments. The two share significant cultural parallels, such that understanding monuments can help us illuminate how film space is perceived by the spectator. *Lost in Translation* is used as tool to demonstrate how, over the course of the film, its primary location is turned into an emotional monument. The film considers two characters trapped in a state of emotional void, and presents a narrative of tourism-as-existential-cure. Charlotte and Bob explore Tokyo in intersecting attempts to find
one's self through lived sensual encounter or, as I argue, in an attempt to be unmade by the landscape. In a parallel to the cinematic spectator, both characters are caught up in the pursuit of coming-into-being by the conscious phenomenological experience. Thus this chapter uses textural analysis to bolster textual analysis: my aim is to tease out how the emotional, narrative and geographic aspects of a film ultimately combine to create psychogeography-as-monument, and how this affects the audience’s intersubjective encounter of the film.

In the chapter, I consider the psychological underpinnings of spatial learning, as well as how human memory prefers to remember geographically and narratively. These two cognitive facets of our mind’s operation are then held in light of the transmission of affect from space to subject, and how this, in turn, can augment the spectator’s experience. The chapter then considers how monuments are built as a way of spatialising the past and creating a collective memory. While vision remains a mode of narrative construction that monuments and films engage with, both mediums ultimately aim to entice the spectator into an intersubjective experience. This chapter therefore considers how monuments use textural lures to connect with their subject’s bodies, and how light, sound, and colour in film constitute analogous textures. The work of phenomenological archaeologist Christopher Tilley and film theorist Laura U. Marks are engaged to consider how both films and monuments aim to speak to and affect the entire body of the spectator. Tilley’s work outlines the way that monuments construct specifically embodied and haptic experiences that attempt to “speak” mediated memories and emotions to the viewer. In the chapter, I attempt to take his findings from metal-aged monuments into the realm of film by considering parallel work by Laura U. Marks on the experience of cinema as a diasporic object. The analogous relationship between filmic landscapes and monuments ultimately helps us understand exactly why cinematic spaces stay with us, why they have the capacity to move the spectator so dramatically, to stay firmly grasped within our memories.

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45Marks, The Skin of the Film, 106.
They are the exact kind of affective, narrative, and emotionally invested spaces that our brains respond to the most intensely.

In the final chapter, I explore one of the major (and wholly under-researched) ways we can understand the spectator’s experience: through the dispersion of the film in online image-sharing platforms. The findings presented in Chapter Three, which considers the power that images have on the experience of space, necessitates a closer examination of platforms which share in the replication and dispersion of images. A glance at any online image sharing platform, such as Tumblr or Pinterest, reveals that Coppola’s work is uncommonly popular within this context. It maintains an online presence comparable to many blockbusters. Coppola’s films are spread, not through video clips or scenes, but through images and silent GIF fragments. I explain why Coppola’s canon is an apt subject matter for an inquiry into online dispersion, as the manner in which her fans express themselves is quite esoteric. This chapter extends the previously set out argument that the immaterial world alters our perception of the actual world through its function as a frame by considering which moments exactly the users of two image-based social media platforms, Tumblr and Pinterest, hold records of spectator response. The themes within these records support the previously explored reading of her work, and in particular indicate the monumental function that Coppola’s landscapes are performing for her fans. Specifically, I consider how her spectators are indexing moments that are neurally affective, that document a landscape and the affective and empathic moments that stand out within her films. These souvenir practices, I contend, aim to materialise the spectator’s experience of the psychogeography. I argue that these souvenirs have this capacity because of the collective nature of online communities. The practice of sharing cinematic fragments simultaneously communicates and recreates the shared memory of the film, and thus makes the viewer keenly aware of the collective nature of film spectatorship. Following Michel de Certeau’s argument that space is defined by the collective habits of a populace, I argue that the dissemination of Coppola’s works in fragments constitutes the landscape into further
materiality. As each individual subject takes a souvenir, or reposts another’s it affirms the existence of this environment. Thus the online dissemination of Coppola's films defines its setting as psychogeography.

**Looking at the Horizon**

Understanding exactly how humans perceive and comprehend their environments, both cinematic and material, may offer new forms of knowledge on both forms of landscape. As the following chapters reference the ways in which our perception of the material world is mediated by our mind’s processes. If the material world (or rather, its coherent comprehensible representation) is built in the minds of its inhabitants, then there is no reason why an immaterial world such as a cinematic space could not become confused with the material reality. This confusion is the key point of rupture: if actual and filmic worlds are confused, this demonstrates that there is little difference (beyond materiality) for the spectator. Thus this questions how the material and cinematic forms of space may alter or dialogically influence one another.
Chapter Two
Literature Review:
Finding Spectators within the Cinematic Space

In order to properly interrogate the nature of the spectator’s relationship to psychogeography, it is necessary to consider the concept’s roots in architectural theory, and indeed in history itself. This literature review surveys the pertinent currently existing scholarship on cinematic spectatorship, cinematic spaces, psychogeography, and landscapes. Its purpose is to consider the current understanding of psychogeography within a broader research context, one that includes film theory, and spectatorship theory. Thus within this review, I consider the major current works in the discourse around cinematic landscapes and spaces. My analysis reveals the underlying tensions within the field’s various conceptions of the relationship between spectator and screen. These tensions lead the chapter into a discussion of larger concerns around spectatorship theory, which in turn underscores my conclusion, that a theory of cinematic space must consider the role of a spatialised spectator. Having established the need to consider cinematic space as a psychogeography (a school of thought which necessarily spatialises the spectator), I will then consider how this line of reasoning also has a difficult relationship to the spectator because of the perceived virtuality of cinematic space. Thus finally, I analyse some of the major works in cognitive film theory - a school which aims to materialise the spectator’s experience - and would thus materialise cinematic space, where it applied the current discourse.

The difference between cinematic spaces and cinematic “landscapes” or cinematic “psychogeographies” is an important and considerable distinction. As this review of the pre-existing literature of cinematic landscapes and psychogeography reveals, cinematic spaces have

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46 It should also be noted that the major psychological research that influences this study, has also been reserved for the chapters. This is to avoid unnecessarily truncating work that has a more complicated relationship to this research project.

47 These concerns also lead to the conclusion that a theory of cinematic space must include an embodied, spatialised spectator. However, this discussion has been left for the fifth chapter of the thesis, in order to avoid truncating the considerable body of phenomenological and affect-driven theory within film studies.
a crucial and memorable role within the pleasures of spectatorship. However, there is a significant difference in the etymological meaning within the field for “landscape” and “psychogeography”. Consequently, one distinction that must be made is the difference between landscape and psychogeography and why this dissertation focuses on psychogeography. The initial question that Bruno considers is how visual culture has historically turned pictures into maps, locations and journeys. This spurs her work into further inquiry in three additional areas: how films take their audience on a journey; how this process has evolved from early western and European cinema (in particular the travelogue); and how architectural theory and film theory intersect quite literally in the sight-seeing invested in the cinema theatre. Bruno’s interest in cinematic psychogeography is quite distinct from the existing discourse on the landscape in cinema.

The following section considers the impact that certain ideas around how the spectator relates to a cinematic text have influenced the subsequent discourse on cinematic landscapes, and how this, in turn, creates a need to return to architectural theory’s interest in psychogeography. The manner in which schools of thought characterise an observer has a significant impact upon their conclusions, an idea best articulated by Jonathan Crary within *Techniques of the Observer.* Crary’s work is designed to be a direct disruption of one of the earlier and more dominant forms of spectatorship theory, apparatus theory. He argues for a rupture to the strictly enforced teleology of classical spectatorship: a historicised view that draws a singular connective line between Renaissance painting, the *camera obscura*, photography and finally cinema. This rupture does not stem, in his eyes, from a technological standpoint, but rather in how the position of the observer is culturally produced in the nineteenth century. This line of reasoning was later picked up by Martin Jay in his paper *Scopic Regimes of Modernity.* Therein,

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49 Ibid, 3.
50 Ibid, 14.
he considers the creation of several cultural conceptions of vision arising from painting throughout the modern era. Borrowing Metz’s term “scopic regimes”, Jay outlines the dominant “Cartesian” perspectivalism that ordered the world into a representational perfection by applying mathematical laws in order to communicate depth. Or rather, that a culture grew around perspective painting which considered the form as the best expression of “the “natural” experience of sight valorised by the scientific world view”. As Jay’s paper goes on to consider, these shifts in the cultural construction of vision have major implications for the way that a spectator to the art object is being characterised. As the following survey of literature on cinematic landscapes demonstrates, there are several distinct observational positions being produced within each text, each with its own separate definition of the relationship between screen-space and spectator.

The Landscape of the “Cinematic Landscape”

The study of cinematic landscapes dates back to some of its earliest theorists, such as Hugo Münsterberg, and some of its most influential authors, such as Stephen Heath and Sergei Eisenstein. Eisenstein, whose philosophical interest lay in deconstructing the representational power of film, and the consequent emotional states induced in the spectator, described cinematic landscapes as the “freest element of film, the least burdened with servile narrative tasks, and the most flexible in conveying moods, emotional states and spiritual experiences”.

The history of cinema is strongly tied to this conception of “landscape” as a scene or view that is given a spectacular (as opposed to narratological) purpose by being framed for the spectator. This freedom from narrative ends is a key element of what makes landscapes of interest to screen scholars, but it also problematises the spectator’s relationship to them. In line with

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54 Eisenstein, Nonindifferent Nature, 217.
Eisenstein’s argument, theorists like Martin Lefebvre, Graeme Harper or Jonathan Rayner consider films wherein the landscape is either used to induce an emotional (although not affect-driven) response in the spectator, or as a coded mechanism of ideology. However, these authors also refer back to “the frame” that demarcates film as a divisive principle between the virtuality of cinematic landscapes and the materiality of actual environments. As Lefebvre argues, the separation between what is landscape and what is nature, or space, or setting, is one that is resolved across disciplines by the invocation of the concept of frame. This concept heralds the first major scopic regime present in the discourse of cinematic landscapes, that of a “framed” space.

Within Lefebvre's edited anthology of cinematic space, he positions the spectator's relationship to landscape as one that is formed by the frame. By delimiting what is and is not within the narrative world, the frame transforms the presented geographic imagery into a landscape. Predicated on Mulvey's “gaze”, Lefebvre posits two poles of spectatorship of cinematic landscapes: one wherein the spectator perceives a text's intent to present a landscape, and one in which the spectator is the source of the landscape. However, this latter mode of spectatorship is not founded in phenomenological or affective analysis, but is instead born of Ricoeur's "narrative intelligence" (the capacity of the spectator to intuit comprehension from the fragmented representational elements of cinema). Therefore, the spectator is positioned by the text to either intuit or appreciate the landscape it articulates. This gaze reveals the underlying relationship present within the scopic regime of these authors: that the landscape is beheld by an external viewer, not a spatial explorer.

56 These three authors are of particular note in terms of this tendency within the study of cinematic landscapes due to their position as editors in several anthologies on Cinematic Landscapes. Harper, for example, has edited two anthologies on the subject, both of which feature essays that take either one or both of these primary assertions about the nature of cinematic landscapes. See: Jonathan Raynor, and Graham Harper, eds. *Film landscapes: Cinema, Environment and Visual Culture*. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014); Graeme Harper, and Jonathan R. Rayner (eds) *Cinema and Landscape*. (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2010).
58 Lefebvre, “Between Setting and Landscape in Cinema” in *Landscapes and Film*, 29.
59 Ibid, 30.
60 Ibid, 30.
This conception of the landscape stems from Alberti’s definition of a picture as a framed view of the word.\textsuperscript{61} The conflation of landscape and framing is best put by Anne Friedberg, who in fact sought to problematise the teleological connection between the two.\textsuperscript{62} Friedberg posits that rather than the discontinuous elements of film being held together by ideology or narrative, the film frame itself holds these pieces together. She describes a frame that is a crucial organising limitation, a visual grammar which renders the representational system legible. As such, the definition of landscape is always tied to the viewer or spectator and tied to the technologies of vision (be they glass, camera or otherwise) that the viewer may use.\textsuperscript{63} However, Friedberg later clarifies that this is not to say that these technologies produce the conception of landscape, but that the landscape itself is a production of social and technological means.\textsuperscript{64} In \textit{The Virtual Window}, Friedberg considers how the connection between "the frame" and film space has been formed by a desire to posit single-point, painterly perspective onto mediums that echo (but do not necessarily reproduce) landscape painting.\textsuperscript{65} This, in turn, aligns cinema with Jay’s description of Cartesian perspective in visual art, wherein the subjective binocular vision of the painter is transformed through geometrical application into the monocular, disembodied view of the painting.\textsuperscript{66} Friedberg’s account of the manner in which cinematic landscapes have been theorised is echoed in the work of cultural geographers and art historians alike who begin their analysis at the point of interaction between humanity and nature, often seen through a “frame”.

However, the discourse on cinematic landscapes does acknowledge that cinematic space is not analogous to a painterly landscape. Lefebvre argues that setting within cinema cannot be wholly

\textsuperscript{61}Anne Friedberg, \textit{The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft} (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004).
\textsuperscript{62}Ibid, 3.
\textsuperscript{63}Ibid, 11.
\textsuperscript{64}I base this assertion on the art historical research of Jonathan Crary in \textit{Techniques of the Observer}. Therein, he underlines the complicated, ruptured and fragmented teleology of the organising regimes of vision that follow classicism and modernism. Crary, \textit{Techniques of the Observer}, 8.
\textsuperscript{65}Friedberg, \textit{The Virtual Window}, 170.
\textsuperscript{66}Jay, ‘Scopic Regimes of Modernity’, 7.
defined by its depiction within a frame. The fragmentation of screen space, the use of screen events or montage, implies boundlessness to cinematic space. As Jacques Aumont argues, "classical cinema ... creates composite spaces by cheating on just about everything [and] needs to compensate by finding ways to guarantee the coherence of these imaginary spaces". He also notably describes this work as a landscape with an intuited "gaze", although modifies this otherwise psychoanalytic conclusion with a reminder that it does not necessarily imply a singular view.

Prior to Aumont, Stephen Heath's "Narrative Space", heavily influenced by Lacanian psychoanalysis, displays how the internal geography of a film is mostly discontinuous, and is only made (illusorily) coherent by the processes of the unconscious. The physical space of the film can only be conceived as a whole, actual space if the viewer actively fills in the gaps created by editing. Heath also affirms cinematic spaces' relationship to the frame by way of landscape painting and photography. He cites Christian Metz's description of the primal scene and the keyhole as the primary pleasure offered to the spectator by cinematic spaces. In essence, he argues that cinematic spaces are both a representational (and therefore ideological) proof of the spectator's "suturing" of film while being subjected to the scopophlic gaze as outlined by Metz and Baudry. Victor Burgin's more recent book *Indifferent Spaces* takes a similar tack, arguing — through psychoanalysis and apparatus theory — that the cinema represents a fantasiescape that the audience uses to distract itself from the frenzy of modernity. His aim for *Indifferent Spaces* was to uncover the space between perception and cognition. Burgin's work emphasises the importance that human beings place on geography, not to mention the sheer amount of

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67 Lefebvre, "Between Setting and Landscape in Cinema", 21
70 Stephen Heath, "Narrative Space." *Screen* 17:3 (September, 1976), 68-112.
71 Ibid, 74.
72 Ibid, 83.
73 Ibid, 83
74 Ibid, 83.
emotion that a space can represent for a person. It is important to note that, in Heath and Burgin’s accounts, the space is constructed and then held still, and the audience cannot travel this imagined landscape.

The landscapes that Burgin and Heath outline cannot be toured, but must be observed in a manner similar to perspectival art. This aligns their perspective with Jay’s definition of Cartesian perspective and Friedberg’s teleology of the Alberti-derived frame. Each of these accounts takes a fundamentally psychoanalytic approach, which is perhaps why each characterises a space as becoming meaningful when it is viewed through human eyes. One of the reasons that this dissertation takes its stance towards psychogeography over landscape is because of the underlying thread of psychoanalytic theory — and specifically gaze theory — that inhabits much of the existing literature. The scopic regime of a gazing spectator, as described by Heath, Aumont and Burgin, refutes the importance of embodiment and embodied moving within a space in order to generate the emotional experience that would transform it into a “place”.

This sets the current discourse somewhat apart from its origins in architectural and spatial theory, beginning with Walter Benjamin and continued by Debord, Kevin Lynch and de Certeau. Even authors who specifically reference architectural theory have a complicated relationship to the exploration of cinematic landscapes in an embodied way. While the frame is a fundamental element of understanding cinematic space, it also alerts the audience to their lack of agency within their exploration. Each of the film theorists mentioned above struggles with this concern, as there is no simple solution to understanding how an audience might make a space meaningful (and therefore help explain why cinematic spaces are so meaningful) without exploring it with their own eyes.

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76 Burgin, Indifferent Spaces, 194.
While the psychoanalytic accounts (such as Heath’s) aim to reintroduce the spectator within the landscape, in order to do so they must make large claims about the nature of spectatorship. These claims exist within a larger problem for psychoanalytic film theory. This problem has been outlined by Stephen Prince as creating a spectator “who exists in theory”. Prince essentialises a common thread of criticism within psychoanalytically informed film study: that the claims made about spectators are exceptionally universal, and yet entirely specific to the particular theorist. There is little correspondence, according to Prince, between the image of the spectator sketched out by psychoanalytic authors and any actual spectators who might ratify their claims. This is a problem that follows psychoanalytic film theory into a discussion of cinematic landscapes. Each of the authors discussed consider a form of spectatorship that is made both outside architectural and spatial theorists (whose work I consider below, as their work on material environments hold a great many important parallels to cinematic spaces) and asserts a spectatorial gaze which does not necessarily correspond to an actual spectator.

The Problem of the Spectator

Given the representational nature of film and cinematic spaces, it is perhaps unclear why the spectator would be a concern. After all, the frame provides a productive way of demarcating cinematic space, and the further work which aligns the experience of cinema with the illusion of travel creates an opening within the discourse to consider an explored space. This perhaps seems sufficient in understanding cinematic landscapes. However, each of these theories considers first and foremost an assumed spectator’s response. Yet the relationship between human beings and their experience of space is a fundamentally discrete one. Certain filmic

78 Prince, “Psychoanalytic Film Theory”, 83-84.
experiences cannot be reduced down to an interaction with narratives, aesthetics or a cultural history. Ultimately, each spectator will have a discrete experience of filmic spaces. This, in turn, will necessarily alter their impression of said space. Thus a consideration of how the spectator is being conceptualised is key in understanding how these accounts of cinematic landscapes do not acknowledge some of the most important aspects of filmic spaces.

This is one example of a wider problem within film theories' various accounts of spectatorship. As Judith Mayne argues in her analysis of the study of spectatorship in film, all theorists who consider the nature of spectatorship are ultimately attempting to find a claim that can be made about the institution of cinema. Whether this takes the form of individual textual analysis, as in the work of Heath, Burgin or Lefebvre, or of a larger inquiry into the discourse of cinema or apparatus, as in Friedberg, each author is attempting to mount claims about the nature of the whole from the sum of its parts. For example, the theorists who consider cinematic landscapes from a psychoanalytic position draw a great deal of inspiration from three earlier theorists, each of whom considers the spectator to be largely passive. This issue stems from the two larger psychoanalytic conceptions of a spectator that colour the discourse on cinematic landscapes, yet it points towards an underlying concern: the manner in which spectatorship theory addresses the individual has been compromised by the impetus for an overarching, organising principle.

The difficulties of making general claims about the spectator are made evident in the semantic confusion over what we refer to when we talk about "the spectator". Attempts from cognitivist, constructivist, materialist, psychoanalytic and affect theory have led to further diffusion of our understanding, as the meaning of the word "spectator" is subtly altered by each school to better fit their own particular argument. The semantic confusion over what a spectator is has produced its own philosophical confusion. The field continues to equivocate between the

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80 Or her contemporaries Tom Gunning and Lauren Rabinowitz, whose work is considered further below.
spectator as a visceral body (as in sensuous theory such as Sobchack's or Marks's), and as a position produced by the cinematic apparatus (as in Metz and Baudry). The problem that this binary is attempting to steer around is over-generalisation. Most schools of thought have, at some point, radically redefined or reclaimed what exactly a spectator is, leading to a conception of the viewer as a straw man.

This phenomenon is best summarised by Thomas Elsaesser: "the spectator thus conceptualised is not only disembodied, but exists mostly for the benefit of the theory he or she is supposed to exemplify." The study of the spectator, as Elsaesser and Hagener write in their anthology on film spectatorship theory, grew from a desire to legitimise and elevate cinema's cultural value. Earlier writers such as Metz, Kracauer, and Eisenstein drew from the psychoanalytic tradition of an implicit understanding of the spectator's mind. Consequently, their theories argue for a general spectator, a singular subject position. This stance is softened in certain accounts by the addendum that the theorist is describing simply a "subject position" not the actual spectator's experience. Elsaesser and Hagener are critical of the assumptions present in early theories of the spectator, in particular those that posit the spectator as a passive receptacle whose sole aim is to "make meaning" from the representative function of film. Their book charts the history of the relationship between spectator and screen across a great many theorists, decades and approaches, and as such these critiques bear witness to a larger issue.

The psychoanalytic approaches to a spectator that most influence the literature are those drawn from Metz and Baudry's apparatus theory. Metz and Baudry draw weight in their analysis from

81Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener. Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses. (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2015), 17.
83Elsaesser and Hagener. Film Theory, 19.
84Ibid, 20.
the physical setup of projection. As the cinematic apparatus presents visual stimuli in front of the eyes, and audio stimuli to the ears, Baudry identified that motion pictures deliberately centre the perspective of the spectator. In so doing, they both aim to represent reality while obscuring their own mediation of said reality (and that mediation's ideological operation). Kaja Silverman and Heath's accounts of suture theory, wherein the film's sequencing requires active cognition on the part of the audience to create a comprehensive impression of the film. Yet while both of these identify active participation at points in the spectator's reception of the film, each also often uses language that implies a passivity or helplessness on the part of the viewer. Metz's earlier work on semiotics also allows that a spectator must be attending to the intelligibility of the cinema, and consequently implies some action on their part. Yet in Mayne's words, "the very notion of a 'response' — not to mention a viewer or a relationship between text and viewer — has been postulated in a totally self-evident, unproblematised way". This is a criticism that can also be seen in the works drawn from Panofsky's conception of a spectator.

Panofsky's influence can be seen clearly within Burgin, Lefebvre and Aumonut. Panofsky's influential argument positions the audience as a passive receptacle for the film's spaces, and can be observed to some degree in almost all of the literature on both cinematic psychogeography and cinematic landscapes. The fundamental principle of his claim is that in cinema, the film camera operates as a mechanical avatar of the eye. Prior to Heath's claims, he puts forward that the audience actively constructs meaning out of the barrage of fragmented images in film. However, he still considers the camera's eyes as the audience's own, and as such does not fully

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86Baudry, Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematic Apparatus, 41.
87Ibid, 46.
89I refer here to Silverman's use of phrases like "We have no choice but to" in Silverman, The Subject of Semiotics, 225 and Baudry's reliance on Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, a school of thought which postulates an inevitability to its conclusions.
90Mayne, Cinema and Spectatorship, 34.
91I would like to emphasise here that this position does not follow into psychogeography in general, but is rather an occurrence within a discourse that must grapple with the virtual nature of filmic landscapes.
consider the capacity of the audience to mediate or alter their own vision. This is a common thread throughout the discourse surrounding cinematic landscapes.

Given the significant and thorough research that already considers cinematic landscapes, it bears asking why this dissertation forgoes this discourse in favour of psychogeography. The answer lies in where these authors place the spectator’s body within the immaterial space of the film. The inquiry into cinematic landscapes overwhelmingly considers them through a distanced view. Cinematic landscapes are discussed as objects, although the form that the object takes (as an ideological, psychoanalytic or archaeological object) often differs. In essence, these texts do not place the spectator within the frame, but as purveyors of a gaze towards it. In accounts of cinematic landscape that do not take the psychoanalytic approach, the spectator is often ultimately left out entirely. The representation of the landscape is instead decoded into a thought-provoking emblem of politics or representation. A key example of this can be seen in the anthology *Cinema and Landscapes*. In it, almost every author — with the exception of Tom Gunning — deconstructs how the landscape within a set of texts is being displayed or articulated. However, this then leads to an anthology that very rarely acknowledges that a spectator may be watching these films. The film’s landscape is seen as a largely self-evident truth, as though it is transmitted directly to the audience through a mechanical avatar-eye. This conception of the spectator notably also occurs in the works of Anne Friedberg and Giuliana Bruno, but was first introduced at roughly the same time as Benjamin’s account of architecture by Erwin Panofsky.

Why then, turn to a term such as psychogeography? The term implies an ability to tour the filmic landscape as though one was walking within it. ‘Psychogeography’ has been imported from a larger body of knowledge that considers embodied and active interpretation of space on
the part of the subject, a key theorist of which is Henri Lefebvre. As Lefebvre writes on the study of space which does not spatialise the spectator (though not, it must be said, on cinematic space):

This connection, presumed to be self-evident from the point of view of scientific discourse, is never conceptualized. Blithely indifferent to the charge of circular thinking, that discourse sets up an opposition between the status of space and the status of the 'subject', between the thinking 'I' and the object thought about.94

To draw distinctions between the spectator and the cinematic space by creating divisive principles is to engage in a form of Cartesian dualism that limits the power of the individual subject. Theories considering cinematic landscapes stand apart from work considering cinematic spaces, a confusing and unnecessary distinction stemming from the incompatible ways the two conceptualise a spectator. Psychogeography fundamentally emphasises the role of exploration, movement and inhabitation in the study of space. It is a mode of analysing space that preferences the experience of the individual in order to transform "space" into "place".95 Unlike the body of work on cinematic landscapes, psychogeography creates a new way of analysing the virtual world that films create while preserving a way to place the spectator within that space. Ultimately, psychoanalytic perspectives do not fully consider the importance of embodiment in a spatialised experience. Psychogeography avoids the issues of spectatorship that plague the study of cinematic landscapes because it is a fundamentally experiential pursuit.

For the purposes of the current inquiry then, it is worthwhile to consider some of the fundamental theorists who first considered the way in which a person may produce meaning around space by exploring it. The scholar who first documented the relationship between urban spaces and exploration was Walter Benjamin.

95It should be noted that the definition of "place" I am using here is Michel De Certeau's, and not Lefebvre's. De Certeau's understanding of "place" importantly foregrounds both individual and collective experience in a way that best suits the cinematic experience (by which I mean an event that is both collective, as in the case of cinematic audience, and individual, as in the case of each spectator's impression and perception of the film).
Psychogeography

Benjamin saw the advent of mechanical modernity as a trigger event that changed the way people perceived places. His argument characterises perception as necessarily culturally determined, and that, as the first world and its culture became increasingly mechanical, people could only truly experience space through motion. In a parallel to the newfound geographic freedom of Parisian flâneurs, Benjamin saw the art and aesthetics of architecture as necessarily being beheld by being explored, toured. In essence, he claims that architecture was consumed in a state of distraction. This led to spaces being experienced not with the detached and clinical eye that observed pictorial art, but with the physical embodiment of hapticity. Benjamin's definition of hapticity within architecture is derived from his interpretation of Alois Riegl's separation between the optic and the haptic. Riegl's works *Problems of Style: Foundations for a History of Ornament* and *Late Roman Art Industry* identified modes of visuality within ancient and modern art and classified these two "forms" of seeing. He argued that the optic appealed purely to the "objectivity" of the eye, and the haptic to an illusory sense of contact and a necessarily subjective experience. Benjamin, conversely focused on how the optic and the haptic represent different modes of appreciation available to any individual. The immaterial space of cinema has an obvious parallel, as the spectator can be drawn into both sensory immersion and intellectual appreciation. Benjamin took similar approaches in the study of architecture and cinema, which makes his accounts of architecture and flâneurism of high relevance to the task at hand. However, it is important to note that although Benjamin describes

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97Benjamin, *The Arcades, 417*
99Ibid, 417.
101I refer here to his accounts of "the collector" and "the flâneur" within *The Arcades Project*, 206, 417.
locations as being imbued with particular emotions, at no point did he explain how such a conflation of the abstract and material took place. However, this gap in his account was soon filled by fellow Marxist, Henri Lefebvre.

Until *The Production of Space*, accounts of psychogeography had looked almost primarily at how people experience physical architecture, and so Lefebvre endeavoured to invert this line of reasoning and instead elaborated on how people's experiences changed spaces.102 Simply put, he argues that equal to a space's material reality is its attached cultural concepts.103 His key argument is that the psychogeography of all spaces is socially produced, and all modes of social production are also an institutional method of control.104 He outlines three distinct and dynamic categories of space, which collectively add up to the process of spatial production: perceived, conceived and lived. "Perceived" space here refers to material places, "conceived" to the ideological intentions an institution has of that space, and "lived" to the actual experience of the two.105 Each of these categories corresponds with a semiotic category, Sign, Signifier and Symbol, which led Lefebvre into a semiotics of geography.106 While all three categories have their own role in the "production" of space, it is the lived experience, Lefebvre suggests, that has an as yet untapped power to redefine it.107 Due to his interest in an ideological and political science of space, Lefebvre often focuses on the ways in which a subject's perception of space moves from a practical and lived (and therefore embodied) definition into an abstract and ideologically mediated one.108 For the task at hand, it is paramount to consider scholars who allow for the agent to have a unique experience within a space, just as the spectator will necessarily have a discrete and individual experience of a film.

102Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 30.
103Ibid, 30.
104Henri Lefebvre, *State, Space, World: Selected Essays* eds Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 167-170. It should be noted that Lefebvre often works in parallel to or isolation from his contemporary scholars, like Guy Debord. I use the term psychogeography here, though Lefebvre never did, in order to create a clearer and more focused case towards a spatialised spectator.
105Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 53.
106Ibid, 100.
107Ibid, 89.
While Lefebvre engages some structuralist principles as a tool for analysis, he also outlines the difficulty in applying such pure theoretical constructs to the messiness of the human experience after modernity.¹⁰⁹ Space, Lefebvre argues,

... is not the context of which I constitute the 'textuality': instead, it is first of all my body, and then it is my body's counterpart or 'other', its mirror-image or shadow: it is the shifting intersection between that which touches, penetrates, threatens or benefits my body on the one hand, and all other bodies on the other.¹¹⁰

The intended meaning of space is always mediated by the body and the discrete subjectivity of the spectator.¹¹¹ It cannot be reduced down to signifier and signified, but instead reflects symbolism and its hold over the populace. One is to assume that the institution produces its ideological spatial design in the implicit culture and social codes. To put it another way, power can never be fully decoded, because it inherently includes control of all codes.¹¹² This leads to a problematic aspect of Lefebvre's text, the exact degree of control the populace and institution have.

The issue with Lefebvre's position is that, if we continue the parallel between director and government, spectator and citizen, then the spectator would only be capable of having one kind of experience. It would seem that we have returned once again to single-point perspective and all the problems of agency that it brings. Lefebvre equivocates on the power of the individual spectator. This is part of a larger tension in his work: the dialectic between conceived, perceived and lived spatiality. In his account, each category relates and responds to the other. He is able to

¹⁰⁹ Lefebvre, The Production of Space, 220.
¹¹⁰ Ibid, 184.
¹¹¹ Ibid, 222.
¹¹² Ibid, 163.
see the power of both governments and people in producing spaces. A "practical and concrete consensus",\textsuperscript{113} formed by the public, can define a place. For example, if the populace deems a water fountain a good place for bathing, then it becomes, for all intents and purposes, a public pool. However, in the monument, Lefebvre can only see the sway of institutional ideological symbolism. In \textit{The Production of Space}, he writes

"For millennia, monuments took in all aspects of spatiality that we have identified... Of this social space, which embraced all the above mentioned aspects while still according each its proper place, everyone partook, and partook fully—albeit, naturally, under the conditions of a generally accepted Power and a generally accepted Wisdom. The monument thus effected a 'consensus', and this in the strongest sense of the term, rendering it practical and concrete. The element of repression in it and the element of exaltation could scarcely be disentangled; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the repressive element was metamorphosed into exaltation"\textsuperscript{114}

His argument, it would appear, is that although these spaces can combine the various public interpretations derived from each subject's lived, perceived and conceived knowledge of the site, the State controls the intention of the site, and its expression in a built environment. Thus, the spectator has no discrete power, only collective power, and even this collective power is moulded by ideology.

The abstract intellectual elements that people attach to locations build and support the material reality of the place through the method of its social production. The distinctions between space and place, Lefebvre argues, are constructed through social practices, or rather that "(Social)

\textsuperscript{113}Lefebvre, \textit{The Production of Space}, 15.
\textsuperscript{114}Ibid, 220.
space is a (social) product.” 115 Once again, the individual must move through a site in order to know it. However, interestingly, Lefebvre also advocates that in this tour, one is producing space as much as they are experiencing it. What is needed is a theorist who demonstrates that, as much as a built city can be drawn with ideological effects in mind, the people who use the city have the capacity to change its meaning. 116 This idea has found significant resonance in the work of a number of cultural theorists since, such as Michel de Certeau. 117

In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau starts his treatise from a (quite literal) god’s-eye perspective: on the viewing deck of New York’s late World Trade Centre. 118 From his vantage point, de Certeau sketches out the biggest tension in spatial theory in the 21st century: who defines the city. His edict that it was the *populace* that produces spaces (an idea which I will unpack shortly) diverges significantly from the discourse on the definition of psychogeography and space. Lefebvre put much emphasis on a space’s abstract essence being created by its intended use, as designed by its institution. 119 Similarly, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault argued that the government has the capacity to set a built site’s patterns of use, and thus produce behaviour, which ultimately became a recurring circuit that produced psychogeography. 120 In Lefebvre’s philosophy, there is no room for a unique perspective, only for collective revolution. Yet looking upon the greater image of a city, de Certeau saw an entirely different mode of production. The people on the street, who paid little mind to the government’s city plans, also had the power to topple them. 121 "Beneath the discourses that ideologize the

115 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, xii.
116 It would seemaingly be remiss to ignore the larger political context that the study of psychogeography was founded in, however its relevance in the scope of an academic archaeology is questionable, particularly as it does not pertain to cinematic space in a meaningful way.
117 It is imperative to note that de Certeau and Lefebvre have different and distinct definitions of space. While I have outlined Lefebvre’s position regarding space and its production, de Certeau thought of space primarily as a geographic, macro-scaled concept, with place occurring on the microcosm of the street.
119 Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 91.
121 On this point, he and Lefebvre are in agreement. Lefebvre argued a similar idea, that if the people en masse choose to redefine a space, they were capable of producing new meaning. To refer back to the example of his triadic category of space: if a government builds a fountain as a new landmark, but the people use it as a public bath, then the government has inexorably built a public bath.
city,” he wrote, “the ruses and combinations of powers that have no readable identity proliferate; without points where one can take hold of them, without rational transparency, they are impossible to administer”. From above New York, de Certeau saw no evidence of agreement among the many individuals milling on the street level. This reveals the greatest strength of *The Practice of Everyday Life*: it is a text grounded in material people and their experiences.

Like Debord, Benjamin and Lefebvre, de Certeau considers how geographic spaces are altered by their populace’s experience of them. His premise is that a location is transformed into a lived “place” by being invested with emotion by the individual. Although many of his thoughts run parallel to Lefebvre’s, de Certeau came to them by a different approach, and consequently the impact of his ideas differs significantly. De Certeau shows that it is the people who define the city, in spite of the role that governments and other authorial bodies think they play. His philosophy is born from a time of increased interest in anthropology, one roughly aligned with the larger linguistic turn of cultural theory. Thus de Certeau incorporates elements of the idea of “habitus”, from the works of Pierre Bourdieu. Habitus here refers to the method by which a group reaches an unofficial consensus via overlapping behaviour. These group habits, Bourdieu states, come to constitute unspoken orthodox rules. By turning to anthropology instead of semiotics, de Certeau thus preserves a *human* spectator, one grounded in both body and reality. Certeau characterises all geography as a psychogeography, as each space is either an emotionally/mnemonically infused place or a liminal way-station between places (an idea which has since been elaborated on in relation to cinema by Peter Wollen).

However, Lefebvre’s ideas ask the populace to act in lockstep. Once again, his ideas abrade against acknowledging the individual subject’s experience.

123 Ibid, 94.
126 de Certeau *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 66.
A consideration of more recent writing on psychogeography reveals two notable facets to the concept: that such ideas are not inherently socio-political, and that the way in which we mentally map a city is reflexively emotional. In *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch brings this concept into a more empirical framework, and claims that in order to make geography coherent and navigable, inhabitants construct a mental map comprising five elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. De Certeau, Lynch, Benjamin and Debord have underscored a rarely commented upon but consistent element of human spatiality: in exploring spaces, we help produce their meaning.

Psychogeography is an (often invisible) fact of modern existence. Through inhabiting spaces, humans necessarily imbue them with memories and meanings quite separate from their material existence. Thus far the concept has been applied largely to material places. However, there is no critical opposition to using it as a framework to consider filmic psychogeography. The first of these few instances of psychogeography being applied to imaginary landscapes was when Gaston Bachelard took the idea of physical spaces suffused with memory into the realm of the virtual through literature.

In a discussion of what he calls the “poetics of space”, Bachelard considers the way in which archetypal images can synthesise with established memories to create new imagined places. Drawing heavily from Lacanian psychoanalysis, he argues that when a writer describes a house as cozy and warm, it forces the reader to associate the space with the memories of one’s own past. In this way the reader’s mental picture of the imaginary house draws reference from actual

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128 Kevin Lynch. *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960). Each element is relatively self-explanatory with perhaps the exception of nodes and landmarks. Lynch defines nodes as small areas with an intensity of city features such as major intersections or popular promenades.

places they have known, and overlays the imagined place with the emotional weight of childhood memories. Consequently, works of art and literature can, according to Bachelard, act as modes of psychic travel to an immaterial landscape. By this account imaginary psychogeography is just as emotionally potent as material locations. Furthermore, Bachelard indicates that the reader’s mental construction of a psychogeography is a process that allows the audience to travel. While this idea has fascinating implications for literary studies, there is an important distinction between Bachelard’s literary critique and film. After all, even books that supply maps of fictional landscapes require significant imagination from the reader to be considered in the mind’s eye. Images derived from literature must be built entirely by the visual imagination of the reader. The same is not true for film.

However, several theorists have opened up a space within their work that can fold the basic principles of psychogeographic study into immaterial spaces. As Christian Metz developed a semiotic language of film, de Certeau and Debord both imagined a semiotics of geography. Indeed much of the literature surrounding architecture can be applied directly to film. It is interesting to note, for example, that each element Kevin Lynch outlines as definitive of a city’s abstraction (paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks) have a parallel in film. A film-scape is a parallel to a landscape’s path, as in both cases, the order in which the narrative takes place, and consequently the order in which filmic locations are revealed. The city’s “edges” apply to both the edges of the frame and to locations and action occurring off-camera. In *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity*, Edward Dimendberg applies Lynch’s study of the city directly to the constructed cities of film. His argument, that *film noir* provides a strategy for reading both cinema and built space as mutually implicated in the construction of common spatial

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130 Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 5
131 Ibid, 5.
experiences, stresses the importance of “exploring” a film’s setting.

Similarly, de Certeau linked spatial trajectories to narrative arcs, seeing them as ultimately intertwined modes of spatial production.\textsuperscript{135} He found narrative beats to align with his argument around the production of place, as fictional locations provide structure. In his words, ”It is the partitioning of space that structures it”, a key form of place-production.\textsuperscript{136} However, this notably positions the application of psychogeography as a form of mediated, identificatory spectatorship: the narrative produces place through the events that occur within its spaces, and the audience takes on the produced meaning \textit{in toto}. The agency of the subject experiencing the narrative is left aside in favour of the narrative itself. Admittedly this may not stem from the controlled nature of exploring fictional, immaterial spaces. After all, Lefebvre’s major argument was that architecture is a common thief of individual agency, a tool of governmental bodies to impose their ideology upon the populace.\textsuperscript{137} That being said, de Certeau’s work mounts a considerable defence against such a claim in its acknowledgment of the power of the individual.

**The Study of Spatialised Spectators**

Psychogeography, in line with Benjamin, Debord, de Certeau and Lynch, is primarily concerned with a spatialised subject. The consideration of how a spectator may be spatialised is then a key aspect of any theory pertaining to psychogeography. Possible accounts of the spatialised spectator have been offered by Bruno, Tom Gunning and Lauren Rabinowitz, each of whom has looked back to the roots of early populist cinema, specifically the early “movie rides”. Their

\textsuperscript{135}de Certeau, \textit{Practice of Everyday Life}, 115.
\textsuperscript{136}Ibid, 123.
\textsuperscript{137}This point was in fact the major thrust of neo-Marxist and modernist architectural theory. For an in-depth history of the notion, readers could consult Fredric Jameson, “The Politics of Theory: Ideological Positions in the Postmodernism Debate.” \textit{New German Critique} 33 (1984), 53-65.
focus on this point of technological innovation also reframes their own conception of the spectator’s relationship to cinematic space.

Some of the earliest films that explicitly and deliberately made the space into a landscape, and then a spectacle, are Hale’s Moving Tours. The tours took place in amusement parks and parlours across the United States, Canada and Europe.138 Designed to create the closest illusion to travel as possible, they consisted of a film of a landscape, as seen through the window of a train, being projected around a stationary carriage that housed the tour’s audience. As argued by both Gunning and Rabinowitz, these rides are of primary importance in how spectators developed a relationship to the filmed landscape because they represent a formative “frame” for the spectator at the beginning of cinema technology. 139

Lauren Rabinowitz, in her essay Virtual Voyages, describes the project of Hale’s Moving Tours as an attempt at creating a living contradiction.140 She argues that the tours “attempted to dematerialize the spectator’s body through its extension into the cinematic world while they repeatedly emphasised the corporeality of the body and the physical delirium of the senses”.141 In essence, she outlines (by way of Jonathan Crary) that the mode of spectatorship being engaged by a travel ride spectacle such as the Hale Tours is one which negotiates between cinema’s appeal to an embodied spectatorial experience and its primarily illusory nature.142 She argues that this alters the principal experience from one of an attempt at perfecting the realism of the cinematic experience into a kind of hyperrealism.143

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138 Noel Burch and Ben Brewster, Life to those Shadows, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 36.
140 Lauren Rabinowitz, “Virtual Voyage” 42
141 Ibid. 42.
142 Ibid. 44.
143 Ibid, 45.
Bruno’s *Atlas of Emotion* maps the psychogeography imbued in a number of works of art, literature and film. Building on the work of Benjamin, Bachelard, Panofsky and a host of literary influences, Bruno insists that by taking the audience through a fictional space filled with memory, a fictional work can create a psychogeography. By moving a camera through the space, Bruno argues that a filmmaker can erect an immaterial landscape that we explore as the camera does. It is particularly effective when the scenery is unknown and visually (texturally) rich. When the eye is unfamiliar with a film’s space, it is prone to wander and explore. Although Bruno often returns to the motif of movement, and motion, as necessary for “traversing the cine-city”, she also refers to pictorial art and its ability to imply motion, movement and as a consequence, travel and transportation. Though Bruno seems to believe that the movement of the physical eyeball is sufficient movement to create the impression of travel (as can be seen in her discussion of the *carte du tendre*) she still posits that the movement of a camera through a space is what gives the audience the illusion of a psychogeography. Thus while her account spatialises the spectator by making them active participants in the exploration of space, her analysis avoids engaging with a fully embodied account of psychogeography.

Other authors who consider a spatialised spectator often invoke the frame, thereby weakening the degree of embodiment that the spectator is allowed. Juhani Pallasmaa has similarly undertaken textual analysis of built space within films in order to articulate the phenomenological experience of some filmic landscapes. Drawing on Benjamin, he writes that “a film is viewed with the muscles and skin as much as by the eyes. Both architecture and cinema imply a kinaesthetic way of experiencing space, and images stored in our memory are embodied and haptic images as much as retinal pictures.” Yet Pallasmaa’s consideration of the architecture of films also notably draws parallels between the painting tradition of landscapes

and the cinematic frame. While he argues that “a street in a film does not end at the edge of the screen”, he also considers the mobility of the audience that the moving camera provides to be paramount to psychogeography, thus indicating that the visual elements of what is presented to the audience are more important than what he initially asserts. This equivocation over the role of the camera as a framing device also follows into the work of Anthony Vidler. Vidler builds directly on Benjamin’s claims towards the importance of spatially exploring and touching a space and argues that film has become a kind of fluid laboratory to explore the built world.

What Friedberg, Gunning, Rabinowitz and Heath indicate is that in film viewing, the audience does not simply perceive a space, they inhabit it. The immediacy and intimacy of a haptic experience would certainly explain why so many have considered film and architecture to have significant parallels. However, the kind of close engagement one has in haptic experience of a physical building comes from embodiment. A clue as to the method of this inhabitation can be found in Benjamin’s connection between the embodied experience of geography within his account of the flâneur. If this is the case, then the phenomenological account of the film experience holds the power to illuminate the psychogeography of cinema. For the parallels that Benjamin, Vidler, Pallasmaa and others have outlined to be logically viable, there must be a way to bridge physical presence into a virtual experience.

Many of these authors, and Gunning in particular, struggle with the separation between virtual and actual. Subsequently, each has created an account of cinematic space that uses a spatialised spectator, but not necessarily an embodied spectator. This aligns Gunning’s work (as well as

149Ibid, 19.
150Ibid, 31-32.
152Benjamin, The Arcades Project, 420-421.
Bruno’s) with a scopic regime characterised by Jay as “baroque.”  

“Soft focus, multiple and open,” Jay describes the Baroque as a mode of visuality that invites the spectator to engage in a carnal manner, as “the Body returns to dethrone the disinterested gaze of the disincarnated Cartesian spectator.” In his work on early cinema and landscape, Gunning asserts that too often screen theory assumes an easy transfer of philosophy between the art-historical perspective of landscape and the cinematic landscape. Although Gunning does not actively reject the window-as-a-frame metaphor, he does however raise the point that cinema is a radically different medium. Indeed, it is a medium that is both informed by the artistic conception of the landscape, and one that has transformed the possibilities of how a landscape is represented. Moreover, he argues that cinema "simultaneously maintains the frame ... and ruptures it." Gunning partially attributes this quality to off-screen space, the spectators that the cinema continues outside of the “window” frame they are shown. Yet there is more to the materiality of simulated cinematic landscapes than the assertion by the film that something else of its world exists outside the spectator’s view. While this provides the fictional world that the film articulates with a sense of boundlessness (or rather “openness” as per Braudy’s definition), it does not fundamentally account for an overarching understanding of how the spectator experiences cinematic space and turns it into psychogeography. Or rather, it cannot account for this, as it does not fully account for continuity editing.

The dominant aesthetic at work in most cinema does not move the camera through a set, but instead lets the actors move through it, and makes its characters the engine of motion in a scene. This is a reality curiously overlooked in Bruno, Pallasmaa and Vidler, all of whom often refer to camera movement as though it were the sole process in constructing a psychogeography. Although Bachelard did claim that psychogeography could be a form of travel, it is a rare book...
that takes its reader through an exhaustive tour of a space through a singular perspective.

Thus far, and largely due to the apparent connection between modernity, mobility and architecture, it has been argued that camera movement through space is a vital element for the audience’s reception of said space. This positions the audience as one whose experience is held at a level of intellectual detachment from what they are watching. Even in an analysis of how certain positions of spectatorship are elicited, Bruno primarily considers the individual audience member as being positioned towards certain viewing paradigms. The generalisation of the spectator’s position is an issue that may stem from Bruno’s theoretical background in Erwin Panofsky’s work. The characterisation of a spectator who is moved, rather than moves themselves is reflected in Bruno’s and Juhani Pallasmaa’s phrasing (both often use metaphors such as “the audience is transported to”). They also continue in the tradition of Panofsky and neo-formalists like David Bordwell in their focus overwhelmingly on the way that meaning is “transmitted” to the audience. They are by no means the only theorists who consider the film-viewing experience to be a submissive one, wherein the nature of the cinematic experience heavily dictates an audience response. Other notable theorists who argue this line of reasoning are Laura Mulvey, Kaja Silverman, Mary Ann Doane and Robert Stam. Indeed, this is a problem which also plagues the literature on cinematic landscapes, as seen in the field’s reliance on psychoanalytic gaze theory, or in its insistence on referring back to “landscape” as a representational practice founded on windows, frames and other technologies of vision which fundamentally separate the spectator from the “view”. Even works which emphasise camera movement do so through the enforced teleology that cinema arose from the “tour” ride. Works which attempt to diplomatically include the spectator as an affected body within the viewing of cinematic landscapes, such as Rabinowitz’ work on Moving Tours, do so in a manner that pushes

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158 I refer here specifically to her consideration of Craig’s Wife within Atlas of Emotion, 89–90.
159 Robert Stam. Reflexivity in Film and Literature: from Don Quixote to Jean-Luc Godard. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992)
the spectator into a generalised population. Furthermore, Dimendberg only considers a film space to have been explored if the camera physically explores it, as in moving through a city street.\footnote{Dimendberg, Film Noir, 173.} This position clearly asserts that the spectator’s experience of space is one wherein the camera acts as a mechanical avatar of the eye. Throughout the discourse on cinematic landscapes that spatialised the spectator, there is a palpable tension in the navigation of the virtuality of the space.

Eisenstein, Heath, Dimendberg, Vidler and Lefebvre similarly all engage with certain forms of Cartesian dualism, wherein the cinematic landscape is articulated \textit{for the eyes of the spectator, through} the eyes of the camera. Such a position subtly creates a subject/object dialectic that none of the theorists mentioned call into question. Although this certainly reflects the general historical context, as per Crary’s genealogy, it has necessarily meant that many of the foundational ideas of film theory disregard the felt experience of film and cinematic spaces. In each cinematic account of landscape, the author positions the spectator outside the screen. Yet the work of Gunning, Bruno, Rabinowitz and Friedberg problematise this distinction, as they reveal that the \textit{feeling} of spatial exploration can be a key pleasure of the spectator. Friedberg outlines the flaws in the current scholarship on cinematic spaces as they consider film to be a fundamentally immaterial object. The lived experience of the spectator is withdrawn in favour of the deconstruction of representational idioms.\footnote{Friedberg, The Virtual Window, 150.} Indeed, the sensation of illusory travel is one of the foundations of early cinema’s growing popularity. Yet each of these authors grapples with film’s virtual nature. Each account relies heavily on metaphors of paintings and windows. Even accounts that allow for exploration as in Gunning and Bruno still rely on a metaphor of the transportation windows. However, it should be noted that a window implies distance and separation. Alberti’s definition, after all, is one which hinges on an imaginary pane of glass between the viewer and the painting. In Gunning’s words, "a true landscape, it would seem,
maintains a certain distance from the viewer, an invisible barrier into actual penetration.”

Even the earliest films, as per Gunning’s account, violate this rule. For example, the early cameras were mounted directly onto railroad tracks, and actually moved into the space. The spectator’s desire to enter into the landscape is reflected in the history of cinema viewing itself, be it through the immersion into a panoramic view, a "moving tour" or the more modern ghost ride.

Thus there is a disconnect even within studies of cinematic space that include a spatialised spectator due to the field’s insistent invocation of a form of separatory device. The divide between the material spectator and the immaterial landscape is repeatedly asserted, yet there is no necessary reason that a study of cinematic space must necessarily continue in this vein. A potential reason why the cinema possesses the capacity to collide illusion with material sensation, with actual and virtual, can be found in a phenomenological approach to understanding the spectator. In order to demonstrate the importance of a conception of the spectator that is both spatialised (as in Gunning, Friedberg, Rabinowitz and Dimendberg) and embodied, I have reserved a consideration of phenomenological and affect theory for the fifth chapter of this dissertation. However, there are key elements of affect theory that cannot be ignored in the discourse on a spatialised and embodied spectator, because they underline why the concern about the virtuality of cinema is less important than each of these theorists consider it to be. In Parables of the Virtual, Massumi combines the philosophy of Bergson and Merleau-Ponty with relevant psychological studies in an attempt to better understand the passing of intensity between subjects. What he reveals is that Merleau-Ponty's ideology that perception is an act of creation (building on the implications of saying that perception is a nascent logos) is largely supported by our current understanding of brain physiology and processing.

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163 Ibid, 37.
164 Massumi, Parables for the virtual, 87.
165 Ibid, 90.
Moreover, his edict that “intensity is unassimilable” helps explain why representational images can inspire material sensation, as his assertion returns the discourse to Lefebvre’s argument that space is simply the intersection between our own body and everything external to it.\textsuperscript{166} Massumi’s argument builds upon the recent discovery that there is a small lapse in time between an event and our conscious perception of it, which he refers to as the “missing half-second”.\textsuperscript{167} This lost moment leads him towards a further consideration of unconscious phenomena, and our cultural mediation of these phenomena, a paradigm which cognitive film theory similarly works towards. These approaches also necessarily create a new conception of the spectator.

**Cognitive Film Theory**

While the importance of how a society or culture positions a spectator cannot be overstated, the desire to find teleological or revolutionary narratives in these positions, as in Crary and Friedberg’s work, runs the risk of historical reductionism. After all, while the apparatus may change, many of the fundamental elements of visual perception remain at the same point of development. Although culture responds immediately to technological revolutions, our physiological reality remains largely static. It is important then to find a theory of the spectator that is both flexible enough to accommodate altered technologies and means of cultural production, and grounded in the intractable realities of human perception.

I take my impetus to turn the study of the spectator towards the brain from the work of art historian John Onians. One of the earliest authors to try to incorporate neurological study with cultural criticism, he has written an extensive catalogue of “NeuroArtHistory”.\textsuperscript{168} His work outlines how philosophers such as Aristotle, Pliny and Baxandall addressed theories of mind

\textsuperscript{166}Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 88; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 184.
\textsuperscript{167}Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, 28.
\textsuperscript{168}Onians, *NeuroArtHistory*, 8.
while considering art and culture. Through exhaustive comparisons between objects of representation and psychology, he concluded that art mirrors both consciousness and/or phenomenological experience. These parallels, he affirms, cannot be ignored. Barbara Maria Stafford similarly brings recent findings on neurology into an art historical context, although her work resides within the realms of cultural theory as opposed to phenomenological philosophy. In *Echo Objects*, Stafford calls for a reciprocally influential relationship between cultural scholars and scientists, given the clear analogical connection between art and consciousness.

Film theory (and in particular the consideration of the spectator) has a history of considering how the mind perceives film. In 1916, theorist Hugo Münsterberg began to sketch out the intersection between consciousness and film spectatorship. In his seminal work *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study*, Münsterberg argues that effective film techniques would mimic the internal processes of consciousness, stemming from perceived common ground between the close-up shot and directional attention. Drawing from his background in psychology, he illustrated that many cinematic conventions are comprehensible in their reception because the cinema does artificially what consciousness does naturally. Münsterberg was the first theorist to suggest that film conventions were evolving not from aesthetics, but from mimicking cognition. Drawing parallels between the close-up and focused attention, he contends that films were essentially inscribing the experience of consciousness, while still inviting the audience to construct their own understanding of what was presented to them. In essence, he argues that an effective film would be equal parts “objective perception and subjective

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170 Ibid, 8.
172 Münsterberg, *The Photoplay*, 78.
173 Ibid, 49-56.
174 Ibid, 78.
investment in the perception."\textsuperscript{175}

Perhaps the most prescient aspect of this idea is that each experience the audience feels in response to a film must have some referent on the screen. For example, Münsterberg considers how attention is elicited form the viewer through the use of close up. Or rather, due to the parallel between close up and focused attention, a film can attempt to overrule the processes of our executive self and forces us to pay attention to it.\textsuperscript{176} In this account, the audience is forced into seeing the perspective of the camera as if through their own eyes, in a mode similar to what Panofsky advocated. There are a number of aspects of Münsterberg's work that have gone on to influence (or at least be shared by) a great deal of film theory. Christian Metz and Jean-Louis Baudry considered the relationship between viewer and film in a similar way, though they moved the field of inquiry from psychology to psychoanalysis.\textsuperscript{177} Although psychoanalytic critique is perhaps the biggest and most influential movement within film theory, cognitive film theory has developed as a discrete school since Münsterberg.

Cognitive film theory, born out of a desire to move research away from both psychoanalysis and semiotics, explicitly links (and often attempts to explain) the phenomena of spectatorship through cognitive science. This can be seen in the works of Bordwell, Noël Carroll, Gregory Currie and Joseph Anderson. David Bordwell's seminal "A Case for Cognitivism" mirrors the edicts of Massumi and Stafford. However, as he was writing earlier than either of those authors, his work simply states that there are key elements of perception that are being ignored by film theory, and furthermore, that the study of cinema should narrow its focus to these elements.\textsuperscript{178} Bordwell's further works, as well as the work of Carroll, Currie, Anderson and others in the field

\textsuperscript{175}Münsterberg, The Photoplay, 78.
\textsuperscript{176}Ibid, 79.
\textsuperscript{177}Though Metz and Baudry are key philosophers in film theory, the psychoanalytic tradition is a problematic and disparate field, and consequently will not be addressed at length.
follow Bordwell’s suggestion, the majority of each of these authors’ bodies of work considers a single element of film and analyses it through a cognitive lens.\textsuperscript{179}

As Torben Grodal noted in \textit{Embodied Visions}, “Key aesthetic phenomena in our experience of film can be understood only in relation to the brain’s way of processing information from the screen.”\textsuperscript{180} This is a self-evident truth, considering the sheer difference between ordinary environmental perception and film spectatorship. His focus on the recent discovery of mirror neurons in the human brain has important implications for film theory.\textsuperscript{181} These neurons, thought to be crucial in learning, give human beings automatic simulations of observed actions. In his own words, the ease with which a viewer can interpret and comprehend a film is indicative of cinema relying on base, biological mechanisms. Indeed, the perception of motion that occurs between frames is one made possible by the “beta” movement perception mechanism.

The fundamental issue, of how to consider and theorise spectator response without making assumptions or generalisations about their experience, has not been solved by cognitive film theory. Rather, as argued by Roger Cook, cognitive film theory often suffers from this same flaw as other forms of spectatorship theory, but spends less time justifying its position.\textsuperscript{182} As Cook points out in his critique, cognitive film theorists often do not revise or alter their fundamental core beliefs, even as the scientific underpinning to these ideas shifts and changes. This is particularly visible in the wider conception of screen/spectator empathy. In Cook’s words: “to the extent that cognitivists incorporate mirroring mechanisms ... they tend to treat them merely


\textsuperscript{180}Torben Grodal \textit{Embodied Visions} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

\textsuperscript{181}Ibid, 22.

as add-ons to the same basic account of film spectatorship that has informed their critical practice since the mid-1980s."\(^{183}\)

Yet another key issue with cognitive film theory is its evident preference for Hollywood film. As Noel Carroll outlines in his paper “The Power of Movies”, cognitivist theorists tend to consider Hollywood conventions as those most responsive to the human mind’s evolved preferences.\(^{184}\) While Coppola’s films are certainly adjacent to contemporary trends within American Cinema, her canon is not within “Hollywood’s” scope.\(^{185}\) Cognitive film theorists are primarily interested in the manner in which observable trends within filmmaking can be explained through certain forms of scientific analysis (although, and it bears stressing once more, the school does not necessarily take on theories with equal models of objectivity and validity). Films that attempt to subvert or confuse convention, as Coppola’s work often does, do not sit neatly amongst the texts that are often considered within cognitive film theory.

### The Brain of the Embodied Spectator

As the mechanisms through which we view film become better understood, the way we consider the spectator’s relationship to the screen, and where they perceive themselves in relation to the landscape, needs to be adjusted. Film theory has begun to address the need to account for the phenomenology of the spectator’s experience as one which is embodied. What is needed to fully understand the spectator’s relationship to cinematic space (and therefore psychogeography) is an account of the spectator which is informed by these new developments.

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\(^{183}\)Cook, “Embodied Simulation”, 170.


\(^{185}\)Her work is far more clearly aligned within the collision of Hollywood and independent cinema (for a compelling analysis of the existing literature on theorising this collision as a genre in and of itself, see Claire Perkins, *American Smart Cinema* (Melbourne: Edinburgh University Press, 2012 1-12)).
My thoughts here run parallel to the work that Patricia Pisters outlines in her book *The Neuro Image*. There, Pisters takes a psycho-analytic and psychological view to Deleuzian film theory. Therein, she argues that modern cinema persists because it contains its own kind of subjective mind. As cinema “never stops tracing the circuits of the brain”, so too does it take on a brain-like quality. Like the movement-image and time-image before it, she argues that the major cinema of the 21st century is the neuro-image. This third category expresses and affects its own attendant psychology which is then transmitted to the audience. In a parallel line of logic to Christine Voss’s account of the surrogated body of the spectator within cinema, Pisters dictates that the spectator takes on the mentality of the film, and in so doing takes on the schizoid temporal logic of film. Drawing on the discovery of the mirror neuron system (which dictates that human beings minds mirror observations) and Deleuze’s thesis that within the momentary experience of the image, the image does not represent reality, but rather is a reality, Pisters argues that the neuro-image can communicate directly to the brain without conscious analysis. Once the spectator begins to watch a movie, their mind becomes devoted to following the implications and expectations set out before them. In their reception of the film, they constitute its temporal logic into being. If we are to follow Heath’s account of the sutured spaces of cinema, then it could just as easily be said that the spaces of cinema are similarly constituted within the mind. Consequently, the viewer should not be considered a subject who gazes upon a landscape, but rather a spectator who exists within the landscape.

Within the discourse on the spectator’s relationship to cinematic landscapes, the frame is

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186I’m hyphenating psychoanalysis to reflect the unusual approach that Pisters takes. Similar to Stafford’s model of analog interdisciplinary study, Pisters blends psychological research, psychoanalytic doctrine and critical theory from Deleuze and Bergson to form a new kind of filmic category: “the neuro image”: Pisters, *The Neuro Image*, 5-7.
187Ibid, 5.
188Ibid, 12-16.
189I refer here to Voss’s specific observation that within the intersubjective experience of cinema “necessarily features a temporal dimension that is at the very least double. Alongside the background perception of the presence of the empirical environment (which receives decreased attention), the surrogate body, by means of resonance, now also follows the fictitious temporal flow of the edited film narrative” in Christine Voss, “Film Experience and the Formation of Illusion: The Spectator as ‘Surrogate Body’ for the Cinema,” Cinema Journal 50 no. 4 (2011): 145.
190Pisters *The Neuro Image*, 128.
191Ibid, 112.
perceived as an impermeable boundary between subject and object. The psychogeographic understanding of space, the manner in which human beings write emotions and memories onto space in order to produce cultural meanings, is one which can only occur if their body is within space. This literature review outlines the shift that cinema studies has partially undertaken towards spatialised accounts, and offers some supportive psychological research, in order to open up a space within the discourse that characterises the spectator as an embodied agent who explores film space, and in so doing generates a psychogeographic impression of the landscape. Within the introduction, I have outlined six key emergent areas that must be considered in order to fully render an account of the spectator and cinematic psychogeography. This review underscores the need for a theory that studies in turn the role of the frame, the role of particular aesthetic articulations of space and the role of cinesthesia and embodiment within the spectator’s experience. However, most pressing of these concerns is the role of the frame, that separatory device so often invoked by authors attempting to manoeuvre around the virtuality of film space.
Chapter Three
Framing *The Bling Ring*:
(Im)material Psychogeography and New Technology

The spectator's understanding of cinematic space is one that relies on a complicated relationship to the film's potential materiality. Cinema's history is connected to its ability to provide the *illusion* of travel, from documentary series that brought exotic locations to urban environments to back-projected screens set outside stationary train cars.\(^{192}\) Yet the degree to which this illusion is understood as artifice by the spectator is a complicated question. Even without the elaborate ruse of stationary train carriages, watching a film can feel like being lifted out of the room, and transported into the world on screen, signalling a momentary collapse between the virtual and the material in the spectator's experience. While Deleuze (whose definition of the actual and the virtual aligns cinema as a virtual space generated by, and thus forever connected to, the actual)\(^{193}\) and Massumi (whose work emphasises Deleuze's connective principle between actual and virtual as part of a larger edict towards considering the connection between a spatialised body and its response to its environment). Many authors, notably Deleuze, Žižek, Massumi and Manovich, have considered aspects of the material/virtual collapse that cinema can create.\(^{194}\) However, the creation of new visual technologies and platforms through small screens and mobile phones marks the potential genesis of a new visuality, and an opportunity to consider the dialectic impact that cinematic landscapes have on each spectator's psychogeographic impression of material spaces.

This chapter examines the dialectic impact a film can have on the spectator's psychogeography, and its findings indicate that the spectator's experience is more complicated than “virtual”

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tourism. By considering how the spectator perceives the landscape behind the screen, this chapter reveals that the distinction between material and virtual psychogeography is less firm than has been suggested by landscape theorists such as Martin Lefevre. Taking Sofia Coppola’s *The Bling Ring* (2013) as a case study, this chapter outlines the permeation of the virtual and actual in contemporary Los Angeles (or, more specifically, Hollywood), a transfer aided by the psychological mechanisms pertaining to expectation and repetition, and from the intrusion of small screen and camera technology into everyday life.

In order to understand the roots of the spectator’s relationship with immaterial landscapes, I have outlined the role of repetition within two key texts that consider how space is produced: Michel de Certeau’s *Practice of Everyday Life* (which necessitates a closer look at the scholarly roots of this work in Pierre Bourdieu’s *Structure, Habitus and Practices*), and Lefebvre’s philosophy from *The Production of Space*. I then move my focus to a more detailed account of Friedberg’s *The Virtual Window*, as her work considers how the film’s frame is a key distinction between virtual and material. However, I contend that the importance of the frame has been compromised by the intrusion of mobile technology into everyday life. I draw support for this idea from Deleuze’s work on the power of repetition, and by engaging the limitations and quirks of the neuroanatomy (and the impact of such elements on the human experience). Thus with specific reference to the intrusion of small screen and small camera technology in the world of *The Bling Ring*, this chapter examines how the proliferation of screens has led to an enriched, framed and digital cartography of the material world. *The Bling Ring* thus both expresses Coppola’s psychogeographic impression while constituting further alteration of the collective psychogeography of Los Angeles. The frame is shown to be a lens of expectation that the spectator simultaneously carries with them, and thus presents its own collapse between material and immaterial landscapes.

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195 This dissertation leaves aside the (significant) Marxist considerations in Lefebvre’s work for the sake of clarity.
It is the spectator’s desire to enter the frame that indicates a larger truth about the separation between immaterial and material psychogeography: namely that the frame has already been breached. My argument is that the rupture has been caused by the dynamic, reflexive change that expectation has on perception, and vice versa. This is a position that I come to from two fronts, the psychological and the philosophical. By examining *The Bling Ring* and the modern western culture that contextualises it, it becomes clear that – due to the encroachment of mobile and small screen technology – the image of Hollywood has transformed the place. The divide between virtual and actual spatial experiences has been occluded to the point of indeterminacy. This chapter stands as a marker of a very specific moment that represents a shift in modes of visuality that in turn alters cinema’s tension between virtual and actual. Coppola’s film demonstrates that, for the youth who have grown up in the age of camera phones, the distinction between material and immaterial is quickly closing. As was outlined in the literature review, spaces are not just perceived, but *produced*. Part of what I hope to demonstrate in the following is that this “image” of the city becomes constitutive of that landscape, thus revealing a dialectical relationship between cinematic landscapes and the material world.

**Producing Spaces**

Spaces are necessarily always at a point *between* virtuality and actuality, although it is the virtual attributes they possess that makes them legible as a place. While they exist in the material world, the previous literature review also outlined that several authors have underscored the importance of the virtual attributes they hold. The production of space, as considered by Lefebvre, Debord and De Certeau, is what transforms an environment into a meaningful place for the subject.196 In each of their accounts, space can only become place through being experienced. Thus space always retains an important virtual element: the psychogeographic impressions it creates and produces.

In the literature on how spaces gain these virtual attributes and consequently are “produced”, repetition is a key thread. Lefebvre argues that “[space] is reproducible and it is the result of repetitive actions”.\footnote{Henri Lefebvre, \textit{The Production of Space}, 75.} Later in \textit{The Production of Space}, he goes on to consider the massive power that expectation has upon the individual subject’s perception (and thus phenomenological experience) of space.\footnote{Ibid, 209.} De Certeau similarly put forward that the overlap between individual’s experiences of space aid in the public definition.\footnote{De Certeau, \textit{Practice}, 115.}

Cinematic interpretations of real spaces present a parallel experience for the spectator. They dually display a space that is both mediated by the film’s intentions and also novel and thus free of the expectations that Lefebvre argue produce space.\footnote{Henri Lefebvre, \textit{The Production of Space}, 175.} As such, they could best be considered “leisure spaces” (by Lefebvre’s reasoning), an environment that holds potential for individuation within a larger cultural understanding of the landscape.\footnote{Ibid, 385.}

Often, a film set in a material space like Los Angeles is the initial point of contact for that spectator and the city. These first moments are crucial to the shape that psychogeography can take, as they are the times when the spectator’s vision is least mediated by their own experiences. Although the film itself will present a heavily shaded and fragmented impression of the city, the initial contact will always be the most “pure” for the spectator. While they may experience the setting with ideas about what a location is like, their primary experience of a space will always be the measure by which all future contact is held to. Cinema, as a point of virtual contact, will largely be the first experience many spectators have of certain places. In this sense, films are objects of mnemonic and psychogeographic power: their works are formative geographic mediations, shading the spectator’s experience and recollection. This has significant

\footnotesize{197Henri Lefebvre, \textit{The Production of Space}, 75.} \hfill \footnotesize{198Ibid, 209.} \hfill \footnotesize{199De Certeau, \textit{Practice}, 115.} \hfill \footnotesize{200Henri Lefebvre, \textit{The Production of Space}, 175.} \hfill \footnotesize{201Ibid, 385.}
impact on individual psychogeography because of the human predisposition for expectation, repetition and rhythm. Expectation and repetition are crucial, not only in this inquiry, but in all areas of the study of subjectivity. This is because, as demonstrated later in this chapter, the subjective human experience is powerfully sculpted by these elements. However, it serves the project at hand to momentarily consider the landscape behind the screen, and the spectator's relationship to it.

**Through the Looking Glass and into the Screen**

Although architectural theory is illuminating when applied to film, it must be admitted that only a small handful of authors were writing with such parallel aims in mind. However, through examining the spectatorial dynamic, several authors have begun to excavate the important similarities between architectural and film critique. Chief amongst this body of research is Friedberg's work in *The Virtual Window*, which is an examination of the spectator's historical relationship with windows, screens, frames, paintings, computers and the cinema. Although her text covers many spectatorial dynamics, the primary metaphor she sketches is an important, and illuminating one: the spectator, staring out into a landscape as though it were a painted scene.

As can be seen within the existing literature on cinematic landscapes, the vertical planes of window, painting, cinema screen and computer collapse into the same basic spectatorial relationship, the dominant axiom being that each grew from the one before. In the traditional view put forward by the architectural theorists that Friedberg considers, the glass window was

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204 Ibid, 47-49, 51.
both formative of and replaced by the painting. This was in turn replaced by the film and computer screen. In theory, the relationship between art object and spectator is one wherein the spectator stares blankly at an image or object. However, this line of reasoning flattens out the object the spectator beholds onto a two-dimensional plane. There is no sense, Friedberg argues, in the work of architectural theorists like Corbusier who align a window as another form of painting. Friedberg’s book stands out due to its execution and its conclusion: drawing on historical contexts, she brings the traditional figure of the spectator into crisis. Her text works against accounts of the spectator that rely on perspectivalism to align a metaphor between the appreciation of film and painting.205 This ontological relationship has been noticeable in a great deal of critical film theory, particularly in relation to the creation of “the gaze”.206 Psychoanalytic theorists who draw inspiration from Lacan have often stressed the distance between the viewer and the screen (as-a-mirror) in order to demonstrate the twin distance between subject and ideal-self.207

Friedberg’s work problematises this spectatorial relationship. Although she aligns herself as a historian rather than a philosopher, Friedberg puts this relationship into crisis by interrogating the teleology of spectatorial relationships and proposes a new model of spectatorship. She points out that such an account overlooks a key element: regardless of the framing device (Screen, Window or Painting), there must be something behind it. Friedberg writes, “The screen functions as an architectonic element opening the materiality of built space to virtual apertures in an architecture of spectatorship”.208 Even a screen, a flat plane, is a virtual window. These windows, even virtual ones, act as

An opening, an aperture for light and ventilation. It opens, it closes; it separates the spaces of here and there, inside and

205Friedberg, Virtual Window, 2.
208Friedberg, Virtual Window 150.
outside, in front of and behind. The window opens onto a three-
dimensional world beyond: it is a membrane where surface meets
depth, where transparency meets its barriers.

For Friedberg, the frame must be considered the crucial element of art: it is the organising principle that marshals the new waves of digital media and postmodern collage into an experience for the viewer. It is the frame that corrals the immaterial into a window, an opening to another world. However, this is not the limit of the frame’s importance. Friedberg’s work considers the ways in which visual media have changed the way that people see the world. In this sense, she examines a frame both literal and figurative: the frame which encapsulates art has become the frame through which the spectator sees the world.

The idea of the frame being an important — and virtual — rhetorical gesture enacted upon material space follows the ideas set out by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*. They argue that “The first architectural gesture is acted upon the earth: it is our grave or our foundation. A plane against a surface of variable curvature, the first frame is excavation.”

All architecture and all art, in this sense, is a kind of framing device, a collision between virtual and actual. For Deleuze and Guattari, all art derives from the impulse to organise the earth. The frame is crucial because it focuses our attention, focuses our sensory organs, but more importantly the frame is what delineates an art object from the rest of the world. The frame introduces the form of spectatorial visuality that places man’s intellectual experience above their embodied and spatialised response. Deleuze and Guattari go on to suggest that this indicates a human tendency to transform everything into a frame, as part of the impulse towards art. The assertion of a universal will to create art is undoubtedly extreme. However, that there is an impulse to frame is not so outrageous when considered in the light of

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209 Friedberg, *Virtual Window*, 1.
211 Ibid, 183.
212 Ibid, 65.
visual processing. The assertions made by Friedberg, Deleuze and Guattari have an important basis in the human body. The frame functions as an aperture, and we naturally seek such apertures out, because the frame serves as a physiological barrier that aids visual processing. If the will to art stems from a desire to organise the earth,\textsuperscript{213} and the frame is that which delineates “art” from the world around it, then the use of screens-as-frames and the uptake of camera technology point towards a new visuality. The use and multiplication in framing moments of the everyday indicates that the importance of creating a rhetorical barrier between virtual and actual is less important than it may once have been.

\textbf{The Rise of Frames in the Everyday}

In Friedberg's and in Deleuze and Guattari's work, the frame represents a barrier between the virtual and the actual. However, the strength of this barrier may be called into question, particularly in the age of Instagram. Susan Sontag’s work \textit{On Photography} points towards why the distinction between virtual and actual is problematized by photography and film. She outlines how photography represents a narrative of truth which obscures the image's mediation.\textsuperscript{214} The practice of creating a photograph of a landscape provides individual agents the capacity to shape the collective image. Further, Sontag argues that taking a photograph is always an intervention.\textsuperscript{215} We might indeed consider the emergent trend of photographing and documenting one’s everyday spatial experiences as an intervention on the collective impression of that particular world-image. Moreover, in line with Sontag's edict that the photographic image is always mediated through a perspective, the practice of photographing a space is always

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{213} Gilles Deleuze, \textit{Difference and Repetition}, (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1994) 92.
\item \textsuperscript{215} Ibid, 86. Sontag's argument is far more polemical than academic, however it is interesting to contrast her assertions with real world trends, in particular those outlined in Nadav Hochma, and Raz Schwartz’s paper "Visualizing Instagram: Tracing Cultural Visual Rhythms.” In \textit{Proceedings of the Workshop on Social Media Visualization in Conjunction with the Sixth International AAAI Conference On Weblogs And Social Media}, pp. 6-9. 2012. Therein, they demonstrate through visual analytics that images taken from specific cities are consistently edited to fit into a specific colour palette that apparently represents said city. This perhaps points towards the impact of a collective psychogeographic impression linked to colour and thus affect on an individual's perception of a place, as their own “unique” Instagram representation of a space is clearly being altered by collective Instagram trends.
\end{itemize}
an expression of one's psychogeographic understanding of that space.\textsuperscript{216} It is now overwhelmingly common for each subject to carry a tool that frames their everyday lives (as is the case in Instagram) and thus the spectator experiences the collision of mediation and reality, of virtual and actual, which was once only available to the professional photographer. Thus the role of the frame as a separatory device must become unstable. In platforms like Instagram, people take a material space and frame it, usually while inserting themselves into the image. The “selfie” is, in this sense, about letting the spectator enter the frame, by concurrently breaking it down and then reconstructing it with the spectator behind it.

A quick scan of online personal essays and opinion pieces reveals an underlying hum of anxiety over this perceived collapse of the immaterial image and the material world.\textsuperscript{217} While much of the academic work on contemporary, everyday self-portraiture focuses on its role as an overlapping assemblage of cultural meanings and identity work, there is little discussion of the role of the frame.\textsuperscript{218} In addition to the “selfie” being a mode of self-representation, it can also be seen as an everyday method of turning one’s life into images, and vice versa. Applications such as Instagram and other social networking platforms are a chance for people to recreate the frame. Or rather, it empowers the individual agent as a form of active creation of the collective image.

Mobile screen technologies have both broken the frame and endeavour to reaffirm it. Like the will to art that Deleuze and Guattari outline, the cameras we carry as part of our everyday

\textsuperscript{214}Ibid, 24.


experience respond to and reflect a desire to reframe the world. They allow us to reconstruct and reorganise the landscape's artistic interpretation to better reflect our psychogeography. While de Certeau's populace defined their spaces by their own individual experiences and expectations, mobile technology now allows us to create artefacts and evidence for each person's own psychogeographic impression. In the modern age, each agent's journey is not just experienced, but recorded via GPS tracking in mobile phones and the mapping applications that they use to navigate the city. Their lived geographic encounters are then uploaded in the form of photos, Facebook's "check-in" function and the social media platform Foursquare, amongst myriad other methods.

The intrusion of small screens and cameras into everyday life represent an emergent visuality. In *Mobile Screens: The Visual Regime of Navigation*, Nanna Verhoff argues that the combination of an increased emphasis on visuality, spatiality and mobility engendered by technological revolution, has fundamentally altered the way in which we perceive the world by altering how we interact with it. While Verhoff draws specifically from the historical connections between our current scopic regime and those from different eras, her conclusion is an interesting juxtaposition when considered against Deleuze and Guattari's work. Perhaps the rise of platforms such as Instagram, where an individual agent's journey is documented through a series of edited photographs (images which are often geo-located within the platform), speak to this particular cultural shift towards framing our everyday lives into representations that are inextricably linked to locations and thus to psychogeography. To go one step further, they perhaps affirm Sontag's argument that the photograph levels all events to the same status. The control of a collective image of a space is now more in the hands of the populace than even de Certeau could have predicted. However, in line with de Certeau's arguments, it is imperative to consider how habitual or repeated behaviour might impact upon the framed space's

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219 At present, there is little work on Instagram's impact on spatiality and geography. However, I would refer interested readers to the work of Nadav Hochman, and Lev Manovich's "Zooming Into An Instagram City: Reading The Local Through Social Media" in *First Monday* 18:7 (2013) for an account of how Instagram can be used to quantify spatial experiences.

220 Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, 121
psychogeography.

**The Power of Repetition and Expectation**

Window frames, in any form, introduce the spectator to a landscape. In the case of immaterial landscapes, they are the initial contact between the spectator and this illusory place. For the spectator, the frame delineates material space and film space. While material space is unbound and unspooling, film space is limited to the narrow view of the camera lens. If the landscape of the film is also a material landscape, then the separation between cinema and spectatorial experience is thrown into question. The cause of this collapse is the collision between expectation, repetition and reality. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze argues that repetition was a unique time-image,\(^{221}\) in the sense that it escapes his concept of “true” time being one experienced within a lived flow and difficult to extricate fragment.\(^ {222}\) Repetition has this capacity, he contends, because it created an expectation for the future.\(^ {223}\) “Repetition changes nothing in the object repeated” he writes “but does change something in the mind which contemplates it”.\(^ {224}\) The filmic landscape’s capacity to alter our lived materiality reveals that this expectation for repetition stays with the spectator long after the aesthetic experience is over.

It is through the combined philosophy of De Certeau, Friedberg and Deleuze that we can begin to understand the impact of film on psychogeography. The cinema screen, according to Friedberg, is an open window. Although the “light and air” it lets in are immaterial fragments, they still permeate into the spectator’s experience, and thus touch their subjectivity.\(^ {225}\) Cinema’s shafts of light curl into the spectator’s mind, creating an instant representation of the immaterial landscape. As a primary contact point between people and place, this filmic experience indelibly informs the behaviour of all non-native explorers. Once the spectator

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\(^{221}\)Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 76.

\(^{222}\)Ibid, 90.

\(^{223}\)Ibid, 77, 91.

\(^{224}\)Ibid, 70

\(^{225}\)Friedberg, *Virtual Window*, 150.
makes contact with a filmic landscape, this is a lens through which they compare all material space. To put it into Deleuzian terms, each future encounter with the space will essentially collapse back to the first (in this instance filmic) encounter, which will become the yardstick that the space is measured by.\textsuperscript{226} The filmed space, if it is the first time the spectator encounters that space, becomes a psychogeographic image. Filmic landscapes and landscapes that have been filmed coalesce to become a synthesised, rhizomatic abstraction for the spectator. Each touches and permeates the other, creating an altered sense of place that invades both our real-world and cinematic impressions of place. However, the question still stands: why would the spectator hang onto the filmic representation? Why would expectation have the impact that I imply it does?

In \textit{Difference and Repetition}, Deleuze highlights the a-temporal nature of repetition. In his philosophy of difference, repetition and difference are used as ways to parse the changes in appearance that would otherwise be lost to time.\textsuperscript{227} He argues that the human understanding of temporality is one made in passive synthesis between past recollection and the present event.\textsuperscript{228} Repetition has no true impact, Deleuze states, but does have a direct effect on the subjective expectation of time. This inexorable alteration to our expectations fundamentally changes the perceived passage of time forming a new temporality. “This is not carried out by the mind, but occurs in the mind”, Deleuze states.\textsuperscript{229} This line of reasoning has experienced parallel development within psychological research. Consequently, it is perhaps pertinent to consider how the structures of our minds might alter or impact on our experience of repetition, and of the frame.

\textbf{The Psychology of Repetition}

\textsuperscript{226}Deleuze, \textit{Difference and Repetition}, 295.
\textsuperscript{227}Ibid, 70.
\textsuperscript{228}Ibid, 70.
\textsuperscript{229}Ibid, 71.
From a psychological perspective, we cannot overestimate the importance of initial sight. The first sensory contact between person and place is crucial in setting expectations, learned behaviour patterns, affect and atmosphere. This is due to the nature of learning and a phenomenon called priming. From a neurological perspective, learning is the forging of new links between neurons in an effort to create a chain or circuit. Each link is generated by an action potential, a brief reversal of the electric polarisation in the membrane of a presynaptic neuron. The action potential triggers the release of neurotransmitter chemicals, each of which has different effects and works as a signal to the neighbouring neuron. In plain English: a spark at one end of the neuron causes a channel to form between that neuron and another. Chemical signals cross this channel, constituting the exchange of basic information. An action potential is thought to be a single “bit” of information, like a single note played by a single violin amongst the maelstrom of an orchestra. If a neuron’s action potential is used for the same effect, it can often form into a long-term potential. This is a more inviolable bond, a kind of hard-wiring in the brain. The brain creates these structures in an effort to save time and energy.

The difference between action-potential thinking and long-term-potential thinking can be easily felt, one is always aware of the difference between an activity they are learning and one they “instinctively” know. This solidification of neural circuitry is known as priming. Once a concept is substantiated into a long-term potential chain, it requires fewer neurons to perceive and/or experience it. Our brains have a demonstrated tendency to repeat experiences, behaviours and feelings based on prior cognitive events. For the sake of efficiency, our minds endeavour to refer the lived moment back to already learned information. This facet of the mind partially explains exactly why images are so powerful. Once an image takes hold in the brain, we are designed to replicate it.

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231Ibid, 118.
232Ibid, 120.
234One of the guiding methodologies to my research is the consideration of the brain’s mechanisms, and as such I have endeavoured to leave out many compelling findings from cognitive psychology. However, it is perhaps interesting to note that film-derived
The first brush between subject and landscape, even if it occurs in a purely visual, illusory capacity, is an important one. After this contact, the spectator's mind is thirsty for repetition of the stimulus. For the sake of efficiency, our minds attempt to collapse every experience down to our expectation of the experience. We are quite literally primed to see things the same way we first saw them, due to the design that allows us to learn. This quirk of evolution has a number of slightly odd follow-on effects, such as confirmation bias and change blindness. Confirmation bias "connotes the seeking or interpreting of evidence in ways that are partial to existing beliefs, expectations, or a hypothesis in hand". It is a borderline universal phenomenon that manifests itself in a tendency to round-down one's perceptions to match their expectations. Change blindness is another example of this tendency, thought to be caused by a top-down cognition disrupting visual perception.

In the experience of change blindness, a person loses the ability to perceive quite dramatic changes in the visual field due to their pre-existing expectations of how their environment would appear. In both filmic and naturalistic material settings, experimental participants have missed major changes in the environment. Change blindness is, at its core, an unconscious confusion between the virtual construct of the world and the world itself. This indicates that not only is it possible that the mind can give primacy to a virtual world like a motion picture's, but that the spectator would not be entirely aware that that is what is happening. These tendencies led psychological researcher and philosopher Thomas Metzinger to conclude that in all likelihood, expectation constitutes a vast majority of our perceptions, with sensory data priming appears to have a significant impact on one's affective recollection of spaces, depending on whether the location is shot in close-up or at a distance. For interested readers, I refer to Lawrence E. Williams and John A. Bargh's study "Keeping One's distance the Influence of Spatial Distance Cues on Affect and Evaluation." Psychological Science 19:3 (2008): 302-308. 236Raymond S. Nickerson, "Confirmation Bias: A Ubiquitous Phenomenon in Many Guises." Review of General Psychology 2:2 (1998): 175.


238For example, one experiment found that the spectator did not detect when an actor in a film was unexpectedly changed mid-conversion, see Daniel Simmons, and Daniel Levin. "Failure to Detect Changes To Attended Objects In Motion Pictures" Psychonomic Bulletin and Review 4 (1997), 501–506. Rather than this being an anomaly born of cinematic conventions, the effect was reported to a greater degree when the participant's conversation partner was swapped in reality; see Daniel Levin et al. "Memory for Centrally Attended Changing Objects in an Incidental Real-World Change Detection Paradigm" British Journal of Psychology 93 (2002), 289–302.
providing the remainder. Expectation becomes key, in both material and immaterial worlds. For this reason, the initial contact a spectator has with a space can constitute the frame through which they will forever see the geography. Because of the brain's tendency towards efficiency, this passive synthesis of temporal events constitutes not only our expectations but our experiences. Events like change blindness occur because our synthesised temporality dictates that they will. These expectations of pattern and rhythm are their own frame: a prism through which we bend reality.

In a consideration of what might shape and impact a spectator's experience of space, the power of repetition cannot be ignored. Repetition carves invisible expectations onto our perceptions, much as the immaterial attributes of space carve material effects onto the spectator's experience of an environment. While the authors who subscribe to a form of visuality that renders the framed landscape as one outside from our embodied experience, any space necessarily is impacted upon by the virtual elements ascribed to it by a frame. A framed landscape helps define that landscape's psychogeographic experience. The Bling Ring, which represents neighbourhoods in Los Angeles, is a key example of this. Although a relatively new film, The Bling Ring has been mentioned online as a film that defines (or redefines) Los Angeles. The film announces its title over a shot of the city's night lights. While making a bold visual impact, it also aligns the film as being explicitly about (and subsequently constitutive of) Los Angeles. By taking Los Angeles as its setting the text becomes a dynamic example of the impact of changed expectations. Los Angeles is, after all, just another coastal city. Its glamour, its character, the idea that it is remarkable at all, is pure psychogeographic construction.

Beverly Hills Caught on Film: Framing The Bling Ring

As Coppola reminds us through intertitles, the film is based on real events and real locations. The “ring” was a group of high school students who performed a series of burglaries on celebrities. This crime spree caught the 2008 American media’s attention and catapulted each of the real life criminals into the spotlight. The main characters are all based on actual people, each of whom took great care to document their lives online prior to their involvement in the robberies. In fact, one of the real-life members of the ring, Alexis Neiers, was part of a reality television show at the time the crimes occurred.\(^{241}\) True to the realities of being a teenager in the twenty-first century, the film catalogues the youth’s obsessions with taking photographs of themselves and updating their Facebook profiles. All of the houses in *The Bling Ring* function as a metaphor for the permeable frame. Belonging to celebrities born “of the screen”, entry to these spaces represents a way to enter the frame and into the cinematic world. For the teenage members of the ring, simple ingress into these houses (even an illicit one) presents a way to further pierce the veil between the screen-world and the material world. This practice is furthered by the characters’ tendency to self-paparazzi and self-promote online. By these means they transform themselves into celebrities, and thus break the frame both legitimately and illegitimately.

*The Bling Ring* is a film that toys with the interplay between expectations and reality. Depicting actual events and filmed in the houses where said events occurred,\(^{242}\) it truly problematises the separation between actual and immaterial landscapes. It also shows how the experience of a space becomes the frame in which our psychogeographic impression is constructed. The film sets up a visual call-back to another film about problematising Hollywood the suburb: David Lynch’s *Mulholland Drive* (2001). As the two leaders of the ring, Rebecca and Mark, drive in another stolen car, the headlights cut out a swathe of the famous Drive in shots almost identical to the opening title in Lynch’s film. It is a visual mirror that, for those who have seen *Mulholland*


Drive, cannot be denied. Although there are differences in the two images, any spectator who has already seen Lynch’s film has neurons primed and ready for recursion. Even the soundtrack, which is dominated by popular music, switches to a score that sounds similar to the opening xylophones and strings in Mulholland Drive. This mirror of earlier film aesthetics dramatizes the importance of the first contact. It also aligns Coppola’s film as one which will similarly examine Los Angeles as a place.

The Bling Ring uses repetition for a number of different ends: to position the film politically within a pop culture and Coppola’s own work, to create reverberation between thematic elements, and to underline the impact that images have on the character’s expectation of how the world should be. The political usage of repetition occurs within the first act, as a reflexive indication that the film is self-aware. In the opening scene, four teenagers break into an excessively opulent house literally stuffed with diamonds, satin shoes and fur coats. This sequence serves as an altered repetition of one of Coppola’s most famous montages, the “Candy” sequence in Marie Antoinette (2006).
Figure 1.1 *A side-by-side comparison of the two montage sequences.* Marie Antoinette *is on the left, The Bling Ring is on the right.*

The visual elements are distinctly similar, though modern and darker in *The Bling Ring*. This serves to set the spectator's expectations for the film's aesthetic: Los Angeles as a modern Versailles. The film's reverberation with Coppola's other works is further explored in the shots of Mark walking into his first day at a new high school. Although the clothes are modern, the colour palette and *mise-en-scène* are unmistakably similar to scenes in *The Virgin Suicides*. Rather than this being a comment that high school is eternally alienating, the echoes of Coppola's first film seem to be about underscoring the *difference* between the two. The similarity invites comparison, with the narrative differences between the two revealing the underlying moral of *The Bling Ring*. If *The Virgin Suicides* was about escaping the end of innocence through death, then *The Bling Ring* is about the death of innocence from a modern cultural toxin. In considering the thoroughly *modern* and real crimes of the ring, Coppola's film explores a social toxin that she positions as stemming from the digital dissemination of images. For example, her stance can be seen explicitly in the juxtaposition between a rapidly paced montage of paparazzi images; which
then cuts to the teenagers searching for celebrity’s addresses on the internet to find their next target. These two moments create a subtle causal dialectic that Coppola pursues throughout the film.

The phenomenon of repetition and replication of images is a major theme in *The Bling Ring*. The members of the ring are both inundated with images, and obsessed with them. In the scene prior to their first major robbery there is a brief montage of photos of celebrities, perhaps meant to signify their internet browsing habits. The short moment communicates the inundation of images that modern young adults are exposed to. These images are also pasted all over the bedroom walls of the main characters. Two members of the ring, Rebecca and Mark, bond over magazine browsing. They comment on the photos of their future victims, speaking about their sartorial choices as though discussing friends, not strangers. Coppola makes it clear within the first act of the film that these teens have seemingly been brainwashed by the bombardment of photos of celebrity life. Living so close to these actors, and being so visually familiar with them, leads the teens to mistake the immaterial *image* of celebrity life as a material and achievable reality. In one scene, the ring sits on the beach, discussing their future plans. One member states that she intends to become a fashion designer with “her own personal fragrance line”, saying that she wants to go to the New York School of Design because “all the girls from *The Hills* went there”.

The images of Hollywood have inexorably poisoned the minds of the ring’s members. Part of what distinguishes *The Bling Ring* from *Marie Antoinette* is that it juxtaposes Beverly Hills opulence with the grey washed suburban reality of nearby Calabasas, where the teenagers live. At the beginning of the film, it is made clear that the group feels short-changed by having to live in such a "glamorous" place in decidedly pedestrian conditions. This is emphasised in the film by the use of colour grading. In the scenes taking place in Hollywood, Coppola uses a higher contrast and more dynamic palette so that the coloured areas of the image “pop” against rich
blacks. Calabasas is depicted with a far lower level of contrast and without the extreme dark areas of Hollywood, leaving the image feeling grey and dull. The ring's expectations are inextricably tied to Hollywood and its image: they walk along Hollywood Boulevard, so they should be stars. Through the repetition of certain images (in which the film shows the teens immersed in phones and the internet), they have been primed for a specific experience of the Los Angeles landscape, one of celebrity and glamour. Throughout the course of the film, they begin to repeat these images: being photographed in popular nightclubs, wearing designer clothes, driving convertible cars with the top down on Sunset Boulevard. It does not seem overly important to the group that their actions are illicit. Instead, the replication of these images is of primary importance. By recreating the imagistic impression of celebrity, it seems they find a cure to teenage malaise. When the group rob Lindsay Lohan's house, there is a long, slow-motion shot of the ring's leader, Rebecca, putting on Lohan's perfume. The shot ends on Rebecca staring into a mirror, perhaps finally feeling that, creating a frame-within-a-frame through Lohan's vanity dresser, she has become the image she aspired to.

The film plays with the repetition of images to further emphasise their role on the group's intrusion into Los Angeles' image. It actually repeats itself at several points, creating its own expectations. Within a Deleuzian paradigm, these moments can be seen as a-temporal moments within the film. The opening scene, which depicts one of the ring's robberies, actually occurs chronologically about halfway through the events of the narrative. This sequence, which blends the title cards into the crimes, is then followed by two clips which will be repeated later in the film. In one, Mark is being interviewed by a journalist about his involvement in the robberies. In another, Nikki gives her public statement to a horde of press, prettily outlined by the golden sunshine of Los Angeles. Early in the film, the main characters are driving down a street in Los Angeles, intoxicated and singing along to their car stereo. The scene, which fizzes with youthful jouissance, is suddenly interrupted when the group accidentally run a red light and end up in a
wrenching traffic accident. At first, it would seem that the scene holds little narrative purpose beyond underlining the irresponsibility of the characters. However, later in the film the scene is almost entirely repeated, sans one character. The two leads, Mark and Rebecca, speed down the same street, ingesting cocaine and singing along to Kanye West. The similarity of cinematic images trains the spectator to suddenly become tense. The repetition evokes for the spectator a momentary collapse between the sequence and the initial car accident. The past car wreck hangs like a spectre over the current scene. In the end, one watches the scene waiting for a disaster that never occurs. The tension that the spectator experiences is due purely to their expectations, which are forged by repetition.

Its opening is almost disorienting, throwing the viewer into clips of the ring members discussing their pursuits, moments which occur chronologically at the close of the picture. On first sight, these scenes seem to aim to contextualise the ensuing events. They portend that the ring will commit crimes, will become infamous, and will get caught. However, the spectator can only know that these clips are repeats on their second airing. It is important to note that the second plays are not exact copies, but clearly alternative takes of the same scenes. They become a kind of simulacra-in-miniature, their repetition highlighting the few differences that exist between them. The spectator primed by their learned expectation to anticipate that these two scenes will be identical. Because they are not, the changes become stark. On the second presentation, Mark’s interview is lengthened, as the journalist points out that he is now a celebrity in his own right. The mention that he has hundreds of Facebook friend requests further underscores this. Yet Mark and the reporter make a point of decrying how shallowly he is being viewed in the public eye. He is nothing more than an image, an abstraction that people would like to digitally observe. This is part of the film’s larger morality, one that rebukes the pursuit of images by pointing out their flatness. However, it also points towards the power that virtual images have over actual events.
The repetition of images in *The Bling Ring* shows us how compelling and influential the immaterial can be on the material landscape. The recursion of filmic image and people's expectation interlace in an individual's experience, inherently shaping their percept of the material space. For example, in one scene the leader Rebecca looks out of a car window, the steady beat of palm trees flowing by forming a visual pattern. As Deleuze sets out in *Difference and Repetition*, patterns, in the sense of landscapes, are rooted in the future: they create expectations for what is to come. Spectators of *The Bling Ring* who travel to Los Angeles will now expect not only palm trees, but palms that rhythmically line the streets of Beverly Hills. As each enters the sight of the spectator, the expectation for another intensifies. Each tree is its own part of a tempo. This is made explicit within the film, the fronds passing by create a rhythmic pattern of light and sound. If, as Friedberg argues, the windscreen is the frame through which the spectator places cinematically-derived expectation onto material places, then the palms of Beverly Hills stand as testament. They exemplify the collision of expectation and the actual, allowing a spectator to momentarily confuse cinema and reality.

Los Angeles is a perfect subject to analyse the impact of the frame and the screen on the landscape, which explains the significant prior research that takes it as a case study. In examining Los Angeles, Jean Louis Baudrillard described the place as one where "the cinema extends outwards into our urban reflexes". Friedberg has done considerable work on the impact that shifting economic conditions and television had on L.A.'s “Screen Culture”. She concluded that the dispersion of cinema's audience in post-war America and the subsequent influx of drive-ins, open air theatres and other technology reflects how Los Angeles opens itself as a permeable city, one which aims to puncture the divide between screen and reality. In her account of Los Angeles, Friedberg cites Baudrillard's statement that Los Angeles should not be understood as a city that moves in towards its cinematic representation, but one that began

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243 Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 70.
with its cinematic representation and then formed a city around it. The city’s reliance on automobiles is enlisted as testament to this, “The windscreen” she writes “is the permeable tension between the materiality of built space and the dematerialised imaginary that cinema provides”, Given that Los Angeles is the beating heart of the film industry, the distinction between the city and its filmic representation has always been more reflexive than that for other cities. In *Spaces of Modernity*, Edward Dimendberg considers the impact of film noir on the city’s self-conception, and how the screen depiction of Los Angeles has shaped the city. He outlines clear patterns of recursion, wherein representation on the screen carves a mark into the city itself. In essence, Los Angeles is a city made in its own image, one where the rupture of film and reality is at its peak. No city more than Los Angeles reveals the impact that the virtual can have on the actual. It is the locus of its own image, and the architect of its image’s own alterations. This theme is explored thoroughly in *The Bling Ring*, a film that sets out to consider the impact of the digital image.

This impact is played out to its fullest extent through the houses that the ring targets. These locations are not a representation of celebrity houses, they are in fact the material houses the actual ring burgled. The spectator never sees a kitchen, a coaster or any corner that does not look like a photo from a magazine. The daring behind *The Bling Ring* comes from its use of houses and settings that look staged, but are in fact authentic. The celebrity houses in the film are not just particularly glamorous homes, they are the actual houses of the people who are being robbed on screen. The mansion of Paris Hilton, for example, is both material reality and a scenography reconstituted into cinematic illusion. Ironically, no amount of “movie magic” can make it look like someone’s home. It is simply too outlandish, too decadent. In essence, it is overly fictional. Its presence on the screen is being used as authentication of the mythology of

246 Friedberg, “Urban Mobility and Cinematic Visuality” 186
249 As outlined in the introduction, authorial intent and Sofia Coppola make strange bedfellows. I draw this conclusion from the following interviews, in which she discusses wanting to explore the impact of technology: John Hiscock “Sofia Coppola interview: ‘The Bling Ring isn’t my world” *The Telegraph* July 4th, 2013; Ryan Gilbey “Sofia Coppola on The Bling Ring: ‘What these kids did really took ingenuity’” *The Guardian* July 5th 2013; Richard Prince “Sofia Coppola” *Interview* August 2013.
Paris Hilton’s celebrity. Its strip club atmosphere has been built with the specifications of Hilton’s personal story in mind. Echoing the framed press clippings on Hilton’s walls, and her pillows (each bearing a silkscreened image of her face), the house supports the fiction of Hilton’s sex-bomb persona. Furthermore, it illustrates exactly how Hilton achieved her level of celebrity. Hilton constructed frames around her image, and her most intimate moments, and fame, soon followed. Thus her home, where it is impossible to discern what is real and what is set-dressing, illuminates the extent of modern permeation. In its dual role as film set and domestic abode, the mansion exists liminally between reality and cinema.

The film plays with the confusion between virtual images and actual reality explicitly through the pseudo-religious education some of the ring’s members receive. Nikki’s mother home-schools two of the girls via “The Law of Attraction”. On screen, the teens are taught to manifest positive personalities and goals (two things they are sorely lacking) through the use of vision boards. These boards, popular with those who follow the teachings of “The Secret”, are literally about turning one’s life into images – and vice versa. Through the repeated exposure to the images on the board, exponents of The Secret believe their life will begin to resemble their dreams. Of course, vision boards are, when viewed through a psychological lens, a method of “hacking” the brain’s confirmation bias into rounding one’s perception of experiences into their desired perceptions, as has been noted by both psychologists and scientifically-minded journalists. In fact, the belief that an image of a bright future will manifest itself through such methods is suspected by social psychologists as a source of modern malaise. The ring’s belief in celebrity image perhaps stems from this education in images as talismans, as tools for

250 A school of thought that argues that people can manifest things they want by focusing their mental energy on them. Michael Losier, The Law of Attraction (London: Hachette, 2012).
251 The Secret is a self-help book that argues that visualisation and positivity will attract whatever someone desires into their life. Rhonda Byrne, The Secret (New York: Ataria, 2006).
building a better reality. The members of the ring are dissatisfied with the reality of their existence, and instead yearn for the images of Hollywood’s lifestyle. This desire leads them to materially enter the immaterial spaces they have seen framed and represented.

The permeation of spectator into screen, and immaterial into material, is marked by the group’s literal (and illicit) entry into mansions through huge framed-glass windows. The first house they rob is made almost entirely of just such doors and windows. It looks, for all intents and purposes, like a frame into Hollywood’s psychogeographic image. This architectural motif is repeated in another burglary, one that marks a turning point in the film. In a breathtaking real-time longshot, the home of Audrina Partridge (a reality TV star), sits like a jewel in the Hollywood hills, the camera observing it from a distance.

As the two leaders of the ring break in and begin searching for valuables, the house (which is cut through with huge, exhibitionistic windows) lights up and is revealed like a species of life-sized doll house. The camera zooms in slightly throughout the long take, although the physical distance between the audience and the thieves is maintained. This distance serves a figurative purpose, as it provides the spectator with an outside perspective of the events on screen. This is
a sucker-punch moment, when the criminality of the ring’s actions is finally and explicitly stated. As we watch them ransack the house, they are far enough from the camera that we cannot see their faces, nor hear their conversation. In short, they look like thieves. Previously, the burglaries were filmed intimately close to the group members, who browsed through other people’s wardrobes as though they were shopping at the mall. This enfolded the spectator directly into the action, as though they themselves were another member of the ring. More importantly, the teenagers’ attitude meant that the robberies didn’t feel criminal. Yet here, stripped of their adolescent naiveté, they are suddenly transformed into felons. The spectator, who may have sympathised with the ring, is shown them stripped of glamour and revealed to be the commonest of common thieves.

The mise-en-scène of the shot puts a wide band of darkness around the mansion, acting as a frame to the house’s windows. The camera slowly pushes in, yet always maintains a significant distance. The audience is strains to parse what they are looking at, to squint into the aperture of Partridge’s home, while the visual underscores its own metaphor for the screen. It is no coincidence that it is this particular robbery that marks the peak of the ring’s success. By entering the house, they are finally and thoroughly embroiled into the image of Hollywood. In accord with Friedberg’s intersecting relations of frame, window and screen, this tracking shot collapses all these relationships into a single puncture between virtual and actual. The glass doors into Partridge’s house act as windows and as frames that the audience sees the actors though. The house is a metaphor for the screen, and now the protagonists have finally, illicitly entered.

This scene marks a puncture within the narrative between virtual and actual by the multiplication of frames it creates. Almost immediately after this robbery the ring finds itself suddenly infamous and under investigation, as it is revealed that Partridge’s home is equipped with its own cameras, which have captured their visit through the frame. Images of Mark and
Rebecca’s robbery are seen from the perspective of security guards, and then from a meta-spectatorial shot as they play on television screens. Coppola multiplies the number of frames, and their medium in a manner that emphasises the puncture between virtual and actual. At several points, she creates montages of celebrity photographs, causing a distinct rupture between the movement of the film image and the stillness of the camera image. These sequences do not have a strong causal or temporal relationship to the story, but instead appear as context to the culture within Los Angeles. These montages are then juxtaposed with photographic montages of the characters themselves at similar nightspots to those the celebrities are depicted in, clearly marking the character’s entrance into the image of Hollywood.

By the third act, the ring has fully entered this image. This is most keenly felt in a bold slow motion shot of them walking on the Hollywood Boulevard, wearing designer clothes and drinking iced coffee. The costumes and props of celebrity, when combined with the slightly lowered camera angle, makes the shot almost indistinguishable (though more stylish) from a paparazzi set. It positions the group as finally becoming of the image themselves. Of course, the ring’s entrance into Hollywood also portends their doom. The police close in and begin arresting the teens.
The stylistic choices that Coppola makes after the Partridge robbery further underscore the collision of Hollywood-the-image and Hollywood-the-place for the group. Once the robbers have entered the frame, the film is quick to collapse the distance between them and their idols. In previous club scenes, the group seemed childish and out of place, obsessively photographing themselves as though they could not believe they were there. Trying, in their own way, to make their lived experience mirror the image of expectation. If we consider Sontag’s argument that photography is always a form of intervention, and that these images are naturally repetitious yet focused on reframing the characters within the image-world of Los Angeles, then these juxtaposed montages of still photographs act as a testament of the levelling quality of modern screen technology.

After the film’s final robbery, Coppola shoots their celebration of a successful heist in graceful slow motion, transforming their bodies into cinematic spectacle. The degree of difference
between Hollywood and the ring is further diminished by the introduction of an interesting parallel: Lindsay Lohan's arrest for shoplifting. Coppola aligns the real-world footage of news coverage of Lohan's theft with the ring's fictionalised footage. It is only after Lohan's arrest that the ring targets her home, signalling the final collapse between virtual and actual. The separation between the ring and Lohan is minimal, all are young, ambitious criminals. The group looks so at ease in the homes of celebrities (who, as it turns out, are thieves themselves), the puncture appears complete. The diegetic blurring of material and immaterial is mirrored by the film's interplay between fictional and nonfictional. Once Coppola begins using "real" news footage, the spectator is forcibly reminded of the reality of the plot. The interplay of fabrication and truth utterly abolishes the spectator's assurance that it is "just a movie", and thus further punctures the virtual/actual divide.

*The Bling Ring* also makes an important connection between the celebrity-worshipping cultures central to the teenager's interests and the intrusion of small screen technology into everyday life. *The Bling Ring* invites the spectator to read "selfies" as akin to self-paparazzi. This can be seen in the opening sequence of the film, which juxtaposes an onslaught of photos of celebrities with the ring member's Facebook pages. Indeed, the characters often go to clubs with the sole purpose of photographing themselves there. Their lives are lived for the photos they produce. In this way, at least, they are remarkably similar to the celebrities they idolise. In their own way, they are trying to portion off their lives via the frame of digital media. Moreover, the purpose of the robberies that the teens commit is explicitly stated to be about submerging into Hollywood's image. When they break and enter into a celebrity's house, their ultimate aim is to break into the Hollywood image-cycle they have observed. This desire is fully realised in the Hollywood Boulevard sequence mentioned above, where Coppola's adoption of a paparazzi-style aesthetic in turn lets the Hollywood screen consume *them*. This consumption is underscored by the ring's sudden appearance on gossip websites and E! access Hollywood interviews. The cycle of repetition, of virtual images replicating, and altering the material by this repetition, is complete.
Rather than this being a fictionalised overstatement, these habits of The Bling Ring's titular characters reflect the film's real inspiration. Ironically, although Paris Hilton left the keys to her home under her doormat, the robbers already had a key: using the screens of their computers and phones they tracked down her holiday plans, and her address. It should be noted that Coppola does not seem happy about this rupture. Coppola has said in the press around the movie that she fears the impact of technology and celebrity culture on modern youth. Much of the anxiety that Coppola expresses over screen technology may well be a fear for her Hollywood world's sovereignty. In the film, she explicitly positions herself as a part of the Hollywood image in the opening credit sequence. When her title card comes onscreen, it is playfully intruded upon by a diamond necklace with the words “Ritch Bitch” spelled out in pink.

While she may simply be poking fun at her own fame and image, the joke also places her squarely within the world that the ring aimed to infiltrate. This is not an illusory worry, but a real threat in Los Angeles. Moreover, it is one made material by screen technology. The Bling

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Ryan Gilbey “Sofia Coppola on The Bling Ring: ‘What these kids did really took ingenuity” The Guardian July 5th 2013
Ring demonises those who enter the film's landscape, although it is sympathetic to why one would want to. While Coppola and The Bling Ring may wish that one can never truly enter Hollywood’s image (as the narrative makes clear), with the rise of Facebook and Instagram, anyone can construct a screen around their lives. In essence, what I am arguing is that Coppola keenly feels the impact of Hollywood’s image on its psychogeography, a shift that makes her anxious. The impetus for the film’s morality is a very real concern for those who live in Hollywood. Hollywood is now an image that both sprawls out and draws in from the screen, caught in a self-reflexive cycle of change. The image, repeated, becomes the landscape, and in turn that landscape is filmed into an image. This cycle of repetition is not driven by the expectation of Los Angeles natives, but by the hordes of global spectators. Hollywood is, thanks to its own constant photographic self-capture, an open frame.

Conclusions: The Hollywood Image within Everyday Screens

The Bling Ring examines the effect of Hollywood’s image on Hollywood’s material psychogeography. An aspect of this influence that The Bling Ring grapples with is the specific impact of cellular phone technology on Hollywood’s image (and therefore, its psychogeography). It makes clear that the collision between the virtual and the real has only become more significant with the introduction of filmmaking technology into everyday life. We are now able to film and photograph our material spaces from mobile phones, heralding a new wave of framed fragmentation of the real. The frame is now everywhere, and everything is framed. I would contend that this has led to an uncontrolled, wild collapsing of material and virtual psychogeography, so that the two become essentially indistinguishable for the spectator. Coppola’s film demonstrates that, for the youth who have grown up in the age of camera-phones, the distinction between material and immaterial is quickly closing.
For the first time, the shift in our collective psychogeography (that has been cued by filmic geography) can be truly seen in the landscape. The social technology outlined above has sped up the collaborative, rhizomatic change in our perceptions. On both a neurological and philosophical level, repetition becomes expectation, which becomes perception. For this reason, the psychogeography of film is not just relevant, but crucial. Far more than it once did, digital landscapes are directly shaping our expectation of material landscapes. This, in turn, inexorably alters our perceptions of the space. The uncontrolled collision between material and virtual worlds that Coppola seems to fear supports the idea that filmic psychogeography alters material spaces in a tangible way. Films, by often being the point of initial contact between space and spectator, neurally prime the audience for a certain kind of psychogeographic experience. The use of modern mobile and small screen technology supports the creation and repetition of this experience. I would suggest that it is for this reason that the impact of psychogeography on our world is increasing, perhaps exponentially. Through the seemingly insouciant Instagram, virtual and actual landscapes have become connected in a recursive circuit. A film like *The Bling Ring* changes our expectation of the material, which alters our perceptions of said material, which alters our own personal transcription of the material back into the virtual. Which is to say, I am far more likely to Instagram rows of palm trees in Beverly Hills after having seen *The Bling Ring*. Perhaps this circuit will seem trivial to those looking for radical shifts in culture, architecture, film and psychology. What I hope to have demonstrated is that this small, frivolous loop is a symptom of such a shift. That filmic landscapes matter reveals the collapse of the virtual/actual divide, and shows us how truly pierced the screen is. If space can be produced by the people who experience it, then the psychogeography of film space has an impact on our perception of material space.

A shift is currently occurring in the relationship between spectators and screen, and in all likelihood the relationship will continue to change as technology dictates. Mobile technology has led to an exponential rise of consumption and spread of images, and of the spectator directly
relating the image to reality. This change is having a tangible effect on psychogeography, cinema, and the spectator's relationship to both. The new spectator frames their own life, often as a mode of replicating cinematic images. These images then go on to be recycled, redistributed, reframed, adapted and copied until they have sculpted the culture and geography that surrounds them. Films that are preoccupied with landscapes are being lent unintended post-hoc realism. The spectator now wishes to “go to the movies” in a real way: a trip to Los Angeles necessitates an Instagram of palm trees. The duplication of frames, and more importantly the loss of division between material and immaterial that the frame once meant indicates that the spectator is in (at the moment of perception) spatialised. This chapter has considered how the material and immaterial bleed into one another at the level of the spectator’s psychogeographic experience. However, I acknowledge that this does not necessarily put forward a convincing argument that film is in and of itself a psychogeographic experience. It is for this reason that the following chapter considers the psychological reception of film, so as to therefore understand the spectator’s misrecognition of the image as material landscape.

The reception of film space presents a permeation of immaterial elements into the spectator's material experience, one that has lasting impact on the spectator's understanding of space. Yet there is an inescapable facet of the spectator’s experience I have thus far left aside: that the spectator sits only in their seat. While this chapter demonstrates the permeation and impact that film landscapes have on a spectator’s psychogeographic impression of both the film's setting and the material world, I have not considered how the spectator becomes fully immersed in a spatialised experience. As I will go on to demonstrate, the manner in which Coppola spatialises her spectator’s experience is an esoteric approach that actively incites an emotional and embodied response in the viewer.
The “motion” of Motion Pictures is a common starting point for a consideration of cinematic landscapes and settings. Motion, in essence, creates space. As the camera moves, it reveals new areas and expands the landscape. The role of movement is also fundamental to Debord’s account of psychogeography, as it was through the “aimless strolls” of the street that Debord saw psychogeography emerge. The importance of moving through a space follows Debord’s account into Bruno’s use in *Atlas of Emotion*. She writes,

The fixed optical geometry that informed the cinematic voyeur becomes the moving vessel of the film voyageuse. Here, we actually travel with motion pictures...that offers tracking shots to traveling cultures.\(^{256}\)

This position further demarcates cinematic space (and the spectator’s mode of visuality) from representational painting or photography. Within her discussion of cinema, the moving camera is characterised as a form of vehicle, taking spectators to new sights that constitute a mode of haptic spatial exploration.\(^{257}\) Yet she also links architecture with Eisenstein’s theory of montage, writing that “the cinematic itinerary [is] analogous to the montage of architectural ensemble”.\(^{258}\) Connecting the architectural view that all space is fragmented by architecture with the inherent fragmentation of film editing, Bruno’s focus in *Atlas* is to explore encounters spatialised and made whole by the spectator’s experience of it. Her theory connects the urban

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\(^{255}\)Debord, “Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography”, 23.


\(^{257}\)Ibid, 6. It should be said that as Bruno’s consideration of psychogeography also relies on the mode of spectatorial visuality of haptic-optics taken from Riegl, the role of a moving camera within her overarching consideration of all media (including still images) is less focused on movement than her consideration of film specifically.

\(^{258}\)Ibid, 56.
flâneur with the cinematic spectator, arguing that the experience of cinematic landscapes is not taken in by a disembodied and rational eye, but rather that the experience of space is an inherently embodied and architectural practice. 259 Thus within Atlas of Emotion, cinematic space is never considered broken due to fragmentary moments within editing or camera work. Yet in spite of Bruno’s compelling connection between montage forms of spatial experience both architectural and cinematic, entire anthologies of work on the landscapes of film are devoted to a single cinematographic style: the touring camera behaving as a virtual conduit for the “tourist” spectator. 260 While the use of a moving or travelling camera undeniably creates a spatialised experience for the spectator, this position stands at odds with the locations of Coppola’s films. Within her canon, the camera rarely performs the kind of tracking shots that “create” cinematic space. The Virgin Suicides has a strong central location, yet rather than being “toured” the house is communicated in a series of montages that fragment the space entirely. However, the fragmentation of the setting does not concurrently fragment the audience’s feeling of the space. Given Bruno’s assertion that all architectural space is montage space, the spaces which Coppola builds out of montage are inherently psychogeographical. Yet this leaves several pertinent questions when considering the text. How then do these visual styles differ philosophically? Why does the visual fragmentation of a space not correspond with psychogeographic fragmentation? What is the effect that this latter, less investigated, aesthetic has on filmic psychogeography?

This chapter sets out to provide answers by exploring our current understanding of filmic landscapes through The Virgin Suicides. What is set forth does not aim to diminish or contradict current ideas of cinematic landscapes, but rather to expand this understanding into films that have previously gone unexamined in an attempt to more fully explore Bruno’s ideas.

260 I refer here specifically to Fred Truniger (ed) Cinematic Mapping: Documentary Film and the Visual Culture Of Landscape Architecture ed. (Berlin: Jovis 2013); Graham Harper & Jonathan Rayner (eds) Cinema and Landscape (Bristol: Intellect 2010). A particularly prescient example of this connection can be found in Tom Gunning’s contribution to the latter work. Gunning draws strong parallels between train travel and early cinema, and goes on to claim that this philosophical similarity has become a key element at the heart of film. “Landscape and the Fantasy Of Moving Pictures: Early Cinema’s Phantom Ride” in Cinema and Landscape, 38, 48-49.
Consequently, the major argument of the chapter is as follows: film spaces can be enunciated through visual styles apart from touring the camera through the landscape due to the nature of visual processing and cognition. However, the aesthetic that flows from alternative modes of visual communication positions the audience in a markedly different way. While the moving camera that others discuss creates a surrogate relationship between spectator and camera, this chapter will demonstrate how Coppola’s spatial aesthetic in *The Virgin Suicides* positions the viewer as a direct participant in the filmic experience. Coppola’s style, when viewed in the context of psychology, reveals new ways to consider the spatialised spectator. In analogising filmic techniques and cognitive visual processing, it has become clear that films hold the power to situate the viewer inside the frame because they mirror some of the experiential elements of consciousness. This chapter will demonstrate how this effect takes place within *The Virgin Suicides*, how this is used to suffuse the film’s setting with a nostalgic affect, and the implications this has for cinematic psychogeography as a whole.

Prior to a consideration of why movement is a key element in the discussion of a spatialised spectator, it is important to establish why Coppola’s spatial articulation in *The Virgin Suicides* is distinct from that of other filmmakers. The film, based on the 1993 novel by Geoffrey Eugenides, tells the story of five sisters and their struggles with overbearing religious parents in the 1970s. After the youngest sister commits suicide, their parents become increasingly authoritarian, restricting their day to day movements until they become essentially entombed in their home. While the film is ostensibly told from the perspective of a group of neighbourhood boys who narrate the film, it does not use many of the conventional means of establishing a point of view (such as shot/reverse-shot sequences that establish a gaze). Moreover, the boys’ narration does not always align with the images being shown on screen, indicating Coppola’s construction of multiple perspectives. This signals that the film’s setting is a space which is open to any gaze, and is designed to be experienced by each spectator individually. The way in which she creates and demonstrates the environment of *The Virgin Suicides* creates an intimate and individual
experience of space and environment for the spectator, but more importantly, it is one which inherently relies on the individual’s reception of images that articulate elements of the film’s setting.

This effect is best seen within the first minutes of the film. Coppola opens the text with a series of fragmented images that help to establish the character of the space. She cuts quickly between shots of mown lawns, children playing basketball, and the wide, tree-lined streets of suburban Michigan. Each shot lasts for only a second or two and there is no clear line of geographic relationship between each moment in the montage. None of the shots has any movement from the camera, providing a still frame that the characters move in and out of. The audience is prevented from “touring” the landscape because the camera remains as frozen as a spectator is in their seat. However, this does not negate the psychogeographic experience that her spectators undergo throughout the film. It is rather, as I contend within this chapter, a different mode of spatialising the spectator. This mode, I further contend, holds an important role within the articulation of her spaces as it encourages the spectator to have a discrete, personalised and emotional response. Although this aesthetic engenders a slight departure from Bruno’s main approach within her account of cinematic psychogeography, it maintains the guiding principle of the concept: that space is defined by the emotional experience of those who explore it.

**Movement and Modernity**

The current understanding of psychogeography is inextricably linked within modernism and modernist architectural theory. The following section outlines this connection in order to demonstrate that this is an account born from one specific way of perceiving a spectator’s visuality, and that it is not the only way to do so. One of modernism’s guiding architectural principles is that mobility generates experience. Historically, this notion was born out of
Enlightenment thinking, which equated travel and movement with scientific discovery.\(^{261}\) This idea became the germinal root for the modernist appetite for motion. It was, after all, this established critical connection between modernity and movement that spurred authors such as Walter Benjamin to explore spatial theory.\(^{262}\) According to Benjamin, the seeds of modern society grew from the figure of the urban *flâneur*, so spatial exploration created a new, egalitarian, modernist sensibility. This positions psychogeography, and particularly filmic psychogeography, as a largely modernist concept. This idea was furthered, and further connected to film, through Tom Gunning's work on early cinema. Gunning saw the advent of train travel as a key moment in both modernity and film culture, the sudden accessibility of the world equalising society. On the modernising capacity of both film and railways, he said,

> It could be argued that techniques of circulation define the intersecting transformations in technology and industry that we call modernity. By 'modernity' I refer less to a demarcated historical period than to a change in *experience*.\(^{263}\) [My emphasis]

Although the theory is related specifically to early and classical Hollywood film, the connection between movement and modernisation has only been further cemented by the advent of video games. It is this moving *through* environments that have critically and culturally defined them.\(^{264}\) Yet Bruno's account also positions both architecture and cinematic landscapes as fundamentally montaged spaces, wherein each destination is made into a coherent spatial whole by the experience of the explorer.\(^{265}\) There is a slight dissonance between this connection of cinema as architectural montage space and her earlier connection between train travel and

\(^{264}\)Video games are a medium wherein the spatial journey is the narrative. As Lev Manovich pointed out in a text that predicted almost every major cultural shift over the past decade, navigable space is a “key form of new media”. Lev Manovich *Languages of New Media* (Cambridge: MIT University Press, 2001), 247.
the cinema.\textsuperscript{266} Her argument within the chapter "The Geography of the Cine-City" does rely heavily on a moving camera, a position reflected in much of the literature on cinematic landscapes.

Movement has also been underlined by Bruno and other theorists because of its relationship to affective transfer. Both Theresa Brennan and Jill Bennett, whose work focuses on material atmospheres, identify roving through a space as a crucial element of taking on the atmosphere.\textsuperscript{267} Each author says that an atmosphere can only be detected if the flâneur (although neither uses that specific terminology) interacts bodily with the landscape. If psychogeography is an extended, hybridised atmosphere of space and emotion, then our movement through it is crucial to its comprehension. As Bruno's spectator is always embodied, it then makes sense to connect the affective power that movement has on one's experience to a larger consideration of psychogeography.\textsuperscript{268} Indeed, she takes this argument further, referring to the \textit{implied} motion in the appreciation of pictorial art as similarly allowing the reader to travel.\textsuperscript{269} In a map such as the \textit{Carte de Tendre}, by her example, the reader's eye wanders over the terrain of the map, and in this manner explores the space.\textsuperscript{270} This is but one form she outlines of an unusual but undeniable contact between emotion and exploration, haptic and optics, between spectator and space, and ultimately it must thus be considered an embodied exploration of a represented space.\textsuperscript{271} This position further aligns embodiment as the crucial element behind psychogeography, rather than the expansion or articulation of space through camera movement. This position is further validated by the potential dissonance with the spectator's experience of a film's "toured" space.

\textsuperscript{266}As seen in "Traversing the cine-city"
\textsuperscript{268}Bruno, \textit{Atlas of Emotion}, 56.
\textsuperscript{270}Ibid, 224-225.
\textsuperscript{271}Ibid, 59-61.
This dissonance possibly derives from the implicit point-of-view present in the “touring camera” cinematography that dominates many of the discussions of filmic space. A moving-camera spatial aesthetic is a surrogate aesthetic, in the sense that the camera articulates the space in a manner similar to the flâneur’s dérive. Yet by positing a point-of-view and assuming control over the spectator’s perspective, the camera is also prone to creating a sense of disembodiment. It does this because it reminds spectators that they themselves are immobile. When the camera displays a tendency to look at what interests it, rather than what interests the audience, the viewer is suddenly jolted back into the conscious perception that they are watching a film. The more a camera moves, the more likely it is to produce this effect, to enunciate the imperfection of the cinematic illusion. The occasional disorientation that a moving camera can cause stems from a disconnect between what the audience would see (or at least, would like to see) and what is being shown. While movement creates space, and thus reveals a world to the spectator, it also jars their embodied experience of the environment. The camera which tours the space it records has inspired much of the rhetoric on filmic psychogeography. Fragmented environments, such as those in Coppola’s canon, problematises the notion of flâneur. Their spaces are articulated in ways that do not create a clear spatialised spectator, as each element of the film’s setting is disconnected from the larger geographic whole. By generating an understanding of how the spectator experiences montaged spaces, we may also create a way of illuminating some of the connections between embodiment and architecture that Bruno outlines in Atlas.

Coppola’s films often have strong and emotionally rich environments that problematise the need to move an audience through a space. Indeed the Lisbon house from Virgin Suicides has such a distinctive aesthetic presence that teen magazines tell young girls how to decorate their rooms to look like it.272 It is built out of brief images cut together into a montage. These fragments of space are, in their momentary presentation, all-consuming. They enunciate the

Lisbon house to the audience while bringing the spectator’s attention to the film’s environmental atmosphere. The audience, presented with an abrupt barrage of images, is forced to try and organise the chaos into a coherent space for themselves. In essence, Coppola presents a radically different spatial aesthetic that builds coherence by a reliance on the spectator’s ability to stitch these brief images together.

The manner in which Coppola articulates her spaces establishes them as an architectural and psychogeographic experience (by Bruno’s definition). As mentioned above, her camera rarely pushes through its setting. Rather, as is now common in both art house and Hollywood film, the spaces are shot primarily in stillness, broken into small images that do not necessarily connect to each other. Coppola’s filmic spaces, and particularly those in *The Virgin Suicides*, have more in common with a tourist’s slide show than the “travel film” that has had such an impact on the study of filmic geography. However, as per Bruno’s connection between architecture and cinematic space, both of which fundamentally occur within a montage, the distinction between the two styles does not necessarily mean that Coppola’s spaces are not toured. Rather, it indicates that they engage a form of spectatorship that involves a psychogeographic experience, yet does not require the same degree of geographic continuity. Coppola’s stylistic direction provides a manner of articulating film space that still appeals to the sensual exploration that a traditional conception of a *flâneur* or spatialised and embodied spectator, while eschewing camera movement. Thus by considering some of the psychological facets of how the spectator perceives montage space, we may come to a better understanding of why cinematic spaces offer this powerful spatial experience. In order to interrogate what this particular mode of spectatorship might entail, it is useful to consider alternative accounts of fragmented film space.

Sutured Spaces

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The theory of “suture”, which has grown from Lacanian psychoanalysis, argues that our minds must be involved in making a film’s editing intelligible, and presents another way of understanding spaces fragmented by editing. The theory has gone through a number of iterations since its inception, having been incorporated into semiotics by Daniel Dayan and into feminist gaze theory by Kaja Silverman.\textsuperscript{274} The idea has been applied directly to filmic landscapes in Stephen Heath’s \textit{Narrative Space}. Heath argues that a film’s virtual world must be ‘read’ by the audience and that the immaterial space of film is created mostly in the mind of the viewer by the suturing of separate scenes into a whole.\textsuperscript{275} Heath’s work refers to the invisible fragmentation of continuity editing and, in an effort to make the invisible visible, attempts to explain how film space could be constructed by the audience’s cognition. Heath, more so than any other theorist discussed, believes in the camera acting as a perfect surrogate for the human eye. He describes film as the “perfection” of the single-point perspective system.\textsuperscript{276} When the camera presents discontinuous images of a setting, it is the presence of a narrative and the will of the audience to follow it which forces us to suture together a space.\textsuperscript{277}

However, Heath draws ideological conclusions from his assertion that the “perfection” of vision represented in cinema is exactly that: a representation. He goes on to say

\begin{quote}
…any modern scientific description of the eye will go on to indicate the limits of the comparison. Our eye is never seized by some static spectacle, is never some motionless recorder; not only is our vision anyway binocular, but one eye alone sees in time: constant scanning movement to bring the different parts of whatever is observed to the fovea, movements necessary in order that the receptive cells produce fresh neuro-electric impulses, immediate activity of memory inasmuch as there is no brute vision to be isolated from the visual
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{275}Heath, “Narrative Space” 70.
\textsuperscript{276}Ibid, 78.
\textsuperscript{277}Ibid, 73.
experience of the individual inevitably engaged in a specific sociohistorical situation.278

The argument that Heath later mounts in his essay claims that there is an inherent ideological force behind the organisation of visual elements in cinema. "It may well be that classically cinema acquires 'the mobility of the eye'" he writes, "while preserving the contained and delimited visual field on which 'correct' perspectives depend, but the mobility is nevertheless difficult".279 This account thus fails to consider films that invite multiplicity in their viewing and instead demand that each spectator's experience be the same.

Suture is an important consideration when a filmmaker like Coppola presents a space which is fragmented, yet the experience the spectator is left with implies a sense of exploration. While the spaces are not toured as in a flâneur's experience, they are still experienced in an exploratory way. The fragmentation present in continuity editing and the style of film-makers such as Coppola does not necessarily prevent a cinematic space from creating a psychogeographic impression in the audience. The basic elements of sutured space such as the 180° rule, and the shot/reverse-shot, have existed since some of the earliest forms of cinema.280

The ubiquity of the conventions of film space (like the 180° rule and continuity editing) suggests that they appeal to general traits of human visual perception and cognition. They have this capacity because of the mind's own ability to make sense from fragmentation.281 Initial research into the mechanisms of continuity editing supports his ideas. In a review of editing conventions,

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278 Heath, "Narrative Space", 73.
279 Ibid, 73.
281 It should be noted that many theorists such as Edward Soja, Patricia Pisters and Victor Burgin include scope for fragmentation in film space. However, these authors take a psychoanalytic approach that argues that the space's fragmentation is a realistic representation of humans' own apparent psychic fragmentation. This is both a rather despairing interpretation of the psyche and an assertion that does not acknowledge that our experience of consciousness does not feel fragmented. Patricia Pisters The Neuro-Image (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 2012); Edward J. Soja, Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-And-Imagined Places (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); Victor Burgin. In Different Spaces: Place And Memory In Visual Culture, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 164.
Tim Smith found indications that editing, and indeed suture as a whole, is made invisible by taking advantage of natural visual processing.282

This suggests that a good deal of film comprehension and “suture” occurs at a stage of cognition prior to one’s conscious comprehension. Each person perceives their own life as a constant narrative, as part of a continuous timeline. The perpetual march of time, coupled with the constant input of our senses, makes each moment part of a continuous sensory flow. However, it is important to note that this flow is constructed by our conscious brain from disparate and separate sensory information. Counter to our lived experience, our brains are perpetually masking fragments. One particular example of this phenomenon highly relevant to fragmented cinematic editing is the constancy of vision.

*Everyday Fragmentation within Conscious Perception*

Human beings have a remarkable capacity to mask the fragmentation left by perceptual systems that are not as perfect as our lived experience implies. For example, in direct contradiction to our lived experience, human beings spend roughly forty minutes out of every waking day completely blind283. This blindness comes from a function of the eye known as a saccade. A saccade is a function of the eye that allows us to create a detailed representation of the world from the limited equipment we have to view it with. During a saccade, the fovea, a circle of concentrated cone receptors (those being the kind of receptors capable of taking in more information about colour, edges and textures than their complement, rod receptors) jumps from one point in our visual field to another.284 During this jump, the eye is incapable of receiving new information. However, the executive centre of the brain blurs and glosses over the saccade,

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causing our experience of vision to register as a coherent flow. Our perception of the visual field is always a representation of the disparate fragments of information given to us by equipment not fully capable of rendering its environment purely. Thus when presented with a picture of a face, we see it in its detailed entirety, regardless of the fact that to absorb it, our eyes are making nearly a hundred small leaps from detail to detail, and in the interim moments we are completely blind.285 A visual representation of this phenomenon is in Figure 2.1

Figure 2.1. A Map of the path that the fovea tracks when looking at a face.

The illusion of the constancy of vision is so perfect that it has become vested in our very language. As Martin Jay points out in *Downcast Eyes*, the visual metaphors in language all treat the eyeball as a mechanically infallible device for parsing the world.286 The academic interest in the filmic surrogacy of vision makes perfect sense in this view, as the camera and the conception of vision are both constant and absolute. However, whilst our cultural understanding of vision is one of constancy, this is based on an illusion. Our eyes stutter and skip through the visual field. Films take advantage of the two particular flaws in our "perfect" vision: Phi Phenomenon and Beta Movement.287 The two stem from the human optic nerve’s ability to perceive changes at

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10 cycles per second. Consequently, any changes in light that occur at roughly double this rate (or in the case of film, 24 cycles per second) are perceived as motion. It is not an infallible eye that shows us the world, but a form of constructive consciousness. Consciousness is the key element which makes sensory fragments part of the intelligible narrative that is the human — and filmic — experience.

Our individual subjectivity forms a through-line: a connective thread that makes the million pieces of our existence an intelligible arc or, as Thomas Metzinger has put it,

> Our conscious model of reality is a low dimensional projection of the inconceivably richer physical reality surrounding and saturating us...the ongoing process of conscious experience is not so much an image of reality as a tunnel through.²⁸⁸

In spite of the dominant conception of visuality employed in discussions of psychogeography (that our subjective perspective is infallible and mechanically accurate) the evidence to the contrary is both myriad and everyday. Our persistent illusion of visual constancy in spite of the flawed visual processing system attests to Metzinger’s “tunnel”.²⁸⁹ What then, is experiencing these fragments? Metzinger and many of his colleagues have concluded that the self-percept (the mind’s ability to situate itself as a being-in-time and in-the-world) is the content of consciousness, while a dynamic flow of perception through memory is the engine for experience.²⁹⁰ This hypothesis is supported by the apparent function of brain’s thalamus. This is

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²⁸⁹The tunnel that is our unique perspective, mediated through our perception of the self as a continuous being-in-the-world. Ibid, 5-7.
the structure in the brain that houses consciousness.291 Or rather, as Metzinger argues, it produces the illusory experience of conscious self-percept which we consider to be consciousness.292 The thalamus functions as an information highway, and has been shown to be the sole part of the brain that is active in the processing of two kinds of information: sensory percept and memory recollection.293 These two functions are largely dealt with in separate areas of the brain, yet both are relayed through thalamocortical circuits.294 In addition, the thalamus is responsible for anti-saccadic eye movement, a key element in the constancy of vision.295 This has led researchers like Metzinger to present a theory of what our experience of consciousness actually is: the constant dialogue between our senses and our memories, out of which grows the self-percept.296

This dialogue is also the key element that prevents film editing from fragmenting the narrative. The fragmentation of a space, such as that presented in The Virgin Suicides, allows our imagination to suture the architecture of its psychogeography together. This is in line with Metzinger's assertion that our perception of the world is internally created and a fundamentally subjective experience informed by working memory.297 Echoes of Metzinger's argument reside in Luis Pessoa's research, a body of work that focuses on the nature of perception. Within several of his studies, he and his colleagues have found that normal "surface" perception is strongly informed by memory, and the emotions which follow with the accessing of certain episodic memories.298 His findings demonstrate that film spectatorship is not nearly as

291By which I refer to the facts that no creature has been found to possess consciousness without a thalamus and removing the thalamus also appears to end consciousness. For more information on the research behind these assertions refer to David J Chalmers "What is a Neural Correlate Of Consciousness?" in Neural Correlates Of Consciousness: Empirical and Conceptual Questions. (Boston: MIT press, 2000), 34.
294Chalmers, "What is a Neural Correlate of Consciousness?" in Neural Correlates, 33.
297 Metzinger, Neural Correlates Of Consciousness, 3.
straightforward as the passive reception of neither sensory information, nor the sorting of particular images into a kind of visual grammar (as earlier theoretical accounts of montage might suggest). The comprehension of both of these elements is necessarily constructed by the viewer from inside their subjective conscious percept. As director Steven Soderbergh puts it "Every time you cut away and cut back, you bought so much, because the audience filled in the gap". These spaces are inherently personalised because they rely on the individual's memory to be fully realised. The fragments are drawn together — just as all our sensations are fragments drawn together — to create a comprehensible “whole”.

The above is a macro-view of how neural processing might influence spectatorship, and is perhaps well served by a smaller, discrete example. The relatively mundane doorway stands as one of the better illustrations of how film, and The Virgin Suicides in particular, mirror cognitive consciousness and in so doing engender a different form of visual spatial experience. In line with a movement-centric model of spectatorial visuality, a door in film should be shown in a fluid movement into the next setting. If the camera were to flow through the opening as in a tracking shot, this action would "build" the internal cartography of the film's setting. In Bruno's words, "the architectural ensemble is 'read' as it is traversed". By presenting a continuous space through a doorway, films could further validate the illusion that their immaterial world is a complete, material whole. However, moving a camera through a doorway rarely occurs. It is,

299 I refer here specifically to Sergei Eisenstein's consideration of intellectual montage. Eisenstein's account argues for the use of montage as a form of language akin to the hieroglyph: a series of significatory images that communicate far beyond their semiotic index due to their juxtaposition. While Eisenstein's larger assertion, that montage creates meaning above the sum of its images certainly aligns with my overarching argument, his is also an account which aims to stabilise a theorist's ability to analyse film and hold meaning to a fixed "dominant" reading. This position demands a form of universality within the spectator's experience of a montage sequence, a position that is untenable when held against the reality of difference in each individual spectator. His account does not truly consider an individual spectator, but rather a position of spectatorship that is ideological and thus general. For a more in depth analysis of Eisenstein's ideas on montage and the spectator, I refer readers to Jason Lindrop's "Eisenstein: 'Intellectual Montage', Poststructuralism, and Ideology" in Offscreen 11:2 (February 2007).

300 Anne Thompson, "Steven Soderbergh" in Premiere (December 2000), 65.

301 This interaction in film viewing between visual perception and the audience's own discrete memory is perhaps best argued by Bachelard in his consideration of "the house" within The Poetics of Space (3-38). Bachelard claims that literary houses are built from the recollected feelings of childhood, and acts as imaginary travel for the reader. The imaginary spaces they create are necessarily nostalgic, being built out of memory. Bachelard claims that authors of the written word hijack the readers' own memories when creating fictional landscapes. They were capable of such a feat because the affect of literature is constructed wholly in the mind. (3, 7-8). While his work bears an important imprint within the current argument, it is also important to note that, like Eisenstein, his argument posits a generalised audience and his ultimate conclusions rely on a universalised experience. As a psychoanalytic work, The Poetics of Space makes many claims about one's response that do not fully consider discrete individuality in the manner that a cognitive approach can.

as it turns out, a shot more trouble than it is worth. Film sets are seldom built to sustain a tracking shot through a doorway, which would necessitate an unusually large soundstage, twice the standard number of electrical and construction workers and troublesome camera angles to mask the dolly rails on the floor. Consequently, a door is a common edit point in the spatial exploration of a film's world. Doorways, which should represent constancy within cinematic architecture, instead stand for the persistence of continuity through editing's fragmentation.

The point of disruption that occurs when a film edits around a doorway instead of moving fluidly through mirrors a common “error” in memory and attention within human beings’ experience of doorways. Simply put, passing through a doorway often makes us forget why we entered the room in the first place.303 In a study particularly salient to film theory, Gabriel Radavansky and his colleagues demonstrated that the phenomena of forgetting when passing through a doorway occurs both in real material environments and within immaterial virtual reality environments.304 The conclusion which they drew from their experiments is that even in a virtual setting, our experience is inherently tied to our expectation of the events which occur within that space. When spaces change abruptly (as is the experience when moving from one room to another), it appears that our minds quickly alter our attention in order to make room for a new possible event. Further research by Zachary Lawrence and David Peterson indicates that these disruptions in attention and memory occur not only when physically (or virtually) entering a doorway, but when a subject imagines walking through a door.305 When a filmmaker moves a camera fluidly through a doorway, as a conduit flâneur for the spectator, they are able to avoid this phenomenon by maintaining the audience’s attentional model on the narrative events of the film. However, editing through a doorway would have the same effect, as it still...
holds a clear “potential event” without including spatial percepts that would cloud our conscious experience.

The fragmented approach potentially mirrors the cognitive processing of a subject who does not forget what they were doing when they enter a room. A subject in these instances apparently avoids the abrupt deletion of their journey’s purpose by ensuring that their attention is on the event they are experiencing, and not the change in location. In essence, their conscious percept is focused on their task, not on their movement. If the act of walking through a door can cause us to forget, \(^{306}\) then the occlusion of this passage via editing is a representation of our lived experience. This is still a mode of spatial experience, however it is one conducted in a mode of visuality that holds the individual spectator’s interest and experience to a higher standard than creating a forced single point perspective. The style affected by Coppola as she creates her film’s setting uses the mind’s own capacity to mask fragmentation and blur over disruption in order to focus on the elements of her environment that will best pull the viewer into an emotional and embodied response. As I will now demonstrate, she eschews the flowing continuity of a moving camera in order to focus on the details within the room that best articulate how the space feels.

**The (Nostalgic) Experience of Fragmented Space within *The Virgin Suicides***

In *The Virgin Suicides*, fragmentation is continually introduced as the film’s setting is articulated to the audience. Whenever a new location is shown, Coppola disrupts the narrative or dialogue to focus on discrete close-up shots of minor details. For example, when the sisters go to a homecoming dance, the event is shown in a shot that cuts abruptly from their entrance to a close-up of the venue's decorations.

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It then cuts to dancing couples, before returning back to the sisters and their dates. These moments echo the initial brush with the text’s setting that Coppola creates in the first minute of the film. At the beginning, the spectator is shown a brief glance of a blonde girl, a woman watering her lawn, two women walking a dog, council workers nailing a “notice for removal” to an elm tree, boys playing basketball in their driveway, light through leaves, before being plunged abruptly into the film’s main setting, the Lisbon household. In each of these montages, and there are several, the camera focuses on small details before cutting abruptly to other small details. This does not establish a firm cognitive understanding of spatial relationships for the spectator, who has no way of knowing how each image relates to the whole. However, it does create an understanding of what is particular about the film’s setting: the gaudy yet beautiful transformation of a high school gym in the former sequence, the leafy suburbs, and tranquil idyll in the latter.

Coppola’s recurring intrusion of close-ups in sequences that would otherwise “tour” the space allows the spectator to explore the affective register of the film’s environment before they fully comprehend the geography of the setting. In the film’s key location (the Lisbon home) the first
image we see of the house's interior is set in the bathroom, in a close-up of cluttered religious bibelots intermingled with perfume bottles and lipsticks.

Figure 2.3 the first shot of the Lisbon house interior

These are totemic images that spectators will interpret according to their own life experiences. It is important to note that Coppola styles the tableau so that the rosary beads, crucifixes and statues are made of the same metal and cut-glass as the girls' cosmetics, rendering the two categories of item as indistinguishable. These small details supply more information about the nature of the Lisbon house and as such are a key directive for the spectator's psychogeographic impression of the film's space. Yet had the camera toured the set, moving as though the viewer was on a tourist's visit, these small details would have been missed entirely. Instead, the space is constructed by showing the audience partial fragments of it. In so doing, Coppola foregrounds the affective experience of the setting over a topographical understanding of the space's geography. As Eugenides writes in the film's originary novel, "What lingered after them was not life, which always overcomes natural death, but the most trivial list of mundane facts: a clock
ticking on a wall, a room dim at noon”.

The visual quirks that define the Lisbon house aesthetic are designed to appeal to a sense of memory, reminiscent of the details one would notice if they were physically in the household. The spectator’s experience of the text’s space is one infused with memory, memories evoked by the totemic objects that litter the space. While the film is already set explicitly in a remembered past, this visual style helps to infuse the psychogeographic landscape itself with a nostalgic sensibility.

The film’s relationship with nostalgia is a key part of what makes it an explicitly psychogeographic text for a spectator to experience. Nostalgia and psychogeography are necessarily intertwined concepts. The word “nostalgia” is derived from the Greek nostos denoting homesickness for a place one cannot return to. Often the nostalgic memory is strongly tied to a place, and so the psychogeography of the site is necessarily invested with the concept. Indeed, some psychoanalytic theorists have postulated that nostalgia is in itself a form of imaginary travel, in which the practice of nostalgic memory serves as a portal to a virtual psychogeography. Sofia Coppola has stated that part of what drew her to Virgin Suicides was that it was set in the suburbs, a place that she was largely unfamiliar with. Having grown up in both Los Angeles and rural vineyards, Coppola found an exoticism in the ordinarily mundane setting. Houses that would be dull or predictable in real life take on a postcard quality in her film, having been shot in dappled sunlight and set to a lilting retro soundtrack. The hermetic world of Virgin Suicides becomes infused with literal golden-age thinking: the golden hues of light suggesting the idea that a time before the present was somehow better. It is easy to be moved by the beauty in these shots, yet their beauty serves a specific function: by making the ordinarily mundane landscape so aesthetically pleasing, the primary affect that the psychogeography holds is nostalgia.

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310 Wes Anderson, “Sofia Coppola” Interview (October, 1999), 326.
The lack of camera movement in *Virgin Suicides* suits its nostalgic theme. As outlined above, one of the reasons that camera movement and psychogeography have been so thoroughly conflated by the academic discourse is that movement is one of the key elements of modernity. Yet nostalgia is a phenomenon tied inextricably to stillness, to memories hermetically sealed away. The suburb of *Suicides* is nostalgic because it represents such a lack of mobility; although the boys who narrate the film grow up, they never move out of Michigan. Their being caught up in the past has prevented them from moving forward, a subtext made explicit with the line “making us happier with dreams than with wives”. In a more fatal echo, the Lisbon girl’s movements are cut down in increments until they become symbolically entombed in the house. The Lisbon house suits a version of Bachelard’s oneiric house, one infused with the ache of nostalgia. It is tempting in analysis of the film to argue that the disrepair that the house falls into is meant to telegraph the increasing depression of the family (as it does explicitly in the Jeffrey Eugenides book the film is based on). However, the film is far more guarded about the internal state of its characters. The house has a long memory: the balloons in the basement from one girl’s final party have not been taken down. Bachelard characterised basements as psychoanalytic spaces of repression.311 The basement is where you put things you do not want to look at, but cannot do without. Like the tree struck with blight in the Lisbon’s front yard, the basement infects the rest of the house. In terms of the psychogeographic landscape, it forces the audience to acknowledge a deep rot, an underlying malignancy to the captivating nostalgia.

The treatment of spaces in *Virgin Suicides* is aesthetically designed to inspire nostalgia. Each image, taken from an immobile camera, moves so little as to almost fool the spectator into thinking they are looking at a photograph. This barrage of impressionistic glances is reminiscent of a slide-projector show, a bygone technology that once allowed travellers to communicate their journey to an audience. In this way, the film’s audience is similarly positioned as being shown a far-away destination, one accessible with the suspension of disbelief and immersion

within the film frame. Yet the fragmented visual style also forces the audience to stitch together their own psychogeographic impression. In so doing, they insert their own associations, hopes and memories onto the landscape, as Bachelard’s readers felt for their literary houses. This is a classical form of psychogeographic exploration, as its focus is on the individual’s response to spaces that elicit emotion and affective resonance.

Coppola’s capacity to incite an experience from the spectator which communicates a psychogeography is also visible in her articulation of the Lisbon house. The film has an idiosyncratic relationship with the house, and consequently so does the audience. It is in turn welcoming and menacing, nostalgic and stifling. The downstairs is filmed with a more fluid camera movement, yet this touring gaze makes the geography of the lower parts of the house incomprehensible. The camera tracks characters as they walk through it, yet they often enter the frame from unexpected angles. Each door opens onto another room, decorated and lit in the same style as the last. The space is not articulated better by adopting a perspectival, flâneur-esque style. Rather, it turns these areas into a maze. Furthermore, the lack of detail and haptic texture shown in these sequences makes them both distinct from other areas of the house, and less emotionally moving or memorable to the spectator. Exploring the lower levels of the house is one of the few times the camera tours the landscape, the other being its slow pan of the suburb at the halfway point of the film. In that sequence, one of the few that extends to an external setting, each house of the Suburb is revealed from the vantage of a passing car. Rather than this effect making the suburban setting feel expansive, it underlines how disquietingly similar each house is to the last. Much like the lower level of the Lisbon house, there is a sense that one could perpetually wander only to find more of the same. It is in this way that the film begins to actively shut down and discourage mobility and movement, though not exploration.

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312Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, 72.
The film’s interest in exploration without movement threads throughout its articulation of space, and reflects the characters’ lived experience. Robbed of opportunities to leave their home, the girls order travel brochures (shown in another montage sequence that blends still photography with film shot on a still camera). Through these photographs, both the girls and the male narrators create an imagined landscape that both can travel to, in a mirror of the audience. The comfort of the suburb (and its resulting disincentive to mobility) is expressed through the visual interest in the Lisbon house’s upper levels, which are shot in the montage style that introduced the house. While the external suburb and the downstairs level are monotonously similar, the upstairs contains the Lisbon girls’ unique aesthetic of youth and faith. The girls’ artefacts transform their room into a museum even prior to their group suicide. Or rather, the items are given this quality by the touristic experience of both the narrating boys who visit them and the spectators’ themselves. By according these small knick-knacks the same watchful eye as other directors would actors’ faces or key artistic flourishes, Coppola uses them to make the girls’ room look like an entirely different world, and in so doing bids the spectator’s eye to wander and explore. Their trivial possessions are more enticing and interesting than the external world of the film, and so the spectator is invited to linger on these images and their response to them.

Mobility and modernity brought with them myriad new social problems, the lack of mobility in nostalgic films like Virgin Suicides makes it seem like a compellingly simple time. The 1970s counter-culture that lurked at the edges of the book is noticeably absent from the film, transforming the girls’ environmentalism into a romantic naturalist fantasy and one character’s drug use into childish indulgence. Even as the film ramps up to its end, it remains still. The Virgin Suicides shows the loss of the girls as being inscribed on the landscape: the newly-vacated Lisbon house is again toured through snapshots of each room. The emptiness is disturbing in part because without the distinctive furniture, the space that the audience has come to know well now seems alien and stark. The final moments of the film compound this effect: the slide of
the male narrators into adulthood is mirrored by one of the few moments where the camera truly “tours” the street in a flâneur-esque way. It rolls slowly down the sidewalk, echoing a car rolling through suburbia. This movement marks an end to suburban idyll and adolescent joie de vivre, yet it also marks the end of the spectator’s opportunity to explore the film’s setting.

Thus The Virgin Suicides represents a mode of exploration that does not require the camera to become an avatar of the wandering flâneur. Instead, it shows exactly how much the experience of travel is born of the smaller details that we encounter on our journeys. Moreover, by fragmenting the space into these details, Coppola engages the audience’s memories directly in the space’s experience and provides an intersubjective psychogeographic landscape. If psychogeography can be built out of stillness, then it must be open to multiple interpretations from multiple subjectivities. In essence, the space is presented to us in a way that plays upon the manner in which the brain operates. By echoing the way in which the brain comprehends the world, the film becomes (in its own way) “thoughtful”. By this I mean — to follow Stafford’s line of reasoning in Echo Objects — the way that the spectator comprehends the film space in The Virgin Suicides can help us understand the manner in which our brains think.313 The Lisbon house is not presented to the spectator in a way in which they can claim a “touristic gaze”. It rejects the classical Hollywood drive towards scopic perfection. In so doing, it actually echoes the way in which human beings actually visually perceive the world. In each instance, the spectator comes to see “perfectly” by assembling the fragmentary units of information through their constructive model of consciousness.

Conclusions: Conscious Exploration and Psychogeography

This process makes the audience collaborators in the creation of a filmic virtual world by using the same mechanisms for constancy that build our consciousness. Virgin Suicides’ world does

313Stafford, Echo Objects, 3-4.
not exist before it is transmitted to the audience. Instead, it is constructed in the viewer’s mind. Due to the dialectic, creative nature of cognition, the audience cannot be presented with parts of a setting without mentally filling in to create a complete schematic. The audience has to suture its own internal schematic of the film’s space out of these snapshots. In so doing, the viewers have an unconscious conversation between their sensory percept of the setting and their memories of both what the world is like and what is known about this film’s space. Although we know that visual experience and the communication of cinematic landscapes are significantly fragmented, we do not perceive either to be so. Our minds endeavour to make fragmentation invisible, which indicates both the sheer subjectivity of consciousness and the intense level of personal mental construction involved in comprehending a film’s space.

Fragmentation is only made intelligible through the active creation of an illusory coherence. This suturing of disparate points is achieved by referring a percept back to our memory of what came before and our logical intuition of what is to come. It is an active dialogue between memory and imagination. Film space can be mentally constructed the same way that our perception of vision is constructed, and the same way that our experience of consciousness is constructed in the thalamus. In Pister’s *Neuro-Image*, the film co-constitutes a form of consciousness through the intersubjective exchange between spectator and screen. This space/spectator relationship mirrors this co-constitution. What we perceive to be fragments are no more fragmented than our experience of existence. Moreover, it is only by placing these disparate shards of the spectatorial experience through the organising attentional model of our mind that they can possibly be comprehended. The film, in its intersubjective perception, comes into being as a whole, fully-realised spectatorial event.

If consciousness is the construction of an image of the world (and ourselves as beings-in-the-world), then the film viewing experience is a virtual analogue of neurophysiological processes of

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consciousness. Continuity editing forces our brains into active participation to create coherence. This also forces us to access recollected contextual memories. A film is made into a coherent, flowing experience by creating a dialogue between sensation and memory, exactly as material percepts become a part of consciousness. In order to construct the film’s intelligibility, the spectator must also refer the space to their own working memories, and so inevitably must make a personal connection with the film’s virtual world.\textsuperscript{315} It is this intimacy that forces the viewer to inscribe their own emotions onto the space, to turn it into a psychogeography. As Bachelard said, "The house, even more than the landscape, is a 'psychic state' and even when reproduced...it bespeaks intimacy".\textsuperscript{316} Although filmic space require significantly less active, conscious imagination from the viewer than literature does for a reader, the aesthetic of modern films (and Coppola’s work in particular) is far more fragmented than the spectator may realise. It is only due to unconscious creativity on the part of the spectator’s ego tunnel that the film comes together into an intelligible visual story. As per Bruno’s connection between architectural space and film montage, psychogeography is made meaningful and intelligible as a spatial form through the spectator’s experience. The audience is presented only with snapshots of spaces in \textit{The Virgin Suicides}, yet the landscape becomes a complete “whole” space within the mind of the viewer. By making us co-creators of the film landscape’s schematic, the space is personalised, and thus converted from a virtual world into a psychogeography. More importantly, the relationship between film and viewer is a direct one of cause and effect, of creative influence.

This is achieved by forcing the audience to experience the film as a direct (and not surrogated) sensory stimulus and allowing it to direct their consciousness in a virtual analogue to actual experiences. It is, in essence, a less mediated and more authentic mode of film reception. The Lisbon house of \textit{The Virgin Suicides} can serve as an example of how the suture process personalises the film viewing experience, and also as a case study of psychogeography. Rather
than undermining the audience's potential to comprehend the imaginary space, the details of the Lisbon house, the religious iconography and aggressively pastel wallpaper are articulated in a detailed way that mirrors our own phenomenological experience. The jump cuts between spatial fragments that Coppola adopts are a truer reflection of subjective perspective than a moving shot. By enunciating this experience, the film also recognises the individual spectator's phenomenological reality. A virtual psychogeography that is constructed by the audience necessarily acknowledges the viewer's own unique subjectivity. It reflects the individual's experience and memory.

It is evident then that the visual style Coppola uses to create the nostalgic world of Virgin Suicides has manifold effects. By mirroring the process of consciousness, it makes the audience an active participant in the enunciation of a film's space. There is certainly reason to believe that, as Bachelard first indicated, by forcing the viewer into a creative role, the space is also personalised. It essentially creates an intimate connection between audience and cinema. The relationship between nostalgia and the psychogeographic relationship between spectator and screen, as found in The Virgin Suicides, demonstrates why an inquiry into the phenomenological reception of such films is necessary. The Virgin Suicides is an explicitly nostalgic text, one which relates to, though does not necessarily support the Jamesonian concept of postmodern nostalgia.317 Jameson's critique of the hyper-stylistic nostalgia film relies upon a mode of historical displacement, and assumes an audience which fundamentally receives the film in a removed manner. Admittedly Jameson's argument is one that takes a macro-view of cultural shifts. Such an approach always invites the assumption that texts, or generic trends within texts, can be “read” in a removed, intellectual manner. Yet within the same paper that Jameson introduced his critique of nostalgia, he also argues that the rise of schizoidal subjecthood within postmodernism had created an emotional ground tone best described as an intensity, and best

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understood through a return to philosophies of the sublime.\textsuperscript{318} What Jameson refers to here is, ultimately, the phenomenological inquiry into affect. The way that the spectator experiences the landscape in \textit{The Virgin Suicides} affirms that a postmodern psychogeography is one which removes historicity from the time period within a nostalgia film. Although it is set within the 70s, the political sphere is left untouched. In its place, the temporal nostalgia stems from an aesthetic and affective appeal to the spectator. While the screen's space becomes a coherent whole through its reception by the spectator, the text entices this reception by appealing to the senses.

While the narrative of the story is a powerful tool of sympathy, encouraging the viewer to engage with the space, it is not sufficient to give the filmic landscape the same kind of emotional weight of psychogeography. For this, a filmmaker must create a work that has space for multiple modes of visual reception from discrete spectators. The reliance on a discourse of exploration through camera movement could lead to a borderline-Cartesian subject, the viewer's subjectivity a ghost in the cinematic apparatus' machine. Thus it is important to underline that exploration is not the only method of interacting within a space. As demonstrated above, it is also possible for the audience to feel as if they themselves have lived in the space, pouring their own memories and associations into the landscape. This acts as a form of illusory inhabitation, from which blooms the individual psychogeographic impression.

There is, as was flagged in the earlier sections of this chapter, significant overlap between these ideas and past work from psychoanalysis. These ideas are notably similar to earlier work on suture theory, as proposed by Daniel Dayan, Stephen Heath, Noel Burch and Kaja Silverman. However, it bears stating that although the conclusions I present mirror these authors, the fundamental lines of argument are significantly different. Suture theory predicates its

\textsuperscript{318}Jameson, \textit{Postmodernism}.6.
conclusion on the psychoanalytic principles of lack and desire. As Silverman writes in *The Subject of Semiotics*:

Suture can be understood as the process whereby the inadequacy of the subject’s position is exposed in order to facilitate (i.e., create the desire for) new insertions into a cultural discourse which promises to make good that lack. Since the promised compensation involves an ever greater subordination to already existing scenarios, the viewing subject’s position is a supremely passive one, a fact which is carefully concealed through cinematic sleight-of-hand.319

While this chapter certainly proposes that the reception of film (and film space in particular) relies on some quirks within visual processing, there is no impetus to assume that the human psyche is one founded on lack. Instead, it is helpful to consider that due to cinema’s reliance on the manner in which human beings construct a view of the world, it can — in its analysis — allow us to see how we think. In essence, films reflect the way in which the brain works.320 Additionally, the psychoanalytic approach could be seen as problematic due to the conclusions that have since been drawn from it. Silverman, Heath and later Victor Burgin have continued the suture concept to argue that the effect forces the audience into a surrogated ideological position, wherein they see the film through the psyche of the characters.321 Such an idea is founded on the concept of a single-point perspective, of a homogenous modernist audience. Consequently, the argument also wilfully ignores the individuality of the subject. It also ignores the fact that the film as a stimulus is always interacting with the individual’s own discrete working memory.

320Once more, I would refer readers to Barbara Maria Stafford’s *Echo Objects* to consider further the manner in which this may be the case.
The above demonstrates is that a space can be built from editing, from a still camera, and that
this space can be as thoroughly known (and explored) as one constructed from camera
movement. What creates the space, first and foremost, is the perception of a place by the
spectator. The only difference is that a moving camera demands surrogacy. A shot that tours
the space asks the audience to imagine “as if” it were their eyes taking in the landscape. In
contrast, a space built from stillness asks the audience to actively involve their unconscious
capacity to create constancy in their experience in order to stitch these fragments into a
geographic site. Within The Virgin Suicides, Coppola creates a mode of spatial exploration that
does not require movement, and in so doing invites a more intimate and personalised response
from the spectator. By using a visual style analogous to consciousness, the film does not ask the
audience to imagine, it forces them to. In this way, the spaces of stillness and of Coppola’s work
in particular accept the multiplicity of views befitting postmodern film. However, the creation of
psychogeography requires more than simply articulating a space to a spectator. Psychogeography also requires an intimate and embodied experience by the spectator. While
this chapter has outlined specific and previously overlooked ways of understanding the
spectator’s spatialisation, it has largely left unaddressed the importance of embodiment. The
affect of film is of great importance to filmic psychogeography, as it is potentially the manner in
which an audience inhabits screen space. The primary affect that comes from cinesthetic
viewing models can further illuminate and illustrate the interaction between audience and
cinematic illusory landscape. Of primary importance to the inquiry is the question of how the
audience “touches” a cinematic space.
In *Atlas of Emotion*, Bruno engages with the embodied and emotional experience of films as inspired by a moving camera. In her account, cinematic motion (and therefore emotion) is a direct descendant from the train and travel cultures which emerged in the eighteenth century. Her claim towards embodied viewing is that the camera incites the audience’s eye to wander and brush against the landscape. Bruno’s relationship to the tactility or hapticity of vision begins at Walter Benjamin’s reversal of Alois Riegl’s separation between the optic and the haptic. Benjamin focus on the hapticity of architecture has been included in Bruno’s definition of psychogeography. For Bruno, the haptic eye is “‘a tangible, tactical role in our communicative ‘sense’ of spatiality and motility, thus shaping the texture of habitable space and, ultimately, mapping our ways of being in touch with the environment’”. Although Bruno spends considerable time in *Atlas* outlining the various ways that the eye “touches” the depths of the screen, she does not continue to consider the other sensory modes of spectatorship and how they may be important to cinematic psychogeography. It would seem that her interest in the “haptic” stops short from being a fully embodied account of a spectator. Thus, this discourse on how the spectator perceives a filmic space is one that still holds to a modernist conception of the screen as a window. Friedberg’s scopic history positions the spectator as one experiencing the end point of Le Corbusier’s modernist landscape architecture. The spectator within Friedberg’s account is one kept separate from the virtual world by a virtual pane of glass. Her spectator, like a tourist in a trolley car, is not fully sensually engaged with the space. Rather, they both sit back in their seats, and let their eyes do the touching as the landscape zooms past.

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323 Ibid, 247.
324 Ibid, 8.
325 Ibid, 274.
326 Ibid, 247-255.
327 Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 124.
328 Ibid, 12-16.
There is a disconnect in Bruno’s work between the latter part of the metaphor, which outlines the audience as bodily distanced from the film’s world, and the former, which immerses the viewer into the text. In spite of the potential flimsiness of the illusion, films are adept at making the audience feel as though they are immersed in their worlds beyond simply appealing to different modes of vision.329 Even a cursory glance at the body of critical work on film reveals that it is common to feel sympathetic twinges when, for example, we shiver with revulsion during a horror film, or lick our lips at a fast food commercial. Some images simply seem so lush and vivid that it is like they remind our organs what it feels like to be there. What frustrates this experience is our absolute knowledge that the sensation is based on an illusion. Our bodies seem inexplicably plagued with misrecognition, while our minds are quite clear that what we see on the screen is immaterial. This confusion is particularly visible in Coppola’s Marie Antoinette, a film that lingers over images that seem designed to inspire phantom sensation: gleaming cakes, oozing cream, soft linens, champagne, grass and warm sun. The experience of the film is heightened by these moments, as they appear to blur the lines between the spectator and the screen. Bruno’s site-seer remains distanced from these sensual encounters, yet it is only in the sensory exploration of a place that it becomes invested with the memories and emotions that turn it into a psychogeography.330 To make the place meaningful, we must sense it to make sense of it, an experience as embodied as it is spatial. This chapter addresses these concerns by considering the spectator’s experience as a carnal and sensuously-derived encounter.

Bruno argued that film spaces are haptically experienced via phenomenological viewing models,331 but she left partially unexplored what these models are, and what mechanisms are at play in immaterial haptics. The following therefore examines first where this disconnect between the spectator’s experience of a landscape and their embodied experience stems from,

331Bruno, Atlas, 171.
before considering theories of embodiment and their support from psychological research into
the brain’s mirror neuron and perceptual systems.\textsuperscript{332} This chapter demonstrates that the brain
perceives film as material sensation, which in turn requires an affective and materialist
approach to the spectator. Using the sumptuous visuals of \textit{Marie Antoinette} as a case study, the
following explores how, neurologically, film viewing is quite similar to film \textit{feeling}. In the words
of Brian Massumi in \textit{Parables for the Virtual},

\begin{quote}
When I think of my body and ask what it does to earn that name, two thing
stand out. It moves. It feels. In fact, it does both at the same time. It moves as it
feels, and it feels itself moving.\textsuperscript{333}
\end{quote}

It is necessary, I argue, to consider a spectator who is not only moving through a space, or
rather (as I argued in the previous chapter) surrounded by space, but how this space provokes
sensations within their experience. A spectator cannot be considered a spatialised subject
without also engaging with an embodied account of their experience.

\textbf{The (Dis)Embodied Spectator Within Theories of Film and Space}

Two of the key theorists in my inquiry into cinematic psychogeography preference the
spectator’s experience as visual, or haptically-visual. As Friedberg outlines, there is a long (and
constructed) teleology between the consideration of a spectator in film as growing from a
painterly medium, and from a school of architectural theory that in turn frames a landscape
through windows.\textsuperscript{334} By these accounts, the spectator is distanced from the image of the space,
and their response is less sensually engaged. She also connects the cinematic representation of

\textsuperscript{332} The references used in this text are among the more widely regarded and prescient theories in neuropsychology. However, they
are not beyond reproach and the validity of some of their findings has been questioned in the past. For more information, I would
recommend Gregory Hickok’s “Eight Problems for the Mirror Neuron theory of Action Understanding in Monkeys and Humans”
the level of causal conflation in its findings.

\textsuperscript{333} Massumi, \textit{Parables for the Virtual}, 1.

\textsuperscript{334} Friedberg, “Urban Mobility and Cinematic Visuality”, 186.
Los Angeles to the windscreen as an example of the permeable and tense frame between representation and reality. How, however, can a frame be permeable if we engage a metaphor that limits the analysis of the affected senses to the visual? Friedberg argues that this is a paradoxical (and therefore theoretically insurmountable) tension within the presentation of film. By her account, "cinematic spectatorship evinces twin paradoxes between materiality and immateriality...and between mobility and stasis". Bruno similarly considers key ways that the spectator could be said to "touch" the space through haptic visuality, wherein the eyes and hands work in tandem. However, the depth of the spectator's immersion is never fully outlined. While she connects Benjamin's edict that spaces must be felt and explored haptically to the cine-city, there still exists a paradoxical tension between the eyes' ability to inspire a sense of touch and her lack of consideration into other senses being similarly inspired.

Friedberg's attempts to understand and account for the paradoxical immaterial materiality of the spectator's experience provide an informative way forward. In *The Virtual Window*, she follows Bergson's definition that "the virtual" is the ontological distinction between possible and actual. The virtual sits at this intersection, presenting the possible without materializing. The problem that filmic psychogeography presents is that it is, in essence, both. The spaces it presents are virtual. However, their experience by the spectator is at least partially material. Friedberg outlines the tension between virtual and actual in film viewing, describing it as a "phenomenological tangle". Friedberg solves these seeming paradoxes by an analogy of memory: a memory is virtual and immanently possible, until it becomes materialised in its experience by its subject. Friedberg pushes further into phenomenology, arguing that we are swept into "the orbit of the senses" while experiencing a virtual felt architecture. However, Friedberg and Bruno's turn towards phenomenology does not include all of the body's senses, a

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335 Friedberg, “Urban Mobility and Cinematic Visuality”, 186.
336 Ibid, 186.
338 Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 140.
339 Ibid, 150.
340 Ibid, 142.
distinction which bears little sense when the origins of phenomenology are considered.

Phenomenology’s roots reveal the field’s intention to disrupt the primacy of vision over the body’s holistic sensory experience. Phenomenology was pioneered by Czech philosopher Edmund Husserl. In an attack on Cartesian dualism, Husserl began his account of the experience of existence from the point of intentionality. He discerned that, in spite of Descartes’s famous maxim, consciousness always has an object outside of the body (i.e. in the external world) and so the world is perpetually intruding on our being. In this way, Husserl argued that conscious existence is an intentional relay between our body and the external world, that our being in-the-world is a fundamental part of existence. Husserl inspired a number of authors to expand on his idea that the body was a fundamental part of our existence, chief among them his student Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Building on Husserl, Merleau-Ponty considered the impact that perception has on consciousness. The conclusion he came to was that perception is the entire content of consciousness, and that, rather than perception being mediated and considered by a Cartesian executive “self”, perception possesses its own nascent rationality. The significant idea from Merleau-Ponty is that perception has its own immediate and unconscious logic. Even prior to conscious cognition, we instinctively know that what we are seeing is distant, not simply very small. It is this a priori logic that gives the two-dimensional image of film the illusion of three-dimensional reality. The idea that our perception has its own reason might explain how films produce these phantom sensations of other senses.

In an extended examination of film viewing, and in particular of the phantom sensations evoked by film viewing, Vivian Sobchack proposes a phenomenological account of the film experience.

She argued that films possess subjectivity-through-intentionality. This intention is the film's aim: that it be seen and experienced. "The moving picture itself", she writes, "makes itself sensuously and sensibly manifested as the expression of experience by experience". Therefore, the film and the audience both undergo the experience of the film, and so take part in intersubjectivity. According to Sobchack, it is this intersection that allows the audience to be so moved by a film image as to feel as though it were a material reality. This, I contend, is the root of exploration within a psychogeographic cinema. For Sobchack, the carnal phenomenological reality of experience is a major part of why we enjoy cinema. This enjoyment, she claims, has been overlooked by traditional film theory because of a sentimental attachment to Cartesian dualism. "We sit in a movie theatre" she states "not only as conscious beings, but as carnal beings".

Sobchack stresses that a film reaches out to its audience not through the abstract and distant modes of intellectual consideration, but through the body's senses. She argues that cinema relies on our senses' nascent logic to be comprehensible to the audience. To relate her argument to my own, psychogeography is at its core the study of the intersection between affect and landscape. Landscape is a space that is produced into meaning through its experience by a subject. Cinema is an experience produced through its reception by the spectator: each relies on intersubjectivity to be wholly realised. This intersubjective exchange has the potential to place the spectator's body within the cinematic space, a space which is constructed and articulated through its reception by the spectator. Screen and spectator, according to Sobchack, are co-constituted in the exhibition of a text into an intersubjective experience. One of the key aspects of Sobchack's phenomenology is the dialectical nature of the film viewing experience.

Ibid. 3.
Ibid. 109.
Ibid, 23–24.
not allow for the viewer’s becoming aware that they are watching a film. To the latter theorists, the phenomenon of conscious self-perception in the viewing experience has always been treated as an error in transmission. Sobchack aims to correct this by addressing how the experience of watching a film will always necessarily involve a level of conscious self-perception.

This line of reasoning has been since extended by Laura U. Marks’s work on sensuous theory. Marks’s *The Skin of the Film* further examines the reciprocal relationship between spectator and screen, and posits that film’s ability to affect the body stems from the sparking of a sens-mem. In developing a phenomenology of vision, Marks appropriates Merleau-Ponty’s idea that there must always be a perceiving subject, and a perceived object. Marks takes these poles and argues that their relationship is a sensuous collision. In Marks’s account of the “skin” of cinema, she focuses on images and moments within the art cinema tradition. These, by her account, are more revelatory because they do not easily codify within narrative or comprehensible systems. Much like Deleuze’s crystal-image, they exist simply to expand out into a moment of pure sensory engagement. The spectator receives the image and is, by the nature of its incomprehensibility, forced to feel it in a haptic mode of visuality. Like blind men touching the walls of a room to find their way, the eye must haptically caress the image, looking for clues as to what it is and what it means. She draws out the tactility of perception, alluding to how our sense of smell is molecules touching our olfactory glands, and hearing is soundwaves brushing against our eardrums. The subject and the object must make contact, must touch each other, to be seen. Indeed, as she rightly states, our subjectivity (by a Merleau-Ponty derived account) is most strongly affirmed when we physically touch something. Haptic images refute

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352Ibid. 109.
353Marks, *Skin of the Film*, 195.
identification. Instead, they encourage us to experience the image as ourselves. This touch asserts our role as a being-in-the-world.

Sobchack and Marks’s phenomenological accounts of film are important as they do not delineate between haptics, vision and the body’s other senses, as Bruno and Benjamin do. In her paper “What My Fingers Knew”, Sobchack sketches out a mode of spectatorial visuality that encompasses a full sensory experience: cinesthesia. Cinesthesia, by her definition is the cross-modal and uncontrollable carnal response that our entire sensorium has to the cinematic experience. By Sobchack’s reasoning, the body’s response is always multi-sensory, and each sense responds at once. In dealing with the cultural impact of transnationalism, diaspora and foreign-ness, Marks begins to see cinema’s ability to inspire and hold cultural memories. Marks argues that like an insect caught in amber, film can capture and replay the texture of a sensory memory. In her concept of haptic visuality, she argues that when an image is particularly laden with overwhelming visual information, we adopt a synesthetic visuality that can appeal to far more senses than the purely haptic-optic described by Benjamin or Bruno.

Thus by considering the phenomenology of a spectator’s experience, Sobchack and Marks move towards the idea that, although a film’s presentation is immaterial, the sensations it provokes in the spectator are largely material. In each of their accounts, the material sensations stem from a basic misrecognition of perception’s nascent logos. The bombarding overstimulation of the film experience tricks the other senses (and the perceptual faculties) into thinking that cinema is materially real. The film experience has the capacity to affect the audience in a

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356Ibid, 3.
358Ibid, 70.
360Marks, Skin of the Film, 132-33.
“cinesthetic” way, 362 Sobchack argued, because it assaults enough of the senses to engage all of them. 363 Ultimately, the difference between “real” and “as-if real” sensation inspired by film is moot, because to an embodied subject any sensation is authentic, regardless of the authenticity of the stimulus. The limitations of Friedberg and Bruno’s accounts, which corral the embodied response of the spectator to a specifically haptic (as opposed to cinesthetic) visuality, perhaps stem from the need to demarcate between the illusion of representation and the materiality of reality.

A maxim on spatiality could be derived from all of these theorists: to truly know a place, you have to sensually experience it. If the spectator is said to be embodied, as in Bruno and Friedberg’s accounts, then there is no logical reason to refer back to haptic-optics in lieu of cinesthesia. Particularly when considered in light of the fact that the arguments of Sobchack, Marks, and Deleuze (the theorist upon whom all draw) have significant support from the fundamental principles of neurology. Increasingly, research into the workings of the mind reveal that our minds may not separate out the sensations from the body and the sensations from cinema as separate threads of the experience.

The theorists discussed all base their ideas on Husserl’s argument that existence is inescapably embodied. I pose a more nuanced definition: that we are inescapably neurally embodied. Our experience of sensory data is heavily mediated by our consciousness, which in turn relates this information to our sense of proprioception. 364 This has important ramifications for cinesthesia, because it endorses the implicit realism of the cinematic experience. What neuroanatomy has recently taught us is that the parts of the brain that deal with visual perception are also often involved with proprioception (the sense which provides us with a perception of our body’s position in space) and motor action. So our existence is always mediated by embodiment, even

362 An apt portmanteau of cinema and synaesthesia.
363 Sobchack, Address of the Eye, 88.
364 As was demonstrated in the previous chapter’s consideration of visual constancy.
in situations that are supposedly primarily visual, like film. Furthermore, this mediation occurs at a stage of cognition prior to consciousness.\footnote{Here I am referring to Thomas Metzinger’s conception of consciousness (\textit{Ego Tunnel}, 14), as opposed to a psychoanalytic definition.} If our brains give us data that temporarily supports an illusion or colours our perception with illusory additional data, then that is as valid an experience as anything wholly “real”. The question we must then explore is how a film might use our neural architecture to create sensuous illusions.

\textbf{The Brain that Touches Light: Mirror Neurons and Conscious Embodiment}

Although few people are glad to admit it, in truth the connection between our perception and reality is less ironclad than we might prefer. Screen media can produce authentic percepts from an illusion because our brains begin to look for and supply data in order to accord with what is perceived as material reality. For example, a television broadcast on \textit{Reports Extra} fallaciously told viewers that it would be trialling a new broadcast technology which should cause a “pleasant country smell” from their television sets during a rural landscape scene. Viewers were asked to call in and report what smells their television produced. Unaware of the ruse, one hundred and seventy-eight people responded that the (fictitious) technology had worked.\footnote{Michael O’Mahony, “Smell Illusions And Suggestion: Reports Of Smells Contingent On Tones Played On Television And Radio.” \textit{Chemical Senses} 3:2 (1978), 183-189.} In this instance, the only aspect a screened image needed to prompt a material percept was to tell its spectators what to expect.

It would seem that for clarity (and sanity’s) sake, most cultures attempt to set aside the fact that the development of perceptual technology – like film and photography – only makes us more aware of the illusions we carry with us. The cultural stigma of admitting the existence of a disconnect between perception and reality carries into almost every facet of society,\footnote{In particular, the stigmatisation of hallucinations (a relatively common phenomenon). For a more detailed look at the culture surrounding the odium of hallucinations, I refer readers to Oliver Sacks’ \textit{Hallucinations} (New York: Vintage Books, 2012).} but it has specifically complicated the film experience. Lay audiences are largely insistent that they
know that what happens onscreen is a fallacy, yet cannot account for cinesthesia or even why a horror movie should prompt fear. In academic circles, the psychoanalytic community is one of the few willing to entertain film audience’s total subjective immersion into a text. Yet the move away from psychoanalysis has led a consequent push to strictly codify the audience as entertained, not sensorially overwhelmed into immersion. As Sobchack argues,

Most film theorists still seem either embarrassed or bemused by bodies that often act wantonly and crudely at the movies, involuntarily countering the fine-grained sensibilities, intellectual discriminations, and vocabulary of critical reflection.368

However, what Sobchack called “cinesthesia” is not without scientific grounds, as research increasingly characterises the human mind as one that is cross-modal, multisensory, and which creates shared manifolds of feeling between subjects. Synaesthesia, as a disorder of sensory percept, is not as prevalent (nor as neurologically structural) as Sobchack would allow. However, the manner in which human beings learn and experience the world has become increasingly better understood. The recent discovery of the mirror neuron system, and subsequent development of the shared-manifold hypothesis, helps explain how spectators could be materially stimulated by a virtual world.

The mirror neuron systems are specific circuits present primarily in sensory and motor-active areas of the brain. What marks these neurons as different is that they have been recorded as active both when an action is observed and when it is performed.369 Thus, if you were to watch a person give a thumbs-up, the same neurons would be active when you returned the gesture.370

Mirror neurons have consequently been implicated in how human beings learn from each other,

as well as strongly colouring our understanding of how our brains perceive the world. The philosophical and psychological implications of mirror neurons are immense. Essentially, they indicate that the human mind struggles with externalising phenomena.

Neurologically, there is often little difference between observing something and doing it ourselves. This has since given rise to the "shared-manifold" hypothesis of empathy and intersubjectivity. Developed by Vittorio Gallese in light of his research into mirror-neuron systems, he proposed that the human brain creates these mimetic pathways as a way of sharing subjective intentionality. Empathy, as Gallese argues, is the capacity of the brain to simulate another’s actions as if we truly performed them ourselves. In essence: the brain has internalised pathways which operate as though we were performing an action when we observe another person doing it. Their actions, within the mind, are mimicked as though we performed them ourselves. This mechanism is highly likely to be a cornerstone of the brain’s capacity to learn, and articulates a hard-wired, physical structure that would allow human beings to experience intersubjectivity. Moreover, this intersubjectivity would be outside of our control.

In the previous chapter, I considered how saccadic masking and the focus of the eye might change the way in which we perceive film space. Cinematic eye tracking, as an empirical field, is still largely in its infancy. However, the emergent data thus far shows that our attention focuses overwhelmingly on the hands and faces of actors on screen. Not incidentally, the visual perception of these features is specialised into the region of the brain with the highest level of mirror neuronal activity.
The power of mirror neurons to mislead our brains into false, embodied perception goes into hapticity, and consequently provides an explanation for Sobchack’s cinesthesia. The explanation for this requires a divergence into pure psychological research. As it turns out, the human mind is capable of producing phantom haptic sensation in a number of circumstances. In one experiment, psychologists Matthew Botvinick and Jonathan Cohen created the “rubber hand” illusion. Participants were put in a shirt with three sleeves, the third middle sleeve containing a rubber arm. The participant’s own left hand was put out of sight, with the rubber hand taking its place in the visual field, as can be seen in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 A participant whose left hand has been visually “replaced” by a rubber hand.

The participants soon felt phantom sensation when the rubber hand was manipulated. The participants perceived material tactile sensation from a prosthetic limb that was in no way attached to their body. If the hand was stroked or pinched, participants were certain that they could feel it in their left hand, which had remained untouched and out of sight. This effect has been further observed in studies on phantom limb sensation in both amputees and those born with congenital limb deficiency. Mirror neurons are the suspected cause of all of these

phenomena. In the former case, for example, their activity in subjects observing moving limbs may be causing the brains of amputees to create the haptic illusion (i.e. the phantom limb). So strong is the power of mirror neurons, they also cause illusory limb sensation in people born without them. A longitudinal study has shown that people born with congenital limb deficiency often develop phantom limb sensation. In that instance, it has been posited that the act of observing fully-limbed individuals triggers the development of mirror neuronal systems which correspond with limbed movement. Thomas Metzinger has gone on to demonstrate how the rubber hand illusion can be expanded into an entire body. Participants were able to experience their consciousness "jump" into an avatar body in an extension of the hallucination of touch that the rubber hand demonstrates. These examples may seem unrelated to film and spectators, however, they in fact reveal an often ignored underlying truth about the nature of spectatorship.

Because of the workings of mirror neurons, embodiment is not a mediating, divisive lens, nor are the senses so easily delineated from one another. In fact, rather than making it easier to intuit the demarcation between things happening to us and things happening outside of us, it makes it impossible. In the moment of perception, everything is happening to us. The externalisation, the moment when we recognise that what we perceive something outside ourselves, occurs afterwards. In this way, the mediation of our bodies is undercut by our neurological misfirings.

Sobchack based her ideas on the philosophy that a film, in aiming to be seen, reaches out to the viewer as much as the viewer reaches out in observation. The scientific reality is perhaps not very different. Film images have the effect of narrowing down the focus of an individual and engaging the visual, sensory and motor-active parts of the brain, all rich with mirror neurons.

These nerve cells are the ultimate embodying force of the mind — they engender immediacy. Their dual roles imply that, in the moment of perception, our brain functions as though everything observed is happening to us, or is being performed by us. In essence, they turn the observed event into a personal, immediate experience. Thus a film that depicts rain tells our brain that it is raining. The fact that it is an illusion is introduced into our consciousness at the last moment of cognition, essentially after the fact. In the moment a film image occurs, our neurological experience tells us it is happening, right now, to us. Therefore film truly is “an experience expressing an experience”.381

By emphasising the aspects of the film that carnally entice the audience, Coppola is actively encouraging cognitive misrecognition. The (illusory) immediacy of the film is created by our brains’ inability to appreciate the difference between the sound of champagne in reality and in film. Because of the nature of cognition and the influence of mirror neurons, we know that this misperception is encoded into our consciousness. Cognition in this instance can be thought of as a flow of information through our various faculties. If we organise these faculties hierarchically, our inner monologue sits at the top, and our sensory data at the bottom, like so:

Figure 3.2 A graphical representation of cognitive forms in top-down and bottom-up processing

Our common (and thoroughly Cartesian) understanding of cognition is top-down, that our inner monologue drives our senses to focus and understand the world around us. Of course, as demonstrated above, the reverse is true. Cognition in the film spectator’s experience is bottom-up, with our sensory data and visual processes having a massive impact on consciousness.

381Sobchack, Address of the Eye, 3.
To summarise: it is perhaps best to imagine a pinball machine — a buzzing plane of noise, colour and lights, the ball in constant motion across its surface, ricocheting from target to target and accruing points as it goes. The game itself is in a perpetual state of flux, each movement changing the course of the experience. A productive way to think about the human experience is that the machine and its playing surface is the mind itself. Inside the brain, much information sits dormant, just as the paddles in the game are only relevant when they make contact with the ball. The ball itself is consciousness. To borrow Metzinger’s nomenclature, it is our ego tunnel. The ball is our experience, the centre of synchrony that an fMRI maps, the current which constitutes our conscious experience. When it makes contact with a percept or affect (or target, to suit the allegory) that moment becomes a part of the constituted embodied experience. Prior to this, it lay dormant in the brain, but it is momentarily aligned with, and a part of, the lived experience. If perception is cross-modal and multi-sensory, it is because there is no such thing as an isolated sensory experience. All experience is a perceptual model arising from a dialogue between consciousness and the senses. One sense can command more focus, but the others are still active in the brain. They simply sit outside of our current conscious percept. Whether in cinema or in the outside world, human beings perceive with their brains, not their senses. What we experience as ‘sensory stimulus’ is in reality a conglomerate percept synthesised from our brain’s learned expectation in addition to the sensory data from our organs. This is why our senses are so easily tricked, why a rubber hand can feel like our own, television sets can “produce” smells and why a film can have such a visceral sensory impact. Our “perception” of the external world begins and ends inside the sensorium’s nascent logics.

Our expectations and knowledge so heavily influence consciousness that our percepts are more created than derived. Moreover, the common understanding of consciousness and this

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“creativity” of consciousness is thought of as affecting only the inner monologue of thought. Our conscious mind is our true perceptive organ. What we see as conscious perception is exactly and only that: a percept of our conscious experience. What we perceive to be the outside world is a neurally-derived construct, and I hope to have demonstrated that it is an unreliable one at that. Consciousness is, in essence, the abstract and illusory information we draw out of the assault of raw data from our sensory faculties. Thus the spectator’s experience is one of authentic sensorial engagement: when we sit in the theatre, we sit “in” the film. On a neural level, our mind knows no difference. The frame is not only permeable, as it touches and alters our personal lived experiences, but utterly meaningless within the moment of perception.

This revelation problematises the notion of the film’s frame and how important or impermeable the frame must be to the spectator. The frame is not only a post-hoc construct in the sense that it is a device placed upon a gestalt of screen culture. It is also a post-hoc construct as it may not actively enter into the spectator’s experience. The screen sits in a similar position, as the affective experience of watching a film must necessarily divest the problems of virtuality. While the cinematic world is a virtual one, the experience of the spectator is material. Consequently, the immaterial world is materialised through its reception by the spectator. In a film like Marie Antoinette, this sensory data is manipulated to have maximum impact, thereby tricking our brains into believing the perception is material in origin and responding accordingly. This illusion flows all the way up into cognition, and only then is it mediated by the knowledge that we are watching a film. Throughout the story, the audience is given moments where the visual style actively encourages the spectator to an embodied experience of the psychogeography.

These ideas, when considered in light of psychogeography, problematize the conception of a spectator who only touches a space. To our conscious minds, we are fully and sensuously embodied within the walls of the cinema’s space. The concern with a mode of exploration that is
primarily haptic or tactile is that it lacks the full carnal sensorium that cinema elicits. Moreover, it eschews the sensorium of material spaces. Accounts like Benjamin and Bruno’s introduce a level of mediation in their reliance on modes of *visuality*, as opposed to modes of *experience*. These assertions are made all the more clear by examining a film made famous for its visual excesses: *Marie Antoinette*.

**Pleasures of the Individual’s Flesh: In the Garden with *Marie Antoinette***

*Marie Antoinette* is an undeniably phenomenologically-minded film. It loosely tells the life experiences of Marie Antoinette as she is welcomed into and riotously ousted from her role as Queen of France. Though this is subject matter with significant narrative possibilities, Coppola chose instead to try to enfold the audience into its geographic setting. Her focus is on the day-to-day existence of Marie and therefore on the simple and sensual pleasures that her life affords. The political and social intrigues involved in regency are only briefly considered, so much so that the film has more silent shots than dialogue. This silence is a symptom of how visually and carnally preoccupied Coppola’s film is.

Coppola’s aesthetics does not simply dwell on sensual imagery, her style actively inspires a cinesthetic experience. As was outlined in the previous chapter, Coppola largely complies with the principles of continuity editing. However, whenever she begins a sequence that is clearly designed to delight the cine-senses, she abruptly changes style. In the place of cuts hidden by saccades and other attempts to make editing invisible, Coppola suddenly takes to changing the visual field dramatically and often. This can best be seen in one of *Marie Antoinette’s* montage sequences.

Set to the upbeat 1980s pop hit *I Want Candy*, the film takes on a series of quick intercuts between champagne, shoes, puppies, desserts and fabrics. An ode to the shallow joy of consumerism, each of these elements is shot in close-up, so that they take up the entire screen.
The clips are short and haphazard, pausing only briefly, so that the audience can fully appreciate the soft lusciousness of a certain cake, or the shine of a jacquard slipper. Yet almost as soon as we are able to comprehend exactly what it is we are looking at, the shot changes. Objects are observed from unusual angles, so that the audience almost struggles to discern if they are looking at a pastry, a fan or a pet.

These images are key examples of what Laura U. Marks describes as part of sensuous embodied spectatorship. These images, she argues, are crystalline moments of intersubjective sensory engagement between viewer and screen, but are also moments which contain a sensual memory. In essence, she considers film images that the spectator may not immediately recognise, though there are inevitably some clues. These haptic images “invite the viewer to respond to the image in an intimate, embodied way, and thus fascinate the experience of other sensory impressions as well”. The montage sequence in Marie Antoinette is one of the film’s most famous, and is certainly accordingly affecting. However, an abrupt cut precedes many of the text’s sensory moments. It seems reasonable to conclude that part of the reason these shots seemingly invite us to touch them with our eyes is because they trigger hypersensitivity of the body as a whole, which in turn encourages our brain to misinterpret data and suggest a material authenticity to our cinematic percepts.

Marks’s account of sensuous spectators has tangible support from the neurological design of the human mind. Perhaps unbeknownst to Marks, dramatically changing the visual field (for instance, as in a montage sequence), probably cues what is known as an “Orienting Response”. In such a response, muscle movement is constricted, the heart rate accelerates, blood flow is increased to the head and skin conductivity increases. In short, one’s attention is abruptly snapped to sensory data, and the sensory organs become significantly more sensitive.

383Marks, Skin of the Film, 53.
384Ibid, 163.
385Ibid, 2.
As a result, the likelihood of the brain mis-recognising sensory data also increases, which would impact on the audience’s capacity for cinesthesia significantly. Whilst continuity editing is designed to prevent an orienting response, abrupt edits actually incite them.\textsuperscript{387} Thus the abruptness of the montage is the key to its phenomenological affect.

The sequence from \textit{Marie Antoinette} is no different. Each image is presented for less than a second, the colours and textures of the image shifting almost quickly. The disjuncture between the sequence’s pop music score and its rococo aesthetics further makes the sequence even harder to parse for the spectator. The sequence begins with a slow pan on Marie’s shoe collection, first panning from left to right, and then cutting to each specific pair as they are removed from contrasting jacquard fabric. From there, the montage quickly becomes more and more incoherent. As it begins, the focus is purely on the fabric and clothes, yet within thirty seconds, it switches dizzyingly between shots of champagne, gloves, mother of pearl gambling chips, desserts, more shoes, puppies, feathers and more fabrics. In a similar mode to the more abstract images of Marks’s account, it is possible that these images immerse the spectator more fully, and allow the spectator to inhabit the sensorium of the cinematic space.

Another of the important aspects of the “I Want Candy” montage, and of \textit{Marie Antoinette}'s general visual style, is its use of disembodied hands. Throughout the montage fingers repeatedly enter the frame, reaching for petit fours, fans and cards. Throughout the rest of the film, the textural elements I have outlined are not simply left to occupy the screen. They are commonly accompanied soon after their entrance into focus by reaching fingers and caresses. That it is hands that reach out and touch objects seemingly tailored to inspire embodied immersion into the text is no coincidence. Mirror neurons are most concentrated in the V5 area of the extrastriate cortex, an area specifically linked to hands and gestures. Consequently, the brain’s

designed inability to parse the personal and the external is most strongly associated with the sense of touch, and of fingers and hands in particular. It is for this reason that research into the rubber hand illusion is so prescient. Although we may feel aware that we are watching an image of someone else’s hands on screen, at every step of cognition prior to consciousness our brain is operating as though we were performing the task. Watching another person’s fingers is, at a neural level, a personal and intimate experience. As the literature presented above of phantom sensation demonstrates, the activation of mirror neurons is potentially sufficient to trigger a percept of haptic sensation in the absence of a material stimulus. Marie often touches the carnal visual elements, and in so doing triggers the spectator to also feel them. Through the pads of her fingers, our minds are brought into a sensual reverie.

Rather than the “I Want Candy” montage being a departure from the film, its aesthetic persists throughout the rest of the text. As mentioned above, Coppola often disrupts the narrative entirely to focus on the sensual. For example, when Marie’s brother comes to advise her on how best to treat the King, their conversation is cut through with a silent shot of tea “flowering” in its ornate cup, the gentle red petals of the flower blooming amid steam. The visuals are given an increased texture by an unusually mixed soundtrack. The accompanying noises of tea being poured or heavy fabric moving through the air are surprisingly loud and unobscured by background music. These moments hold inside them a phantom sense of taste and smell as much as a haptic moment of touch. Even the sequences that use modern pop music to set the mood still maintain strongly audible diegetic sounds, like the fizz of champagne being poured. These elements, rather than being incidental, are part of the reason that the film has such a material sensuality.

Sound is an important part of the cinesthetic experience, particularly in Marie Antoinette, because it can aid in the misrecognition of film as materially real. Mary Anne Doane argues that sound, and in particular diegetic sounds, simulate depth. In so doing, she claims, they brought
together and unified the visual illusions of the screen, making film space coherently three-dimensional.\textsuperscript{388} Given our understanding of the neurally embodied spectator, it is likely that sound has this power to unify and give a “weight” to film space because it encourages the brain to further maintain the cinematic illusion. In effect, diegetic sound pushes the viewer into further immersion by providing more information that will be mis-recognised as material, creating a cinesthetic experience. Furthermore, as per Doane’s argument, it helps to create the illusion of a deep, three-dimensional plane. In so doing, the carnal appeal to the body by the screen helps constitute the cinematic space as a material space, even if its materiality stems from its effects, and not its objects. This can be observed in the first scene of Marie Antoinette, where the camera follows a young Marie through a carriage into France. The soundtrack gives prominence to the crunch of autumn leaves under wheels, and to the jangle of horse’s bridles. These sounds prompt an almost \textit{déjà vu} like experience, where the spectator is suddenly and viscerally aware of the sensation of leaves underfoot and crisp autumnal weather. The sounds encourage the brain to access the associated sensations in a synthesised conscious percept. However, the scene which holds some of the strongest diegetic and most audible sound comes halfway through the movie, in the Trianon scene mentioned in the introduction.

In its presentation of pastoral idyll, the film emphasises two things: the haptic-optic inspiring textures of nature, and the sounds of nature. Diegetic music is replaced by birdsong, and the sound of animals walking through grass. The film once more turns to montage, the form which most quickly turns the screen's address from the cerebral to the visceral. Similar to the “I Want Candy” montage, the images cut quickly and without reference to spatiality. The scale of the objects is once more thrown off, as Coppola alternates between mid-shots and close-ups. These abrupt cuts between images that focus so strongly on haptic texture, and that are so unassimilable into a narrative flow, help create the haptic mode of visuality that Marks outlines.

For example, in one moment, a brief exchange between Marie and her daughter is intercut by an extreme close-up of a feather stuck on a blade of grass.

Figure 3.3 A close up from Marie Antoinette's Trianon sequence.

These images cannot be comprehended by the disengaged, narratively-minded top-down cognition on which so much of the current literature on cinematic spectatorship relies on. As Sobchack's account emphasises, these images can only be parsed if the eyes take on a phantom carnal ability. They must be caressed by cinesthetic eyes. At the same time, Coppola floods the soundtrack with the noises of chickens in roost and wind moving through grass. These too are sounds that can only be parsed by appealing to the sense-memory of the spectator. They inspire sensation, as they inspire the spectator to access (and therefore re-experience) their sensory memories. Tied to their haptic illusions of touch is the sense memory of how chicken coops smell, how grass sounds. Thus, in their presentation, they inspire a material sensory response from the viewer that goes beyond the merely haptic and into a carnal incitation. In so doing, the spectator may be “pulled” into the embodied experience of the landscape, one which occurs within the cinematic world.
This envelopment into a landscape is also a visual theme within the text, as represented by the aesthetics of the characters. In the *Trianon* sequence, Marie and her child visually blend into the landscape of the scene. Her white dress and blonde hair blur into the shots of daisies and sheep, making her as much a part of the landscape as a character within it.

![Figure 3.4 Marie and her daughter in Trianon.](image)

Often the characters wear clothes and hairstyles that use the same colour palette and hold the same amount of detail as the rooms in Versailles. They literally disappear into the landscape, or rather are subsumed by its aesthetics. In one scene, Marie’s clothes visually blur with the wallpaper behind her, signalling a sense of being consumed or subsumed into the film’s space. This mirrors the aims and experiences of the spectator in a specific and important way. The spectator is similarly taken in by the aesthetic presentation of these haptic, sensuous elements until the experience is inescapably embodied, and built from a material cinesthetic sensation.
The film places the spectator into its world by appealing to their embodied experience. In their experience of the film — an experience wherein the boundaries of the self are blurred and the senses are pulled into misrecognised sensation — they enter into the cinematic space. Or rather, they lend the cinematic space a materiality. The filmic landscape holds a drive towards subjectivity in its demand to be felt. In so doing, it constitutes its immaterial space into material sensation for the spectator.

It is because of this capacity to incite a carnal vision that *Marie Antoinette* operates as a post-modern time machine. Blending modern music with baroque aesthetics, the audience is enticed to experience the old through the new, to have its own personal experience of the cinematic psychogeography. Coppola connects the present and the past through sensation, a universal that directly addresses the spectator as an individual. She uses our eyes to enfold the rest of our physical being into the landscape. This explains why the camera so often lingers on tactile or
gustatory aspects such as soft fabrics or fizzing champagne. By engaging the audience's senses, Coppola spins a common thread between the film's events and the viewer's experience. This helps us mentally enter the film's psychogeography. These moments add up to what becomes the moral of the film, as Marie's only escape from life (in an interesting parallel to the lifestyle of the Lisbon girls in *Virgin Suicides*) becomes the sensual.

*Marie Antoinette* is a particularly apt film for considering the power of embodied film viewing because it is a subtly vocal advocate for the visceral and sensual thrills that life has to offer. It is only when Marie moves to the chateau at Trianon and consequently succumbs to simple sensory pleasures that she finds a modicum of happiness. Admittedly the film sometimes glamorises excess in its more questionable forms, such as pet elephants in Versailles or three foot tall powdered wigs full of tiny fake birds. However, much of that excess is showcased in shots that remove the sensory elements (in this regard, the “I Want Candy” montage is an exception). The extreme aesthetic artifice in much of the film's setting provides limited physical enjoyment for the viewer. The Trianon scenes, in contrast, use all of the techniques outlined above to push the audience into carnal engagement. The spectator's preference of the sensual over the artificial is a theme that the narrative itself mirrors.

Marie is bound by rules and abstraction, her every movement and action frustrated by royal codes of civility. As the text illustrates at several points, the queen cannot even get dressed unless the correct waiting lady is there to hand her the correct gown. Her happiness comes not from being queen, nor from successfully conquering these codes, but from sensually engaging with the world around her. Getting dressed may be an absurd production, but she is at least afforded the joy of soft, rich fabrics in lush colours. Coppola manipulates the sensory aspects of the film so that this experience is reflected in the audience. As Marie learns to enjoy what this complex and often unhappy life can offer her (sumptuous cakes and beautiful clothes, sunshine and fresh milk), the audience is given the escape from the uncomfortable scenes of court life and
invited to plunge cinesthetically into the same excesses. Our journey and her journey are inextricably intertwined, both on a neural and textual level. A viewer could hardly be blamed for licking their lips as we watch Marie eat strawberries with cream. Our mouths flood with the misrecognised idea that it is we who are eating, and when our brains try to bring the conflicting percepts into accord, we feel hunger.

If there is a surrogacy in the film experience, it is here. Not in the camera’s eye, but in the character’s mouth, nose and hands. Marie Antoinette is a film that has sown its affect into its landscape. As Bruno claimed, the space is replete with an emotive contagion, so that each audience member feels the film as they “feel” the film. This is doubly true when we consider mirror neuronal circuits, given that their likely evolutionary advantage is to intuit the outcomes of others’ actions by placing ourselves into their shoes. In essence, they are the germinal root for emotional contagion, and consequently a primary way in which motion (as it is observed) is used to intuit and spread emotion to the audience of the film. Bruno strongly underlined the importance of the transmogrification of motion into emotion. Yet it is not surrogacy that allows the emotions and sensations of others to seep into our own subjectivity, it is our empathic response. The audience responds in concert with the film’s affect, not through a simulatory process of thinking “as though” they were there. This effect is pushed further by the cinema’s ability to incorporate self-percept into the film experience, a phenomenon Sobchack considered at length.

The Individual Spectator and the Film

Sobchack’s insistence on the reversibility of film perception and the conscious self-percept is important to psychogeography because it affirms the subjective experience. If we suddenly become conscious that “we are watching a movie”, this realisation grounds the filmic experience

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as a personal one. The individual experience of a place is the framework of psychogeography, both material and immaterial. It is only at the sudden jolt of reversion, the moment when we are taken out of illusory immersion, that we can fully appreciate that we are having an experience of the film and the film landscape. De Certeau, Bruno and Benjamin all saw it as important that the individual produces a space — and thereby turns it into a psychogeography — by touching the walls of it, so to speak.

Moments of reversion are not necessarily bound to break the viewer’s psychogeographic experience. One the biggest problems with using a moving camera as the basis for a theory is that it can ruin the illusion of immersion. If the camera moves too quickly, or in a way that is impossible for humans to follow, we tend to become suddenly aware that we are not inside the frame. Arguably, heavily edited sequences like those in Marie Antoinette would be subject to the same problems. Surely the moment when the illusion of cinematic reality breaks is also the moment of destruction of filmic psychogeography? Thankfully, Sobchack has put forward a possible solution to this problem. She suggests that we recognise the moving picture as the work of an anonymous and producing body-subject, intentionally making visible choices with the very behaviour of the body-being. We allow the film to have its own breaks from perfect immersion because the experience of film viewing is not one solely devised of illusion. Instead, Sobchack puts forward the idea that the film viewing experience is necessarily a dialogue between the visual expression of the film and one’s own experience of that expression. This is an idea that the embodiment of neural architecture supports, as the nature of consciousness is similarly a dialogic synthesis of sensation and cognition. If anything, the embodiment of the subject furthers their discrete identity. If, as Husserl stated, touching something affirms our

390For example, the "cosmic zoom" now popular in many films, where the camera flies above the earth only to zoom (assisted by CGI) suddenly down to the street. For a more comprehensive overview of the cosmic zoom and its effect on cinesthesia see Jennifer Barker "Neither here nor there: synaesthesia and the cosmic zoom." New Review of Film and Television Studies 7:3 (2009): 311-324.
391Sobchack, Carnal Thoughts, 288.
existence as a being-in-the-world, then our neural embodiment only furthers our awareness of being a single subject.

From Benjamin and Debord’s work, we can understand the importance of the individual’s sensual exploration of a space. This exploration also often occurs in the comprehension of film space. It is tempting to call the carnal experience of the film spectator a virtual exploration. However, it is now clear that on a neural level, there is little that is “virtual” about the film experience. The far superior term for our immersion and experience of the film’s landscape is illusion. As participants in an illusion, we have an authentic experience, even though we are aware that the catalyst is based on an abstract fabrication. This idea supports the application of architectural theory to films, as the conclusions that the latter draws about spatial experience and practice are just as applicable to our real experiences of cinematic landscapes. In essence then, “The cinema does not just present images, it surrounds them with a world. This is why, very early on, it looked for bigger and bigger circuits which would unite an actual image with recollection-images, dream-images and world-images.”

Marie Antoinette shows how the experience of the film is what creates the sensory connection necessary for a film’s landscape to take on the properties of psychogeography. It is, in essence, an explored and emotional world-image. Thus far, the relationship between spectator and cinematic space has been considered as a carnal, immersive experience. However, its role as a mood stimulant in psychology experiments (as noted in the introduction) raises an important question. If a psychogeography is a space that is infused with emotions and memories, how do film spaces capture and hold them? Furthermore, in considering the underlying neural architecture that allows the cinesthetic contact of audience to film, this raises another important consideration: the role of empathy and intersubjectivity. The following chapter is designed to

consider how humans have previously spatialised emotions, and how this applies to the psychogeography of Coppola's 2012 film *Somewhere*.

**Chapter Six**

**Getting Somewhere:**

**Intersubjective Empathies in the Cinematic Experience.**

When discussing psychogeography, it is tempting to write as though the film is an empty landscape. Indeed, in an effort to emphasise the intersubjectivity of the phenomenological film experience, I have deliberately focused on the dialogue between the filmic landscape and the spectator and disregarded the role of the character's emotions. However, to say that the primary enjoyment or mode of connection that the spectator feels to the screen is in its spaces would be an unforgivable overgeneralisation. After all, my definition of psychogeography, as drawn from Bruno and de Certeau's work, does not describe the experience of only one person within a city. Rather, the city is defined by the overlap between multiple psychogeographic interactions between multiple subjects.\(^{394}\) While de Certeau's account explores the manner in which the individual can help create or craft the abstract semiotic meaning of a city based upon their own individual experience,\(^{395}\) he is also careful to underline that this definition can only take shape if there are commonalities between multiple subjects' psychogeographic impressions. If psychogeography is the exploration of an emotional, mnemonic, sensual experience of a space — one which has tangible power in shaping said space when it matches the experience of other subjects — then empathy is a fundamental and key part of psychogeography. Thus to talk about filmic psychogeography without considering empathy would be to tender an incomplete project.

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\(^{395}\) Ibid, 92.
As previously established, the spectator's experience of the cinematic space sits at the intersection of virtual and actual, as immaterial artifices create material sensations. This has the effect of constituting the landscape into a state of immanent materiality, and places the spectator's experience inside the frame of the screen. Thus the empathy most worth considering in an exploration of cinematic psychogeography is the emotional connection between spectator and screen characters. Psychogeography is ultimately always tied to a form of emotional response, as both Debord and Bruno underline.396 It is key importance then to parse the effect that emotional contagions (born of either landscape or other subjects within it) has upon the spectator’s experience of space.

Coppola's body of work has a significant and demonstrable interest in the experience of empathy. Her films often engage with problems, obstacles and failures of empathy. Her characters (and particularly the characters in Somewhere) are often in a state of social dissociation, suffering from an inability to connect with those around them. These distanced characters are, quite importantly, in a state of dissonance with the spectator. The spectator begins a film aiming to experience an emotional connection with the screen, to partake in one of the key pleasures of cinema. If the spectator aims for empathy, and the characters are incapable of such modes of being, then how are the spectator's needs sublimated or fulfilled? As I go on to argue, the richness of Somewhere's narrative is only accessible to spectators who experience the film in a state of synchronous feeling with the main character, Johnny. This experience in turn shades the spectator's psychogeographic experience by sewing emotional content deep into the immaterial landscape.

Within her work, Coppola creates an unusual form of empathic connection between spectator and screen by creating moments of synchronous affective intensity. In Somewhere, Coppola crafts these moments by rendering the film into a series of emotional landscapes. I argue that

396Debord, "Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography", 23; Bruno, Atlas, 1.
Coppola uses specific aesthetic conventions (such as framing, close-up and shot/reverse-shot) in order to entrain the spectator to the affective intensities of her characters which in turn transforms the film into these sites of emotional contagion. “Emotional contagion”, in this sense, refers to the passing of emotions from one subject to another, without the receiving subject necessarily being able to discretely identify the transmitting subject. As Theresa Brennan outlines, emotional contagion works through the body, but affects the spectator’s mind. Brennan aims to overthrow the characterisation of empathy that holds each subject as a discrete entity, moving instead towards a consideration of the subject as a “permeable way of being”. The subject is decentred because they feel in synchrony, which blurs the lines between internal and external, origin and destination. In order to fully comprehend what they are seeing, the mind automatically reacts as though the observed is an internal, personal occurrence. Mirror neurons (as briefly addressed in the previous chapter) demonstrate that the external is already internal. When spectators and the characters of film feel in sync, the latter becomes our company on a psychogeographic journey. This also allows discrete spectators to open their subjectivity up to a group experience, to allow themselves to become a part of an audience. In this way, the film mirrors what the audience wants. As was outlined in the second chapter, spectators travel (through the cinema) to feel something, to experience a psychogeography. The produced empathy of *Somewhere*, the entrainment of spectator and cinematic subject, is one such experience. Thus the empathy between the spectator and Johnny is how the film engages in intersubjective exploration. In fact, the only narrative arc that the film has requires the spectator to feel in sync with Johnny, so that the subtle change to his character is detectable. The film depicts a series of vignettes in the life of a largely successful Hollywood actor as he spends a weekend with his estranged daughter Cleo. Without empathy, the film is simply a series of moments in the life of a depressive, but with synchronous intensities moving between spectator and screen, the actual story begins to emerge.

398Ibid, 11.
The following chapter begins by unpacking the significant body of literature on spectatorial empathy in order to demonstrate that Somewhere problematises these accounts. The issue I identify is one primarily drawn from a preference for “top-down” theories of mind within the current discourse. As this thesis aims to move away from such areas in order to consider the major impacts of bottom-up cognition on psychogeography, I then consider the works of Massumi, Theresa Brennan and Amy Coplan in order to further illuminate the “unruly empathy” that Somewhere generates, and how human beings are subject to unruly empathy because of our neural architecture. I argue that landscapes and places engage the spectator in an intersubjective affective interplay, and thus constitute the spectator beyond themselves. I then consider how Somewhere echoes this impact by eliciting the spectator’s ingrained empathic response. It is this intersubjective exchange of affect, I argue, that allows Somewhere to elicit empathy from its atmospheric (and thus inherently spatial) apathy and produce a film that feels in sync with the spectator. This discussion is then brought back to the current understanding of psychogeography, as the implication for the unruly empathy that my argument puts forward is that the experience of psychogeography is significantly altered by unruly empathy.

The Problem of Empathy in a Theoretical Framework

Somewhere is unique amongst Coppola’s films, as it actively rewards viewers who connect empathically with characters who are unable to feel. Despite the cognitive dissonance that is involved in empathising with a character who cannot empathise, Coppola naturalises much of this unruly synchronous feeling in her work. The study of spectators and their relationship with the screen owes a great debt to Christian Metz (although not to his psychoanalytic approach). It is on his assertion that the viewer is in a state of perceptual openness, desirous of a connection between themselves and the screen, that I build my analysis of Somewhere. Metz’s argument

399Metz, “Identification, Mirror” in The Imaginary Signifier Trans. Celia Britton and Annwyl Williams (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 42-58. I do not necessarily subscribe to the psychoanalytic idea that the Spectator is primarily identifying with themselves watching a movie, an argument arrived at by considering the totality of the viewing experience. As I have already argued in chapter one, the recency effect and its impact on memory and perception means that more work must be done on the
stands apart from cognitive theories of empathy in film, which focus on films that use narrative causality to allow the spectator to connect with characters through their motivations (and our own spectatorial desires for narrative completion and pleasure)\textsuperscript{400} or affective cues such as soundtracks and editing to encourage a synchronous state of feeling between viewer and film.\textsuperscript{401} However, Coppola’s film style exceeds and complicates traditional notions of cinematic causality and narrative. While the Introduction of this thesis established that her work is best understood as a liminal link between Hollywood and art cinema, \textit{Somewhere} in particular is a film that pushes the communicative function of form and style. Consequently, the empathic, dialectic connection between the characters of the film and the spectators cannot be neatly coded within the current understanding of cinematic empathy. In \textit{Somewhere}, Coppola uses the entrainment of the spectator to bring them to the very edge of an emotional void, while still preserving the individual subject’s capacity to feel. This spectatorial experience may feel simple, but its creation is highly complex, and requires the film to craft a delicate, discursive intersubjectivity between the text and the audience. This intersubjective exchange has significant impact upon the individual’s psychogeographic encounter, as it constitutes a mode of shaping the spectator’s emotional response to cinematic spaces.

For the purposes of the chapter, my definition of empathy is where two subjects feel in synchrony.\textsuperscript{402} It is also important to make a distinction between empathy and sympathy, sympathy being a conscious simulative response akin to “If that were me, I would feel...”. I am drawing this distinction due to the aggressive reassertion of discrete subjectivity within a


sympathetic response. To feel sympathy is to assert the boundaries between two subjects while one of the subjects imagines their own response if they were in another situation. It has already been established that psychogeography is reliant upon intersubjectivity, and (in a cinematic context) the blurring of boundaries between spectator and screen that leads to this intersubjectivity. Thus in order to interrogate the role of emotional contagion in psychogeography, it is paramount to focus on the emotional experiences that also rely on intersubjectivity.

I draw my definition of empathy-as-synchrony primarily from Barbara Maria Stafford’s model of empathy as derived from mimetic properties of the brain. Stafford, following Metzinger, asserts that social cognition has evolved from an unintended repurposing of the body model, i.e. the mirror neuron system’s potential for learning-through-mimicry. Stafford’s account pushes this idea of a shared manifold between subjects as the fundamental basis for empathy, and for the spectatorial experience. Following Metzinger, Antonio Damasio and Gallese, she affirms the idea that social thought has grown from an accidental repurposing of the brain’s mechanisms for learning from others into a potentiality for shared intersubjective experience. Somewhere, I argue, forms this empathic connection dialogically. It sets out a series of affective lures to entrain the spectator into synchronous states. It follows that my definition of empathy then is a significantly narrower one than that already considered in film critique. It is perhaps an uncomfortable definition, as it is one that is potentially subject to significant failure on a personal level: spectators either entrain to the emotional affect of the characters on screen or they do not. Somewhere’s negative reviews directly cite a lack of empathy towards these characters contributing to what was regarded by the critical community as a dull film. However, this perceived flaw in Somewhere stems partly from what makes it an

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403 Stafford, *Echo Objects*, 175-6
404 Ibid, 175-6
405 Ibid, 175-6
406 Ibid, 175-6
ideal candidate through which to consider empathy — its narrative of an apathetic and
disenfranchised actor uncovering his capacity for emotional connection is only accessible to the
spectators who were moved into synchrony. It is an unlikely, and thus unruly kind of empathy, 
an unadulterated call-and-response between spectator and screen into synchronous
phenomenological states.

This is a form of empathy not currently popular in the theoretical understanding of cinematic
empathy. It is important to note that many of the simulative models of empathy are attempts to
bring a level of scientific psychological theory into film critique.408 As argued by Carl Plantinga,
Murray Smith, Daniel Barratt, Torben Grodal and Gregory Currie, the relationship between
spectator and character will always be occluded by the fictitious nature of the film-subject, the
mediating filter of cinema and the yawning gap of reality and illusion that stands between
spectator and screen.409 Within this discourse, the viewer's knowledge that the characters are
not real has been constructed as a major obstacle to empathy between a spectator and a
fictional character. Yet it would seem that there is little room in cognitive film theory for a form
of unconscious synchronous empathy between spectator and characters on screen. This is
because each of the authors discussed ultimately argues that empathy occurs in a top-down
cognitive fashion, i.e. it occurs within our consciousness, after the missing half-second. While
the mediation of the spectator's view through film is certainly an element of the experience that
should be taken into account, to state that it transforms all empathy into sympathy is a step in
the wrong direction. Particularly as it relies on the assertion that empathy is a top-down
process.

Thus far, I have tried to emphasise that firstly, the human mind struggles to separate reality
from the virtual illusion presented in film. Secondly, that as psychologists increasingly

408 Gregory Currie "Imagination as Simulation: Aesthetics Meets Cognitive Science" In Mental Simulation: Evaluations and
Applications, eds A. Stone & M. Davies (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1995) 120, Barratt "Tracing the Routes of Empathy" 37, Smith,
409Plantinga, Moving Viewers, 73, Currie "Imagination as Simulation" 125, Barratt "Tracing the Routes of Empathy" 38, Smith,
understand the unconscious processes of the mind, so too must cognitive film theory begin to take these advances into account, and finally, that much of the spectatorial pleasures of cinema arise out of the brain's bottom-up appraisal of the film, as opposed to a top-down conscious understanding. A model of spectatorial-empathy-as-simulative-imagining or empathy-as-mediated-sympathy all adopt this top-down approach. These compelling ideas have potentially been created in the image of how empathy feels within consciousness, as opposed to how it operates on a mechanistic level. However, given that so many of the brain's operations are outside our conscious experience, it is important to consider other explanations for cinematic empathies of all kinds. This is particularly striking when viewing a text such as Somewhere, because the film presents us with an apparent paradox: it contains none of the classic mechanisms of an empathic connection between spectator and screen, yet one feels in sync with the main character.

Somewhere, and indeed much of Coppola's work, problematises both the need for classical narrative structures, and the causal relationship within the definition of empathy being critically constructed here. What Jonathon Frome, Miller, Grodal, Plantinga and Barrat all ultimately share is an "if...then..." understanding of empathy.\textsuperscript{411} The simulative or aligning models of empathy connect the spectator to the temporal causality of narratives. Yet this is not how empathy occurs in material social interaction. Empathy (and again it bears stating the distinction between empathy and sympathy) is an instantaneous reflex. The sudden shock of feeling as it hinges between two subjects occurs at a preconscious level, at the sparks of intensity that Brian Massumi outlines.\textsuperscript{412} As can be observed in the literature already considered in this thesis, much of the thought on spectatorial empathy, and indeed with the

\textsuperscript{410}It is important to note that many of the accounts I have cited, particularly Frome and Miller's work, temper the broadness of their outlines by including room for a learned-empathy reflex (to the point where it is often outside of our control, as is apparently the case when one empathises with an individual when they would prefer not to). The logical through-line to all of these accounts is that simulative imagining is repeated until a reflex develops. This is perhaps the only way that one can account for an 'intentional' experience of empathy while acknowledging the unconscious and potentially unwanted ways it can be triggered. These models of empathy still ultimately reaffirm the idea that one's conscious mind is "in control". Thus the simulative empathy models outlined above all eventually argue that empathy is an unconscious process growing from a conscious activity, a claim that is logically dissonant. This is due to an attribution of executive control to the conscious mind which may not exist.

\textsuperscript{411}Frome, "Representation, Reality, and Emotions Across Media." 12; Miller "Defining Empathy: Thoughts on Coplan's Approach." 67; Grodal, \textit{Embodied Visions}, 1-4; Plantinga, \textit{Moving Viewers}, 73, Barratt "Tracing the Routes of Empathy" 37,

\textsuperscript{412}Massumi, \textit{Parables for the Virtual}, 85.
spectator's experience, seems to necessitate narratological arcs. Frome, Miller and Barrat's work all categorise the spectator/screen empathic connection as one forged through the mechanics of narrative causality. The spectator's alignment with a character's motivations depends upon those motivations (and their desired outcomes) being readily detectable. They must follow a temporal-causal track. These accounts of empathy, if included within a discussion of psychogeography, run the risk of once again disincarnating the spectator and ignoring the reflexive and affective contact between spectator and cinematic space.

*Somewhere* poses a challenge to these accounts of empathy and thus necessitates a new way of considering how empathy and emotion change the spectator's experience. *Somewhere* does not adopt the classical narrative of Hollywood cinema, and so does not neatly align with the dominant discourse on empathy. However, if experienced through (and considered as) a series of intensities, a narrative begins to emerge. One cannot access the film fully without feeling it, and acquiescing in its to-be-felt-ness. In this way, *Somewhere* shares far more with Deleuze's taxonomic definition of the affect-image than the action-image.413 An affect-image consists of a moment that exists a-temporally and takes on its own subjectivity, in the sense that it has an inherent affect that spreads to those it engages intersubjectively.414 Any cinematic and psychogeographic encounter will necessarily rely on affect-images, as they engender a reflexive and subjective response akin to any material environment. Foregoing an obvious narrative arc of causal relations (as in the action-image), *Somewhere* instead consists almost entirely as a long-form montage, an assemblage of vaguely related moments in the life of its main character, Johnny. The story is not one arrived at by the rubric of "if...then..." causality or classical cinema's action-image. For its duration, it simply demands to be felt. This can be detected in the vignette-style temporal organisation of the text. It is often hard to tell, when watching the film, whether it takes place over the course of a few days or a few months. *Somewhere*'s chronological and causal

414Ibid, 97.
vagueness underlines the work's to-be-felt-ness, as it actively rejects being “known” or understood. For spectators who intend to analyse the film on a removed, cerebral level, the film obscures this reading behind the affective lures of the text. As will be examined in the third part of this chapter, the film's images tend towards indeterminacy, instead opening up and playing with the possibilities and potentials of their perception.

The purpose of the film’s sequencing and events can only become clear if the spectator empathises. By synchronously feeling with Johnny, the spectator gains the capacity to compare emotional tenors in scenes. From there, the narrative emerges, one of a person who is in a dissociative, alienating struggle with his own emotional void. But the image's potentials can only become actualised through intersubjectivity, through the synchronous sharing of feeling. Once they feel as Johnny does, the spectator can become attuned to the changes his character undergoes throughout the course of the film. Thus while there is a broad and often compelling body of work on the creation and curation of empathy within spectatorship theory, it is problematized by filmmakers such as Coppola. In her preference for non-causal or indeterminate images and scenes, and by creating characters that do not fit comfortably within understandings of identifiable nor antagonistic characteristics, Coppola has made as text that should not engender empathy in the spectator. And yet, it is only through empathy that the film’s meaning emerges. It is for this reason that I now turn to the second part of this chapter, and consider models of empathy that do not require a top-down approach to cognition. It is my hope that in moving towards theory that examines the unconscious mechanisms of human cognition and perception that an explanation for the “unruly” empathy of Somewhere can be explained.

The Unruly Empathy of Affective Intensity

As a review of the literature on empathy reveals, the dominant philosophy of filmic empathy is that it occurs in a top-down cognitive fashion. This, in turn, implies that the emotional content
must be read by the spectator, thus veering the discourse into a borderline semiotic or psychoanalytic course on identification. It is exactly this valence that Massumi sought to avoid in order to create complete analysis.\textsuperscript{415} As he argues in \textit{Autonomy of Affect}, semiotics presents us with an apparatus for breaking down sociological phenomena that begins and ends with the formal cognition and cultural context of the subject. While semiotics allows us to break apart concepts from their lay-usage in order to see to their core, it is also a framework that seems to present an infinitely recursive set of abstraction.\textsuperscript{416} This is an issue perceptible in both Grodal’s equivocation between the spectator’s conscious and unconscious acknowledgment of the film’s illusions, as well as in Plantinga’s movement between direct and sympathetic emotional responses.\textsuperscript{417} Because an image can be broken into such small aspects of structure, Massumi claims that semiotics had bent its focus too narrowly on the structures of events, instead of the events themselves.

Massumi’s answer to the seemingly infinite nature of semiotic recursion was affect, but a very specific kind thereof. Moving away from Clough’s definition of affect as a feeling changed by some external inciting stimulus, he aimed to consider the image specifically in its moment of reception: to focus our attention on the very moment itself.\textsuperscript{418} Affect, as Massumi characterises it, is the suspension of our cognitive action-reaction circuits.\textsuperscript{419} Massumi wants to pierce temporality to uncover the emergence of meaning within the body, as opposed to the culturally moulded subjective \textit{post-hoc} account that the mind constructs. He validates this focus by considering the simple fact that thoughts, and the cognitive registering of one’s thoughts, takes time. Skin conductivity is instantaneous, he points out, yet it takes about a half-second for the percept of our skin to become registered within our ego-tunnel.\textsuperscript{420} It is in this unaccounted for

\textsuperscript{416}Ibid, 85
\textsuperscript{417}Although it does bear stating that neither theorist would consider themselves semioticians. However, the point I am trying to make clear is that a discussion of the brain’s workings (which both authors do consider) that takes top-down models as the primary mode of thought (which, again, both authors do) shares such procedural DNA with semiotics that they suffer from the same issues.
\textsuperscript{418}Ibid, * 87
\textsuperscript{419}Ibid, 89
\textsuperscript{420}Please note that I am paraphrasing Massumi, who does not refer to Metzinger’s ‘ego-tunnel’. Ibid, 93.
half-second that we can detect unconscious processes, and move into a pre-social analytic framework.421

Massumi’s affect is borderline mechanical in that he considers affects that are fundamentally autonomic. This “autonomic tendency”, he writes, is “received second-hand from the body and is raised to a higher power to become an activity of the mind”.422 It is important to note that Massumi delineates between emotions and affects, one of the points which differentiates his work from the broader category of affect theory. While Eve Sedgwick and Erin Manning are concerned primarily with affect as a transmitted emotion, Massumi feels that affect must be arrived at in its most primordial form, as a bodily intensity.423 This stems from two driving principles in his inquiry: his desire to move away from structuralist and poststructuralist forms of thought, and his characterisation of emotion drawn from Spinoza.424 Massumi rightly points out that affects are precognitive, whereas emotions require multiple levels of categorisation and subjectivisation, thus making them the domain of semiotic and structuralist inquiry.425 Massumi looks at affect as intensity because he was concerned about the sway that socialisation and semiotic categorisation might have when an affect registers to the viewer as an emotion. These moments of shared intensity occur within the mind, though not necessarily within consciousness. It is for this reason, their position outside conscious control, that I call them unruly. It is this framework which I adopt in an attempt to fully excavate the psychogeography of Somewhere.

**The New Neural Empathy**

Two significant authors have already begun to consider this “unruly empathy”. The first is Theresa Brennan, who in The Transmission of Affect aimed to understand the germinal root of

421Ibid, 89
422Massumi, “The Autonomy of Affect”, 92
423Ibid, 87
424Massumi, Parables for the Virtual, 40
425Ibid, 40
social contagion by bridging the gap between psychology, affect and psychoanalysis.\textsuperscript{426} Brennan has two major theses: that affect exists outside the subject, and through infection, it decentralizes the subject. Her discussion of Le Bon, McDougall and Trotter underlines the vastness of theory on empathic response, and the dearth (at the time of her writing) of hard evidence for its mechanisms. Consequently, she returns to McDougall and Freud in an examination of a “primitive sympathetic response”. When groups act in affective sync, she argues, it is because there is an underlying primordial trigger within the mind, in the form of pheromones and “nervous entrainment”.\textsuperscript{427} While these are certainly two factors in encouraging group formation and productive social entrainment, there is a third that cannot be overlooked – mirror neurons.

In Amy Coplan’s article “Catching Character’s Emotions”, she attempts to create a space for mirror neurons within a framework of emotional contagion.\textsuperscript{428} It is becoming increasingly clear from functional brain imaging studies that the brain itself has its own perceptual circuits, which respond with the same immediacy that one’s skin or eardrums or optic nerve might. These circuits are mirror neurons. They are crucial in both the perception of images, and the spectator’s response to them. Coplan considers mirror neurons to constitute a kind of associative empathy which she terms emotional contagion.\textsuperscript{429} This model of empathy has a simple premise: humans are, through the affect of mirror neurons, conditioned towards certain emotional responses to situations and any cue, no matter how mediated or convoluted, has the potential to trigger the associated response. A film has the capacity to evoke empathy between its characters and its spectator because it provides these cues while depicting characters

\textsuperscript{426}Brennan, The Transmission of Affect, 2-4.


\textsuperscript{428}Amy Coplan, “Catching Characters’ Emotions: Emotional Contagion Responses to Narrative Fiction Film.” \textit{Film Studies} 8:8 (2006)

\textsuperscript{429}Coplan, “Catching Characters’ Emotions”, 26-38
experiencing relevant emotions.430 The expression of emotion from one subject may trigger an internal empathetic reaction from an observer.

This is a model of empathy that works outside a conscious mind choosing to take on another's perspective. The spectator is affected by the image of another because the brain uses the same circuits, as in the shared-action ontology of empathy.431 Due to the energy efficiency of shared-action empathy, the brain uses the same pathways it has developed to create consciousness in order to intuit the intentions of another's consciousness. Thus by a quirk of efficacy, the mind operates empathically by internalising the external. In Somewhere, and in cinema generally, we are capable of feeling synchronously, because this mode of empathy occurs outside of a perceptual-model of consciousness. The subject recognises that they are not consciously simulating an emotional reaction as though they were the object of their empathy. Instead, they are genuinely moved by the feeling of the empathic object into synchronous feeling. This conception of intersubjective connection does not need to perform logical acrobatics to account for undesired or unruly empathy. The model of empathy outlined above operates neurologically on mirror neuron systems. These circuits are automatically activated in observation due to their crucial role in development, and are commonly activated when looking upon the facial expressions of others.432

In Somewhere, emotions are communicated via close-up shots and extended takes, two stylistic elements ideal for causing emotional contagion by engaging with the face. Coppola's directorial choices problematise the Cartesian/embodied divide as their affective properties cause a decentred spectator, one that is both discrete and intersubjective. Somewhere aims to make the audience feel in sync with a character who is in a state of emotional alienation, whose numbness renders him unable to empathise. The film demands that the spectator feel his alienation and

430For example, a viewer may be conditioned to find a group of smiling happy people a pleasant environment, and thus seeing a room full of laughing people on screen will trigger the associated happiness in the viewer.
make contact with an emotional void. This is an understated feat of filmic empathy, to create a complicated synchronous feeling between spectator and screen. It is an intersubjective experience that still requires the spectator to reject full identification. The reason it can be described as understated is because this is achieved by the careful organisation of cinematic elements so that they bypass a conscious, intellectual engagement.

The Affective Face: An Intersubjective Surface

Mirror neurons connect the spectator with the film in an internal and intimate way. By neurologically echoing active participation, the brain processes film as though what happens on screen momentarily happens to us. Moreover, they potentially make up the neurological basis for empathy. The mimicking of facial expression is a key example of emotional contagion and is notably made both possible and unconscious by the operations of mirror neurons. The purpose of mirror neurons is to intuit the intentions of others by simulating their actions as though they were the actions of one’s self. Mirror neurons are highly active in the perceptions of other’s faces, which imply that they are the source of emotional contagion. This conclusion is supported by other research on the tendency of infants with cleft palates to smile when they are shown a smiling face. These children are too young to be classically conditioned, and they lack the physiological structure to fully imitate a smile. Yet infants with facial deformation will still respond empathically to a smiling face with their own attempt at a smile. There are echoes here of the research into phantom limb sensation covered in the previous chapter. Both deal in odd physiological phenomena that are explained by a misattribution of external states as one’s own. This proposition can only be explained one way: by the existence and application of mirror

435 Lynne Murray, Francois Henriques, Jonathan Hill, Janne Karpf, Beejal Mistry, Marianne Kreutz, Peter Woodall, Tony Moss, and Tim Goodacre. “The Effect of Cleft Lip and Palate, and the Timing of Lip Repair on Mother-Infant Interactions and Infant Development,” Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry 49:2 (2008): 115-123. It should be noted that this study only briefly addresses the fact that infants with facial anomalies smile at all, and instead focuses on how the intersubjective experience of mother and infant is impacted by, and impacts upon, children with cleft-palates. Although unrelated to spectatorial studies, it is a stunning example of the sociality and biology of emotions and empathy.
neurons in the human mind. Therefore, the face becomes a key surface of the transmission of affect or emotional contagion.

As Brennan, Grodal and Plantinga all explore, there are direct emotional consequences of copying other's behavior.\(^\text{436}\) However, rather than this being an indication of simulative reasoning (as they all ultimately argue) psychologists have tended to conclude that this phenomenon stems from the pre-ordinate dominance of bottom-up processing on conscious percepts\(^\text{437}\). In Chapter four, I briefly addressed the two competing modes of cognition that human beings experience: top-down and bottom-up, an idea which has gained significant practical support in recent years from PET scan-assisted models of neural networking.\(^\text{438}\) Bottom-up cognition has two facets that are crucial in a discussion of emotional contagion and empathy. Firstly, activation of mirror neurons occurs outside conscious awareness, thus demarcating their action as a bottom-up cognitive process.\(^\text{439}\) Since bottom-up processing occurs external to an inner monologue of deliberate intention,\(^\text{440}\) this form of emotional contagion can be comfortably explained as a reflexive mode of operation. Furthermore, due to its reflexive nature, the empathic process that occurs when one mirrors the face of another is a powerful process. A perfect example of the affective strength of bottom-up processing exists in an everyday truism: the act of smiling makes us happy. By this I mean, a contraction of the eleven facial muscles that produce a smile significantly increases a positive mood and affect in research subjects.\(^\text{441}\) The internal and external, social and subjective states become so commonly interconnected in the brain, that eventually the process of happy>smile is reversed, 

\(^{436}\)Brennan The Transmission of Affect, 22; Grodal, Embodied Visions, 16; Plantinga "The Scene of Empathy and the Human Face", 240.


so that the act of smiling can "produce" happiness. Smiling is encoded by humans as both an expression and constitution of shared happiness.442

It is at this point that facial recognition becomes crucial to understanding theories of empathy. Humans are wired to process the faces and facial expressions of others through mirror neuronal circuits. Consequently, they are primed to copy those expressions, often in a manner outside their top-down conscious control.443 Thus the sharing of affective intensity, a non-verbal and uncomplicated emotional transference, may be as simple as seeing someone express an emotion, which in turn causes the spectator to mirror it. Because of its bottom-up nature, this shared feeling is almost synchronous: by the time one face expresses an emotion, the viewer's face has already begun to copy it, which shows that they have begun to take on the same affective state. It is impossible to understand the emotions of others without empathy, without a modicum of synchronous feeling. Admittedly this is a fact acknowledged by almost all of the theorists I have just discussed, although each tempers this point by focusing on the conscious mind's post-hoc re-externalisation of the emotion.444 However, we must not discount the possibility that on a preconscious level, the mind internalises the emotions of others, and thus opens us up to the possibility of intersubjectivity.

The operation of mirror neurons shows us that the face is felt as affective stimuli on a par with a material landscape. We have unavoidable reactions to faces, in much the same manner as we have uncontrolled reflexes towards certain shades of light, or certain sounds and smells.445 The planes of an actor's face fill our screens, providing us with details and quirks we rarely glimpse in material experiences of real people's faces. The face in cinema is expansive, by the virtue of its close-up shot. This face, I would argue, becomes the key to an empathic psychogeography.

444By which I mean, that although the mind must take on the affective state of another to experience and comprehend empathy, it will afterwards attribute the state solely to the contagion's origin.
445For more information on the particular psychology behind the reception of light and colour, please see Chapter seven, pages 192-193.
The Face as a Landscape of Intensities

Within the study of psychogeography, and readily observable in the overarching themes of Bruno, Gunning, Soja and Dimendberg’s work, there is a temptation to make the geographic scope as wide as possible.\textsuperscript{446} The theorists mentioned above often consider filmic depictions of entire cities, or at least suburbs of those cities. It is no surprise then that film theorists concerned with landscapes would take only the broader locations as their case studies. Furthermore, the common discursive thread of travel and film-as-virtual-travel necessitates an area large enough to be traversed. However, \textit{Somewhere}, like many films that focus on characters over narrative or location, resists this interpretation. Although it is set in (and occasionally takes a cinematographic glance at) Los Angeles, \textit{Somewhere} exists primarily in the close-up shots of its characters’ faces. Rather than this causing the film to be spatially unmoored, these faces become their own psychogeographies.

There is no reason that the study of psychogeography must be limited solely to a single explorer’s experience of space. Bachelard reflects this idea in his study of literary miniatures.\textsuperscript{447} In this, he considers the infinite expanse that can be packed into the immaterial space, by the nature of its divisibility. Like a split atom, a virtual world – no matter how small – can contain multitudes. Furthermore, as previously stated, the illusion of travel is not necessarily one that requires the film to move diegetically, rather, it is in its reception by the spectator that the virtual spatial exploration occurs. Faces, particularly those looked upon with the focus of a portrait, can be experienced at the level of the senses with the same processes and ambiguity as landscapes. While not necessarily a psychogeographic experience, the contact between the eye and another’s face is always a spatialised one. Relevant eye-tracking data reveals that the mind uses facial features as landmarks on the visual field, as anchor points to focus foveal

\textsuperscript{446}Bruno, \textit{Atlas of Emotion}; Soja, \textit{Thirdspace}; Edward Dimendberg, \textit{Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity}.

\textsuperscript{447}Gaston Bachelard, “Miniatures” in \textit{The Poetics of Space}, 148-183
attention. Furthermore, with the level of overwhelming magnification that occurs in the cinematic environment, the spectator is forced to perceive a face so large that it cannot be comprehended as a normal human face. While humans are still capable of recognising distorted faces, it is important to consider just how different a face in close-up can be for the viewer.

A face expresses to express, to communicate and signal to others. These expressions constitute a form of transmitted, infectious affect, as the human mind naturally mimics the emotions of those around us. This fundamentally changes our experience of a space. Our psychogeographic impression is one that is touched, shaped and altered by affective lures. If these lures come not from our discrete experience, nor from a feature of the space itself, then they must necessarily come from transmitted affects of those around us.

The capacity of faces to emit an emotional contagion in this way is what constitutes them as a virtual-landscape. This mimesis occurs through the conduit of the roving eye, as it addresses the face-in-close-up. It recognises a spatial relationship similar to a landscape, and is similarly infected with emotional contagion. By moving the fovea over the planes of nose, eyes and corners of the mouth, the mirror neuronal circuits of the mind take up their affective information and mimetically force us to express it. In Chapter two, I outlined how the human eye does not take in the visual field in one coherent image, as it appears to the subject. Instead, the fovea jumps throughout the visual field, taking in small details until the brain can construct a model of the seen world. The way that we perceive faces is the same, although we have a

449 There is significant work on the use and effects of the close-up by early film theorist Béla Balázs (I refer specifically to Balázs, Theory of the Film: Character and Growth of a New Art; trans Edith Bone (London: Dobson, 1952)). It is important to note that one of his major theses was that the face cannot be thought of as a spatial relationship, as in a landscape, because it is only sensible as a face in its entirety. Using Bergson’s theory of duration, Balázs bound the face into one entity existing outside space in the same way that a melody (which is itself one entity) can only exist outside of time. His work here is compelling and logically sound, however these are assertions made in a necessary historical ignorance of the workings of the human eye. The human tendency to spot faces in abstract lines is one well established within psychology literature and indeed on considered at length by Barbara Maria Stafford in Echo Objects, 76–90. The Livingstone study cited above causes further problems to the underlying principles of Balázs’ argument, that the face is only comprehensible in its totality. In actual fact, the reverse is perhaps true: that human beings only perceive faces, and especially the enlarged faces of close-ups and portraits, in small foveal sips. The visual information is then passed onto mirror neuronal circuits and other sub-cortical regions of the brain outside of conscious awareness, before finally being integrated within the ego tunnel. What this means is that Balázs’ statement that faces must be comprehended in their totality was made without the necessary knowledge of how human minds comprehend faces.
demonstrated tendency to foveally-focus on the eyes and mouth. But not, importantly, both at the same time.

When human beings look at faces we track between these key features. Manipulation of light and shading on the human face can cause significant different percepts of the person. When a face is blown up to giant, cinematic proportions, there is little difference between any of the important phenomenological or ontological elements of the face to an intersubjective landscape. As Christopher Tilley argues, “[t]hings, landscapes and places influence us, alter our consciousness, constitute us beyond ourselves. In this sense they are not radically divorced from us”. Tilley argues that landscapes phenomenologically un-make us, by constituting us outside ourselves. It is through this process that they engage the spectator intersubjectively. The face, when perceived in a close-up, holds a similar capacity. Our mind catches the affective lures that a character’s facial gesture transmits, and in so doing our psychogeographic impression of the space is inexorably altered.

The image of a face is never one experienced purely at the level of aesthetics. The face in film then, is not the actor’s face, but the film’s face. The face of another sets our own affective neural circuits into synchronous feeling. The perception of facial expression is a key mode of affect transmission, one wherein the electric intensity of emotion passes between two subjects. This is the core of cinematic empathy. It is this transmission of affect that makes the more cerebral concerns of identification and "simulational empathy" possible. It appears from imaging studies that the human mind may be attributing the emotions present on the face to itself, in order to


451 For example, Margaret Livingston researched the neural underpinning that gave Da Vinci’s Mona Lisa her enigmatic smile. Her thesis is that the spectator’s percept of the smile changes depending on where their fovea is directed. Looking directly at her mouth reveals that the smile is almost non-existent, however if the fovea is directed elsewhere (such as at her eyes), then the blurring that occurs naturally with vision will give the impression that the smile is broader. As Livingstone argues, “It seems that her smile is more apparent in the low spatial frequency range, and therefore more apparent to peripheral vision than to central vision. Hence the elusive quality—you can’t catch her smile by looking at her mouth. She smiles until you look at her mouth, and then it fades, like a dim star that disappears when you look directly at it”. Margaret Livingstone, "Is It Warm? Is it Real? Or Just Low Spatial Frequency?" *Science* 290:5495 (2000): 1229

construct an understanding of the intentions of the other. If a film presents us with an image of a face, then it possesses the affective tenor of that face. In its display, the film's subjectivity takes on the emotion of the actor. The empathic response between spectator and screen then, is one wherein the synchronous feeling is not between discrete spectators, but between the film's emotional subjectivity and the spectator's. This is one enabled by the repurposing of mirror-neurons for film comprehension, a task they were not evolved to do. In essence, the human mind does not understand how to deal with a face that does not belong to a real person, but is rather a ghost of the cinema.

These assertions destabilise one of the constitutional categories of psychogeography: that it is dependent on landscapes. If landscapes and spatial expanse do not necessarily constitute a psychogeography, then the category becomes open to a broader range of cinematic images. It is these images, or rather these landscapes, that enable Somewhere to engage in a mode of unruly empathy. Somewhere's key feat is its ability to express a lack of feeling. "Without using any of the alienation strategies of Brecht or the assault tactics of Artaud in his 'Theatre of Cruelty', Coppola not only communicates the emotional void at the centre of her protagonist, she infects the spectator with synchronous feeling. Somewhere then presents something of a paradox: how does a film engender empathy between spectator and screen when the emotion that it aims to create is one of numbness? Johnny's main intention is to escape this void. However, if the spectator is to empathise with him, they must first enter into it themselves. This is where the film's unruly empathy comes into full effect. The void, it would seem, cannot be felt. However, the void can be expressed by feeling its edges, and Coppola manages to create this unusual, unruly empathy by showing the audience the edges of Johnny's emotional void.

These unusual feelings are not present within the dialogue or diegesis of the film, but instead emerge through its topography. These moments should not be thought of as seeds of

453 Nummenmaa et al, "Is Emotional Contagion Special?", 571.
“emotional” contagion, but rather as lures of intensities. The film does not appeal directly to the emotions of the viewer, instead, it entrains them into synchronous feeling by sparking affective intensities that are mirrored on screen. This is true whether we are discussing two human subjects or the spectator and the screen. The screen, in close-up, presents a facial topography that throws an intensity out towards the viewer. If the viewer is struck by a simulacrum of affective intensity, then the two become engaged in an intersubjective state of feeling and to-be-felt-ness. The affective intensity that the screen projects are only sharpened by the recognition in the viewer that their feelings are in sync. It is this synchrony that allows the spectator to access the overarching story of *Somewhere*. It is this through these affective lures that the film is capable of its paradoxical, unruly empathy. By appealing to the neural level of spectatorial engagement, *Somewhere* creates an intersubjective experience that necessarily allows the viewer to retain a level of discrete identity. In this way, it uses the method of spatial articulation that Bruno outlines in her consideration of the cine-city (i.e. of the touring gaze and a haptic sensation of place derived from exploration), and thereby transforms its text into psychogeography.454 However, the close-up is not the only means by which the text possesses psychogeographic qualities. Before the faces of *Somewhere* can be fully examined, it is important to consider the film's spatial relationships at a macro level.

**Finding place in *Somewhere***

By careful spatial arrangement, the film’s psychogeographic landscape becomes invested with affective intensities. This mode of storytelling serves as an important analogy to the material monument. In Tilley’s work on metal-age monuments, he stresses how early societies told stories through their landscapes by a process of spatial position and juxtaposition. Totemic boulders and structures were nestled into the curves of hills or jutted out from cliffs deliberately, each choice a part of the monument’s signified story. This method, he argues,

enlists the monument’s audience into telling its narrative through spatial exploration. In *Somewhere*, Coppola uses this same technique with her actors within the frame. The negative spaces are filled with meaning, it is her primary way of expressing the emotional void.

This method of storytelling can be seen in the film through three major motifs: the wide and distanced frame in which Coppola chooses to set many scenes, Johnny’s use of cars, and facial close-ups. In the film’s critical reception, the former category was largely read as part of the film’s lo-fi aesthetic. However, it is important to note that most of these scenes echo a set *mise-en-scène*. The camera sits outside doors and windows, the edges of the frame are often bare walls or door frames. Johnny’s point of view is always being explicitly constructed within these moments, either through shot/reverse-shot, or by placing him to the side of the frame, and the camera remains still in these shots, held at a distance. By keeping the camera outside the action of the image, the spectator is alienated from the possibility of total visual immersion. This aesthetic causes the viewer to lean forward, to feel keenly the distance, to yearn for a more complete escape into the film’s world. By placing Johnny within the scene, and by overtly constructing these moments as a glimpse into Johnny’s view, the spectator is entrained into a synchronous state of apathy, and a desire to escape it.

*Somewhere* demonstrates that the spectator can feel a synchronic, unmediated empathy with a character that possesses little motivation or drive, and is largely emotionally void. From the opening shot, it is clear that much of *Somewhere* concerns alienation and existential pointlessness. This first introductory glance into Johnny’s life is revealing: a race car repeatedly curves through a statically framed shot of tarmac. The colour is bleached out, the soundtrack pared down to the sound of the engine as it passes by. Because the car cuts in and out of frame, and the camera stays still, the spectator is often left staring at an "empty" frame. If we were to read this scene using Plantinga’s view, it is a perfect example of how the spectator is cut out of the filmic experience, and is left capable of only a sympathetic connection to the events on
screen. The lack of agency and control that the spectator is subjected to is never felt more keenly than when they are reminded of the limits of the frame in such a way. However, the scene establishes this key connection between Johnny and the spectator through synchronous feeling, which carries on throughout much of the film. In this way, Coppola invites an 'unruly' empathic exchange between spectator and screen.455

Unruly empathy is made explicit from the very beginning of the film. Johnny himself is frustrated by his lack of agency, his alienation and his boredom. Driving his sports car around a closed loop of road is perhaps supposed to be a distraction from his existential ennui, yet the strict limitations it places upon him, coupled with his social isolation, simply serves to underscore the fruitlessness of the endeavour. With little external information to guide the spectator into "alignment", the viewer undergoes a similar emotional response. Being reminded that they have no ability to control what goes seen and unseen, the spectator may feel similarly frustrated by limitation. With no other characters and no dialogue, the spectator's mind does not read the scene as a social interaction, and thus they too are socially isolated. The connection being forged in this scene is not an emotional call-and-response or sympathetic echo, it is a mimetic link. The emotional bond arises not from imagining you are the character, but from a recognition that the spectator and the character are in similar emotional states.

The opening car sequence does not just establish Johnny's emotional void, it also serves to introduce the film's use of lo-fi aesthetics to dampen what might otherwise be moments of adrenaline. Throughout the film, it becomes clear that Johnny is a man who engages in intense behaviour to try and spark some feeling within himself. Yet the muted colours and distanced camera underscore the inefficacy of his attempts at feeling something for both himself and the audience. In one scene Johnny lies on a bed in his room at the Chateau Marmont while two

455 I describe this connection as unruly because it breaks the anticipated rules of empathy (that humans would share a cerebral and sympathetic connection based around identification and legible, high intensity emotion) in favour of a reflexive and uncontrolled shared feeling.
blonde twins pole-dance for him. Shot statically, the strippers have been drained of any inherent carnal sexuality. If the audience were in any doubt that this scene is supposed to bore the spectator, Johnny Marco falls asleep during the dances. This further triggers an affective response, by encouraging the audience to entrain to a synchronous facial expression. Yawns are, after all, contagious. Later in the piece the spectator bears witness to another sexual encounter, in which the only part of the act in the frame is a headboard banging rhythmically against the wall, again situating the spectator (and implicitly Johnny) as distanced from the diegesis. This strategic use of lo-fi aesthetics and a distanced camera also come to the fore in the scene immediately following the opening.

The moment when Johnny breaks his arm falling down the stairs in a state of visible inebriation, reveals the way that the film resists spectacle in order to entrain the void into the viewer. Setting up the text’s rejection of traditional causal patterns, there is no explicit point where it is established that this fall breaks his arm. There is neither sense of pressing importance to the moment, no warning from the soundtrack nor sense of impending gravity. He falls out of the frame, so that the impact is withheld from the viewer. Echoing the car, the spectator is reminded of the limits of the frame, and thus their own inability to escape into the screen. The film resists making a spectacle of his fall, and in so doing prevents the spectator from fully identifying with the character or escaping into an emotionally charged response. These moments of import are felt with the same level of apathy that Johnny has, entraining the audience to his emotional state by careful arrangement of figure and ground.

The film’s strong use of imagery and style to communicate information works to entrain the spectator and the film’s characters into synchronous states, demonstrating the unruly empathy within cinematic intersubjectivity. For example, the audience does not have access to Johnny’s past history. What little information is presented about the character and his backstory can only be gleaned from minor beats of dialogue. Thus the spectator is unaware as to why Johnny is so
dissociated and anhedonic, just that he is. This fact of his being is less explicitly stated than an observation accessible from the design of the film, and how it feels in its reception. The low lighting, washed-out colours and enforced limits of the frame entrain the spectator into feeling a low, frustrated energy. This feeling is initially without locus, an open quality of potential energy, an intensity of ennui. It is only when these shots are intersected with close-ups of Johnny’s face that it becomes clear that they originate within him.

The recognition that these feelings are shared by a screen character mark the point of synchrony and intersubjectivity. The temporality of this event is hard to dissect, because the cinematic experience of *Somewhere* is fluid. The intensity of ennui ripples and bounces between the screen (when it exhibits the rough texture and drab colours of its light), the spectator (when they cinesthetically experience these textures as affective intensity) and most importantly the spectator’s intellectual perception of the characters (when they recognise him as the origin of the film’s affect). The moment of recognised synchronous feeling, wherein the audience acknowledges that they are experiencing the film with the same intensities that Johnny does, are only made possible by the use of Johnny’s face. Were these scenes shown without his close-ups, then the affect would remain unbound and unspooling, and the spectator could not recognise their mirror in a character. Instead, they would simply exist as part of the experience of the film, a note in the text’s timbre that the spectator simply receives. It is through the face that these feelings are organised into an empathic experience.

*Somewhere* uses faces to demonstrate the power of intersubjective spectatorship. Because the narrative is only accessible to those who empathise with Johnny, the way that Coppola engages with his face becomes a key to the film. For much of the film, Johnny is presented as a cypher, his blank countenance an indicator that he himself feels very little. In one sequence about halfway through the film, it is made quite clear that this blank state is meant to be echoed by the audience. During the scene, Johnny visits a visual effects studio to have a cast of his face made.
for an upcoming feature. Sitting in the dead centre of the frame, his face is covered by amorphous grey latex until he is completely obscured.

As his face is covered, the make-up artist tells Johnny that he must now sit completely upright and still for nearly an hour. At first, this seems to be a joke about the unglamorous nature of acting compared to its external cultural cachet. However, Coppola lets the scene continue on for nearly three minutes, draining it of any comedic potential and forcing the viewer to home in on the lack of emotion. The camera slowly zooms in, Johnny's vaguely horrific mask taking up more and more of the frame. The spectator is forcefully reminded that there is no emotional cue here, only alienation and boredom. These are the emotions, coincidentally, that we suspect Johnny feels. His blankness becomes our blankness, his alienation now shared.

The importance of considering mirror neurons as a site of shared affect can be seen clearly in a number of different ways within Somewhere, specifically in the contrast between the affective power of the image versus the affective power of the character's faces. In Chapter Two, I outlined how films can appeal to bodily feeling. Somewhere deliberately rejects this form of
identification and spectatorial engagement. This can be seen most clearly in the way the film depicts sex. There is an adjunct scene to the pole-dancing sequence analysed above. It becomes clear that Johnny books these twins often, another repeated extreme behaviour designed to incite some intensity. However, in the second pole-dancing scene, the spectator's pleasure lies not in a renewed carnality of the image (which remains as unsexually charged as the first), but in the smile on Johnny's face. It is this smile more than anything that is the character's entry to spectatorial pleasure. Somewhere resists the visceral phenomenological empathy that theorists such as Sobchack might align with, in favour of the affective intensity of the characters’ faces. Instead of having the spectator reach out and touch the screen with their eyes, it is about feeling synchronously with the characters. Its intention is not to create shared experience but shared affect.

The power of the human face to elicit shared emotion is made explicit with the introduction of Johnny's daughter Cleo. Cleo constitutes the film's major site of positive affect, a beacon of happiness that infects both Johnny and the audience. Cleo is revealed in two kinds of shot: in extremely tight close-ups and medium shots. The first moment we see Cleo, her face is shown in a tight close-up, her smile ringed by the sun behind her. By framing her in such a close manner, and positioning her so that the light is behind her, the edges of her hair filmed like a mountainous horizon. Coppola encourages the spectator to roam their eyes over her smiling face. By letting her face take up such a large portion of the frame, Coppola turns it into an affective landscape, encouraging the spectator to smile along with her. Her role as a source of infectious happiness is made clear (the spectator's alignment with Johnny made more explicit) than in Cleo's ice-dancing scene.

Coppola presents this extended sequence, in which Johnny watches Cleo practice an accomplished ice skating routine, and alternates between long shots of Cleo and close-ups of Johnny's reaction. The visual beauty of the film's pastel blue colour palette makes it clear that
the shots of Cleo’s ice-skating are purely for the spectatorial pleasure of watching. By interspersing Cleo’s dancing with Johnny’s watching the spectator is unmistakably being encouraged to empathise with him instead of her. The spectator has no choice in whose emotions they will pick up during the scene because only one face, Johnny’s, is clearly visible. His face goes from being visibly bored, which the audience is accustomed to, to being lit up with an obviously unexpected delight. It is no coincidence that this is the same emotion that the spectator experiences while watching the simple beauty of the sequence. In this way, the film positions the spectator to experience Cleo as her father does, furthering the connection between spectator and Johnny. In another sense, it also helps the spectator to share further the feelings of a character who is, for the most part, defined by his lack of feeling.

These two affective topographies, constructed from faces and framing, are brought together throughout the film’s third major motif: setting many of the scenes between Johnny and Cleo within Johnny’s car. The car is a site of isolation, where two people can share space without sharing the affective intensities of their faces. People in cars do not face each other. Instead they look outwards, mirroring the spectator of the film, and further engaging both a sense of shared affect and emotional distance. Johnny and Cleo do not partake in shared affect in the majority of these scenes, instead letting Los Angeles sprawl out before them, the windscreen acting as their own cinema screen.456 The distance between father and daughter can be read in Cleo’s posture, as she often angles her face towards her father in these scenes. She wishes him to see her. Yet in one of the film’s most emotionally charged sequences, Cleo turns her face away from him when she starts to cry. It is at this moment that Johnny ceases driving and turns to face her, trying to divine the source of her feelings from her face. The in-car interactions between father and daughter contrast with the other scenes between the two, where Coppola cuts between close-ups of each actor. In those scenes, the affective intensities in their faces are displayed to both the audience and, through the implicit staging of the scene, to each character. Yet in this simple

456This is an idea that Anne Friedberg considers to be foundational to the psychogeography of Los Angeles, and was discussed in the chapter three, page 79.
moment within the confines of the car, the spectator and Johnny are both starkly reminded of their isolation, as Cleo's angled body precludes us both from accessing the emotional root of the scene. As Cleo eventually faces him, she begins to explain her anxiety over her mother's abrupt departure. Yet the dialogue is secondary, even unnecessary for both Johnny and the spectator. All one needs to do to understand Cleo's feelings is to look upon her face.

*Somewhere's* ending demonstrates the power of the intersubjective relationship that has developed between spectator and screen through the entrainment of the face. After dropping Cleo off at her summer camp, Johnny drives, seemingly aimlessly. Then, in a move never explained by the diegesis, he pulls the car off the road and steps out. In this final moment, Johnny begins to walk away from the car, facing the spectator. As the sun sets behind him, he walks forward, and smiles. This moment is pivotal for spectators who have been infected with the affective intensities that Johnny has put out for the film. It is a moment where he finally faces someone who has felt what he feels, and he smiles, as though he feels less alone.

The vignette can be read several ways. One possibility (that caters to an audience predilection towards narrative causality) is that his interactions with his daughter have taught him how to feel, and he is walking toward finally feeling something and escaping the void. The triumphant music and golden colours of the images certainly seem to support this idea. However, this reading is actually unsupported by the film, due the narrative's ambiguity. Without knowing *where* he is going, or what moment of the many he shared with his daughter has apparently changed his outlook, the diegetic "truth" of his actions and their meaning are obscured. If there is no causal support for the reading, then these impressions must be coming from the affective lures of the images. Indeed, I suspect that the only reason an audience member might code the scene as happy is because of the smile on Johnny's face. Through a reflexive engagement of mirror neurons, his expression becomes the spectator's. By overriding top-down thought in favour of the biofeedback from the facial muscles, the spectator perceives themselves (from the
bottom-up) as happy. Thus the spectator and the character once more engage in synchronous feeling, entrained into an empathic state.

*Somewhere*’s ending ultimately operates on two levels, that of intensity and that of gesture. The spectator is prompted to engage in the empathic entrainment outlined above, to discern the inherent emotional feeling of the sequence. However, audience members who aim to dissect the text through narratives and causality will recognise the hollowness of these feelings within the larger schema of the film. Given that Johnny’s supposed moment of triumphant feeling has neither determined causal root nor a perceptible end point to its trajectory, it seems unlikely that this change within his character will last. Consequently, the ending seems to be gestural, a Hollywood performance of both happiness and endings. This performativity of the scene is supported by Coppola’s choice to have Johnny walk towards the camera, meeting its gaze. This has a double effect: on the one hand, it breaks the fourth wall, underlining the idea of the finale as gesture. Yet it also increases the likelihood of the spectator’s entraining to Johnny’s facial expression, and thus encourages synchronous feeling. This moment then can help us lay out exactly what the unruly empathy of *Somewhere* is: knowing intellectually that the affects of its characters are hollow, flawed and illogical illusion and yet empathically feeling them anyway.

This kind of empathy mirrors the intersubjectivity of film that Sobchack outlines in *Address of the Eye*. Yet instead of the film reaching out to the viewer with a to-be-looked-at-ness, it has a to-be-felt-ness, or rather a to-be-felt-with-ness. Johnny is not happy until he experiences true intersubjectivity: the shared affective response of traveling with his daughter. The spectator goes through the same journey, both narratively (as we follow Johnny’s story) and affectively (in that we are literally precluded from feeling happiness until he does). Over the emotional planes of the actor’s faces, the spectator and the film itself go on a psychogeographic journey together.
The Empathic Spectator and Intersubjective Cinema

Cinematic empathy may at first seem like an impossible proposition. After all, the film is not real, and the actor is merely *playing* at displaying whatever emotion affects the subject. However, if we take Sobchack’s intersubjectivity of the screen into account, then it is not nearly so outrageous to claim that the spectator can feel empathically with the film. Emotional contagion, picked up from the eye’s traveling over the psychogeographic landscape of the face, may be considered a mechanism for affect transferral from space to subject, and from screen to spectator. The film, according to Sobchack, reaches out subjectively in its “to-be-seen-ness”. By having an intention, it moves out of objectivity. Although the spectator may not feel synchronously with an actor who is pretending to exhibit an emotion, the film *itself* has an intention, and thus has subjectivity. An actor produces an emotional response so that the film may possess it for display. In this way, by transmitting affect, it possesses the affect. This demand, the film’s to-be-felt-ness, is identical of the to-be-felt-ness of modern monuments, which similarly reject intellectual comprehension in favour of affective connection. As stated above, the emotional face of the actor becomes the film’s face. This face, when projected to such great dimensions, shifts our psychogeographic encounter with the film space.

If faces express to communicate, then certain built spaces such as monuments are larger versions of a similar phenomenon. They exist to express affects, historical fragments and cultural understandings. Certain landscapes are not entirely discrete from us as subjects, in much the same way that faces are not discrete from us. This stems from the fact that both possess a phenomenological address, an intentionality towards visibility and communication which renders them partially subjective in themselves. Both faces and monumental landscapes are non-verbal visual communication. Ultimately, faces and landscapes often communicate to the spectator in the only pre-social way possible: through a mimetic shared feeling. I consider

457By this statement, I do not aim to discredit or dismiss the considerable amount of work that has been done of filmic empathy. The narrowness of my own definition of affective empathy is necessitated by the psychological framework I have adopted.
458Sobchack, *Address of the Eye*, 129.
459By certain landscapes, I refer specifically to built environments and monuments in particular. There is important overlap between Tilley’s arguments and Vivian Sobchack’s visual address in *Address of the Eye*, 22-23.
how landscapes achieve this feat in the following chapter, but for now it is important to note that faces constitute a form of pre-social and thus cognitively pre-conscious form of communication that occurs through mimetic shared feeling.

Following on from previous chapters, there is evidence that cinema presents a similar spatial experience to material exploration. Although the spectator is being held in the illusion of travel, their lived experience is still constitutive of authentic travel. After all, neurologically speaking, all perception is constructed inside our minds. The only difference to the spectator between an authentic experience and a virtual filmic experience is that we are aware that the latter is already mediated, and not indexed to reality. Given these facets of spectatorial response, it is prescient to begin extending scholarship on “real” spatial exploration into the immaterial. Taking our current working definition of psychogeography, a landscape suffused with emotion, a monument is one of the purest forms. Perhaps then, films could be considered immaterial monuments in and of themselves.
Chapter Seven
Monumental Movies and *Lost in Translation*

Thus far, I have offered an account of the relationship that a spectator has with the psychogeography presented within Coppola’s work. I have demonstrated that this relationship can be created through different modes of spatial exploration, and that a psychogeographic experience necessarily requires a carnal subject. While the previous chapter stressed the empathic nature of the spectator’s experience (a key factor in turning a space into a psychogeography, as it sows the space with emotion), it necessarily left aside the idea of landscapes that are fundamentally affective *in and of themselves*. It is not only the characters within the landscape that invest it with emotion, the transmission of affect can also occur simply between space and subject. There are fundamental elements of space that can alter or change our mood, creating a landscape that possesses a capacity for affective intersubjectivity. Furthermore, the role of narrative has, until this moment, been left aside.

This chapter addresses these gaps and establishes the status of Coppola’s films as psychogeographic experiences through the extended analogy of the cinematic space as a monument. It considers how monuments are built as a way of spatialising the past and creating a collective memory, an important mode of narrativisation. The allegorisation of filmic landscape and monuments may initially seem arbitrary. However, the two actually share significant cultural parallels, such that to understand monuments can help us illuminate how narrative *within* film space is perceived by the spectator. Herein, I show how the human brain remembers things geographically and narratively, and how the transmission of affect from space to subject can augment the spectator’s experience and help construct a communal narrative experience within a geographic encounter. It may initially seem that the analogous relationship between film and monument is primarily because they are both culturally viewed as visual storytelling. However, as the work of phenomenological archaeologist Christopher
Tilley and film theorist Laura U. Marks demonstrates, both films and monuments aim to speak to and affect the entire body of the spectator. While vision remains a mode of narrative construction that both monuments and films engage with, both mediums ultimately aim to entice the spectator into an intersubjective experience. This chapter therefore considers how monuments use textural lures to connect with their subjects’ bodies, and how light, sound, and colour in film constitute analogous textures. *Lost in Translation* (2003) is used as a tool to demonstrate how over the course of the film, its primary location is turned into an emotional monument.

*Lost in Translation* is a text which is both about and constitutive of psychogeographic encounters. The film considers two characters trapped in a state of emotional void (similar to *Somewhere’s* Johnny), and presents a narrative of tourism-as-existential-cure. All three of her creations find themselves trapped in hotels, unable to feel connected to the world around them. As *Somewhere’s* blankness of emotion both highlighted and paralleled the spectator’s desire to feel, Bob and Charlotte (and the spectator) enter the film hoping to connect with an exotic new landscape. Bruno writes in *Atlas of Emotion*, all travel is ultimately experience-seeking, and filmic travel is no different. Charlotte and Bob (played by Scarlett Johansson and Bill Murray) explore Tokyo in intersecting attempts to find one’s self through lived sensual experience or, as I argue, in an attempt to be unmade by the landscape and let one’s self be moved by the psychogeographic encounter. In a parallel to the cinematic spectator, both characters are caught up in the pursuit of coming-into-being by the conscious phenomenological event. Thus this chapter uses textural analysis to bolster textual analysis: My aim is to tease out how the emotional, narrative and geographic aspects of a film ultimately combine to create psychogeography-as-monument, and how this affects the audience’s intersubjective encounter of the film.

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460 Tilley, *A Phenomenology of Landscape*, 71-74; Marks, *The Skin of the Film*, 245.
Mnemonic Spaces

To draw out the reasons why monuments have been selected specifically as an allegorical lens to film, it is necessary to consider why monuments have been constructed, and their intended purpose. A monument is, in every articulation, an attempt to portion off a section of the earth so that it may stand as a mnemonic space. This is a desire evident in some of the earliest parts of human history. Furthermore, the monument impulse is a different drive from the more general story-telling and communicative drives. A need to tell stories is a single behaviour which has obvious evolutionary applications in entertainment, socialisation and cultural control. But the unique factor in monuments (and films) is the construction of this story in space. The story of New York's Ground Zero monument, for example, is not a simple retelling of the events of 9/11. By spreading the narrative elements depicted in the monument over ground, the story becomes a self-directed exploration. The spatialisation of narrative is of primary importance because it demands a personalisation of the story within the viewer. This makes building a monument, and having it explored, take on dramatic new meanings. Or to borrow from Deleuze and Guattari, “a monument does not consider or celebrate something that happened, but confides to the ear of the future the persistent sensations that embody the event”. Ultimately, the monument is about reframing expectations, in order to produce certain effects in the spectator.

Of course, the way in which monuments (and to a lesser extent, film) are considered in the academy can diverge quite dramatically from their material reality. Perhaps reflecting the centrality that they hold in cultural life, monuments have been considered across a range of disciplines. However, as was noted by Rita Sakr, there is an underlying tendency across these fields to treat a monument as a set text, one whose meaning is rigidly enforced by its

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463 Tilley, *Phenomenology of Landscapes*, 3
inscriptions and historical significance. While this is one aspect of the monument that is commonly called upon (and is perhaps responsible for their popularity as theatres of political action and conflict), it is but one element of a far more complex entity. Monuments are spatial objects, and as such, must be considered as texts open to multiple and varied exploration and comprehension by their audience. As Lefebvre writes,

The monument is not the outcome of a signifying practice, or of a particular way of proposing meaning, but merely that it can be reduced neither to a language or discourse nor to the categories and concepts developed for the study of language...A monumental work, like a musical one, does not have a signified (or ‘signifieds’); rather, it has a horizon of meaning: a specific or indefinite multiplicity of meanings, a shifting hierarchy in which now one, now another meaning comes momentarily to the fore by means of — and for the sake of — a particular action.

Lefebvre’s account argues that a monument cannot set its own meaning. However, in its creation it is given both a purpose, that of communication, and a to-be-looked-at-ness. Consequently it registers a level of intentionality commensurate to a being-in-the-world. This phenomenological existence can be interpolated through the monument’s visitors into an intersubjective experience. This is an idea that Christopher Tilley picks up in The Materiality of Stone, wherein he states that an encounter with an environment is always inherently an intersubjective experience. As Sakr later writes, the monument demands that an audience read it in a manner similar to Roland Barthes’ “writerly text”, the end result of which is that the monument’s meaning and existence is a fluid and mercurial property only accessible when engaged intersubjectively. Furthermore, I will argue in the following that this intersubjective exchange ultimately threatens the boundaries not only of the monument, but of the self. By

467Lefebvre, The Production of Space, 222.
468Ibid, 222.
469Tilley, Materiality of Stone, 22.
470Sakr, Monumental Space, 6.
demanding that the spectator unravel the space, the monument also demands that the spectator momentarily unmakes themselves. Not incidentally, it is this desire to be unmade that is perhaps one of the largest drives for tourists, the need to experience a new self via new experience. Yet the monument is not an entirely new experience, but an expression of another's. In this sense it acts as an intersubjective prosthesis to another human's memories.

The monument aims to create collective memory by inscribing an affective experience through the spectator, using the prosthesis of the monument. The notion of a prosthetic, affective object to inspire collective experience (and thus memory) was unpacked further by Alison Landsberg in her book *Prosthetic Memories*. 471 Landsberg similarly points out that for a memory to occur, it must be made personal and thus tied to the body. 472 Physical mediation of an experience is the conduit which turns narratives to memories as they bridge the divide between fictional and actual. While — in Landsberg's case studies — the source of one's affect is fictional, the body's response is actual. By mediating though the flesh, the virtual and material can collide and become inextricably linked.

Although Landsberg does not make explicit mention of mirror neurons, there are clear parallels throughout her discussion of mimesis. "In mimesis", she writes, "cognition is no longer contemplative, but tied to action". 473 In *The Transmission of Affect*, Theresa Brennan argues that shared affect decentres a subject, and when viewed in the light of Landsberg's work on prosthetic memory, it becomes clear why: because empathy is not the acknowledgment of another's feelings but a legitimate and bodily experience of them. We literally share each other's emotions. In so doing, Landsberg argues, we become more porous to the memories of the collective unconscious. The monument then can be considered as a personal touchstone to a

472 Ibid, 19
473 A proposition that Landsberg adopts from Walter Benjamin, by way of Susan Buck Mors; Ibid, 138.
collectivised narrative, an affective lure aiming to communicate a story. By appealing to the senses of the spectator, to speak a narrative through their body, they authenticate the story that is being told.

Monuments are built as a way of spatialising the past, and creating a collective memory. They become an iconographic landscape of an event. The monument is designed to connect those people who did not experience the event with the collective historical memory of the event. Thus, they inscribe a story into a landscape, a story that can only be told by the haptic exploration of the site. In their construction, a society makes the space that its citizens will use to connect with and remember the desired narrative. Furthermore their transmission can — as per the wishes of cultural theorists Hirst and Echterhoff — be traced back to psychological phenomena. As was mentioned briefly in the opening literature review, space and memory are practically inextricable. If one wants to memorise something effectively, the best method (according to world memory experts) is to spatialise it. By this I mean that to allot each element of the memory to a particular part of a common journey, so that you turn the memorisation into a map of a familiar place. For added efficacy, most of the champions who compete in memory competitions add small stories to their “memory travels”. There are obvious parallels to film here. However, there are also parallels to monuments. The human

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474 It bears consideration that theories of collective memory suffer from what has been described as “the problem of reception” which refers to the insistence of memory studies that memories are transmitted. (as seen in Wolf Kansteiner’s, ”Finding Meaning In Memory: A Methodological Critique Of Collective Memory Studies.” History and theory 41:2 (2002): 179-197.) In Creating Shared Memories, William Hirst and Gerald Echterhoff argued that the humanities must pay less attention to the simple inscription of cultural memory practices. It is insufficient to consider only how stories are passed down from generations, how monuments are built, and how history is written (and rewritten). “They also need to understand why some memory practices and memory resources have a profound impact on a community’s collective memories”, Hirst and Echterhoff argued, “whereas others do not” (William Hirst, and Gerald Echterhoff. “Creating Shared Memories In Conversation: Toward A Psychology Of Collective Memory.” Social Research (2008) 185.) Taking an epidemiological approach, they outlined how conversations construct narratives, which in turn become collective memories. In so doing, they examined how the social standing of the speaker and the relevance of the memory impacted on its transmission. Hirst and Echterhoff’s inquiry unfortunately does not have the scope to consider spatial memory practice, a great shame considering their longstanding history in the cultural construction of monuments. Hirst and Echterhoff’s work has become a guideline for this chapter. The focus is not on why monuments are built, or why films are made, but the reason why the practice of spatialising a narrative makes it potently memorable. In accordance with their wishes, the suggestions I offer here are informed not from history or anthropology, but from a consideration of psychological phenomena. In essence, monuments are meaningful memory practices for two reasons: because the human mind learns spatially, and because it is an operationalisation of atmospheric affect. The former allows the story to be remembered and is bolstered by the latter. A monument breaks a narrative down into its most easily recalled elements, and its texture is formed by being reconstituted within the body of the spectator.

476 Ibid, 90.
brain remembers things geographically and narratively. A monument and a film are both ways of spatialising a narrative.

The common element between these two spaces is the operationalisation of the spectator’s body-in-space. Following Massumi’s characterisation of the body as comprising movement and sensation, it has already been established that films speak to the body by causing sensation and movement, thus preserving the spectator’s material body in the immaterial cinematic experience. Sobchack’s further consideration of cinema as a primarily embodied experience characterise film as being a conduit for the textures of what it captures, a way of virtually touching an absent material world. At the same time, if we compare their work with Tilley’s analysis of monuments, we can see that the latter similarly engages the viewer by inciting movement and demanding to be felt. It too appeals to an embodied, spatialised spectator in order to articulate its mnemonic narrative. Embodiment is an inescapable spectatorial position of film viewing and monumental experience. Consequently, we can see that both film and monuments drive the spectator into a particular mode of embodied (yet partially immaterial) intersubjective experience with a landscape.

Thus many of the claims made about monuments can be extended into film reception and landscapes. As has been argued by Andrew Higson in his work in Space, Place and Spectacle, the landscapes of film are used as an authentication of the fiction in cinema. Taking place in real spaces, he argues, cinematic landscapes provide materiality to film’s virtuality. They provide realism and texture to the spectator and, as Sobchack contends, this cinematic texture embodies the spectator into an immersive sensorial experience.

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477Brian Massumi, Parables for the Virtual, 1.
478Vivian Sobchack, The Address of the Eye 172.
480Ibid, 9-10.
stories and emotions into a physical landscape, monumental spaces similarly create the opportunity for people to engage intersubjectively with the space. Monuments offer us the opportunity to be unmade, to have our worldview momentarily reframed. Both mediums have this capacity because of their appeal to an embodied, carnal subject through affect.

The Inner world:
Inside the landscape and the mind of the spectator

To be engaged by a landscape is to become more porous to its affective lures, a capacity which has manifold effects on both the psychogeographic encounter of the spectator and the narrative of a film. The question thus becomes: what possible mechanisms are there for the transmission of affect, and how might they alter these two outcomes? I have already considered the works of Teresa Brennan in The Transmission of Affect in previous chapters. However, Brennan avoids considering the intersubjective relationship between spaces and people, instead focusing on the interpersonal. For such answers, it is informative to consider the work of cognitive psychology. James Russell’s position of empathy-through-symmetry is perhaps the most relevant here. It speaks to the phenomenal force of environments that one of the most respected psychologists in affective science began his work in emotional places.

His account of emotions plots all experience onto a matrix of high vs low arousal and pleasure vs displeasure. Furthermore, this nominal matrix of emotion coincides with an external phenomenal environment, thereby creating a framework for considering transmitted affect through accord. Certain environments, he argues, are reflections and parallels of certain affects. For example, discotheques are an environment of high arousal, as the flashing lights and loud music are designed to overstimulate. The aestheticism of their sensory experience is designed

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to be enjoyed. Events like raves fall on a high-arousal pleasurable point of Russell’s matrix. A rainy, cold morning is a setting which elicits low arousal and mild displeasure, which is arguably the reason that such weather is culturally associated with melancholia. It would seem that humans are always affected by the landscape, always plugged into a larger environmental circuit of feeling. Layered on top of these ideas are the objective material effects that certain stimuli (such as the colour of light) have on the brain.

Unfortunately, there is little clear data from neuroimaging studies that indicate why these effects occur. However, the impact that something as simple as the colour of a particular light has on a human brain is clear and demonstrable. Blue light decreases the production of melatonin, a hormone linked to circadian rhythms and the immune system. Exposure to blue light decreases the production of cortisol, the body’s toxic stress hormone. In essence, blue light makes us “happy”. When blue light colours our environment, we are less stressed. The effect of blue light is so fundamentally tied to the processes of visual perception that it works on people who have been rendered blind by malformed neurons, as long their ocular nerve is intact. The colour red may increase focus and attention as can be seen by the positive effect it has on IQ scores if participants take the test on red paper. Red-toned lights have been found to increase cell growth and healing by a factor of between 150-200 percent. Thus far, the best possible explanation presented by the scientific community has been that colour’s affective power plays on associated “primary” emotions. So powerful is the effect of coloured light on the

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emotional affect of subjects, it has been used in 29 train stations in Tokyo in a (successful) attempt by the government to lower suicide rates.488

Films are unintentional documents of environmental features and their produced affect. A blue-toned light or colour graded system instantly invests the filmic landscape with blue’s associated powers. While the reasons that light hue has this effect are currently at a stage of conjecture that is scientifically inadmissible, the effect that it has remains empirically observable. This gives hues the power to elicit such emotions in the spectator. The landscapes that cinema presents to the audience use similar, though conduited, tactics. There is no arguing with the fact that certain images have specific, seemingly universal, impacts upon the spectator.

In his consideration of the psychology of cinema, Hugo Münsterberg arrived at a fundamentally phenomenological account of the spectator’s experience. In *The Psychology of the Photoplay*, he writes

> The photoplay tells the human story by overcoming the forms of the outer world, namely space, time and causality, and by adjusting the events to the forms of the inner world, namely attention, memory and imagination.489

Münsterberg’s argument ultimately points towards the transmutation of affect into narrative effect upon the subject. While it is important to note that the fundamental cognitive theory I am proposing here has scholastic roots that date back to early cinema, I also include the passage because of its profound resonance with the work of both Bruno and Christopher Tilley. Both authors chart the ways landscapes (both memorial and cinematic), move the viewer into a new perceptual mode of spatial appreciation while unfolding a narrative. While both have also

488Since the lights were turned on, suicide rates at train stations in Tokyo dropped 84%. Tetsuya Matsubayashi, Yasuyuki Sawada, and Michiko Ueda. “Does the installation of blue lights on train platforms prevent suicide? A Before-And-After Observational Study From Japan.” *Journal of Affective Disorders* 147:1 (2013): 385-388.

focused on the embodied and emotional feelings that these geographies inspire, I have built upon their work in an attempt to demonstrate that these effects are due to the manipulation of neural processing. In his series of books on archeological phenomenology, Tilley looks specifically at how the effects that monuments have on the spectator hold the keys to understanding the intentions of those who built them. Building monuments, he argues, is a fundamental attempt to affix an affect upon a landscape in order to communicate a moment of significance.\(^{490}\) He creates a catalogue of Maltese temples, buildings that play heavily on perspectival tricks.\(^{491}\) The temples ask to be spatially explored, yet their spaces are based on illusions. Both cinema and these temples induce a spatial experience by playing with the spectator’s exploration of a space. Monuments use sudden changes in spatial volume (for example, narrow halls leading to spacious chambers), excessive use of doorways as visual “frames” and their play with windows and sunlight to create an embodied and often narrative experience of the space. Films too play with the spectator’s perspective and sense of space, creates sudden bursts of brightness and can easily mimic the unease of claustrophobia. From Tilley’s phenomenology of landscapes we can also see that monuments have a series of effects, in the same manner that Deleuze saw subjectivised matter.\(^{492}\)

Tilley outlines the entraining capacity of monuments. Their materials and architecture, he has concluded, is often carefully selected because of their ability to produce effects in spectators. For example, he argues that the large marble rooms used in Maltese temples were chosen because of the stone’s ability to alter both the temperature of the space and the acoustics of the room.\(^{493}\) As he notes, a marble room is cold, hard and still: an environment that similarly entrains the spectator into a state of quietude. There are important parallels here between this mode of transmitted affect and the interpersonal mode that Brennan considers. Both are

\(^{490}\)Tilley, *The Materiality of Stone*, 33
\(^{491}\)Ibid, 131
\(^{492}\)Brott, *Architecture for a Free Subjectivity* 11.
\(^{493}\)Tilley, *Phenomenology of Landscapes*, 131.
fundamentally about the movement towards accord that seems to be a fundamental state of human subjectivity. Yet the attentional focusing of these monuments goes further than the mere atmospheric. When chambers begin narrowly, only to open out suddenly, and vice versa, the aim, he suspects, is to play with the visual perspective and gestalt principles of the viewer, to force them to feel claustrophobic, then relieved at each turn. In this way, the monument has been built to be an effective narrative, one which uses the viewer’s own body and mind to communicate tension and release.

The travel films that Giuliana Bruno considers in Atlas of Emotion use similar techniques to achieve similar ends. The travel film aims to provide the viewer with the illusion that they are traversing a material landscape, to make good on the promise the films often made that the experience was as good as travel itself. Yet rather than the free-roaming eye that can look where it chooses when confronted with a map, the spectator of the travel film consents to a mediation of the landscape. In essence, they request that the film take their attention hostage, and suspend their disbelief in an attempt to immerse themselves better in the virtual travel experience.

Filmic landscapes share so many properties with monuments, so much so that it could be said they exist as immaterial and material poles of the same medium. Both are spatialised narratives which focus on the experience of a space telling a story. Although in film the director dictates the degree of exploration (potentially divesting the spectator of the self-directed spatial experience), the experience is still that of a spatialised story. The spectator walks the camera's path, and in so doing what the camera saw, the audience sees. A film then becomes a virtual monument to a fictional event. Although its landscape is an illusion, and its narrative an

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494Tilley, Phenomenology of Landscapes 132.
invention, it still takes an imagined idea from the creator, which becomes a memory for the audience.

Filmic psychogeography possesses a strong affective quality, a kind of emotional contagion that becomes bound to the spatial experience of the spectator. If matter gains subjectivity via a drive towards affect, — as in Deleuze’s account — then monuments are certainly subjective landscapes. Monuments are made with an intention already inscribed: to tell a story. The experience of the monument is not just the point of the space, it constitutes its own subjectivity. The spectator at the monument, in experiencing the space, is not in a state of subjective experience but of inter-subjectivity. This position has been well articulated by architectural theorist Simone Brott. Taking a Deleuzian approach to subjectivity (by which I mean that subjectivity should be measured by immanent forces that act and produce effects, as opposed to a humanist perspective) Brott argues that affect is not ephemeral, but rather a productive (and therefore subjectivising) force upon our experience. Given that architecture can have palpable effects upon our own subjectivity, and that it is constructed to-be-seen, it follows that it possesses subjectivity. Monuments are a particularly interesting case, in that they are constructed to be affecting, but also to tell a story.

**Dislocated in Tokyo:**

*Lost in Translation, Tourism and Intersubjectivity.*

The claim I am making towards an analogous relationship between film and monuments is an admittedly broad one. However, film analysis can help clarify how the relationship between subject and space (a relationship that monuments rely upon) colours and augments the

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496 Deleuze’s primary basis for this argument is the lack of personalisation of the sensual experience. His phenomenology is actively critical of the phenomenologists that Sobchack follows as they remain a humanist doctrine.

spectator's experience and constitute it as a psychogeographic encounter. *Lost in Translation* is an apt case study for three reasons, each of which forms a focal point in my analysis. Firstly, its narrative constitutes explicit commentary on the nature of travel, monuments, and the difficulty that its characters have in trying to connect with the world. Secondly, its visual style plays with the intersubjective relationship between monumental space and the people who walk it, and finally because its cinematographic conventions can show us how the film itself might operate as monument allegory. The film can be read as a meditation on the experience of the alien, and by extension, the spectator. Both tourist and spectator enter into a landscape with the explicit desire to become consumed by it and consume it in turn, to become immersed in a new geographically constituted mode of being. The tourist and the spectator both often have the ultimate goal of divesting themselves of one egocentric model of subjectivity, and instead engaging in an intersubjective dialogue with the new environment they find themselves in.

To understand how films and monuments constitute a narrativised psychogeographic encounter, it is helpful to consider Coppola's visual style within the film. Coppola constructs the landscape of her film as one that deliberately obscures its location. While the film takes place in Tokyo, it avoids the many obvious sights that would clarify its place in the world. In so doing, Coppola creates an immaterial space that is as much a construction of her intended spectatorial experience of Tokyo as the material city itself. Authors such as Higson have considered how recognisable material cityscapes, when used in film, help to authenticate the fiction that is being created.\(^\text{498}\) However, Coppola's visual style and chosen scenes eschew this authentication, instead allowing her to paint a Tokyo that is both real and imagined. In this way, *Lost in Translation* 's landscape is constituted dialogically between spectator and screen, a similar mode of spatial exploration that Coppola uses in *The Virgin Suicides*. Within the film, Tokyo itself is presented almost monument-like in its monolithic and unknowable architecture. In her article

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\(^{498}\)Higson, "Space", 7.
"Neon Gothic", Wendy Haslem draws Lost in Translation's parallels to Gothic environments in its interest in uncanny architecture and illogical spaces that cannot be fully communicated. Gothic architects participate in the Kantian sublime, by creating an aesthetic experience too immense to be fully comprehended. Haslem argues that Coppola depicts Tokyo in the same way, a space too huge and alien to be communicated or understood by its characters. One key location within the text, the hotel bar where Bob and Charlotte meet, is constructed primarily from three angles: one focusing on the bar itself; one on the cabaret singer; and one on the restaurant's dining section. These three shots are intermingled, allowing the audience to connect with the space through their own constructive comprehension and create their own personal mental schematic.

Sean Redmond, in his work on Kitano, helps us understand how the sensation of being lost may draw the audience into an embodied, carnal mode of visuality and fall into the narrativised landscape present in Lost in Translation. He argues that being lost is a tangible physical sensation, a form of hypersensitivity of flesh and space. This is echoed in Marks's account of the haptic image: these moments must necessarily force the spectator to "lose" their place, to grope and grasp at the image in order to find their location. Their eyes cannot help but try and touch the space. This again strikes a chord with monument studies. Monuments are always an attempt to affix a communicated narrative to something that is fundamentally incommunicable. As Tilley argues in Phenomenology of Landscapes, monument builders use textural elements to produce effects in spectators because of this need to create a distinct, collective story that underwrites the object. Monuments aim to communicate a simplified narrative, as the "truth" of their commemorated moment is too immense to be communicated fully. However, the story persists, the meaning communicated however loosely. This

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500 Haslem, "Neon Gothic".
502 Tilley, A Phenomenology of Landscapes, 7.
503 Ibid, 12.
experience is one mirrored in *Lost in Translation*, a film whose narrative is only loosely causally connected. Instead, it is through an experience of the cinematic space that a narrative emerges (in much the same way that Somewhere's narrative only emerges through unruly empathy). Both utilise the carnal and spatialised subject's capacity to be affected by the environment, creating an experience that is defined by psychogeographic encounter.

The poignancy of affective transmission, its role within narrative environments, and the monument as a site of shared subjective experience is expressed throughout *Lost in Translation*. In one scene, Charlotte finds herself excluded from a shared experience she had anticipated having. She visits a Shinto temple, expecting to have a touristic yet revelatory moment, one which it is implied a guidebook has told her will be transformative. Yet, faced with no cultural context for the Shinto ritual she witnesses, she is incapable of joining in the collective experience. Her alienation now emphasised, she laments the fact that she “felt nothing” on the phone to her friend later that day. These scenes are an integral part of establishing the emotional tone of the film, one of alienation and the relief when such feelings are overcome. Yet it also serves as a direct comment on the power of cinesthetic spectatorship over cerebrally distanced, intellectual appreciation. Charlotte spends much of the start of the film refusing to plunge herself into Tokyo’s culture. She appreciates the aesthetics, hanging plastic cherry blossoms in her hotel room, yet she hesitates before removing her shoes at the temple. Instead, she stands outside, reluctant to engage in conversation with anyone who might explain the Shinto ritual and its meaning. Her alienation is palpably felt by the spectator, who is similarly caught by frustrated spectatorial desires: for the film’s narrative to take a firmer shape; for dialogue; for the character to progress in some way.

Both Charlotte and Bob are caught in feelings of utter dislocation, or rather alienation. While their apparent loss of a sense of self is blamed by both characters on being in Tokyo, it is clear
each is in a state of identity crisis. They wander the streets of Tokyo, unable to connect with others and in perpetual states of confusion and being misunderstood. There is an important parallel being set up by Coppola here, that of the tourist alien and the viewer. In the scene where Charlotte first visits a Shinto temple, she is unable to escape into the landscape and naturalise. She explores as a flâneur, yet because she is an outsider, she is trapped in a spectatorial position. She cannot connect with the scene. It is only when she becomes an active participant in Tokyo (singing in a karaoke booth, eating sushi, swimming) that her loneliness and alienation ease. This acts as a parable for film spectatorship. We cannot enter the frame, we cannot inhabit the immaterial space, unless the film asks us to participate. We must allow ourselves to be moved.

The desire to become one with the landscape is analogous to the desire of the spectator to enter into the immaterial space of the film. What *Lost in Translation* proposes is that it is only in moments when a subject forgets their subjectivity and engages with something bigger, with an intersubjective exchange, that this can occur. Given that filmic landscapes are made in the mind and that the lay understanding of a "good" film is one where you forget yourself entirely (which is to forego a cognitive post-hoc framing of your own subjective experience and instead allow the cinema to engage and be engaged by us) it follows that the spectator desires to be "unmade" by the landscape.

The desire for naturalisation that Coppola considers is brought into clearer focus when we consider the visual style that she uses to create the film's topography. Coppola uses Japanese landscape aesthetics to transform the inner spaces of the Tokyo Grand Hyatt into micro-geographies. In the opening scene, the landscape we traverse first is not Tokyo itself, but Bill Murray. As Bob stares out a taxi window, the city is reflected back onto his face. Coppola pauses, letting the moving lights absorb the spectator's attention momentarily. Within this
moment, the character is separated from the film's setting, sitting in a position similar to the spectator. Throughout the rest of the film, Coppola creates visual hints that Bob is slowly being enfolded into Tokyo's landscape. In figure 5.1, Murray is framed by rows of bedding and linen. The high-contrast lighting creates a series of crisp lines between each “layer” of sheet or pillow. This layering echoes 19th century ukiyo-e painting, wherein landscapes were depicted with a similar style of focus and layering. In both the image and the painting style, landscapes arc gently from left to right, creating a series of lines of sight implying depth of field. The characters are subsumed into the landscape and cultural history of Japan.

Figure 5.1 Bob awakes in his hotel room.

The lighting pushes out the edges of the image, making the bed seem like a mountain range. In Figure 5.3, the same effect is pushed even further. The open window functions as a natural skyline to Murray's profile. It is important to note that in these images, the characters are not immersed in a landscape, they have been subsumed by it, become a part of it. In the second image, Murray sits as a peak of an analogic mountain range. This speaks to one of the fundamental drivers of tourism: immersion to the point of naturalisation within the environment. The tourist explores and, in their psychogeographic encounter, becomes part of
an intersubjective dialectic between space and subject. This relationship blurs the boundaries between environment and explorer and constitutes a mode of immersive naturalisation.
Figure 5.2-5.3 A comparison between the still taken from *Lost in Translation* and Utagawa Hiroshige I’s *View of the lake at Hakone*
The difficulties of full immersion within the travel experience are made explicit in one scene, at the end of the first act. As Bob walks away from the hotel bar and into an elevator, he stands just slightly in front of the camera, so that the framed shot consists of his back and a view of the Tokyo skyline. The audience is struck by the fact that Bob’s framing and the positioning of the camera and the spectator looking over his shoulder locates both audience and character as subjects viewing a city in which they may wish to travel and subjectively disappear. However, the elevator doors close brutally on the skyline, their mirrored panels sharply bringing Bob's face back into focus. It is a perfect visual analogy of the impossibility of escaping one’s sense of self and existence for any notable length of time. The complicated nature of tourism in landscapes is echoed in the uncomfortable position the spectator is in. They too, like Bob and Charlotte, aim to travel to a place and be subsumed into the phenomenological experience of it.

The immersion of Coppola's characters into stylistic landscapes is completed not with Bob, but with Charlotte. Charlotte’s character has already explicitly stated her feelings of distance from both the spectator and a friend via a phone call, in which she mentions that in a fit of dissociated alienation she tried Ikebana, the art of flower arranging. Within the context of that call, it is another sign offered as symptomatic of Charlotte’s emotional void. Yet at the close of the first act, Charlotte momentarily forgets herself, and her sense of dissociation, and instead simply engages once again with the flower arranging practice taking place in the hotel. Scarlett Johansson’s face in this scene is uncharacteristically brightened, her momentary curiosity and joy infecting the audience with unruly empathy. Furthermore, the actress is once again framed in a visual analogue to Japanese ukiyo-e paintings. For a few seconds, Charlotte engages intersubjectively with the culture and history of Japan, and is rewarded with the immersive, positive experience she had hoped for. She is part of a landscape, yet it is a happy, constructive
one. Almost immediately, however, this dialogue is broken. Charlotte remembers her alien status, and is instead struck by the ease and comfort that the local women have arranging these flowers. In this scene, Coppola offers us both problem and cure: alienation is overcome by forgetting one’s self and instead intersubjectively engaging in the environment in front of us.

Charlotte and Bob’s first brush with true immersion into a new environment is at a party that Charlotte’s friend is hosting. The scene is intercut with close-ups of the blue firework visualisations that decorate the venue. The animated fireworks, which at first stay attached to their spherical screens, begin to bleed out onto the faces and bodies of the partygoers. Here Coppola demonstrates visually the impact that light has on the mood of the spectator, making material the virtual transmission of delight. The environment literally envelops its spectators, enfolding them into its topography.

The visual metaphor for being transformed by the landscape, for being naturalised, is solidified in the following scene. Bob and Charlotte sprint joyfully through the streets of Tokyo. The colour palette maintains a soft blue background, and the red and gold neon lights of storefront displays mirror the firework effects and extend these effects outwards. In this moment, Charlotte and Bob become part of the Tokyo landscape itself, much as the partygoers became a part of the party’s small geography. Bob’s and Charlotte’s participation in a psychogeographic dialogue with Tokyo results in a visual reward for the viewer: the film begins to use the visual style of the travel film. In images reminiscent of the video art that Laura U. Marks used to form her concept of the haptic optic, Tokyo streets whizz past Bob and Charlotte’s taxi. These bright bursts of colour and movement momentarily allow the viewer to finally engage in a carnal and embodied mode of spectatorship, a form of embodied visuality that creates contact between material spectator and immaterial space. It is through this contact that the spectator (and Bob and Charlotte) is able to feel the boundaries between themselves and the immaterial landscape. It is
only by feeling these boundaries that they can shift, and subjects can be ‘unmade’ and immersed into the psychogeographic encounter.

The way that Coppola frames both Bob and Charlotte into landscapes is interesting when viewed in the light of Tilley’s work on Bronze-Age monuments. These simple forms of large rocks carefully placed upon hills and coastlines require participatory movement from the spectator to reveal the narrative or significance that they hold. In this way, the monument tells its affective story to the very sinews of the spectator, before it attempts to affix an abstract and complicated narrative on top of it. The spectator is a necessary bodily conduit for the monument, it can only communicate when engaged intersubjectively. Coppola’s use of figure and ground supports this similar need for intersubjective dialogue with Charlotte and Bill. When they forget themselves, they become a part of the landscape of the film. The implication being that the spectator may do the same thing, and enter the frame by letting the film speak to their body and letting go of an egocentric point of view.

Charlotte’s first brush with Japanese temple practices also marks a clear moment when the audience’s attention and embodied response is being affixed by Coppola’s stylistic choices. The gong which sounds takes over both tracks of the audio, momentarily silencing any background or foley sound and forcing the spectator to focus on the unfolding images. However, neither Charlotte nor the spectator is given the opportunity to lose themselves in the images being presented. Coppola eschews the landscape style she has been crafting in the opening scenes, and instead frames the temple flatly and from a slight distance. In so doing, the myriad colours and textures are reduced into small points of light. By keeping the camera at this slight distance and preventing a truly three-dimensional image from forming, Coppola momentarily disrupts the film’s potential to incite haptic-optics. This is a scene that is — first and foremost — designed to be heard, not seen or touched. In this way, Coppola maintains the audience’s
distance from the image, and prevents them from truly traversing the landscape. This effect has a specific purpose, it is to make the scenes where Coppola does allow the spectator to experience and engage with the film as a carnal event that much more moving.

In the broad, sweeping shots over Tokyo City, the many small red lights (instituted in the city to improve helicopter safety) form another kind of image, one reminiscent of cherry blossoms. The analogous shots, where cities become tree branches and beds become mountain ranges, show how the material scale of the image does not alter the way that the spectator sees it. The eye, if allowed, will roam any space, and the mind will understand this space as topography. This space must be made affective if it is to be remembered or made resonant for the viewer. The mind is adept at learning a space, but remembering it is tied directly to its capacity to affect the subject through its atmosphere. Charlotte hangs flowers in her hotel room, the plastic decorations adding depth to the visual field. There is a slight parallax effect when she hangs them, as the camera focuses on the flowers, instead of her face. This, it is clear, is the frame we are supposed to rove our eyes through. This is an attempt at intersubjectivity on Charlotte’s part, to lose herself better in Tokyo’s image. Yet the visual style is designed to appeal to the audience. While Charlotte’s feeling of dislocation may persist (as can be seen in her facial expression at the end of the sequence), the spectator is given a taste of intersubjective, cinesthetic becoming.

The increasing envelopment of the characters into the landscape reaches its zenith in Charlotte’s Kyoto sequence. Here Coppola uses the visual style that dominates *Marie Antoinette*, in which the images are designed to inspire carnal modes of visuality within the spectator. Adopting a montage form, the scene cuts quickly between shots of the sun through maple leaves, close up shots of kimono fabric on passing geishas and the warmly coloured oak scaffold in a Shinto temple. By using this carnal, spatial aesthetic, Coppola creates a landscape not just for Charlotte to explore, but for the spectator as well. The soundtrack uses a combination of
score (a rhythmic repetitive electronic song) and diegetic sound. The score remains, in an attempt to narrow and modify the spectator's affect, mood and attention. At the same time, the layering of diegetic nature sounds allows the viewer to locate the affective lures geographically. This is not simply the enfolding of a subject into the landscape. It is an intersubjective dialogue between spectator and cinematic environment, one where the affective intensities transmitted to the audience help set their experience of the space.

The final moments fully solidify *Lost in Translation*’s monumental status. One of the biggest problems of monuments, as outlined by Lefebvre, is that they can (and often do) refuse literal meanings. The intended denotation of a monument is only visible for a short time after it is built, while it remains within its very specific cultural context. Over time, the explicit intention of those who built it falls away, the semiotics of the work become porous and unmoored, and the affective lures it holds become more prominent and resonant with the spectators. This is part of why Tilley considered Bronze Age monuments, as by the time of writing, the creator's significatory intention was lost to time. Because it is the bodies of contemporary spectators and their subjectivity that mediate and amplify the meaning of the monument, each will bring a mediating lens to its intention. *Lost in Translation* mirrors this with its final interaction between Bob and Charlotte. As the two characters embrace and say their final goodbyes, the dialogue is obscured from the viewer, their sound cut down to a backing score. In this way, the meaning of *Lost in Translation* is porous to the desires and intentions of the spectator. The only pure environmental cue towards affect is the continued blue colour palette, inviting a positive interpretation of the scene through decreased cortisol production. Apart from this, the scene's meaning can only be interpreted based on the experience and body of the viewer.

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504 Architectural theorists may find this line of reasoning troublingly anthropomorphic. As Simone Brott points out in her analysis of Deleuzian architecture, Deleuze’s aim was to subjectivize matter, not to humanise architecture. This is a stance that cannot be ignored when considering natural and unintended spaces. However, certain spaces, especially filmic landscapes, are entirely constructed. Considering these places, it is essential to acknowledge that they exist as an expression of another subject’s will.
In effect, the quest of Charlotte and Bob is also the aim of the spectator: to allow one's subjectivity to be augmented by the cinematic environment. *Lost in Translation* entices the spectator with affective lures towards a spatial, carnal and empathic response. Whether this attempt is successful or not will ultimately depend on the individual, yet the intersubjective dialogue is undeniable. When considering the way in which Coppola’s online fan community celebrates and connects with her works, it becomes clear that the film absolutely stands as an affective immaterial space for them. As I will go on to show in the following chapter, her films and the image sharing culture that surrounds her work could be seen as subjects taking souvenirs from immaterial landscapes, an action which works towards materialising them.

**Taking Souvenirs from the Monumental Movie**

If we consider the film as a psychogeographic narrative, then perhaps the key explanation as to why users create fragments of her work, in the form of stills and GIF images, lies in its role as a monument. Friedrich Nietzsche saw the monument as far more than notable architecture. In *The Use and Abuse of History*, Nietzsche restructures the cultural relevance of a monument as a framework of human memory. The monument, he argues, was a format of memory capable of being applied to more than buildings, but also to artworks, fictions and people in turn. He outlines a multifaceted system by which anything can become a monument form. In her analysis of Nietzsche’s monument theory and fame, Aleida Assmann goes a step further to connect it to the idea of immortality (here defined as a kind of eminent, communicative collective memory). Anything, Assmann claims, can be a monument if it is elevated outside the everyday as in the steps Nietzsche outlined, into a milieu of fame that guarantees immortality.

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Nietzsche’s steps are of note here as they follow the practice of some of Coppola’s online fans. Coppola’s canon is an apt subject matter for such an inquiry, as the manner in which her fans express themselves is quite esoteric. The major observable response her fans have to her work is in the crystallisation of specific moments, settings, and landscapes. These enthusiasts consistently upload images and stills taken from her body of work, as well as turning tiny moments into GIFs (an image format which can record up to (roughly) 8 seconds of movement). Online, this mostly translates to creators carving small moments of film out and separating them into this moving image. The dispersion of film texts into images and GIFs is often performed for Art-house works with bold visual styles and little narrative form. Coppola’s canon fits well within these parameters, and there are once more clear analogous parallels between the practice of monument-making and Coppola’s particular fan practices.

The first is that the artefact must be selected and, importantly, extracted from its context. For Coppola’s fans, there is a clear analogy with the GIF making process, in which fans must select and edit down a film into a smaller fragment. Yet paradoxically, the selection of a film scene for GIF making also satisfies the second step in Nietzsche’s argument. Nietzsche argues that for the moment to become monumentalised, it must be translated from the small scale to the large scale. It may seem odd to argue that by isolating a clip, fans are making a film larger. However, if one accepts that the GIF is made more potent by its looped isolation, then the experience of the scene does indeed become more overwhelming, and enlarged in its reception by the viewer. The final notable stage in monument creation is that the event must be translated from the particular to the general. The artefact must be made relatable to the present moment. Once again, by the nature of the GIF image’s isolation and break from its narrative significance, it can be appreciated on a general affective level. By turning the moments into crystal images, the fans are actively making a monument out of the film. However, the GIF or film still is not designed to stand alone.
Fans of Coppola's films do not present fragments of the film in isolation, but rather concurrently with other images. While the fans that produce the images are monumentalising the film's virtual world, the presences of these monuments within the online image sharing platforms perform multiple effects. As I will go on to consider, the GIF-fragment is closer to a crystal-image, and the film still (the image that recurs throughout Pinterest boards) is presented in a manner strikingly analogous to a postcard. These two elements of souvenirs taken from Coppola's films help constitute further the psychogeographic worlds she presents.
Chapter Eight
Wish I was There:
Sightseers and Spectators in the Digital Image

One of the most unusual things about Coppola’s body of work is the disconnect between its fan base and critical regard. Critics have described her work as shallow, unthoughtful and boring, yet her canon remains popular online and has found a wide and productive fan base in online image sharing networks. Coppola’s work, in particular *Lost in Translation* has been significantly remediated online. A possible explanation can be found in Coppola’s stylistic method. She considers her work as collections of “tone poems” rather than linear narratives. This approach is observable within her films: in lieu of strong narrative arcs, her canon strings moments of significant, resonant affect together. This style makes the cinematic spaces she creates more easily seen as psychogeographic ones. Each spectator is presented with a series of spaces full of affective textual lures, empathic connections between character and spectator, and moments with a drive to create a mnemonic narrative experience. These elements, when combined, transform the cinematic world that Coppola creates into a psychogeographic encounter for the spectator. Additionally, it is often (upon close inspection) this psychogeographic impression that the spectator receives that makes her work the subject of remediation and dissemination online. The thread that connects each image in her films is the affect-driven spectator’s experience. The disregard for a linear narrative means that each image can be taken out of its context and still maintain its emotional and phenomenological content. This makes her work digitally fluid and easily transferrable between cinema screen, laptop computer and cellular devices. Each of these screens then becomes a portal into the cinematic space, an opportunity to create or expand one’s psychogeographic connection to the work.

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The landscapes in Coppola's films are full of affective traces of emotion and texture. Thus far, I've argued that Coppola's films are images not merely surrounded by a world but are neurally affecting, intersubjective and intimate. However, these arguments consider the films without the broader context of their online dissemination. Across multiple platforms and through different media forms, Coppola's work is popular and virally dispersed. The project for this chapter is to explore one of the major (and wholly under-researched) ways in which we can understand the spectator's experience — through the dispersion of the film in online image-sharing platforms.509

Within Coppola’s online dissemination, a visible theme of travel helps to clarify the nature of the relationship between spectator and screen space and to validate my argument that this relationship is a psychogeographic one. GIF sets of Marie Antoinette are commonly accompanied by comments of "I wish I was there". What we can see from neuropsychology, and indeed from larger cultural studies, is that on a fundamental level, human beings believe in vision. There is a persistent understanding that the image is real. On a top-down cognitive level, we do understand the fallacy that cinema presents. However, this nascent belief in vision may plague us into the misrecognition of the immaterial for the material. Thus the image of a film space is an authenticating document, a proof of the audience's experience. The cinematic place affirms the audience's memory. As Bruno writes in Atlas of Emotion “film animates the city as a real means of transportation. The movie camera becomes a moving camera – a means of 'transport'”510. Users seem to both understand the artifice of the landscape being presented, yet have an intimate and nostalgic connection to it as though they had been quite literally transported there.

509 There is a distinct difference between the practices of fandoms on Tumblr and the kind of work I am analysing here. As can be seen from the analysis of Hillman et al and De Souza, Tumblr can be a hub for fans to produce, consume and appreciate para texts, alternative readings and other typical fan practices (Serena Hillman, Jason Procyk, and Carmen Neustaedter. “Tumblr Fandoms, Community & Culture” In Proceedings of the Companion Publication Of The 17th ACM Conference On Computer Supported Cooperative work & social computing. (ACM, 2014), 285-288; However, this behaviour is reserved primarily for cult media (specifically television) and does not mirror the other more unique and dominant Tumblr forms. 510Bruno, Atlas of Emotion, 24.
Pinterest and Tumblr are two social networking websites that emphasise the sharing of images and are a space in which Coppola's popularity has grown. These two platforms are primarily concerned with the trafficking of images between people. Although they look radically different, the underlying mechanics are the same: users upload images to a database, which then allows other users to repost that same file to their personal pages. In this way, a Tumblr blog or a Pinterest board is first and foremost an aesthetic remix, one wherein the meaning of the assemblage flows from juxtaposition. The traffic on both of these sites is primarily internal, with many more users reposting the images of others than those creating or uploading their own. While other image-sharing based social networks emphasise the creation of unique and individual content, both Pinterest and Tumblr focus on sharing others’ work. The curation of disparate images into aesthetic boards, as seen in the platforms being discussed, performs a number of functions: primarily to articulate a form of aesthetic identity online.\textsuperscript{511}

The virtual world of Coppola’s films has been indexed into iconic images and GIFs, which are now accessible at any point in one's day. In this way, they let small sips of the virtual cinematic world into our own. In Chapter One, I demonstrated how the virtual world alters our perception of the actual world through its multiplication and subsequent rupture of a “framed” visuality, and through the power of repetition. These findings necessitate a closer consideration of other

\textsuperscript{511}One thing that must be drawn out is that Tumblr and Pinterest are not montage forms and resist analysis when considered as such. They do not have the linear progression, nor beginning and end, required to classify them as such. They are constantly being built, made and unmade as required, each user further altering the mélange to better suit their expressive aims. Consequently, their analysis cannot fold back into Eisenstein’s theory of montage and collision, nor Manovich’s database aesthetics which relies heavily on the former author’s work when considering collage media. When analysing Tumblr or Pinterest as a platform, there is a distinct lack of appropriate academic language and terminology. The openness of the platform, and the customisation of each user’s personal pages means that terms which may once have been useful, such as Manovich’s database (though that does provide an adequate summary of Pinterest) or even Williams’ “flow” (as in Raymond Williams’ Television: Technology and Cultural Form, London: Fontana, 1975, 83), fail to encapsulate the entirety of user activity. This is because Tumblr fundamentally plays with spectatorial temporality. Some pages are designed to be experienced sequentially, with each image placed vertically on top of the next, yet far more present the images in large blocks, visually similar to a Pinterest board. Even those that do present images within a sequential flow often have photo backgrounds or images which sit permanently at the sides of a spectator’s browser. It is clear from this form that no image is supposed to have supremacy or focus. As a result, this chapter will tentatively put forward a possible alternative: “mélange”. In geological terms, the mélange is a rock form made up of different sized, smaller rocks and crystals. So densely packed that they cannot always be differentiated by the naked eye, a mélange must first be taken in all at once and then studied individually. This echoes the intended experience of the Tumblr and Pinterest board: a collection of variously sized and affectivity-textured images, that must be seen from a distance and then from close-up.
platforms which traffic in images, as they hold key clues to understanding the overarching image of Coppola’s psychogeographies.\textsuperscript{512} Tumblr and Pinterest hold records of spectator response, and the themes within these records can tell us something about how a spectator may receive her work. This chapter examines how the practice of her online dispersion is carried out, and how it indicates that spectators index moments that are neurally intimate and affective. The analysis of social media and fan experience that follows aims to address the latter point of my intention — to investigate the communal spectatorial experience. A swift browse of any image-sharing platform such as Tumblr or Pinterest reveals that Coppola’s work is uncommonly popular within this context, it maintains an online presence comparable to many blockbusters.\textsuperscript{513} Coppola’s films are spread not through video clips or scenes but through images and silent GIF fragments. While the images themselves may move, they remain a fragment of a larger linear text that cannot progress. The GIF allows users of social media to remind, document and haptically brush against the cinematic world. It is a fragment taken from a whole cinematic text, and it seems that, in the case of Coppola’s work, it is often being used to remind and communicate the immaterial landscapes she creates. They become ways of replaying memories of journeys, of post-carding a trip to a psychogeography.

In this chapter, I argue that these images are popular because they present a language of communication outside the lingual. To fragment a text and share only the fragments is to essentialise the spectator’s experience, to draw out the image from the circuit. These pictures, instead of being plugged back into the cinematic world, are then contextualised within a single spectator’s online presence. In this way, they become a form of psychogeographic encounter related to but distinct from the cinematic landscape. My premise is that these fragments and those from Coppola’s work in particular, are popular (and fragmented in this esoteric manner) because they offer an experience of shared psychogeographic encounter, which in turn helps

\textsuperscript{512}This, in turn, may have significant impact on individual subjective encounters with material spaces.
\textsuperscript{513}For an example of how Coppola’s work appears on each platform, see figures 6.3 and 6.4
materialise the spectator's experience of the landscape. The images have this capacity, I argue, because they excite the same neural architecture that Coppola's work is so adept at using. This thesis has thus far been devoted to examining new explanations for spectator experience through the lens of neuropsychology. In this last chapter, I provide weight to these ideas by examining platforms which provide us with significant clues as to what the viewer finds moving from Coppola's work. If we are to consider Coppola's films as forms of virtual worlds, then the following will tackle the communicative faculties of cinematic memory, as used by Coppola's online fans. Ultimately, both forms of image curation are about expressing an identity based around personal experiences of the sensory. They are images that index a moment or memory steeped in the personal affective recollections of the spectator.

There are several common themes within the kinds of images that Coppola's films are turned into that can provide clues as to her prevalence on the online platforms. These themes, it is worth noting, have a tendency to align with some of the aspects of her work that I have analysed in previous chapters, namely affective imagery of the landscape or cinematic world and close-ups of the actors' faces. Herein, I propose that the popularity of these particular images within the online spheres indicate a complicated and nuanced form of spectator response. Specifically, it indicates that the former category — of images that aim to encapsulate and record the particular affective textures and lures within Coppola's works — is popular due to the impact that film can have on a spectator's mindset around geography, space and memory; and that the latter category of actor's close-ups speaks to the empathetically unruly emotions of the films' resonance with the viewer. Platforms like Pinterest and Tumblr, where identity is expressed through curated media collections, allow us to see viewers' attempts to communicate their experience not through language, but through affect. However, in spite of their architectural similarities, the two platforms also have differences which slightly alter how they must be considered.
A key difference between the fan’s activities on both platforms is the role of ownership over the images. On Pinterest, users maintain a possessive objectivity over their collections. Each user is documenting their favourite films, their favourite imaginary destinations, their favourite faces. Images are framed with boards full of possessive qualifiers, and each is phrased within the website in the tone of an archivist. On Tumblr, this distinction is lost as users remove the possessive quality. These differences illuminate that, although the action of remembrance that the online spheres participate in may seem similar, they must necessarily be theorised in slightly different ways.

Pinterest, I will argue, is a network where the spread of Coppola's images works as a form of postcarding, emphasising and materialising the space’s role as psychogeographic. The original (and still somewhat dominant) use of Pinterest is to index recipes and craft projects (a function which is ideal for the simple interface of a linking image which forwards to another website). The Pinterest platform demands networks and links to other websites. Yet its users (and Coppola’s fans in particular) subvert this requirement by uploading images only to the database. Instead, they use Pinterest as a digital collage. For these users, the platform is closer to a bedroom wall, or a vision-board similar to those seen in *The Bling Ring*. It is a series of images whose organising function is usually announced in the board’s title. Users often curate upwards of ten boards at once, each serving a different function. Coppola’s work features primarily on the site in boards dedicated to cinephilia. The online practice of Coppola’s fandom is distinctive and potentially unique among art-house filmmakers.

Tumblr users differ from this mode of image-sharing, and the curators’ spread of the crystal-images of Coppola films is demonstrably analogous to an architectural ruin. Lacking the
organising principles of Pinterest’s boards, these sites function more like a Victorian cabinet of curiosities. Notes from the curator are rare, instead, most images are reblogged without comment. Her imagery, I will argue, has become crystallised in a Deleuzian sense. While the action of online users is similar to Hebdige’s theory of subcultural bricolage, the outcome is vastly different. Rather, than this being an attempt to disrupt meaning, it is a communal attempt to construct a semiotics of affect. The meaning that can only be inferred by these juxtaposed images stems from the flow of feelings and intensities that the blog’s spectator experiences. Tumblr in particular, I would contend, is a site where fans aim to communicate who they are based on where they feel they have been through post-carded moments taken from Coppola’s films. It is a medium wherein users assist in the construction of identity through the cinematic virtual worlds they index.

The images represent a micro-level experience of psychogeography. As I will go on to show, each fragment demonstrates the key elements necessary to create a psychogeographic experience: they are moments where the frame is pierced or made less stable, indicating an attempt on the part of the online fan to re-enter the landscape. They are fragmented documents of spatial experiences, however this fragmentation does not impede the way in which the spectator will relate them back into a coherent and constant narrative. Like the montage space set out in The Virgin Suicides, the fragments Coppola’s fans upload and disseminate are a "neo-baroque polycentric system", a phrase I take from Angela Ndalianis’ Neo-baroque Aesthetics. What stitches and heals these fractures into a whole piece once more are the spectators themselves. On Tumblr and Pinterest, this reaches its zenith as it is the curators’ role to draw images of Coppola’s work into their own collections of fragments. The long memory of the pop culture audience, combined with the seriality present in popular media forms means that the presence of ruins, fragments and intertextual references are always harking back to one’s own

experience. The return to the constancy of human consciousness in the same manner that a space presented in montage form becomes whole through the spectator's perception. As such, though their meaning is layered, it is neither schizoidal nor disjointed. Within the spheres of Tumblr and Pinterest, the souvenirs’ spread through different users is layered into a new ruptured form of meaning, one which flows from the specific brushes with affect that these specific images can create. Furthermore, the fragments disseminated online are also inherently affective, and often sown with the form of unruly empathy that Coppola creates in her films. They ultimately reflect a micro-form of the psychogeographic experience, or rather a form of psychogeography taking shape on a new, micro-level media platform.

It needs to be stressed that I do not strip away the “world” which surrounds these recollection-images in an attempt to understand better what makes the film resonate. To consider film as an intersubjective experience is also to shed the hope that there can be an easily accessible reason behind a film’s reception. However, the personalisation of the use of the recollection-image as it appears on Tumblr and Pinterest provides us with an opportunity to look for common themes and elements while still acknowledging the discrete and unique subjectivity of any single spectator. As I will go on to argue, these platforms are used to communicate the personal and intimate through shared experience. If we can examine what is being offered up to be shared by these online fans and communities, then perhaps we can help isolate the elements of Coppola's canon which move beyond the individual and into the intersubjective. It will be within these common, shared moments of group being, I maintain, that we can see more clearly where the spectator’s experience is one framed and shaped by the fundamental architecture of the mind.

**Thematic Connections within the Dispersion of Coppola’s Images.**

The images chosen on Pinterest or Tumblr are not randomised or subject to whim, but instead
operate as part of a complicated bricolage, connected through juxtaposition and analogy. As my analysis reveals, they are each part of an analogical system of relations. Users offer each image as an invitation to the viewer to search out the gentle threads of harmony, similarity, contraries and contrast. These images are repeated, or rather mechanically reproduced. Both the "re-pin" and "re-post" functions in Tumblr and Pinterest allow users to borrow images' whole form onto their personal boards or pages. However, as both platforms are digital collage media, there is little concern amongst users about crediting the original or the authenticity of the image. Instead, the "authenticity" (for lack of a better term) is derived from the variance of uses amongst different users. For example, although perhaps the least critically popular of her texts (it currently sits at the lowest rating of her canon on review aggregating websites), Marie Antoinette is the most commonly used source of images online. I would argue that this is not only because it has the most memorable aesthetic of her films, but that it is also the most affective. It is a film composed of colour and texture — pastels, feathers, velvet and cake. It is images of these affective lures that the audience reposts. In short, there is a softness to her films that her fans try to capture through still photographs and GIFs. This is more than an aesthetic paradigm, it is fundamental to the affective atmosphere of her canon. Her fans recognise the atmospherics of her work and use the broken fragmented images of her films to try and infuse their online presence with a similar intensity.

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Figure 6.1 is one of Coppola's most popular on the platforms discussed. Each user reposts it within their own aesthetic collections, in which different elements of the densely layered narrative moment are emphasised. On one site, the childlike innocence of Kirsten Dunst is brought forward from the photos juxtaposed: soft and naïf-style cartoons and pastel textures and colours. On another, the starkness of the image is emphasised by the starkness in other surrounding images. Yet the image is never fully divorced from Coppola’s own multilayered and complicated affects. Each user draws one single thread, made more visible by the affective traces in the images it is displayed near. A still taken from The Virgin Suicides will cause different effects in the mélange depending upon its position within. In this way, the analogical themes of Coppola's works are engaged not within one person's use, but across the platform at large.

Theme is a particularly apt way of considering both Coppola's work and the manner in which it is spread online, due to her particular quirks as a filmmaker. Her films layer complicated feeling,
uncomfortable and unruly empathy, unusual emphasis on affective geography and an underlying capacity to spark the neural as much as the cerebral in the spectator. Consequently, her work has a similar capacity to be many things to many fans, a loose hovering signifier to something bigger. Before we consider why these images are particularly resonant, it is important to consider exactly what kinds of images are being spread throughout both platforms. Figures 6.2 and 6.3 aim to help the unacquainted reader understand better what exactly is being spread on each platform. The major thematic links between Coppola’s online dispersion on both Tumblr and Pinterest can ultimately be reduced into three interwoven categories: moments of pure cinesthesia, records of landscapes and close-ups of actors’ faces. I maintain these categories are interwoven as each is notably reliant on the creation and articulation of a psychogeography. While these may seem like distinct areas, in fact they share a thread: both are key in the affective experience of a carnal and spatialised spectator. The kind of images recursively posted on Pinterest fall largely into two categories: those that emphasise the aesthetics of her work (in particular Marie Antoinette), and moments centred on the faces of actors.
Figure 6.2. An example of Coppola’s dispersion on Pinterest.
Pinterest

The carnality of Coppola’s fan base, and their interest in a cinesthetic cinematic experience, is made explicit within the kinds of images shared on Pinterest. *Marie Antoinette* is the most popular of Coppola’s films on the platform, with the emphasis by fans placed squarely on the film’s baroque aesthetics. In contrast to the other films within the canon, the images used are visibly absent of quotations or commentary that implies an emotional or empathic connection between the viewer and the spectator. Instead, it is moments from the film where the visual style is most boldly on display. The most popular are those that feature three key elements from the text: the baroque layering of textures and colours, the jouissant shots of food, and the costumes. Rather than these elements being random or particularly aesthetically pleasing (although of course there is the chance that their role on Pinterest is both) I would contend that they each, in their own way, express a key element of the intersubjective psychogeographic experience of the spectator. The role of food in *Marie Antoinette*, as articulated in Chapter Three, centres on the multisensory and carnal connection of the viewer. The close-up shots of cakes, fruits and champagne elicit a phantom memory of taste for the viewer, one that lends an authenticity to the immaterial world of the film. The layered textures that the film presents, wherein flocked velvet wallpaper is placed next to the feathers, satin, silk and lace used in the costuming, hold a similar role. Each is an invitation to the spectator into a cinesthetic mode of spectatorship, in which the film moves from a visual to multi-sensory (though phantasmagoric) experience. The spectator’s interest in multisensory and affective imagery is also made clear in the colour palette that dominates her “pinned” images. In particular, the colour palette that Coppola uses (pastel blue and pink are particularly predominant), offset by the distinctive naturalistic lighting style of Harry Savides (the cinematographer who shot almost all of her films), becomes a sensuous and affective lure into the text.

On Pinterest, films (other than *Marie Antoinette*) are most often remembered by stills taken
where actors are in close-up, the face playing a central role within the image. A possible reason that these images are the ones that uploaders choose to add to the database is because they document a moment of unruly empathy. Within the faces of the actors, the affective lures of the text elicit viewer response, perhaps even to those who have not seen the film. These are expressed through the faces of actors, furthering the argument that the face of the actor becomes a site of emotional contagion. The desire on the part of Coppola’s fans to connect with emotionally unavailable characters is further emphasised by the tendency of users to include a quote by that character with the image being used. A potent image of Johnny from *Somewhere* is made more powerful for the inclusion of a line of dialogue taken from later in the film: ”I’m nothing. I’m fucking nobody”. If the face is a site of unruly empathy between spectator and screen, then the images that memorialise these moments of affective transmission act as souvenirs of that experience. However, images of her films also feature heavily in boards devoted to Travel.

Fans potentially use still images of Coppola’s work to create collections of feelings and places in an attempt to articulate the feeling of realism that her films have gained through their neuro-cinematic techniques. These postcarded spaces articulate the intersubjective experience between spectator and film, as can be seen through an examination of how Coppola’s other films are remembered on the platform. Apart from *Marie Antoinette*, *The Virgin Suicides*, *Lost in Translation* and *Somewhere* are (in order) her most popular works on Pinterest. Yet the kind of images pinned and postcarded from the latter three films are somewhat different from those selected from *Marie Antoinette*.

Whereas the latter work is remembered for its visuals, each of her other films is remembered in equal measure by emotionally resonant moments and the aesthetics presented. Searching the platform for images from *Somewhere* primarily returns images of the actor’s face taken from the
few moments within the film in which Johnny is able to empathically connect with another human being. This underscores the unruly empathic connection between spectator and screen that the film creates (as these images would not be noteworthy to one who did not connect to the film) but also memorialises the transmission of affect that these moments present. Similarly, *The Virgin Suicides* has just as many images of actors’ faces in close-up as it does without. However, it does bear noting that many of the images which are spread on Pinterest from *The Virgin Suicides* focus on the same elements that were emphasised in my analysis in Chapter Four: the minor details of set-dressing that create a textual and textural lure for the spectator.

In the previous chapter, I argued that the characters of *Lost in Translation* aim to be unmade by the landscapes in order to experience the world through intersubjective experience with the landscape. The memorialisation of that particular film on Pinterest seems to point to a similar desire on behalf of its fans. *Lost in Translation* is featured on boards devoted to travel, aligning the desires of the audience and the characters. Yet their activity unknowingly indicates that the spectators of Coppola’s work have already been unmade, by a filmic landscape. They have already experienced the intersubjectivity that they crave through the film itself, explaining why they find it worthy of memorialisation in the first place.  

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517It is worth elaborating on why I consider these particular fragments to be of a documented landscape, as opposed to a moment of cinema. Admittedly they are technically both. However, what stands out in the images that are being disseminated is the same snapshot style that Coppola uses in films like *The Virgin Suicides* and *Lost in Translation* to affectively communicate place. In Chapter Four, I argued that the techniques of geographic articulation that Coppola uses help to create an intimate and personal connection between spectator and screen by speaking to the neural architecture of the viewer. In essence, that her landscapes are drawn for the viewer in a neurally intimate manner which elevates them from setting to psychogeography. The images taken from *The Virgin Suicide* reflect this phenomenon, as they focus on these particular quirks of the filmic world. Although they are removed from the larger geographic picture of the film, they still stand as a synecdoche of the film world. In this way, Coppola’s fans are creating essential images of the film world, where the essence is the affective trace that the image holds.
Figure 6.3. An example of Coppola’s dispersion on Tumblr.
Like the images popular on Pinterest, Tumblr users prioritise images from Coppola’s films that have unusual framing, shots where the focus is on an actor’s face, and where the colour palette is primarily blue-tinted. Much like the aesthetic identities formed through the analogic mélange in Tumblr, Coppola’s films are inherently relational. The major themes she presents are those engaged through tension: the nostalgia for innocence starkly contrasted with the grim nihilism of youth in *The Virgin Suicides*, the alienation of the tourist nestled against the jouissance of travel in *Lost in Translation*, the material wealth and emotional poverty of the French court in *Marie Antoinette*.

As stated above, *Marie Antoinette* is the most popular film that is fragmented and spread on these platforms. On Tumblr, however, the moments that are made into GIFs have less focus on baroque aesthetics, and more on documenting the visual depiction of the landscape. Popular images show Versailles inside and out, creating small animated pockets of the immaterial landscape. Yet these GIFs do not simply document (or even crystallise) the viewer’s geographic impression. They tend to capture moments of film that appeal to cinesthesia. The pastoral scenes mentioned in Chapter Three, for example, are particularly well dispersed. These crystal-images offer a fan the opportunity to momentarily become immersed into the visual world of the film.

A relatively recent development in Tumblr’s short history is the creation of GIF ‘sets’. These prove to be a useful way of understanding what certain users find to be compelling in her films. The GIF is a small fragment of a larger piece of film, one which bridges the division of the actual (the spectator’s experience) and the virtual (the filmic representation). Its role on Tumblr is equal parts celebration of the image and remembrance of the film. In this sense, it fits Deleuze’s
description of the recollection-image: “an actual image, but one which, instead of extending into movement, links up with a virtual image and forms a circuit with it”.  

There is an element of personal documentation to the uploading of a cinematic image onto an individual’s Tumblr blog, a possessive nod towards favoured films and resonant experiences. These tiny fragments are then placed within the context of the film and within the context of the user’s individual page. In this way, the recollection-image finds a larger circuit both within the online ecology of image-sharing platforms, and within the personal documented experiences of spectators. Almost all of Coppola’s films have been turned into sets, with the exception of The Bling Ring.  

Each set aims to memorialise the film in some manner, and it is worth noting that they are some of the most popular images taken from Coppola’s canon on Tumblr. A collection of the most popular sets of GIFs from Coppola’s work is available at sofiacoppolamoves.tumblr.com, so that readers may see the apparent themes of Coppola’s online dissemination.

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519 Within the scope of this project, there is insufficient space to unpack the reasons for this omission. Given that The Bling Ring is the only film that has its own official Tumblr page, with content generated by Paramount Pictures, it seems likely that this stems from a divide between fan work and canon work. For readers interested in the politics of fan production in this arena, I would recommend the work of Karen Hellekson, in particular her article “A Fannish Field of Value: Online Fan Gift Culture” in Cinema Journal 48:4 (2009), 113-118.
The first set which points towards a general, though intimate, spectator response can be seen in the collection taken from *The Virgin Suicides*. The first image is taken from early in the film, a close-up of Kirsten Dunst's (here playing Lux Lisbon) smile. The affective trace of this image is easily discernible: if the close-up of a smiling mouth was not sufficiently indicative, the image is tinted a warm gold. What made this moment worthy of being removed from the text? This set is designed to outline the uploader’s most resonant moments from the film, so perhaps the better question is: what made it so resonant?

One possible answer can be found in the previously discussed idea of the face as an affective lure to mirror neurons. The sight of a smile on another's face incites the viewer to follow suit,
blurring and dissolving the boundaries between subjects. The smile speaks directly to the mind of the spectator, providing a moment of intersubjectivity. This is perhaps all the necessary motivation required for a fan to try and capture this moment and transform it into a recollection-image. However, the warm, sunny light that tints the GIF is also relevant to its importance, although this is perhaps only noticeable if viewed within the context of the larger set. The golden tone speaks to the general atmosphere of the first half of the film, in this way to stand as a synecdoche of the text's spaces.

The other images within the set perform similar work. In Chapter Four, I discussed the manner in which the landscape of The Virgin Suicides is made into a psychogeography by Coppola's focus on the affective details that the mind tends to hold onto. Two other images within the set are focused on similar moments: the image of the school hallway seemingly extending forever backwards, and the image of the Lisbon girls piled onto the floor of their single bedroom. Each articulates a particular space to the spectator, but also gives a specific affective trace to that space. The school is made endless and endlessly boring by its lack of colour and repetitive design. The bedroom is made intimate and warm by the overcrowded frame and riot of pastel coloured clothes and characters. It is clear that this particular user and those who recycle the set on their own blogs find resonance with this particular psychogeographic imprint of the film. It is also interesting for the current discussion that the uploader does not post or document images from later in the text, where the colour palette bleeds into cooler greens and the narrative turns from idolatry to the gothic. This is memorialisation of a psychogeography that one might want to visit, as opposed to the decidedly grimmer place that the film turns it into. Similar claims can be made for the GIF sets made from Coppola's other works.
Figure 6.5. A GIF set made from Marie Antoinette.

The GIFs taken from Marie Antoinette hold both the cinesthetic elements that commonly occur within the images on Pinterest, but also pay equal attention to the moments of film that express the particular affects within the landscape. The cinematic world is reduced down to a hand running through sun-dappled grass, light filtering through trees, and the juxtaposition between these natural scenes and the baroque architecture of Versailles. Kirsten Dunst's face (here playing Marie Antoinette) is featured prominently, looking beatific and distressed in turn. The face helps articulate and position the viewer's own empathetic response to the image. What is being captured is the feeling that the spectator gets from the cinematic world, one of cinesthetic, psychogeographic encounter combined with the alienation that the main character feels.
Within the set taken from *Somewhere*, it is the faces that are made most prominent. The focus is squarely on the negotiation of empathy and alienation that occurs between the two main characters, and also between the spectator and screen.

![Figure 6.6 A GIF set made from *Somewhere*.](image)

As I stressed in Chapter Four, the cinematic world of *Somewhere* is made moving to a viewer not by its particular geography, but by the unruly and illogical empathy that occurs between subjects. The affective atmosphere is articulated here in the exact manner it is expressed within the film: through the colours of the cinematography. Even in moments where the uploader of the GIF could have focused entirely on the beauty of a single moment (for example, the scene of
Cleo ice skating), they keep the reaction shots of her father within the scope of the image. It is clear that what has resonated with this particular spectator is the emotions written on the actor's faces. There is a tension between the spectators' need to connect empathically with Somewhere's characters, people who are incapable or unwilling to empathise. Previously I have argued that the unconscious spread of emotion between spectator and character within Coppola's works is made possible by her use of close-ups on the actors' faces. This idea is given further validation by the recurrent images of faces across both Pinterest and Tumblr. These faces absorb even the small frame of a GIF, becoming their own kind of emotional landscape. The production and consumption of GIFs helps capture what the spectator found resonant. However, it also helps create a souvenir of the virtual world. This is never more clear than within the set dedicated to Lost in Translation.

Figure 6.7 A GIF set made from Lost in Translation.
The images taken from *Lost in Translation* hold two key elements in focus: the affective face and the moments where the characters become parts of the landscape. In the previous chapter, I pointed toward Coppola's tendency to frame her actors in a style similar to traditional Japanese landscape paintings. Rather than this being a coincidence, it mirrors the desire of her characters to be unmade by the landscape. The images that this user has decided are the most resonant carve out these exact moments. In one GIF, Charlotte smokes a cigarette framed by the zigzagging wallpaper of a karaoke club. The lines of the paper echo the lines of a mountain range, and with pink hair the colour of cherry blossoms, she appears to have become naturalised in this moment into an urbanised, post-modern reimagining of late 19th century ukiyo-e. Similar conclusions can be drawn from another image of Johansson from the set, the opening image of her body with the title superimposed over the top. In this, her hip bone follows that same ukiyo-e curve, and the colour palette similarly matches ukiyo-e style. These GIFs, placed within the context of their set, capture three things: the emotions of the characters, the landscape and their place within it. In this way, the set essentialises this fundamentally psychogeographic story into a set of key recollection-images. But what of the spectator to this set? How might this synecdoche be received by the uploader or reuser of the image?

A valuable clue to the answer can be found within the accompanying text to the image. The words are a piece of dialogue exchanged between Bob and Charlotte: “I do not want to leave” “So do not, stay here with me. We’ll start a jazz band.” It is important also that the uploader chose not to include who said what or even that these words are part of a dialogue. Instead they appear as an individual, though fragmented, thought. Perhaps then, we may read the accompanying text as another form of repurposed media: the sentiment of longing for travel, to become a part of the landscape, is no longer the property of the film, but of the user who posts this set online. It is no coincidence that a still version of Charlotte's smoking GIF also appears on a Pinterest board dedicated to travel. These images, it appears, are part of a project of the online
community to try to document a psychogeographic encounter with a cinematic world. One which, it would seem, they wish to return to.

Figure 6.8. An example of an image from Coppola’s films appearing on a board dedicated to travel. A still from *Lost in Translation* is second from the right.

Pinterest is centred on mementos: users frequently have boards dedicated to "pin now try later", implying that the contents are entirely for the sake of remembrance. The pins specifically taken from Coppola’s work are primarily featured in boards dedicated to favourite films. However, it is informative to question the need of users to keep these online mementos of their favourite films, given that if they are indeed important to the user then they should arguably be easy to remember. Instead of existing within the memory of the spectator, the still images of Coppola’s films are uploaded into these online archives. This tension between function and purpose makes the activity of Coppola’s fans on Pinterest and Tumblr somewhat obscured. From the manner in which these images are discussed, from their focus on landscape and travelling to the cinematic worlds that Coppola creates, it seems likely that (in an echo of the diasporic immigrant turning nostalgic objects into cultural artefacts) the icons of Coppola’s work become similar “souvenirs” to the psychogeographic encounter.
Theorising the Online Sphere

These images, when taken onto online platforms like Pinterest solidify and therefore authenticate the psychogeographic connection that the spectator experienced, to take a souvenir of the filmic world. If we view Pinterest images and boards through the lens of the postcard collection, these two kinds of collection coalesce into a record of films’ power to feel like a virtual world to the spectator. As was noted by Mendelson and Prochaska, postcards have always been the property of the personal.\(^\text{520}\) While photography underwent a taxonomic shift towards art in the 20th century and was subsequently studied academically, postcards remained popular only in the sentimental circles of collectors, libraries and local historical societies. In her analysis of the personal postcard collections, Steiber writes that postcards of city views were part of a larger perceived need to document the visual modernisation of cities.\(^\text{521}\) As Mendelsohn and Prochaska further stated, "the postcard emerges as a mediator of modernity, a means to identify and possess the totality of the city".\(^\text{522}\) As the urban landscape changed, inhabitants desired records of both what had come before, and what was now becoming. In the postmodern context of Coppola’s films in a digital age, we can see the film still as a mediator of this post-modernity — a way to take ownership of a virtual world on multiple platforms, through multiple channels, and to multiple effects. The postcard thus has not just always been an objective visual record, but something more personal. In this way, it may be seen as a crystalline recollection-image.

The practice of collecting postcards to articulate a changing or crumbling urban landscape speaks to this tension between our feeling that memory is lasting and our capacity to forget. It is by creating objects that solidify the details that we hope to reach objectivity in our recollections and stop ourselves forgetting. These images on Pinterest serve the same function: to solidify and

\(^\text{521}\)Nancy Steiber, "Postcards and the Invention of Old Amsterdam Around 1900", Postcards: Ephemeral Histories of Modernity, 21
\(^\text{522}\)Prochaska and Mendelson, "Introduction", xxi
therefore authenticate the emotional connection that the spectator experienced, to take a souvenir of the filmic world. Laura U. Marks focused on the term “fossil” to emphasise the material nature of a recollection-image. I apply the same focus to the postcard: a material fossil that indexes a subject's experience. The postcard, as demonstrated below, is bought to document, memorialise, commodify and communicate their experience to themselves and others. The online postcards on Pinterest serve these same functions for cinematic spaces before being corralled into categorised collections.

This idea, that the tourist's need to capture a city's atmosphere in the stillness of a postcard, stems from the history of the postcard as memory-object. Postcards, as Stafford argues, are cultural artefacts that draw their roots from the scientific picture derived in exploration. When the earth's surface was still being discovered, it was a matter of ontological necessity to visually record the new species of plants, animals and landscapes explorers encountered. They were simple images with a simple phenomenological function: to denote what someone had seen on their travels. Postcards are a parallel medium, one that borrows the same mode of visual communication to similar expressive ends. In this way, one can observe an attempt by the sender to move outside of a lingual mode of epistolary and into a more synaesthetic semiotics. However, as Stafford shows, the postcard retains its possessive quality.

Both scientific exploration images and postcards reveal not just a world explored, but a world conquered. Through the image, the sender takes and crystallises something ephemeral. It is mediated through their own experience to the receiver. As Bruno argues in *Atlas of Emotion*, the

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523Marks, *Skin of the Film*, 50-51.
525Ibid, 351.
526Ibid, 351.
touristic gaze is possessive, and travel commodifies the landscape. The postcard as souvenir can thus be seen as an attempt to document, communicate and commodify the world around us. A postcard collection could be arranged based on how it was experienced by the owner, or by the level of emotional intensity that each card held.

As a result, the postcard collection becomes a material analogue cartography of affective psychogeography, a visual record of a space exactly as it matters to the curator. There is a clear parallel here between the practice of postcard curation and online image curation. Previously, Nancy Stieber has argued that the postcard became a method for those who lived in changing spaces to virtually affix their own personal geographic encounter of the place. The desire for people to catalogue a space in a linear, snapshot fashion recalls the effective memory-palace technique I outlined briefly in the previous chapter. The brain likes to learn spaces in linear explorations, and it also likes to add moments of emotional texture for further efficacy. Furthermore, while emotion plays an undeniable role in the transformation of one's experience into an episodic memory, research into the hippocampus (the area which encodes events to memory) reveals that there is significant cause to believe that all memories are somewhat spatialised. In a rigorous study that aimed to find clear pathways within the brain, Demis Hassabis and his colleagues concluded "Spatial representations ... have been suggested to form the scaffold upon which episodic memories are built" Thus perhaps the psychogeographic encounter preserved in the souvenir is not only socially intimate, but neurally intimate. It reflects our brain's predilection for linking geography and emotion to memory. The activity of online communities collecting and curating mementos from Coppola's texts is always part of a larger, spatially formed, and subjective experience.

528Nancy Stieber "Postcards and the Invention of Old Amsterdam around 1900" 23.
529Foer, Moonwalking with Einstein, 89-91
531Hassabis et al "Decoding Neuronal Ensembles in the Human Hippocampus.", 545.
This subjective experience, I contend, is one founded on the continued blurring of the distinctions between material and immaterial landscapes. In documenting their discrete experience of a space, an online user is able to "authenticate" the encounter. These souvenirs (as I will suggest below) help to materialise the landscape, but only because they exist in a form which necessarily distorts the immateriality of the cinematic experience. The souvenirs taken from Coppola's films, when read through a Deleuzian understanding of images, reveal the continued blurring of materiality and immateriality in the spectator's experience of cinematic space.

**The GIF as (Im)Material Crystal**

The reception of Coppola's films encourages an appreciation for the crystal-image. The spectator must let the moments unfold, or the entire cinematic work will hold little interest, given its tendency towards sparse plots and sparser grandiosity. Until recently, that unfolding could not be reproduced. Each image within the film had to occur sequentially, as part of a narrative unspooling. Until, that is, the invention and widespread use of the GIF image format to create tiny shortened moments from films. In so doing, the image is cut away from its narrative landscape, looped into an infinite circle of repetition. The GIF thus aligns with Deleuze's account of the "crystal-image". A crystal-image is an image that, when experienced by a spectator, expands out to overwhelm their perception. It is the "heart" of the opsign: "when the actual optical image crystallises with its own virtual image". If the crystal-image is one wherein "the split image constantly runs after itself to connect up with itself", then the GIF's position as both fragment and infinite loop sets it out as a crystal. The GIF becomes both a visual referent to the crystal-image and its replacement. One no longer needs to see a full film to be exposed to the beauty of its crystal-images. The crystal-image is the final point in a time-image, it is a fragment

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532 Deleuze, *The Time Image*, 80-84.
533 Ibid, 69.
534 Ibid, 83.
of a moment. Moreover, it reveals to us the underlying mechanisms of how human beings perceive time and memory. Films are a logical creation of the way humans experience memory. The memory is, in a Deleuzian sense, an absolute analogue of the crystal-image. The GIFs made from Coppola's work are flashbulbs for her fans, crystallised moments of a feeling present in the film that come to stand as synecdoche to the psychogeographic encounter.

Deleuze argues that the crystal-image is an experience that makes us keenly aware of time. It is a fragment of cinema that demands our full attention and in so doing makes us aware of our attentional faculties. In an experience such as this one, Bergson's duration is made manifest. The two elements of human temporal perception become apparent to the spectator: that time is constantly passing, and that our perception of the current moment is always framed and mediated by every second that comes before it. These moments of being captured by the crystal have a doubled effect. They can, when considered abstractly (that is, after the moment has passed) make us more aware of the operation of consciousness, time and duration. However, within the moment, they are pure experience, and thus necessarily purely embodied experience. While we might classify a moment where we are so intellectually held as a less-embodied experience, it is a moment wherein the mind becomes its purest possible conduit for sensation. The brain hungers for information from its sensory organs, and so the viewing subject is placed more firmly within their body and their organs than before. However, the key element of the crystal-image is not the spectator’s embodied experience, but the manner in which it allows the spectator to feel the relationship between time and subjectivity. It is, as stated, the moment which is both passing and the past which is present. It is no wonder then that the spectator uses fragments of cinema as souvenirs. These experiences, though common, crack open the processes of consciousness. While the subject may not be aware that this is why they find the text affecting, it is still a transcendent moment. Much like Bergson’s and Deleuze’s

\[536\]Ibid, 85.  
\[537\]Ibid, 81.
account of duration, the filmic monument is a space that allows the spectator to feel their mind working, to catch the soft edges of what makes their brain operate. This is, perhaps, what makes even the smallest moments in Coppola’s films so grand, they make us experience our consciousness.

Deleuze’s theory shines a light on some of the ways in which we might theorise GIFs on Tumblr and Pinterest. It is tempting, when considering something as minute as the film fragments summarised by GIFs, to return to Bela Balázs’ theory of the close-up. Indeed, there are echoes of his writing in Deleuze’s theory of the crystal-image. Balázs wrote of the capacity for film to collapse the spectator’s focus down to the minutiae to reveal a new world, the ”secret life of small things”. In Deleuze, this secret life can be seen in the experience of a crystal-image, the moment when the viewer’s focus shatters into two poles: that of duration, and that of sensation. In the crystal-image, the viewer’s mind sheds its cerebral understanding and instead expands out to become absorbed by the image. At the same time, the organising principles of time and context come sharply into view. The spectator’s mind is pulled in two directions, inwards towards the perception of time, and outwards into an intersubjective brush with the world. It is this pulling perhaps that Balázs accounted for in the secret life of small things, as film makes the spectator both consumed by the need of the image to be seen, while making us aware of our own perceptive lens.

This idea has necessary repercussions for how we might theorise these images, specifically in terms of a Deleuzian model. It has been argued before that Deleuze’s time image is a better account of postmodern cinema than the modern cinema he analysed. This idea has led to multiple accounts of a third cinema: a Deleuzian reading of twenty-first century films.

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539 Balázs, Early Film Theory, 55.
Consequently Deleuzian theory has turned towards understanding cinema as a "system of the relationships of time".\textsuperscript{541} When considering material objects, Marks writes that a fossil or object can never be fully alienated from its materiality. It will always maintain its physicality as a literal touchstone for a cultural memory. GIFs, on the other hand, can never fully shed themselves of their virtuality. Not only are they a fragment of a much larger illusion, but they will always require a spectatorial view that acknowledges their fragmentation. The images derived from cinema are always acknowledged as a referent, and in this way they can never stand outside a virtual understanding. If the recollection-image and the film image are always in search of a bigger circuit to connect virtual and actual, image and context, then online image sharing platforms solder these image fragments into a holistic spectator’s response. However, I would also argue that the affective quality that the GIFs and images evoke indicates a demand that they be felt.

The GIF is always attempting to transcend its virtuality into the actual. This intentionality classifies it firmly within a phenomenological model of cinematic spectatorship, one wherein the text possesses a distinct virtual subjectivity in its demand to be seen or felt. It also helps illuminate how it might be understood through a Deleuzian paradigm of perception. In the \textit{Skin of the Film}, one of Marks's projects is to create a space for both memory and sensation within a Deleuzian paradigm of film perception. To bridge the gaps between her own work and Deleuze’s, she plays with his notion of the recollection-image.\textsuperscript{542} Deleuze related this image directly to the nebulous fragments of flashback that could not be connected meaningfully to history.\textsuperscript{543}

The recollection-image comes to fill the gap and really does fulfill it, in such a way that it leads us back individually to

\textsuperscript{541}Deleuze, \textit{The Time Image}, xi.
\textsuperscript{542}Marks, \textit{Skin of the Film}, 37
\textsuperscript{543}Ibid, 40.
perception, instead of extending this into generic movement. It makes full use of the gap, it assumes it, because it lodges itself there, but it is of a different nature. Subjectivity, then, takes on a new sense, which is no longer motor or material, but temporal and spiritual: that which 'is added' to matter.544

In turn, Marks states the recollection-image is a mode of virtual imagery that requires attentive recollection.545 To put it another way, the recollection-image is partly intended to disorient the viewer in order to draw attention to the process of cinematic perception. These images are not designed to be immediately understood by the viewer. To be parsed, they must be sifted through the spectator’s own understanding and knowledge of the visual world, and then slowly cognitively reframed as relevant. In this way, one can take Marks’s reading of the recollection-image as a miniature of the processes that constitute consciousness. It is a viewing experience that forces our mind to become aware of the cartoon universe it is forever drawing, the sketch that we accept as the world itself. Marks, who focused on postcolonial intercultural and diasporic cinema, saw the recollection-images’ use in film as a way of redeeming “these stranded images by bringing them into the very present, even into the body of the viewer”.546 In spite of her narrow focus on this ontology, it is also an apt analogy for the intense riot and use of GIFs on Tumblr.

Marks’s reading of the recollection-image can also help clarify the memorialising properties of fans’ online behaviour. Again in Skin of the Film, Marks blends a Deleuzian reading of haptic cinema with the transnational object and fossil.547 The idea of the fossil here refers to more than an artefact, but rather a bearer of collective memory. The fossil, as Marks sees it, is redefined by

544Deleuze, The Time Image, 48.
545Marks, Skin of the Film, 39.
546Ibid, 57
547Ibid, 84.
its classificatory movement from object to "fossil". In so doing, people imbue the object with sense memory. Not only is the fossil a witness to a moment in time, it becomes a phenomenological holder of prosthetic memory. To touch it is to access the collective memory, to have (to borrow a phrase from Sobchack's *Address of the Eye*) an "experience expressing an experience". In her analysis of *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, Marks elucidates how for the characters and the film itself, history is both inescapable yet elusive. If we consider Landsberg's notion of "prosthetic memory", then the cinema constitutes its own form of history.

The dispersion of digital fragments of films online, when viewed through the framework of these two ideas, is revealed as a way of spectators articulating and augmenting this contrary tension between virtual and actual. To consider these two authors: Marks goes on to explain how *Hiroshima Mon Amour* grows to articulate this tension. Art, she claims, cannot represent human experience unless it is fully sensual, an experience cued by the brushing of a film's surface with the audience's. The fragment that fans are placing into their online accounts on Tumblr or Pinterest is sensual, haptic and necessarily imbued with memories of the initial film viewing experience. However, while these ideas clarify potential motivation for why the online community produces and uses such fragments, a distinction must be drawn between the still images of Pinterest and the moving images within GIFs.

The GIF cannot stand as a postcard to the cinematic world as it is simply too full of its own haptic imagery. To perceive a GIF is to watch a moment of film again. While it is certainly a memento for online fans, its sensuality moves beyond a comfortable analogy with the postcard-form. Instead, it must be considered as a digital analogue to another kind of memorialising.

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548 Marks, *Skin of the Film*, 85.
550 Marks, *Skin of the Film*, 134.
551 Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 112.
practice, one which demands to be experienced at the same moment as it expresses the historical experience. It is with this in mind that I turn to Walter Benjamin's consideration of the ruin. For Benjamin, ruins function materially in the same way that allegory and analogy function in the mind. Both Benjamin and Stafford see the function of allegory as a creative method of forging new significatory structures. The ruin, according to Benjamin, has this same purpose. It both presents a trace referent to the past (and its past signifieds) and coexists with the present. It is this coexistence and reference that allows the ruin to disrupt the juncture of signifier and signified, and it is the disruption that curators use to create new meanings through old relics. Benjamin’s ruins are thus defined as highly significant fragments, a synecdoche. Whereas previously colonialism lead to a spatial politics where power was expressed through vastness, the rise of capitalism and the merchant class in the 17th century began a fascination with aesthetic density and seriality. Both of these elements are readily observable in the Tumblr mélange where text posts are automatically truncated and images are stacked so closely together. However, it is the intertextual reference, the convergence of past and present that is key when unpacking the analogy between Tumblr, ruin and consciousness.

If we consider the GIF as a form of crystal-image, we can see that the film text is, through the Tumblr platform, being fragmented into ruins of the virtual worlds within the texts. This might explain why devotees of Coppola’s work describe the films as “wonderlands” and “dreamscapes”, and are far more interested in the emotional tone and aesthetic of the work than of the narrative. The usage of cinema images on archival sites like Tumblr and Pinterest speaks to an exponential intensification of Deleuze's proposed system: as a form of crystal-image embedded within an online collection, the film-GIF or film-still is a ruin that in its experience makes the spectator aware of the present which is passing and of the past's constant presence. As Ndalianis writes, "that which has succumbed to the ordeals of time also embodies an

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The GIF has a similar awareness of time, as a crystal-image, it is both a moment in itself and a fragment of the past.

The online uploading, archiving and display of Coppola’s film images emphasises the impact that they have over the viewer while memorialising their experience. In so doing, the image collection serves as an authenticating archive, one that articulates the discrete experience of the spectator. The text’s psychogeography is lent an authenticity through the solicitation of sense memory, as it comes to present a landscape wherein the viewer has an experience. By taking still images from this exact moment of cinesthesia, users are able to take a memory of the virtual world into their online archives. These pins stand as both a testament to their experience and an expressive, communicative tool to show others the world of the film.

The Outcome of the Online

The GIF and film image are being used, it would seem, as a form of memory-object of a place that exists only within the mind of the viewer. This is the question at the heart of my inquiry into fandom: what binds Coppola’s image into the mélange of online media? The answer is in the impact that it has had on her spectators. Like the ego tunnel, funnelling our entire mind’s work into a single coherent model that we experience as consciousness, the image stands as both a powerful moment and a visual index of the whole. It is both enticement to momentary intersubjectivity and synecdoche of the intersubjective experience with the film that the viewer once had. Both crystal and invitation, it stands as a postcard to the monumental landscape Coppola erects.

Ndalianis, Neo-baroque Aesthetics, 56.
In the case of those blog creators who include Coppola’s work in their own sites, the transmittable affects of her films are extended and emphasised by their place in the assemblage. On Tumblr, most other directors’ film GIFs or images include subtitles so that the viewer can understand whatever dialogue is being used. In contrast, Coppola’s work is just as likely to go without subtitles. This seems to indicate that, while other films are being used to communicate through language, Coppola’s texts are being spread because they communicate on a pre-lingual level. They are not just crystalline images in the sense that they expand out into an overwhelming, all-consuming duration. They also, much like the crystal-image in cinema, demand to be felt rather than heard.

Tumblr fans are aware of the communicative function of their blogs, and the identity they are expressing, yet the removal of archival commentary seems to denote an acknowledgement of the intersubjective nature of spectatorship. With still images, the personal can be objectified and quantified. However, when dealing with the crystal-image of the GIF, users tend to present them without comment. This lack of commentary further pushes the idea that the GIF offers an experience to the spectator, one that may echo the curator’s own. They represent and reorder the fragments of Coppola’s canon to express an individual experience yet acknowledge that each fan will experience the crystal in a similar fashion. They stand as key fragments of Coppola’s landscape, a series of souvenirs to her psychogeographic cannon. Each image communicates a small part of the landscape, and it is in their curation on the individual’s blog that the subject can express their experience. The communal or communicative function of GIFs in this instance is only possible because of the collective nature of psychogeography.

These aesthetic identities, built from crystal-images of film and photograph, allow an affective community to form through shared experience of the psychogeography. The collections have this capacity because they are in themselves an enticement to intersubjectivity. As the film
demands to be seen, so does the public user’s identity demand to be felt. While it is constructed artifice, it remains a stylised synecdoche of the person who created it (or at least, that seems to be the larger intention). As such, an affective dialogue exists between curator and spectator. These webs of shared experience can glue together, under the organising principles of hashtags, and allow a new, loose community of similarly moved people to develop. The experience that they have shared is an inherently spatial one, as both forms of memorisation are tied back to the landscapes within Coppola’s films.

The fragments of Coppola’s work are inherently spatialised through the logic with which they are organised on each platform. However, as in most new media platforms, they are also temporalised. In a consideration of the database aesthetic, Lev Manovich argues that the database was moving away from spatial logics and towards a system of temporal organisation. Both platforms analysed above, at first glance, support this position: posts are organised haphazardly based on time of publication and experienced in a reversed chronology by online spectators. However, if we dig past the apparent temporal structure of Tumblr or Pinterest through the uploading of images-as-memory-objects, and instead focus on this nostalgic desire to return to the psychogeography of the films, we can see an overarching spatial logic. These are spectators who do not define themselves by where they are in history, but where they have been and where they wish to go. The real and the cultural blur due to the realism that Coppola’s films are given from her appeal to the neurological. Her fans create and curate digital souvenirs as a way of cementing illusory virtual travel.

In Coppola’s fandom, the commonest form of interaction is one of yearning. In a response almost entirely founded in the aesthetics of the image, her work is treated with a nostalgic

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desire to re-enter the film’s spaces. These then are not just images that fans found resonant or interesting, but markers of a phantom ache for illusory travel. As Landsberg writes in *Prosthetic Memory*, what we are analysing must be considered a new, post-commoditised form of memory. It is one that has developed entirely separate to organic forms of memory, and has consequently suffered a critical categorisation as inauthentic. However, the use of GIFs in online identity construction indicates that, while the origin of the memory may be immaterial, the impact it had upon the spectator is manifested as material. As Landsberg argues, "prosthetic memories thus become part of one’s personal archive of experience, informing one's subjectivity while also impacting one's perception of the present and future tense". This final statement indicates the crystalline nature of a prosthetic memory. How else might Landsberg make the claim that such a memory fragment could mediate the spectator’s percept if not through the recollection-image’s ability to make us aware of, and to be consumed by, duration. A prosthetic memory will always be a combination of virtual and actual, and in the case of digital postcards, these two elements combine and interweave into a recollection-image.

If both platforms rely on the posting and reposting of images, and if Coppola’s images are always chosen and fragmented over moments of affective transmission, then we can begin to understand that these images are not just a collection of personal remembrances. They are also a form of communication. The images are almost exclusively made of moments that are neurally intimate. It seems that Coppola's fans offer up these fragments of her work as a way of communicating to each other outside reductive language and in a manner which acknowledges the unique perspective of the other subject. The GIFs of Tumblr are ruinous memory-objects,

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556Landsberg’s argument is admittedly problematic, a fact that both she and other authors have acknowledged. The biggest issue with the notion of prosthetic memory is the cultural danger of "unearned" or misplaced empathy. None of these considerations, however, are relevant in a discussion of digital images being used as prosthetic memory. Landsberg’s work focuses on cinema, and the capacity for cinema to allow a spectator to situate themselves within a historical narrative. There is an obvious concern arising from this mechanism, wherein the voices of those who actually experienced an event are drowned out by those who have accessed and interpreted a prosthetic memory of it. Yet when dealing with a fictional event, one that took place in a immaterial landscape, these issues become less pressing. Instead, the viewer is free to empathise with the curator, regardless of the authenticity of these memories. When both origin and memory-object are a rhizomatic coalescence of virtual and actual, there is no hierarchy of authentic and inauthentic. There is only the demand that the viewer open themselves up to experience, and the replying experience itself.

similar to — though distinct from — the still images of Pinterest. Both platforms aim to memorialise Coppola's canon, yet the difference in medium also creates a difference in teleology and in impact for online spectators. They are an object of digital material, yet one that the spectator can touch and observe in order to re-experience the film. This idea can help elucidate why the films are treated with a nostalgic desire to return while simultaneously authenticating the psychogeographic experience. In longing to journey to the fictional worlds that Coppola constructs, her Tumblr fans reinforce and reify the immaterial landscape.

The communal and communicative nature of Coppola's online dispersion helps clarify the experience of the spectator as a psychogeographic encounter. Not only are these images a tiny fragment of a larger film, but also of a larger and richer other spectator's experience. By making the platform viewer keenly aware of the other, this makes the spectator aware of the collective nature of film spectatorship. These souvenirs simultaneously communicate and recreate the collective memory of the film, and the filmic world. Thus in disseminating these fragments online, the psychogeography of Coppola's films is made vast and materialised. As each individual subject takes a souvenir, or reposts another's it affirms the existence of this environment. Although fictitious, the documentation and memorialisation of each individual spectator's psychogeographic impression of this space affirms and materialises its existence. As in de Certeau’s idea that the city is defined by the communal experience of its citizens, the online dissemination of Coppola's films define their settings as psychogeography.
Conclusion

Throughout this dissertation, I have demonstrated that the experience of a cinematic space by a spectator is one formed through an affective, intersubjective connection. This connection creates a psychogeographic impression for the spectator, one which indelibly alters their percept of the world. It is an impression that also relies on many of the fundamental quirks of their perceptual faculties. In light of the problematic conceptions of the spectator revealed in the literature review, this dissertation undertook research that would generate film critique without making undue generalisations about the spectator. In line with this principle, I engaged psychological research that can help us understand the important and fundamental elements of human perception that impact the spectator's reception of film.

The psychological aspects of this dissertation reveal the lack of distinction between the virtual and the material within the spectator’s moment of perception. I explored how the manner in which the brain encodes information into memory creates an important bias towards repetition, one which has significant influence on how a spectator perceives landscape regardless of its materiality or immateriality (as in the case of cinema). I outlined how the fragmented images of Coppola’s landscapes are actually made into a cohesive whole within their perception, due to the mind’s own immense capacity to create coherence. I considered how the mirror neuron system has significant impact on the spectator’s embodied and empathic experiences, two facets of the perception of cinema that dramatically undermine the “virtuality” of the experience. Finally, I considered how emotional spatialised experiences are at the core of our memory faculties, in turn demonstrating the sheer importance of considering psychogeography, as it is the very fabric that our minds weave our episodic memories through. By mirroring cognitive function and bombarding the senses, cinema becomes a sensual archive of places, and provides us with a compelling rendition of how we neurally experience our environment.
Thus I conclude that although the landscape of film is immaterial, it is constituted through the intersubjective experience that cinema presents to the spectator into a materially perceived object. To divide the materiality or immateriality of the experience is, I hope to have proven, somewhat unnecessary. If within the moment of transmission and intersubjective connection, there is no true immateriality in the spectator’s response, then to discredit the exchange as immaterial by positioning the spectator as outside the cinematic space and separated by a frame, is to ignore perhaps the most important part of a spectator’s experience. By operating within this manner, the filmic world elevates itself out of a wholly “immaterial” status and indeed beyond Massumi or Deleuze’s definition of the virtual into a semi-actual state.

The distinction between material and immaterial landscapes is not nearly as discrete or binary as has been suggested in the pre-existing literature on cinematic landscapes. The current discourse on cinematic landscapes still largely relies on a concept of the spectator that depends on two elements: single point perspective and the frame. Yet the findings presented within this dissertation potentially pose a problem to the centrality and validity of these two ideas. If the spectator’s reception of the cinematic space is one built out of material sensation, if the relationship between spectator and space is one that frames the spectator as within the landscape, then the frame is a metaphor that no longer helps explain this relationship.

The most likely explanation for this has been presented within this dissertation as the following: the immaterial spaces that cinema open up to the viewer are the most personal and therefore important connection made between subject and screen. They have this capacity because they touch the viewer directly in the moment of reception via base neurological mechanisms. The relationship between spectator and cinematic landscape is one that can help us understand
better the perspective of the spectator. Moreover, it is a relationship that, when analysed, does not require assertions to be made about the spectator’s subject position.

This dissertation exists within a smaller subset of film theory that aims to return the focus of analysis away from semiotic or psychoanalytic perspectives, and towards the architecture of the brain. While neuro/film theory is in its infancy, (a necessity, given that it grows with the scientific research body from which it draws) it remains an avenue of cinematic critique that does not posit assumptions around identity positions. Instead, it analyses the elements of spectatorship that are shared amongst all human subjects. In this way, the dissertation has presented a model of spectatorship theory that does not make generalisations about the spectator’s experience, except when considering how the fundamental elements of our perception might colour our perception of film.558

Cartography of the Dissertation:
A Brief Summary of the Project’s Findings

As demonstrated in the literature review, the spaces of cinema are powerful because they are removed from the narrative. The spectator’s relationship to filmic landscapes has been complicated, I argued, by the needs to generalise spectator response, as well as the complicated relationship that exists between the invocation of the frame and the dissonant experience of film. In the third chapter, I argued that this concept of “frame” reflects the representational nature of film space. However, I also contended that the blurring boundaries between

558The conclusions I have drawn in previous chapters may perhaps seem somewhat reductive, in that neurological processes are offered as a way of understanding the spectator’s experience. Much of this thesis has been devoted to the exploration of a paradigm of spectatorship that both acknowledges the discrete and individual experience of the spectator while also maintaining a capacity to make general claims about the viewing experience. It is an apt and important step within this task to consider the manner in which Coppola’s canon has been observably received. There are inevitable issues that arise when something as nuanced and complex as a spectator’s reaction is viewed through the limited scope of what is currently known about the brain. However, every effort has been made to ensure empirical rigour and supporting research within the cited studies.
representations of places within cinema and the psychogeographic impression that they create for the spectator provides important evidence towards a collapse of immaterial space into a form of borderline materiality. The frame is being problematised, I argued, by the spectator’s experience of the cinematic space.

The frame, and the immateriality of film space, is also occluded by the different modes of spatial articulation that filmmakers such as Coppola use. Coppola’s specific style, where her settings are articulated through abrupt montages and cuts — with a focus on small elements that communicate larger “textures” to the audience — helps to create a psychogeographic encounter that does not posit the level of remove that a spectator observing a framed image might experience. A person develops a personal, intimate impression of space (and as such, produces it into a place) by connecting their own sense memories and understanding of their environment to the textures of the cinematic space. In short, Coppola’s style (which goes against Gunning and Bruno’s characterisation of filmic psychogeography) helps the spectator create a personalised experience of the space, thus continuing the psychogeographic tradition that the individual’s impression produces spatial meaning.

This meaning is in turn augmented by the sheer carnality of the images that Coppola uses and the empathic connections she creates for the spectator. The spaces of Coppola’s films are articulated through the bodily response of the audience. In so doing, the spaces of film are partially materialised — or at the very least legitimised — by the audience. This intersubjective relationship is a key element of the spectator’s experience, and helps to explain how filmic space can feel real within the moment of viewing. Her spaces are also invested with emotion through the intersubjective mimetic experience of spectator and screen. These two elements help clarify the importance of understanding the spectator’s relationship to the cinematic space as a psychogeographic one. The response that the spectator has to these two elements is, I have
demonstrated, largely reflexive and outside of cognition. Consequently, they must be considered as experiential elements of a space. That these elements are ultimately material (in the sense that an experience always “exists” for the spectator) helps further actualise the experience of Coppola’s environments.

The role of narrative within a psychogeographic encounter can be understood, I have argued, if considered as an analogous experience to a monument. However, this parallel also helps illuminate how an environment such as either a monument or a cinematic setting can create a spatial experience that is both communal and discrete to each subject. Both monuments and cinematic spaces have this capacity because they are experienced intersubjectively. In so doing, the spectator’s discrete boundaries between subject and object are blurred, creating the possibility to be “unmade” by the landscape. The digital dissemination of Coppola’s canon through platforms like Tumblr or Pinterest, I have argued, points towards a practice of souvenir-taking which in turn informs us of the essence of the filmic experience by the spectator. The practice of Coppola’s online audience indicates a connection between spectator and screen which is intersubjective, intimate, emotional and affective. With this in mind, cinema must be considered as a psychogeographic encounter that envelops the spectator into the environment. With these ideas in mind, the question must become how the cinematic psychogeography can be further researched.

**Paths Forward: Directions for Future Research**
My analogical methodology (taken from Stafford’s *Visual Analogy*) dictates that comparisons necessarily create two-way flows of understanding.\footnote{Stafford, *Visual Analogy*, 2.} This means that the implications for future research span both screen studies and psychology. Psychologists could undoubtedly find numerous applications for media which create communal experiences, as they have already done in the case of music used as a positive therapy for dementia. However, as has been flagged by the numerous studies I have cited which actively examine the filmic experience, the bulk of further research areas rest within cinema studies. The field’s approach to psychological phenomena has always been esoteric; however, in an age when new information about the brain surfaces every day, it is key that researchers consider the increasing body of knowledge from the sciences with consistency and trust. Trust, it would seem, is a component lacking in interdisciplinary research, and a lack that must be addressed if a clear understanding of the spectator is ever to emerge.

Furthermore, there is still considerable work to be done on the gendered nature of Coppola’s canon, and particularly on how this interacts with the claims of intersubjectivity I have put forward. While Pam Cook and Todd Kennedy have made some important headway into a consideration of Coppola as an explicitly feminist (or at least, feminine) auteur, there is still a dearth of literature considering how the femininity presented in her films operates on an affective level.\footnote{Pam Cook, "Portrait of a lady: Sofia Coppola." *Sight and Sound* 16:11 (2006): 36-40. Todd Kennedy, "Off with Hollywood’s head: Sofia Coppola as Feminine Auteur." *Film criticism* 35:1 (2010): 37.} This gap within the discourse is an important one to close considering the depth and power of the intersubjective exchange between spectator and screen that I have outlined in this dissertation. If the cinematic experience opens the spectator up to an intersubjective and neurally intimate experience, then the explicitly gendered experiences that Coppola creates therefore deserve further analysis when considered as a spatial encounter.
However, perhaps the most pressing direction for further research is to consider the significant parallels between the account of the spectator outlined here and Friedrich Jameson's schizo-subject in postmodernism. Jameson's outline of the organising principles of postmodernism (although his relationship to this idea is admittedly more complicated that I have scope to consider here) is as follows: a weakening of historicity ultimately resulting in the schizo-subject; a breakdown of the distinctions between high and low culture; a preference for emotional intensities, and a return to theories of the sublime.561

Each of these elements can be found in the major findings of this dissertation. Coppola's films exhibit a weakened historicity by colliding anachronistic elements into the depiction of a utopian past. I have already unpacked the nostalgic, utopian sensibility in *The Virgin Suicides*; however, Jameson's idea can also be seen in *Marie Antoinette*, (where Baroque aesthetics are displayed next to pop music from the 1980s). One could consider the recursive ages taken from Coppola's films as a form of pastiche, especially when they are presented with the particular form of nostalgia for the filmic world I have emphasised. Coppola constructs time-scapes that pay no attention to realism in favour of representation, perfectly exemplifying "our (emergent) relationship to public history and in the new forms of our private temporality, whose 'schizophrenic' structure (following Lacan), will determine new types of syntax or syntagmatic relationships in the more temporal arts."562 Coppola's depiction of certain periods in time underscores a schizoidal temporal logic, wherein everything occurs at once and the image becomes all-consuming.

Coppola's position within the Hollywood and Art-house milieus further supports Jameson's articulation of the collapse of high/low cultural distinctions. Her work is not explicitly

562Ibid. 6.
concerned with philosophical ideas around realism (though it does reference new wave film quite thoroughly).\textsuperscript{563} However, its economic scale and widespread distribution does not place her canon comfortably within traditions of Art Cinema. At the same time, her work does not use many of the fundamental conventions and expectations of Hollywood cinema (which is why it is understood better through Deleuze’s work in \textit{Cinema II} than \textit{Cinema I}). Her work problematises both high and low culture, supporting the cultural climate that Jameson drew on to create his account of the schizo-subject. In his account, Jameson follows the Deleuzian paradigm for schizophrenia — wherein the recursive nature of simulacra in the late-capitalist era creates fissures within the chain of signification.\textsuperscript{564} In essence, the subject becomes reduced to “a series of pure and unrelated presents in time”: a string of crystalline moments.\textsuperscript{565}

The aesthetic identities being constructed on Tumblr and Pinterest are also perhaps best understood as a form of schizo-subject. Perhaps some scholars would see the fandom’s expression on Tumblr and Pinterest as another form of the postmodern “incapability of achieving aesthetic representations of our current experience.”\textsuperscript{566} After all, fans are attempting to express their experience of a film by fragmenting it and memorialising the moments they found most moving. Yet an image is inescapably reductive and the subjective experience will always resist communication. Therefore, Tumblr and Pinterest present what could be seen as a perfect example of Jameson’s characterisation of postmodernism: a restructuring of pre-existing ideas, one that lacks (at times) the distinction between “Culture” and “The Real”. Moreover, the GIF-as-recollection-image is a time-image that is both an experience while also — because of its place within the collage-like blog — an expression the spectatorial experience of the curator. Cinematic fragments are an impression of another spectator’s experience that demands intersubjective connection to be fully seen. In this way, they are their own impression of a

\textsuperscript{563}Kennedy, “Off with Hollywood’s Head”, 39.
\textsuperscript{564}Jameson, \textit{Postmodernism}, 27.
\textsuperscript{565}Ibid, 27.
\textsuperscript{566}Ibid, 198.
subject’s mindset, a neuro-image. This conclusion brings with it an explanation as to why the platforms resist analysis through Manovich’s model as set out in database aesthetics; it reveals that temporality has come unmoored in these online spaces, another articulation of late capitalist logics. The desire to travel to the psychogeography of Coppola’s films, combined with the aesthetic identity that individual users express through her images, reveals that these curators exist within the logics of Jameson’s schizophrenic subject. Thus the biggest possible further direction of research may be to reconsider Jameson’s schizo-subject through the analogic model of theory and scientific research I have engaged here. While there are undoubtedly concerns arising from the combination of psychoanalytic work and psychological research, it is still a productive endeavour to consider the elements of Jameson’s work that resonate with our understanding of the brain.

Journey’s End.

This dissertation began with a simple aim: to consider the facets of the psychogeographic experience a spectator has with cinematic texts. I have argued that the reason why cinematic spaces are so meaningful is because the audience perceives them psychogeographically. Psychogeography is a form of spatial meaning — and manner to understand spaces — that arises from the embodied and emotional experience of the landscape. I have further argued that this experience is one that dramatically problematises the virtuality of film space, as evidenced by: the capacity that cinematic landscapes have to alter one’s own experience of material landscapes; by the ability of these landscapes to “unmake” the boundaries that separate our subjectivity and force the spectator into an intersubjective exchange; and finally by the “souvenir” practices of online fandoms. Each of these latter facets of psychogeography constitutes ways that the spectator partially materialises the film’s space through their own discrete experience, and through the collective experience of online communities. While my argument is ultimately designed as one of many potential ways that we can consider the experience of cinema, it also offers an explanation as to why film holds the capacity to be
profoundly moving and memorable. As I have previously demonstrated, we see with our brains, not our eyes. Cinema is one of the greatest reflections of the processes that constitute our consciousness, an experience which is always spatial. Coppola's films stand as testament to this, creating environments in unconventional ways in order to allow the spectator to enter into the film's world.
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