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Moving Images - Static Spaces: Architectures, Art, Media, Film, Digital Art and Design

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Architectures of the Instant: glimpsing the utopian in the suspended moment

To apprehend the city is to grasp how heterogeneous temporalities, histories and spaces have been produced, mediated and experienced. The spatio-temporal compressions of the digital are shaping not only cities but our own sense of agency: there is an urgency in contemporary art practice to make these conditions visible.

Reading two digitally constructed artworks, the suspended moment between still and moving image allows us to glimpse the city as imagined and experienced *otherwise*.
Between cinema and city, the affinity of their 'flows of life' was a common modernist assumption: however digital image-construction demands that the viewer treat the dynamic manipulation of viewpoint, time, indexicality and framing as critical strategies.

Claerbout's 'The Algiers Sections of a Happy Moment' (2008), an assemblage of endlessly looped images, allows us spatialised access to a single instant. A quotidian moment, a game of football on a Casbah rooftop, is suspended between photography's decisive moment and cinema's mobile viewpoint, a dance of proximity, distance and affect. In this expanded present the happy moment becomes a tangible, latent force of possibility.

Douglas' large photographic diptych Mare Street and Pembury Estate (2017) addresses the eruption of rioting in August 2011. Meticulously researched documentation was combined with new footage into a synchronous (re)construction of the gathering disturbance.
The view is thus actual, virtual and historiographical.
Against a global context of financial crisis and urban uprising, the work scrutinises contested visions of the local, of community and Olympic legacy.

Lines of sight, fields of vision and the panoptic vista are examined as coded regimes, common to urban planning and film alike. Borrowing Lefebvre's schema, these works confront the conceptual representation of space with the lived spaces of representation.
The city is returned to us as a cinematographic artefact: real and imaginary, constructed and contingent, quotidian and now utopian.