



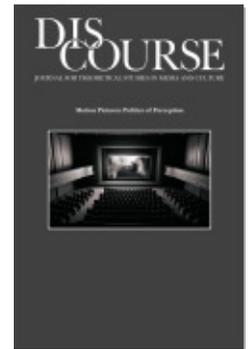
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Still *Einstellung*: Stillmoving Imagenesis

Jon Inge Faldalen

Persons do not mirror themselves in running water—they mirror themselves in still water. Only what is still can still the stillness of other things.

—Confucius

[T]he artist was so overwhelmed by the splendor of the Buddha that he could not draw when looking at him directly. When the situation was presented to the Buddha, he said, “Let us go together to the bank of a clear and limpid pool”; whereupon the Buddha sat himself by the bank of the pool, while the artist sketched his drawing based upon the reflection on the water’s surface. . . . This particular style became known as “the image of the Sage taken from (a reflection in) water.”

—Lama Gega

O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

—Henry Francis Lyte, “Abide with Me,”

1847

Reflections and shadows—drawn lightly on the fluid or fixed surfaces of water and rock—dissolve the dichotomy of still versus moving images, provoking a third concept: *stillmoving imagenesis*, or a simultaneous becoming of still and moving images. From Narcissus to Nosferatu, reflections and shadows have been discussed as significant others of things in myth, religion, philosophy, art, science, and popular culture. Taking the still ethics and aesthetics (or with a German term, the still *Einstellung*) of Confucius and Buddha as points of departure, attention is drawn to the material and mediating stillmoving *imageability*—understood simply as the material conditions for an entity’s ability to create an image—of natural water and rock, which conditions the immediate and immaterial stillmoving imagenesis of reflections and shadows. Acknowledging this complex in-betweenness, I describe reflections and shadows as being *(im)material (im)media*. These terms signify the intangible relation of the material and mediating (water, rock) with the immaterial and immediate (light, reflection, shadow). With the speed of light, *immaterial* reflections and shadows are drawn *immediately* on the *mediating materialities* of water and rock.

Look into a reflective surface—a metal mirror or a pool on a rain-swept sidewalk—or dance your fingers between a source of light and a surface, and you can sense the stillmoving imagenesis of reflections and shadows. Such everyday contemplations open up an exploration of not only how we are *moving (with)* images but also how we are *stopping (with)* images, through our abilities to control the movement and stillness of our own reflections and shadows. Reflections on water and shadows on rock move with us and are stilled by us. Every morning, we meet our reflection in the mirror and adjust ourselves according to it; at nightfall, we encounter our shadows. Reflections and shadows, as extensions touching surface tensions, are things to make sense *with* and make sense *of*. As complex human/nonhuman entanglements, they come into view as physical yet immaterial “extensions of man.”¹

To make sense of reflections and shadows, one can gain knowledge by posing the question of how reflections and shadows, viewed as stillmoving imagenesis, dissolve the dichotomy of still versus moving images. At stake in posing this question is not only a dissolution of this dichotomy but also the performing of an archaeological intervention into conceptualizations of moving image *(im)media*, resulting in methodological and theoretical insights—an *(im)media archaeological* approach from objects, reflections, and shadows to the concepts of *stillmoving imagenesis*—of consequence for disciplinary formations, since such stillmoving objects demand interdisciplinary insights. This *(im)*

media archaeology uncovers, under layers of seemingly composite images—below the still and moving images that appear later, historically—the stillmoving imagenesis of reflections and shadows. This essay first sketches the field to which it intends to contribute and explains its key terms; second, it conducts analyses of shadows on the fixed surface of rock by turning to Werner Herzog’s film *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (2010) and reflections on fluid surfaces, taking as its case study Richard Wilson’s art installation *20:50* (1987); and third, the essay concludes by outlining how these observations fundamentally recast the dichotomy of still versus moving images as a trichotomy of *stillmoving/still/moving* imagenesis. In this order of things, the stillmoving imagenesis through reflections and shadows—and the still *Einstellung* through film, video, or digital media—is not a collision of any preexisting entities (the still plus the moving) but instead is *the* initial entity, the spring of imagenesis: the *stillmoving*.

The proliferation of digitally produced and exhibited media in recent decades has reactivated a core issue in art history, photography, cinema, and media studies: the conundrum of still and moving images. A host of image works—such as the videos of Bill Viola, where the still *Einstellung* and slow motion examine minute gestures, or the “moving stills”² of David Claerbout, where still photographs are gently animated—explicitly or implicitly engage this conundrum, where images are seemingly dynamic or seemingly static. Thus, recent scholarship discusses, for instance, the freeze frame, the photofilm, and the still film.³ A pivotal figure, which may serve as a common denominator for traversing this history, is the still *Einstellung* (most often called a static, stationary, or fixed-frame shot).⁴ It is found in most movies, but more often it is explored in experimental film and video art, from Andy Warhol’s *Empire* (1964) to David Lynch’s *Rabbits* (2002).

Coming to Terms: *Einstellung*, Stillmoving, and Imagenesis

The term *Einstellung* offers an amalgam of ethics and aesthetics, being “the German word for both ‘attitude’ and a ‘film shot.’”⁵ An *Einstellung* is both a technique (style or aesthetics) and a perspective (intention or ethics): it is an *aesthetics*. “The *Einstellung* is the *Einstellung*,” writes Gertrud Koch: “the *Einstellung* of something and the *Einstellung* to something.”⁶ Koch’s provocative redundancy equates ethics and aesthetics, echoing the *Cahiers du Cinéma* ethos “morality is a question of tracking shots.”⁷ In an updated version of

this dictum, ethics can be viewed as a question of *Einstellung*. So, what differentiates a still *Einstellung* ethics from a moving *Einstellung* ethics?

For André Bazin, the still *Einstellung* was a crucial part of his “aesthetic of immobility,”⁸ most exemplarily found in the famous kitchen scene of Orson Welles’s *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942), where the camera remains still for several minutes during a charged dialogue. For Bazin, the combination of the four stylistic traits—long take, deep focus, total frame, and either a moving or a still *Einstellung*—forms a quietly revolutionary ethics of no less than *liberté, égalité, and fraternité* within the imagenesis and between it and its viewers.⁹ Flaunting few devices, this cinema leaves us to our own. Whereas a moving figure in conventional cinema most often would cause camera movement tracking this figure—for instance, Rocky running—a similarly moving figure would not cause camera movement in a still *Einstellung*. Only what is moving is shown as moving, while what is still is shown as still.

Thus, while the intentionality of a moving *Einstellung* sees everything (both what is still and what is moving) as moving, the intentionality of the still *Einstellung* sees something (what is still) as still and something (what is moving) as moving. This differentiation, found in stillmoving imagenesis from natural reflections and shadows to today’s digital still *Einstellungen*, is at the core of my contention that the still *Einstellung* is fundamentally different from the moving *Einstellung*.

The still *Einstellung* conditions *stillmoving* rather than moving imagenesis, regardless of material (water, rock, film, video, or digital) or mode of mediation (reflection, shadow, cinema, television, or computer). Reflections and shadows dissolve the dichotomy of still versus moving images. They achieve this through the stillmoving imagenesis of their material and mediating invisible (water) and visible (rock) still surfaces—as these are entangled beneath and around immaterial and immediate figural presences (the stillmoving reflections) and absences (the moving shadows). As a consequence, the age-old dichotomy of still versus moving images is recast by the trichotomy of imagenesis: stillmoving/still/moving.

The value of such a dismantling and fundamental restructuring of the framework of still and moving images is found in its implications for disciplinary formations, methodologies, and theories within and between art history, photography, cinema, and media studies. Stillmoving imagenesis does not fall squarely into any established discipline, such as painting does in art history or film does in cinema studies. Being truly *inter*, these in-between objects thus demand interdisciplinary insights. An interdisciplinary “still/

moving” research field is therefore forming, with several contributions using the terms “still,” “moving,” and perhaps even more significant “between”¹⁰ in their titles, radically suggesting that these homeless betweens, these *metaxy*¹¹ or media, deserve a room of their own, a stillmoving research discipline.

In order to understand current technological, artistic, and scholarly preoccupations with “stillmoving,” “still moving,” “still-moving” or “still/moving” images,¹² I therefore sink the space and slashes, heave the hyphen, and imagine a return to a genesis of images by turning to reflections and shadows. Moving and stillmoving images occur naturally. Before cinema was even an idea, it was a fact. It was therefore never, and will never be, *invented*. Humans have always been driven to remake nature through images, but nature has always already (re)made itself within itself, through the natural (im)media reflections and shadows. These earliest of images were truly *acheiropoieta*, reflections and shadows ephemerally drawn by light on water and rock without the touch of human or other animal hands. The initial images were thus neither portable sculptures nor sand or cave drawings but were simultaneously still *and* moving reflections and shadows.

These natural imageneses could be seen as part of what Peter Geimer terms “self-generated” images, and I second his call for “a concept of images that can also incorporate contingency, occurrence, and the ‘uncomposed.’”¹³ Reflections and shadows are parts of *physis*, the natural world that springs from itself. Before their ubiquitous presence in man-made environments through metal or glass reflectors or the water mirrors of landscape architecture, stillmoving images occurred in the natural world. Water and rock surfaces¹⁴—whose complex material mediations condition reflections and shadows—have stillmoving *imageability*.¹⁵ Whereas rock has shadow imageability, water has both shadow and reflective imageability.¹⁶ And for fluids, such as water, a condition for figural imagenesis is *surface stillness*.¹⁷ The hands or tears of Narcissus ruin his reflection, resulting in nonfigural refraction.

Testing and taking advantage of—like Narcissus or the Buddha artist—such surface stillness, two-year-old Fanta, a chimpanzee from Fongoli, Senegal, for the first time visits a spring in a forest grove, clinging to a branch above, looking into its imagenesis, slightly undulating the water surface with her *index* finger (figure 1). The voice-over in the anthropological documentary states that “First she tested the water with a leaf. And then we watched her discover her own reflection. Self-recognition used to be something we said set humans apart. But as we watched Fanta play with her reflection, we can only wonder: What goes on in her mind?”¹⁸



Figure 1. Fanta and her reflection. From video taken by Christine Eckstrom. © Christine Eckstrom.

Reflection precedes recognition, and leaving the latter aside, what seemingly occurs is an experience of a still *Einstellung*, of a slowly moving figure, drawn on a gently moving middle ground of rustling leaves, resting on a still ground of blue skies. Fanta senses the spring of reflection, the original stillmoving imagenesis.

So, how does this natural imagenesis destabilize core ideas in the studies of images? The seemingly ever-pressing questions “What *is* an image?” as well as “What *is* a moving image?” and “What *is* cinema?” require continual refreshing in response to technological developments, the current development being digitization. Turning from ontology to ontogenesis, from being to becoming, cinema and media scholars would do well to first ask “How do moving images *become*?” Aiming to answer this question, the concept of imagenesis—a composite term made from the Latin *imago* and the Greek *genesis*—seeks to unfix the rigidity of the substantive nouns “image” and “moving image” in order to emphasize the ontogenetic, process-derived *becoming* of still and moving images.¹⁹ Acknowledging that “[t]he idea of process and production is completely absent from the Latin word”²⁰ *imago*, imagenesis finds in translation and transformation this idea of process not only inherent in the Greek *genesis* but also in the German *Bild*, “the material and spiritual aspect of the image, considered together; and the power of production, of forming.”²¹ This move from image as *product* (picture) to image as *process* (imagenesis) informs analyses of different kinds of imagenesis: natural, mechanical, technical, aesthetic or phenomenal, and historical, cultural, or social. While

I discuss these other modes of imagenesis elsewhere,²² this essay deals with natural imagenesis, objects of inquiry being reflections on fluid surfaces (water) and shadows on fixed surfaces (rock).

My ambition is to challenge the concepts of still and moving images, already deeply destabilized by digitization.²³ What happens to these concepts if we welcome reflections and shadows into the family of images as still, moving, and stillmoving imagenesis? What kind of imagenesis does the still *Einstellung* condition? Do stillness and movement remain a dichotomy? Or is the still *Einstellung*, where some parts are still and other parts move, something that is “between-the-images”²⁴ or a foundational “image-state”²⁵—stillmoving imagenesis?

The Buddha artist by the pool adopted a still *Einstellung*, a perspective, an intention, and an ethics similar to the camera-mediated still *Einstellungen* used by contemporary moving image makers such as Roy Andersson in *Songs from the Second Floor* (2000), where long take, deep focus, total frame, and an unmoving camera combine in forty-five out of forty-six *Einstellungen*. Similar to the artist who stilled his body and eyes to sense the stillmoving imagenesis of the (reflection of the) Buddha in order to paint still imagenesis, this director stills his camera to capture the still as still and the moving as moving in order to make stillmoving imagenesis. Rather than a radical exception—as in *The Magnificent Ambersons*—here the still *Einstellung* is a rule. And with it, moving imagenesis turns into stillmoving imagenesis.

Reflection and shadow imagenesis on water and rock reveal further complications: a different kind of image is unveiled in (im)-media archaeological layers below still and moving images. The origin of all images—before humans formed sculptures or drew on sand or rock—were stillmoving imagenesis, becoming through water reflections and rock shadows. These images could be termed the springs of stillmoving imagenesis, being *simultaneously still and moving*. This simultaneity reveals a foundational level of *differentiation*. In moving imagenesis through the moving *Einstellung*, the still and the moving are conflated. In stillmoving imagenesis through the still *Einstellung*, the still and the moving are differentiated.

In my writing about digital compression technologies, such as the MPEG codec and the movement and stillness detection algorithms in digital video surveillance, I have found fundamental differences between the treatment of movement and stillness through coded, fixed pixels rather than fluid grains or signals.²⁶ Through digital imagenesis, the still *Einstellung* differentiates. Digital stillmoving imagenesis thus makes *apparent* what is only *latent* and *dormant* in the still *Einstellung* through film and video, where the next

grain or signal would be similar but not the same. In Auguste and Louis Lumière's film *The Baby's Meal* (1895) and Viola's video *The Reflecting Pool* (1977–79), both employing the still *Einstellung*, the next grains or signals that depict a still area would look like but not be the same picture elements. The latent and dormant in the still *Einstellung* through film and video are thus the perceiver's aesthetic or phenomenal imagenesis of the moving as moving and the still as still, despite that on a technical level everything, even what is still, is continually moving through successive similar grains or signals changed dozens of times a second.

To clarify this differential ability, and its apparent existence in digital imagenesis, it is helpful to scrutinize the term "still." There exists no sustained effort investigating at length this core term in the research on "still/moving" images.²⁷ To highlight its complexity, I engage it triangularly: as a concept combining its adjectival spatial meaning, *not moving*, and its adverbial temporal meaning, *continuing*, as well as its affective agency to *calm and quiet* (such as Jesus's stilling of the water in the speech act "Peace, be still!"). With this vocabulary, the digital still *Einstellung* (for instance, MPEG compressed) precisely calms what is not moving as continuing, as it "ignores" the still areas of the frame and only updates those areas that are moving. Thus, while moving the moving as moving, it *calms the not moving as continuing*: it *stills the still as still*.

Compared to the imagenesis of reflections and shadows, there are striking digital analogies between the *still pixels* (the *same* pixels, refreshed or not) of a digital still *Einstellung* and the *still rock* surface around a moving shadow on a cave wall. This differential ability—digital's intrinsic capability to code stillness and movement separately, a feat impossible for film or video—parallels reflections and shadows, where there is no next and similar frame, line, or pixel but where the still remains the same: "O Thou who changest not, abide with me." Beneath the stillmoving reflections on water or around and beneath moving shadows on rock, the fluid water surface or fixed rock surface abides with us. Water reflections and rock shadows move the moving as moving and still the still as still.

Reflections and Shadows as Imagenesis

Reflections and shadows have long puzzled art historians, poets, philosophers, physicists, and psychologists. However, reflections and shadows have sometimes been somewhat reductively discussed as *still* images, disciplined into a discourse on painterly rendition

of shadows or photographic contrast.²⁸ But natural reflections and shadows are never entirely still; they are moving, or are different kinds of stillmoving imagenesis, since the physical and phenomenological stillness of their fluid or fixed material surfaces take part in the imagenesis. These phenomena merit more attention from cinema and media scholars.²⁹

Recent contributions to histories and archaeologies of moving images provide valuable explorations of precinema and early cinema, but why restrict our time travel to firelight-animated cave drawings and spinning bone disks, so-called Paleolithic thaumatropes?³⁰ Investigation of reflections and shadows poses fruitful interventions in foundational debates in our fields, such as the ones on indexicality, representation, liveness, or real time. Reflections and shadows, for instance, challenge a dominant understanding of images as present absences by being copresences or present presences.

Stillmoving imageability and imagenesis are an untended path through the prehistory and history of moving images, from the natural imagenesis of shadows and reflections, via the mechanical imagenesis of bone disks, shadow play, camera obscura, Brunelleschi's experiment, and the magic lantern, to the -ramas, -scopes, and -tropes of the nineteenth century, culminating in the technical imagenesis of film, video, and digital images of our age. The moving image has always carried the still within, but the stillmoving question is yet to be fully addressed.

The material conditions for natural imagenesis may also shed new light on fluid and fixed surfaces of technical imagenesis, such as plasma and liquid crystal displays or cinema projection screens. Whereas the surface of water shares qualities with the relative fluidities just below the fixed surfaces of television and computer screens, rock's fixed surface beneath and around the moving shadow shares qualities with the texture of the cinema screen. A revelation for me is the still superior quality of natural reflections as high-definition, wide-screen, three-dimensional moving or stillmoving imagenesis.³¹ Water reflections rotate with the viewer through parallax in 3-D and remain, in my view, the most advanced imagenesis.

Two concrete case studies of reflections and shadows, namely the 3-D film *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* and the piece of installation art *20:50*, demonstrate how reflections and shadows slightly differ in their imageneses through the invisibility of water and the visibility of rock, how they have had (pre)historical significance as imageneses, and how they embody the trichotomy of stillmoving/still/moving.

Shadows on Fixed Surfaces

During an interview sequence in the documentary *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, imagining the genesis of images in the prehistoric Chauvet cave in France, director Werner Herzog briefly discusses moving shadows on fixed surfaces with archaeologist Jean-Michel Geneste in a conversation that I transcribe here uncorrected:

HERZOG: Could it be, how they set up fires in Chauvet Cave, there's evidence that they *cast their own shadows against the panels of horses*, for example?

GENESTE: The fire were necessary to look at the paintings and maybe to *staging people around*. When you look with the flame, with moving light, *you can imagine people dancing with the shadows*.

HERZOG: Fred Astaire? Fred Astaire?

GENESTE: Yes. I think that this image dancing with his shadow is a very strong and old images of human representation. Because *the first representation was the walls, the white wall and the black shadow*.³²

This short dialogue opens a path further back in time than the ones opened so far by cinema and media scholars: to any still surface and its moving shadow. The dialogue resonates with Pliny's account of the birth of images, where a young Corinthian girl outlines the shadow of the profile of her boyfriend to keep his likeness present in his absence. But her boyfriend's cast shadow was already an image, a *stillmoving* image: an amalgam of the still wall and the moving shadow of the boyfriend (attempting to stay still).³³ Thus, it is highly significant that "(im)media" archaeologist Geneste emphasizes both the black shadow and the white wall. The white wall, or the rock surface, is the *still ground* of the *moving* shadow, causally tracing the movements of its caster. As an integral part of the imagegenesis, the fixed rock surface is a condition for imageability. Cast shadows need a ground, whether flat or undulating (figure 2). On the rock surface—what David Lewis-Williams metaphorically calls "the living membrane"³⁴—shadows are drawn immediately by the speed of light (here, firelight) and its equal, the "leap" of shadow.³⁵ Shadows are holes in the light, figural absences.³⁶

Whereas Edward Wachtel³⁷ as well as Marc Azéma and Florent Rivère examine how cave drawings display cinematic qualities under flickering light or through superimposition or juxtaposition of successive images "when the light from a grease lamp or a torch is moved along the length of the rock wall,"³⁸ Herzog and Geneste speculate whether the earliest artists also consciously projected³⁹ shadows of themselves on and between the drawings in the Chauvet



Figure 2. Shadow play on the rock of Chauvet cave. Frame grab from *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (Werner Herzog, 2010).

cave, containing the earliest known man-made images drawn some 32,000 years ago, making the cave the longest quasi-permanent exhibition site ever. Herzog comments:

Well, there is one moment in the film where I am speaking about the charcoal that was found in the vicinity of the Panel of the Horses, the charcoal fires. There is *a row of fires which was used for illumination*, but placed in a way that when you are close to the Panel of the Horses *your own shadow becomes a part of the image, apparently as an integral part of the staging.*⁴⁰

The drawn images that dancing shadows (and Herzog's documentary) become integral parts of are almost exclusively depicting animal figures, in "an imaginary world where humans seem to be absent."⁴¹ Discussing the more famous and more recent drawings in the Lascaux cave, Geneste and colleagues ask: "Man as a whole, unconnected to animals, is absent from Lascaux. Did Palaeolithic man represent himself by metaphor in the form of hybrid creatures, or *was he forbidden to represent himself?*"⁴² I would suggest that he or she was not. Since the *moving* human figure was present on the rock surface through vertically cast shadows, perhaps conscious shadow projection partly accounts for the lack of human figures in the drawings? I would argue that the scene was an amalgam of drawn still images—themselves potentially "moving" through light changes—and moving shadow images: stillmoving imagensis. Shadow play of people dancing with their others

in caves, thirty millennia before Plato chained people to watch other's shadows dance, was certainly a possibility. This shadow play might then be the true forgotten dreams of the Chauvet cave. Either way, shadows are almost ubiquitous, carved from the photons of firelight, sunlight, or electrical light, on any kind of still fluid or fixed surface.

Sean Cubitt writes that "The first movie, we teach in Film 101, was the flickering torchlight in the caves at Lascaux, as our ancestors moved past the images . . . or the shadowgraphy of handpuppets in the firelight."⁴³ Cinema and media scholars should also welcome reflections into the family of images and thus teach that among the first movies were reflections in water, nature's *camera fluida*. The fundamental feature of moving images, I think, prior to representation or the possibility of camera movement is the potential to depict *object movement*, part of what Christian Metz terms "real presence of motion."⁴⁴ Both reflections and shadows depict object movement through real presence of motion. One such object is the human figure. Reflections and shadows depict human figures traced in light and shadow.

So, how do shadows challenge the dichotomy of still versus moving images? Through the stillmoving imagenesis of the *visible*, material, and mediating still surface entangled with the immaterial and immediate presence of the *figural absence* of the moving shadow. Reflections, however, dissolve the dichotomy in a slightly different way.

Reflections on Fluid Surfaces

Water reflections—the "liquid eyes of nature"⁴⁵—were the first mirrors for humans and other animals and have ever since been looked into.⁴⁶ The most famous water reflection is found in "Narcissus and Echo" from the *Metamorphosis* of Ovid, who describes the material conditions of this eternal "silver screen," undisturbed by algae rhythms: "*Picture a clear, unmuddied pool of silvery shimmering water. The shepherds have not been near it; the mountain-goats and cattle have not come to drink there; its surface has never been ruffled by bird or beast or branch from a rotting cypress.*"⁴⁷

Ovid emphasizes the stillness of the water surface, thereby establishing its imageability. Unlike the artist looking at the reflection of the Buddha, *an other's other*, Narcissus—like Fanta, the chimpanzee—looks at and drowns in his own reflection, *oneself's other*. Nevertheless, like the artist or the chimp, Narcissus senses an undulation of still and moving imagenesis.

Tor Ulven writes that “A mirror is a paralysis. Water is moving. But the less the water makes noise, the more it is suited to mirror, as if the mirroring function and stillness presupposed each other.”⁴⁸ This poetic truth is also physically true: Water’s mirroring function and stillness do presuppose each other. The still water surface—or the air/water interface, as it is known in chemistry—is a fragile, fluid film of molecules. Surface stillness is a condition for the figural imageability of fluids, such as water and oil. Unlike rock undulations, water undulations undo imagenesis. John Ruskin writes that “[a] piece of calm water always contains a picture in itself, an exquisite reflection of the objects above it.”⁴⁹ For the purpose here, it is important to stress that calm water contains *still*, *moving*, or *stillmoving* imagenesis—a “continuously changing image”⁵⁰—depending on whether the perceiver and the reflected are still or moving.

Reflections challenge the concepts of still and moving images, and this challenge is poignantly posed by the fluid imagenesis of Richard Wilson’s *20:50* (1987) (figure 3), a work that combines land art and architecture in one sculpture/installation. In the work, a gallery space is filled with oil whose horizontal reflections mirror the gallery architecture and thus double our perception of it. Being unfamiliar with its material genesis, my initial experience of the work was baffling: Is it a gigantic mirror? Or maybe some kind of liquid? How deep is it?

As writer and reader, we are unable to sit by a pool in a sacred forest grove, Walden Pond, or a gently flowing mise-en-Seine, so this fluid yet quasi-permanent installation at London’s Saatchi Gallery serves as a concrete example of fluid imagenesis. The piece was inspired by water reflections that Wilson encountered while on holiday while “in the pool, up to my eyes,”⁵¹ but oil’s higher viscosity and blackness condition more stable visuality. Wilson’s *20:50* has been installed all over the world and is currently at its third location in London. In its first installment, *20:50* was accompanied by a quote from Alice in Wonderland: “Let’s pretend the glass has got all soft like gauze, so that we can get through it.”⁵² Both water and oil are soft, like gauze, so one can get through. But doing so, of course, drags along the reflection.

The online gallery presentation text describes *20:50* as

an expansive and indefinable virtual space that clinically absorbs and mirrors the gallery architecture. The room is in fact entirely flooded in oil. . . . *20:50* takes its name from the type of recycled engine oil used. It is thick, pitch black, and absolutely indelible: please take extreme care with your clothing and belongings, and no matter how tempting, please do



Figure 3. Reflections on *20:50* (Richard Wilson, 1987). Frame grab from *theEYE: Richard Wilson* (Illuminations, 2001; DVD, 2006).

not touch. *20:50* often has to be demonstrated to be believed: the liquid can be seen by blowing very gently on the surface.⁵³

Simultaneously a sculpture, an installation, and a performance, *20:50* forces the perceiver to participate and play with the still, moving, or stillmoving imagenesis. Previously, one could move like Moses, strolling up an inclining walkway parting the still sea. Now one must stand by a fence at the frame⁵⁴ and, like Narcissus, look down into the reflections. Its *Einstellung* has thus shifted from moving to stillmoving imagenesis. Whereas before one could choose to move through the piece and sense its moving qualities, one is now first and foremost encouraged to sense its still qualities.

The title *20:50* is derived from the viscosity grade of the material, the fluid sump oil, transformed through millions of years. This material conditions the imagenesis. Andrew Graham-Dixon, one of the work's early commentators, wrote that its "unchanging surface registers a dark and utterly stilled reflection of its surroundings,"⁵⁵ although the reflection is neither still nor moving but instead is stillmoving. The stillness of the fluid oil has stillmoving imageability. The oil is responding, but not recording, as a fluid film of "forgetting,"⁵⁶ a "[m]ute surface, uninhabitable, impenetrable, where all is event and nothing is memory."⁵⁷ If reflected objects (such as the walls or ceiling) are still, their reflections are still. If reflected objects (such as visitors, a vehicle, or a bird in flight outside the windows) are moving, their reflections are moving. This, of course, is also the case with all kinds of fixed mirrors, whether metal or

glass. There is always potential for movement in a still reflection (effectively used in sudden figural appearances in horror movie bathroom mirrors). Viewed in this way, *20:50* becomes potentially either still, moving, or stillmoving imagenesis. Like still water reflections, it embodies the trichotomy of imagenesis.

If you walk along either *20:50* or a still lake, “looking along”⁵⁸ or “according to it,”⁵⁹ its reflections are sensed—like the tracking shots of cinema—as a moving *Einstellung* of moving imagenesis. If, following the Buddha’s invitation, you stand or sit still by a pool, its reflections are sensed—like the static shots of cinema—as a still *Einstellung* of stillmoving imagenesis. We are truly moving (with) images; reflections and shadows move with us. But we are also stilling (with) images. We can still reflections and shadows by becoming still. *Only what is still can still the stillness of other things.* Thus, the colon dividing the title of this essay, “Still *Einstellung*: Stillmoving Imagenesis,” signals a conditional and causal relationship: a still *Einstellung* conditions and causes stillmoving imagenesis.

How, then, do reflections dissolve the dichotomy of still versus moving images? Through the stillmoving imagenesis of the *invisible*, material, and mediating still surface entangled with the immaterial and immediate figural presence of the stillmoving reflection. Each in their own way, reflections and shadows thus challenge the concepts of still and moving images by provoking a third concept: stillmoving imagenesis.

The Trichotomy of Imagenesis: Stillmoving/ Still/Moving

I suggest that stillmoving imagenesis is not a collision of any pre-existing entities. Rather, it is the spring where the simultaneously still and moving occurs as a natural phenomenon. Stillmoving imagenesis is the initial entity, the foundational image state of the trichotomy stillmoving/still/moving. Imagenesis is then crucially not seen as initially still (as in sculpture and painting), and only later moving (as in the camera obscura and the cinema), but as initially stillmoving—through stillmoving reflection imagenesis and stillmoving shadow imagenesis—and only later also still (as in photography) and moving (as in computer games). This initially stillmoving imagenesis seems then not a collision but rather a natural spring where still imagenesis and moving imagenesis later came to drink. Still imagenesis (such as sculpture, painting, and photography) and moving imagenesis (such as camera obscura, cinema, and computer games) are therefore “*taken from* (a reflection in)

water”⁶⁰ or shadows on rock. Current interest from scholars and artists in stillmoving imagenesis might then be a thirst quenched by these stillmoving springs.

Notes

The first two epigraphs are from *Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings*, translated by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 65, and Lama Gega, *Principles of Tibetan Art* (Darjeeling: Jamyang Singe, 1983), 42. The third epigraph is from Henry Francis Lyte’s hymn “Abide with Me,” written in 1847 shortly before his death.

¹ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (London: Routledge, 1964). Reflections and shadows are truly “the optical counterpart of an object” (Benjamin), “optical images” (Mitchell), “optical media” (Kittler), or “natural media” (Belting). Walter Benjamin, from “The Task of the Translator,” quoted in Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 56; W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 10; Friedrich Kittler, *Optical Media: Berlin Lectures 1999*, translated by Anthony Enns (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2010); and Hans Belting, “Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology,” *Critical Inquiry* 31, no. 2 (Winter 2005): 309.

² Ingrid Hoelzl, “Moving Stills: Images That Are No Longer Immobile,” *Photographies* 3, no. 1 (March 2010): 99–108.

³ See, for instance, Laurent Guido and Olivier Lugon, eds., *Between Still and Moving Images* (Herts, UK: John Libbey, 2012); Eivind Røssaak, ed., *Between Stillness and Motion: Film, Photography, Algorithms* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011); Ágnes Pethő, ed., *Cinema and Intermediality: The Passion for the In-Between* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011); Gusztav Hámos, Katja Pratschke, and Thomas Tode, eds., *Viva Fotofilm, bewegt/unbewegt* (Marburg: Schüren Verlag, 2010); Karen Beckman and Jean Ma, eds., *Still Moving: Between Cinema and Photography* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); David Green and Joanna Lowry, eds., *Stillness and Time: Photography and the Moving Image* (Brighton, UK: Photoforum and Photoworks, 2006); and Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006).

⁴ Elsewhere, I examine the stillness of moving images, mainly materially mediated through film, video, and digital media. I explore how different materials and mediations from film to file—a fundamental shift from what I term “sequential silver” to “palimpsest pixels”—make a difference for how movement and stillness in moving images are created and experienced. See Jon Inge Faldalen, “Still *Einstellung*: Stillmoving Imagenesis,” PhD dissertation, University of Oslo, 2014.

⁵ Bernd Hüppauf, “Emptying the Gaze: Framing Violence through the Viewfinder,” *New German Critique*, no. 72 (Autumn 1997), 14.

⁶ Gertrud Koch, *Die Einstellung ist die Einstellung. Visuelle Konstruktionen des Judentums* (Berlin: Edition Suhrkamp, 1992), 9, my translation.

⁷ Luc Moullet, “Sam Fuller: In Marlowe’s Footsteps,” *Cahiers* 93 (March 1959), quoted in Jim Hillier, ed., *Cahiers du Cinéma: The 1950s; Neo-Realism, Hollywood, New Wave* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 148.

⁸ Ludovic Cortade, "Cinema across Fault Lines: Bazin and the French School of Geography," in *Opening Bazin: Postwar Film Theory & Its Afterlife*, edited by Dudley Andrew with Hervé Joubert-Laurencin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 20.

⁹ Viewers experiencing this "aesthetic of immobility" of the still *Einstellung*—compared to experiencing the dominant style of contemporary cinema, employing above all the four stylistic traits short take, shallow focus, close-up frame, and moving *Einstellung*—are supposedly given more freedom to examine the equality between humans and the fraternity between humans and their environment, including nature, animals, and things.

¹⁰ Guido and Lugon, *Between Still and Moving Images*; Røssaak, *Between Stillness and Motion*; and Beckman and Ma, *Still Moving*.

¹¹ "Aristotle, however, speaks of two elements, namely air and water, as of two 'betweens'. In other words, he is the first to turn a common Greek preposition—*metaxú*, between—into a philosophical noun or concept: *tò metaxú*, the medium. 'In the middle' of absence and presence, farness and nearness, being and soul, there exists no nothing any more, but a mediatic relation." Friedrich Kittler, "Towards an Ontology of Media," *Theory, Culture & Society* 26, nos. 2–3 (March–May 2009), 26.

¹² See Røssaak's *Between Stillness and Motion* and Marta Zarzycka and Bettina Papenburg's introductory essay, "Motion Pictures: Politics of Perception," in the current issue for an assessment of this research field. Shinji Kohmoto and Frits Giertsberg, eds., *Still/Moving: Contemporary Photography, Film and Video from the Netherlands* (Kyoto: National Museum of Modern Art, 2000), use the backslash for these "images on the border": *still/moving* (10). Stitching together the until then dominant paused two-word version "still moving" or the hyphenated "still-moving" (e.g., Beckman and Ma, *Still Moving*), Røssaak reintroduced a slash in his composite version—"still/moving"—in *The Still/Moving Image: Cinema and the Arts* (Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic, 2010).

¹³ Peter Geimer, "'Self-Generated' Images," in *Releasing the Image*, edited by Jacques Khalip and Robert Mitchell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 42.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the surface concept, see Avrum Stroll, *Surfaces* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

¹⁵ I thank Kathrin Friedrich for her usable German term *Bildbarkeit*, in English "imageability," used in a different setting in the chapter "Bildbarkeit: Mediale Dispositive diagnostischer Bildgebung" in her as of yet untitled doctoral thesis on medical imaging (unpublished, Academy of Media Arts, Cologne, 2014). Kevin Lynch has previously used "imageability" in another sense in *The Image of the City* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1960)

¹⁶ Examples of the imageabilities of water and rock are found in numerous movies: Joris Ivens's *Rain* (1929), in which the streets and canals of Amsterdam are flooded with stillmoving imagensis; Nicolas Roeg's *Don't Look Now* (1973), in which a young girl is running as a water reflection before drowning and then later is reflected in the canals of the mirror-city Venice; Bill Viola's *The Reflecting Pool* (1977–79), in which the artist is caught midair while his reflection takes a life of its own; and Ang Lee's *The Life of Pi* (2012), which fetishizes water reflections for a new age. The most famous figural shadows in movies are found in F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922), Fritz Lang's *M* (1931), George Stevens's *Swing Time* (1936), and Jacques Tourneur's *Cat People* (1942). The joint reflective and shadow imageability of water can be seen in John Woodman's *Reflections on My Shadow* (1980).

¹⁷ Of course, slowly flowing fluids have figural imageability while remaining flat and avoiding undulation.

¹⁸ Christine Eckstrom, “Chimps on the Edge” *Unusual Behavior at a Waterhole in Senegal*, Video clip, 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=JsXQ913MOEY.

¹⁹ I am here drawing on Whitehead’s concepts of *process* and *becoming* and Simondon’s concept of *ontogenesis*. See Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality: Corrected Edition* (New York: Free Press, 1978), and Gilbert Simondon, “The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis,” *Parrhesia*, no. 7 (2009): 4–16.

²⁰ Jacqueline Lichtenstein, quoted in James Elkins and Maja Naef, eds., *What Is an Image?* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 28.

²¹ Gottfried Boehm, quoted in Elkins and Naef, *What Is an Image?*, 27.

²² Faldalen, “Still Einstellung: Stillmoving Imagenesis.”

²³ See, for instance, “Mitchell vs. Mitchell” on digitization in W. J. T. Mitchell, “Realism and the Digital Age,” in *Critical Realism in Contemporary Art: Around Allan Sekula’s Photography*, edited by Jan Baetens and Hilde Van Gelder (Leuven: Leuven University, 2006), 12–27.

²⁴ Raymond Bellour, *Between-the-Images*, translated by Allyn Hardyck (Zürich and Dijon: JRP Ringier and Les presses du réel, 2012).

²⁵ Hoelzl, “Moving Stills,” 106, suggests that “photography and film are synthetic ‘image states’: they both display aspects of stasis and movement.”

²⁶ Faldalen, “Still Einstellung: Stillmoving Imagenesis.”

²⁷ There are a few exceptions considering this spatiotemporal duality of still: Kaja Silverman, “Growing Still,” in *James Coleman*, edited by Kaja Silverman and Helmut Friedel, 50–71 (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002), and George Baker, “Re-animations,” *October*, no. 104 (Spring 2003): 28–70. There is also, of course, the auditive aspect. Wonderful essays on the still in a broader sense are found in David Bissell and Gillian Fuller, eds., *Stillness in a Mobile World* (London: Routledge, 2011).

²⁸ Art history contributions such as E. H. Gombrich, *Shadows: The Depiction of Cast Shadows in Western Art* (London: National Gallery Publications and Yale University Press, 1995), and the wonderful Victor I. Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), downplay the moving aspects of shadows. In physics (e.g., M. G. J. Minnaert, *Light and Color in the Outdoors*, translated by Len Seymour [New York: Springer-Verlag, 1993]), psychology (e.g., Roberto Casati, *The Shadow Club: The Greatest Mystery in the Universe—Shadows—and the Thinkers Who Unlocked Their Secrets*, translated by Abigaill Asher [New York: Knopf, 2003]), and philosophy (e.g., Roy Sorensen, *Seeing Dark Things: The Philosophy of Shadows* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008]), however, the moving aspects are more apparent.

²⁹ While C. W. Ceram’s *Archaeology of Cinema* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965) dismisses shadows, Olive Cook’s *Movement in Two Dimensions* (London: Hutchinson, 1963) takes them seriously.

³⁰ Marc Azéma, *La Préhistoire du cinéma: Origines paléolithiques de la narration graphique et du cinématographe . . .* (Paris: Éditions Errance, 2011).

³¹ Mark Kauntze describes how the earliest fixed “reflections produced by metal surfaces . . . did not have the same level of resolution as those produced by reflective surfaces in nature, such as still water.” Mark Kauntze, “Seeing through a Glass Darkly:

The Interpretation of a Biblical Verse in Augustine of Hippo,” in *The Book of the Mirror: An Interdisciplinary Collection Exploring the Cultural Story of the Mirror*, edited by Miranda Anderson (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 61.

³² *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, DVD, directed by Werner Herzog (2010; London: Revolver Entertainment, 2011), my emphasis.

³³ See Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow*, 11–20.

³⁴ David Lewis-Williams, *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2002), 214.

³⁵ Casati, *The Shadow Club*, 171–72, observes that “between the object casting a shadow and the shadowed surface there is nothing moving. . . . The linguist Len Talmy . . . jokes that shadow projections are a physical fact because there is no shadow-thing that corresponds to photons—no ‘shadowons’ around.”

³⁶ See Sorensen, *Seeing Dark Things*, 4, and Casati, *The Shadow Club*, 47, 205.

³⁷ Edward Wachtel, “The First Picture Show: Cinematic Aspects of Cave Art,” *Leonardo* 26, no. 2 (1993): 135–40.

³⁸ Marc Azéma and Florent Rivère, “Animation in Palaeolithic Art: A Pre-Echo of Cinema,” *Antiquity* 86, no. 332 (2012): 319.

³⁹ “Light spreads physically by making a geometric projection; shadow is *only* a geometric projection—it’s not propagation.” Casati, *The Shadow Club*, 169.

⁴⁰ Zach Zorich, “Interview: Werner Herzog on the Birth of Art,” *Archaeology* 64, no. 2 (March–April 2011), http://archive.archaeology.org/1103/features/werner_herzog_chauvet_cave_forgotten_dreams.html, my emphasis.

⁴¹ Marc Azéma in the documentary *Marsoulas, la grotte oubliée*, DVD, directed by Marc Azéma (2006), enclosed with the book by Carole Fritz and Gilles Tosello, *Marsoulas: Renaissance d’une grotte ornée* (Paris: Édition Errance, 2010).

⁴² Jean-Michel Geneste, Tristan Hordé, and Chantal Tanet, *Lascaux: A Work of Memory*, translated by David Ball and Nicole Ball (Périgueux: Fanlac, 2003), 98, my emphasis.

⁴³ Sean Cubitt, “Visual and Audiovisual: From Image to Moving Image,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 1, no. 3 (2002): 361.

⁴⁴ Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, translated by Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 9.

⁴⁵ Henry David Thoreau, *Thoreau on Water: Reflecting Heaven* (New York: Mariner Books, 2001), 72.

⁴⁶ Mark Pendergrast contends that “early hominids probably learned to recognize their reflections in still waters” and describes how Sumerians looked into a bowl of water with floating oil to see visions. Mark Pendergrast, *Mirror Mirror: A History of the Human Love Affair with Reflection* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 7 and picture text. Sabine Melchior-Bonnet describes “the shadow and the reflection in water” as “the first means by which man saw his body.” Sabine Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror: A History*, translated by Katharine H. Jewett (New York: Routledge, 2001), 256. Divination by natural water reflection, or *hydromancy*, has been widely practiced, even into our time. See, for instance, Janet Bord and Colin Bord, *Sacred Waters: Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland* (London: Paladin Grafton Books, 1985). Sacred waters were in “sheltered groves protected from disturbance or disruption,”

according to Richard Gregory, *Mirrors in Mind* (London: Penguin, 1997), 46. In ancient Greece, statues of Zeus were reflected by pools of water at Athens and by olive oil at Olympia. See Martin Robertson, *A Shorter History of Greek Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 102. Water reflections have had protective uses, such as the Aztecs “leaving a bowl of water with a knife in it near the door. The intruder, alarmed at seeing his image pierced by a knife, would turn and flee.” See Benjamin Goldberg, *The Mirror and Man* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985), 4. All later fixed mirrors, be they metal or glass, can be seen as extensions of still water. Chief Cameahwait of the Shoshone tribe termed mirrors “solid water, which were sometimes brilliant as the sun and which sometimes showed us our own faces” (Pendergrast, *Mirror Mirror*, epigraph).

⁴⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses: A New Verse Translation*, translated by David Raeburn (London: Penguin, 2004), 112, my emphasis.

⁴⁸ Tor Ulven, *Fortæring* [Consumption] (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1991), 64, my translation.

⁴⁹ John Ruskin, *The Elements of Drawing* (London: Herbert Press, 1991 [1857]), 91.

⁵⁰ Jack L. Nasar and Minhui Li, “Landscape Mirror: The Attractiveness of Reflecting Water,” *Landscape and Urban Planning* 66, no. 4 (2004): 234.

⁵¹ Wilson, quoted in Simon Morrissey, *RW* (London: Tate, 2005), 10.

⁵² Lewis Carroll, *The Annotated Alice: The Definitive Edition*, edited by Martin Gardner, illustrated by John Tenniel (New York: Norton, 1999), 143.

⁵³ “Richard Wilson Exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery,” Saatchi Gallery, www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/richard_wilson.htm.

⁵⁴ Mechanical and technical imageneses, such as film, video, and digital media, most often have fixed, rectangular frames, clear-cut edges that separate the imagenesis from the rest of the world. Water reflections and cave shadows are, however, dependent on the perceiver: Water (or oil) reflections are either clearly framed by the edges of their material surface, as in the case of the Buddha artist sitting at the bank of a pool, or more unclearly framed by the perceiver’s field of vision, as in the cases of Narcissus and Fanta, where their close encounters with the water leaves it frameless. Shadows also are either framed by the edges of the material surface they are cast upon, such as a white wall, or by the perceiver’s field of vision, such as in Plato’s allegory of the cave and Herzog’s depiction of the Chauvet cave, where the close encounters leave the rock surface frameless.

⁵⁵ Andrew Graham-Dixon, “An Oil Well That Ends Well,” *The Independent*, February 18, 1987, www.andrewgrahamdixon.com/archive/readArticle/1033.

⁵⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, translated by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁵⁷ Jorge Luis Borges, quoted in Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror*, 268.

⁵⁸ John Ruskin, *Of Truth of Water from Modern Painters* (Lancaster, UK: Unipress Cumbria, 2010), 35.

⁵⁹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind,” in *The Primacy of Perception*, edited and with an introduction by James M. Edie, translated by Carleton Dallery (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 164.

⁶⁰ Gega, *Principles of Tibetan Art*, 42, my emphasis.