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Chimeric Realities

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Chimeric Realities

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Essay Abstract

This essay examines the urban experience in postmodern cities and mediated reality. Modernity brought a change in perception that altered the experience of the city. This shift was registered through cinema which disrupted the fixity of classical space and provided an aesthetic reception similar to the gaze the flaneur. With the transition into postmodernism came the idea of the Heterotopia, a city that is capable of juxtaposing multiple temporalities and spaces that are themselves incompatible. The postmodern city developed with the exponential growth of mass communication and consumption immersing us in mediated reality.

My projective works make use of collage techniques to produce images that match the way in which we perceive, interact, and navigate mediated reality. My sequence makes use of cinematic qualities to immerse viewers in the imaginary spaces portrayed. The postmodern city is experienced as a territory in which we simultaneously inhabit a multiplicity of spaces, both digital and physical. These intertwined realities give the postmodern city a phantasmagoric character, one of undefined spatiality.

Exploration of Contexts:

The Modern City and Cinema

The development of the modern city and cinema are inextricable. As David B. Clarke states in his essay on the cinematic city, the new pace of modern life and frantic rhythms of the city were captured and normalized through the spectacle of the cinema. As Baudrillard notes “The American city seems to have stepped right out of the movies... to grasp its secret, you should begin with the screen and move outwards towards the city.”¹ He states that the cinema has always been leaking out of its specific context and has become dispersed throughout many sites, specifically the city. The modern cityscape, thus, begins to be experienced as a screenscape.

According to Walter Benjamin, the abrupt cultural shifts of modernity registered shifts in people’s sense of perception. He claims that film corresponded to profound changes in perception, changes that were experienced on an individual scale by the man in big city street traffic. Cinema could take these shifts in perception and push them further through its ability to modify scale and proximity; speed and slowness; and to liberate sound, of smells, and of color from vision.² As Shaviro states “Cinema is at once a form of perception and a material perceived, a new way of encountering reality and part of reality thereby perceived for the first time.”³

Modernism was marked by an obsession with imposing a rationalized order to the world. This, paradoxically gave rise to a swelling up in the city. A powerful recurring nightmare in modernist cinema was the dystopian alter ego of modernity, as captured in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*.⁴ Modernism believed that following a certain historical trajectory could either lead society into a utopian or dystopian future. In my work I themes and scenarios where modernist utopian and dystopian visions manifest. In some instances they are not seen as realities, but as crystalised memories or visions from the past.



Fig 1. Thomas Moore, Still from *Chimeric Realities*, 2015. Projection.

The speed of the modern city gave rise to a different sense of space, it gave rise to abstract space, one of fragmentation and disjuncture. According to David B. Clarke, “the notions of time and space were no longer stable, solid, and foundational. Instead, modernism gave way to the transitory, the fleeting, and the contingent.”⁵ Cinema

contributed in shifting classical conceptions of space by disrupting the fixity and coherence of perspectival representation through its use of moving images.

Walking amongst crowds in the modernist environment, was the new experience of a world populated by strangers. This is a recurring theme in my work. The figures inhabiting the environments that I create are either in isolation or are part of massive crowds moving through space. The feeling is always impersonal and overwhelming, it conveys the experience of navigating through large cities. As Italo Calvino describes in *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* "I am an anonymous presence against an even more anonymous background."⁶



Fig 2. Thomas Moore, Still from *Chimeric Realities*, 2015. Projection.

With the birth of the modern city came the emergence of the Flaneur, a term coined by Baudelaire. The Flaneur can be thought of as the first "window shopper." Technology of the 19th century includes the first use of steel frame construction and

plate glass windows, which marked a dramatic shift in the experience of strolling through the city. The customer no longer had to enter a shop to view their products, they were framed on display and could be viewed from the outside, free of commitment. This new way of experiencing the city, according to Clarke, embraced the uneasy, fleeting life of the modern city and found fascination in the pleasures and potentialities of a world removed from the restraint of tradition. The city stroller would draw the strangers around him into his private theater without fear that they would claim the right of insiders; a similar aesthetic reception of what is experienced through film.

As Clarke claims, "The Flaneurs' existence was marked by the melancholic nostalgia for a lost (or impossible) world, and by a sense of impotence at the interminable deferral of any sense of arrival at a final destination."⁷ The gaze of the city stroller is essential to experiencing my projective sequence and it's enhanced through the cinematic qualities present in the work. The slight zooming and panning in the sequence creates an uneasy, uncanny feeling which disrupts the fixity of the perspectival spaces portrayed. It enhances their dynamic quality, along with the audio track, and further destabilizes spatial relationships. It allows the viewers to immerse themselves in the environments and situations portrayed with the knowledge that they are at a safe distance viewing the spectacle before them.

The Postmodern City in Cinema

As Foucault stated, modernism was worried about history. Instead, “we are now in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and the far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed.” He theorizes about the possibility of the Heterotopia, which is “capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are themselves incompatible.”⁸ The concept of Heterotopia is explored extensively in my work. The environments I create conflate multiple temporalities and suggest the simultaneous interaction of digital and physical space within the Postmodern city.



Fig 3. Thomas Moore, Still from Chimeric Realities, 2015. Projection.

As Mark Shiel states “Postmodernism comes with a recognition that the way back to the modern is sealed for good.”⁹ The idea of the end of history is no longer seen as viable or interesting. According to Baudrillard we are beyond the end, we are in the transfinite universe. Utopian and dystopian themes are still explored in cinema, yet no one believes in them becoming a reality anymore.

Postmodernism comes with a strong sense of uncertainty about the future and nostalgia for the past. ‘Nostalgia film’ as identified by Fredric Jameson articulates the sense of disorientation and loss of history present in Postmodernity. As Mark Shiel claims, it presents each city type: Paris, New York, Los Angeles, as iconic of the dominant cultural realities of its respective historical stage. The Traumatic social reality of one generation often becomes the comforting myth of the next.¹⁰



Fig 4. Thomas Moore, Still from Chimeric Realities, 2015. Projection.

Postmodern City and Architecture

As architect Rem Koolhaas states in his essay *The Generic City*, “Identity is derived from physical substance, from the historical, from context. But the fact that human growth is exponential implies that the past will at some point be too “small to be inhabited by those alive. We ourselves exhaust it.”¹¹ The exhaustion of identity and the production of architecture that can inhabit any context has informed my work. As Calvino describes “Stations are all alike; it doesn’t matter if the lights cannot illuminate beyond their blurred halo, and all of this is a setting you know by heart.”¹²



Fig 5. Thomas Moore, Still from Chimeric Realities, 2015. Projection.

According to Koolhaas, Postmodernism is the architectural style of choice in the Generic City. “Postmodernism is not a doctrine based on a highly civilized reading of

architecture history but a method, a mutation in professional architecture that produces results fast enough to keep pace with the Generic City's development... Anyone can do it - a skyscraper based on a Chinese pagoda and/or a Tuscan hill town." ¹³ He continues describing Postmodern architectural production in his essay *Junkspace* "Regurgitation is the new creativity; instead of creation, we honor, cherish, and embrace manipulation... superstrings of graphics, transplanted emblems of franchise and sparkling infrastructures of light, LEDs, and video describe an authorless world beyond anyone's claim, always unique, utterly unpredictable, yet intensely familiar." ¹⁴ The overproduction and accumulation of the Postmodern city, both in terms of physical and digital space, informs the amount of layering in my images.



Fig 6. Thomas Moore, Still from *Chimeric Realities*, 2015. Projection.

As architect Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown state in their book *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form*, Postmodern architecture is an architecture of communication over space. The dominance of signs over space can be seen in big airports, where “complex programs require complex combinations of media beyond the purer architecture triad of structure, form, and light at the service of space. They suggest an architecture of bold communication rather than one of subtle expression.”¹⁵ The symbol, thus, dominates space, architecture is not enough. Spatial relationships are made by symbols more than by forms, architecture becomes symbol in space rather than form in space. The shift to an architecture of signs has had a dramatic shift over the scale of the architecture and planning of the Postmodern city. The way in which communication and media affects our experience with the city and its architecture is very relevant to the development of my images. Several of them explore a built environment of overwhelming scale.



Fig 7. Thomas Moore, Still from Chimeric Realities, 2015. Projection.

Contemporary Collage, Hyperreality, and Mixed Reality Landscapes

Technological change brings new paradigms of perception, communication, travel, and ways in which we relate to society and our surroundings. Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, we have experienced unprecedented growth of technology, media, and communications. Artists have had to create new techniques of representation in order to cope with the rate of change of the past century. One of the most effective modernist techniques was collage because it allowed for fragmentation and multiplicity of form and meaning. Collage enabled artists to cope with the changes in perception and time in the modern experience. As the twentieth century progressed there continued to be an exponential growth of mass media and communication technologies, leading us into the digital age we live in today. Collage remains an essential form of artistic representation because it allows artists to keep up with the increasing complexity and speed of our mediated reality by tampering with the syntax of our culture and exposing how images and meanings are constructed.

There were of course multiple interpretations of modernity and a newfound multiplicity of meanings in people's experiences. These cultural shifts where speed, change, and simultaneity were central, coincided with the introduction of collage techniques into modern art. Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, Hannah Höch, Kurt Schwitters, and Paul Citroen brought a rearrangement of the categories of art and perception. As art critic Sally O'Reilly states "Their play between actuality and depiction, tactility and visuality, flatness and volume, contributed in tipping pictorial representation

into crisis.”¹⁶ Collage represented a new kind of individual, one who was no longer a coherent subject, but rather one whose identity was fragmented and multiplied. This new artform sought to respond to and cope with the fast changes in perception, time, and the psyche of modern experience.

More recently, the exponential expansion of mass media and communication technology has led our society to live in a growing state of what French philosopher Jean Baudrillard calls “Simulacra.” In his treatise *“The Precession of Simulacra”* Baudrillard states that a simulation substitutes signs of the real for the real itself. It provides all signs for the real and short circuits its reduplication by signs. The simulacrum never again exchanges for what is real, but exchanges within itself in an uninterrupted circuit. The simulation, he claims, envelops all of representation as itself a simulacrum. Therefore, the simulation threatens the difference between the real and the imaginary in our society. We live, he states, “in a world of simulation: of hallucinations of truth.”¹⁷

Baudrillard explains that it becomes increasingly harder to isolate the process of simulation. We then find ourselves in a state where it is impossible to isolate the process of the real or to prove the real. Society, thus, has entered a state of hyperreal events, where the contents are indefinitely refracted by each other. Contemporary material production is Hyperreal. The production and overproduction of society pursues the restoration of the real which escapes it. He presents Disneyland as an example, because it is a place that is preserved as imaginary by the American population in order to make us believe that the rest is real, when in fact America is no longer real but

hyperreal.

Baudrillard continues on to explain what he calls “The end of the panopticon,”¹⁸ the panopticon is a prison building plan designed by Jeremy Bentham in the 18th Century. It consists of a circular arrangement in which the jail cells are located around the circumference and the watchman is in the center. The inmates do not know when they are being watched which means that they must act as if they are being watched at all times. The end of the panopticon for Baudrillard entails the end of perspective and the perception of objective space. Portraying reality television as an example of a simulation that transforms the real into the hyperreal, he says that the real can not be perceived without the distance that produces perspective and depth of vision. There is a switch from panoptic perception to what he calls a system of deterrence where the distinction between active and passive is abolished. In this Hyperrealist society the real is confused with the model. It is, therefore, impossible to locate an instance of the medium itself because we are always already on the other side, we are the news, we are the social, we are involved, we are no longer simply spectators. There is a merging of the medium and the message.¹⁹ There is no longer any recognizable medium, it is now intangible and diffracted into the real, and it can no longer be said that the real is distorted by it. There is a dissolution of the media into life and life into the media, it has become spectralized. Media, thus, acts as a genetic code that transforms the real into the hyperreal, where there is little distinction between the source and the spectator. It is in this state, where this distinction can not be maintained, that we enter into simulation and are vulnerable to absolute manipulation.

With the widespread use of computers since the 1990's we are collectively engaged in mixed reality environments. The term was introduced as a computer science concept by Paul Milgram and Fumio Kishino in 1994 as a part of what they called the "Virtual Continuum." The model they proposed has reality on one end and virtual reality on the other; and any segment between both extremes can be considered mixed or augmented reality. Mixed reality, thus, encompasses physical environments that are overlaid with digital information, such as "Wikitude," or virtual environments that are overlaid with physical information, such as "Second Life."²⁰ We, thus live in a time where virtual and real objects interact in real time.

The transition into a mixed reality landscape and the realm of the virtual image has been described by French cultural theorist Paul Virilio in his book *The Vision Machine*. Virilio states that society's visual culture has transformed from "formal logic" which is the realm of painting and etching, to "dialectic logic" which is the realm of photography and film, to "paradoxical logic" which is the realm of video recording, holography, and computer graphics. The end of the twentieth century, as Virilio describes, marked the end of a logic of public representation when the real-time image began to dominate the things being represented, virtuality began dominating actuality. The term "high definition" no longer applies to the image but to reality itself.²¹

The idea of generating a virtual reality has played a crucial role in integrating computers and new technologies into our lives. As new media theorist Lev Manovich states in his essay *The Language of New Media*, the quest for a perfect simulation of reality is what drives the field of virtual reality. Manovich explains that throughout the

twentieth century, illusionism became the domain of mass media technologies such as photography, film, and video, and that today these technologies are being replaced by new digital illusion generators, computers. He declares that the paradox of visual culture is that while imaging is becoming more computer based; photographic and cinematic appearing images are becoming more dominant. The virtual worlds that are being created are portrayed as if they were seen through a camera, and are subject to effects such as depth of field and motion blur. As Manovich states “The visual culture of a computer age is cinematographic in its appearance, digital on the level of its material, and computational in its logic.”²² The digitally coded cinematographic image thus satisfies the demands of human communication and is suitable for computer production, editing, and distribution. These images have contributed in developing more accurate simulated realities where the demands are increasingly complex because they have to deal with several fields of realistic fidelity, not just the visual field. It is through interactivity, that New media and the field of virtual reality has changed our concept of what an image is because it turns the passive viewer into an active user, it has moved viewers from identification into action.

In this context it is easy to understand why collage practice in visual arts has continued to be prevalent and ever more relevant. Sally O’Reilly raises the question of whether our world has become one large collage through technological intervention or if it is our perception that has changed. As was discussed earlier, the introduction of collage into the visual arts was related to developments in communication and transportation systems in the early Twentieth Century. Through the past century and

into the Twenty First Century that information networks have had an exponential growth, and collage is a reflection of their effect.²³ Technology has had a very large influence over collage as it follows and grabs images from the media including: magazines, film, television, and the internet. Collage artists today have a wider range of source material and editing possibilities than ever before. The internet and new media provide an unprecedented wealth of source material that can be assembled, edited, and reassembled through the immense amount of iterations that computer software provides. Images can also be produced and rendered through 3D modeling software. Artists have the possibilities of printing or projecting these images, they can bring them into the physical world through painting them or they can be left in the digital or cinematographic realm. Travel, communication technologies, and architecture also provide contemporary artists, such as Franz Ackermann, Julie Mehretu, Ian Monroe, and Richard Galpin, with vast source material that speaks of the complexity and media saturated environments we inhabit in our globalized world. As Sally O'Reilly claims, collage matches the rejection of the singularity, of rationality, and coherence of mainstream media, where constant streaming and online surfing are commonplace. It is through the verbs summoned by collage such as: cutting, tearing, separating, contradicting, substituting, etc; that collage is able to keep up with the speed and complexity of contemporary mixed reality environments.

A major characteristic of collage as stated by Sally O'Reilly is the capacity of unleashing a phantasmagorical plurality of meaning through the simple act of cutting and pasting. This act creates fragmentation, hybridization, appropriation, and

simultaneity, which are more relevant to the contemporary experience than a single coherent, illusory image.²⁴ With this in mind, artist Ian Monroe talks about the importance of the “Chimera’s Edge”²⁵ in collage. He is referring to an edge that is corrupted (See Figure 8 and Figure 9), a juxtaposition that creates anxiety in the viewers due to the loss of the preservation of differences. Such an edge is particularly relevant in our contemporary context because it forces the viewers to reassign and question perceived boundaries and assumptions regarding our relationship to the external world. The Chimera’s Edge as described by Monroe is an essential aspect that I strive to cultivate in my work. The anxiety created by the merging of source material under a spatial construct is critical in creating the experience of navigating mediated reality and the Postmodern city.



Fig 8. Dinh Q Le. Untitled (from the Hill of Poisonous Trees Series), 2008. c-print and linen on tape, 52.75 x 84.25 inches



Fig 9. Dinh Q. Le. Persistence of Memory #12, 2000-2001. c-print and linen on tape, 114.3 x 49.9 inches



Fig 10. Thomas Moore, Still from Chimeric Realities, 2015. Projection.

In our mixed media reality that contains an ever increasing saturation of information, collage practices present themselves as a response to cultural overproduction and correspondent to our altered perception in this environment. Similar to the way in which cubists and early modern artists used collage techniques to cope with the speed of cultural change, artists today can use it to effectively navigate the increasing complexity, fragmentation, ambiguity, and overlap of information and meaning. Through multiple reconfigurations of our surroundings collage shows that meaning is neither universal nor fixed. The construction of reconfigurations is always on display in collage where the seams are evident. In this regard collage tampers with the syntax of our culture. It exposes the way in which images and meanings are constructed. As artist John Stezaker claims, "It confronts abstraction with particularity."²⁶ Thus, it is an effective mode of production for contemporary artists to attempt to dispel illusion, critique mediated reality, and deconstruct meanings in our mixed reality culture.

Exploration of the Work:

My work portrays environments of the urban experience in postmodern cities. We live in a time of embodied virtuality, where computers and data technologies have become more and more integrated into our daily lives, thus furthering our immersion into mediated reality. The Postmodern city accumulates, it embraces multiple temporalities and compresses them into a totality. These intertwined realities give the Postmodern city a phantasmagoric character, one of undefined spatiality.

I create sequential projective works that incorporate my collage practice. Using physical and digital collage techniques I select and recombine source material through multiple iterations. Making use of fragmentation, appropriation, juxtaposition, and recombination, my collage techniques produce images that match the way in which we perceive, interact, and navigate mediated reality. My images make use of cinematic qualities to heighten the Postmodern city as imaginary space; as a complex object where all spatial reality is as described. The final sequences are projected at a large scale with audio to immerse the viewers in these imaginary spaces.

The environments in my sequence include a wide range of elements: architecture from different time periods, natural elements, crowds, abstract shapes, signs, smoke, and flying objects. This aggregation is important because it relates to the way in which we experience mediated reality in the postmodern city. It's important for me to include images from different time periods in order to show the coexisting multiple temporalities

of the postmodern city. We look at the past in order to project the future, as Giuliana Bruno writes regarding Blade Runner “The future is like the present, only older.”²⁷

I create images in a digital format. I use collage and digital painting techniques to create the environments in my work. Working digitally allows me to engage in multiple iterations of an image at a quick rate. It is important for me to be able to add, subtract, or blend images and fragments at any time during this process. I saturate spaces with large amounts of visual information and complicated spatial relationships. Furthermore, working digitally allows me to make use of very saturated colors and glows to emphasize or bind separate visual elements that I am juxtaposing in each image.

My work depicts both interior and exterior spaces, and in many instances these boundaries are blurred. Scale and linear perspective are exaggerated in my environments in order to convey the overwhelming spatial aspect of the postmodern city. The majority of images use a three point perspective system in order to emphasize their vertical pull of the images.

The cityscapes and interiors in my work include either figures in isolation or massive crowds of people move through the space. These elements heighten the overwhelming scale or speed of the environments. They bring up the city as a living entity that never rests, one that is always on the move. The spaces portrayed emphasize circulation of large crowds, they are public places; suppressing intimacy in favor of entertainment, information, and consumption. These spaces are in a constant state of flow similar to our global economies, information, and transportation hubs.

Accumulation and fracture are essential to my visual language. I choose from images that have different print and grain quality in order to emphasize that they come from multiple sources. In order to convey the experience of the postmodern city I craft collisions of a wide range of visual information. These points of collision or disruption relate to ways in which we experience the wide range of physical, visual, and digital information in our daily lives. These accumulations prevent a clear reading of individual bits of visual information, creating a chimeric image. This fracture and ambiguity brings up the idea of how our memory is constructed after experiencing the multiplicity of stimuli in the urban environment.

Signs, saturated lights, transparencies, and glows are featured heavily in my work. These visual elements are relevant to how we experience the city at night, how we process information within different spaces in the city, as well as how we interact within the digital realm. They command our attention and carry a sense of urgency. In my work, these color and transparent effects present themselves as portals, they bring up ways in which we simultaneously inhabit a multiplicity of spaces, both digital and physical.

I collect images from varied sources to use as raw material for my collages. Having a broad range of subject matter not specific to a single time period is very important to me. For my source material I use my own photographs, I take photographs from newspapers, books on architecture, yearbooks, the internet, among many other sources. I normally look for images that contain references to landscape, architecture, machinery, crowds, or pattern. Newspaper images interest me because they are very

dramatic. Furthermore, due to their printing techniques and print quality they can be set in a nostalgic context, as a critique to the Postmodern nostalgia for the Modern that was discussed earlier in the essay. Primarily to show that nostalgia is not authentic, it longs for a betterness that never existed. The dramatic nature of these images can be contextualized into past visions of utopia or dystopia. The accumulation of memory is very important in how we experience each new city environment we encounter. As Calvino describes “ It is the arrival at an old station, which would give you a sense of going back, a renewed concern with lost times and places.”³ The selection process for source material also relies on images where the description of the environment, built or natural, is the main character in a similar way to how W.G Sebald’s places come to life in his novel *The Emigrants*.

My large collection of source imagery is processed, scanned into the computer, and archived. The range of imagery acts as a starting point and fuels the possibilities of how my digital collages develop. It allows me to play with them, resize them, overlay them in search of unexpected affect. This stage in my creation practice is very organic. The general shapes, spatial relationships, content, color relationships, and composition begin to arise after intuitively experimenting with overlaying several images and manipulating them digitally.

I keep a sketchbook as a way of recording daily interactions and as a way of exploring and cataloguing formal elements that I may use later on. Using the sketchbook as a pressure free zone to experiment with formal elements is vital to my practice. I try to create and catalogue many brushstrokes, edges, patterns, and color

interactions that I can then scan and archive in my computer for future use and alteration in my collage work. Having these natural media elements introduced into a digital format is essential in my process. I treat it as a way of discovering new interactions between photographic images and my marks. They allow me to build complexity, layering, and texture in my works. This is a way in which I incorporate my hand into an otherwise photographically and digitally composed image.

I have learned many of the techniques used by Matte painters in the film industry. I have always been interested in imbuing my images with cinematic qualities specific to composition, scale, hierarchy, and dynamism. The techniques used by these artists allowed me to create convincing and intricate environments in a digital format. Some of the filmic examples of the Postmodern city that have influenced my work through their use of urban density, signs and hyperreality, and the scale of the architecture are: *Blade Runner* (1982), *2046* (2004), *The Fifth Element* (1997), *Zero Theorem* (2014), and *Ghost in the Shell* (1995).

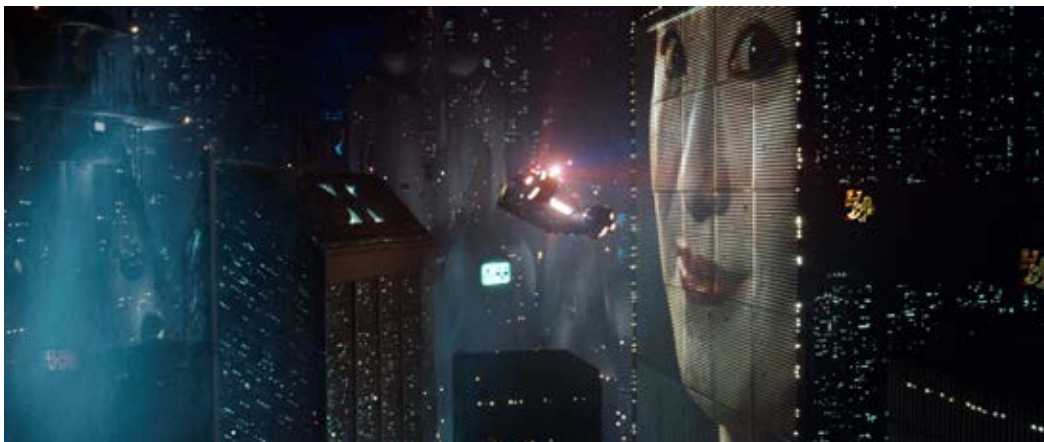


Figure 11. Ridley Scott, *Blade Runner*, 1982.



Figure 12. Wong Kar-Wai, 2046, 2004.



Figure 13. Luc Besson, The Fifth Element, 1997.



Figure 14. Terry Gilliam, Zero Theorem, 2014.



Figure 15. Mamoru Oshii, Ghost in the Shell, 1995.

However, I do not want to simply create background art. I incorporate the seam that is physically present in collage as well as conflicting elements within the environment. I want to complicate spatial relationships in the work, I create tension by taking the image as close to the point of illegibility as possible.

While working on finished images I find myself creating multiple quick collage experiments in which I overlay many existing images onto one another and look for interesting interactions and relationships. At times I print some of these images, act on them physically and re-scan them into the computer. I engage in many of these experiments in order to search for new ways to manipulate images by looking for unexpected results. They also act as a way of creating raw material that can later be included in the construction of a finalized environment.



Fig 16. Thomas Moore, Untitled, 2015. Digital Collage.

The images start with an initial color and spatial composition onto which I add scanned images, photographed images, and brushstrokes. I begin layering them in photoshop through different layer blending modes. As I add new elements I keep in mind how they interact with the other elements that have been added previously and how they relate to the initial color composition. Every element I add I manipulate in a way that it fits into, or purposefully disrupts, the spatial or perspectival system of the image. Through use of linear perspective, atmospheric perspective, and lighting I'm able to integrate disparate elements into a composite image with a coherent spatial system. The addition or subtraction of layers with images, color, and marks continues until the image is finalized.

As the number of completed images grows I work on how they can inform each other sequentially. I try to keep a balance of collage images that have a quicker read

and, thus, have a shorter duration in the sequential presentation than some of the more complex or elaborate images. I am interested in creating a sequential experience with my work, in which each image may relate to the previous one in terms of mood or content. Each image is an immersive experience that stands on its own, yet the memory of previous images in the sequence add to what you experience at that precise moment, it builds up. As Calvino says “The more one is lost in the quarters of distant cities, the more one understands the other cities one has crossed to arrive there.”²⁸



Fig 17. Thomas Moore, Still from Chimeric Realities, 2015. Projection.

The audio component is essential in the sequence. There is a different audio track for each image, each consists of many collaged and layered sounds. The tracks are designed to respond to each image and create an immersive experience for the viewer to enter each environment. The addition of audio is the final step in bringing the final images together in a sequence; it imbues each still image with a dynamic quality, it

creates in the viewers the sense of movement within each environment.

The final sequence is meant to be projected with surround audio inside a “black box” in a gallery setting. Projecting the work is essential because the sequence consists of moving images. The sequence will run in a loop and viewers can enter the work at any time. The projected work preserves the luminosity of the computer screen where the images were conceived. Using a project and surround audio borrows from the cinematic experience which allow viewers to immerse themselves in the work through the large scale image accompanied by an audio track.

Conclusion:

With the growth of mass media, communication, and digital technologies; the environments we inhabit, navigate, and the way we perceive them, have become one large collage. Through fragmentation, appropriation, juxtaposition, and simultaneity, collage allows me to craft images that are more akin to the contemporary experience in our mixed reality environments than fixed coherent illusory images. Through projective techniques, sequencing, and audio, the work creates a cinematic experience of the urban environment. The viewers are immersed in these spaces, and are confronted with the overwhelming stimuli of the postmodern city. It is an effective mode of production for critiquing mediated reality, and navigating the complexity of our increasingly technological landscape.

End Notes

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