Heaven Can Wait

The Revolving Restaurant as Cinéma Trouvé

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Introduction

During the late 1950s in Western Europe and United States, a growing middle class began enjoying signs of prosperity after two decades of depression culminating with the most devastating war in the history of humankind. The celebrated postwar economic boom laid fertile ground for experimentation in design and technology, in which an international phenomenon was introduced—a revolving restaurant in a tower. Following the early 1960s and 70s, cities around the world raced to build revolving restaurants atop communication towers, hotels, and office buildings considering them to be unequivocal expressions of modernity and progress. These venues attracted customers with the spectacle of a dramatic “moving view,” while ensuring uninterrupted access to that view over the course of a visit. From a purely technical standpoint, the revolving restaurant can be characterized as a form of kinetic architecture invented in the wake of postwar progress and technological optimism in Germany in 1959. This patented invention soon enjoyed widespread popularity during the Cold War 1960s, thanks in part to unprecedented technological progress on a global scale. Today there are hundreds of such restaurants stately spinning around the world, and their elevated “revolving views” continue to attract and impress patrons across generations.

The key focus of my thesis is the revolving restaurant perceived as an optical device, where the attributes of elevated view combined with mechanical motion evoke a cinematic experience. The background for my approach is the moving image as a platform for contemporary artistic expression studied through an architectural construction where form and motion inhabits qualities of the non-narrative film-loop often encountered in a museum or gallery setting. My intention is to explore what this non-narrative approach offers as a tool for philosophical and artistic inquiry into the anti-hierarchical and abstract as a potential political expression. I will place cinema within a broad context of cultural practice, including

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1 In the 1920s, a few “carousel bars” came close to the revolving restaurant idea, offering snacks and drinks while rotating around a serving center. However, because they were mostly located at the ground level, the view in these whimsical bars was generally focused on the bartender at the center instead of the outside scenery (although Top of the Mark in San Francisco is said to have had foldable walls that would potentially provide revolving patrons with a spectacular side view of the Bay Area). Some of these bars are still in operation, most notably The Carousel Piano Bar & Lounge in New Orleans installed in 1949.

2 Also relevant here are the repetitive visual sequences generated by the philosophical toys of the Victorian era such as Mutoscope, Phenakistiscope, Praxinoscope, Zoetrope, Zoopraxiscope, etc. I will briefly touch upon this relation in chapter 5.
the shifting position of the observer in modern visual culture from ca.1820 to the present. Similarly, I treat architecture as a medium in and of itself as a perceptual mechanism and semiotic tool. Writing from within a postindustrial Information Age perspective, my task will be to illuminate certain “time-images” of our everyday environment, exemplified by the revolving restaurant, but also found in various modes of transportation and travel, as a cinematic experience. Throughout this text, I will attempt to show the intimate connection between the genealogy of moving images and the revolving restaurant experience. My overall questions will be: Can studying the revolving restaurant experience give us any insight into our relationship to moving images? What is the transformative power of this slow and strange architectural cinematic construction? And finally, can the view from the revolving restaurant, perceived as an architectural dispositif, articulate an alternative resistance in line with the one Deleuze argues for in the time-image of modern cinema? As I attempt to answer these questions, I will be excavating the roots of the moving and projected image, from the Italian vedutas, the Claude glass and the picturesque gardens of the early 18th century through the development of immersive image practices such as the Panorama and Diorama and the coming of modernism with urbanization, ferro-vitreous architecture and the development of the railway and tourism. This leads up to various experiments of moving images and the early days of film production, including panorama films and immersive viewing practices, media architecture and postindustrial control. Initially however, I deem it necessary to introduce the revolving restaurant within a compact historical framework. Similarly, before aligning an argumentation for how the revolving view can be seen as a cinematic experience, I must properly introduce the term cinéma trouvé. These two initial passages will serve as a backdrop for further discussions and articulations in later chapters and are therefore slightly disconnected from the rest.

In the first passage, “A Short History,” I construct what might be called a montage history of the revolving restaurant through an abbreviated line of sites and events. My intention here is not to offer a full chronological account as Chad Randl did precisely that in his research to which I will often refer. Rather, I will be connecting significant yet, at some times, disparate points across a long and vexed historical path that is tailored specifically to my purpose. I will be moving from Emperor Nero’s Domus Aurea, dating back to 64 AD, to the 19th and 20th century industrial theme parks and fairgrounds, from presumably the Big

Bang of the revolving dining universe to the ultimate Space Age architectural icon: Seattle’s Space Needle.

The second passage, “Cinéma Trouvé,” introduces the concept of cinéma trouvé. Situated at a table in front of a magnificent view, the spectators are “traveling” gently in a circle not being part of the physicality of his/her view. In his brilliant account of the railway journey, Wolfgang Schivelbusch has shown how rail travel contributed to transforming the sense of space and time through perception of mechanical movement. The revolving restaurant and moving images, I will argue, share some of the same sensation Schivelbush was early to detect. This line of thought leads up to my proposal for the concept of “readymade cinema” or cinéma trouvé, a cinematic experience outside the normative cinematic apparatus.

As the topic of architecture’s relationship to cinema amounts to a wide field of study, I have sketched out three main areas of focus that I find articulate the most potent connection between the revolving restaurant view and moving images today. I will make no claim to be exhaustive here. Rather, I have structured the research around a series of examples and events that will serve as representative case studies for a wider field of investigation. In chapter one, “View Aesthetics,” I reflect on the origins of viewing practices inherent in the revolving restaurant by revisiting accounts of proto-cinema, early film and travel culture. I am primarily concerned with how the painted panorama and other visual entertainments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries foreshadow the fundamental qualities of early cinema and provide a historical base for understanding the nature of moving images. As I proceed into the histories of immersive environments, view aesthetics, and the significance of early film, I hope to answer some questions related to the cinematic spectacle that dominates the revolving restaurant experience. In the second chapter, “Kinetic Architecture: Cinema Beyond Film,” I develop an itinerary around iconic structures of modernity, seeing the development of mechanical motion and ideas of speed and information as a cine-dream rearticulated in art, architecture, world fairs and tourism in tandem with postindustrial capitalism. Throughout the chapter, a fundamental re-thinking of architecture becomes visible, ending with Eameses’s powerful claim that “architecture is information.” In the third and final chapter “Cinéma Trouvé and Time,” I align the experience of the revolving restaurant with the rupture Deleuze detects in modern cinema historically and aesthetically. Intended as a symbol of prosperity and progress, the revolving restaurant’s multisensory constellation of dining to a mechanical

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motion in the sky instead reveals a strange architectural dispositif where the cinematic is constituted on an intellectual level. Following a line from biopolitics (Focault) to control society (Deleuze), Sven-Olov Wallenstein explains, noopolitics (Lazzarato) “implies that capitalism not so much exploits our labor as our cognitive capacities, those new productive forces that it must contain and channel into the corporate network.”6 This concerns the field of architecture as well, as “architecture begins to be understood as an ordering and production of space instead of a representation of pre-existing order.”7 To make possible a belief in the world is one of the goals of modern cinema for Deleuze, “but only in this world seen and thought ‘otherwise.'”8 As Ronald Bouge points out, “Such connection requires a different mode of thought, and Deleuze sees such a mode of thought as entailing a form of belief.” Consequently, Deborah Hauptman points out we must attempt to understand relationships between our culture and the brain; it is not enough “merely to understand what architecture is, but how it acts.”9

The work I present here is drawing on a vast field of interdisciplinary research with a hybrid emphasis on art, architecture, philosophy and cinema. Authors such as Giuliana Bruno, Anne Friedberg, Oliver Grau, Tom Gunning, and Lev Manovich, among others, form part of a substantial group of researchers on the genealogy of the moving and projected image, new media and immersive environments. Deleuze’s two books on cinema: Cinema 1: The Movement-image (Cinéma 1: L’Image-Mouvement, 1983) and Cinema 2: The Time-image (Cinéma 2: L’Image-temps, 1985), introduced a whole new film discourse and a steady stream of conferences and publications devoted solely to this field is steadily growing.10 In addition, research on the extension of Deleuze’s thoughts on cinema has been a focal topic for the last ten years, reflected in a number of important publications by authors such as, D.N. Rodowick, Gregory Flaxman, Patricia Pisters and Ronald Bouge. In the line with this list I will include a seminal anthology that I consider very important for my research; Cognitive Architecture, from Biopolitics to Noopolitics (2010) edited by Deborah Hauptmann and Warren Neidich with key contributions by Ina Blom, John Rajchman, and Sven-Olov Wallenstein among others. I consider the above-mentioned research as substantial material for my investigation in

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7 Ibid.
10 See for example Deleuze Studies Conference, 8-10 July 2013, Faculty of Science, University of Lisbon, Portugal. http://deleuze2013.fc.ul.pt/, accessed 09.05.2013.
this project and I am immensely indebted to their excellence and insights.

My text is thus intended as a contribution to an existing media–archaeological discourse in which the development of visual media are seen in a larger cultural context. I examine if the revolving panoramic view can be said to share its history with what Tom Gunning has called “the technological image,” understood as an ongoing series of technological devices (from nineteenth century philosophical toys to the cinema to video and digital media). Ultimately, I will reflect on basic questions in relation to moving images, noopolitics and visual perception. My intension is to open up a possible strand of resistance in the increasingly dominant audio-visual culture of our time. Through a rather innocent invention originated in the wake of cold-war heat, I hope to offer a comprehensive account of how the experience of the revolving restaurant has potential to take the form of a thought-provoking cine-architectural experience.
A Brief History

This history begins and ends with architecturally grand ideas. It starts out with emperor Nero’s Domus Aurea (64 AD) and ends with the icon of Space Age exploration, the revolving restaurant in Space Needle (1962) (Fig.2). As I am confined to present this gigantic time-span in history across very few pages, I have chosen to frame the revolving restaurant in a jump-cut manner, history vise and thought vise. I will connect some dots along a multifaceted itinerary, drawing lines between such disparate paths as the growing fair grounds and amusement parks of the nineteenth century to the rapidly expanding media architecture developing in urban areas today. While not mentioning the cinema explicitly in this chapter, it is present in the background as the unifying context that shapes the direction of the chapter (and the entire history of the revolving restaurant). For a chronological history of revolving architecture, I will recommend previously-mentioned Chad Randl’s book *Revolving Architecture: A History of Buildings that Rotate, Swivel and Pivot*, a book I am drawing extensively on throughout the first part of this chapter. What follows below is a disconnected history of a motion view in architectural terms, wherever it may lead. It is not my intention to draw a correct chronology of events, rather I have chosen the forms of collage and montage, forms that were highly recognized and widely used in the time-period of the revolving restaurant’s origin—a period in which the audience sometimes enjoyed the finale as open ended.

According to Suetonius (ca.69–ca.122 AD), the main dining room of Emperor Nero’s (37-68 AD) Domus Aurea revolved “day and night, in time with the sky.” In 2009 archeologists found what they believe to be the alleged dining room, with a large wooden floor rested upon a wide pillar and four spherical mechanisms that presumably rotated the structure powered by a constant flow of water. As Huffington Post proclaimed on the day of the news, “[n]ot only was Nero a Roman emperor, it turns out he may also have been the father of the revolving restaurant.” In his book, Chad Randl has meticulously traced the evolution of revolving buildings and identified Domus Aurea as the earliest example. Ever since, the somewhat counterintuitive synergy of rotation and domicile kept evolving, from ancient waterwheels and medieval windmills to the prime example of Constructivist

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12 Ibid.
architecture: Vladimir Tatlin’s *Monument to the Third International*, designed in 1919. The history illustrates how technology of rotary motion in architecture historically has served to impress and overwhelm visitors by challenging the fundamental idea of buildings’ inherent stability. As Randl remarks, revolving buildings throughout time have offered a new way of looking at the world. “They rewrote spatial relationships within buildings and reconfigured views of the world outside.”

Introduced in Atlantic City, New Jersey in 1891 as The Roundabout, William Somers’s large-scale wooden wheel indicates a turning point in the history of architectural rotation. Smaller iterations of “pleasure wheels” or “ups-and-downs” date back to as early as the seventeenth century in the Balkans, India, and Siberia, but the idea of employing motion solely for accentuating visual sensation only received full attention in the late nineteenth century. Apparent success of The Roundabout motivated Somers to build two more in Asbury Park, New Jersey, and in Coney Island, New York, the same year. Pressured to rival the magnitude of the Eiffel Tower, the planners of the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition identified Somers’s patent as an adequate challenger and commissioned George Washington Gale Ferris Jr. to develop it further into a gigantic iron construction. With a height of 80.4 meters, Ferris’s wheel truly became the Columbian Exposition’s largest attraction, both physically and commercially. Carrying some 38,000 passengers daily on dazzling nonstop nine-minute vertical revolutions, the wheel offered sweeping views of the fairgrounds and the downtown skyline in the distance. Two years later, Jesse Lake pivoted the wheel’s axis by 90 degrees and introduced to the public of Atlantic City the world’s first revolving tower (Fig. 9). The spiraling ten-minute ride up and down the tower provided a mechanized horizontal panoramic view of Atlantic City and the ocean. Featuring a rotating platform on a tower, with a moving view as the main attraction, Lake’s Revolving Observation Tower represents the most direct architectural predecessor to the contemporary revolving restaurant. The growing development of industrialized entertainment parks and fairgrounds continued to develop revolving views and ever-changing vantage points as one of their major attractions for the masses. It doesn’t come as a surprise then that the fairground

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was also the site in which the idea for the revolving restaurant was both conceptualized and realized\textsuperscript{17}.

Historically, towers in general have symbolized powers such as technological accomplishment, civic pride, and political authority. Toward the late eighteenth century, towers increasingly adopted another feature; they became popular as raised vantage points from which an unobstructed panoramic view of a town or landscape could be enjoyed.\textsuperscript{18} This practice initiated a trend of constructing a new type of building whose sole purpose was to provide an elevated view of the surroundings. The Outlook Tower in Edinburgh, Scotland, is one example, located on the Castlehill section of the Royal Mile next to Edinburgh Castle. The tower, which also featured a camera obscura as part of its attractions, was purchased and refurbished by pioneering town planner sir Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) in 1892, who transformed into a “place of outlook and a type-museum as a key to a better understanding of Edinburgh and its region, but also to help people get a clear idea of its relation to the world at large.”\textsuperscript{19} The building is still operating today although relegated to a slightly different agenda as “Camera Obscura & World of Illusions.”

An elevated view from a tower was also the premise for Norman Bel Geddes’s Aërial Restaurant, originally proposed for the 1933 Chicago World's Fair: A Century of Progress. It could have been the World’s premier revolving dining facility in the sky, however, the idea seemed overly progressive even for “A Century of Progress” and had to ripen for some three decades in before it gained renewed attention. During the 1950s, new microwave communication systems required a series of transmitters linked by the line of sights. This resulted in a rapid growth of communication towers mostly build of steel lattice frames.\textsuperscript{20} The engineer Fritz Leonhardt challenged this convention and convinced German government authorities to consider a more elegant form of reinforced concrete, rather than a generic steel structure. As a result, the first reinforced-concrete communication tower in the world was built in Stuttgart in 1956. To help defray construction and operation costs, Leonhardt proposed to expand the tower’s scope and include tourist attractions, such as a restaurant with a view, along with broadcast equipment. This proved to be an enormous success, attracting a million visitors to the Fernsehturm’s panoramic view of Stuttgart and the surrounding forests

\textsuperscript{17} Unrealized, the Aërial Restaurant was a proposal for the 1933 Chicago World’s fair. The first realized revolving restaurant was built for the Federal Horticultural Exhibition that took place in Dortmund, Germany in 1959.

\textsuperscript{18} I discuss the emergence of a specific view aesthetic in chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{19} \url{http://www.camera-obscura.co.uk/}, accessed 07.05.2013.

\textsuperscript{20} Chad Randl, Revolving Architecture, 102.
during the first year of operation alone. Only three years later, the very first revolving restaurant in a tower was built in Dortmund, Germany, on the occasion of the federal horticultural show. Designed by Will Schwarz, the 219.6-meter-high Florianturm (Fig. 5) opened to the public on April 30, 1959, presenting an optimistic vision of future engendered by a marriage of capitalism and high technology on a grand scale. Intimately connected with the eighteenth-century quest for a view and the exploding industry of telecommunication and tourism, the concept of the revolving restaurant was planted in the adequate context and destined to become a worldwide success. As Randal remarks, the aura of the revolving view suited any ideology and charmed everyone, regardless of social status or cultural background. Even though Dortmund’s Florianturm may indeed have been the first incarnation of a revolving restaurant in a tower, the concept received its defining commercial boost through its American iteration just a few years later.

The idea of the World’s Fair in Seattle —“The Century 21 Exposition”—was conceived in the mid-1950s as a response to the growing technological advancements on the other side of the Iron Curtain, dramatically intensified by the launch of Sputnik and lunar probe landings. On April 12, 1961, when Yuri Gagarin (1934–1968) became the first human being in outer space and the first to orbit the earth, the tension between the ideological rivals was additionally heightened. Apparently, the idea for a terrestrial counterbalance to the “frightening” achievements of the Soviet space program appeared to the president of the Century 21 fair, Edward Carlson, upon an ad-hoc dinner in Stuttgart’s new television tower in 1959. His visit to the Eiffel Tower on the same “voyage across the old continent” pinned the idea of a skyward-pointing needle firmly in his imagination. Carlson returned to the United States convinced that a signature tower hosting a restaurant at an appropriate altitude was a necessary addition to the Seattle Exposition. The structure, he proposed, “could serve as a symbol not only for the period of the fair, but like Eiffel Tower and the Empire State

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23 Sputnik 1 launched on October 4, 1957, and first successful lunar landing by Luna 2 on September 14, 1959.
25 Knute Berger, *Space Needle: The Spirit of Seattle*, (Seattle: Documentary Media LLC, 2012), 59. Berger further points out: “One key decision was made when Wright and Skinner chartered a helicopter from Boeing and flew over the Century 21 site to get a sense of how high the Needle should be. The Eiffel Tower was nearly 1,000 feet high. They tested that altitude, but found the Goldilocks ‘just right’ height at between 500 and 600 feet. Much higher, and the city became too small and impersonal, and the view of the surrounding scenery was no better. Plus it put the Needle just higher than Queen Anne Hill, which loomed nearby. Bagley Wright was one of the city’s premier arts patrons and collectors, and his discerning collector’s eye helped to make just the right call. The revolving Needle restaurant would show off the region, yet keep visitors close enough to the ground to enjoy a bird’s-eye view of the fairgrounds and bustling city below.
Building, it could become a permanent, easy recognizable symbol of its locality.” The architect chosen to design the tower was John Graham, a native of Seattle, whose firm was constructing *La Ronde*, the first US revolving restaurant, atop of an office building in Honolulu, Hawaii at the moment of endorsing the agreement with Carlson. Once the design for the Space Needle was confirmed and circulated in public, it was immediately adopted as a symbol of that year’s World’s Fair and served as a powerful expression of the fair’s theme, “Man in the Space Age.” The Space Needle’s commercial triumph overshadowed its (numerous) predecessors and is to this date, more often than not, falsely credited as a mother of all revolving restaurants. A person that perhaps unintentionally contributed to the fabrication of this myth was Walt Disney, who prophesized that “[t]here will be Space Needles cropping up all over after the success of this one.” Regardless of the chronological correctness, the fact is, as Tom Vanderbilt wittily commented on the Needle’s triumphant launch into the orbit of public consciousness, that “the revolving restaurant took over the country and then the world, becoming a gently turning symbol of optimism and progress.”

During the fair, over 2.3 million visitors were revolving inside the flying saucer–like restaurant, in contrast to only a small group of highly-specialized scientists and a few radio enthusiasts that managed to directly “experience” Sputnik’s bee-beeps on its two-month mission. More than 40 years later, “The Needle” still hosts more than a million visitors annually, making it the number one tourist attraction in the American Northwest. In its “Report on Designation,” the Landmarks Preservation Board in Seattle wrote: “The Space Needle marks a point in history of the City of Seattle and represents American aspirations towards technological prowess. […] [It] embodies in its form and construction the era’s belief in commerce, technology and progress.” Perhaps surprisingly caught off guard in outer space by the Soviets, United States quickly recovered back on Earth through a spinning myth of Space Age for the masses. As noted by a writer from the National Geographic on the first meeting with the Needle: “Standing at the foot of the Needle, I was reminded of the Eiffel Tower, but where the Parisian landmark dwindles to a point on top, the Space Needle spreads its broad disk, as if offering man home in the sky. Stepping into a capsule-like elevator… we

28 See the “List of Revolving Restaurants.”
had the feeling of shooting into space.”

The Space Needle at the “Century 21 Exposition” whetted a gargantuan appetite for revolving restaurants worldwide. Tied to futurism, progress, and technological savvy, revolving restaurants became icons of achievement and status. Following the trend set by Seattle’s Expo, the themes in revolving restaurants were a blend of high technology, interplanetary travel, and exciting visions of airborne lifestyle. Since the Western market for new revolving restaurant installations slowed to a near standstill in the mid-1980s, one would have to turn toward the (Far) East to recognize how revolving restaurants’ omnipotent symbolic charge instantaneously grants prestige to the locale. As China’s economic growth and urbanization have been skyrocketing in the recent decades, revolving restaurants have become an iconic attraction in its booming cities. In some, like Beijing and Shanghai, one finds several of them. Currently, the largest building housing a revolving restaurant in Asia is in Huaxi, located a few hours by car northwest of Shanghai. It was built in 2011 as a “New Village in the Sky,” and, needless to say, the rotating restaurant on top is identified as one of the key features in the building’s opulent profile. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in rebuilding and refurbishing old revolving restaurants. A new burst of life is seemingly injected into this outdated technology with a revolving view and an uncertain future.

32 Knute Berger, Space Needle: The Spirit of Seattle, 92.
33 See appendix: “List of Revolving Restaurants.”
34 “Huaxi’s so-called New Village in the Sky—at 1,076 feet, a bit taller than the Chrysler Building in Manhattan”—finished in 2011. “Among other attractions, it will have a five-star hotel, a gold-leaf-embellished concert hall, an upscale shopping mall and what is billed as Asia’s largest revolving restaurant.” http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/12/world/asia/12huaxi.html?pagewanted=all&r=0, accessed 09.05.2013.
35 See appendix “List of Revolving Restaurants.”
Cinéma Trouvé

By tracing the revolving restaurant’s cine-dream and panoramic desire through a genealogy of the moving and projected image, I will propose the 360-degree revolving view as “readymade cinema” or cinéma trouvé—a specific cinematic experience outside the normative cinematic apparatus. To claim the view from the revolving restaurant to be of a cinematic quality can be loosely understood in line with what Pavle Levi has defined as “cinema by other means,” where a practice of cinema is articulated with materials and techniques different from those commonly associated with the normative cinematographic apparatus.36 When one views the exterior scenery from a revolving restaurant rotating at a snail’s pace, perceiving it as a cinematic spectacle is almost inevitable. Just as traveling on a train or in a car can recall watching moving images on the silver screen, the concentric journey in the revolving restaurant’s magnificent panoramic view inspires ponderings on mediated movement and time in film and video.

Pavle Levi’s book Cinema By Other Means is a recent contribution to the expanded field of cinema, understood as a mental state of existence as well as a remediation through other forms of cultural articulation. Continuing the line of thought previously addressed by Andre Bazin, Sergei Eisenstein, and Edgar Morin among others, Levi is tracing a “‘pure’ cine-desire,” which in his view can be located in “a desire subsequently sustained and perpetuated through the dialectic of film and cinema, of the two non-identical though entirely interdependent phenomena.”37 Not only inspired by the new medium of moving images, but directly articulating its imaginary and theoretical potential often through the means of “old” media such as painting, collage and sculpture, the Constructivists as well as some Dadaists embraced, reflected, analyzed and explored the gradual cinefication of life they felt coming by the introduction of the new medium. As Levi puts it, “by being thought through the framework of the cinema, the material form and structure of this assemblage are invested with a creative potential to generate an entire set of kinetic, film-like effects.”38

To fully explain what is at stake “When Cinema is presented in the form of a diagrammatic drawing (Picabia, Man Ray), or a theatrical performance (Picabia),” Levi uses the term “Retrograde remediation,” which he sees as a further development of Jay Bolter and

37 Levi, Cinema by Other Means, xii.
38 Ibid, 27.
Richard Grusin’s category of “remediation,” a term used to describe the process when newer media appropriates and surpasses, but also on some level preserves, older forms. Evoking the well-known media theorists Marshall McLuhan and his concept of how “the content of one medium is always another medium,” “Retrograde remediation” is, according to Levi, articulating “instances of remediation distinguished by some inherent discrepancy, by a pronounced practical/technological inadequacy of one (“older”) medium to fully assimilate certain aspects of another.” This idea complicates the linear progression of new technology by also reinventing and rearticulating its key aspects in other media. In his classic essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility,” Walter Benjamin states, according to Levi, that; “[b]efore it is practically realized, every technological innovation is first articulated as a desire for novel form.” However, as Levi points out, Dada and film was coinciding historically, even to the point where it was becoming sufficiently commodified, which is exactly the reason why it had to be reflected, expanded, opened and reworked through different modes and materials.39 As we shall see, this “reversal of influence” persisted, albeit on a slightly different track, in the postwar era.

Based on a sort of “retrograde remediation,” the revolving restaurant’s view incorporates something of the “general cinefication” of everyday life, which increases in power after the 1950s.40 In order to describe the complex relationship to cinema such view inhabits, I have coined the term cinématounvé. This is in direct relationship to Duchamp’s objet trouvé, a practice “powered” precisely in “displacement” of contexts. This logic of displacement works somewhat differently in cinématounvé. To explain it, one has to consider both Schivelbusch’s concept of panoramic perception in addition to viewer’s journey through cinematic space, e.g. by way of phantom ride, road movies, simulators, etc. Cinéma trouvé occurs when the two experiences (cinematic and physical realities) couple into an undistinguishable perceptual mode.41 The cinema out-of-the-cinema experience that makes up cinéma trouvé therefore, is interpreted as an inverted cinematic experience, i.e. the physical reality is experienced as cinema on the basis of previous experiences of normative cinema. The trigger for this experience “preexists” in various architectural and infrastructural constructions, e.g. revolving restaurants, escalators, elevators, or any mechanism that instantaneously “displaces” the viewer from one perceptual mode into another. One falls into

39 Ibid, 43.
40 Ibid, xiv.
41 Wolfgang Schivelbusch, The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century, (Berkeley: University of Calif. Press, 1986), 64. According to Wolfgang Schivelbusch “Panoramic perception, in contrast to traditional perception, no longer belonged to the same space as the perceived objects: the traveler saw the objects, landscapes, etc. through the apparatus which moved him through the world.”
it like Alice in the rabbit hole... So, in *cinéma trouvé* instead of cinema (the object) being “displaced” it is the viewer (the subject) who is “displaced” from one visual mode into another. In this sense, *cinéma trouvé* depends on Levi’s concept “retrograde remediation,” that is to say the spectator’s previous experience of normative cinema.
1. VIEW AESTHETICS

The revolving restaurant is an apparatus of vision in which the “moving” panoramic view imperceptibly transforms patrons into passengers on a peculiar journey without a defined itinerary. In this chapter I will show how this moving view shares its genealogy with cinema and proto-cinematic practices, rooted in the cultural production of landscapes as medium of cartographic voyage. Following the logic of Giuliana Bruno, who argues that “cinematic motion descends genealogically from the traveling history of spatial phenomenology,” I will be tracing the emergence of the immersive travel culture in the mid-eighteenth century. As Bruno points out, this discourse premised on the increase in travel includes journey poems, view paintings and garden views, in short a “collective attraction for views” that paved the way for a cultural momentum that eventually “led to the cinema.” To understand the relationship between cinema and the revolving restaurant view, I would argue, we must return to this period of emerging mass culture and tourism reflected in the changes industrial revolution and maturing global imperialization brought forth to society. To claim the view from a revolving restaurant to be a form of cinematic experience is in essence to say that within this “architectural vehicle” one is presented with an image, or more precisely, a 360-degree “moving image” of an urban environment or a magnificent natural landscape. But how does the seemingly innocent revolving restaurant view behold its position within this tradition of Western imperial practice? For as W. J. T. Mitchell has reminded us, if, “landscape painting was the chief artistic creation of the nineteenth century,’ we need at least to explore the relation of this cultural fact to the other ‘chief creation’ of the nineteenth century—the system of global domination known as European imperialism.” By excavating the history of the popular travel genre of early cinema, we find very similar types of images to that produced by the revolving restaurant. However, as Tom Gunning points out, “while images of early travel films have obvious affiliation with Western ideologies of power and appropriation, does not the very potential of movement in moving images at the same time offer an utopian idea of escape and flight?” In the following paragraphs I will investigate this

43 The quoted phrase is Bruno’s, ibid., 172.
44 Revolving restaurants are built atop of skyscrapers and transmission towers as well as on top of mountain peaks or in the proximity of natural wonders like Niagara Falls.
complexity between stillness and movement, overview and vertigo that the revolving restaurant view shares with the nature of moving images. Running along Gunning’s argument, I will be tracing the emergence of travel images and the many viewing devices such as the painted panorama, the moving panorama, and the cinéorama, in order to situate the revolving restaurant view within this historical development. My ultimate goal in aligning these trajectories is to investigate whether the revolving restaurant view can tell us something about our relationship to moving images, historically and in today’s context.

2.1. The Oblique Image and Prospective Vision

Simultaneously offering an overview and sense of control, the elevated view from the restaurant also abstracts the field of vision and the grounded sense of being, inducing such bodily commotions as vertigo, dizziness and confusion. Once a privilege of nobles, such as the first Duke of Wellington — “a famous occupier of elevated positions — who remarked that he had spent his life trying to guess what was over the next hill,” the view gradually became a popular demand of the masses. The turn of the eighteenth century had brought the changing landscape of the Industrial Revolution and the emergence of the metropolis. The city exploded, becoming opaque and no longer visually graspable. In these conditions, the overview played a decisive role. As Bernard Comment describes: “Not only did [the view] express the perceptual and representational fantasies that befitted such troubled times; it was also a way of regaining control of sprawling collective space.” In short, the experience of the horizon became an important concept. In 1783, just a few years before Robert Barker patented his painted panorama and six years before the French Revolution, Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier became the first human being to defeat the gravitational bond to terrestrial surface and go up in a balloon. The spatial reverence this inspired led to perpetual yearnings for yet another vista. The sky-high revolving restaurant feeds on this century-long quest for a view and, as we shall see below, facilitates the complex mix of bodily and rational sensations.

In his article “The aerial view: notes for a cultural history,” Mark Dorrian analyzes the aerial view in relation to other visual modes and positions. The upright position of humans as opposed to that of animals has certain connotations, Dorrian asserts. Freud, among others, famously argued that “the momentous process of cultural evolution” originated with man

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raising himself to an upright position, thus elevating his view at the expense of revealing his genitalia. Taken as a foundation for culture and the human, Freud’s account serves as a metaphor for some of the complexities elevated views inhabit. Turning the aerial view to its exact opposite, these complications are mirrored in another visual mode, namely that of the extreme close up. Surly related and often presented alongside each other historically, the microscope and the telescope nevertheless present vision in quite different ways. Rather than being directed upwards to the universe, the microscope directs our vision down onto a flat screen, the light emanates from above. As such, Dorrian reminds us, the microscope has a set up for a basic structure of the aerial view, a set up that also speaks about the power relation of this particular perspective. Various accounts of cinema, Walter Benjamin among them, have pointed to this exact complexity of the moving image medium, both in terms of the “close up” and in the sense of having an overview of everything close at hand via representational means. Bought and refurbished by pioneering town planner Patrick Geddes in 1892, The Outlook Tower in Edinburgh, Scotland, served and still serves, as a giant “microscope-like” apparatus with a camera obscura-based set up that reflects an aerial view to spectators at the top. Geddes himself intended to transform the tower into an educational viewing machine in order to help people get a clear idea of its relation to the world at large. However, what type of relation to the world one is getting from this apparatus is not an unimportant task to scrutinize. With the image of the ground reflected onto an interior screen for onlookers above it, the stage is set for a suitable “microscope” experience. Similarly, I would argue, the revolving restaurant promotes its cinematic features through its mechanical motion and elevated view, facilitating a removed distance from the all-encapsulating display on the window-screen.

In the revolving restaurant one can choose to look straight down, but one can also gaze laterally toward an unobstructed horizon. As we shall see in the following, the oblique view offers somewhat different connotations than the flat aerial view experienced in the Outlook tower or from an airplane. The oblique image, directed both downwards and laterally, and often described as a prospect, is an extensive or commanding sight or view. The oblique looking forward, Dorrain argues, brings implications of the future, something that can be

49 The relationship between the close up and the aerial, the zoom in and the zoom out, technologically speaking, is masterfully illustrated in the film "Powers of ten" by Charles and Ray Eames.
traced etymologically through exactly the use of the term prospect. Prospective glasses in the seventeenth century describe everything from magic mirrors (telling the future) to field glasses, spy-glasses and telescopes.\textsuperscript{52} Thus, the oblique view express a desire to see it all, including the future, but at the same time it is always hiding something behind the hills or horizon. Posing a problem for warfare, the oblique image was made into plans reliefs. Starting from the seventeenth century, “these huge three-dimensional representations” were oblique but mobile models, whose overview of territory were used to present the “defensibility of France’s newly conquered towns and fortifications in their relationship to their surrounding landscape.”\textsuperscript{53} The prospective view was also important for the 18\textsuperscript{th} century landscape aesthetics. According to Denis Cosgrove:

\begin{quote}
the precondition for the fully fledged ‘landscape idea’ was the development of the linear perspective which reinforced, as he puts it, ideas of individualism, the subjective control of an objective environment, and the separation of personal experience from the flux of collective historical experience.”\textsuperscript{54}
\end{quote}

In the following I will look at the oblique view from the revolving restaurant in relation to the imaginary spectator in landscape painting and the proliferation of views depicted in an almost immersive desire developing in the wake of modernity and the industrial/imperial Western development.

\subsection*{2.2. The Ideal and the Picturesque: Landscape as a Cultural Space of Motion}

The historical relationship between cinema and the revolving restaurant view starts with the conception of an imaginary travel within the ideal and picturesque image. As we shall see, these forms of landscape images both influence and reflect a particular transient perspective. The significance of the view as a space contained within an image can be traced back to the Italian \textit{vedute} and the idea of the ideal landscape. In the early sixteenth century, landscape as motive relied on the antique lineage of the pastoral tradition for its nobility. By the 1430s introduction of central perspective landscape was given another recognition and status. In addition to now being associated with the highly respected disciplines of architecture and geometry, perspective also offered an illusion of stability and control. According to David C. Ditner, “[p]erspective lent at least a superficial appearance of order to

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{52} Dorrian, Aerial View.
\bibitem{53} Ibid.
\bibitem{54} Denis Cosgrove, \textit{Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape}, London and Sydney, Croon Helm, 1984, 27, cited in Dorrian, “Areal View.”
\end{thebibliography}
Anne Friedberg reminds us of the theory of Western painting, defined by Alberti as a rectangular window onto the world. “The renaissance representational system implied by perspective and its frame” convey two main points: “(1) the frame of the window was an important metaphor for constructing the coherent spatial arrangement of objects on the picture surface, and (2) the single spatial frame of perspectival representation did not always imply a single frame of time.” The view within the painting understood as window invited a mental journey onto unexplored territory by way of an endless view, or as Gunning phrases it: “Placing a view of nature within a frame, ... a frame that organizes a composition geometrically, while simultaneously opening a view into a depth—this describes the double aspects of the landscape.” The veduta or view contained within a rectangular shape becomes a mechanism by which an ideal world “beyond” is opened up and as such landscape is produced as a cultural space. Giuliana Bruno continues this thought: “The effect of these forms was to carry away—transport—the spectator into the landscape or cityscape depicted, powerfully creating the feeling of simulated travel.” As we shall see, this highly developed practice of turning landscape into picture works hand in hand with an increase in travel and tourism eventually turning modernity into the cause and effect of an evasive mass culture.

The mastery of the Ideal landscape led by painters such as Claude Lorrian (1600-1682) and Gaspar Poussin (1613-1675) never claimed to be accurate representations but rather artistic visions of the ideal—a paradise beyond reality. This ideal composition of a unified view, framed by trunks of trees or architecture as repousooir, or side-screen (a term borrowed from theatre) and continuing into the distance, became a normative format not only for landscape painting but also for the way one would seek out and experience nature. By the late 18th century in Great Britain this was articulated in the concept of the picturesque. Part of the emerging Romantic sensibility of the 18th century, the picturesque served both as an aesthetic ideal for landscape painting but also as guiding principle for seeking out views of natural landscape and garden design to the point where “crumbling ruins were made to order to satisfy the ‘love for broken surfaces’ so praised by James Gilpin, chief theorist of the

picturesque.” Defined as a series of images, the picturesque gardens were crafted and designed by professional gardeners. The use of colors and textures as well as devices of framing and (often forced) perspective was common elements. The picturesque was in essence a passion for experiencing nature as picture. As Tom Gunning points out, the introduction of the “Claude glass” signals the height of this aesthetic preference in the late eighteenth century. Named after the 17th century landscapist, the Claude glass was a convex tinted, oval or rectangular mirror used to reflect ideal views back to the beholder in distant unified colors. As a source of endless images, this hand held device used by artists and tourist alike, “exemplified better than any picturesque arrangement the process of turning nature into landscape through a technology of vision.” Gilpin himself articulates something of the temporal nature embedded in the picturesque view: “The first amusement of the picturesque traveler is… the expectation of new scenes continually opening, and arising to his view.”

Focusing in particular on the architectonics of view painting, picturesque aesthetics, garden strolling, and other topographic or cartographic practices, Giuliana Bruno lays out an elaborate study of the relation of landscape to pre-cinema. As Bruno remarks: “Composed of a series of pictures, often joined by way of association, the picturesque was constructed scenographically. Perspectival tricks were used to enhance the composition of the landscape and its mode of reception,” focusing on what she calls “moving spectatorial culture.” The picturesque influenced the city and it travelled across modernity via Choisy and the architectural promenade to Le Corbusier’s and Einstein’s own account of this practice. Prior to “panoramic vision” and “metropolitan movements,” Bruno argues, “the picturesque established the geophysic possibility of a modern traveling spectator” The “promenade” evolving out of the picturesque gardens foreshadowed the ultimate “site-seeing.” The picturesque outlook searched out through the simple but effective technology of the Claude glass showed that “the pleasure of transience, motion, variety, succession and, especially, mediation through an apparatus of viewing already played a key role.” The picturesque sensibility searched out through transference and motion foreshadowed further developed with the invention of the railway and eventually of moving images. As the successive flow of vantage points return the revolving restaurant view to the Claude glass, I am also concerned

59 Gunning, "Landscape and the Fantasy of Moving Pictures;" 34.
60 Ibid, 35.
62 Giuliana Bruno, Atlas of Emotions, 194
64 Bruno, Atlas of Emotions, 194.
65 Gunning, "Landscape and the Fantasy of Moving Pictures;" 41.
with another mirror image; the reflection of the revolving restaurant’s interior live action on the window-screen. Projected onto the grandness of the “moving” exterior, the shadows of multiple self-portraits within the restaurant interior ad yet another layer of transparent information, blending and blurring the multiple surfaces; from widow to projection, from the view to the map. This modern blurring of interior and exterior space develops along the lines of the Italian eighteen-century city-views or vedute and the enormous imperial appetite for internalizing these views.

Utilizing slightly different codes in its representation of the city than the Dutch tradition, the Italian vedute transferred conventions of landscape painting to the urban terrain. It is readily evident in the masters of this tradition, such as Canaletto (1697-1768) and Giovanni Paolo Panini (c. 1691-1765) that the emphasis is on the drama of the location. Developing even further, this narrative dramatization of sites inspired imaginative representational maps where the same city was approached from different viewpoints. In a transition from the outside to the inside, signaling the later omnipresent blurring of interior and exterior space, these city views were considered the proper decoration of hallways and staircases. Together with the world map and the globe, reduced to a miniature size and easily fitted in one’s own home, the city view became a feature of domestic urban life. As Giuliana Bruno has showed, it was fitted on to “everything from architectural décor and decoration to illustration of domestic objects such as plates, bowls, glasses and furniture as well as ladies’ jewelry boxes and fans to name a few examples.” Bruno has emphasized how these city views, together with early cartography and landscape painting in their many manifestations, established a form of site-seeing, “they endeavored to extend the limits, the borders, and the perspective of picturing into an act of mapping.” With their many perspectives embedding a mobile observer “these urban views exhibited a proto-cinematic attempt to extend and expand the field of vision itself […] It was this cartographic mobilization of perspective, inscribed in the movement of and attraction to urban imaging, that eventually became the “transport” of motion pictures.” These early itinerant views also inhabit a direct relation to the circular motion above landscapes and cityscapes observed from the revolving restaurant. Above all, a designated tourist destination, the revolving restaurant exhibits this relationship between the itinerant site-seeing of travel images and the moving image cartography. Below, I will show how the early itinerant spectator turns into a mechanically transported passenger through new technological developments of train travel and moving panoramas, and how the cinematic

67 Ibid, 178.
voyage through landscapes and city views brings about another analytical model for the revolving restaurant view.

2.3. Technologies of Imaginary Voyage

The view from a revolving restaurant is a cocktail of the objective real and the seductive imaginary, gently stirred not shaken. The moving overview from a safe distance seems to take on a different ontological status. Seated at a table against the panoramic window surface, the spectator consumes the “kinetic view” as a plat du jour, distanced and comprehensible in an ordered fashion, yet at the same time immersed and overwhelmed with a sensory overload. The 360-degree unobstructed view of the horizon has obvious connections to the format of the painted panorama, in which the spectator was insulated from all of the “disturbing” properties of the exterior with an ambition to augment a novel “near-reality” experience. The painted panorama was particularly popular throughout the nineteenth century in Europe and the United States. The very first specially designed panorama rotunda opened in Leicester Square on May 14, 1793. In order to access the painted composition, one had to enter a long, dark hallway, “surfacing” on a circular platform from which the 360-degree painting revealed itself in a flow of controlled natural lighting from above. Visitors were immersed in the painted view from all sides, while architectural design prevented visual access to the upper and lower edges, creating a space of “total illusion” (Fig. 4). Like the painted panorama, the revolving restaurant design also relies on careful spatial coordination in order to create a maximum “effect.” Prior to unveiling a striking vista, the architecture of the tower masterfully orchestrates the patron’s trajectory to catharsis by transporting her in a lengthy elevator ride from the ground level, often via a pitch-black shaft that accentuates the suspense, up onto the rotating platform uncannily hovering in the air. Encapsulated in a “mediated space,” the spectators of painted panoramas and revolving restaurants are similarly immersed in a 360-degree image that stages the ultimate entertainment. Oliver Grau explains how the feature of total illusion was the core idea of the panorama. It provided the foundation for cinema, television, and computer-generated images by illuminating the painting in such a fashion that it appeared to be the source of light itself. Later, around 1830, a faux terrain was incorporated into the panorama, making it even more realistic, as the two-dimensional surface developed into a three-dimensional space. Evolving out of the history and technology of immersive landscape spaces, the panorama became a visual form that excluded the outside world and completely relied on the image. Its essential feature was the “assumption of being entrapped
in the real.” Visitors to a revolving restaurant certainly feel this ensnarement as they revolve some 150 meters above the ground. While they enjoy a meal (usually serenaded by schmaltzy Muzak or lulling smooth jazz), the gradually “unreeling” view seems increasingly unreal and, as such, functions as a reward for the audience in the trained pursuit of illusion. Following the desire to absorb and comprehend the location in its entirety in the minimum amount of time, spectators escape actual immersion (being in the street) and choose the revolving restaurant’s totality à la carte—real time in situ.

The panorama presented a laboratory approach to the discovery of the horizon. By the 18th-century most people had a sensory encounter of the horizon and it became a key experience of the entire epoch. The slogan of the Grand Tour age was “travel broadens one’s horizons.” In the Panorama, people could experience the horizon under ideal conditions as if in a laboratory. As Stephan Oettermann has pointed out, this served not only as an aesthetic counterpart of a natural phenomena: “The panorama was both a surrogate for nature and a simulator, an apparatus for teaching people how to see it.” Oettermann continues:

The panorama becomes a kind of pattern for organizing visual experience. …real landscapes were experienced as (artificial) panoramas, and the panoramic view…became the dominant mode of seeing. The pictorial panorama was in one respect an apparatus for teaching and glorifying the bourgeois view of the world; it served both as an instrument for liberating human vision and for limiting and ‘imprisoning’ it anew. As such, it represents the first true visual ‘mass medium’. Oettermann refers to the painted panorama as the first mass medium, not only because it addresses a huge audience at once but also because it teaches them how to see. The painted panoramas offers a magnificent view and at the same time a controlled and systematized pattern of visual experience which again influences how the world outside the painted reality is viewed and experienced. We recall the Ideal landscape and the way gardens were made into successive streams of picturesque views. The painted panorama follows this visual trope when people started viewing the real world in the same 360-degree pattern. The panoramic view became the normative outlook and was referred to when describing a place. In addition, Oetterman points out, the horizon aroused a sense of hope—the idea of paradise had acquired a new spatial component: The Promised Land now lay not across the threshold of death but

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beyond the horizon. The only invention that had more newspaper articles in the international press than the balloons was the panorama. Oettermann continues: “What the montgolfiers symbolized, and what the panoramas expressed, was the freshly acquired ability of the bourgeoisie to see things from a new angle, in both a literal and a metaphorical sense.” The horizon was the line that separated bleak reality from glorious possibility. However, the changes in power and knowledge and the visible that modernity brought on society is according to Foucault the “episteme” where “new modes of social and political control were institutionalized by ‘un regime panoptique.’” The same year Barker started making his panorama, in 1787 (Fig. 3.), Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) began campaigning for his most ambitious project: a new type of prison, which he appropriately called “panopticon.” “A prison governed by the eye.” Bentham’s design has since proved useful for other institutions where enclosure and control was a priority. The painted panorama however, suggests a slight alternative model of visuality. As Friedberg points out, it was designed to transport rather than confine the spectator-subject. It produced a spatial and temporal mobility to a spectator on an imaginary tour.

The Painted Panorama offered a highly realistic and immersive experience of imaginary travel. Its history shows us how one form of viewing practice influences and is influenced by a larger political and economical picture. As I have argued above, the obvious connection between the revolving restaurant and the painted panorama is the unobstructed view of the horizon. However, the unique quality of the revolving restaurant’s mechanical motion brings up another cinematic quality to the elevated view. The moving panorama, the painted panorama’s younger sibling, introduced this cinematic aspect. Also known as the pleorama or padorama, the moving panorama consisted of a several-hundred-meter-long canvas attached to two cylinders that was slowly unreeled in front of a “traveling audience,” often seated in mockups of boats, train cars, or wagons to heighten the realistic experience. The moving panorama became especially popular in the United States, where the traditional panorama had less appeal. Oettermann explains: “The moving panorama anticipated, in art, the speed of travel which the railroads would soon make a reality.” The movement and absorption of space catered particularly to the new settlers “seeing the vast landscape of their

71 Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 30.
own continent unrolling before their eyes as if they were traveling westward in a covered wagon.” The moving panorama would never be as successful as the static panorama, perhaps because it accommodated only a few spectators at a time but also because other technological inventions were taking over. Another invention of a moving 360-degree painted illusion was the Mareorama of Hugo d’Alési, exhibited at the 1900 world’s fair *Exposition Universelle* in Paris. The same event also famously featured the Cinéorama, where ten 70mm film reels were projected simultaneously in an attempt to form a seamless 360-degree aerial view simulating a hot air balloon ride over Paris. As such, it represented a union of the earlier technology of panoramic paintings and the most recently introduced technology of celluloid film projection. In addition to the cognitive representations of “the real”, Lauren Rabinovitz remarks, these virtual voyages also catered to a bodily sensation beyond the real, relying on experiences of overwhelming stimuli, vertigo and nausea in their attempt to attract the audience. Tom Gunning has pointed out how this particular view aesthetic is reflected in early film, especially in its pioneering phase. Films from cinema’s introductory decade generally undermine or lack a narrative approach in favor of “a variety of attractions on display for a curious audience.” Within this “cinema of attractions,” quite a few films had an emphasis on showing eye-catching scenery in a 360-degree panoramic view. This is further exemplified by titles such as *Panorama of Eiffel Tower* (1900) or *Panorama from Times Building, New York* (1905). Many of these films consist of a slow 360-degree pan from an elevated outlook, such as on top of Times Building in the above-mentioned title. The view from a revolving restaurant mimics almost exactly the formal language of these films, only without the rectangular constraint of the film frame. As the travel film genre developed, train films and phantom rides would explicitly show dangerous situations and close-to-accident narratives to a cinematically secure passenger in a continuous attempt to attract by way of devastation. As we have seen, the revolving restaurant view has an almost obvious connection to the early travel film genre by way of exhibiting both its formal composition and the way the desire for foreign views is so deeply embedded in its central structure. I will now move on to discuss these similarities in order to better understand some of the deeper motivations behind the revolving restaurant view and its cinematic dimension.

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75 Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 323.
2.4. Travel Films and the World in Images

The unobstructed view of a panorama painting is often thought of as an image without borders. The type of film genre that grew directly out of this format was the early travel film. In the following I will relate these travel films to the revolving restaurant view in order to illuminate important aspects of its connection to cinematic spectatorship. Frequently referred to as “foreign views” the travel film genre can best be understood in direct relationship to the visual technologies preceding it. As Tom Gunning has shown in his essay “The Whole World Within Reach: Images Without Borders,” these “foreign views” should be approached with caution, as they portray “not only a distant site but also a particular point of view, one from outside the land viewed.”

Travel images and foreign views, Gunning argues, must be understood in the context of a “peculiarly modern experience in which the role of images has taken on a new dimension.” As we shall see, this new dimension is directly connected to the revolving restaurant view. Charles Musser, a pioneer on the travel film genre, has made apparent how the travel film genre was among the most coherent and well-produced genres in films early decade.

The many legendary lantern slide illustrated lectures, such as those of John L. Stoddard and his successor E. Burton Holmes, testify that the travel film genre grew directly out of this form. In 1897, Holmes adopted films into his lectures as a natural extension of the projected slides thus seamlessly combining still and moving images for the same purpose. As Rick Altman points out, “Holmes managed his moving pictures in exactly the same way that he handled his photographs,” a move that would shape the next two decades of travel films to come. In addition, like much early cinema, travel images enjoyed a multiplicity of exhibition formats, such as embedded in special theatres designed to simulated train- or boat rides (e.g. Hale’s Tours, 1905-06), or as “scenic” – multi-shot programs featured in many nickelodeon programs (from ca. 1907). The travel film genre was also taken up in the early development of fiction films serving as a backdrop for fictional action up until today. As such, the travel genre is the one genre most prepared for by other

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79 Gunning, “‘The Whole World Within Reach,’” 25.
82 Gunning, “‘The Whole World Within Reach,’” 26.
83 Ibid. Gunning ads: “The most interesting example being Wim Wenders’s Until the End of the World.” This is also an interesting film in regards to my discussion on noopolitics in chapter 5. In the film, the characters start
pre-cinematic practices, and the one that most directly relates to the view from revolving restaurants. It is therefore important to investigate this genre in greater detail.

To fully understand the travel film genre, Gunning explains, one has to consider the historical context of the nineteenth century where the proliferating industry of travel images was developing at a rapid pace. As the most reproduced motive next to the portrait, the travel image provided means of appropriating distant views and territory through an image. This is particularly visible in the popularity of the tourist postcard that became a major form of travel imagery by the turn of the century. However, the postcard obtained a slightly different status, functioning as evidence of a travel made by the tourist and received back home by the ones that didn’t make the trip. As Gunning points out, “The postcard seems to function not only as a souvenir of the journey but as its goal and purpose.” This preoccupation with documenting one’s journey through images speaks to the center of the modern use of images and their perception. The revolving restaurant view, I would argue, is this postcard and travel film at once. As the view itself inhabit a mental sense of transit, adding movement by way of film or revolving architecture becomes a powerful amplification.

The development of tourism and travel in the modern era is linked and feeds on the growing production and demand for images. Gunning continues: “The image becomes our way of structuring a journey and even provide a substitute for it. Travel becomes a means of appropriating the world through images.” Understood in the context of mass tourism, the travel image transcended their own dimension when their depicted destination was within actual reach. “This sense of accessibility of foreign lands forms a corner stone of the modern worldview in which technology can render every distant thing somehow available to us.” Industrial capitalism brought convenience of travel to distant places, and the creation of Cook Tours in the middle of the nineteenth century had a symbiotic effect on modern means of transport. The development of steamships and railway especially made mass tourism possible and reciprocally returned funding for further development. “The idea of making the world available in the form of a spectacle stretches back to the panorama of the end of the eighteenth century and to the world expositions of the latter part of the nineteenth.”

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dreaming their dreams as a result of becoming totally addicted to individual dream visualizers. An interesting “loop” for a revolving thought machine.

85 Ibid, 27.
86 Ibid.
89 Gunning, “‘The Whole World Within Reach,’” 29.
their over-stimulating mixture of exotic environments, consumer products and technological achievements, the world expositions were “explicit hymns to the colonial expansions of the industrial nations.” As a prolongation of the same mentality, it is in these exact conventions that we find the most elaborate exhibits of travel images, from the traditional painted panoramas to new and elaborate inventions of moving panoramas such as the Cinéorama (fig. 7.), Maréorama, the Trans-Siberian Panorama, or the Stéréorama. All elaborate apparatuses that reveal a tight connection between cinematic travel imagery and the panorama and diorama earlier in the nineteenth century. Gunning explains: “One cannot understand modernity without penetrating its passion for images. Images fascinate modern consciousness obsessively, and this modern sense of images comes from a belief that images can somehow deliver what they portray” This narrative tells us about the expansion of the tourist industry and colonialism, but more than a simple effect of causality, the images themselves participated in the construction of the modern world view to which all of these transformations relate.

The “image as appropriation” effect that prevails the entire modern image-making industry is exceptionally visible in travel images of early film and proto cinematic practices, and is reinstalled in the revolving restaurant view as an architecturally produced travel with a view. However, as we know, on the backside of the picture world we encounter the darker side of the industrial and colonial expansion that provides the context for the consumption of the world through images. Although by now a well covered terrain, we need to remember the machines of warfare and exploitation that is leading the way for photographers’ and spectators’ alike. Hence, we recall W. J. T. Mitchell’s work on the Ideal and Picturesque landscape and how these views should be “the focus of a historical, political, and (yes) aesthetic alertness to the violence and evil written on the land, projected there by the gazing eye.” Nicholas Mirzoeff takes this thought further when he argues that: “In a sense, all visuality was and is imperial visuality, the shaping of modernity from the point of view of the imperial powers.” As such, the seemingly innocent revolving restaurant view carries with it an altogether different spin of heavy historical context. The artist/architect couple Diller + Scofidio has pointed out the complex relationship between tourism and war as related forms

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90 Ibid, 29.
93 Ibid.
of conquest. In their book, *Back to the Front: Tourism of War*, which includes documentation of their art projects and several original texts published to coincide with the 50th anniversary of D-Day, George Van den Abbeele envisages “militarism and tourism as transcultural forms of invasion in competition with each other.” Later in the same book, Thomas Keenan cross-examines the hyper-mediatization of present-day combat “as proof of the birth of new strategic requirements, cultural and media-oriented alike, for military strategies.”

96 Martin Heidegger’s theory about the “Age of the World Picture” serves to further elaborate on the deep connection between images and conquest:

> Where the world becomes picture, what is, in its entirety, is juxtaposed as that for which man is prepared and which, correspondingly, he therefore intends to bring before himself and have before himself, and consequently, intends in a decisive sense to set in place before himself. Hence, world picture, when understood essentially, does not mean a picture of the world but the world conceived and grasped as picture.

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In other words, Gunning points out, “the metaphysical (and destructive) nature of modern Western man views the world as something that can be appropriated through becoming a picture.” Symptomatically, the early travel films were often advertised as providing “the whole world within reach.”

98 Something similar could be said for the revolving restaurant view, built to reach the world by the means of a spin. Much like Gunning’s argument about the travel film, which “seem to act out the aggressive appropriation of space that Heidegger finds implicit in the world picture,”

99 the revolving restaurant view also inhabits cinema’s involvement with the most negative aspects of modern perception, “its links to war and colonial expansion and exploitation.”

100 As a contemporary incarnation of perpetuum mobile, the revolving restaurant multiplies the travel image by 360-degree, offering tourists and scouts a strategic view where nothing is inaccessible. Closely connected and springing out of the same history of colonial and industrial expansion, the revolving restaurant view is infested with imperial ideas of access and power. The swirling land below is nicely fitted within the distant encircling horizon. The mobile composition of every possible street and every visible building is pre-packaged and ordered, digested literally à la carte, and like this internalized. The revolving restaurant becomes an architectural metaphor for the transitory nature of a

98 Gunning, “‘The Whole World Within Reach,’” 33.
99 Ibid, 38.
100 Ibid.
visitor to a place—for the tourist’s on-going search for effortless satisfaction.

The proliferation of travel images that predates the travel film genre in turn helped transform the very nature of images. The many different viewing devices invented in the same period, testify to a feeling of insufficiency about the framed perspectival illusion of traditional images. Influenced and growing out of landscape painting and the picturesque, each device attempted to compliment this insufficiency in one way or another. Gunning explains:

While traditionally these supplements are thought of as attempts at greater realism, it might be more useful to think of them as attempts to overcome the limits of the traditional picture and its frame. As such they heighten the experience of an image by either giving it a greater visual saliency (illumination, stereoscopy) or a temporal dimension (both forms of panorama; transforming views) since the view cannot be exhausted from one view point. 101

Evidently film incorporated both illumination and movement, however, these new travel images also implied a new form of observer, as Jonathan Crary has demonstrated about the stereoscope “all these devices in some sense create an image that overwhelms the viewer through change, scale, or intensity, or all three in concert.” 102 As I have mentioned earlier, the frequent usage of the term “panoramic views” in early travel film testifies to the revolving restaurants heritage. Similarly to the pre-cinematic devices that gave the word “panorama” to such film style, the travel film extended the promise of the picturesque voyage beyond the rectangular frame. 103 Common for all of these devices, including film as well as the revolving restaurant, is the direct physiological stimulation beyond the purely visual register. In this sense, travel films “promote a truly modern perception of landscape, one mediated by technology and speed.” 104

According to Walter Benjamin, cinematic spectatorship offered an explosive impact that freed the spectator from the “prison-world” of nineteenth-century architectural space. 105 “This modern passion for nearness wields a destructive power that is also liberating, a power that smashes older forms of control and ownership of the image.” 106 Giuliana Bruno relies on Italian philosopher Mario Perniola’s term transito to express this utopian power of cinema and its ability to evade the entrapments of the older static culture. According to Bruno the

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101 Gunning, “‘The Whole World Within Reach,’” 34.
103 Ibid, 36.
104 Ibid.
105 Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art”
term transito connotes “a wide-ranging and multifaceted notion of circulation … [as well as]… many levels of desire… inscribed in both physical and mental movement: it includes passages, traversing, transitions, transitory states, and erotic circulation, and it incorporates a linguistic reference to transit.” Bruno considers transito as a neglected source of cinematic pleasure, one that has the power of escaping strategies of containment and ideology.\textsuperscript{107} Gunning concludes: “while not undermining the entrapment of power and aggression in early cinema and especially travel films, there is a sense of utopian possibilities in early panoramic films that also describe a line of escape and flight.” A kind of flight, the revolving restaurant can also be thought of as many different forms of escape.\textsuperscript{108} As Tom Conley has argued, unlike cartography’s function in an atlas, the cartographic cinema engages a larger reflection of “the nature of space and being.”

When a cartographic shape—be it a projection, a globe, an icon of the world, an atlas, a diagram, a bird’s eye view of a landscape, a city-view—is taken as a point of departure, it becomes a model, a patron, or even a road map from which transverse readings can be plotted. It lifts the viewers from the grip of the moving image and thus allows our gaze to mobilize its faculties. At times it looks into what might be assumed to be the unconscious register of cinema, a domain that, as we have seen through the attention of Jacques Rancière brings to the areas of the image that the camera records passively, remains unbeknownst to the artist or technician who impose an action or conscious control upon it.\textsuperscript{109}

The revolving restaurant’s itinerant view inhabits the picturesque quest for imaginary travel at the same time it figures as the ultimate destination, perpetually insisting on its own location. The mechanically mobile spectator simultaneously returns to a bodily immobile position creating a sense of imaginary movement in a complex cinematic dimension. Revolving at a snail’s pace, the cartographic view narrative of the restaurant can perhaps gently turn more liberated, unmotivated, and undesired, and thus be opening up for an unconscious “alien thought”? I will return to this anti-fascistic take on the revolving view in a later chapter.

In a passage in a *Time Out Abu Dhabi* review of the Le Royal Méridien’s Al Fanar revolving restaurant, I came across the following comparison:

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\textsuperscript{108} The revolving restaurant view’s relation to flight and aerial view is a topic I will be returning to in chapter 3 and 4.

\textsuperscript{109} Tom Conley, *Cartographic Cinema*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 208.
After all, from every seat at this lofty revolving restaurant, you can gaze at spectacular panoramas of the capital. The windows, of course, are huge, so you feel like you’re in the front row seat at a widescreen cinema, watching the city’s story unfold beneath you. It takes *a little under two hours* to make a full turn, leaving you plenty of time to pick out the Corniche, the bustle of the Tourist Club Area, and figure out whereabouts your house is.¹¹⁰

The eye cuts from near to far like a film composed of close-ups and city skyline establishing shots. Even the close-ups are distant, however, as the elevated architecture, generally one hundred to two hundred meters above the ground, prevents the noise and the smell, the intimate properties of the street, to enter this stylized perspective. The notion of surface is present in the bird’s-eye perspective as it protects one from a closer investigation of details and keeps the overview at a fixed level. And while the satisfying feeling of travel accompanies the spectator in the circle, the comforting base and starting point is never far away. After a “feature-length travel,” one actually hasn’t moved anywhere. Just like in the travel films, one has only been transported on an imaginary tour. The panoramic view unfolds as if one is traveling without a destination. By employing basic technological methods, the “revolving view” demonstrates how our society became susceptible to blurring boundaries between an image and the real. The view becomes “a movie” because the context is cinematic and the atmospheric attributes are controlled. In the revolving restaurant the window-screen of the revolving view is an agent of the exterior view’s metamorphosis into cinema. This process was anticipated in the painted panorama, which marked the transition from representation to immersion and introduced a new rationale with abundant consequences. But as the panorama and cinema rely on a viewer in the dark, mentally transported on a virtual journey, the revolving restaurant actually provides physical motion through “stationary reality.” Thus, the paradox of cinematic spectatorship is inverted.

During the nineteenth century, the explosion of travel images offered a new logic of visibility: physical sensation of movement to an immobile body. In the 1960s travelling via the 360-degree view from revolving restaurants as it unfolds its grandeur over the course of approximately ninety minutes, based much of its popularity, I have argued, on the same experience. Not until the late 1950s do we see the panorama, pleorama, or Cinéorama fused in an architectural form with a 360-degree “moving view” — that of the revolving restaurant. Here the ten film projectors of the Cinéorama are exchanged with slanted glass panels

presenting reality itself, configured with a distant view and a slow-motion-like turning speed in order to accommodate the adequate psycho-physical conditions for igniting the sense of immersive voyage. With its resurrection of the qualities of early cinematic perception, the revolving restaurant can be seen as a present-day example of how the visual spectacles of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries prefigured cinema in its earliest forms. Because of this unique characteristic, it relates to cinema both emotionally (through physical experience) and historically (through architectural similarities). Viewed in this historical and aesthetic heritage, the revolving restaurant does not simply classify as architecture per se, nor is it merely a vehicle with a view. It most closely resembles an immersive image medium, a vision machine and a pictorial apparatus, like cinema and its pre-cinematic forms. Similarly to the various ride- and travel films, the view from the revolving restaurant should be understood in a larger context, one which ranges from the travel lecture, the post card industry and the world fair exhibits. Also introduced at a world fair, the architectural design and rotating technology of the revolving restaurant is aligned to this historical development, facilitating “moving image-views” to a seated audience. However, as I will discuss in the next chapter, the promiscuously daring task of dining at 500ft while simultaneously encountering a spinning ground would seem to attract an audience only when properly framed within an outer-space imaginary. Contextualized within the cold war’s space program, the perpetually spinning mobile offered diners a special form of moon landing by dining in elevated circles—by then a welcomed sensorial exploration.
2. KINETIC ARCHITECTURE: CINEMA BEYOND FILM

In the previous chapter I have been tracing the genealogy of the moving and projected image, as a panoramic desire starting from the Italian vedutas, the Claude glass, and the picturesque gardens of the early 18th century, through the development of immersive imaging practices such as the Panorama and Diorama, and the emergence of modernism with urbanization, ferro-vitreous architecture, and the development of the railway and tourism. As such, the revolving restaurant experience should be firmly situated within cinema’s historical context. In this chapter, I will expand the line of aerial view to include what Pavle Levi would call the “cine-dream” of kinetic architecture found in the early 20th century avant-garde, of which Vladimir Tatlin’s epitome of constructivist architecture, Monument to the Third International, is a prime example. I am specifically targeting architectural structures that combine mechanical motion with a sense of overview either as a physical aerial view, such as the revolving restaurant, or implied through an “all-seeing” kino-eye of the city symphony and the infinite eye of the diagram. To illustrate my point I will consider selected examples of kinetic and media architecture, from the Eames’s information spaces of the 1960s to the hypothetical structures of invisible architecture, sketched out by the legendary architectural movement known as Archigram in the same period. I will end up discussing the latest iconic addition to Oslo’s arsenal of attractions in the bustling new upscale neighborhood of Tjuvholmen—the 90-metre observation tower poignantly named Sneak Peak. With this I hope to draft a distinct trace of architectural circulation that will serve to articulate a very specific cinematic experience.

Seated next to the panorama window-wall of revolving restaurants, the spectator has the possibility of looking straight down at a vertical image. Denis Diderot, has accounted for this charged visual mode asking:

Do we ourselves not cease to feel compassion when distance or the smallness of the object produces the same effect on us as lack of sight does on the blind?...I feel quite sure that were it not for fear of punishment, many people would have fewer qualms at killing a man who was far enough away to appear no larger than a swallow than in butchering a steer with their own hands. And if we feel compassion for a horse in pain though we crush an ant without a second thought, are these actions not governed by the selfsame principle?

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Tracing the vertical view and the structures of power it entails, gives us another historical context very different from the oblique view of the Panorama paintings. The vertical image is closely connected to photography and specifically the aerial representations during WW1. The view is no longer pointed towards the hills or horizon and the future to come; by its nature of looking straight down, it has turned to abstract patterns, a machine vision devoid of human emotions. The quote above from Diderot shows how distance diminishes ethical relationships. Nadar recognized the “entrancing effect of distantiation” when he took the first aerial photograph in 1858. As his notes suggest “there is nothing like distance to remove us from all ugliness.” His abstracted photographs underpin this statement as they show the relationships of “city, landscape and spectacle.”112 But this visual mode gained a darker implication when used strategically during new industrialized warfare. Seeking new ways of mapping out territory during WW1, aerial photographs were taken from airplanes flying at a fixed height and subsequently stitched together to make up a map of a changing topography. As B. Hüppauf remarks, the natural landscape was exchanged with “highly artificial and, within its own parameters, functional spatial arrangements.” The vertical aerial photograph provided a “meta level of artificiality,” where the view abstracted even the human body into dots and lines of information for national and military operations.113 As Kasimir Malevich recognized in his 1927 book the Non-Objective World, “The agency of abstraction—is the aerial, the means whereby the earth is detached from itself.”114 By comparing abstraction in painting to the abstraction produced by the aerial image, Malevich show us how a form of radical transformation of the familiar is aligned with technological image production of spatial representation.

In the diagram, the process of abstraction reached another level. The diagram is part of the history of the aerial view claims Dorrian, in the sense of Charles S. Peirce, the diagram is “a species of representation that relates to its referent though its display of sets of

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relationships that are embedded within the latter.”¹¹⁵ Like in the example of an architectural plan drawing, the diagram displays metric relationships rather than a straightforward geographical view. “But at the same time”, Dorrian continues, the diagram is presented “in terms of an eye that is located at infinity in relation to the picture plane”¹¹⁶ which in a sense is a kind of elevation. The diagram situates representation in real-time through its expulsion of viewing space and ‘humanist’ space. Thus, Pavle Levi suggest, the diagram can be seen as cinematic in the way it assembles itself in a continuous present. Man Ray and Francis Picabia’s diagrammatic drawings from the late 1910s represents a category concerned with the re-materialization of the cinematic apparatus. According to Levi, these works “are all motivated by their author’s desire to posit cinema-as-design. They locate this cinematic design in the space—or, more precisely, in the difference—between the concept of the film medium and its unconventional technological realization.”¹¹⁷ In *Admiration of the Orchestrelle for the Cinematograph* (1910) by Man Ray, for instance, a “simple linearly traced montage…of sound and image reproduction” ‘suggest’ a sound-film apparatus.¹¹⁸ The important aspect Levi explains, is that an orchestrations of “older” or “inadequate media” produces a “dynamic and largely imaginary film system; that it will give body to a *diagram* fueled by what is, at its origin, a pure flow of thought.” This, Levi concludes, can be seen as a form of “philosophy of technology,” a “conceptual-materialist *praxis* in which the *techne* and the *logos* coexist in each other as *technologie*...precisely because they are, in fact, prevented from ever entirely coinciding.”¹¹⁹ This is underlined by a quote form Gilles Deleuze:

“[E]very diagram is intersocial and constantly evolving. It never functions in order to represent a persisting world but produces a new kind of reality, a new model of truth. It is neither the subject of history, nor does it survey history. It makes history by unmaking preceding realities and significations, constituting hundreds of points of emergence or creativity, unexpected conjunctions, of improbable continuums. It doubles history with a sense of continual evolution.”¹²⁰

The infinite eye of the diagram is the cinematic apparatus, “the subjectively grounded process of *thinking* and (thus) *mapping relations* between these material coordinates—serves as the ‘cinematic dynamo’ that sets the apparatus in motion, so to speak, by determining its

¹¹⁶ Ibid.
¹¹⁸ Ibid.
¹¹⁹ Ibid.
specificity.” Thus, the circulation of modernity manifested itself. The diagram, seen as an aerial view that ultimately came with the movie camera, sets the coordinates of human perception in motion and as such becomes again a form of cinematic expression. The vertical view from the revolving restaurant therefore, is both cinematic in the way of mechanical motion, transporting the immobile viewer through space and in the way of an infinite eye manifesting itself as abstract lines and dots on the ground similar to the diagrammatic real-time construction of understanding spatial relations. “It is with a ‘marvelous mitigation of altitude’ as Roland Barthes proposed, that the aerial eye grants ‘an incomparable power of intellection,’ “the birds eye view, for Barthes, ‘corresponds to a new sensibility of vision; in the past, to travel…was to be thrust into the midst of sensation, to perceive only a kind of tidal wave of things; the bird’s eye view, on the contrary, permits us to transcend sensation and to see things in their structure.” I will follow up on the relationship between cinema and aerial view in the chapter on Bel Geddes’s Futurama. In what follows I will trace specific forms of motility in the early 20th century architecture in Europe that embodies some of the same ideas communicated 50 years later in the revolving restaurant.

2.2. Motility in Architecture

As the industrial revolution gradually inspires and reworks economical and ideological structures, aspects of change and movement seems urgently reflected in every sphere of cultural expression. Particularly prevalent in Europe during the first half of the 20th century, we see a new agenda behind rotary designs in architecture. Rather than serving a purely functional asset, like regulating sunlight in sanatoriums or early film studios (Edison’s Black Maria), maximizing space in garages or changing stage designs, the very idea of continuous rotation, of a motility as an inherent attribute of the architectural expression, became evident as it came to articulate “new artistic, political, and philosophical ideas.”

Many writers have pointed out the fact that “architectural changes in the window were roughly coincident with changes in perspective in modern painting early in the twentieth century.” Siegfried Giedion for instance, wrote in his Space, Time and Architecture (1941) about the distinction in perception of space through architectural history. Giedion is interested in understanding the common background of art, architecture and construction. He proposed the cubist’s method of representing spatial relationships as the form-giving principle of the

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new space conception in modern architecture. The twentieth century saw, according to Giedion, “an optical revolution that resulted in the abolishing of the single viewpoint perspective. This had fundamental consequences for man’s understanding of architecture and urban space.” “Giedion declared that ‘the essence of space’ in this new conception ‘is its many-sidedness and infinite positionality for relations within it.’” For Giedion, “modern space was cubist.”¹²³ In addition to comparing modern architecture to cubist influence, György Képes traces both art forms back to the invention of the moving image. In *Language of Vision* (1944), Képes argues that photography and film unchained vision in fundamental ways by showing recorded views from a variety of angles and shifting the vanishing point away from the center of the image.¹²⁴ This “multiple, simultaneous perspective” influenced avant-garde artists who “shifted the point of vision into a kind of cinematographic sequence, and represented the projection of several points of view in one picture. Képes argues that “the optical properties of the photographic camera and motion picture photography” are the “apparatical agents that produce the new post-perspectival language of vision” visible in both painting and architecture of the early twentieth century.¹²⁵ However, without adopting any one-directional claims, I see the technical invention of photography and film as a symptom of an era that influences a whole new mode of visual consumption of the world. My argument would simply be to acknowledge how the moving image is born out of the larger spirit of modernity—simultaneously reflected and absorbed into all aspects of cultural production.

Think only of Edison’s *Descent from the Eiffel Tower*, filmed at the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris, in which, as Tom Gunning put it, the filmmaker “unwittingly captured the conflict in the representation of space that the new century would usher in.” This, Gunning continues, is “triggered, at least partially by the very industrial and technological development and burgeoning consumer culture the Expositions was designed to display and celebrate.”¹²⁶ Visually, the film shows cubism in motion, viewing space cut up through the netting of the tower’s structure. Tom Gunning’s account of the filmic ride is worth quoting in its entirety:

One not only sees a place but also experience it *through* a conjunction of modern technological triumphs, including the camera itself, but also the elevator that enables the ascent and the struts of the tower framing our view. As much as space, we experience *motion*, a previously inconceivable motion, enabled by new technology in which the viewer remains seated passively, like a spectator in a theatre, and moves

¹²³ Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 118.
¹²⁵ Ibid.
nearly effortlessly, while simultaneously becoming hypervisual, all-eyes, attentive as a new sort of space unfurls before her.\textsuperscript{127}

The Eiffel Tower’s exposed steel struts in combination with the elevator cutting up and moving mechanically through space were all features later adapted into Expressionist architecture and to the constructivists design, in which Vladimir Tatlin’s \textit{Monument to the Third International} represents an epitome of constructivist architecture.

Expressionist architects such as Bruno Taut, Erich Mendelson, and others “experimented with “light-kinetic principles” to demonstrate the triumph of time and mobility over space.”\textsuperscript{128} Various expressionist designs implemented movement and rotation but none of these were ever realized. As Chad Randl reminds us, the movement struggled with political change and economic crisis on the backdrop of WWI in Germany, resulting in few actually realized projects. Hence, expressionist architecture predominantly existed on paper through sketches and theoretical tracts, which in return freed it from the burden of “functional requirements, financial restrictions and limitations of site and material.”\textsuperscript{129}

Originally designed for Mr. Mendthal, for a location on the sand dunes overlooking the Baltic Sea near Köningsberg, Max Taut designed a rotating house featuring polymorphic designed glass walls emanating from a circular foundation. A series of pointed “roofs joined these wall sections to a central steeply pitched pyramidal core.” As seen on the drawing, letters and expressive lines emanates in a spiral shape from the top of the pyramid, suggesting rotation as a philosophically motivated rather than a strictly utilitarian idea.\textsuperscript{130} (Image: Mr. Mendthals house designed by Max Taut)

A Constructivist architecture unique to the Soviet Union mirrored expressionist ideas in Germany and Central Europe. Following Russian futurism, Russian constructivist art, applied a three-dimensional cubist vision to abstract kinetic form. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, architecture turned its attentions to the new social demands and industrial tasks required of the new regime. As the new government “abandoned traditional forms associated with the imperial past” art in service of the new socialist ideas gained authority and state commissions.\textsuperscript{131} Within this context of highly politicized agenda, Tatlin develops his design for a Monument to the Revolution, a gigantic tower made of lattice steel that

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{127} Ibid, 14.
  \item \textsuperscript{128} Randl, \textit{Revolving Architecture}, 66.
  \item \textsuperscript{129} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{131} Ibid, 67.
\end{itemize}
incorporates no less than three continuously revolving buildings stacked vertically atop of each other. Each building was designed for distinct usage, and it revolved in different speeds. Designed to rage 400 meters above ground, an open-ended iron spiral, tilted to face the North Star, framed three halls of different geometrical shapes in glass. Best described by Nikolaj Punin at the time:

The lower structure (A), in the form of a cube, moves on its axis at the speed of one revolution a year and is intended for legislative purposes. Here may be held conferences of the International, meetings of international congresses and other broadly legislative meetings.... The next structure (B), in the form of a pyramid, rotates on its axis at the speed of one full revolution a month and is intended for executive functions (the Executive Committee of the International, the secretariat and other administrative and executive bodies). Finally, the upper cylinder (C), rotating at a speed of one revolution a day, is intended to be a resource centre for the following facilities: an information office; a newspaper; the publication of proclamations, brochures and manifestoes - in a word, all the various means of broadly informing the international proletariat, and in particular a telegraph, projectors for a large screen located on the axes of a spherical segment (a1-b3), and a radio station, the masts of which rise above the monument.132

Tatlin’s design is a powerful example of how constructivist ideas absorbed the dynamic atmosphere of industrialization and new technology, featuring abstract forms and exposed structural elements. It combined a heightened awareness of inherent qualities of industrial materials such as concrete, glass and steel, with ideas of kinetic elements, as a move away from conventional ideas of architecture as static and stable entity. As historian of revolving buildings, Chad Randl remarks, constructivists “announced an allegiance between architecture and machinery and made explicit the modern faith in progress through technology and movement.”133 As its dual function as a monument and as the Comintern’s headquarters suggest, Tatlin’s tower embraced the current debate within the constructivist circles on the relation of form to function.

Similarly to the situation in Europe, pressed economy and political turmoil prevented actual construction in any large scale. Vladimir Tatlin never got to realize his legendary proposal but his ideas nevertheless remains as a significant example. Another famous early Constructivist project was the Lenin Tribune by El Lissitzky (1920), a moving speaker's podium. Lenin Tribune sits alongside many of the so-called "paper architecture" projects of

133 Randl, Revolving Architecture, 66.
the 1920s. As such, constructivist architecture mostly remained proposals on paper, evaluating aesthetic and utopian ideals over realizable concerns.

In a thorough study of Tatlin’s life and work, Norbert Lynton is listing a number of historic towers that might have influenced Tatlin’s never realized proposal, the most immediate model being Eiffel’s design. Tatlin decided that his monument to the Revolution would have to be a tower...The new monument would be a proudly innovative addition to the long history of towers ranging from Babel to Eiffel.” Returning from Paris and the Salon des indépendants in 1914 Tatlin not only encounters Robert Delauney, Cézanne, Picasso, and Braque, he also experiences the source of their vibrant artistic milieu, namely the city of Paris itself. At the time of Tatlin’s visit, Paris was the embodiment of modernity and progress, signaled above all through the exposed steel and lattice structure of the Eiffel Tower. At 300 meters the tower was the tallest building in the world. Right next to it La Grande Rue, a smaller iteration of Ferris’s wheel animated the site’s modern aura with its gentle rotary motion. The two modernist structures—one stretching its steel lattice frames towards the sky, the other demonstrating mechanical movement through slowly revolving pleasure rides—often figured together in photographs and paintings of the time. And for Tatlin it became the starting point for an entirely new approach to architecture. As Lynton observes, “[t]he two constructions complement each other: The static vertical feature, and the slowly rotating wheel, both erected for pleasure and profit,” and both to be absorbed in Tatlin’s design. (Image: Robert Delauney’s Homage to Bleriot with its many “disks and rings of color suggesting power and motion”)

Both film and architecture offers for the beginning revolution an art to the masses, a social reality reproducible and machine-made. In the period of 1914-17, following his Paris visit, Tatlin moves away from his earlier painting practice and into the construction of the

134 The New World Encyclopedia notes: the Lenin Tribune by El Lissitzky (1920), a moving speaker’s podium. During the Russian Civil War, the UNOVIS group centered around Malevich and Lissitzky, designing various projects that forced together the “non-objective” abstraction of Suprematism with more utilitarian aims, creating ideal Constructivist cities. See also El Lissitzky, Prounenraum (1923) or the Gustav Klutsis, Dynamic City (1919).
136 Ibid, 81.
137 Ibid, 32.
138 Ibid, 33. “It is also reasonable to believe that Tatlin was aware of Fernand Leger’s work through a partial echo in Malevich’s paintings of around 1912.”
139 Ibid. Although originally erected to demonstrate its own existence at the World’s Fair, “By 1903 the Eiffel Tower was equipped to send military messages over great distance, from 1911 also radioed time signals using Greenwich Mean Time, from 1918 it housed first civil radio station in France. Also from 1910 serves as marker for flying machines.”
tree-dimensional Counter Reliefs and Corner reliefs in which, the dynamic encounter with material and space suggest a radical change in mode and perception. Directly quoting Picasso and the cubist idea of three-dimensionality, he uses various materials suspended across separate walls to neglect a firmly positioned painting or sculpture in favor of a dynamic encounter of spatial questions. Upon accepting various mandates within the new government, Tatlin did not exhibit any new work between 1917-1920. However, late in 1919 it was officially stated that Tatlin was working on a monument for the Revolution, that it had backing from the ministry, and that it was to be called the Monument to the Third International. Nikolai Punin’s article describes Tatlin’s vision as demonstrating mobility over all else; “the monument will be the locus of concentrated movement.” Celebrating iron construction and industrial motion, the tower was designed as a functional sculpture, yet, in cubist tradition, maintained the aesthetics of material choices over the utilitarian value. For Victor Shklovsky, it was a monument of “iron, glass and revolution,” with its own “semantics”. The constructivist filmmaker Dziga Vertov’s films embody similar methods of expression. As Annette Michelson points out, by moving into the space of function that which is preserved as a character of sculpture, Tatlin questioned “the closure of sculpture and architecture alike.” Michelson continues: “[T]he tower was based upon the cubist formula just as Vertov’s master film—multiple, polyvalent, contrapuntal in its structure, celebrating the turning of wheels of industry—was grounded in the technique of montage.” As such Michelson argues, both Tatlin’s architecture and Vertov’s film inhabit the message of revolution in the material construction itself, as she puts it:

Both tower and film propose a hyperbolic intensification of their techniques, insisting upon the materiality of the object and its architectonics as determinant. It is for these reasons, and insofar as both structures do in their counterpoint, polyvalence, and circularity literalize the notion of Revolution, that they converge in a common movement of transgression upon the definition of a program, the formulation of semantics of socialist construction.

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142 Ibid.
143 Michelson, “Introduction,” xxxiii.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid, xxxv.
Incorporating the circular motion of modernity, the tower featured core values of a new era, a machine-made constructivist architecture-cinema signaling, as Chad Randall also concludes: “the aspirations of a dynamic Soviet Union.”  

Largely influenced by cubism, the constructivism of Vertov and Tatlin embraced “a cult of materials” while at the same time focusing on the dialectics between the “aesthetic” and the “purposive.” Influenced by Cubism, Russian Constructivism is perhaps one of the first examples of how gradually in art the medium becomes the message. Anticipating the legendary remarks of Marshall McLuhan, art became life and life became art, intertwined with political ideals and a mission of revolution. The mobile quest for the “visual consumption of the world” that marked the rupture of modernity in the west, translates into the cine-revolutionary visions of the constructivist movement in the newly formed Soviet Russia. These first examples of revolving architecture therefore inhabit the cinematic as the art of motion. In a dynamic relationship between the new industrial conception of space and time these architectural designs revolved toward another possibility for humanity—a cine-desire of revolutionary practice. In the next chapter I will focus on the true father of the revolving restaurant, which contextualizes its cinematic features within a new historical paradigm.

2.3 Bel Geddes’s Futurama

As I have pointed out in earlier chapters, the transformation of the city into a distant object of visual consumption had an ideologically recuperative effect. The miniature or model works on the same principle, Mark Dorrian explains, its “usefulness as urban planning’s most potent tool of public persuasion endures through precisely such powers of sublimation.” In the model of Le Corbusier’s *La ville radieuse*, we see the hand of the architect as a god-like liberator of urban space. At the same time the vertical abstraction does away with history and compresses space into defined territory. Norman Bel Geddes’s Futurama (Fig. 6) modeling the “world of tomorrow” at the 1939 New York’s World’s Fair works on the same principles. Based on 119 aerial photographs, and presented as part of the automobile giant General Motor’s *Highways and Horizons* exhibit in the tremendously popular Transportation Zone, Bel Geddes’ “number one hit show” bombarded a nation struggling after the Great

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147 Michelson, “Introduction,” xxx.
Depression and longing for prosperity and progress.\textsuperscript{148} As a write-up in Wired Magazine states,

\begin{quote}
The Futurama ride carried fair visitors past tiny, realistic landscapes while a narrator described the world of tomorrow. The effect was like catching a glimpse of the future from the window of an airplane. As you might expect from a ride sponsored by GM, the focus was on what roadways and transportation might look like in 20 years.\textsuperscript{149}
\end{quote}

The aerial-architectural motion that makes up the cinematic qualities of the revolving restaurant is closely linked to Bel Geddes’ numerous aerial-architectural inventions (Fig. 1.) He could in fact qualify as the revolving restaurant’s historical father. In what follows I will show how the cinematic experience of the moving aerial view, and its symbolic relationship to future and progress, is properly reinforced during the interwar period in the United States, as the ascending journey of the Futurama takes spectators to the land of tomorrow, a future utopia of imagined dimensions.

With the inscription “I have seen the future,” the souvenir button received by patrons on completing a ride of the Futurama reinstated the fairs theme “Building the World of Tomorrow.” Seated and thus immobilized, 522 spectators per ride were “lifted” on a three quarter mile long winding conveyor belt to a simulated flight over Bel Geddes’ idealized model of “The World of Tomorrow.” Here, Wired’s remarks continues, the “GM's ride presented a utopia forged by urban planning. Sophisticated highways ran through rural farmland and eventually moved into carefully ordered futuristic cities…What the Futurama ride was really selling was a highway system — a taxpayer-funded highway system.”\textsuperscript{150} As architectural historian Adnan Morshed has noted “The emphasis on the display process rather than the exhibit itself was one of the guiding principles…\textit{How} the future was seen was becoming as important as \textit{what} was seen in it.” This aspect of the 1939 fair is also noted by cultural historian Warren Susman: “The real genius of the exhibitors at the Fair…was their understanding that the machine itself was not to be central, as it traditionally had been in all world’s fairs since 1851 and the Crystal Palace. Rather, they realized that in a consumer-

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
centered society people ended up more fascinated with process [of production] than with machines."\(^{151}\) This rings a bell with constructivist ideas of process as analogues of change and thus a site of revolutionary practice. The process signals a continuous change toward the future and a better society, mirrored by the continuous change of the images on the film projector or the mechanical time-based assemblage of a 360-degree panorama in the revolving restaurant.

At the Futurama, an eighteen-minute “flight” enhanced with controlled light, sound and color, showed what the world would look like twenty years into the future. The Wired article concludes: “People stood in line for hours to ride it and experience the exciting possibilities of life in the distant future—the year 1960.”\(^{152}\) As Morshed has noted, “[i]t created the illusion of an aerial journey over the varied and meticulously crafted terrain of an American utopia.”\(^{153}\) Having already established the aerial view as a kind of cinematic mode in earlier chapters, the “flight” can also be seen as a cinematic ride, I would argue. Similarly to the features of the revolving restaurant, in what Schivelbush would call “a panoramic spectatorship,” the seated audience is not physically in the environment that they are transported through.\(^{154}\) This, Anne Freidberg has noted, creates a “virtual moving gaze,” a similar visual mode to that of watching film through normative cinematic apparatus.\(^{155}\) Thus, as Bel Geddes sought to represent a “surrogate airplane eye,”\(^{156}\) this airplane eye is a camera’s infinite “kino-eye”. Morished notes, “[t]he simulated voyage over the Futurama was intended to resolve the optical limitation of earthbound views and, more important, the philosophical problem of experiencing the utopia that, as an ideal condition, eludes us in reality.”\(^{157}\) The moving aerial view creates the unreality of the film. If the aerial vehicle is the movie camera, then the transported aerial passenger is a cinematic voyeur. The aerial view, similar to the movie camera signals “[m]ankind’s victory over physical barriers.”\(^{158}\)

For Bel Geddes and he’s contemporaries, new break troughs in aviation technology and the idea of traversing aerial space had a significant impact on the imagination of future

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\(^{152}\) “The Original Futurama,” in Wired Magazine.


\(^{155}\) Anne Friedberg, Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994).

\(^{156}\) Morshed, 77.

\(^{157}\) Ibid, 78.

\(^{158}\) Ibid, 79.
civilizations. Ever since the 1909 airplane crossing of the English Channel by aviator Louis Blériot, powered flights had a significant effect on architecture and city planning, as well as a general influence on art and culture at large. As Morshed remarks: “Solitary in his monoplane, the aviator was the modernist trope par excellence representing a privileged view of the earth and was a catalyst for new models of aesthetic experimentation in literature, science fiction, and the arts during aviation’s golden age.”

Similarly to the train ride, the airplane ride offered mechanical thrust through previously unimagined perspectives of space-time, dissolving the grounded identity of objects and subjects. At the same time, means to achieve an all-encompassing overview of the city is also accomplished through filmic montage. This is especially true in the genre associated with the City Symphonies such as Walter Ruttmann’s *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City (Berlin: Die Sinfonie der Grosstadt, 1927).* “Berlin’s parallel editing,” Tom Gunning remarks, “reworks an accumulation of images into a synoptic view taken from no single position, and from this ambient uncentered montage of multiple viewpoints creates the archetypal sense of a city.”

Further more, Anthony Vidler remarks, “What the rational experience had acquired in the way of knowledge by analysis, by comparison, by deduction, suddenly becomes a matter of total and firsthand experience for the eye.”

Prior to the Futurama, Bel Geddes designed other projects that utilized his fascination with aerial ascension and mechanical motion. The utopian transoceanic airplane called the Air Liner Number 4, and, in fact, a three floor aerial restaurant that was to make one full revolution every thirty minutes makes Bel Geddes a founding father for the subject matter of my research. Following the historic event of Lindbergh’s flight over the Atlantic in 1927, Bel Geddes turned to industrial design. Within a couple of years he had conceived of an aerialized architecture, “a V-winged leviathan aerial vessel with a wingspan of 528 feet and sleeping accommodations for 606 persons.” This design marked a significant shift, as Paul Virilio has pointed out, tilting the concept of architecture out of its age-old gravitational axis.

Submitting his anti-gravity architecture back to earth, Bel Geddes’ revolving restaurant was designed for the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition, also known as the Chicago World’s Fair. It was never realized due to functional and economic problems, but the mobile aerialized

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159 Ibid.
162 Morshed, 85.
spectator was finally reinstated in the Futurama a few years later, drawing on the same principles. As James Gibson has noted, “Seeing the world at a traveling point of observation, over a long enough time for a sufficiently extended set of paths, begins to be perceiving the world at all points of observation, as if one could be everywhere at once. To be everywhere at once with nothing hidden is to be all-seeing, like God.”\textsuperscript{164} In Berlin, Gunning remarks, the street remains an essential image […], but the filmmaker rises above its one-way logic, employing cuts that move without friction, even with collisions. The camera remains disembodied, aerial, transcendent.\textsuperscript{165} The all-seeing God-like view is also the cinematic view. “An exclusive realm detached from earthbound mortals.”\textsuperscript{166} Having laid the ground for understanding some of the virtues of aerial images—how they work in architecture as cinematic experience, and how this relates to the understanding of the revolving restaurant view as cinematic form—I will now continue with architecture’s relationship to film from the film point of view.

2.4. Multimedia Architecture and the Cold War

In addition to physical motion, the float glass windows are equally responsible for the cinematization of the view from the revolving restaurant, as they act as an ethereal membrane separating the interior from the exterior. As we know, glass emerged as an important asset for new building types during the nineteenth century. As Siegfried Gideon remarked early on, however, the real transformation of glass’s function within architecture, from a source of light and air to a frame for a view, was first realized in the 1920s and ’30s modern architecture of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and Le Corbusier, among others.\textsuperscript{167} This architecture of visibility and transparency has since been discussed in terms of its “psychogeographic” effect on the subject. Richard Sennet describes it as a particular modern sensation: “A complete visibility without the exposure of the other senses . . . contributes to the virtuality of the experience.”\textsuperscript{168} Similarly, Beatriz Colomina has noted: “Viewing a landscape through a window implies a separation. A ‘window,’ any window, breaks the connection between being in a landscape and seeing it. Landscape becomes [purely] visual,

\textsuperscript{164} James Gibson, \textit{The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception} (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), 197.
\textsuperscript{165} Gunning, “One-Way Street,” 62.
\textsuperscript{166} Morshed, 94.
and we depend on memory to know it as a tangible experience.” As the panoramic view is “sticking” to the window-wall of the revolving restaurant, the flatness of a screen presents the view to the visitor-spectator, comfortably seated in a controlled environment. Finally, Ann Friedberg points out: “As the wall becomes the window and the window becomes the wall, the wall also becomes a screen and the screen becomes a window.” Thus, in the revolving restaurant, the itinerant panoramic view can be seen as “hyper cinema,” a virtual travel where the window surface becomes the “film screen” of immaterial architecture.

Continuing an aerial esthetic from Bel Geddes, Tati’s masterpiece Playtime (1967) turns the architectural setting itself into a spectacle. But rather than an aerial overview, Tati offers a dystopic no-place, “a glistening antiseptic environment” has become what is left of the aerial promise. As if Bel Geddes Aerial Liner Number 4 crash-landed at Orly, the traveler’s continued journey now depends on the artificiality of the multiple glass surfaces in the unidentifiable airport terminal. The location of the film is according to Ockman, “set outside normal space-time relations […] [i]t initiates the viewer into an ‘other’ order, a time of aesthetic play, cinematic time—playtime.” The background for Tati’s vision is clear, Ockman reminds us: “Between 1954 and 1974, 24 percent of the buildable surface of the city was subject to demolition and redevelopment.” A process started with Haussmann about a hundred years earlier, this violence of urban space’s creation begins with an aerial view, as Walter Benjamin reflects, “Haussmann’s urbanistic ideal was one of views in perspective down long street-vistas.” With the Haussmannization of Paris, the citizens “began to become conscious of the inhuman character of the great city.” And equally, an aerial view will be its only remedy, commoditized through Ferris wheels, outlook towers and eventually, revolving restaurants. “The violence of the urbanism ‘on the ground’” As Mark Dorrian remarks “would be sublimated into the quasi-pastoral spectacle of the ‘urban landscape’.

Another cinematic quality of the revolving restaurant “hides” in the acousmatic field. Whether it is schmaltzy muzak, ethereal classical composition or soft pop, the musical background melts with the typical white noise of a restaurant interior. As the view continually

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172 Ibid, 183.
refreshes, the soundtrack emitted from a concealed system of speakers infuses a specific psychological effect into the picture and lays a narrative implication upon the moving view. As Joan Ockman discovers in her account on *Playtime*, the soundtrack plays an equally important task in structuring a sense of disruption and disconnection as it produces “a palpable gap between hearing and seeing.” The door that slams in “golden silence,” at the trade fair, Ockman recalls, “alludes to the synthetic nature of acoustics in cinema.” This is an important point for the cinematic experience in the restaurant. In *Playtime*, in a view from above looking into one of the apartments in a high-rise glass building, the exterior sound (the sound of the camera’s position in physical reality) makes us aware of “the pantomimed presentation of the dialog inside the building.” Situated on the inside of the insulating glass surface and looking out to busy streets, highways or waterfalls, the cacophony of music, human voices and crackling utensils, provides for an equally synthetic “soundtrack,” pointing to a camera’s voyeuristic position. “The sound barrier that prevents us from hearing the inhabitants’ conversation relates the ‘outside’ of the street and the ‘outside’ of the audience.” This cinematic effect heightens the awareness of displacement of the spectator. Equally, in the revolving restaurant, I would argue, the cinematic effect of the discrepancy between the visual and the aural displaces the patron of the restaurant and turns the view into a cinematic experience.

The glass wall in the revolving restaurants fixes the view in a similar way cinema does it on the screen, creating a cinematic view out of a regular on-site location. As Ockman has noticed,

> from the inside, the window frame, like the camera lens, is an optical instrument that positions the viewer and constructs the gaze.” At once frame, mirror and window, glass architecture wrecks havoc with materiality just as film does, except inversely: whereas film calls forth what is unreal, glass tends to dissolve what already exists. Its quixotic qualities of transparency, opacity, and reflectivity make it an analog for the unreality and absence at the heart of film itself.

I would argue that the motion of the revolving restaurant adds to this dissolving of the reality effect, making the reality outside less real, more cinematic, and importantly severely more ideal. As Ockman concludes, the relation of film and architecture “is a paradigm of the

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177 Ibid., 188.
178 Ibid.
relation between physical experience and the advancing forces of dematerialization and virtualization."

From vertical image and diagram, to Taltlin, Futurama and Tati, this chapter is ending with an account of the multi-media architectural practice of the Space Age architects Charles and Ray Eames. Their works and attitude towards architecture and spaces of information serves to illustrate how the politics of visual media and information strategies in post-WW2 USA created spaces of heterotopias on a global scale. The Eameses’ contribution to the 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow created big attention on the backdrop of Cold War strategies. Just preceding the “Man in the Space Age” World Fair in Seattle, which later would launch the first successful American version of the revolving restaurant, Eameses’ multi-screen installation *Glimpses of the USA*, provided over 2200 still and moving images separated onto seven gigantic 20-by-30-foot screens. Suspended from the roof of Buckminster Fuller’s gigantic 250 feet diameter dome, the visual effect overpowered any previous multi-screen experience hitherto constructed. In a kind of bulky line of evolution, the panorama-like installation of the Eames could be seen in line with the 360-degree Cinéorama attempt of the Raoul Grimoin-Sanson at the 1900 Paris World Exposition, while more than doubling the effect of contemporary, but smaller Cinerama movie houses, which offered a three-screen projection forming a continuous panoramic moving image. Parallel in time to this, Disney had developed the Circorama, which also came to the Exhibit in Moscow 1959 and resulted in the creation of the Russian Circular Kinopanorama the same year. The British Circlorama (1963) was developed after the Russian model, using eleven projectors synchronized to form a continuous 360-degree projected image. Together with a nine track stereo system it was quite a spectacular cinematic experience. As it turns out, Eameses’ multi-screen installation was one of the most popular exhibits in the show. Here, the aerial shots we know from the city symphonies are repeated. The flying all-seeing camera, now

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180 I retain here the concept of heterotopia elaborated by Michel Foucault, as a concept of human geography. According to Foucault, heterotopia describes places and spaces that function in non-hegemonic conditions. “Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.” Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces” (1967), [http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html](http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html), accessed 31.10.2012. This text, entitled “Des Espace Autres,” and published by the French journal Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité in October, 1984, was the basis of a lecture given by Michel Foucault in March 1967. Although not reviewed for publication by the author and thus not part of the official corpus of his work, the manuscript was released into the public domain for an exhibition in Berlin shortly before Michel Foucault’s death. Translated from the French by Jay Miskowiec.
from as high as outer space, starts up with star constellations and planets. Spread across the seven screens followed aerial shots of cities and landscape before closing in on details such as milk bottles, and newspapers, and eventually the intimate private sphere of the family breakfast and the startup of everyday life. The Glimpses installation emphasized the domestic and personal good life in combination with aerial views and outer space voyage. As Beatriz Colomina has noted, domestic life became “suspended within an entirely new spatial system—a system that was the product of esoteric scientific-military research but that had entered the everyday public imagination with the launching of Sputnik in 1957.” (fig. 8) Farmed on the same spatial regime, the American version of the revolving restaurant was re-born as The Space Cage.

On the agenda for the 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow was an attempt to soften the arms and tame the space race of the Cold War into a dialog of domestic life and a competition in kitchen appliances. However, Colomina notes, the final outcome of the gigantic seven-screen installation was “that of an extraordinary powerful viewing technology, a hyper-viewing mechanism, which is hard to imagine outside the very space program the exhibition was trying to downplay.” As such, Colomina continues, “this extreme mode of viewing goes beyond the old fantasy of the eye in the sky.” The Glimpses installation showed the good life of domestic America, but “without ghettos, poverty, domestic violence or depression.” The Situation Room in the White House, where multiple screens are set up to bring in information from all over the world, may have inspired the multi-screen design. The Eames’s were preoccupied with the organization of information, and Glimpses was “organized around a strict logic of information transmission…where the central principle is that of compression. […] The space of the multi-screen film, like the space of the computer, compresses physical space.” As with the revolving view of the restaurants and the 360-degree-cinemas (and the panorama theatres before that) the concept was a complex mixture of the clarity of overview and a sensory overload.

Interestingly, the development of the multiple screen installation from the Moscow exhibition took another significant shape that in many ways signals a similarity in visual modality to the revolving restaurant. At the 1964 World’s Fair in New York, Saarinen’s IBM Ovoid Theater lifted the audience hydraulically from the ground level up into the dark interior of the egg, where Eameses’s fourteen-screen installation of the film Life was on display.

183 The initial name of the Space Needle.
185 Ibid, 85.
Welcomed to the IBM Information Machine, the hovering audience encountered an architecture simultaneously conceived as a “structure, multi-screen film and computer.” As Colomina has showed us, “the Eameses treated architecture as a multichannel information machine. And, equally, multimedia installation as a kind of architecture.”\textsuperscript{186} For the Eameses, everything was architecture: “The chairs are architecture, the films—they have a structure, just as the front page of a newspaper has a structure. The chairs are literally like architecture in miniature…architecture you can get your hands on.”\textsuperscript{187} Similarly, they write in a note to the film \textit{Powers of Ten}: “In the past fifty years the world has gradually been finding out something that architects have always known, that is, that \textit{everything} is architecture.”\textsuperscript{188} As Colomina insightfully remarks, for the Eameses “architecture is all about the space of information.” We no longer need concern ourselves with “space” but rather with “structure” or more precisely, with time. “Structure, for the Eamses is organization in time.”\textsuperscript{189} Nowhere is the architecture as information, structure in time, and as such a cinematic experience more evident that in the revolving restaurant. Growing out of the same Cold War mentality, the very beginning of the information and computer age, the slowly rotating overview reassured rulers as well as audiences of their mediated existence. Or as the Space Needle historian Knut Berger remarks: “Originally named \textit{The Space Cage}, the Needle, became a flying saucer, or halo in the sky, the symbol of the 1962 World’s Fair. It fit the fair’s theme of a cheery Space Age tomorrow, defying cold war anxiety over nuclear annihilation.”\textsuperscript{190}

The underlying message is the same, the changes in perception by industrialization turns into a new era of information and as a result a changing conception of time and space. The moving image absorbed and projected back the existence of modernity and became part of every aspects of life, turning architectural experience into a cinematic voyage. The status of architecture, Colomina concludes, is transformed into an enclosure of information, “a space we now occupy continuously without thinking.”\textsuperscript{191} These spaces can be classified as heterotopias in the way they operate through perceptual modes. They are placing the subject out of joint by way of complex relations between presence and absence, and, as we shall see, different dimensions of time.

\textsuperscript{186} Ibid, 88.
\textsuperscript{188} “\textit{Powers of Ten}—Gregotti” (handwritten notes), Eames Archives, Library of Congress, Washington DC, box 217, folder 11, cited in Colomina, 89.
\textsuperscript{189} Colomina, “Enclosed by Images,” 89.
\textsuperscript{191} Colomina, 91.
The revolving restaurant should by now be firmly situated in the ever-expanding relationship between architecture and communication and information industries. As we have seen above, Beatriz Colomina points out how modern architecture becomes modern through its engagement with the forms of mass media. Architectural critic and writer Rayner Benham, among others, has also questioned the way in which architectural masterpieces of the twentieth century are known to us as photographs rather than physical experiences. This sets the background, Lisa Blackman and Janet Harbord argue, for a particular trait in contemporary architecture, which takes a “more precise and precisely designated…more tactile and fluid” approach to rethinking the urban environment. Recent efforts in architecture and urban planning have sought to find alternatives to growing problems of gentrification and alienation. One such approach entails a mediation of social memory and shared futures that are evoked through engaging concepts of affect and sensibility. The concept of New Century Cities, where cities are networks of complexities designed to be “responsive environments,” is one such example. Created and produced through lived performance and activity, NCCs are composed as cities of “emergence and becoming.” At the same time, growing interest and development in the field of urban media and (interactive) media façades carries some of the same ideological message. Digital displays and moving image content on architectural facades are becoming an integral part of urban life around the world, however, this specific field of architectural research and practice defines itself beyond the pure context of innovative display techniques. A major focus of Realities United, a leading company of this practice today, is, according to their website, architecture’s “outward communicative capacity.” Another focus is “the user experience inside spaces, which in function and appearance is essentially augmented and changed by additional layers carrying information, media content and communication.” As this statement tells us, the field previously known as “Urban screens” has expanded to become “Urban media,” incorporating, among other things, the extended spatial and social dimension of cellular transmitting and Internet-based technologies. It has come to define a field of research that also pose questions around what a mediatized city could mean and be, aiming (for their customers) to balance (and control) social and economic interests. As senior researcher of Applied Sciences Ursula


195 Ibid, 309. See also MIT’s more fact-based information on-line: http://web.mit.edu/cre/research/ncc/ncc.html

196 http://www.realities-united.de/
Stalder’s remarks: “By viewing the medium as a whole, we can pursue questions concerning the source and the design of data, the availability of infrastructure for interaction and participation between producers and users, etc. Urban Media is hence a comprehensive cultural phenomenon, with a front side and a shadow side.” The urban media company ag4 Meidatecture’s creation of a media wall in Münster is an example of relevance here. The 14x14 meter façade they build for PSD bank in 2008 was intended to do more than just reinforcing the company’s identity. Drawing on panoramic visuals of the city and its surroundings, the goal was to (re)connect locals and visitors to the historical and cultural identities of the city of Münster. Under the theme “change and modernization” Münster University of Applied Sciences and the architects collectively developed the façade. Importantly, as long time member of ag4 Christian Rhein points out, “[t]he media façade has never assumed the role of advertising medium but was devised and continues to be seen as an object of art.” Yet, as subtle as it may seem, and definitively not recognizable by all, there is another algorithm governing the visual appearance on the facade. Reflecting the relationship between the company (PSD Bank) and the screen and subsequently also communicating beyond its own borders, the images’ temporal change on the screen is controlled by the current states of the DAX, Dow Jones and Nikkei index. “The speed of the panorama movement on the media façade and the frequency with which videos and images were superimposed onto the building” increases on a strong DAX index and subsequently decreases on a weaker performance. Success is thus equated with speed while a slow and more leisurely rhythm is of a (traditionally) lesser value.

The revolving restaurant could easily be seen as foreshadowing these media architectural projects. It was a type of media architecture for which specific technology became available some three decades upon the ideation. Brought to light in “The Sixties” the revolving restaurant not only responded to the Space Age and Cold War excites, it also reflected a decade of expansion in every field, with relationship to both film and architectural practices of various unconventional layouts. Formed around the same time period, the predominantly British architectural movement Archigram proposed a kind of expanded architecture for a new reality through several Space Age-inspired hypothetical projects. The

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197 Ursula Stalder is a senior researcher/ lecturer at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, School of Business, http://pervasiveadvertising.org/?page_id=160.
198 Ursula Stalder, Urban Media Cultures: (Re)Shaping the Public Space through Urban Screens and Media Architectures, eds. Pop Susa, Ursula Stalder, Gernot Tscherteu, and Mirjam Struppek, (Ludwigsburg: avedition, 2012).
199 http://www.ag4.de/, my emphasis.
200 Christian Rhein, “Identity and the Role of Media Facades,” in Urban Media Cultures, 98
201 Ibid, 98.
main members of the group, Peter Cook, Warren Chalk, Ron Herron, Dennis Crompton, Michael Webb and David Greene, experimented with ideas of space capsules, mass-consumer imagery and mobility through the environment, envisioning a transient image of transformative architectural thinking. As Archigram member David Greene points out,

[i]f we consider for a moment Christo's seminal work – the 'wrapped cliff' – we might see it in one of two ways: as a wrapped cliff or; preferably, as the point at which all other cliffs are unwrapped. An Archigram project attempts to achieve this same altered reading of the familiar (in the tradition of Buckminster Fuller's question, 'How much does your building weigh?'). It provides a new agenda where nomadism is the dominant social force; where time, exchange and metamorphosis replace stasis; where consumption, lifestyle and transience become the program; and where the public realm is an electronic surface enclosing the globe. 202

Closely linking mobility with freedom, the Archigram movement clearly reflected the political and social climate of post-war consumer culture in the west. Projects such as Instant City (1968), proposed whole societies of mobility designed as non-static homes for the entire population. “This idea of ‘travelling environments’ would potentially allow settlements or communities to evolve undivided by social strata, with no suburbs or privileged areas.”203 Riding on a tide of optimism, Archigram’s Space Age “paper architecture” positioned itself as an architecture of the mind as their projects often involved impractical solutions and unrealizable designs. It reflects an image of the power of human imagination in a time when everything seemed possible. Such expanded vision of architecture can hardly be ascribed to the architects of Dortmund’s Florianturm or Seattle’s Space Needle. Yet, as I will discuss in chapter 5, a similar set of thoughts may find its way, albeit unintentionally, on the level of thought and imagination.

2.5. Contemporary “Flights”

As aerial vehicles of circular loops, the fairground Ferris wheel features something of the cinematic experience I seek to articulate in the Revolving Restaurant. The over 100-year old concept of the Ferris wheel is still popular today. Although Ferris’ giant original wheel experienced a sad destiny by ending its grand career in St. Louis in 1906 with a blast of dynamite instead of in a splendor of magnificent fireworks, its legacy lives on through

numerous new wheels on urban squares, fairgrounds and amusement parks.\textsuperscript{204} As a final remark to this chapter, I will look at the recently opened observation tower at Oslo’s newest waterfront neighborhood of Tjuvholmen. The brand new installation that moves patrons up and down through a glass-plated shaft has no other purpose but to offer a highly orchestrated mechanized view of the fjord and the city, and as such the Sneak Peak, I would argue, constitutes a \textit{cinéma trouvé} experience \textit{par excellence}.

To look from the Ferris Wheel, Mark Dorrian starts out, implied a geographic, temporal, and visionary position. Opened to the public in 1893 as part of the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the 80-meter-high original Ferris Wheel was a “hybrid cultural phenomenon that displayed a threefold character of vantage point, kinesthetic device, and optical entertainment.”\textsuperscript{205} Serving as a combination of “a carnivalesque fairground ride” and an “observation wheel” Ferris himself insisted on the latter, seeking to align his construction with its “Parisian predecessor” and a former elite, but by now “popularized visual modality.” As Dorrian has shown, the ride on the Ferris Wheel was an experience significantly shaped by the increasingly popular optical entertainments and philosophical toys during the nineteenth century. Contemporary comments on the experience of the ride point to the view from the wheel as a proto-cinematic spectacle. As Ferris’ partner, William Gronlau, described on his first ride, it was “as if everything was dropping away from me, while […] the car was still.”\textsuperscript{206} Similarly to the Revolving restaurant, the sensation of movement is so controlled that it suddenly feels like the exterior is moving.

As one of the newer Ferris Wheels today, The London Eye also called the Millenium Wheel, opened to the public in March 2000. Similarly to the revolving restaurant, this giant contemporary reiteration, Dorrian points out, “is an exhibitionary installation” that makes the “city itself its object.”\textsuperscript{207} An equally specialized and commodified “view-propaganda” can be located at the various revolving restaurants.\textsuperscript{208} Again, a complexity of experience between that of total overview and control and that of instability is created. While patrons sense that the city is designed and structured specifically for them, it simultaneously brings up a certain

\textsuperscript{205} Dorrian, “Cityscapes with Ferris wheel,” 26.
\textsuperscript{207} Mark Dorrian, “The Way the World Sees London: Thoughts on a Millennial Urban Spectacle;” in \textit{Architecture Between Spectacle and Use} ed. Anthony Vidler (Williamstown: Clark Art Institute, 2008), 49.
\textsuperscript{208} Consider for example the text written on the first page of the menu card at the Top of the Riverfront at the Millennium Hotel in St. Louis: “The Top of the Riverfront has slanted windows and dark painted ceilings so the reflection in the window is kept to the minimum, making it an optimal optical experience.” Menu card picked up on a personal visit in May 2012.
experience of unreality, as if suddenly, the city starts to depend on the mechanically movable overview that displays it.\textsuperscript{209}

My last remarks on aerial mechanical routes, is the new observation tower at the booming waterfront in downtown Oslo. Similarly to the revolving restaurant, this tower needs to be scrutinized beyond its obvious value of popular attraction to entertainment and tourism. As reported on the engineer’s website, the construction consist of a “[t]ubular lattice tower …composed of straight legs, a left winding cylindrical helix and straight braces…A glass elevator takes the visitors up to 55m, with a 360 degree vista over the city and the fjord.”\textsuperscript{210} In other words, another addition to the line of pure pleasure rides, seemingly detached from the purpose-built transportation qualities of the elevator leading into a building. This free-standing glass and steel tower with its transit to a view is a prime example of how cinéma trouvè is inserted into new and gentrified cityscapes.

Simultaneously offering a magnificent display of the city, the wheel, the tower, and the revolving restaurant are designed as a form that isolate the individual from it, elevating the patron out of the crowding interference of the ground and into a superior, meditative seclusion.\textsuperscript{211} It facilitates a “particular kind of optical performance from the visitor …a very specific visual experience”\textsuperscript{212} that also plays on the overturning of control. As Jonathan Crary observes in his legendary book, The Techniques of the Observer, the Diorama and other optical devices of the 19th century had a disciplinary effect that produced a “modernization of the observer.”\textsuperscript{213} Visually united and spatially static, the body was succumbed to the machine and measured and controlled as a component within it.\textsuperscript{214} However, as Dorrian notes, the Ferris Wheel simultaneously allowed for something more ambulatory that Crary associates with the panorama form in opposition to the diorama, as the body is physically transported through space.\textsuperscript{215} Applied to the revolving restaurant, and the observation tower, this complex sensation of movement and stasis is the basis of a cinematic experience I would argue, when the two modes bled into an undistinguishable perceptual situation. By creating a sense of “removal or distance from the city—of being in a separate world,” the mechanical thrust through space produces a separation of environments, between physical and mental

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid, 54.
\textsuperscript{215} Dorrian, “Cityscapes with Ferris wheel,” 30.
perception, where the physicality of the exterior seems to exist in a cinematic dimension. The implication of such installations will be further discussed in the chapters that follow. In the chapter on view aesthetics, I traced the visual modes of elevation and travel as a proto-cinematic experience, materialized through new inventions of mass entertainments such as the Panorama and Diorama in the early nineteenth century. In this chapter, I have argued that the elevation in combination with mechanical motion set the revolving architecture apart from normative architectural experience and transgressed into a cinematic elsewhere. Historically charged with symbolic and spiritual value the age-old aspiration for an elevated view reinforced its position parallel to ideas of movement and change in the years leading up to, and following WW1. As the 360-degree panorama paintings foreshadowed the transformation of the visual field of the city into a popular entertainment at the end of the 18th century, Eiffel set out to offer a stunning view from the tallest tower ever built at the end of the 19th century. As Mark Dorrian has shown, the Eiffel Tower produced the city of Paris below as a pictorial entity, cohesive, purified of toil and social upheaval. The planned height of Tatlin’s kinetic constructivist tower of 400 meters set out to challenge Eiffel’s construction. Following this, the symbolic ascendancy of the elevated view gain a new dominance in the early 20th century connected to vehicles of mechanical motion and technology of aviation and outer space voyage. This particular combination seems to offers a visual mode available for commodification in a capitalist system of spectacle, architecture, and tourist-driven economy.

In the wake of post-WWII economic progress, and the Cold War nuclear technology and space program, the revolving restaurant’s aeronautical experience of motion and overview seemed to be peeking into the bright land of tomorrow. The cinematic-architectural experience in the wake of cold-war strategies tell us something about the panoramic all-encompassing desire to control not only the world in its entirety but the universe at large. At the same time, the complex desires of overview and vertigo, power and dizziness, control and confusion these elevated perpetual motion machines exhibits can tell us something about our relationship to moving images historically and today. The way moving images seem to mirror our dreams and recreate themselves in our memories, and how they gain their power of presence has most recently been discussed in relation to the postindustrial information society that is controlling our brain. In what follows I will move on to discuss the noetic dimension of the relation between architecture and cinema, in which the revolving view can be articulated on a deeper sensorial level—a discussion situated in the perception of time.
3. CINÉMA TROUVÉ AND TIME

The revolving restaurant offers a pocket of temporality as an architectural response to the general cinefication of everyday life that increases in power from the 1950s.\textsuperscript{216} With the panoramic motion view, it is intended to satisfy a busy tourist agenda by mediating its own locale in a cinematic fashion. It was no longer sufficient for the most modern of high towers and buildings to offer the view in itself, motion was needed in order to articulate the effective quality of contemporary information space. I have previously written on the cinematic nature of the revolving view experience by aligning it with the genealogy of proto-cinematic devices and new systems of mechanical transportation. In this chapter I will be moving further along the line of cine-thinking in an attempt to account for some of the experiential complexities inherent in this cine-architectural experience. With its spectacular panoramic motion view, the revolving restaurant can easily be framed between Focault’s concepts of biopolitics and Deleuze thoughts concerning societies of control.\textsuperscript{217} However, as I will draw attention to in this chapter, another subtle “strangeness” reveals itself as a potential escape within this cine-revolving spectacle.

Tracing the route of discussion back to earlier chapters, I will start out with a short reflection on Walter Benjamin’s account of the \textit{flâneur} and the tourist as two modes of diametrically different operandi. The multifaceted and contradictory writings of Benjamin seem to reflect the key complexities of cinematic experience and the polymorphous aspects of overview and dizziness, information and sensation, power and escape that I have written on in earlier chapters. I will follow these contradictions into Deleuze’s account on modern cinema and anti-fascist thinking. Deleuze singles out a \textit{dispositif} in postwar cinema, where moving away from predefined forms opens up new and unimagined relations between images and thought. As D. N. Rodowick points out, Deleuze’s implicit (and powerful) theme is how our culture has become a predominantly audiovisual culture, which, however, is not developing in a good direction. Especially not in regards to the way this culture gets increasingly televsual and turns into a control market through the flow of information.\textsuperscript{218} Are we then trapped in a mediated space or is it possible to “think difference in and of the image itself”? Although Deleuze’s ontology and Benjamin’s dialectics are very different from each other, they both

\textsuperscript{216} Pavle Levi, Cinema by Other Means, 77.
seem to agree, within their respective modes of thought, that there is a strand of hope.

Coinciding historically with the time-shift in cinema arrives a tower with a democratic view. Conceived and produced as a commercial enterprise, the revolving restaurant was intended as a sensory-motor experience of “information space,” providing every customer with an equally magnificent view—a gliding overview of a specific location. However, after continuously having to slow down the speed to a minimum of detectible motion, the sensori-motor-schema was unintentionally broken.219 The experience in the revolving restaurant is thus ending up producing less a futuristic sense of speed than a strange and peculiar sensation of a split-up being. My questions in this chapter are therefore the following; can the revolving restaurant be seen as an architectural dispositif that is comparable to what Deleuze proposes in the modern cinema? And in what way may Benjamin’s concept of the flâneur be seen to articulate and activate this particular situation? Will the cinéma trouvé of the revolving restaurant tell us something about our relation to the moving image and its potential power? As we shall see, although predominantly planned as architecture of entertainment, the revolving restaurant experience also turned into a strange mediatic dispositif, where the cinematic connection is produced on a transitory intellectual level revealing the way we are in time as opposed to a spatial succession.

3.1. The Flâneur and the Tourist

As we have seen in earlier chapters, cinema and travel images are inextricably linked to the most destructive aspects of modern perception with its connection to war, colonial expansion and exploitation.220 As a tourist destination par excellence, the revolving restaurant could easily be seen as a manifestation of Debord’s dystopic claim that “everything that was directly lived has receded into a representation.”221 As Ina Blom sharply remarks, “this new image-world presents itself as a separate and autonomous pseudo-world, a sphere of isolated visual phantasmagoria that splits apart the essential unity of the life-world.”222 This pseudo-world artificially homogenizes and unifies society by laying claim on our “entire cognitive

219 Comment of an anonymous Space Needle visitor: “Dining at the Space Needle always amazes me with its views. I love that the rotation is so slow you don’t realize you’re moving.” 
and sensorial apparatus,” thereby also dominating and controlling society at large.\(^{223}\)

However, as Gunning detects in the early travel films, these images at the same time appear to “describe a line of escape and flight.”\(^{224}\) This liberating aspect is also articulated in the work of Walter Benjamin, in his well-known 1935/36 essay “The Work of Art in Age of Its Technical Reproducibility,” where he articulates the specifically modern “desire to bring things ‘closer’ spatially and humanly.”\(^{225}\) As I discussed earlier, for Heidegger, the knowledge of reality is obscured by its images and “this is a prelude to a lament for the loss of a focused understanding of the question of being.”\(^{226}\) For Benjamin, however, this pressing demand for modern closeness exercises a damaging force that simultaneously has the power to liberate by crushing older forms of authority and possession of the image.\(^{227}\)

Consequently, for Benjamin, understanding photography is central to any articulation of modernity. In the development of film production, Benjamin claims, “the apparatus has penetrated so deeply into reality that a pure…equipment-free aspect of reality has here become the height of artifice, and the vision of immediate reality the Blue Flower in the land of technology.”\(^{228}\) The practice of filmmaking in other words, has transformed reality into a “technological-sensorial event.” It is precisely this intimate relation that is at stake in the view form the revolving restaurant, I would argue, between the aesthetic temporal experience of the technical motion and the general cinefication of the everyday life.

According to Benjamin’s “Short History of Photography,” the rise and subsequent fall of photography has a possible third development. As Miriam Hansen points out, “To Benjamin, the Surrealists signaled the possibility of such a redemptive turn by their efforts to overcome the esoteric, isolating aspect of inspiration, to give the aauratic promise of happiness a public and secular meaning—to make it a ‘profane illumination.’”\(^{229}\) Or, as Adorno’s subsequent commentary makes clear, “the absurd is presented as if it were self-evident, in order to strip the self-evident of its power.”\(^{230}\) The possibility of experience in a disillusioned world necessitates a historical and epistemological alteration, a genuine “work of passage.”

\(^{223}\) Ibid, 370.

\(^{224}\) Gunning, ”’The Whole World within Reach’,” 39.

\(^{225}\) Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility.”

\(^{226}\) Martin Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture.”

\(^{227}\) Gunning, ”’The Whole World within Reach’,” 39.

\(^{228}\) Benjamin, ”’The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility.”


\(^{230}\) Theodor Adorno, Uber Walter Benjamin (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), 54, cited in Hansen, ”Benjamin, Cinema and Experience,” 194. Hansen also points out that ”it should also be remembered that Benjamin saw Surrealism as a practical critique of official Marxism, the tradition of ’metaphysical materialism’ which has consistently neglected the unconscious and libidinal side of human experience and failed ’to win the energies of intoxication for the revolution.’”
And perhaps even more so than the surrealist, Miriam Hansen points out, the figure of the flâneur embodies for Benjamin this transitory nature. Already in 1929 Benjamin writes “The Return of the Flâneur,” a review of Franz Hessel’s book *Spazieren in Berlin* [“On Foot in Berlin”]. Here, Benjamin envisions the flâneur (in this case Hessel) to be the exact opposite of the tourist “who seeks out the monuments and exotic attractions of foreign sites; rather, it is a purposeless purposeful drifting into the past which turns the city into a ‘mnemotechnic device.’” Entertained by flashes of memory and always on an indeterminate path leading “if not down the Mothers [of Goethe’s *Faust*], so into a past which is all the more fascinating since it evokes more than the author’s merely individual, private [...] childhood or youth, more even than the city’s own history.” The flâneur takes this “more” in the cues from the hidden details and the overlooked, the “scent of a particular threshold or the touch of a particular tile.” This is the optical unconscious, a repressed memory in visual form. With the promise of a tourist destination, the revolving restaurant, the youngest member of the observation tower family, offers a magnificent view. However, rather than simply checking off an item in the tourist agenda at the top of an outlook, the patron of the restaurant is invited to pass an hour or more at the dining table as the circle slowly returns. In the passing, the dinner and the interior situation take thought away from the tourist agenda, as does the continuous, hardly noticeable, almost immobile view. Offering much more of a flâneur-like experience, than that of the rush of a train travel, the slowly advancing motion sets up a condition where details and the overlooked once more trickle forward in a monotonous postcard scene. The temporal gap of progression proposes an alert of subtle un-eventfulness, a desire unfulfilled but lingering, propping open a space where thought can happen. The slow motion of the revolution continues, thereby ensuring mobility of thought. The redemptive transition proposed by the flâneur is thereby incidentally produced in the revolving restaurant’s cinéma trouvé. As we shall see, such a transition can also be interpreted as a Deleuzian time-image, that is, as a cinematic constellation of an image of thought.

232 Hansen, "Benjamin, Cinema and Experience,” 194.
3.2. Deleuze and the “Image of Thought”

In *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*, Deleuze introduces two semiotics of film, one for the indirect and one for the direct representation of time. In order to explain the way the world of images operates on our perception, Deleuze relies on Henry Bergson’s concept of the “sensory-motor-schema,” a narrative mechanism governed by a moral necessity to make reliable, common sense. The cinema before WW2, described in the *Movement-image*, generally works within this system of perception. The Cinema after WW2, the *Time-image*, however, often tends to mirror a breaking down of the rationale behind the movement-image, mainly as a result of the destructive-aggressive drive that revealed itself within scientific enlightenment. In the “interstice,” in the gap that opens up, thought experiences its own duration and the direct presentation of time “rises up to the surface of the screen.”

“For Deleuze, ‘the brain is the screen’ that emerges in the world of images.” The conventional understanding of the division between subject and object, between spectator and image, is understood by Deleuze to be our human prison. As Patricia Pisters explains, seen from the position of Bergson and Deleuze, where all images are situated on a plane of immanence, past, present and future are coexistent temporalities and can be ordered in a number of ways. In Deleuze’s film theory therefore, there is no difference between real and unreal (dream, fiction, memories). Rather, Deleuze distinguishes between virtual and actual, both images are real, but only the actual is in the physical present. Through the mobility of the camera and emancipation of the viewpoint we have come to live in a universe that is metacinematic. With this we now understand our past, present and future through a “camera consciousness” that infiltrates all aspects of our perception.

For Deleuze, cinema is of a particular interest to philosophy because “time has always put the notion of truth into crisis.” Rather than through “hermeneutics or metaphysics, truth is solely the creation of thought.” What the time-image shows us, John Rajchman explains, is time as a force, “how we are affected by time and ‘affect our selves through it’ at once.

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objectively and subjectively; it is the problem of time itself as this uncontrollable potential in
who we are or may become.” Deleuze’s overall project is an attempt to break out of the
rigid “image of thought” that has dominated western philosophy: “The search for new means
of philosophical expression … must be pursued today in relation to the renewal of certain
other arts, such as the theatre or the cinema.” The conspiracy of technology and capitalism
is aggressively targeting our most private moments. As a resistance, Deleuze turns to artistic
sensation. Painting for instance, borrowing a concept from Tarkovsky, creates “blocks of lines
and colors,” the cinema, by contrast, invents “blocks of movement and time.” For Deleuze,
artists are thinkers, Gregory Flaxman explains, but rather than creating concepts, they make
“percepts and affects particular to a given medium” in which “philosophy can engage
conceptually.” For Deleuze, all art is movement in the sense that sensation moves thought.
But where the other arts demand a “making” of movement by the mind, the automatic
movement of the cinema elevates sensation to another level. Here, the image produces “a
shock to thought, communicating vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral
system directly… it converts into potential what was only possibility.” But the potential of
cinema remains a potential unless images of a very special kind moves thought to its own
limit. This is a difficult task indeed, as the industrial and economic circumstances make these
images “infinitely easier to prevent” Deleuze’s concept of the time-image is in this sense a
struggle to fight the informatization and standardization of thought developed in
postindustrial society. Bringing up Martin Heidegger’s text “What is called thinking” (Was
heißt denken, 1968), Deleuze claims that even though humanity may believe this is not the
case, we are in fact thinking less and less as the amount of information in our society is
steadily increasing. The only remedy is a new mobilization of thought, or, as Rajchman puts
it, “to define thought in relation to movement as auto-movement (spiritual automaton) that
forces thought to happen… Cinema is a way of having ideas with images that introduces a
new ‘psychomechanics,’ a new way of affecting us and our nervous systems.”

Deleuze bases his film philosophy partly on Henri Bergson, who famously denounced
film as representation of time. Henri Bergson’s process philosophy “proposed to treat all

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240 John Rajchman, “Deleuze’s Time, or How the Cinematic Changes our Idea of Art,” in Afterimages of Gilles
Deleuze’s Film Philosophy, (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press,) 288-289.
242 Deleuze, The Time-Image, 156.
243 Deleuze, The Movement-Image, XIV.
244 Rajchman, “Deleuze’s Time,” 284.
245 Rodowick, Time Machine, 122.
things—that is, each entity in the world of matter—as “image” or aggregate of images. “It is a mistake to reduce matter to the perception we have of it,” Bergson wrote in *Matter and Memory* (1896), “but it is a mistake also to make of it a thing able to produce in us perceptions, but in itself of another nature than they”; as a consequence, we should treat matter—including that collection of matter that makes up a human being—as “an aggregate of ‘images’.”

For Bergson, cinema echoes one of the oldest philosophical errors, namely the conception of time as fixed, divisible abstraction. In 1907, in *Creative Evolution*, Bergson compares film’s illusion of motion to Zeno’s paradoxes, denouncing both for the reconstruction of motion from static instants. As he attempted to demonstrate, a real movement is not made up from a stationary position, “The movement slips through the interval, because every attempt to reconstitute change out of states implies the absurd proposition, that movement is made of immobilities.”

The basic principle of Zeno’s paradox, Mary Ann Doane explains, was designed to demonstrate what he believed was an absurd concept of movement, change and plurality. One paradox attempts to prove that it is impossible to traverse a stadium because one will never reach its end. First one has to make the halfway mark, and before that the halfway mark, and before that the halfway mark of the halfway mark, and so on, in eternity. Bergson thought this was a good analogy to the multiple still frames of cinema that sought to represent movement and time. Movement he claimed, is qualitative rather than quantitative, its divisibility is unthinkable. It is in the interval in between states that movement takes place, not in the accumulative instants.

Bergson recognized that our ordinary every-day perception of time is of a cinematographic quality, but it became crucial for him to move beyond that cinematographic impulse in order to understand the true values of movement and time. The still photographs that constitute cinematographic motion has noting to do with real movement, their feature is static. The real movement necessary in order to produce movements is located in the film projector, a mechanical movement always the same, producing a general movement from the particular recorded by the camera.

As Paul Douglas has noted, the critique Bergson voiced for the camera, was part of his general critique of the intellect. The intellect according to Bergson was the agency of compensation for the vertigo of flux. By marking of the boundary of

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247 Releasing the image, 12.
250 Ibid., 175.
bodies, intellect creates a stable view which we call form. However, the body is constantly changing: “or rather, there is no form, since form is immobile and the reality is movement. What is real is the continual change of form: form is only a snapshot view of a transition. Therefore, here, again, our perception manages to solidify into discontinuous images the fluid continuity of the real.”252 In 1934, Bergson reinstates his view of cinema; it fails to capture essential reality. The cinematographic succession of images “adds nothing: on the contrary it takes something away; it marks a deficit; it reveals a weakness in our perception, which is forced by this weakness to divide up the film image by image instead of grasping it in the aggregate.”253 Again he blames it on the convention of Western metaphysics, in which the cinematographic method is reflected:

In short, time thus considered is no more than a space in idea where one imagines to be set out in line all past, present and future events, and in addition, something which prevents them from appearing in a single perception: the unrolling in duration would be this very incompletion, the addition of a negative quantity.254

As Paul Douglas remarks, Bergson maintained this view of cinema until his death in 1941, eighty-two years old, when cinema had advanced to dramatically better “illusion” of movement. He distinguished “between an evolution and an unfurling, between the radically new and a rearrangement of the pre-existing.”255 Film is not an evolution but an unfurling, a hiding screen that “glides over” reality below. It is livable but not without a cost. Bergson’s obvious critique of cinema did not prevent others from adopting his philosophy to film. By utilizing “terminological ambiguities,” Deleuze uses Bergson’s concepts in his two books on cinema by arguing that cinema had only reached its primitive state when Bergson published his attack.256

Keeping Bergson’s criticism in mind, Deleuze holds that film has movement immanent to the image similar to duration in two ways, both through the universal variation of matter and through the movement of thought in time. Building his concepts on Charles S. Pierce’s theory of signs, Deleuze emphasizes that mind and matter exist within the same dimension and is composed of the same material. “Just as we say that a body is in motion, and

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253 Ibid., 18, cited in Ibid., 213.
254 Ibid., 20.
255 Ibid., 20.
256 Deleuz, Cinema 1, 59, cited in Ibid, 220.
not that motion is in a body,” Pierce writes, “we ought to say that we are in thought, and not that thoughts are in us.” As D. N. Rodowick point out, Pierce’s semiotic theory is important for Deleuze in the way it restores the temporality of thought in relation to signs and the immanence of different materials of expression. The time-image presents time as force, e.g. in the way it subordinates movement as spatial succession. Rather than present thought, it forces us to think. By disjoining time from its image or “truthful” self-representation, time appears as a force that provokes thought. All cinema “brings to light and intelligible matter” which “consists of movement and processes of thought (prelinguistic images) and of points of view taken on these movements and processes (presignifying signs).” This intelligible matter is “a plastic mass, an a-signifying and a-syntactic matter, a non-linguistically formed matter, though it is not amorphous and is semiotically, aesthetically and pragmatically formed” As Ronald Borg remarks, “it becomes one kind of ‘signaletic matter’ when regulated by the sensori-motor schema, another when shaped by the paradoxical forces of time.” Hence, Deleuze does not share Bergson’s concern with the technical origin from which this “signaletic matter” gain its movement since time is not represented in this movement as such. Rather, he treats our perceptual meeting with the moving image as if movement is an intrinsic feature of the image. What interest Deleuze is the effect this “signaletic matter” can have on our perception of time based on our inability to perceptually deconstruct this material back into still frames.

In 1934, the art historian Elie Faure eagerly celebrated the moving image as capable of having a real impact on the mind. Cinema, he stated, creates an “intimate union of the material universe and the mental/spiritual universe” and this union produces “a shock in the mind,” which “directly unsettles the ‘intellectual automatism’” and thereby open up for new possibility of thought. The new patterns in which thought would come about derail the “intellectual automatism” of habitual mental processes. For Deleuze, this unsettling gives rise to a “spiritual automaton” a term he adopts from Spinoza, initially in

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258 This is in opposition to the linguistics-based semiology developed by Saussurre and utilized by Christian Metz in creating a language of cinema. “Understood as a fundamentally static universal logic, in which signs are reduced to universal “structure,” the system of linguistic signs ignores the different material of expression. A structuralist model does also not give an account for the relation between image and time.” D.N. Rodowick, 122.
259 Rodowick, Time machine, 122.
261 Ibid., 44; 29.
262 Ronald Bogue, Deluze on Cinema, 201.
order to explain “the involuntary nature of thought’s response to the moving image.” For Spinoza, the soul like the body obeys laws of cause and effect. When Deleuze turns to modern cinema and the time-image, a “spiritual automaton” is also like an alien thinker within. Bouge explains: “The thought aroused by the image is like…an other as remote from our ordinary human world as a wandering mummy or a robotic machine.” In classical cinema, the whole is conceived of as a generative force between images, the modern counterpart is the outside, “what Blanchot calls the force of ‘dispersion of the Outside’ or the ‘vertigo of spacing’: this void that is no longer a motor-part of the image.” In Modern cinema, therefore, “the whole becomes the power of the outside that passes into the interstice.” And this “passage of puissance or force of the outside into the interstice has a direct effect on thought….Logical thought breaks down and experience its own limits, its ‘unpower [impouvoir]’ or ‘impotence [impuissance],’” revealing that genuine thinking, referring to Heidegger, has not yet begun. As such, it is thought’s involuntary response to the moving image that is both our prison and our potential liberation.

3.3. The Revolving Restaurant as Architectural Dispositif

The new images created by postwar filmmakers problematized the coherence of time, space, and movement in ways that brought together new ways of thinking and new political issues. This Deleuze sees in opposition to the new televsual-digital regime, which, through their “presentifying” tendencies, produces images that “do not force us to think, or that keeps us from thinking.” As John Rajchman points out, “[t]o write about cinema…was to identify these images and to examine the larger ‘apparatuses’ or dispositifs through which cinema manages to pose them.” A dispositif, such as in the post WW2 cinema can also translate...
into other arts and disciplines, Rajchman argues. “Rather than a media specific form or a way of transmission of content, it is ways of disposing our senses in such a way as to enable thinking or to make ideas possible.”

The cinéma trouvé of the revolving restaurant propose similar problems of coherence of time, space, and movement as that of the modern cinema in purely architectural terms. When situated in a revolving restaurant the mind is captured, much like in film, between multiple experiential dimensions of time. The anticipation of the view coming around becomes the time passing but also alludes to the future of the view as well as a heightened sense of the past. Simultaneously, the very slowness of the motion itself creates an illusion of total immobility; the absence of close objects combined with the extremely slow speed confuses even the most attentive spectator. What eventually reveals itself as moving is something else than the expected traveling speed. Rather it is a “strange” and uncanny instability of the interior, an instability that manifests itself in the tables and chairs and the gradual separation of interior architectural elements. The view itself seems remarkably unchanged, however this only adds an additional layer of alienation. As Rajchman reminds us, it was the way filmmakers used disjointed images and sounds to bring up thought that played into Deleuze’s general concern about differentiating between thinking and communication.

The disconnection between inside and outside in the cinéma trouvé of the revolving restaurant, I will argue, works in this disjointed manner. Through the mechanical motion the interior of the restaurant seemingly exist in its own time, disconnected from the exterior view, thus “moving” in a double sense. When eventually gazing back out at the “immobile view,” the patron is at a different place in the panorama picture than previously encountered. The three types of movement, the interior, the exterior, and the mechanical, create a gap or interstice for “the outside” to enter in. In the shared forces of thinking, imagination and affect, the revolving restaurant becomes a strange architectural dispositif that quite unintentionally provide a subtle disconnection from anything stable. Having originally intended to only play the role of what Debord critiqued as reformating geographical location

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271 The visual distortion of Parallax is not at work here. The Paralax effect is the difference in the apparent position, of an object, caused by actual change (or difference) of position of the point of observation; Oxford English Dictionary (Second Edition ed.). 1989. This was also an effect skillfully recreated in the various installations of the nineteenth century moving panoramas.

272 Ibid., 301.

into travel destinations, the revolving restaurant’s uneventful circularity eventually also pertained to a different realm, one where thought is introduced through combined forces of mobility, immobility and subtle displacements. To linger with this view is to inscribe oneself in time and embrace the outside of thought. The structure poses a meal and seating thereby relegating the slowly advancing panorama to the realm of Benjamin’s “state of distraction.”

Intended as the symbol of national prosperity as well as a spectacular event, the revolving restaurant failed in offering the sensory participation of a constantly changing geography of information. The slowness to an almost stand still rather emptied out the image of the promised motion-effect and turned it into a chrono-abstraction of interior and exterior space.

Unlike cinéma trouvé in general then, which (as already mentioned) hinges on Schivelbusch’s definition of panoramic perception in relation to a knowledge of cinema as experience, the revolving restaurant produces a cinéma trouvé intellectually, through gaps that introduce thought beyond ordinary thought. The revolving restaurant view translates as primarily displaced and open ended in the anticipation of a not fulfilled physical sensation. Yet exactly this feature is what links it to art in an expanded cinema sense. According to Gene Youngblood, “[e]xpanded cinema isn’t a movie at all.” Similarly to life it is “a process of becoming, man’s ongoing historical drive to manifest his consciousness outside of his mind, in front of his eyes.”

As an architectural “expanded cinema” project that abandoned the celluloid film entirely, Anthony McCall’s Long Film for Ambient Light (1975) will serve as a good example here. McCall used three simple elements to define the site as a cinematic experience, in his own words:

These were, first, an altered space: a single electric light hung in the center of the room at eye level. The windows were covered with white paper, limiting them to being light sources during the day and reflective surfaces (‘screens’) during the night. Second, there was a time schema on the wall that identified the time period of the presentation but suggested its continuity outside the twenty-four hours; third, there was a two-page statement on the opposite wall, ‘Notes in Duration.” The notes criticized the hierarchical distinction that was routinely made between the so-called a-temporal arts such as painting and sculpture, and the time-based arts such as film.

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274 Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility.” Benjamin here famously argues that film and architecture are related in that hey both are received in a state of distraction. It is common to assume that Benjamin here alludes to cinemas early years, what Gunning has called the “cinema of attractions,” mentioned in chapter 2.


video, and dance. It maintained that everything that occurs, including the process of looking and thinking, occurs in time and that therefore, the distinction is absurd.277

Similarly to Long Film for Ambient Light, the mechanical movement through space in the revolving restaurant brings on a cine-related experience contrary to the concealed-in-the-dark body of the normative cinema. Like in McCall’s piece, the body in the revolving restaurant is participating in the cinematic through a double physical and intellectual presence. Through the mechanical movement through space in the revolving restaurant, we become conscious of the way we are “in time” in a similarly peculiar way to that of the cinema. The function of cinematic images and sites are to alert us to this aspect “in our lives and worlds.” As Rodowick reminds us, “[o]ne sense of force here is that which subordinates or disrupts movement as spatial succession.”278 Michael Snow’s many “automatic” camera movement explorations are also relevant to mention here. Perhaps most significantly the machine vision of La Région Centrale, shot in the Mountains of Quebec over a period of 24 hours in 1971. Seen in the context of the most intense period of the NASA space program, the 180min experimental film coincides on more than one occasion with the revolving restaurant phenomena. Snow uses a robotic arm of entirely preprogrammed movements that never moves exactly the same way twice. As Annette Michelson points out: In addition to conveying “most powerfully the euphoria of the weightless state…Snow’s film extends and intensifies the traditional concept of vision as the sense through which we know and master the universe.” Yet, as the machine vision presents its unfamiliar perspectives, “[t]he reconstitution is more mental than physical.”279 Similarly to the forces in Snow and McCall’s works, the being in and out of place in the revolving restaurant, the disjointed combination of mechanical movement, view and restaurant interior, and its seemingly unhinged purpose, introduces a dispositif in architectural terms that returns the “mechanisms of separation and unification” of control society into question.280 As such it can be seen as a leftover or ready-made architectural dilemma.

As Sven-Olov Wallenstein points out, “visual arts, architecture, advertising, and media in general can be seen as part of a larger process whereby our minds are ‘sculpted’ in

277 Anthony McCall, he also adds in a parenthesis: “Of course, the distinction was often made in order to put time-based art in its place, to make the claim that important aesthetic developments were always made—and always would be made—by painting and sculpture.” http://www.lightindustry.org/longfilm, accessed, 09.05.2013.
278 Rodowick, Gilles Deleuze’s Time Machine, 122.
280 Blom, ”Spectacle versus Cinematic Sociality,” 371.
order to attain new levels of action and reaction.” 281 This has posed the question whether the idea of resistance at all makes sense. One strand of architectural theory claim that architecture now “must move beyond the critical approach.” 282 Architectural projects should rather project life forms similarly to the way Rem Koolhaas’s Downtown Athletic Club works to produce “social life.” Rather than a critical text that must be understood and intellectually reflected upon, the Athletic Club aims to “seduce and instigate new events and behavior.” Yet, as Wallenstein remarks, it is difficult to see how such projective practice would resist a total recapitulation to the market forces. The task of an architecture of resistance in the society of control and noopower lies, according to Maurizio Lazzarato, in the invention of entirely new connections that resist re-appropriation—a task “that can never be completed.” 283 Hence, the emerging control of the noetic level requires a rethinking of the very idea of critical theory. As Wallenstein concludes, our horizon is constituted by a society of control that produces and generates multiple images of thought. “[T]o extract from them a transformative power of philosophy, art, and politics is a formidable task that we must not reject.” 284 The question remains if the revolving restaurant can produce such transformative powers? Being on the inside of the moving window-wall, time is experienced as “unsync” thereby revealing thought’s own duration. This arrangement of sensibilia as dispositif, as an apparatus that forces us to think, is the revolving restaurant’s cinéma trouvé. By being forced to altering its original operation through reports on user experience, an unintentional dilemma of this cinematic-architectural form transformed the “revolving view” from its intended sensori-motor function into a dispositif of noosensibility.

3.4. The Technology-ignited image: I Know Yet I See

Deleuze is trying to articulate the potential of the moving image, the way it inhabits a power and a force as signaletic material. It can produce new and fruitful relations between humans and the world or it can format our brains and lock us up in the society of control. The image-circuit of the spiritual automaton that has a potential for thought for Deluze, is also the nooshock leading to an outside for Benjamin:

282 Ibid, 57.
284 Ibid, 60.
Our taverns and our metropolitan streets, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories appeared to have us locked up hopelessly. Then came the film and burst this prison-world asunder in the dynamite of a tenth of a second, so that now, in the midst of far-flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go traveling.  

At once confronted with the unstable – the non-localizable, technological image, we are caught up in a power that can go both ways. As Ina Blom points out, cinema’s potential “for mental control, while no doubt considerable, cannot be separated from the open-ended or indeterminate moments that comes to the fore once mental life is also seen as an independent origin of politics and not just as a more or less passive abject of capture for the media apparatuses.” Based on knowledge of the cinema as a social site, the revolving restaurant turns into a cinematic apparatus that produces its signaletic material through new relation between movement and architecture, thought and distraction. As John Rajchman observes, “Indeed it is precisely this sort of “nonrelation” between what we see and what we say that shows why it is so misleading to think of cinema as language, rather than as a “signaletic material.” The moving image throws the instability measure around our existence as it brings truth into crisis. As Tom Gunning remarks, trying to foster an in-depth understanding of the images that we produce with the aid of sometimes very simple technologies, such as nineteenth century philosophical toys:  

We grasp the thaumatrope or other optical device firmly in our hands. We can operate it and understand its process. But the image it produces is not fixed in space, embodied in pigment or canvas; it occurs in our perception. Yet while it may be defined as a subjective image, taking place through our individual processes of perception, it is not a fantasy or, in a psychological sense, a hallucination. But its ontology wobbles and amazes us precisely because it plays with our vision, exposing its limits and possibilities.

What the thaumatrope specifically shows is that the actual movement in moving images is of less concern to us here; the thaumatrope produces a still image as a direct presentation of time. Writing on Bill Viola’s slow motion videos in the exhibit Passions at the Los Angeles Getty Museum, Giorgio Agamben accounts for the at once familiarity and strangeness [estraneazione] Viola’s exceptionally slow movies are producing. Confronted with these

286 Blom, “Spectacle versus Cinematic Sociality,” 382.  
images “[t]he spectator realizes with surprise that what caught his attention is not just the animation of images that he was used to considering immobile. It is, rather, a transformation that concerns the very nature of those images…one could say that they insert not the image in time but time in the images.” The “technological image” or signaletic material grows deep in our social memory, they are the potential for being other or for reinforcing the structure as is. It is a power that can close and format our thoughts but that also has potential to open up to an outside beyond thought. Finally, Éric Alliez points out,

The only thing to do is to invest the interval, or, more precisely, the interstice between two images of a ‘world which looks like a bad film.’ And it is here that everything overturns. For the constitution and the linkage of things now only objectively depend on the differential and the in-between-images, that make us believe in this world, in this image here, in the identity of thinking and life in relation to the new genetic value of a ‘so called irrational cut.’”

But believing in “this image here” means choosing to believe. For Deleuze, “[t]o choose is to exercise freedom, and to believe is to risk at every moment the freedom of choosing….to will the results of each throw of the dice as the outcome one desires.” To become flâneur, Benjamin argues, is to see this image here, while simultaneously imagining this same image to be infinitely more.

Like I mentioned in earlier chapters, the revolving restaurant sends us further back in history, to the origin of mass media, by way of calling up memories of the painted panorama and the historical quest for total immersion. Its rotating cinéma trouvé can be seen as a time machine on several interconnected levels; from the early origin of 19\textsuperscript{th} century optical toys, via aviators golden age following WW1, to the new scopic technologies of Cold War and Space Age. And eventually, for some, this particular optical device can also become a mediatic potential for thinking difference in and of the image itself. While I am moving toward a conclusion, I still consider this thesis to be just a beginning. I have structured the research around a series of examples and events that will serve as representative case studies for a continued stream of investigations. My approach has been to concentrate on the three main areas of View Aesthetics, Kinetic Architecture and Cinéma Trouvé and Time. The revolving restaurant, I have argued, does not only show us a history of mass media and the way we are severely entangled within a mediated world. With this preliminary presentation, I

291 Éric Alliez, ”Midday, midnight,” in The Brain is the Screen, 299.
292 Bogue, Deleuze on Cinema, 179.
hope to have inscribed the revolving restaurant as something other, as a possibility of thought from the outside that can liberate the ever so pressing “time that takes thought.” Finally Bergson warns us, we commonly place ourselves in a “spatialized time” without “listening to the uninterrupted humming of life’s depths.” Even tough “that is where real duration is.”

By entering a revolving restaurant, the tourist turned flâneur could not only be forced to significantly slow down, but potentially also be experiencing a powerful alteration of thought.

List of Revolving Restaurants

Albania
Sky Club Panoramic Bar & Restaurant, Sky Tower, Tirana

Argentina
Revolving restaurant at the top of Cerro Otto, San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina
Confiteria Giratoria, San Carlos de Bariloche

Australia
Alto Tower Restaurant, Black Mountain Tower, Canberra
C Restaurant, St Martins Tower, Perth, Western Australia
Four Winds Revolving Restaurant, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Surfers Paradise, Queensland
Hi Lights Revolving Restaurant, Blacktown Workers Club, Blacktown, New South Wales
Koala's View Revolving Restaurant, Perth, Western Australia
Point Revolving Restaurant, Wrest Point Hotel Casino, Sandy Bay, Tasmania
Skyway Restaurant, Katoomba Scenic World, Katoomba, New South Wales
Summit Restaurant, Australia Square, Sydney
Sydney Tower Restaurant, Sydney Tower, Sydney
Top of the World Revolving Restaurant, Atlantic Tower, Adelaide, South Australia

Austria
Donauturm, Vienna

Bangladesh
Top of the World Restaurant, Shaheed Zia Smriti Complex, Chandgaon Thana, Chittagong

Bolivia
Restaurante Giratorio Pari Urqu, Potosí
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Radon Plaza, Sarajevo
Brazil
Cuisine Du Ciel, Golden Tulip Internacional Foz, Foz do Iguaçu
Revolving Rooftop Restaurant, Taj Mahal Continental Hotel, Manaus

Bulgaria
Magnito Sky, Varna Towers, Varna

Canada
La Ronde, Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe, Edmonton
Sky 360 Restaurant, Calgary Tower, Calgary
View of the Top of Vancouver Revolving Restaurant, Harbour Centre, Vancouver
Cloud 9 Revolving Restaurant & Lounge, Empire Landmark Hotel, Vancouver

Top of Vancouver Revolving Restaurant, Harbour Centre, Vancouver
Royal Crown Revolving Restaurant, Fort Garry Place, Winnipeg
360 Restaurant, CN Tower, Toronto
Skylon Tower, Niagara Falls
Summit, Ottawa Marriott Hotel, Ottawa
Toulà, Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto *
L'Astral, Loews Hotel le Concorde, Quebec City
Le Tour de Ville, Delta Centre-Ville, Montreal

Chile
Coco-Loco, Valparaiso
Giratorio, Santiago

China
Carousel Revolving Restaurant, Xiyuan Hotel, Beijing
Revolving Restaurant, China Central Television Tower, Beijing
Starlight Revolving Restaurant, Beijing International Hotel, Beijing *
Summit Club Restaurant and Lounge, Hotel Kunlun, Beijing Chengdu
Restaurant Grande, West Pearl Tower, Chengdu
Jiuchongtian (Cloud 9) Revolving Restaurant, Yu Du Hotel, Chongqing
Mingzhu Revolving Restaurant, Bohai Grand Hotel, Dalian
Revolving Restaurant, Bohai Pearl Hotel, Dalian
Revolving Restaurant, Dalian Radio and TV Tower, Dalian
Carousel Restaurant, Garden Hotel, Guangzhou
Revolving Restaurant, Aiqun Hotel, Guangzhou
Sky Cafe-Revolving Restaurant, Guangdong Asia International Hotel, Guangzhou Hangzhou
J Western Restaurant, Tianyuan Tower Hotel, Hangzhou
Restaurant Café and Bar, Friendship Hotel, Hangzhou
VIEW62, Hopewell Centre, Hong Kong
360° Café, Macau Tower, Macau
Rotunda Revolving Restaurant, Metro Park Hotel, Macau
Art 50, Hotel Novotel Shanghai Atlantis, Shanghai
Blue Heaven Revolving Restaurant, Jin Jiang Tower, Shanghai
Epicure on 45, Radisson Hotel Shanghai New World, Shanghai
Oriental Pearl Revolving Restaurant, Oriental Pearl Tower, Shanghai
Shenzhen Tiara, Shangri La Hotel, Shenzhen
Tianjin Revolving Restaurant, Tianjin Radio and Television Tower, Tianjin
Wenzhou Revolving Restaurant, Wenzhou International Hotel, Wenzhou
Wuhan Panorama Restaurant, Holiday Inn Wuhan-Riverside, Wuhan

Colombia
El Giratorio Restaurant, Hotel Dann Carlton, Barranquilla
Restaurante La Fragata Giratorio, World Trade Center, Bogotá
Tony Roma's, Hotel Dann Carlton, Medellín

Croatia
Vertigo bar, Hotel Antunović, Zagreb
Dominican Republic
Aroma De La Montana, Jarbarcoa, Due to Open January 1, 2012

Egypt
360-The Revolving Restaurant, Cairo Tower, Cairo
The Revolving Restaurant, Grand Hyatt Cairo

Estonia
Tallinn TV Tower

Finland
Puijo tower, Kuopio
Näsinneula tower, Tampere

France
Phare de la méditerranée, Palavas-les-Flots, Hérault

Germany
Water Tower Belvedere, Aachen
Telecafè, Berliner Fernsehturm, Berlin
Florianiturm, Dortmund
Rheinturm, Düsseldorf
Henninger Turm, Frankfurt am Main *
Heinrich-Hertz-Turm, Hamburg *
Fernmeldeturm, Mannheim
Olympiaturm, Munich
Fernmeldeturm, Nürnberg *

Greece
OTE Tower, Thessaloniki

Iceland
Perlan, Reykjavík

India
Patang Hotel
Carnival Heights, Chennai
Chicago Revolving Restaurant, Ernakulam
Falak, Hotel K.C Residency, Jammu city
Kandeel, Tex Palazzo Hotel, Surat
Om Revolving Restaurant, Jaipur
Parikrama, New Delhi
Kashish Restaurant, Sirsa District
Patang Hotel, Ahmedabad
The Pearl of the Orient, Ambassador Hotel, Mumbai
Pind Baluchi 18th Floor, Biscomaun Tower, Patna, Bihar
Revolving Restaurant, Hotel Howard International, Mussoorie
Patel Revolving Restaurant, Siwan District
Indonesia
The Empire Grill, Menara Imperium, Jakarta
Panyawangan Restaurant, Hotel Panghegar, Bandung

Iran
Revolving Restaurant, Grand Hotel Shiraz
Abadgaran Hotel, Mashhad
Aseman Hotel, Isfahan
Bolour Tower, Tabriz
Borj-e Sefid (the White Tower), Tehran
Cheshm andaz tower, Ramsar, Mazandaran
El Goli Hotel, Tabriz
Enghelab Hotel, Tehran
Eram Grand Hotel, Kish Island
Mahestan Shopping center, Karaj
Milad Tower (Borj-e Milad), Tehran
Moali Abad, Shiraz
Mosala, Isfahan
Narmafzar Tower, Emperor Restaurant, Ahwaz
Narnjestan Hotel, Noor
Saeedi Center, Qom
Yademen Tower, Gorgan

Iraq
Grand Millenium Hotel, Sulaimani

Japan
Fukunoseki restaurant, Shimonoseki
Ginza Sky Lounge in Yūrakuchō, Tokyo
Hanagasa Revolving Sky Restaurant, Okinawa Miyako Hotel, Naha, Okinawa
Hotel New Tsukamoto, Chiba
Le Train Blue Restaurant on top of Hiroshima Kokusai Hotel, Hiroshima
Restaurant Rondo, Century Royal Hotel, Sapporo
THE Sky, Hotel New Otani, Tokyo
Top of Kyoto, Rihga Royal Hotel, Kyoto

Kenya
Kenyatta International Conference Centre, Nairobi *

Korea (North)
Hyangsan Hotel, Myohyang-san
Koryo Hotel, Pyongyang
Ryugyong Hotel, Pyongyang
Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang

Korea (South)
N Seoul Tower
Kuwait
Kuwait Towers, Kuwait City
Liberation Tower, Kuwait City

Libya
Al Mat'am al-Hawar Burj al-Fateh, Tripoli

Lithuania
Paukščių takas, Vilnius TV Tower, Vilnius

Malaysia
@mosphere, Kota Kinabalu
Bayview Hotel, George Town, Penang
Bintang Restaurant, The Federal Kuala Lumpur
Menara Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Lumpur
Menara Alor Setar, Alor Setar

Mexico
Bellini Restaurante, World Trade Center Mexico City

Nepal
Revolving Restaurant, Ratna Plaza, Dharmapath, Kathmandu
Revolving Restaurant, Airport Hotel, Sinamangal, Kathmandu

The Netherlands
De Koperen Hoogte, De Lichtmis, near Zwolle
Euromast, Rotterdam *

New Zealand
Orbit, Sky Tower, Auckland

Norway
Egon Tårnet, Tyholttårnet, Trondheim

Pakistan
Port Tower Complex, Karachi
The Revolving Restaurant, Karachi, Pakistan

Portugal
Vasco da Gama Tower, Lisbon

Qatar
Aspire Tower, Doha

Russia
Seventh Heaven, Ostankino Tower, Moscow *

Saudi Arabia
Al Faisaliyah Center
Serbia
Genex Tower, Belgrade *

Singapore
Prima Tower Revolving Restaurant
Meritus Mandarin Singapore *
Prima Tower Revolving Restaurant, Prima Tower

Slovakia
VEŽA, Kamzik TV Tower, Bratislava

Spain
Panoramic 360, Forum Building Granada

Switzerland
Le Kuklos, Leysin
The Piz Gloria, Schilthorn
Hoher Kasten
Le Kuklos, Leysin
Mittelallalin, Saas-Fee
Piz Gloria, Mürren
Stanserhorn

South Africa
Revolving Restaurant, CR Swart Building, Bloemfontein
Roma Revolving Restaurant, Durban
Top of the Ritz Restaurant, Cape Town

Syria
Cham Palace Hotel, Damascus

Taiwan
Star Tower Restaurant, Taipei
UFO Revolving Restaurant, Taichung

Tanzania
Akemi Restaurant, Golden Jubilee PSPF Towers, Dar es Salaam

Thailand
Club Lounge, Grand China Princess Hotel, Bangkok
Pattaya Park Beach hotel, Pattaya

Trinidad and Tobago
360 Degrees, Crown Plaza Hotel, Port of Spain

Turkey
Atakule Tower, Ankara
Endem TV Tower, Istanbul
Uganda
7 Hills Revolving Restaurant, Golf Course Hotel, Kampala

Uruguay
La Vista, in Punta del Este

United Arab Emirates
Al Fanar, Le Royal Meridien, Abu Dhabi
Al Dawaar, Hyatt Regency, Dubai

United Kingdom
BT Tower *
Lakeview Restaurant, Center Parcs Elveden Forest
St. John's Beacon *

United States

Alabama
The Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa, Florence

Arizona
Compass Restaurant, Hyatt Regency Phoenix, Phoenix

California
BonaVista Lounge, Westin Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles
Revolving Restaurant, Renaissance Hotel Hollywood, Los Angeles *
Revolving Restaurant, Sheraton Hotel, Macy's Plaza, Los Angeles *
Revolving Restaurant, Theme Building, Los Angeles *
Equinox, Hyatt Regency, San Francisco *
Top of the Harbor Restaurant, Crowne Plaza, Ventura *

Connecticut
Vuli Restaurant, Stamford *

Florida
Garden Grill, Epcot, Walt Disney World Resort, Lake Buena Vista
Grand Plaza Hotel & Resort, Spinners overlooking the Gulf of Mexico, St. Pete Beach
Holiday Inn, Destin *
The Alamo at Holiday Inn Lakewood Ranch, in Lakewood Ranch, Florida
Hyatt Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale, Pier Top Restaurant
Revolving Restaurant, JEA Tower Jacksonville *
The View at CK's, Marriott Tampa Airport, Tampa *

Georgia
Polaris, Hyatt Regency Atlanta, Atlanta *
Sun Dial, Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel, Atlanta

Hawaii
La Ronde Restaurant, Ala Moana Building, Honolulu *
Top of Waikiki, Honolulu
Illinois
The Pinnacle Revolving Restaurant, W Hotel Chicago *
Ventana's, Rosemont *

Indiana
Eagle's Nest, Hyatt Regency Indianapolis, Indianapolis

Iowa
Top of the Tower Ballroom, Holiday Inn Downtown, Des Moines

Kentucky
360 Restaurant, Radisson Hotel Cincinnati Waterfront, Covington
Galt House, Louisville
Spire, Hyatt Regency Louisville, Louisville *

Louisiana
Club 360, World Trade Center New Orleans *
Top of the Dome, Hyatt Regency New Orleans, Poydras, New Orleans *

Maryland
Circle One, Baltimore *

Massachusetts
Spinnakers, Hyatt Regency Cambridge *

Michigan
Coach Insignia, Renaissance Center, Detroit *
Rondeview, Holiday Inn, Southfield *

Minnesota
Carousel Restaurant, St. Paul *
Revolving Restaurant, Wells Fargo Tower, Bloomington *
JJ Astor, Radisson Hotel Duluth Harborview, Duluth

Missouri
Skies Restaurant & Lounge, Hyatt Regency Crown Center, Kansas City *
Top of the Riverfront, Millennium Hotel, St. Louis

Nevada
Top of the World, Stratosphere, Las Vegas

New York
Changing Scene, First Federal Plaza, Rochester *
The View, New York Marriott Marquis Times Square, New York City

Ohio
Ventana's, Millennium Hotel, Cincinnati *
Oklahoma
Nikz at the Top, United Founders Tower, Oklahoma City *

Pennsylvania
Revolving Restaurant, Crowne Plaza Hotel Harrisburg *

South Carolina
Top of Carolina, University of South Carolina, Columbia

Tennessee
Polaris, Sheraton, Nashville *
Revolving Restaurant, White Station Tower, Memphis *
SunSphere, Knoxville *
Top of the 100, 100 North Main Building, Memphis *

Texas
Antares, Reunion Tower, Dallas
Marriott Hotel, George Bush Intercontinental Airport, Houston
Spindletop, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Houston
Tower of the Americas, San Antonio

Virginia
Skydome Lounge, Doubletree Hotel Crystal City, Arlington

Washington
Revolving Restaurant, Holiday Inn, Seattle *
SkyCity, Space Needle, Seattle

Wisconsin
Polaris Restaurant, Hyatt Regency, Milwaukee *

Uzbekistan
"Koinot", Tashkent Tower, Tashkent

Venezuela
Hotel Pipo Internacional, Maracay

Vietnam
Dan Chu Hotel, Hanoi
Images

Fig. 1. Norman Bel Geddes’s model of the Aërial Restaurant, photograph by Maurice Goldberg, ca. 1930. Image courtesy of the Edith Lutyens and Norman Bel Geddes Foundation / Harry Ransom Center.

Fig. 2. Century 21 Exposition (Seattle, Washington), design for the Space Needle, cross section of restaurant. Architectural drawing by Seymour, acrylic or gouache on board, 1962, 68 × 64 cm. Courtesy of University of Washington Libraries. Special Collections Division.

Fig. 3. Robert Mitchell. Cross section of Robert Barker’s two-level panorama at Leicester Square (c. 1793). Colored aquatint. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 4. Unknown Artist. The Geometrical Ascent to the Galleries in the Colosseum, Regent’s Park, London, 1823 (1926). Aquatint. Courtesy of Peter Jackson Collection, London.

Fig. 5. Florianturm, Dortmund, (1959). Black-and-white postcard.

Fig. 6. Futurama Exhibit by Norman Bel Geddes, New York World’s Fair 1939.

Fig. 7. Illustration of the Cinéorama balloon simulation at the 1900 Paris Exposition. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 8. Front of Sputnik One QSL, 1957.

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