Material Environments: Sensing Time And Matter In Digital And Visual Culture

***Swamps and stages: affective immersion and strategic discontinuity in the films of Manuel de Landa and Ryan Trecartin***

Dr Bridget Crone, Department of Visual Cultures

Goldsmiths, The University of London

This paper considers the use of discontinuity in the films that the philosopher Manuel De Landa produced during the 1970s and early 80s, alongside the more recent work of artist Ryan Trecartin. In particular, I will examine the way in which the editing techniques exploited by De Landa and Trecartin, and the built structures or viewing devices in Trecartin’s work (structures that he calls ‘sculptural theatres’) act to produce points of encounter. These points of encounter act to reorganise and resituate the viewer by providing a resistant pull against the immersive flow of images that is particular to neo liberalism.

Considering these works in relation to Gilles Deleuze’s writing on the crystal image of time and his sparse writing on experimental film, I will look at the temporality of the ‘point’ or ‘cut’ as a kind of flicker-time – a time that is organised through a fleeting and seemingly ungraspable moment of encounter with a pure image: light. While De Landa and Trecartin’s works are not flicker films as such, we find the presence of ‘flicker-time’ as a structure that is inherent in the work, and which acts against the smooth (and swampy) space of affective immersion by producing discrete and differentiated moments of experience – moments of being-*with* the image rather than being-*within* the image.