
For a cinematic mode of existence

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There is an interval between consuming and getting a feeling for the consumption. There is an interval between filming and getting a feeling for the film. There is an interval between experiencing a passion and getting a feeling for this passive affect, transforming it into an affirmative and joyful action.

Passionately, what if research did not try to speak of addiction but rather get a feeling for it? The interval would become affectively productive rather than remaining a lost opportunity.

Passionately, what if addiction was an affective process in which researchers could experience research as a differential in the interval? The research would not produce the consumption it tries to categorise but experience what addiction as a life force can do.

Passionately, what if research was a place where people recovering from addiction could experience addiction? The recovery from addiction would become a mode of existence rather than an illness to classify.

Passionately, a transduction process between addiction and film would enable “to feel the world, thinking with it, rather than simply speaking of it” (Manning, 2009, p215), through a cinematic mode of existence.

As a mode of existence, recovery from addiction becomes an intercessor of the filming and the writing. Through the operations of filming and writing, recovery from addiction cares to feel the world, to reach out affectively, to avoid the loss of the bond to what we joyfully become.

As an affective process, addiction enables the filming and the writing to not pretend that nothing happened, consumption being a condition of our survival in the world as we know it.

Addiction activates a line of flight towards worlds where the surplus-value of life (Massumi, 2018) makes life worth living. It invents the sociality of the people who are intercessing each other, the culture of techniques which transform consumption into a series of minor gestures.

The transduction of the nonverbal and corporeal into the time image

How to avoid the production of a moving image that mediates? What are the conditions for the emergence of the immediating image-making? How to transduce the embodied experience of the preacceleration of filming and the filming into a time image? An immediating time image operates with a series of transductions which is embodied in the nonverbal and corporeal experience of preparing the filming, the act of filming and watching the film. What we perceive as real life and filmic life become indiscernible, before, during and after the filming. The film becomes life and life becomes what I call a cinematic mode of existence. A cinematic mode of existence carries the potentiality of the filming without the film, as the recovery from addiction carries the potentiality of the experience of drug without the drug. The cinematic mode of existence carries a series of transductive movements to be activated by the act of filming without the film. The craving for the film destroys transduction while abstinence sustains the transduction until its activation. Abstinence enables the filmmaker to get a feeling for

life without the film, especially during the act of filming. To get a feeling for life without the film is to film every second without a camera. It activates a mode of attention where the filmmaker registers not only the moving image of the camera but also the time image, not with the specifics of the camera but with the relational qualities the camera enables. During the act of filming, getting a feeling for life without a film makes the camera not central but not pushed away either. The camera becomes an intercessor in the series of intercessors. Abstinence enables the preacceleration of fabulation and its falsifying quality for the transduction to take place. The nonverbal and corporeal experiences of the act of filming are transduced into the verbal and the more-than corporeal through the series of filmic events.

Petra¹ walked. Petra walks. Petra will walk. Petra is walking. Petra keeps walking. When Petra stops walking, she walks. We walk with Petra, watching her or after watching the film, reading these very words or remembering them. This is how Petra transduces her endurance in coping with addiction into an immediating time image. Petra shares how to get a feeling for the walking, how to get a feeling for addiction as an affective process. What was nonverbal becomes the articulation of a thought, what was a corporeal movement becomes a sensuous more-than corporeal perception. The camera not only registers, the camera becomes the intercessor of the transductive process. The camera registers the walking but transduces the walking into the rhythms of addiction. The walking, the rhythms of addiction and the moving image feel different but are indiscernible. The transduction develops the line of flight of the time image between what we perceive as the walking, addiction and the moving image.

Throughout the filming, I asked Petra and everyone else to walk slower. As in the exercises from the Cleaning the House workshop², it is paradoxical that controlling one specific minor quality diffracts on every other quality of a movement and activates the transduction. As in the recovery process from addiction and for the walking to transduce, the permanent modification of speed during and after the use of film requires to actively slow down what we perceive as outer filmic movements in order to get closer to inner filmic rhythms. By walking slower, the transduction operates in ideal conditions to distribute the intensities of the filmic event. The walking becomes a cinematic walking, which is indiscernible from the slow walking from the Cleaning the House workshop and from the fast walking habits of Petra. It carries the intensities of

the “what was” walked and the “not yet” walked. Their forms remain different but their shapes become indiscernible, The cinematic walking cares for the emergence of the verbal from the nonverbal and of the more-than corporeal from the corporeal. The cinematic walking is the derivate of the filmic event. It becomes a necessity for the film to live and for life to produce its surplus-value.

Using the powers of the false as a tool in practice-led research

Gilles Deleuze did not only develop a philosophical framework but more importantly a lifelong research project that was and still is disruptive of disciplinary areas. With Guattari, Deleuze wrote *Anti-Oedipus* (1983) followed by *Thousand Plateaux* (1987). Later, Gilles Deleuze wrote *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (1986) and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1989), two books on cinema specifically that are drawn from *Anti-Oedipus* and *Thousand Plateaux*. These books induce the idea that making art and producing knowledge widely share similar processes while using different techniques and instruments. There is a liminal space where the shared techniques of intercessing and fabulating are indiscernible from the processes of making art and producing knowledge. The films become intercessors of the philosophical concepts, allowing a dialogue about how to foster circumstances of creative knowledge production. Manning and Massumi (2014, 2016) have further developed this purpose and have concretised a collective practice of research creation called immediation at the SenseLab, in which I regularly participate. With a similar intent, this research is discussing, eliciting and assembling the sensory and affective conditions for research-creation, but through a practice-led approach in collaborative filmmaking practice with someone recovering from addiction, solely focusing on the recovery process.

By combining the sensorial aspect of film with the internal rigour of its processual conceptualisation, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* are thoughts-in-motion. During the practice of filmmaking, thoughts-in-motion requires to direct the attention towards the affects. *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* is about the transformative power of affectivity, which I correlate with the nonverbal, the more-than corporeal and the minor gesture (Manning 2016) for the research. It is the point of departure of filmmaking and inherently interrelates with the processual conceptualisation and the verbalising process. The nonverbal dimension of image-

making not only produces knowledge self-sufficiently, on its own and by its own means, but also does it in a singular, useful, stimulating and complementary way to the one in the written form. In *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, notions such as transcendence, transcendental and immanence are at play in the background:

A description which assumes the independence of its object will be called 'organic', it is not a matter of knowing if the object is really independent, it is not a matter of knowing if these are exteriors or scenery. What counts is that, whether they are scenery or exteriors, the setting described is presented as independent from the description which the camera gives of it and stands for a supposedly pre-existing reality. In contrast, what we call a crystalline description stands for its object, replaces it, both creates and erases it – as Robbe-Gillet puts it – and constantly gives way to other descriptions which contradict, displace, or modify the preceding ones. (Deleuze 1989: 126).

The powers of the false operate with the transcendent rigidity of the organic mode of existence and the immanent softness of the crystalline regime to experience the immanent quality of the transcendental. Although both organic and crystalline descriptions are deeply entangled, the concepts afford to experience filmmaking more immanently, where contradictions, displacements and modifications are in the middle of the practice. That is why the powers of the false is an intercessor of a practice oriented towards its potentiality by creating a space between the organic and crystalline descriptions. Deleuze further states that organic and crystalline regimes deal differently with the real and the imaginary as well as with the actual and the virtual and define them as follows:

In an organic description, the real that is assumed is recognisable by its continuity – even if it is interrupted – by the continuity shots which establish it and by the laws which determines successions, simultaneities and permanencies: it is a regime of localisable relations, actual linkages, legal, causal and logical connections. It is clear that this system includes the unreal, the recollection, the dream and the imaginary but as contrast. [...] The crystalline regime is completely different: the actual is cut off from its motor linkages, or the real from its legal connections, and the virtual, for its part, detaches itself from

actualisations, starts to be valid for itself. The two modes of existence are now combined in a circuit where the real and the imaginary, the actual and the virtual, chase after each other, exchange their roles and come indiscernible. Deleuze 1989: 126-127

The indiscernibility provoked by the combination of the two modes of existence is a key aspect of the powers of the false. If this immanent way of approaching filmmaking seems binary at first sight, it is the exact contrary. By acknowledging the presence of two modes, Deleuze is in search of their interactions, variations, extensions and transformations. As a practice-led research tool, the powers of the false paradoxically strengthen and structure the way I practice film while offering an infinite space made of multiplicities and variations between the real and the imaginary with the emergence of the crystalline regime, “affected by repetitions, permutations and transformations” (Deleuze 1989: 137). The crystalline regime is the playfulness of a script that is not written yet, of a moving image that does not know its direction yet and of the character who becomes another. But the crystalline regime also knows how to activate the fragments of a script that was fabulating already, of a time image that captured the force of life, of a character who shared his mode of existence. As a filmmaker, the powers of the false allow me to articulate the dialogue between my own need of coherently shaping the unfolding of the protagonist and the impossibility to convey fully the affects related to her experience.

While the powers of the false is complementary to the crystalline regime, there are no aesthetic or narrative goals such as in a transcendent approach but rather an immanent process that experiences what Manning (2016) calls the minor gesture: “The minor gesture’s indeterminacy, and even its failure to thrive, is what interests me here. For there is no question, it seems to me, that we put too much credence in that which persists, in the edifices rebuilt daily by technocrats. There must be other ways of living?” (Manning 2016: 2). The minor gesture leaks out on all sides from life and is a condition for life to sustain. The minor gesture is playful and points towards the other game, the new game, the less favourite game, the more-than game. The minor gesture enables the act of creation and triggers its machinic assemblage, without asking and without claiming recognition for the work it has done. This is why the minor gesture always operates in the periphery, without asking for attention and permission. If the

minor gesture tends to remain precarious or ignored, it is because the minor gesture is not a function of everything else. Paradoxically, the minor gesture is operative. It is what shifts everything else and requires an effortless mode of attention to catch its shape and to become playful, creative and alive with and through it.

For the research, it means focusing on what leaks out on all sides of the patient's narrative, which is carried by the protagonist since her recovery. It makes it possible to look for subtler moments of life and progressively give them enough place to become a movement and fabulation of their own. As an affective process, addiction becomes the intercessor of the filming and the writing for the research. Addiction creates an urgency to look for the more-than research, what makes research liveable and life bearable. It looks for a cut in the "what was" of the research that activates a passage towards what the research can do for experiencing addiction as a force of life.

Fabulation is a key concept drawn from the crystalline regime (Deleuze, 1989, p126-155). The concept is set in a broader philosophical discussion about the question of truth: "We have not mentioned the author who is essential in this regard: it is Nietzsche, who, under the name of "will to power", substitutes the power of the false for the form of the true, and resolves the crisis of truth, wanting to settle it once and for all, but, in opposition to Leibniz, in favour of the false and its artistic, creative power..." (Deleuze 1989: 131). But it also relates to the influence Henri Bergson had on Gilles Deleuze (Deleuze 1989: 9-10), who constantly refers to him, comments and complements when researching the interrelation between image, movement and time. But Deleuze redefines fabulation, which goes beyond the narrative dynamics of myth-making. Addiction makes the temporality of the history of our own making nonlinear and nonchronological. It compresses time through its feeling for the urgency: life does not last, life is about to end, death is already activated. It uses the powers of the false to value life over death, most often unsuccessfully, especially when the intensity of relapsing washes away the hope of a brighter future that is not yet. But it fabulates the recovery process to get a feeling for the more-than death, which makes the film worth filming, the words worth writing and the research worth researching.

The use of the powers of the false as a research tool defines collaboration in a particular way, where fabulation (Deleuze 1989: 150) becomes its core function, and where it

activates shared affects and desires between the protagonist, the film team and the filmmaker. Fabulation as a technique also involves a light change in attitude due to a slightly altered mode of perception provoked by the act of collaborating, without ever having the guarantee of immediate filmic results. The altered mode of perception is mind wandering (Baird et al. 2012) and correlates with the nomadic quality of fabulation. It activates a multiplicity of unclassical forms of creative problem solving where “narration ceases to be truthful, that is, to claim to be true, and becomes fundamentally falsifying” (Deleuze 1989: 131). The falsifying process becomes a multiplicity of stories of their own as main filmic tension and resolves the crisis of truth of the nonlinear storytelling. By multiplying, it carries the same excess that addiction does. By multiplying, it subtracts the heavy structure of narration and the weight of unnecessary aesthetics. By multiplying, it fabulates an excess that does not exist yet and creates the conditions for addiction to be felt as a force of life.

One can define fabulation as the core function of all filmmaking, where a storytelling process engages with the relational field for the affects to be activated. Anybody is able to fabulate in any filmmaking process. But fabulation is a nomadic potential that is not often explored and if explored, it does not mechanically happen. In order to share these affects, the filmmaker needs to falsify the experience of filmmaking. Sharing the affects is a technique of survival for the film to exist and for someone recovering from addiction to live. How to create a reasonable doubt which enables the drawing of a line of flight from addiction, from the seemingly endless repetition of compulsive behaviours? How to assemble sensory and affective circumstances for the collective creative production while raising some reasonable doubt about how the filmmaking is about to happen? Both questions differ immensely but become indiscernible once fabulation is activated. Fabulation enables to pass a threshold collectively, among the many possible ones. But it is one threshold in particular, which is activated by local sensory and affective circumstances during the time of the event. During the filming, the protagonist, the cinematographer, the sound engineer, the filmmaker or any other participant doubts but feels secure enough to allow themselves to act in a minor way. It results in their intercession and the invention of new lines of flight of a collective story of people that “are not yet” (Rodowick 1997). Besides, the viewer is able to grasp and take part in the fabulative process. The viewer also acts in a minor way too, invents new lines of flight and becomes an intercessor of the shared experience of affects. Bordeleau

et al. (2017) offer a multiplicity of accounts of what fabulative film works by Apichatpong Weerasethakul can do. Each of the authors is an intercessor of Apichatpong's filmic gesture and looks for the more-than film to be expressed with concepts, the surplus of filmic value that survives the moving image. They extend the concept of fabulation further to deal with hallucinatory or dreamlike perceptions which glimpse the virtual, although fabulation has been thought of in terms of a speech act or of a cinema of orality until today. In the same gesture, the research questions the relationship between fabulation and orality by experimenting with a series of minor speech acts throughout the film. The research asks what silence can do with fabulation. Deleuze explains the functioning of fabulation from the perspective of the viewer, who experiences the fabulative protagonist beyond classical schemes of reality or fiction since the film is not explanatory or causal anymore but becomes self-sufficient in itself. In this new affective film experience, the more the real character fabulates, the more real he feels to the viewer. With the powers of the false, Deleuze blurs the traditional categorisation between fiction, documentary and ethnographic films. Deleuze considers fabulation as one major machinic aspect of the collaborative filmmaking practice initiated by Jean Rouch and what Rouch refers in his own words as Shared Anthropology. The filmmaker enters a process of invention with the protagonist. The collaborative filmmaking practice is inherently fabulatory, as the recovery from addiction. It is more a matter of getting a feeling for the potentiality rather than owning creative skills, allowing oneself to start telling a story in a somewhat alternative manner, "just for today". For the film project, it activates a filmic freedom between the actual and the virtual of the story of the real characters. As initiated by Rouch, the camera opens a virtual space of invention, where the protagonist and the filmmaker can incorporate the imminent narrative potentiality in the filmic event. Manning develops upon the notion of fabulation:

Fabulation is about the event, the event of time: fabulation is not the telling of a narrative in the form of the 'what was' (the transcendent) but the expression of 'the act of legending.' This act creates not a truth but an opening onto the aberrant movement of time where the surface of the film itself begins to 'fiction,' to 'legend' or fabulate, where the character (the surface) begins to 'fabulate without ever being fictional' and where the filmmaker cannot but 'intercede

himself from the real characters who wholly replace his own fiction through their own fabulations'. (Manning 2012: 44)

In nonfiction filmmaking, fabulation can be seen as the productive machine of the filmmaking practice. It allows the protagonist to open the story towards its potentiality, the character who is "not yet", rather than exclusively towards its past, towards the character that "has been". It provokes performative processes with help of a storytelling technique made of imagination and speculation, towards a multiplicity of myth-making movements, without setting myth-making as a goal to reach. In the case of addiction, myth-making is the relapse to the drug, which makes myth-making movements a matter of life or death. While the myth-making movements are always risky, they are productive movements enabling the recovery. They invent the bearable life after medical care and carry the joyfulness of a minor mode of existence in its own right. Deleuze presents films by Rouch as central nonfiction examples of the powers of the false. Talking about *Jaguar* and *Cocorico Monsieur Poulet*, Deleuze makes the following analysis: "To restrict ourselves to these masterpieces, we notice in the first place that the character has ceased to be real or fictional, in so far as he has ceased to be seen objectively or subjectively: it is a character who goes over crossings and frontiers because he invents as a real character and becomes all the more real because he has been better at inventing" (Deleuze 1989: 151).

For the research, the concept of fabulation is valuable because it invites to get a feeling for silence and to operate with it. It underlines that the quality of filmic collaboration sets in motion a series of mutual immediating responses, not the filmmaker alone. To access them, the filmmaker operates a shift with silent qualities from directing to embracing and supporting a multiplicity of immediating pulses and rhythms. What we usually understand as subjectivity is a nonsensuous perception in the process and is "the relay that allows sensation to be felt as such" (Manning 2019: 154). It supports the emergence of a desire for a collective enquiry. Later in the process, nonsensuous perceptions emerge in the doing and feels slightly different. They have taken another desiring shape through the actualisation process and are already directed towards the collective with a different intensity. Gradually, silence operates to develop an untimely perception which blurs and transforms the nonsensuous into sensuous experience. The collaborative filmmaking practice cannot be exclusively conceptualised through the

quantitative lens of power relationships but can rather be experienced as the emergence of a desire to be felt collectively.

Fabulation operates a partial or total destruction of the current storytelling process that has been told and therefore resolves the crisis of truth one was confronted with, “in favour of the false and its artistic, creative power”. White (2017, p215-220) underlines the potential of destruction in art and science, which is an essential part of the fabulative technique. Fabulation is a subtle but subversive practice, where falsification may happen at every stage, at every moment in various dimensions. Only the minor quality of the cinematic gesture enables the emergence of fabulation. Its subtlety is equal to its subversiveness in the rhythms of its repetitions, permutations and transformations. Fabulation asks what the film can do, what the recovery from addiction can do. Fabulation asks what the potential of destruction can do when the consumption asks what destruction destroys. During the filmmaking practice, the editing is the most inherent and obvious example of the fabulative practice, which is the act of transforming a story that has been experienced into a story that is not told yet. This is why Manning refers to fabulation as “the event of time” (Manning 2012: 44).

If fabulation can be understood exclusively as a filmic concept, the SenseLab has reinvested it as collective research-creation events since 2004, where imaginative and speculative philosophical thinking is experienced as a creative practice in its own right, in relation to art and activism. In addition to contributing to the SenseLab, a partnership has been concluded with Digital Anthropologies, an event I curate every year in Paris, France and now Berlin, Germany. It shares the same intent with the SenseLab but from the perspective of artistic and ethnographic knowledge production: “what kinds of events can we craft that are capable of creating a living ecology that values forms of engagement that trouble the mode of self-presentation of the conference and the art exhibition, the two major ways in which we are taught to share our work?” (Manning, 2019: 79). The fabulative research practice is situated and embedded in the participation and partnership with the SenseLab.

Notes

¹ Petra is the protagonist of my film *Nur für heute* (in English: Just for today), 2019, approximately 89 minutes. Petra is a recovering heroin addict who recounts the life

after treatment. The film offers audiences a rare opportunity to follow her as she confronts both her memories and her self-image. After the last steps of a successful therapy until death, what does it mean to still identify oneself as an addict while not actively using drugs? Living in Berlin, Germany, Petra has to use her imagination and invent herself anew to stay away from addiction. In this film, she progressively uses the filmic process to explore these transformations. Her journey unveils what it feels like to go through the never-ending recovery process from addiction.

² Founded by Marina Abramovic, the Cleaning the House workshop is part of the Abramovic method, a set of exercises used to prepare long durational performance (Marina Abramovic Institute, 2018). It comprises exercises such as “Counting the Rice”, where the participants are asked to separate lentils from rice and count each grain during up to 8 hours. Each day of filming started with the practice of elements from the Cleaning the House workshop, which have been adapted to the scope and the nature of the film practice.

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