
Immersion Grade: Tegan Moore, Ryota Sato

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The Destratification of the Screen

I was one of the insatiabables. The ones you'd always find sitting closest to the screen. Why do we sit so close? Maybe it was because we wanted to receive the images first. When they were still new, still fresh. Before they cleared the hurdles of the rows behind us. Before they'd been relayed back from row to row, spectator to spectator; until worn out, secondhand, the size of a postage stamp, it returned to the projectionist's cabin. Maybe, too, the screen was really a screen. It screened us... from the world.

(The Dreamers, 2003)

I'm hesitant to think that this exhibition is about the critique of cinema as a medium, nor speaking on its purity (or lack there-of) in some twisted form. If I had it my way I would prefer not to. Perhaps it speaks more as a reminder that Cinema represents a heterotopic space designed for the possibility to experience a subversion of our own mediated world(s) in ways that may not necessarily be limited to the two dimensional screen.

We look at the Cinema as a place of refuge – a place of leisure – a gentle reminder that there is another world beyond our own, counterintuitively situated in an artificially air-conditioned room shielded from our default state to momentarily protect us from everyday obligations of finance, labour and society at large.

In consideration of these characteristics pertaining to climatic chambers and air-circulated environments, the act of stepping into a climate-controlled space that is the Cinema relinquishes us from our own history for a brief instance, so that we bear the opportunity to witness alternate histories and alternate futures based on unreality. This unreality projects a politicized narrative of our own history, and, for better or for worse, accelerates our own ideological inquiries in the name of trial and error in a simulated environment.

Far from this dramatization of what cinema *could* represent, this exhibition, *Immersion Grade* tries to make a simpler inquiry: an attempt to slow down the simple act of looking through the recontextualization of cinema space.

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How *Immersion Grade* might diffuse or “decelerate” our ability to look at an image brings us to Moore and Sato’s works which in their own methods conjures up “interruptions” to bring the two dimensional image to function as media-based sculptures.

This constant tug between three and two dimensional qualities takes on certain transgressions in the different modes of presentation of the image. One of Sato’s pieces is comprised of a plastic vessel coated with a hydrographics imaging print. The print is of a digitally rendered face presented in a flattened and distorted version of itself, resembling a skinned head without a skull. In addition, a collaborative gesture in this piece involves the use of Moore’s installation of “air movers”, quiet yet powerful industrial fans placed to create ripples in Sato’s light-refracted water vessel.

The video works instill a kind of delayed input in ways that slow down the visual information that the audience can experience. Tegan Moore presents a work resembling a mesh surface situated on the floor. The projection is roughly the same dimension as the mesh and projects directly from above onto the work. The mesh catches most of the projection, and some bleed through the cracks creating a false moire pattern that changes based on the position of the viewer with the slight difference in the angles of the mesh.

Moore’s mesh work functions to fragment the uniform viewing experience. A point of inspiration for this subject on the “speed of the image” is a quote from Bernardo Bertolucci’s *The Dreamers* (2003), one of the characters, Matthew, speaks on his desire to absorb the content of the screen before anyone else, before they “cleared the hurdles of the rows behind us. Before they'd been relayed back from row to row, spectator to spectator; until worn out,”

Through this introduction of the third variable - that of the body’s own physical movement, loosely brings cinema to a state of “2.5D”, a far less efficient method to receiving visual information puts more weight on the individual’s own bodily pace to extract visual cues from its own subjective angles – an experience of cinema as a body-based “slow motion” means to achieve a more conscious absorption of content and/or substance entering our field of view.

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