Speculations on Transpositional Photography

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Can we understand photography as transposition? Such a reading seems to be at odds with the major narratives of photo theory. Despite all differences over the question of how photographic images (either still or moving) obtain meanings, there is a basic consensus that an image as such is something different from the specific thing or situation it apparently has a connection to. The main issue of any photo theory, then, is how to define the translation between these two poles of subject and image. The answers range from a direct, indexical relation to no relation at all. Even normative aesthetics of realism that call for closing the gap between subject and image in their first step accept the divide as a problem they promise to solve.[1]

The notion of transpositional photography, on the other hand, implies that no ontological transformation occurs, or at least that any kind of transformation is less relevant than the change of position or environment that the term transposition suggests. Thus, to understand photography as transposition means that there are not two states but two positions for the same thing. In the course of the photographic process this thing would not change in regard of what it is but of where it is and what surrounds it. So can we replace the ontological question of photography with a topological one? If we dismiss subject and image as the two states that theories of photography under a semiotic paradigm postulate, we have to ask how one can conceive of an identity across very different manifestations.

Turning from translation to transposition also has implications for photography as an epistemic practice. Photography understood as translation is based on the assumption that it constitutes a qualitative and positivistic step; a photo isolates and abstracts real-world phenomena and thus shows something we might not see without it, for which the motion studies of Eadweard Muybridge are the most obvious example.[2] Transposition, in contrast, is a potentially never-ending process of shifts, displacements, and assemblies not offering any stable position. Concerning artistic research this can be a venturesome step as the practice of translation is supported by a long tradition of representation and aesthetic competences. To abandon this practice poses the question what the

1 This also applies to André Bazin, for whom the photographic process resembles that of transubstantiation (Hediger 2018).
2 Regarding the photo as visual evidence, see, for example, Daston and Galison (2007); Wilder (2009); Rickli (2011); Dufour (2015).

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creation of knowledge without representation would look like. The critique of representation that is inscribed in late modern art, as much as post-conceptual art practices, have prepared such a step.

Aesthetic journalism

I am going to elaborate on the proposition of transpositional photography in regard to selected photographic works of the last two decades. In particular, this will take account of practices that Alfredo Cramerotti has synthesised under the term "aesthetic journalism" as these share epistemic interests and often use still and moving photographic images. Aesthetic journalism is an appropriation from the domain of mass media to the field of fine arts that saw its initiation with Catherine David's *documenta X* in 1997. For Cramerotti (2009, 23), "the journalistic method is the principal instrument to read the world; it provides a certain security, by establishing an order for the things 'out there.'" That it is artists who investigate incidents or situations and exhibit their findings as documentations of their research is seen here as a reaction to a crisis of traditional journalism. "The journalistic position in art responds to an urgency felt by artists and video makers to foreground topics that are absent from mass-media information" (ibid., 69). It is primarily the influence of economic interests that had an effect not only on the content but also on the formalised modes of narration that alternative practices claim to respond to. What makes aesthetic journalism, according to Cramerotti, "aesthetic" is that its inquiry includes the means and forms but also critiques of representation. And it is such an epistemological interest that spans subject and method, which connects aesthetic journalism with the field of artistic research.[3]

Among the examples that Cramerotti provides is *Helsinki Shipyard/Port San Juan* (2002–3) by Laura Horelli, which can help us gain a better understanding of how aesthetic journalism uses photographic images. Horelli's work depicts in two parallel videos the construction and operation of large cruise ships. While this is a subject that is not unusual for documentaries or even commercial television, the way she treats it is at odds with the practices and aesthetics of traditional journalism. The recordings favour the ease of use of the then newly available miniDV video equipment over conventional image and sound standards. Commenting on her practice, she expresses unease over the need to edit her forty hours of original footage down to the thirty minutes she actually shows (Horelli and Kopsa 2005). In consolidating her material, she avoids a clear narrative, which is supported by the decision to show two looped videos of slightly different duration side by side, leaving it up to the viewer how to watch them. But despite her practical and aesthetical non-compliance with journalistic standards and the open form that comes with it, she does have a clear, political message, as Cramerotti (2009, 90) notes. Whether a personal

3 I will leave open the question whether and where one should draw a line between journalism and research as it is not relevant to my argument. Instead, I will simply regard both aesthetic journalism and artistic research as epistemic practices that use photography.

attitude for him is indicative of aesthetic journalism's deviance from common journalism remains unclear.

The deprecation of a coherent and elaborate form in combination with the necessity to point to specific subjects—in the case of Horelli, the working conditions and economies of globalisation—is reminiscent of early so-called actuality films. Before the emergence of the documentary genre as "the creative treatment of actuality" (Grierson 1933, 8) in the late silent film era, non-fiction films depicted or re-enacted current and historic events in an effortless mode of looking rather than developing a narrative from them (Gunning 1997). But the video works of Horelli and others are post- rather than pre-narratives. Their unwieldy styles are a way to avoid a hegemonic position that inevitably comes with the representational function of standardised narratives. They place themselves in a tradition of scrutinising (aesthetic) representation, which has been a defining matter for modernism since its beginning. But the reluctance to represent an issue contradicts the claim of political agency that is attributed to works of aesthetic journalism. Therefore, representation is not obsolete here but must evolve in a different form than imaging and narrating. This is a tension within any modern and contemporary art practice that conceives itself as political: is it possible to represent without an aesthetics of representation? Here, photography as transposition becomes relevant since, as I have suggested earlier, it disregards the distinction between subject and image and, hence, challenges representation. In what follows, I will speculate whether it is productive to speak about transpositional photography in the context of aesthetic journalism and more recent photographic practices, and whether we can consider their use of photography as document, witness, or finally as place.

Between witnesses and documents

One Step Beyond by Lukas Einsele, another work from Cramerotti's corpus of aesthetic journalism, documents the use of and the victims of land mines in different crisis regions of the world. Catherine David, who supported the project, starts her contribution to its catalogue (Einsele 2005) with an assessment of Einsele's approach as a counter-movement to the aesthetics of traditional journalism. The combination of a refusal to fulfil expectations—here by not depicting violence and misery—and an openness towards viewers' interpretations likewise echoes Cramerotti's concept of aesthetic journalism. Each victim was the subject of a photographic portrait and was asked to describe their accident and make a drawing of the situation. The reduced depth of focus displayed in the portraits, which were shot in close-up using a large-format camera, gives the survivors an idiosyncratic quality. The focal point on the eyes corroborates their identity and personal story while the rapid decrease in focus and the uniform style of the portraits makes them also look like objects. There are additional photographs and texts but the standardised representation of the survivors is at the centre of the project. And it is these portraits that convey the impression that the survivors function as witnesses. The role of the witness at the time has to be related to another phenomenon. Commercial news

coverage of the Second Gulf War worked with the concept of embedded journalism—the integration of reporters into the military—as a strategic method of warfare. As Hito Steyerl (2007) has pointed out, the emphasis on witnesses was at the expense of the expressiveness of their reports. While their real-time images often show little information, the presence of the journalists fills this vacant space. The witness as a role becomes more important than the actual message he or she delivers.

But explaining *One Step Beyond* with the figure of the witness is problematic for several reasons. First, Einsele acts as a mediator between the survivors and the audience. In contrast to embedded journalists, he himself is not a witness but, if at all, presents others to us as witnesses. Second, the witness is a figure of authority who challenges claims for the openness of the artwork. Cramerotti (2009, 74–77) discusses this aspect with reference to Umberto Eco's concept of the open work and refers to Jacques Rancière's "emancipated spectator" to describe the relationship between the work and us as audience. According to Rancière, "an art is emancipated and emancipating when it renounces the authority of the imposed message, the target audience, and the univocal mode of explicating the world, when, in other words, it stops *wanting* to emancipate us" (Carnevale and Kelsey 2007, 258). Or, in Cramerotti's (2009, 76–77) words, "the significance of aesthetic journalism today is shot through with the idea that we, as spectators, need to be aware of the distance from the proposed subject, and from the author who proposes it. We must be aware of our capacity to interpret what we see, touch and hear, translating others' ideas into our own." Finally, Einsele's own description of the project also tells a different story. In the catalogue he presents his project like a legal or scientific investigation when he elaborates on procedures and identifies devices that were used to make the photos and to record the sounds. He also discloses the agreements he made with the victims to produce the artefacts that he shows in the exhibition and the catalogue (Einsele 2005, 4–5). Neither in his methodological statement nor in the photos themselves does Einsele aim to increase the credibility of the survivors. Instead, we can ask whether the photos, texts, and drawings have the status of documents.

As with the witness, it is helpful to relate the concept of documents to political events of the time. On 5 February 2003 Colin Powell, then US Secretary of State, presented evidence at the United Nations to support the thesis of Saddam Hussein's possession of weapons of mass destruction. In a situation like this, photographs (along with other kinds of media) can turn into documents if they are successfully integrated into a purposeful procedure of reasoning. At the same time, the value of such documents largely depends on how they were produced—and this is what Einsele clarifies in his statement. That Powell's argumentation was later refuted was analysed by Bruno Latour in his cause for what he called "Dingpolitik." Latour (2005a) uses the failure of documents to argue for the relevance of objects as such. "For too long, objects have been wrongly portrayed as matters-of-fact. This is unfair to them, unfair to science, unfair to objectivity, unfair to experience. They are much more interesting, variegated, uncertain, complicated, far reaching, heterogeneous, risky,

historical, local, material and networky than the pathetic version offered for too long by philosophers" (ibid., 9, 11). Latour's praise of things shares with aesthetic journalism the aim of establishing communal spaces of discourse. What remains problematic though with the concept of photography as document is that it cannot satisfy the claims to provide images that are at the same time specific and open for a discursive appropriation through the spectator. Any attempt to establish an aesthetic discourse will likewise harm the status of the documents. The positivistic claim that comes with documents is too strong to fit aesthetic journalism and we can only emancipate ourselves from them at the price of their invalidation—this is where Latour (2004a) suggests letting the things themselves speak. Regarding the question of photography as transposition, documents have the advantage that they are designed for mobility. But their mobility aims at a universal validity, which attempts to make the documents independent of any specific context. This comes at the cost that the photographic document no longer has a specific position per se. This can be observed in Einsele's project and likewise is an argument against the usefulness of the document as a model to understand photographic images within the context of aesthetic journalism. If we understand transposition as a change of locations or contexts, then an image that claims to be independent of any context cannot be transposed.

Places

If we consider aesthetic journalism's photographs to be problematic as witnesses and as documents, then what is its specific quality? What is it that is transposed here? To answer this question, we can look at Steve McQueen's film *Western Deep* (2002), which thematises everyday work in a gold mine near Johannesburg. Over the course of twenty-five minutes we accompany miners going underground, digging tunnels, and finally attending a somewhat enigmatic drill or physical test. The impressive experience, which the film provides, suggests that the audience actually gets an idea of what the miners' work looks or, better, feels like. But considering the images and sounds this impression can be questioned. The Super 8 film used for shooting in the difficult light conditions underground reacts in a different way than the human eye. The images it brings forth are rich in contrast and often feature merely stray highlights. Hence, T. J. Demos (2005, 61) has called the film "striking for what it does *not* show." During the elevator's initial descent, light occurs only occasionally through the cabin grille. The following images of drilling workers also do not represent human perception of the portrayed situation. And the drill scene—the only one that is clearly depicted—remains opaque regarding its meaning. The lack of information that the images exhibit is supplemented with a powerful but interrupted soundtrack. Image and sound, it seems, never belong together, which is just another way that the film raises doubts about itself. Cramerotti (2009, 29) comments on this common feature of aesthetic journalism when he writes, "The point is that art is not about *delivering* information; it is about *questioning* that information."

Western Deep's images feature an indeterminacy that requires emancipated spectators but also curators, critics, and scholars as mediators who cultivate the vacant space that McQueen has provided them. That the openness of works empowers not only the audience but also intermediaries is left out by both Cramerotti and Rancière; nevertheless, at this point we should set down that the production of meaning is accomplished by networks rather than emancipated individuals.[4] That modern artworks call for educated comment is not new, but in the case of aesthetic journalism the discourses that back the artwork have a different significance as in most cases they address political rather than aesthetic issues. In opposition to Cramerotti, I would say that it is not the selection of otherwise ignored issues that has given aesthetic journalism its relevance but the alternative modes of discourse that come with it.

These discourses depend on institutional spaces, both physical and structural—that is, the openness of the works becomes productive within collective sites like the museum. Because the works and their public presentations are indissociable, canonical lists of exhibitions are an integral part of the discussion of aesthetic journalism as a phenomenon.[5] Regardless whether the works are actually installations, they all turn into site-based media. Bringing this to mind can help us better understand the aesthetics of aesthetic journalism. What do these works themselves provide besides the selection of a subject and an openness in its representation? After rejecting them as witnesses and as documents, we can say that what they really do is to represent places. And it is these places that relate to the sites of presentation. But the representation of foreign places is not an act of immersion; the exhibition space does not mimic the original site. The work within an art-space merely evokes the place it represents. Though aesthetic journalism may involve other media, it is photography that realises transpositions because photographic images—as a result of optics and independent from the question whether they actually show something in a recognisable way—inherently refer to places. This is often overlooked because the discussion of photography tends to focus on the medium's temporal aspects as for example with Roland Barthes's (1981, 77) definition of photography as "that-has-been." Writing primarily about portrait photography, in *Camera Lucida* Barthes recurrently raises doubts about images as realistic representations of the depicted. Nevertheless, the plain assessment he makes (and which has dominated the reception of his seminal book) is that everything and everybody we see in a photograph belongs to an unidentified moment in the past. What has received less attention is how specific Barthes's reading of photographs can be when it comes to locations. Writing about André Kertész's 1921 photo of a blind violinist, Barthes (1981, 45) looks at the muddy road and states, "I recognize, with my whole body, the straggling villages I passed through on my long-ago travels in Hungary and Romania." To relate to a photograph in regard to the exact moment of its origin can be much more difficult

4 With Latour we would have to speak of mediators instead of intermediaries here, because for him the latter are merely neutral means of transportation while the former "transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are supposed to carry" (Latour 2005b, 39).

5 Beside Cramerotti (2009, 83), see also Balsom and Peleg (2016, 19).

than to build a connection to its location because the point in time is, strictly speaking, invisible. The place is necessarily also much more specific than the time in the context of aesthetic journalism, where most works already in their titles make such a claim. Looking again at Einsele's portraits of the survivors, we can say that despite isolating the faces of the depicted and eliminating any visual information that could refer to a specific place we *know* that the artist had to travel to such a place to make the photo. The same is the case with the works of Horelli and McQueen.

Although aesthetic journalism brings reports on the world into museums, it has little to do with the question posed by modernist ready-mades over what constitutes an artwork. The reference such works build upon is much more recent: the entrance of film culture into art-spaces in the early 1990s with artists such as Douglas Gordon. These artists had reacted to home video, which, on the one hand, gave the public for the first time individual access to feature films and, on the other hand, devalued the cinema as a collective place to watch them. Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho* (1993), which may be the most effectual example, slowed down the eponymous 1960 thriller to the duration of an entire day. By resolving the narrative into a combination of silence and a perceivable succession of individual frames, Gordon thus created a space where viewers could *visit* and not just *watch* Alfred Hitchcock's film.[6] What then was new and specific about aesthetic journalism is that it did not compare the art-space with another place, such as cinema, but it installed a foreign place within the art-space. And it did so primarily by means of photography as transposition.

So what enables transposition in photography? In comparison with text or physical objects, in this respect photography has a privileged position because of its genealogy from linear perspective as a means not only to capture but also to control space. Latour (1990, 29) elaborates on how linear perspective is less an analytical than a constructivist method that makes it possible to take arbitrary elements and "to reshuffle them like a pack of cards." This approach can be traced from the emergence of Western science in the Renaissance to the montage of Sergei Eisenstein—or the craft of conventional journalism. Hence, aesthetic journalism can be said to refrain from the act of construction and to rely solely on the capacity that linear perspective has bestowed on photography: to transpose things while keeping them intact and thus trustworthy. Such a displacement can turn them into what Latour (1990, 26–35) famously has called immutable mobiles. But their immutability only becomes evident and also necessary in the moment when they are recombined. As aesthetic journalism artists tend to turn this into a discursive option for visitors, there is no need to deliver subjects as components. (A problem with Einsele's project is that he presents a collection of [photo]graphic objects instead of just evoking the places of accidents.) What remains is photography's spatial referentiality that can be invocated and that allows one to evoke a place such as a gold mine in South Africa without depicting it.

6 Since then, the desire to create places for media has further been nurtured by the Internet and what Peter Osborne (2015) has described as the "distributed image."

So far, I have elaborated on how I would understand transpositional photography and how it occurs to different degrees within what Cramerotti calls aesthetic journalism. Transpositional photography though is not limited to this field and has also surpassed it, as finally I want to show. Aesthetic journalism as a prominent artistic practice, it seems, ended with the publication of Cramerotti's book in 2009. As I want to argue, this also has to do with questions of transposition that aesthetic journalism had to deal with, the most crucial of which is, How specific can or should the places be that transpositional photography connects?

Aesthetic journalists by all accounts rely on the specificity of the transposed places. Their depiction may be vague but is often balanced by concrete denominations in the titles and commentaries of curators and critics in the constitutive periphery of the works. Furthermore, the political agency of aesthetic journalism requires specific places as an argument of immediacy. On the other hand, we can witness a growing unspecificity of many places. Already in 1992, Marc Augé had described these as non-places, as spaces that are defined as transitory, exchangeable, and the effect of globalised capitalism. The question here is whether we still can understand the problems caused by a global economy by looking at the specific places or if non-places are not much more expressive of the underlying structures. This is where aesthetic journalism fails, with the exception of artists such as McQueen who highlight the unspecificity of places in their works. Contemporary artists themselves as travellers are a part of the supermodernity that Augé describes. They travel through the transitory non-places, which are no longer self-contained but merely hubs, to find a real place. The dualism between these two kinds of locales is, of course, not absolute, as Augé himself has pointed out: "Place and non-place are rather like opposed polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten" (Augé 2008, 64). Peter Osborne, finally, has adapted Augé's term for the art-space, which itself is transitory and at least in some aspects unspecific. "Contemporary art produces (or fails to produce) the non-place of art-space as the condition of its autonomy and hence its functioning as 'art'" (Osborne 2001, 192).

Between delay and real time

Aesthetic journalism thus understands and uses photography as transpositional but eventually fails regarding the places that are transposed or the destination of this transposition. There are two different though closely connected reasons that led to the decline of aesthetic journalism and that helped apprehend how transpositional photography continues to be relevant for more recent works. The first half of my argument here concerns the question of critique. Aesthetic journalism legitimises itself primarily politically and not aesthetically. At least in the way Cramerotti portrays it, it challenges journalistic ineffectiveness when it comes to debate relevant political and economic issues. This critical position is difficult, for one, because of the position of the artists and the art-

space as explained above and, for another, because critique in general is a tough act to follow today.[7] The other half of my argument is that meanwhile technologies and economics have significantly changed our experience of time.[8] The decreased interest in aesthetic journalism since 2010 coincides with an accelerated mediality, as has been demonstrated, for example, by different protest movements since then. The 2011 protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square could be watched live over the Internet; the images conveyed atmosphere rather than information but they were highly effective. Social media and video live-streaming thus have challenged authorship and criticality to the benefit of affects and participation. Aesthetic journalism is primarily travel photography but the correspondence between places it creates also involve different times. David (2005) when writing about Einsele points to Rancière and his claim for "intervals" that separate situations and places. But that the delay caused by the spatial distance is a necessary condition for the criticality of aesthetic journalism only becomes evident once such an interval turns optional.

There are different ways to react to this situation. One can be outlined on the basis of recent works by the Swiss photographers Taiyo Onorato and Nico Krebs. For *The Great Unreal* (2009), a project that "simultaneously reinforces and undermines the mythology of the American road" (Rothman, Onorato, and Krebs 2015), they travelled for several months through the United States. With wit and artifice, they either constructed the subjects they set out to find or modified the prints later. The resulting images celebrate analogue photography as well as its decline. Critique here is limited to the medium itself and its aesthetic history. In such an aesthetical stalemate, transposition is both impossible and unwanted. This has changed with their latest exhibition project, *Eurasia* (2015) (see Onorato and Krebs 2017), for which they by all accounts simply travelled in the opposite direction. But on their tour through Central Asia they could not rely on or mimic familiar images. Their still and moving photographs, it seems, strive to find again a somewhat naive view of what they discovered and brought home. This brings us back to the question how transpositional photography functions as an epistemic practice relevant for artistic research. *Eurasia* would hardly be considered a research project—first because of the lack of a specific question. But the project's return to collecting the things "out there" is the first step of many scientific methods, which can make it a useful reference for artistic research. This is applicable for example to the short 16mm film loops that Onorato and Krebs produced in an expansion of their earlier practice, which depict daily scenes whose meaning stays enigmatic to the tourist eye. While this points at the origins of photography and the transpositional disposition therein, it also comes at the price of nostalgia. Nonetheless, such a collection might gain a very different character in other circumstances.

An alternative post-critical approach to transpositional photography can be studied in a series of events organised by Selina Grüter and Michèle Graf

7 This is a question beyond the scope of this text. One argument comes from Latour (2004b), who describes how critique has become too cheap and easy to have to be still effective.

8 See, for example, Crary (2013).

in 2014 and 2015: *Watch the Sunset* consisted of eleven public gatherings at different locations in Zurich for which Grüter and Graf commissioned friends in places such as Buenos Aires, Hong Kong, or Los Angeles to broadcast a static shot of their local sunsets. Each live-stream lasted three hours and started in accordance with the local time of the respective sunset. Transposition here becomes ironic as the subject of the sun setting can be observed everywhere.[9] Differences in light and scenery, of course, exist but are overshadowed by the denomination of the locations and the arbitrary times of the social watching.

The redundancy of the series reinforces the question what a sunset actually is. It can be defined as the apparent conjunction of a light emitting object, which, as *Wikipedia* informs us, is about 150 gigametres away with the border of our own space of perception. Both the sun and the horizon are out of reach for us in their own ways. Their meeting remains a delusion because it only happens for our eyes or the camera lens, respectively. In that sense the sunset (as much as the sunrise) already is a photo—that is, it does not depict what it shows but is merely a view. It looks real, we comprehend it immediately, but it only exists as an image defined by the combination of a specific location and time. Drawing on Augé (2008, 63) and his concept of non-place as "a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity," we can conceive the sunset as a non-photo. And just as Osborne (2001, 189) revises Augé's non-place as a place that is "the product of the *dialectic* of the space of places and the space of flows," I understand the non-photo as a photographic image that is specified by its own transposition rather than the specificity it bears.

The association with specific sites that Grüter and Graf carry out is a simple act of declaration. In a dialectical movement the different sunsets become generic by associating them with distinct names such as Casablanca or Treasure Island, which gain their value from the suspicion that they might not refer to existing places at all. Relations, histories, and identities only become possible in the course of the events the artists organised. Osborne (2001, 191) has furthered Augé's concept to the domain of arts when he writes: "It is in its specific character as a self-enclosed and specialised place that the gallery appears as an exemplary or 'pure' non-place: constituted as a non-place by its dual negation of place-based social functions by itinerary and textuality: the itinerary of the viewer, the 'textuality' of the work—a form of itinerary that mediates the universality of the work's address with the individuality of relations of private property." The sunset here is not only the perfect photo, as a non-photo it is also the congenial mirror for the art-space as non-place.

To understand the different kinds of transpositions, we have to look at how they relate their operations to time. In the works of aesthetic journalism, differences in place and time necessarily correlate. As the presentation in an art-space and the foregoing investigation are both tied to the artist as author, there is a necessary temporal interval. This fact is so self-evident that it is not seen as

9 At this point *Watch the Sunset* departs from Andy Warhol's *Empire* (1964), its obvious precursor, which does celebrate its subject. Warhol reportedly also inspired Brian Cury, founder of EarthCam, an online directory of webcams worldwide, to start his company. One such camera has since 2013 showed Warhol's grave (see http://earthcam.com/warhol/).

a principal element for aesthetic journalism as a practice. But it is the basis for the critical treatment of a subject. In the moment when this delay gives way, a critical reflection is also no longer possible in the course of image production. If it is reintroduced as by Onorato and Krebs, it turns into either nostalgia or formalism. The more compelling option here is the playful approach by Grüter and Graf who, at a stroke, promise simultaneity and point at the time shifts as the final delay in a globalised and mediatised world, a weird obstacle, a brain twister.

The function of time is also relevant when we finally conclude these speculations with an example from artistic research in the closer sense. Paul Landon (2013) has investigated two small islands, Île Sainte-Hélène and Île Notre-Dame, in Montreal as historic places. Most famously, they were the location for Expo 67 but Landon connects this with the lesser-known fact that about a decade later the abandoned site of the world fair served as a set for Robert Altman's dystopian movie *Quintet*. Landon visited his hometown's islands in 2011 to look for traces of both historic events. Time here is not relevant to his practices but is inscribed into the subject of his research because of the history of the place itself and because the two historic events were futuristic in their very different ways. Where aesthetic journalism depends on the interval between visiting a place and evoking it in the exhibition space, Landon publishes his research online. While the Internet, of course, is not independent from time and space, they both work so differently "there" that connections to real-world time and space are less compulsory. Landon instead builds these relations within his exploration. He uses three kinds of photographs: the ones he made himself in 2011, the ones from Altman's 1979 movie, and original postcards from Expo 67. Landon's own photographs are pale in every sense of the word, just as the light seems to be in Montreal "in mid-November at a time of year just before snow covers the city" (Landon 2013). Their primary aim seems to be to show what is not there, leaving us with the place as such. The images from Altman's film are replaced by a series of simple drawings, which suggest a figure disappearing in the landscape. The postcards from 1967, finally, here appear as prototypical forms of transpositional photography. Either sent or brought from a trip to the place, they claim to be that place. They say, "I am a French/British/Soviet/Iranian/ . . . pavilion at the Expo in Montreal," and not what happened there of who has been there. This is what a text that is written on them might say. Therefore, they make clear that transpositional photography requires additional steps to claim something that is more than the evocation of a place. These additional steps are not photographic. In the case of Landon, it is his drawings, mappings, and layerings of the same place in different times. Transpositional photographs, therefore, in artistic research can be valuable points of departure that allow knowledge to be created without being representational themselves.

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