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1-Go 1-E

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1-GO 1-E:
THE DEVELOPMENT OF DURATIONAL AESTHETICS
IN
MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

A Master's Thesis

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IN MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

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ABSTRACT

1-GO 1-E: THE DEVELOPMENT OF DURATIONAL AESTHETICS IN MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

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This thesis investigates the development of a technique for the depiction of motion in painting through mixed media sculpture. Utilizing stacked glass layers as the spatial medium, 1-Go 1-E conceptualizes the technique utilized in the creation of barrier grid animations to be used in painting. Examining the concept of movement through the composite of Henri Bergson's conception of qualitative and quantitative multiplicities, this thesis merges both to create a workflow for the creation of stacked glass mixed media sculptures.

Keywords: Duration, Glass Sculpture, Movement, Multiplicity, Painting

ÖZET

1-GO 1-E: KARMA MEDYA HEYKELDE SÜRESEL ESTETİĞİN GELİŞİMİ

Teğın, Alp E.

M.F.A, İletişim ve Tasarım Bölümü

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Bu tez resimde hareketin tasvir edilmesi için karma medya heykel kullanarak bir tekniğin geliştirilmesini inceliyor. 1-Go 1-E, Üst üste bindirilmiş cam levhaların uzaysal ortam olarak kullanılmasını ve bariyer kafes animasyonlarda kullanılan tekniğin resimde kullanılmasını kavramsallaştırıyor. Hareket konusunu Henri Bergson'un sürekli ve ayrık çoklukları ile birleştirerek, bu tez cam levha bazlı karma medya heykeller için bir iş akışı yaratıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Cam Heykel, Çokluk, Hareket, Resim, Süre

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“In art, and in painting as in music, it is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of capturing forces. For this reason no art is figurative.”

Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: Logic of Sensation*, 1981 (56)

The idea of capturing movement, throughout history, has been a fascinating subject.

The technology that allowed for the capture of movement, the motion camera, emerged as a scientific tool for the study of kinetics (Treske, 2000, p. 3).

Melies noted after he has seen the first screenings from the Lumieres and Edison in Paris, that the fascinating point wasn't the recorded events or images. He and the audience were fascinated by the appearance of movements, like the moving leaves of a tree in the background. (Treske, 2000, p. 3)

The history of cinema, thus, is built on this fascination with and desire to see movement. The oldest surviving film, Louis Le Prince's 1888 silent film, *Roundhay Garden Scene*, is a testament to this idea of excitement in motion. Presenting 1.66

seconds of movement depicting people moving around in the titular garden, the sentiment expressed in these excitations, namely the depiction of movement, comprise the core of this study.

Situated within the domain of mixed media sculpture, this study and the accompanying praxis incorporates elements from stacked glass sculptures and painting to develop a technique for the depiction of motion, utilizing the juxtaposition of qualitative and quantitative multiplicities developed by French philosopher Henri Bergson, and interpreted through the lens of philosopher Gilles Deleuze's commentary on Bergson, his works and their influence on his own theories, namely the concept of *becoming*. Within the study, the resultant framework for the depiction of movement is dubbed "durational aesthetics," presented as the composite of time and space. The reason the word "durational" is chosen in lieu of "experiential," is the core focus of movement. As the technique outlined in this artistic research is expanded and iterated upon, *experiential* might become the more appropriate term to describe the process, however due to the scope of the project, *durational* was deemed as a more fitting way to express the aims of this research.

Movement, expressed through the use of figuration associated with barrier grid animations, is juxtaposed onto the spatiality resulting from stacked glass layers,

giving the artist the possibility to paint in three dimensions through a multitude of horizontal and vertical points, thus resulting in a space that features depth. The guiding idea that impacted the development of the study was the need for the final



Figure 1. Louis Le Prince, *Roundhay Garden Scene*, 1888

artwork to be completely analog, without requiring any digital screens or devices to depict motion. However, the workflow presented throughout this artistic research

starts out digitally, serving as the avenue where the prototyping and experimentation occurs, after which the scene is painted on the glass layers to finalize the work.

Thus, the research question that is at the heart of this study is “How else can movement be expressed through painting, without the use of video or digital animation?” The preliminary answer to this question, which is through the creation of a specialized space, through the use of stacked glass layers, and the juxtaposition of the movement, through barrier grid animation principles. However, it is of note that the study does not aim to create an animated sequence, rather the depiction of movement, as such the praxis should not be evaluated within the context of animation, but rather the context of painting.

Being the son of a photographer and videographer, the concepts of space and movement in an artistic context have been fascinating topics from a young age, which in turn developed into a passion manifesting itself through painting, narrative and filmmaking. Thus, this thesis aims to lay the foundation of the point of coalescing for these passions, incorporating elements gleaned through years of experimentation and the tuning of my own artistic sensibilities, in order to serve as the first step towards the development of a future body of work focusing on the intricacies of the topics discussed before.

Excluding the introduction and conclusion, this study consists of three chapters, with the second chapter setting up the theoretical framework upon which the research is based, providing an overview to Bergson’s concept of multiplicities along with a

discussion on spatial and temporal movement. The third chapter introduces the artistic research, discussing artworks that have been impactful in the conception of the study towards the development of durational aesthetics, within the context of the theoretical framework. Chapter four, on the other hand, focuses on the artistic praxis accompanying the study, providing a history of the development process and the experimentation that resulted in the work *I-Go I-E*, featuring a breakdown of the scene depicted in the artwork and the detailed workflow that was developed throughout the study.

CHAPTER 2

MOVEMENT AS MULTIPLICITY

“It is the task of the artist to compensate for the absence of movement and space by giving his shapes the lucid completeness of a classical relief. Only thus can he avoid having to rely on the beholder’s knowledge and power to guess.”

E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 1984, (171)

In the above quote, art historian Ernst Gombrich paraphrases German sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand’s stance on the role of the artist in the medium of painting and sculpture, which he outlined in his 1907 book *The Problem of Form in Painting and Sculpture*. In the 17th century, the academies of Europe created a hierarchy of painting genres, reserving the lowest spot to Still Life paintings and the peak to Historical Paintings (Duro, 2007, pg. 96-97) French historiographer Andre Felibien, who created the first complete hierarchy of painting genres, wrote “He who paints living animals is more estimable than the painter who only paints things that are

lifeless and without movement.” (Duro, 2007, p. 96) as his reasoning to place Still Life paintings at the bottom of the hierarchy, whereas to reach the peak “one must depict history and fable and represent great deeds like historians, or charming subjects like poets,” (Duro, 2007, p. 96) As such, movement and narrative are considered as important in the continuity of painting and sculpture. Felibien, in his classification values the dynamism and movement of Historical paintings over the stasis of Still Life paintings. He also regards the symbolic potential of Historical paintings as of utmost importance when he writes, “...one must in allegorical compositions know how to cover under the veil of fable the virtues of great men, and the most exalted mysteries. We call a painter great who can perform such tasks well.” (Duro, 2007, p.96). The concept of movement gained wider importance in the 20th century, as Cubism and in particular Futurism placed motion at the center of its manifesto, writing “We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing automobile with its bonnet adorned with great tubes like serpents with explosive breath...” (Marinetti, 1909, p. 3). Thus, it would not be wrong to characterize movement as an important subject of study in art history.

Scholar Thomas Nail frames movement as “...a traditionally marginalized ontological category.” (Nail, 2018, p. 49) He further notes, “In most major domains the study of motion is not the dominant one. The study of motion is often defined solely by the fact that its domain of inquiry deals exclusively with the study of bodies as movements.” (Nail, 2018, p. 51). Hence, in order to discuss Durational Aesthetics, one must be clear on the conceptualization of movement. While this study utilizes the

Bergsonian notion of movement as its basis, which is a durational conception, it is of importance to discuss the spatial conception of movement beforehand.

2.1. The Spatial Conception of Movement

Ancient Greek philosopher Parmenides' student, Zeno of Elea put forth four paradoxes to illustrate his teacher's points regarding movement, which would prove that Parmenides' conception of reality as correct. Putting aside the ontological preoccupations of Parmenides, his conception of movement was that it was impossible, and that movement motion itself was a mere illusion (Plato, trans. 2003, p. 84). Zeno's first paradox outlines a scenario where a person wants to get from point A to point B, for which the person has to reach the halfway point before they reach their goal. However, since space is infinitely divisible, the distance the person needs to traverse can be bisected ad infinitum, thus they would never reach their destination, hence movement is an illusion (Aristotle, trans. 1991, p. 110).

This conception of movement is problematic, as it frames movement as purely spatial. The second paradox that Zeno suggests deals with Achilles racing a tortoise. In the scenario, the tortoise has a head start on Achilles and once the race properly starts, Achilles cannot catch the tortoise as in the time Achilles reaches the tortoise's original position, the tortoise would have moved and prolonged the head start it had (Figure 1), thus invoking the bisection paradigm introduced in the first paradox.

Bergson, however, notes in his book *Time and Free Will* that, "... we attribute to the motion the divisibility of the space which it traverses, forgetting that it is quite

possible to divide an object, but not an act...” (Bergson, 1950, p.112). He writes that “...each of Achilles steps is a simple indivisible act, and that, after a given number of these acts, Achilles will have passed the tortoise.” (Bergson, 1950, p. 113). Echoing the first paradox, Bergson underlines that the mistake of Zeno is “ [the] identification of this series of acts, each of which is *of a definite kind* and *indivisible*, with the homogeneous space which underlies them.” (Bergson, 1950, p. 113). He further notes that the reason the tortoise would not win the race is, “Because each of Achilles’ steps and each of the tortoise’s steps are indivisible acts in so far as they are movements, and are different magnitudes in so far as they are space.” (Bergson, 1950, p. 113). Hence, Zeno’s mistake, according to Bergson is confusing space with motion.

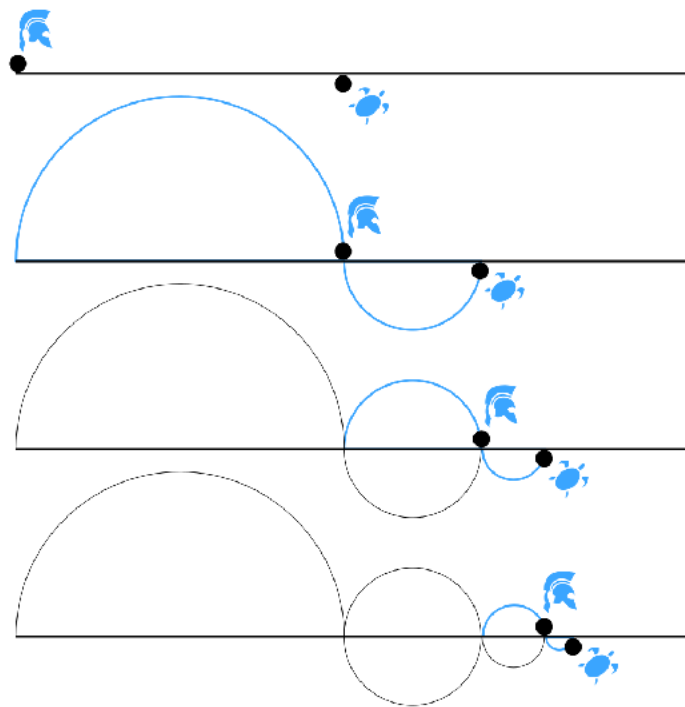


Figure 2. Achilles and the tortoise by Martin Grandjean

However, the spatial conception of motion introduces the notion of homogeneity, which is a concept that gains importance when discussing Bergson's idea of the quantitative multiplicity, writing "... space is what enables us to distinguish a number of identical and simultaneous sensations from one another; it is thus a principle of differentiation other than that of qualitative differentiation..." (Bergson, 1950, p. 95). Deleuze, in his analysis of Bergson's philosophy, writes that Bernhard Riemann (whose definition impacted Bergson's use of the concept):

...defined as 'multiplicities' those things that could be determined in terms of their dimensions or their independent variables. He distinguished *discrete multiplicities* and *continuous multiplicities*. The former contain the principle of their own metrics (the measure of one of their parts being given by the number of elements they contain). The latter found a metrical principle in something else, even if only in phenomena unfolding in theme or in the forces acting in them. (Deleuze, 1991, p. 39)

The two forms of multiplicity outlined by Riemann were mathematical in nature, and Bergson gave the concepts a context within his philosophy as *quantitative* and *qualitative* multiplicities. The first kind of multiplicity, the quantitative (also called a numerical multiplicity), relating to the above conception of motion, is spatial in nature. It denotes a difference in degree or number, a clear way of illustrating this is the example given by Bergson in his book, *Time and Free Will*, which is through a flock of sheep. When a person imagines a flock of sheep, that denotes a plurality of the animal. However, these sheep, in the imagination are situated in an ideal space, juxtaposed into a single image. The individual sheep in this imaginary experiment differ from one another in terms of spatial positioning, meaning they are scattered or lined up, maybe close to each other, maybe spread out but they remain separated,

divisible, which is the important characteristic for quantitative multiplicities (Bergson, 1950, p. 76). The other characteristics of note when it comes to quantitative multiplicities is their extensive and measurable nature, considering Achilles and the tortoise's steps in the race, their steps differ in magnitude, thus the space covered by each step differs. It is not the act of the step that is divisible and measurable but the distance traversed, thus the spatial paradigm this argument conceives for movement is not fitting for movement itself, which is indivisible and intensive. The quantitative multiplicity is, thus an expression of the time of Chronos, which in Greek mythology was the personification of linear time, with a clearly divided past, present, and future.

2.2. The Durational Conception of Movement

However, a qualitative multiplicity is an expression of the time of Aion, which in Greek mythology is signified as unbounded time. Contrasted with a quantitative multiplicity, a qualitative multiplicity, characterized by Bergson as *duration*, is best exemplified through an example which Bergson gives, which is a musical melody. The sounds in a musical phrase, individually are musical notes only, they do not evoke the phrase or melody. However when played in a specific succession, they result in the aforementioned melody, which is indivisible as dividing it would result in notes only, not the melody. The listener, thus, retains memory of the previous notes and synthesizes them to reach the melody (Bergson, 1950, p. 111). This indivisibility lies at the core of the qualitative multiplicity. The same principle can be applied to the chiming of a bell, where each strike of the bell is individually a sound, however

the retention of the previous strikes results in the bell chiming (Bergson, 1950, pg. 86-87).

Bergson also makes a note of the intervals of the bells chiming, writing, “If we count them, the intervals must remain though the sounds disappear: how could these intervals remain, if they were pure duration and not space? It is in space, therefore, that the operation takes place.” (Bergson, 1950, p. 87) thus concluding that there are two kinds of multiplicity, “...that of material objects, to which the conception of number is immediately applicable; and the multiplicity of states of consciousness, which cannot be regarded as numerical without the help of some symbolical representation, in which a necessary element is *space*.” (Bergson, 1950, p. 87) Thus, both space and duration play an integral role in movement, but what of the figure in motion?

Bergson characterizes the body in motion as follows:

... the successive positions of the moving body really do occupy space, but that the process by which it passes from one position to the other, a process which occupies duration and which has no reality except for a conscious spectator, eludes space. We have to do here not with an *object* but with a *progress*. (Bergson, 1950, p. 110-111)

Bergson, in the above quote, frames movement as processual, a composite that Deleuze characterizes as being made up of the space traversed by the moving body which is a quantitative multiplicity and the movement of the body itself, which is a qualitative multiplicity which changes every time it divides (Deleuze, 1991, p. 47).

What is of note regarding multiplicities are the differences, as quantitative

multiplicities differ in degree, and qualitative multiplicities differ in kind. Regarding the composite nature of motion, Deleuze writes, "...what seemed from outside to be a numerical part, a component of the run, turns out to be, experienced from inside, an obstacle avoided." (Deleuze, 1991, pg. 47-48).

The processual nature of duration characterized by Bergson implies constant change, which Deleuze reiterates, writing, "It is a case of a 'transition,' of a 'change,' a *becoming*, but it is a becoming that endures, a change that is substance itself." (Deleuze, 1991, p. 37). Furthermore, Deleuze outlines continuity and heterogeneity as the two fundamental characteristics of duration (Deleuze, 1991, p. 37). Thus, concerning multiplicities, while qualitative multiplicities are continuous and heterogeneous, quantitative multiplicities are discontinuous and homogeneous.

CHAPTER 3

COMPOSITING CHRONOS AND AION

“Art does not reproduce the visible but makes visible.”

Paul Klee, *Paul Klee Notebooks Volume 1: The Thinking Eye*, 1961 (76)

The matter of spatiality in painting, in the context of duration becomes a complicated topic of discussion, as the previous insights outline a composite, where the role of space is a *stage*, serving as the avenue for the expression of duration. This stage, however, is a homogenous medium, wherein the homogeneity expresses the qualitative characteristics of duration. Bergson writes:

The more you insist on the difference between the impressions made on our retina by two points of a homogenous surface, the more do you thereby make room for the activity of the mind, which perceives under the form of extensive homogeneity what is given it as qualitative heterogeneity.
(Bergson, 1950, p. 95)

Hence, the homogeneity of the surface becomes a magnifier for the heterogeneity of movement, creating lines of differentiation that express the qualitative characteristics of duration. The need to composite the times of Chronos and Aion for the expression

of motion become an integral problem for the artist to find a solution for, followed by a method for the expression of movement in accordance with the paradigm of duration.

3.1. *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*



Figure 3. Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*, 1912

In his 1912 painting, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*, Duchamp depicts a blocky rendition of a figure moving down a flight of stairs. The painting displays the spatial translation of the figure as a series of distinct poses, with a clear continuity of the emergent “descent.” The figure, at the present, is at the lowest point of the staircase, with the previous positions constructed as after-images, resulting in the formation of a conga line of figures. Motion lines and rhythmic dotted arcs suggest the movement of the figure, while the transparency of the figuration results in the juxtaposition of the different states the figure has gone through. The movement characterized in the painting is spatial, with the figure’s movement being situated in the time of Chronos, where the changes between each pose feature a difference in degree, resulting in the poses of the figure becoming points on a line. Duchamp’s characterization of motion, thus is an example to mobility, however the Bergsonian notion of motion eludes the figure, resulting in a purely spatial conception of movement.

3.2. *The Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash*



Figure 4. Giacomo Balla, *The Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash*, 1912

Giacomo Balla's 1912 painting explores movement through abstraction created by the rapid movements depicted through their subjects, namely the dog and its owner. The legs, leash and the dog's tail are multiplied and juxtaposed, resulting in the type of visual movement that is purposefully abstracted. The abstraction of the figures, acting as *speed lines*, thus conveys excitement, whereas the abstraction of the background conveys speed. Both of these characteristics are, when analyzed through the insights of the previous chapter, measures of magnitude, showing differences in degree and displaying spatial divisibility.

Thus, Balla's conception of movement presents the potential of abstraction, once derided by writer Cornelia Geer LeBoutillier as "...crude, less mature,almost childish indeed." (LeBoutillier, 1943, p. 82), with the claim that "Movement evades portrayal, just as change does, or growth. Motion (in the depths) is as elusive for plastic as thought is, or cruelty." (LeBoutillier, 1943, p. 82), whereas in 2009, art critic Tom Lubbock hailed Balla's work in regards to its method of depicting motion, writing "these motion effects, supposedly capturing the action of the walking legs, become a way of creating new sensations and new phenomena." (Lubbock, 2009, para. 16). The impact that this abstraction presents on the study is the disconnection of the moving subject from the space they traverse, a point also brought up by Lubbock (Lubbock, 2009, para. 11-12)

3.3. *Gussie Moran (Tennis)*

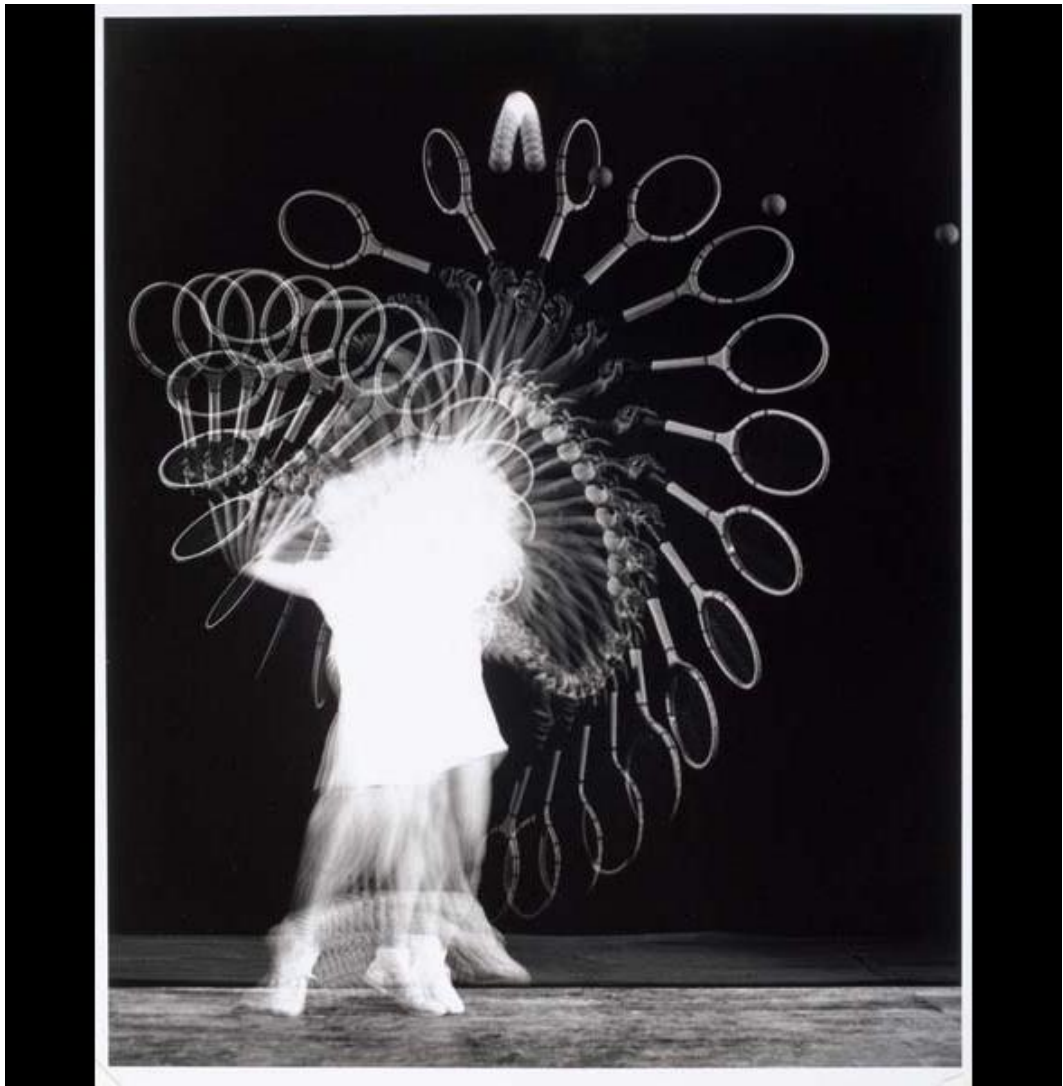


Figure 5. Harold Edgerton, *Gussie Moran (Tennis)*, 1949

Engineer and photographer Harold Edgerton, with the use of high speed cameras, photographed subjects in motion, ranging from animals to a bullet being shot, rendering their movements on the same plane, resulting in an abstracted image compositing all the movements the subject has made during the time the action was taking place. Similar to the chronophotographic works that inspired Duchamp's *Nude*

(Tomkins, 1996, p. 78), Edgerton's *Gussie Moran (Tennis)* depicts the the tennis player Gussie Moran, swinging her racket and hitting the tennis ball. The construction of the image thus features all the individual movements of the swing and hit, resulting in a multiplicity that depicts Moran's act. The photograph's central position presents the juxtaposition of the torso, resulting in a blur, with the entire movement of the figure tracing the arc of the tennis racket. The multiplicity presented in the image evokes a combination of the mobility of Duchamp's *Nude*, and Balla's *Dynamism*, thus creating the same spatial temporal paradigm, which equates to counting time, a possibility on which Bergson writes, "...we cannot count them unless we represent them by homogenous units which occupy separate positions in space and consequently no longer permeate one another." (Bergson, 1950, p. 89).

Hence, concerning the movement expressed in the above works by Duchamp, Balla and Edgerton, time is quantized, through which it loses its heterogeneity, which falls contrary to the Bergsonian notion of duration. The indivisibility of the act of moving naturally brings up the question: if movement is indivisible, then how can the artist depict it in accordance to duration? Deleuze clarifies this point, writing;

...for Bergson, duration was not simply the indivisible, nor was it the nonmeasurable. Rather, it was that which divided only by changing in kind, that which was susceptible to measurement only by varying its metrical principle at each stage of the division. (Deleuze, 1991, p. 40)

Thus, Duchamp, Balla and Edgerton's works divide not the duration of movement but the time, which is spatial, presenting the figure-in-motion as points in a spatial paradigm. Advancing with the above quote, the artist is required to find a way to

divide the movement and simultaneously express the changes in kind. This statement inherently proposes a juxtaposition, a blurring that results from overlaying multiple figures, a quality which was present in Edgerton's *Gussie*. However, mere juxtaposition would result in a homogeneous figure, which would present not the overlaid *multiple*, but rather a new *one*, a quality which falls contrary to the concept of the multiplicity, which Deleuze clarifies as, "The notion of multiplicity saves us from thinking in terms of "One and Multiple." (Deleuze, 1991, p. 43). Hence, the figuration that needs to be developed for the expression of movement requires the concept of multiplicity to be kept in mind.

3.4. *Painting*, 1978



Figure 6. Francis Bacon, *Painting*, 1978

English painter Francis Bacon's use of movement, characterized by Deleuze as "...a spasm," (Deleuze, 2003, p. 15) presents motion as a contortion of intent, of the flesh bending and curling and escaping itself. Presenting a contrast with the previously discussed depictions of movement of Duchamp, Balla and Edgerton, Bacon's method of depicting motion highlights Bergson's statement on Achilles and the tortoise, namely the indivisible nature of the steps in their respective runs. Here, movement does not quantize time to reflect the motion of the figure but rather the figure deforms and abstracts into movement. Deleuze writes on the role of the body in Bacon's paintings as, "An intense movement flows through the whole body, a deformed and deforming movement that at every moment transfers the real image onto the body in order to constitute the Figure." (Deleuze, 2003, p. 19)

Bacon's characterization of movement presents insight on how motion can function, where it does not denote the mobility of the figure, rather it indicates the change the figure undergoes. This notion of change emphasizes the changing in kind principle found in qualitative multiplicities, thus underlining the role that movement plays and the processual nature it embodies. On the depicted movement in Bacon's 1978 work, *Painting*, Deleuze writes, "...the body attempts to escape from itself through one of its organs in order to rejoin the field or material structure." (Deleuze, 2003, p. 13) In this instance, the movement within the figural contortion acts as the processual intent of the escape, containing within itself thought and desire, and bleeding out of the extremity as the manifestation of change.

3.5. Barrier Grid Animation

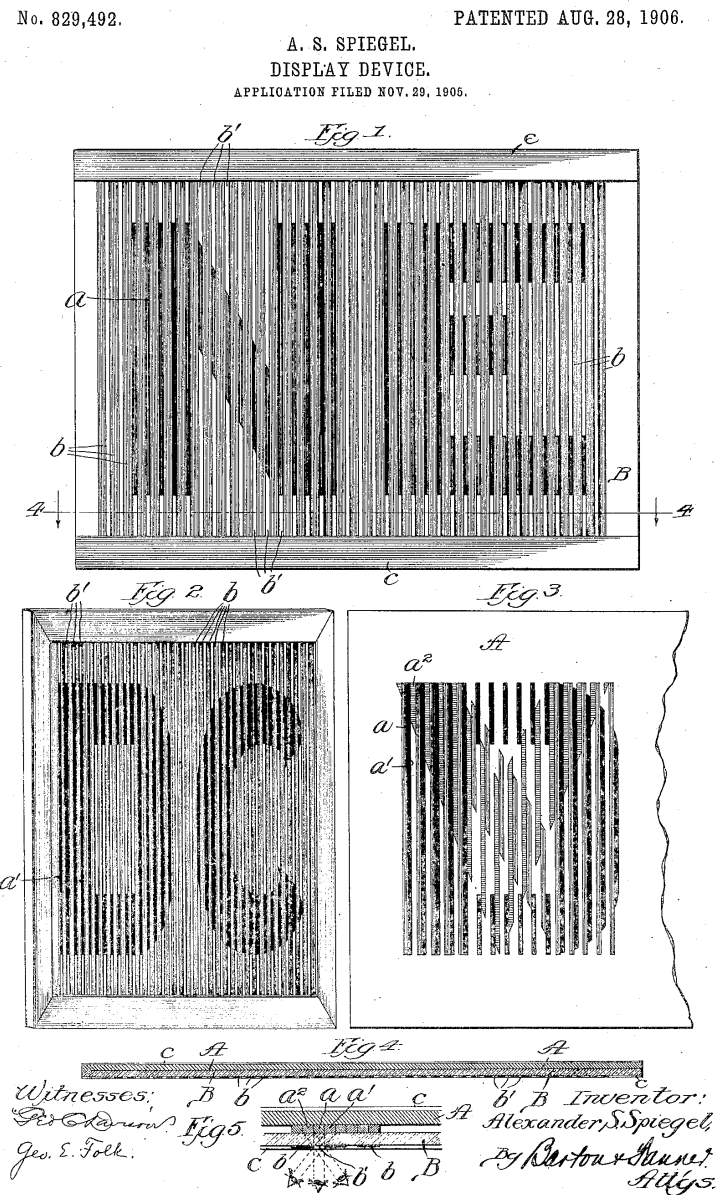


Figure 7. Alexander S. Spiegel, Patent Application for *Display Device*, 1906

Barrier grid animations are optical illusions developed in the late 19th century, appearing in various forms with slight differences, utilizing moire patterns to create the illusion of motion. Among the many iterations of barrier grid animations, there is the motograph developed by W. Symons in 1896, Alexander S. Spiegel's display

device, patented in 1906 among several examples. The working principle for these animations is fairly straightforward, where multiple images are cut up and juxtaposed in an alternating fashion onto the same surface, with the individual images appearing on the surface through sliding a lined overlay over the juxtaposed images (Figure 7), creating a looped optical illusion animation (Spiegel, 1906, p. 2).

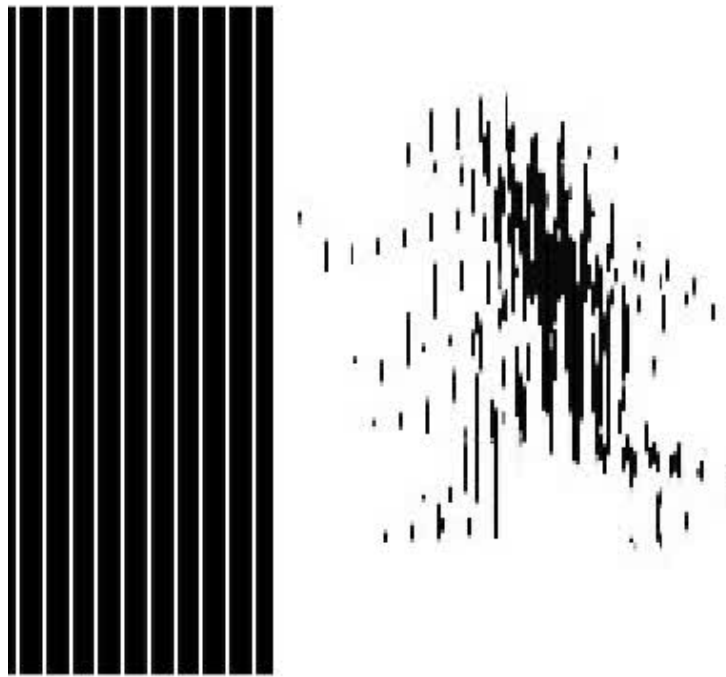


Figure 8. - Barrier grid animation of a figure jumping

The method of creating barrier grid animations presents an intrinsic multiplicity, namely a qualitative one, that enables the artist to juxtapose multiple frames within one, thus creating lines of differentiation between each section of the figure, intersecting the figure multiple times and presenting the succession of time through the use of the lined overlay in order to facilitate the animation. The intersection presented in barrier grid animations, thus results in a heterogeneity that when viewed without the lined overlay results in the interpenetration of time, meaning in this

context that the figure exists not in a spatial paradigm, but a temporal one. It should be noted, however, the temporal interpenetration expressed in barrier grid animations should not be thought of in a quantitative sense, as the temporal paradigm exhibited is not one to be added to, rather it is indivisible, as breaking the sequence of the animation would evoke the same feeling as in the melody or bell example, namely leave the person with a single note. Hence barrier grid animations act as a visual melody, representing the same indivisibility as a musical phrase. The movement comes from the intensity of the formation of the image. However, the use of the lined overlay creates a disruption in the movement, relegating it to the extrinsic, namely the sliding of the overlay, which results in the image moving from the time of Aion into the time of Chronos, thus relinquishing its qualitative characteristics in favor of quantitative ones. The facilitation of the animation thus results in linear time.

3.6. Flattened Time

The cut up and intersecting nature of barrier grid animations, sans the lined overlay, provides a suitable foundation for the expression of movement in terms of image construction. The juxtaposition of multiple frames gives the image both heterogeneity and creates lines of differentiation *in kind*, thus presenting the artist with a method of depicting a qualitative multiplicity. The means to achieve this is through the removal of the lined overlay, thus *flattening time*. The act of flattening time juxtaposes the time of Aion onto the surface used for painting. This method of image creation presents differences with the works discussed by Duchamp, Balla and Edgerton, as flattening time takes the entirety of the descent down the stairwell, the

excitation of the dog on the leash and Gussie Moran's swing and redistributes the temporality of the acts across the entire figure. Each step bleeds into the next and back without creating a blur, through which the act preserves its heterogeneity.

However, it should be noted that the resultant qualitative multiplicity is not necessarily a depiction of movement, as established in the previous chapter, there must be a spatial component for the action to take place in. The problem that arises is the surface the painting is done on, which for the most part tends to be two dimensional. What should be noted, however, is *not* that two dimensional surfaces cannot be used to depict movement. Rather, the entire two dimensional surface constitutes the image, which is neither homogenous, as space is, nor exhibits the characteristics of it.

3.7. Differentiating Space and Pictorial Space

From Bergson's writing, two types of space can be inferred. He refers to an idealized space in relation to imaginary concepts such as numbers and psychic states of the consciousness such as emotions (Bergson, 1950, p. 77) and a material space which the volume of materiality occupies, in which Achilles and the tortoise race,. Deleuze refers to space in relation to Bergson's writings as, "space, which never presents anything but differences of degree (since it is quantitative homogeneity)." (Deleuze, 1991, p. 31). According to Bergson, "...externality is the distinguishing mark of things which occupy space..." (Bergson, 1950, p. 99) Thus, the need arises to look at what homogeneity constitutes in relation to space. Bergson furthermore writes, "the

representation of a homogenous space grows out of an effort of the mind, there must be within the qualities themselves which differentiate two sensations some reason why they occupy this or that definite space.” (Bergson, 1950, pg. 95-96).

The previous analyses on Duchamp and Balla’s works were carried out with particular focus on the figuration in the respective paintings. However from a spatial sense, it could be argued that the paintings themselves are heterogeneous, an argument which is derived from perceptual reasoning. In Duchamp’s *Nude*, however abstract the figuration, the viewer differentiates between the staircase and the figure descending the stairs. Furthermore, the figure can be divided into their individual extremities. In Balla’s *Dynamism*, the same principle applies, the figuration creates lines of differentiation of paint which is applied to the same plane. It would be possible to argue, at this point, that since externality is the distinguishing factor of space, that since the viewer can differentiate what is what on the painting, it is in fact space. However, that brings to the forefront the concept of the *intervals*. Bergson writes, “...material objects, being exterior to one another and to ourselves, derive both exteriorities from the homogeneity of a medium which inserts intervals between them and sets off their outlines...” (Bergson, 1950, p. 98). The extensivity of space precludes interpenetration, a characteristic which can be exemplified in a multitude of ways, ranging from the mental image of a flock of sheep;

Either we include them all in the same image, and it follows as a necessary consequence that we place them side by side in an ideal space, or else we repeat fifty times in succession the image of a single one... (Bergson, 1950, p. 77)

or two bodies penetrating one another;

...you will at once assume that there are empty spaces in the one which will be occupied by the particles of the other; these particles in their turn cannot penetrate one another unless one of them divides in order to fill up the interstices of the other; and our thought will prolong this operation indefinitely in preference to picturing two bodies in the same place. (Bergson, 1950, p.88)

Hence, the aforementioned intervals play a significant role in the definition of a homogenous medium.

It is of importance to contextualize the concept of Bergsonian space in relation to painting. The two dimensional surface upon which the paint is applied, be it a landscape or a portrait, constitutes the totality of the artwork. When looking at the artwork, one must ask themselves: are we considering the paint itself, as pigment and strokes, as a means for differentiation, or are we considering the figuration as the metric for intervals, whether abstracted or realistic or a mix of both? This question might seem very basic, however it is important in the context of this study to differentiate the kind of space we are looking upon, as the following section will focus on spatiality in relation to artworks and work out a means of creating space, in the Bergsonian sense, homogenous and discontinuous for movement to be depicted in. Scholar Michael Schreyach quotes German-American painter Hans Hofmann's *Lecture V*, as;

In the moment when something is not related to the picture plane we are concerned with realistic space. [Although the artist] may not directly imitate nature, [to the extent that] he has nature in mind as the basis for creation, his work [will yield] the idea of realistic space. [But] a painter who understands the picture plane as the basis for creation will never create naturalistic space, but he will create pictorial space. (Schreyach, 2015 ,p. 49)

Hofmann's statement on the space in painting provides valuable insight into the conceptualization of a homogenous space, as Hofmann's characterization of pictorial space creates a dichotomy when analyzed from the perspective of a quantitative multiplicity, namely the impression of space presented as pictorial space, and homogenous space which creates lines of differentiations.

3.8. Spatiality in Dustin Yellin's *The Triptych*

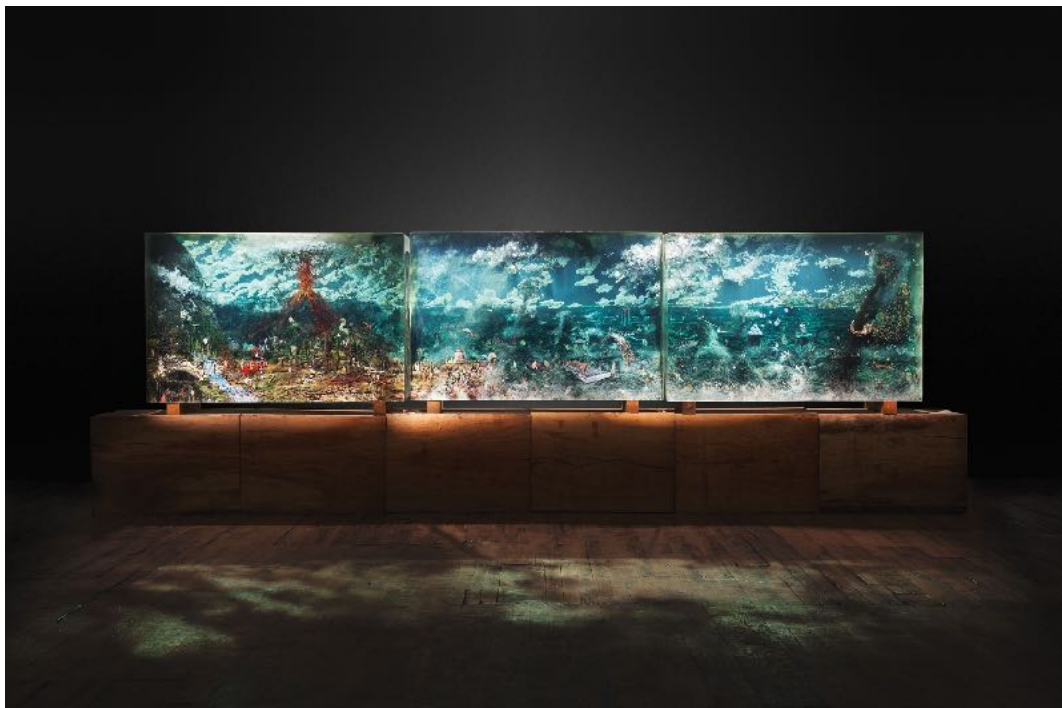


Figure 9. Dustin Yellin, *The Triptych*, 2012

Yellin's *Triptych* presents a packed landscape evoking medieval Christian altarpieces, as well as serving as nod to Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights* (<https://dustinyellin.com/triptych/>), the work, from a material structure, is comprised of glass panels stuck together to form a *spatial canvas*, which Yellin calls "frozen cinema" (<https://dustinyellin.com/about/>).



Figure 10. Dustin Yellin, *The Triptych*, (Left)



Figure 11. Dustin Yellin, *The Triptych*, (Middle)



Figure 12. Dustin Yellin, *The Triptych*, (Right)

Art critic Gilda Williams, writes on Yellin's work:

Buried within each massive, light filled, transparent block - a fat sandwich of thirty one sheets of half-inch-thick glass - were thousands of tiny pictures extracted from encyclopedias, science manuals, magazines. These cutout images are typically one-half to two inches tall, and most depict living or moving things... (Williams, 2017, p. 281)

As expressed in the above quote, transparency is utilized by Yellin to construct his sculptures, enabling the artist to superimpose a multitude of images on glass, and by extension, on space. Unlike the previously discussed paintings, Yellin's sculptural works present spatiality that is homogenous, precisely due to their transparency. The glass layers enable the collage pieces to stay visually suspended, which in turn echo Deleuze's notion on the core function of space: creating differences in degree.

Furthermore, the depth that results from the glass layers liberate the perspective of

the viewer, offering, "...the ability to occupy a divine vantage point while enjoying an overwhelming sense of discovery." (Williams, 2017, p. 282), hence disrupting the fixed perspective of the pictorial space.

3.9. Xia Xiaowan's Spatial Figuration



Figure 13. Xia Xiaowan, *Two People in Water*, 2012

Chinese painter Xia Xiaowan's use of glass layers utilizes the transparency of the layers to achieve an image "Influenced by calligraphic principles – indication of form through minimal line and a striking adoption of white space – the work is a synthesis of technological craft and ancient aesthetic values, Confucian in thought and antique-modern in form." (Jack, 2013, p. 55)

The use of glass layers in Xia's artworks contrast Yellin's use of the layers in terms of role, where Yellin utilizes the glass to create space for his figures to exist in, the glass layers in Xia's work becomes part of the figuration, creating not space, but a spatialize image. Thus the aforementioned calligraphic influences result in images that are almost holographic, composed of distinct slides that are separate, unlike Yellin's glass blocks that are stuck together.

3.10. Nobuhiro Nakanishi's Temporal Transparency



Figure 14. Nobuhiro Nakanishi, *Cloud/Fog*, 2005

Time and its passage plays an important role in Japanese artist Nobuhiro Nakanishi's transparent suspended landscapes, with the artist writing, "Capturing the accumulation of time as a sculpture allows the viewer to experience the ephemerality of time." (Nakanishi, 2010, <http://nobuhironakanishi.com/essay/layer-drawings-en/>).

Utilizing transparent film as the transparent medium, Nakanishi's technique utilizes space as the temporal element, with the viewer having to walk along the suspended layers of photographs, Nakanishi is in fact laying out time, thus spatializing it. He writes on the role of the viewer, "When we look at the photographs in these sculptures, we attempt to fill in the gaps between the individual images."

3.11. The Materiality of Glass

Yellin, Xia and Nakanishi's use of transparency presents points of overlap and distinction, namely Yellin uses glass as space, Xia as spatial figuration and Nakanishi as the manifestation of time. These use cases provide room for experimentation and different methodologies for the creation of the artworks. It is important to recognize that while Yellin and Xia use the same material, their utilization of the material, while bearing similarity, achieves different end results. As such, glass and transparency provide varied properties that impact the work being created. This artistic research utilizes Yellin's use of glass layers, namely the way the layers compose a spatial block, in between where the figures and environment exist.

3.12. The Time of Kairos

Having conceptualized both a method for the depiction of duration in terms of figuration through the use of barrier grid animation figuration, after the removal of the lined overlay which facilitates the spatial succession of the animation, and the homogenous spatial paradigm for the duration to take place in, in the form of layered

glass, it is essential to consider the context this methodology creates for the conception of Durational Aesthetics.

Durational Aesthetics provides a composite that juxtaposes durational figuration, which in this context means the body-in-motion within glass spatiality, thus giving the artist an avenue for the expression of movement and the resultant narrative potential this paradigm creates. However, this paradigm does present limitations on the movement that can be expressed, as the nature of barrier grid animations allows for a limited number of frames to be juxtaposed onto the same surface. This, ultimately echoes the temporal concept of *kairos*, which in Ancient Greece represented the third form of time. Whereas *Chronos* represented linear time, *Aion* represented unbounded, cyclical time, *Kairos* is the expression of the *right time*. This conception of time might sound vague and subjective, seeing as how the right time may vary from person to person, however that subjectivity precisely embodies the meaning of *Kairos*, giving it a qualitative character. In Homer's *Illiad*, "...the word *kairos* indicates a point and time at which an arrow strikes its target, delivering a deadly blow." (Shew, 2013, p. 47), whereas in Sophocles' *Electra*, "Orestes utters it after he is reunited with his sister *Electra*, and he urges her that they must enact their revenge on their mother, *Clytemnestra*, only when the time is right, that is, when the opportune moment arises." (Shew, 2013, p. 48). Hence, the time of *Kairos* expresses a versatile nature, relating to the "right," "opportune" or "critical" moment.

It should be noted, however, that this text does not conceptualize the time of *Kairos* as the composite of *Chronos* and *Aion*, rather *Kairos*, in the context of this study

refers to the limited frames the artist possesses when constructing the image of duration, through the utilization of the barrier grid animation technique. Thus, the motion the artist is depicting on the glass exists in the time of Aion, however the chosen frames represent the Kairos, making it not a measure of time but the totality of the selection of the frames of the figure that constitute duration.

CHAPTER 4

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DURATIONAL AESTHETICS

4.1. The Project Description

I-Go I-E is a mixed media sculpture that fuses painting and sculpture. Through layering glass panels and painting in between, the artwork suspends paint mid-air. Apart from the use of media, *I-Go I-E* aims to develop a technique for the depiction of motion within the paradigm of Bergsonian qualitative multiplicities. The project re-contextualizes movement in a spatio-temporal paradigm, as opposed to solely spatial and presents a depiction of motion based on interpenetration, rather than juxtaposition. This form of depiction allows for the movement to flow into each other, thus presenting the viewer with a representation of durational aesthetics.

4.2. Project Development

The development of the technique that this study dubs “durational aesthetics” has its genesis in cinema, painting and storytelling. Taking inspiration from Pieter Bruegel the Elder’s paintings of rural life, the core idea that put into motion the thought processes that resulted in the development of the project being the potential for narrative. Thus, the praxis of this artistic study serves as a proof of concept experiment that would lay the foundation for the utilization of durational aesthetics on a larger scale. Hence, Bruegel’s paintings serve as the inspiration for the eventual goal expressed through this study. The story depicted in *I-Go I-E* is economical in terms of story beats, taking inspiration from the literary genre of horror, it presents a figure trespassing near a well to examine an organic mass, and being startled and running away when the organic mass starts to grow suddenly. As the artistic research conducted in this study relates to motion rather than narrative, the simplicity of the narrative heightens the movements depicted.

This line of inquiry resulted in the exploration of how motion is conveyed in painting, as the project was conceived as an analog artwork from the beginning, it was of paramount importance that no digital screens or wiring be introduced into the project, as the introduction of video would run counter to the ideas professed during the development of the study. This limitation resulted in the exploration of analog animation principles, ranging from the zoetrope to the magic lantern, culminating in the decision to incorporate the figuration of barrier grid animation.

The idea of incorporating glass layers, being present all the way from the conception of the project, occupied a varied list of forms throughout. First as the means to keep paint suspended, in order to paint in three dimensions, utilizing the parallax effect for the conveyance of depth in the artwork. However, as the role of movement got expanded within the project, the role of the glass layers shifted to take up a spatial paradigm, eventually serving as the stage for the movement to take place in, thus the idea of *durational aesthetics* started taking shape.

Following the conception of the theoretical framework the work would occupy, taking place simultaneously as the experiments in the conveyance of motion, the focus shifted towards the work taking its final shape. From a figuration perspective, the work shifted visual styles several times, starting out as low polygon models, due to concerns over highly detailed models resulting in a reduced legibility when the artwork would be put together, hence the first test models to experiment with the



Figure 15. Two Boxers, Experiment #1 by Alp E. Teğin

depiction of motion were created in digital modeling applications. The application of choice in this case was *Blender*, an open source creation suite developed by the Blender Foundation, due to the versatility the program offers, enabling the entire workflow for the required modeling to be contained within a single software.

Despite the low polygon aesthetic utilized in the first experiment, the concerns over the legibility of the image were factored during the second visual experiment, which eliminated the depth of the figures, creating silhouettes, a quality that merits future experimentation, however does not work within the confines of this study.

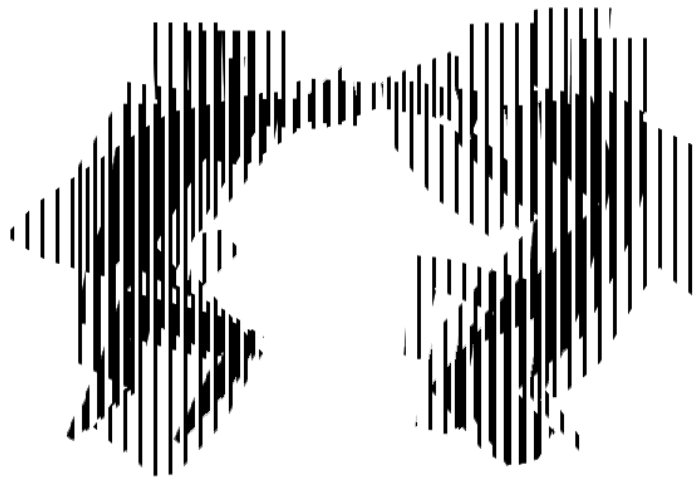


Figure 16. *Two Boxers, Experiment #2* by Alp E. Teğin

Depth became a prominent issue during the visual experimentation phase due to the glass layers, as the intersecting lines allowed for different parts of the figure to exist

in different layers of the artwork, hence the first experiment proved superior for the use in the figuration of the painting. The silhouetted figures, on the other hand, were noted to be utilized when shadows would become prominent in future works.

Apart from the low polygon visual style, another style that was considered during the development of the project was pixel art. The reasoning behind this consideration is twofold, primarily being the size of the proposed artwork, which was set to be small (20 to 20 centimeters with varying depth, around ten to twenty centimeters) would allow low resolution pixel art to function well, as low resolution pixel art allows for fast prototyping and the importance of every pixel is heightened due to the limited number of pixels available. The second reason for the consideration of pixel art was due to the glass layers mimicking the softwares that were used in the creation of pixel art, which in the case of this project was *Aseprite*, due to the versatility the program offers pixel artists, allowing for in-program animation and lossless scaling of the art asset, which Adobe's Photoshop (another popular software for pixel artists) does not offer, which results in artists wanting to scale up their assets by any amount to end up with blurry images. Working in layers, the *Aseprite* software allows the artist to break down their pixel art assets into layers, painting every part on another layer, thus allowing for a more robust planning phase for when the work would be transferred onto the glass layers.

The scene chosen for the pixel art test featured a static scene, as the main experimentation during this phase of the project was not durational, but rather spatial. With the aim of testing how to array the limbs (place them in subsequent

layers of the glass in a repeating fashion to create visual depth) of the figures and how the pieces would interact when placed between glass layers, the pixel art assets were imported into Blender, where the scene was set up and tested.



Figure 17. *A Simple Decision*, Experiment #3 (Fully Arrayed Figures) by Alp E. Teğın

The choice of scene for the spatial tests relates to video games and aims to parody the black and white morality many in-game decisions propose, which is reflected in *A Simple Decision* as a man holding a police officer at gunpoint, with the user interface showing in-game statistics such as health and currently active weapon, and a floating button prompt featuring the words “kill” and “spare,” reflecting the oversimplification of critical choices in video games.

Visually arraying every limb of the figures provided depth, however the figures ended up looking thick and cubic, not displaying proportions relative to anatomical thicknesses of body parts and ending up looking akin to voxel models. Further experimentation, hence, involved arraying the figures relative to their limbs and natural thicknesses. This resulted in a better image proportionally, however it showed that the separation the glass layers create would have to be accounted for when the artwork is physically created, either through the use of thinner glass layers or through breaking the figures further up and spreading them between the layers, to address the issue of which limb is at which point spatially, relative to other body parts.



Figure 18. *A Simple Decision, Experiment #4 (Partially Arrayed Limbs)* by Alp E. Teğin

Following the practical findings regarding the proportions of the figures employed in the praxis of the study, the final scene was conceptualized around the previously covered notion of kairos. The name of the artwork, *I-Go I-E*, functions as a

reference to kairos, coming from the Japanese idiom “Ichi-go Ichi-E,” meaning “One meeting one time” (Varley, 1989, p. 187), referring to “once in a lifetime,” signifying the unrepeatable prospect of any moment in one’s life, thus requiring the person to cherish and appreciate it. “Ichi” is the Japanese word for the number “one,” hence “1-Go 1-E”. While this idiom originated in relation to tea ceremonies, in the context of the artwork it denotes a more macabre meeting, signifying genuine terror. Echoing a prominent theme in the cosmic horror sub-genre of horror fiction, the artwork depicts “a meeting with the incomprehensible,” which functions as the acquisition of forbidden knowledge within the genre. Thus, the figure meets a monstrosity, which terrifies him and prompts him to run away, mentally scarred.

The praxis is composed of twenty layers of glass stuck together, when taking into account the inside and outside of each glass layer as a potential surface to paint on, presents the viewer with 38 layers, as the very outside layers of the first and last glass layer are not taken into account in order to encase the painting with the glass. The depth the glass layers present dictated the scene the work would depict, hence a depth of 10 centimeters resulted in a scene that would have to be narrow, hence the decision to stage the entire scene tightly with a chainlink fence, well, the human character and the organic mass sprouting from the well.

4.3. *I-Go I-E*



Figure 19. *I-Go I-E*, Alp E. Teğın, 2020 (Digital Render)

I-Go I-E is presented as a stacked glass sculpture held together by a cement base with paint in between the layers. Featuring a human figure in three distinct stages of a singular sequence: fright, fall and escape. The three parts to the motion are visually different, apart from the spatial positioning and the respective poses of the sequence, every pose features a distinctly different coloration and anatomical figuration. The organic mass, on the other hand is uniform in its aesthetic and features limited motion. This is due to the different uses the movements serve, respectively, which will be further elaborated upon later in the chapter.

Stylistically, the sculpture presents two different styles of figuration within the same work. On the one hand, the human figure and the environment is executed in a visual

style inspired by expressionism, featuring wild line work, frequently overpainted colorful areas eschewing realism, and simplistic anatomy. Whereas the organic mass is painted in a precise, artificial and monochromatic style. The two clashing styles of aesthetics serve the narrative, as the encounter the figure has and the subsequent fright it results originate in something very different from the figure and his worldview, thus the conscious decision to utilize two radically different aesthetic styles underlines both the incomprehensible nature of the organic mass in the eyes of the human figure, as well as primal reaction, in this case the compulsion to run away, being warranted by the abject discomfort arising from the encounter.

The motion within the scene features two distinct modes, the first being the movement of the human figure, being spatially distributed, and the other being the organic mass, being spatially fixed. The spatial distribution exhibited by the human figure results in the impression that there is not a singular figure, but rather three separate characters. Visually, this notion is justified as there are no connecting links between the poses apart from the barrier grid masking, whereas the movement of the organic mass acts a nesting doll of poses, containing the smaller poses within the largest pose. The aim with the usage of two different modes of movement is twofold, the first being an experiment in continuity. Through the spatial distribution of the human figure, the work frames the same figure as three separate figures, due to their change in emotion and mentality during any given pose. The organic mass, on the other hand, presents no change in emotional or mental state, thus thee poses are spatially juxtaposed. The second reason for the different modes of movement presented in the work is structural difference both modes of motion present. The

human figure exhibits a motion of translation in space, whereas the organic mass presents a motion of growing.

4.4. *I-Go I-E* Breakdown

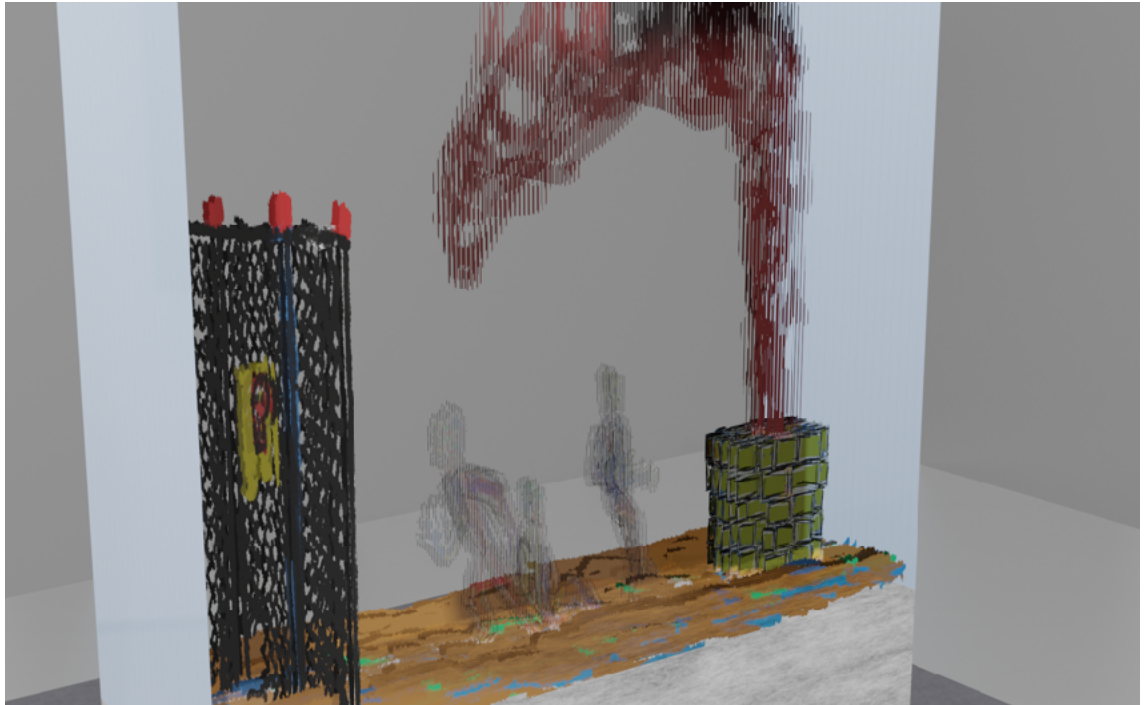


Figure 20. *I-Go I-E*, Alp E. Teğın, 2020 (Digital Render)

The environment, being composed of the ground, the chainlink fence and the well, are composed of various colors and multiple lines overlapping. The chainlink fence features a small tear at the bottom implying that the human figure crawled inside, and the fact that he is trespassing is exemplified in the danger sign expressed through a red skull on the chainlink fence (Figure 17). The ground does not feature any contour lines, which results in pieces of the ground that are painted on separate layers to result in a singular image of the ground when looked at from an angle. The well, on the other hand features contours prominently, which represent the individual stone

pieces that construct the structure. The contours of the well create a contrast with the ground, resulting in thickness for the well, whereas the ground looks seamless and flat (Figure 17).

The environment presented in *I-Go I-E* embodies the Bergsonian notion of the quantitative multiplicity, composing the spatial qualities of the artwork. The environmental features create a contrast with the barrier grid masked figures, thus embodying the notion of difference in degree. Hence, the environment becomes the space through which the viewer can distinguish each figure. The transparency of the glass, thus provides the space, where the figures enact their movements. The spatial characteristics expressed in Dustin Yellin's works provide the main source of inspiration, creating a fixed spatial paradigm for the environment and the figures to exist within. Furthermore, the stuck together glass layers provide a fixed scale for the paint in between, freeing the perspective and preventing painted-in forced perspective, thus providing an expression for the quantitative space, rather than the pictorial space.

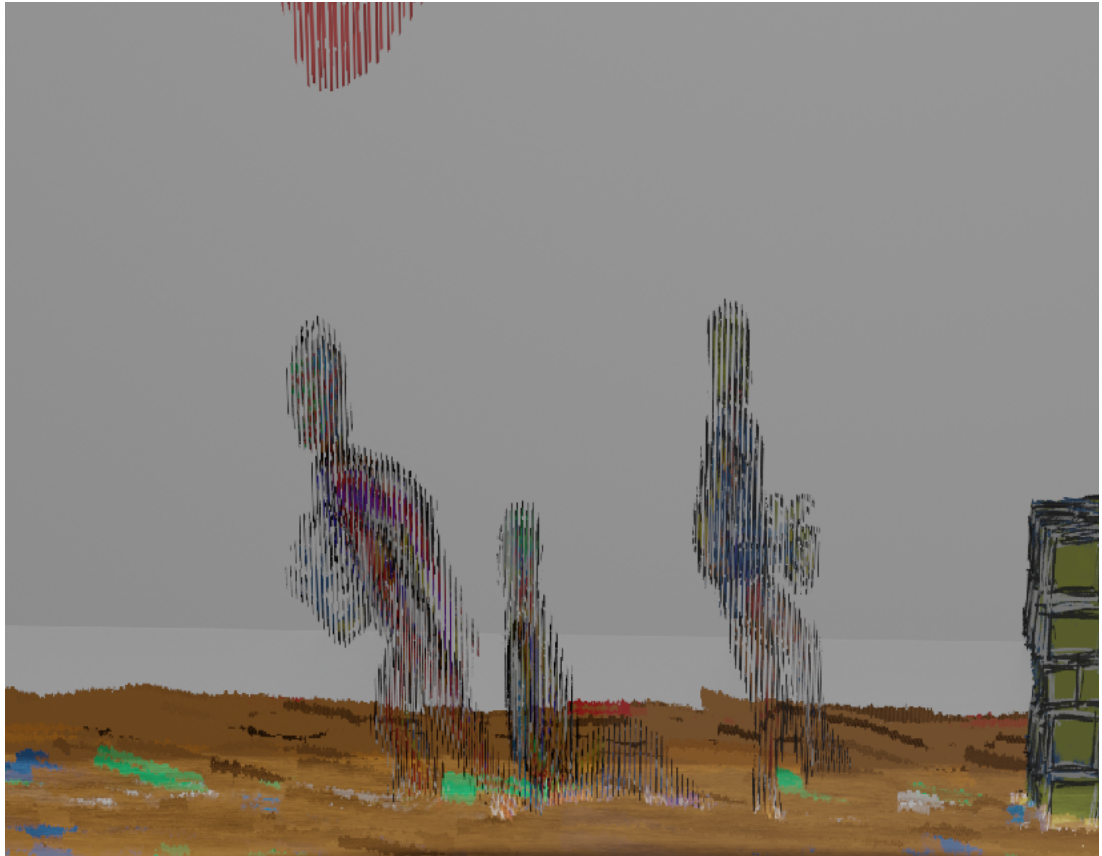


Figure 21. *I-Go I-E*, Alp E. Teğin, 2020 (Digital Render)

The human figure is composed of three poses (Figure 18), the first being the fright (the pose on the right in Figure 18), the fall (middle pose) and the escape (left pose). In traditional hand drawn animation, the in-between frames of the movement have to be drawn for a smooth transition, however the nature of barrier grid animation allows for the in between frames to be eschewed as the technique relies on the facilitation of the animation through the use of a lined overlay. However, as durational aesthetics foregoes the use of the lined overlay in order to remove the sequentiality of the movement, the sequential nature of the poses are implied through the specific poses of the entire sequence of motion. Namely presented trajectory of the first pose

(fright) lines up with the second pose (fall), which establishes the implied continuity, which is continued in the third pose (escape).

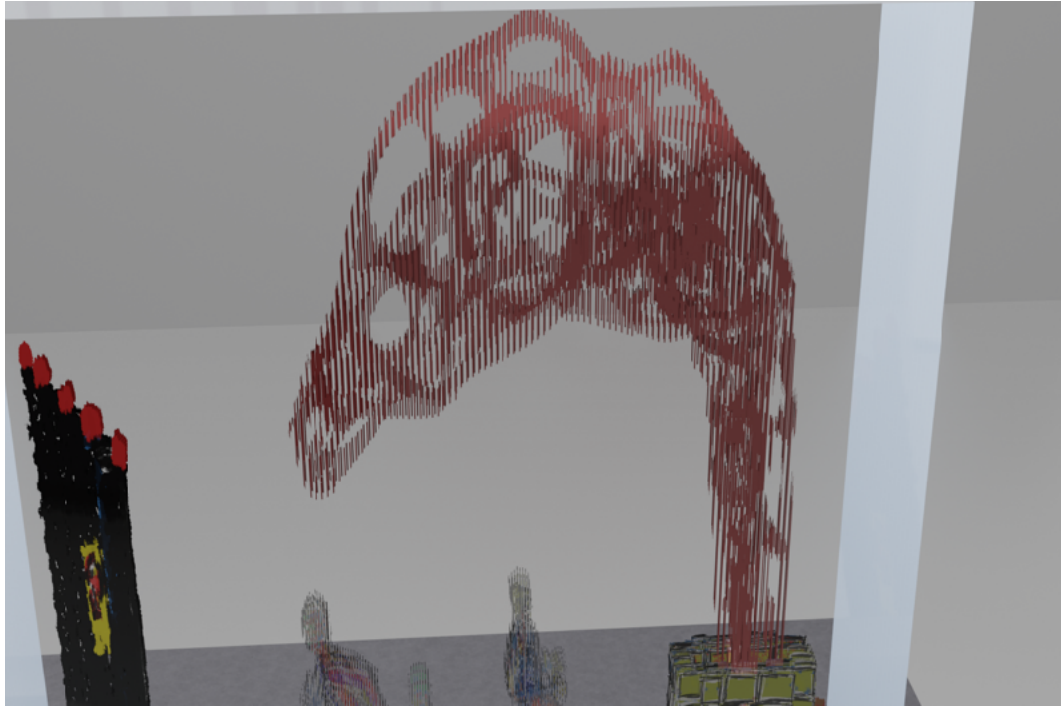


Figure 22. *I-Go I-E*, Alp E. Teğın, 2020 (Digital Render)

The organic mass, features intertwined lighter and darker lines (Figure 19). The darker lines are the result of overlaps within the poses of the growth, signifying stationary parts whereas the lighter lines present distinct movement within the growth. As such, the viewer is able to discern which parts of the organic mass grow and which parts do not.

The movements expressed through both figures embody qualitative changes that manifest as emotional state in the case of the human figure, and physical scale in the case of the organic mass. Thus, the differences in kind are expressed and iterated

upon with every vertical bar that makes up the barrier grid masked images, as such providing an expression of qualitative multiplicities in Bergsonian terms. While the masked images embody the qualitative changes the figures are involved in through their movements, the movement expressed is distinctly different from Francis Bacon's method of movement depiction, namely whereas Bacon's figures contort their bodies as motion flows through them, the movement in 1-Go 1-E is expressed through distinct changes in state, such as scale and intent. As such, the figuration becomes a manifestation of the state the figure is in at any given moment, be it shock and fear for the human figure, or the primal response to a trespassing potential threat in the case of the organic mass.

4.5. *1-Go 1-E* Documentation and Creation Process

The creation of 1-Go 1-E spans the use of several softwares, serving as distinctive stages in the development and final execution of the work, incorporating both digital and analog processes. The workflow will be broken down in this part of the study.

4.5.1. Blocking

The blocking of the scene which results in the final scene is created in Blender Foundation's *Blender* software, which is an open source 2D/3D suite. While any 3D modeling application would work in the blocking stage, *Blender* was chosen due to the versatility it offers in modeling, texture mapping, texture painting and real-time rendering.

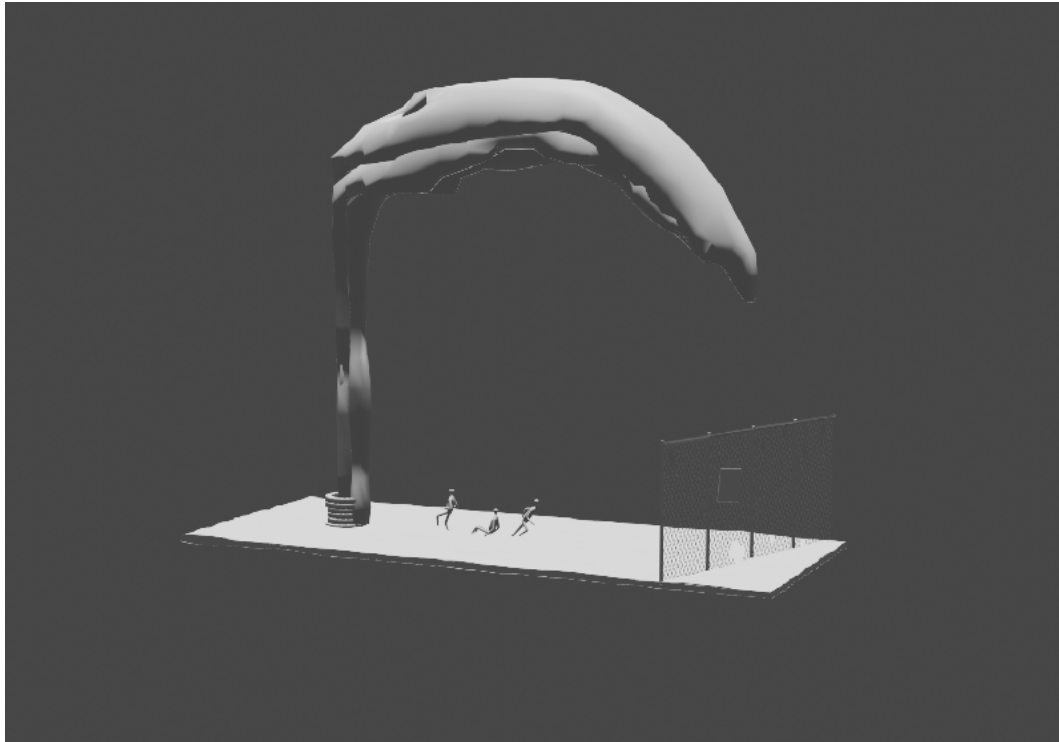


Figure 23. *I-Go I-E* (Scene Blocking), Alp E. Teğın, 2020 (Digital Render)

The blocking does not represent the final image in terms of scale, it mainly serves as the guide along which the image takes shape. As such, this stage is crucial in the formation of the artwork, being the stage where all the brainstorming in terms of theme and form takes place in, it serves as the underdrawing of the work itself.

4.5.2. Splitting Up the Scene

The splitting up of the individual models constitutes the next step in the creation of the artwork. This stage serves the function of providing the scale of the models for the next stage, which constitutes the painting of the figures and environment. In this stage, the most important decision that needs to be made is decreasing how many layers of the glass any given model will occupy. This in itself is a decision which will

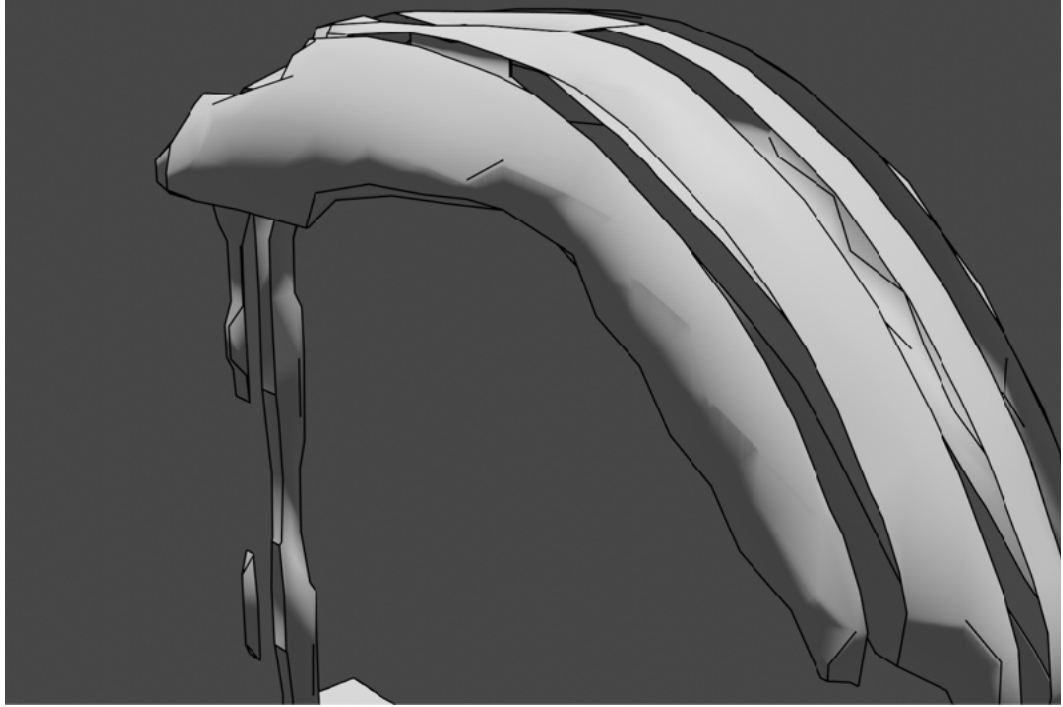


Figure 24. *I-Go I-E* (Scene Splitting), Alp E. Teğın, 2020 (Digital Render)

impact the concerns raised in the third and fourth experiment (Figures 14 & 15) during the development of the study, mainly relating to the thickness of the figuration within the artwork. Following the splitting of the models, each layer of the models is rendered out to serve as the template for the next step in the workflow.

4.5.3. Painting The Figures and Environment



Figure 25. Human Figure(s), Alp E. Teğın, 2020

The rendered figures are placed according to their distribution within the glass layers, following which the images are created by hand in accordance with the established scale of each individual element. This step exemplifies the creation of the artwork proper, the choice of colors that will be featured in the artwork and the visual imagery are decided on and executed at this stage.

4.5.4. Barrier Grid Masking

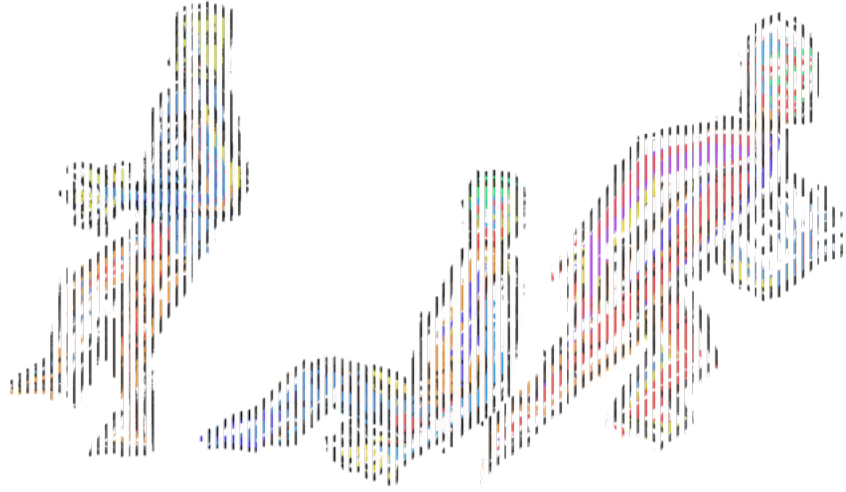


Figure 26. Human Figure(s) (Masked), Alp E. Teğin, 2020

Following the painting of the images, the pieces that will move are masked in accordance with the barrier grid animation figuration. The masking is done in an image editing software, in the case of this study GIMP, which is an open source image manipulation software developed by volunteers around the world, through the use of layer masks. The masking requires a fixed offset that masks vertical portions of the image, which when viewed through the sliding of a lined overlay across the image results in a sequential visibility in accordance to the offset. Thus, if someone were to slide the lined overlay across the image in the above example (Figure 23), the left figure would be visible first, followed by the middle image and lastly the right image.

4.5.5. Setting Up the Final Scene

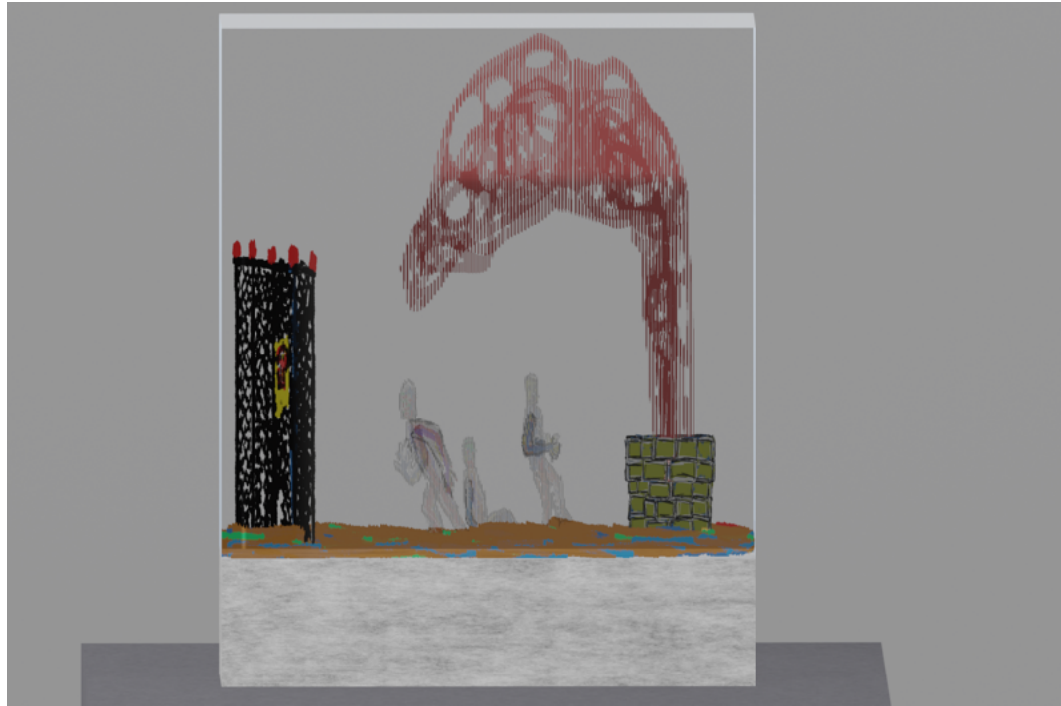


Figure 27. *I-Go I-E*, Alp E. Teğın, 2020 (Digital Render)

Following the creation of the barrier grid masking, which serves as the encoding of the movement within this artistic study, the final step in the workflow encompasses the import of the individual painted assets back into blender in order to set up the desired scene, with the final visualization of the sculpture taking place in this step. The layers of glass are simulated in 3D and textured with the images of the environmental and figural elements, afterwards the camera and lights are animated in order to render a visualization of the final artwork.

The resultant model displays an approximation of the final sculpture, upon which the artist can change the placement of the individual pieces and bring to their desired

state through the manipulation of the textures themselves. The depth created through the use of glass thus simulates the depth of the space the figures enact the movement, serving the depiction of the notion of spatiality within quantitative multiplicities, whereas the abstracted moving figures serve as the depiction of the durational quality of qualitative multiplicities, thus compositing the time of Chronos with the time of Aion.

4.4.6. Executing the Sculpture

Following the final set up of the scene in a digital environment, every layer is rendered as an image and projected onto the glass layers through the use of a projector, upon which the negative space that is devoid of any paint is masked out through the use of masking tape and paper, which functions as the stencil. The space that will be painted is coated in gesso primer, to serve as the bonding agent for the paint on the surface. Following the drying of the primer, the paint is applied onto the glass layer and this step is repeated for every layer, after which the layers are stuck together with the use of transparent glass adhesive and the mold for the cement base is attached to the stacked glass layers, which completes the process of creating the sculpture when the base dries and the mold is removed.

It is of note, however, that the final step executed in Blender is optional, serving mainly the purpose of visualization and a final edit, given the potential of not being able to hold a physical exhibition for the piece or the desire to create a model that can be viewed online. As such, the artist can skip the final digital step and start painting

on the glass layers directly through the projected image, however the ability to edit the entire piece is limited to the last step, as such it provides an important opportunity for the artist.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

“Our sentence is up.”

Grant Morrison, *The Invisibles* Vol. 3, Issue #1, p. 22, 1994

This artistic research and the accompanying praxis outlines the preliminary foundation of durational aesthetics, which in the scope of this study focused solely on the qualitative depiction of movement. However, throughout the study the potential for the expansion and growth of durational aesthetics became evident. Namely, echoing Paul Scheerbart’s sentiment in his seminal speculative text on glass architecture when he writes, “The new glass environment will completely transform mankind...” (Scheerbart, 1914, p. 74) Durational aesthetics, in this respect, opens up a potential for the depiction of movement in future artistic works. Warranting further experimentation, with particular focus on the narrative and figural elements in the glass layer sculptures, durational aesthetics presents room for growth and change.

The narrative experimentation, with the guiding question of “what would a short fiction story look like in the context of durational aesthetics?” Presents promise, as the problems arising within that particular avenue could hold the key to the visual language that durational aesthetics needs to develop. As the barrier grid masked figuration makes fine details difficult to identify and the qualitative changes therein create problems with visual continuity with regards to characters, the proposed future visual language of durational aesthetics could solve these issues, through potential identifiers or a more refined technique to enable the viewer to follow the narrative and/or the movement of the figures depicted more fluidly.

Furthermore, the figuration could be refined further, to potentially devise a method for the finer details to be preserved, either through larger vertical bars that depict the figures or through some other means, that would still highlight the qualitative differences of the poses while enhancing the visual fidelity the artist intends for their figures.

As such, the utilization of the spatial qualities stacked glass layers provides, along with the temporal characteristics barrier grid animations provide to ultimately composite time and space opened up an immense potential for future artistic projects and researches. The narrative and figural potential notwithstanding, being able to present movement without the use of a video screen and being able to visually freeze motion gives way to interesting use cases, both as bigger and more elaborate scenes, as well as miniature worlds, without needing to resort to three dimensional models of the buildings or physical miniatures.

Working on this artistic research proved challenging in terms of decision making. Considering the myriad of possible topics, narratives and movements to explore, by far the most difficult aspect was keeping the main argument of the depiction of motion in focus. As the mind wonders on what else could have been done in relation to the praxis, conscious effort had to be made to creating a small scene and keeping it logically consistent, as many ideas brainstormed during the development of the project would result in movement being overshadowed by the story. As such, given the self imposed limitations that this artistic research adhered to, future iterations of durational aesthetics seems to be rife with potential.

Another difficulty that has arisen throughout the project was the matter of the workflow, namely the efficiency of the process. While time consuming, the process, in theory, could be streamlined further through the programming of specialized tools that would aid and automate certain aspects of the steps involved in the process. However, in order for that possibility to be explored, it would be best to further refine the workflow through the creation of several projects and identifying redundancies or inefficiencies involved.

The unfortunate time frame that this artistic research was conducted in, during the COVID-19 pandemic, meant that the project was not physically exhibited at the culmination of the study but rather exhibited digitally through the use of a digital model of the sculpture. However, regardless of the unfortunate turn of events regarding the exhibition, following the end of the pandemic a physical exhibition of

the sculpture would benefit both the project as well as create an opportunity to receive feedback with regards to the technique developed and incorporate the ideas to refine the project into its second iteration. As such, in terms of future experimentation, an element to focus on would be the visual disconnect the layers create in solid elements with a contour such as the architectural features and the depicted sculptures within the project. Even if solving this aspect of the work might turn out to be impossible, it might be refined into a unique feature that relates to durational aesthetics.

This thesis was the result of a year long study on the depiction of movement through painting, taking inspiration from many varied sources and experimenting with different media to present the viewer with *I-Go I-E*, the story of a character who trespasses into restricted territory, only to discover an eldritch creature that challenges their notion of reality, essentially serving as an encounter with the unknown. As a primal fear, the fear of the unknown serves both as a blocker and fuel for the creative process, thus I, as the artist feel a certain amount of kinship with the trespassing figure, as I both feel the fear in not knowing how the technique developed in this study will be received, as well as the excitement in the potential it holds.

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APPENDIX

ARTIST STATEMENT

My works present a lifelong interest in convergences, and the potential they hold. Serving as a philosophical anchoring point, I see the many disciplines I operate within as one thing: storytelling. Aiming to connect with you and present not how I see, but rather how I think and feel. Working in the fields of literature, painting, sculpture, video game development and photography, the principle themes that inform my artworks relate to narrative, space, movement and the role of the audience.

I-Go I-E is the result of my Master of Fine Arts thesis on the development of a technique for depicting movement in mixed media stacked glass sculpture, firmly rooted in the philosophical concept of the qualitative multiplicity by Henri Bergson, the work presents a figure trespassing and being frightened by the movement of an organic mass sprouting from a well, upon which the figure falls to the ground and frantically runs away.

The choice of colors and the visual aesthetic plays a key part in the conveyance of the narrative. The organic shapes and precise imagery of the sprouting mass provide a contrast with the aesthetic style of the rest of the artwork, which is more expressive, combining multiple layers of gestural brush strokes and line work, signifying the unfathomable nature of the sprouting mass in the eyes of the trespassing figure, thus the work melds concepts such as cosmic horror, inspired by H. P. Lovecraft's short stories and expressionistic painting techniques.

ARTIST BIO

Alp Tegin was born in Switzerland on May 27, 1994. His interest in art and literature manifested itself when he moved to Turkey at the age of 10, writing stories and filling notebooks with sketches. This in turn lead to his introduction to clay sculpture, which he used to produce miniatures to be used in self designed tabletop games.

His interest in literature and writing lead him to enroll at Hacettepe University's Department of American Culture and Literature, where he focused on experimental storytelling and poetry. Following his Bachelor's degree, he enrolled in Bilkent University's Department of Communication and Design, where he is currently working on his Master of Fine Arts in Media and Design.

His works focus on narrative experimentation, world building, the role of genre, movement and space in the context of mixed media sculpture and painting.