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# Moving image installation, the embodied spectator of cinema and Amar Kanwar: Learning from intermediality

## ABSTRACT

*This article juxtaposes cinema and moving image installation to question the ways cinema studies has understood embodied spectatorship. Through a close study of Amar Kanwar's moving image installation, The Sovereign Forest, exhibited at 'documenta 13', the article draws on an intermedial approach to explore emerging transformations in the phenomenological dynamics of the moving image. The article explores how the concrete, multisensory experience of Kanwar's installation trains the sensorium of the viewer, opening new possibilities for the moving image. This concrete physicality serves as a point of reference to refocus and sharpen the understanding of the more complex kinaesthetic dimensions of cinema spectatorship.*

## KEYWORDS

Amar Kanwar  
cinema and embodied  
spectatorship  
moving image  
installation  
intermediality  
film and the senses  
artists' cinema

## INTRODUCTION: CINEMA STUDIES AND MOVING IMAGE INSTALLATION

In the discourse of art history, discussions of hybrid moving image installation works have repeatedly focused on the trope of the mobile spectator, in accounts that valorize the ambulatory vision of the gallery as the physical

1. Among art historians there has been a spectrum of responses. On one hand there is a defensive response that sees film as colonizing the gallery, displacing traditional contemplative modes with sensationalist immersive spectacle; on the other, a euphoric response that privileges the viewing of the moving image in the gallery space – seen as active and mobile – over the cinema spectator – seen as sedentary and passive (Baker 2003). The curator of the Whitney Museum, Chrissie Iles, for example, has argued that in ‘the immersive space of contemporary commercial cinema ... you’re passive and motionless, and you’re transfixed by the image’ (Baker 2003). For a good overview and critique of this tendency among art historian and curators, see Balsom (2013: 50–55).

correlate of and condition for an active, critical viewing. In a sleight of hand as anachronistic as it is exasperating, a hierarchy of discourses comes into play in which the mobile, embodied and supposedly active spectator of the gallery is opposed to the sedentary and putatively disembodied and passive spectator of cinema.<sup>1</sup> The understanding that our experience of cinema is an embodied and active experience has been systematically argued over decades and is widely accepted by many contemporary film scholars. We recognize the materiality of film – that it engages tactile, sensory and kinaesthetic registers as essential dimensions of spectatorship – and the trope of the spectator as a disembodied set of eyes, popular in 1980s film theory, has long since lost its lustre. Even a cursory foray into contemporary film studies should alert the reader to the sophisticated and nuanced understandings of embodied cinematic experience developed over decades, and the need for an interdisciplinary awareness in any investigation of the reception of the moving image in the museum space (Barker 2009; Marks 1999; Rutherford 2011; Sobchack 1992). Even so, the differences between embodied cinema spectatorship and the different kind of physicality of the viewer of installation work challenge the ways the embodied spectatorship of cinema has been theorized by film scholars, demanding a rethinking and clarification of these insights. As Giuliana Bruno wrote in her groundbreaking 2007 study of the ongoing transformation of the moving image in the museum, the practices of exhibition are key considerations here and ‘film theory, despite its interest in exhibition, has yet to engage fully in this art historical discourse’ (Bruno 1997: 5).

How can we think about the differences between embodied cinema spectatorship and the experience of the viewer of these ‘spatialized narratives’ extended into the physical spaces of moving image installation work? Does this work relativize what we have come to understand as the embodiment of cinema spectatorship, positioning it on one end of a continuum, with the physically mobile spectator of the gallery space on the other? Is it a difference of scale, or is it a qualitatively different kind of embodied experience that ensues? Is the embodiment of the gallery spectator actual and that of the cinema spectator virtual?

Bringing to bear a sophisticated understanding of cinema spectatorship to these questions, Bruno focuses on the mobility of vision intrinsic to viewing the cinematic image. Tracing the genealogy of cinema in practices of perambulatory vision that preceded it, Bruno highlights the continuities between late nineteenth century architectural promenades and proto-cinematic exhibitions, the mobile cinematography of theatrical exhibition and the ‘architectural’ hybrids of recent moving image installation work. Pivotal to this discussion is an understanding that the physical mobility of the pre-cinematic viewer is carried over – transmuted – into the mobile vision into which the viewer is transported by the cinematic camera. Bruno argues that this mobile cinematic vision is, in turn, refigured in installation:

she who wanders through an installation acts precisely like the film spectator absorbing and connecting visual spaces. The installation makes manifest the imaginative paths comprising the language of filmic montage.

(Bruno 1997: 28)

Thus, from the perspective of the mobile experience of space, Bruno suggests that, for the viewer, ‘the kind of transport that drives the architectonics of

film spectatorship' mirrors the 'fluid geography of exhibition' of the museum (Bruno 1997: 27, 18). This genealogy of the mobile and kinaesthetic haptic vision that is cinema spectatorship emphasizes the continuities between the three historical modes of viewing but does not provide us with tools to think about the qualitative differences between them.

Coming from an equally sophisticated understanding of cinema spectatorship, but emphasizing temporality, Laura Marks highlights the differences between the spectatorial modes of cinema and the museum, focusing specifically on the quality of attention that derives from duration (2012). Writing of experimental film and video works made for theatrical exhibition, she argues that a commitment to the duration of the work is essential for spectatorial immersion in the experience and highlights the impoverishment of viewing that is often produced in the installation context. In the gallery, she argues, the compensation for losing this absorptive quality is a cognitive one: in an often fleeting walk-through, the viewer gets an idea of the work, rather than experiencing it.

Both Marks and Bruno characterize spectatorship of the 'single channel' cinematic moving image as a multi-directional sense of 'transport'. In Bruno's account, kinaesthetic experience and the dynamic, integrative aspects of spatial montage figure prominently in the complex 'psychic, emotional geography' of cinema spectatorship. For Marks, this is virtual but still profoundly embodied:

immersion in the single channel allows the virtual to traverse us in all directions: from the movie, from our memories, from our bodies, from our physical surroundings, in experiences that can be unbearably intense as certain virtualities become actual while others teem inchoately in our knees, in our stomachs, behind our eyeballs, behind the eyeballs of the film.

(Marks 2012)

Both approaches expose the crude maxim of the supposedly disembodied, immobile passive cinema spectator that is so often repeated in an art context. A swathe of other studies of hybrid moving installation works, by scholars well grounded in contemporary understandings of the richness and complexity of cinema spectatorship, such as Maeve Connolly and Erika Balsom, lay out comprehensive challenges to the valorization of the mobile spectator of installation work (Balsom 2013; Connolly 2009). However, clearing the field of this furphy so popular among art historians still leaves us with many gaps in our understanding of the kinds of spectatorship emerging in the museum and how they challenge the ways we, as film scholars, think about film.

A phenomenological approach that acknowledges the complex, dynamic, multisensory nature of cinema spectatorship in its immersive modes can help to tease out the ways these modes are being transformed in installation work that integrates the moving image with other media. Starting from an exploration of a synthesis of diverse media forms within the single channel film, Ágnes Pethő writes,

reading intermedial relations requires, more than anything else, an embodied spectator who gets 'in touch' with the world of the film. Intermediality in film is grounded in the (inter)sensuality of cinema

2. Kanwar (1997), for example, draws on the extensive correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian public over the question of non-violence.

itself, in the experience of the viewer being aroused simultaneously on different levels of consciousness and perception.

(2011: 4)

Interdisciplinary approaches to the convergence between cinema and the museum, emerging under the rubric of intermediality, have begun to explore what happens at the interface between different media (see Pethö 2010 for an overview). Scholars working in the field of intermediality have highlighted the ways these different modes or media 'refashion each other' (Mandelli 2014) and must be understood not as 'an adding of different medial concepts nor a situating-in-between-media of separate works, but an integration of aesthetic concepts of separate media in a new medial context' (quoted in Arapoğlu and Erol 2014). In some emerging installation work, this is a montage of disparate phenomenological modes, which occurs at the level of reception, producing a kind of multisensory experience that stems specifically from the hybridity of the work: its capacity to bring together different modes of experience that may amplify and complicate the sensory engagement with the work. This work does not necessarily produce the kind of immersive experience that Marks seeks, or rely strongly on the mobility emphasized by Bruno, but can be invigorating and draw the 'transportive' capacities of cinema into composite, hybrid works.

### **THE SOVEREIGN FOREST: A HYBRID 'CONSTELLATION OF EXPERIENCES'**

*The Sovereign Forest* (Kanwar 2012), a moving-image installation work by Indian artist/film-maker Amar Kanwar, exhibited in 'documenta 13' in 2012, serves as a generative point of departure to explore these questions. Kanwar became known internationally for his densely layered documentary films that synthesize the rhythmic, tactile, sensory and intellectual dimensions of the medium to engage heterogeneous audiences on multiple levels. Speaking of his single channel film work, Kanwar has described his attempts to work with 'sound, music, ambience, image, and, color ... to create a constellation of experiences that have the capability to relate with the multiplicity of life and audiences and eventually the multiplicity of the maker as well' (Rutherford 2005: 118). In these documentary works, Kanwar's approach stems from an understanding that 'the reality you are trying to talk about itself is filled with many dimensions', and he works to create this multisensory and intellectual 'constellation of experiences' within the context of a strongly committed political project (Rutherford 2005: 119).

There was a sense in the earlier films that Kanwar was straining against the unifying tendency in documentary, but as much as these earlier films often played with a tangential relationship between image and voice-over and explored the rhythmic and associative possibilities of the image, the films were somewhat logo-centric – dense political tracts compiled around tightly constructed written texts.<sup>2</sup> For a viewer familiar with these earlier documentaries, *The Sovereign Forest* would come as a surprise. The installation is sparse, pared back, the voice-over gone, but in this installation Kanwar has not abandoned his commitment to a multi-layered, polyvocal aesthetic engagement with the medium and its possibilities to intervene in his political context. *The Sovereign Forest* is about land – the struggles over sovereignty of the commons, as the state and industrial and mining corporations appropriate rural lands

in India's mineral-rich Odisha state and in neighbouring Chhattisgarh, and the protest movements mobilized to resist the dispossession. Here the means of documentation and its effects have evolved dramatically from those of the earlier films. Kanwar has spoken recently of the ongoing transformation of his aesthetic means in 'the search for a language, a way to speak' (Sardhesai 2014: 52). He says he wanted 'to experiment with ways of seeing, showing, perceiving – the opening up of and the dialogue with a multiplicity of senses' (Bailey 2014). In *The Sovereign Forest* he has completely reinvented his idiom.

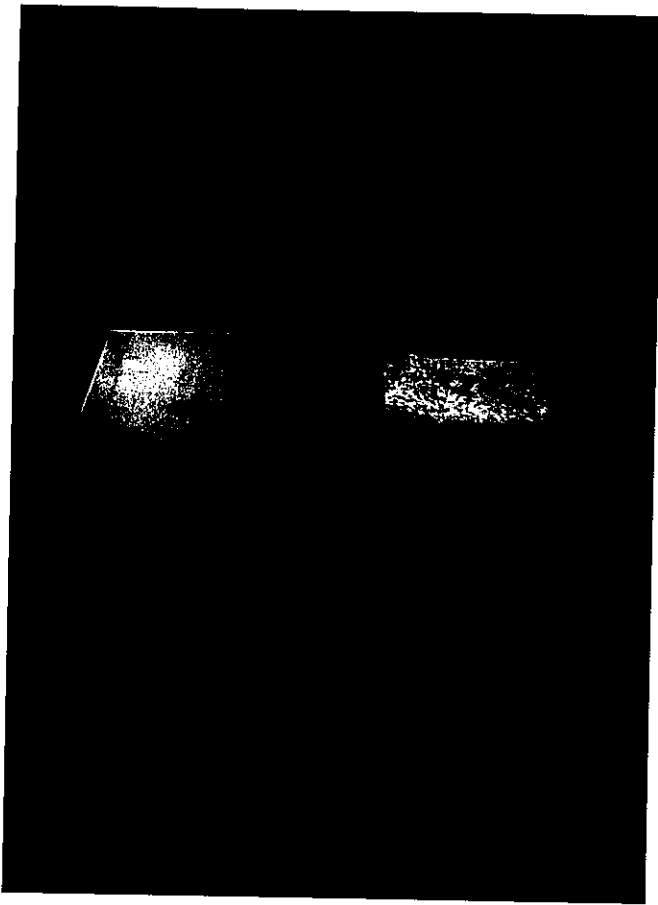
At 'documenta', this work combined digital film projections, written texts, objects and photo books, extended across the space of a two-room gallery installation in the Ottoneum, the Natural History Museum in Kassel. In the first room, a relatively darkened space, the eponymous forest of the work featured in a digital film projection filling the entire wall of the small room. Kanwar has said that this film, called *The Scene of the Crime*, documents landscapes, places and spaces in Odisha that were probably about to disappear as they were bulldozed out of existence by industry (Yorkshire Sculpture Park 2013). For much of the film, images of the land, trees, grasses blowing in the wind and water rippling across a lake drew the viewer into an encounter with the land (Figure 1). Slow, relatively still, the film contained almost no dialogue until a very minimal text towards the end of the film as a woman talks, briefly, about grief. The balance of the film relied on visual and auditory rhythms. In lieu of the dense text of Kanwar's earlier single channel film work, here the rhythmic sensory qualities of the image were split off into an elegiac, contemplative mode, as the viewer was drawn in to a sensory engagement with the fluid movement of trees, wind, water and grass and the precariousness of the land.

In the second room, laid out around three walls, three digital projectors beamed images down from above, each one projecting onto a large book about



Figure 1: *The Sovereign Forest: The Scene of Crime*, 2011. HD video installation, colour, sound (42 minutes). Courtesy of Amar Kanwar and Marian Goodman Gallery. Photo credit: Henrik Stromberg.

3. The paper makers received an individual credit at 'documenta'. One commentator has noted objects 'embedded inside the paper such as a fishing net, a cloth garment, rice seeds, a betel leaf and a newspaper' (Yorkshire Sculpture Park 2013).



*Figure 2: The Sovereign Forest: The Counting Sisters and Other Stories, 2012. Book: handmade banana fibre paper, screen print, hand sewn. Projection: version 2, HD colour, silent (40 minutes), 2011. Installation view: Amar Kanwar: The Sovereign Forest, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary 21-Augarten. Courtesy of Amar Kanwar and Marian Goodman Gallery. Photo: © Jens Ziehe / TBA21, 2014.*

a metre wide. The pages of these books were manufactured from banana leaf paper, which was a bony, yellowy colour, and the paper itself was heavily textured with ripples, grooves, folds and gnarly knots.<sup>3</sup> Each book had fragments of text printed on the left-hand page and the image was projected on the right-hand page. The viewer had to turn the pages to follow the text, feeling its greasy, leathery texture, its weight, its fragility and the need for care in the interaction (Figure 2). The projected image merged with the fibrous vegetal matter and the cryptic textual narration to produce a composite, highly tactile encounter. Akin to the 'cine-material structures' that Maeve Connolly writes about, which 'explore the material properties of the screen', here the materiality of the banana fibre became part of the concept (Connolly 2009: 18ff).

On one of these books, the written texts were documents about the struggle to prevent the expropriation of land in Chhattisgarh state in 1991, signalling the historical continuity with the contemporary resistance in Odisha. The

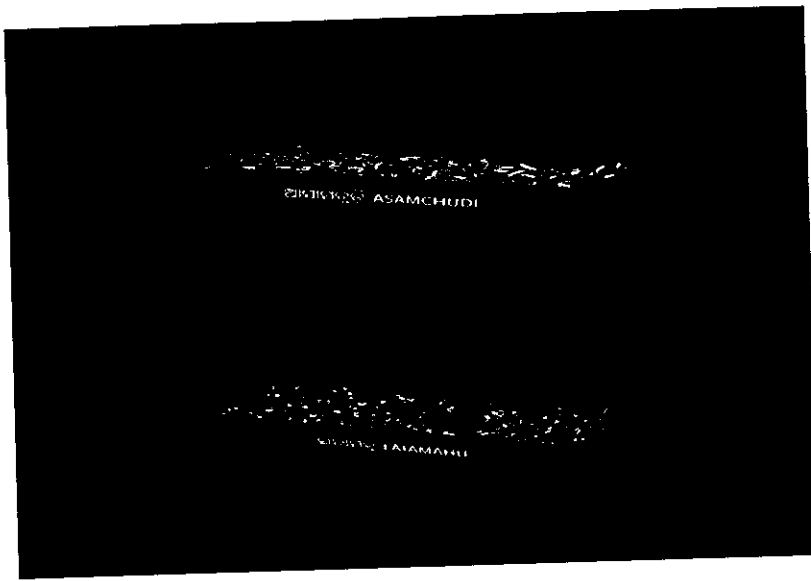


Figure 3: The Sovereign Forest: '272 Varieties of Indigenous Organic Rice Seeds', 2012. Organic rice seeds. Installation view: Amar Kanwar: *The Sovereign Forest*, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary 21-Augarten. Courtesy of Amar Kanwar and Marian Goodman Gallery. Photo: © Jens Ziehe / TBA21, 2014.

texts and images traced the incursion of industry into the land, documentary footage of the protest movement, the mass demonstrations, the testimony of participants who recount the build-up of tension and menace, the abduction and murder of the trade union protest leader, Shankar Niyogi, the funeral procession following his murder, and the struggle to seek justice and to bring the perpetrators to account.<sup>4</sup> In the second projection, images of Odisha were beamed onto the 'paper' printed only with the titles of chapters, with no written word to document the knowledges they contained.<sup>5</sup> The third projection – the one in the middle – was quite different. Here footage of the daily life of the village was projected onto the banana leaf folio printed with the text of small fables that resonated with the poetic wisdoms of traditional village life and evoked a magical, storytelling quality.

At the other end of the room, six ranks of small rectangular wooden boxes stretched in an arc around the width of the room, 272 in all, each filled with a different kind of seed (Figure 3). Each seed, named in an inscription on the box in the cursive Oriya script and in the Roman alphabet, was a different colour, shape and texture. The immediate temptation was to smell the seeds but only a musty fragrance remained to satisfy the olfactory desire they evoked. At intervals, inserted into the ranks of seed boxes, were several photo books that recorded the suicides of indebted farmers.

#### WHY INSTALLATION?: A MULTI-SENSORY STRATEGY

Like a beam of white light passed through a prism, splitting into all the colours of the rainbow, the conventions of the single channel film that brings together the spectrum of sensory and kinaesthetic experience were here split, dispersed and staged across the multiple channels of the installation work. The material

4. The alleged perpetrators were assassins hired by local industrialists (Sanhati collective).
5. This book has been described as 'a book about knowledge that is not scripted [in which] each title locates trajectories of wisdom that are missing in formal national constitutions' (Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary 2013).

6. Marks also suggests a second option: 'When the work is both impossible to see in its entirety and absorbing enough that you might want to see the whole thing' (Marks 2012).

qualities of each part spoke to different senses, amplifying the sensory dimensions of the work. Each channel now brought with it a different quality of experience and evoked a different mode of engagement.

The film projected on the wall in the first room pared back language and linearity to expand the kinaesthetic dimensions of visual and auditory rhythm. In the second room, the facility that we have come to understand as an integral part of our engagement with the haptic image was rendered concrete and physical in the touch of hand on leathery banana folio, the three-dimensional texture and palpable density of the projection surface. The remnant scent of the seeds added another sensory layer. Complementing the sensory dimension, the storytelling mode of each medium generated different modes of experience.

The viewer of *The Sovereign Forest* at 'documenta' was free to view the installation in whatever order they chose, but the layout of the rooms encouraged viewing the large-scale projected film first. In my engagement with the work, this 42-minute film was intriguing enough for me to watch it in its entirety and to become thoroughly immersed in its temporal and spatial rhythms. My sensorium thus entrained by the experience in the first room no doubt fed into an enhanced sensory-tactile attunement that carried over into my encounters with the objects and projections in the second room. This structure of awakening the senses in one medium and then multiplying this sensory quality through a dialogue with other kinds of sensory experiences seemed to enable an experience that had a quality of astonishment and produced an embodied engagement that was more layered, unfamiliar and difficult to grasp than the embodiment of the cinema spectator in the auditorium. The sensory dimensions of *The Sovereign Forest* opened a pathway into a different kind of engagement with the work. As one Indian reviewer, Shailaja Tripathi, wrote, 'Not just viewing but the process of viewing [...] enriches the viewer's experience' (2014).

Following her critique of the move of experimental film and video work into the museum, Marks asks when the gallery makes sense as an exhibition venue. She argues that installation can be productive when it can produce a multisensory environment that enhances the quality of immersion, or makes possible a multisensory immersion that a theatrical screening could not achieve.<sup>6</sup> However, *The Sovereign Forest* suggests that installation has the potential to be enlivening in ways that are multisensory but not necessarily immersive and derive specifically from its hybridity – from integrating disparate sensory-experiential modes from different media into a new synthesis, new configurations.

### A SENSORY EPISTEMOLOGY

Understanding this installation cannot be separated from a consideration of the ways Kanwar has reworked the documentary medium. *The Sovereign Forest* is motivated by the documentary impulse but that impulse has been thoroughly interrogated, its limitations and aporias challenged, its speaking positions ruptured and transformed into new modes, new voices, new kinds of evidence, new ways of articulating knowledge. In *The Sovereign Forest*, Kanwar says, he is taking the investigation beyond 'the limits of a factual ontology, challenging the constraints within which documentary has "painted [us] into a corner"'. He asks,

which vocabulary has more capability to understand the scale and extent of the crime? If I do not understand the meaning of loss, its scale,



its extent, its multiple dimensions how could I even know what it is that is lost?

(Bailey 2014)

In *The Sovereign Forest*, what is being annihilated in the expropriation and destruction of the land is a whole life world, a sensual quality of life experienced as much poetically as it is 'factually'. As critic and curator Anannya Mehta puts it, the work occupies and creates a space where poetry, memory and evidence are equally important in understanding one's idea of oneself and the other' (Adhikari 2013). The work, says Kanwar, 'presents in the public space poetry as evidence in its multiple forms' (Bailey 2014). He asks, 'can poetry serve as evidence?'

Kanwar's understanding of how to work with the poetic registers of documentary to produce a 'constellation of experiences' (emphasis added) is pivotal here in his ability to invent ways of opening up this panoply – to mix and disperse the properties of the single channel across numerous modes in a form of expanded cinema. By splitting the imagined, non-existent single channel documentary work into multiple phenomenologically distinct encounters, the work amplifies the knowledges and understanding it can evoke and in doing so has the potential to address multiple audiences on different levels.

The brief for 'documenta 13' sought work that would explore 'terrains where politics are inseparable from a sensual, energetic, and worldly alliance between current research in various scientific and artistic fields and other knowledges, both ancient and contemporary' (Christov-Bakariev 2013). In *The Sovereign Forest*, Kanwar explores 'regimes of knowledge' that belong in a different register than the Cartesian understanding of cognition. This happens in part through an enlivening of the senses that opens a kind of porousness that builds new connections. The kind of knowledge that this installation kindles is not limited to literal, cognitive understanding. Rather, a recognition of many knowledges and many modes of being is enabled through affective resonances of those worlds. The seed boxes – 272 varieties of rice cultivated by a single farmer – are 'containers of several generations of a fluid intangible knowledge system developed by farmers', as Kanwar describes them (Bailey 2014). Like a portal into the encyclopaedic agricultural knowledge of the farmers – of seeds and planting, of biological diversity, of a whole ecology of the land – the seed bank opens the work to a horizon of knowledge beyond the gallery space. Kanwar says that farmers have always given their seeds names, usually the names of loved ones like their children. While very few viewers of the work at documenta would be aware of this association, for the farmer who views the installation in Bhubaneswar this resonance may saturate the encounter with the work. Similarly, the plant leather 'paper' speaks to its vegetable origin in the leaf of the tree, a whole genealogy of labour of cultivation, tilling the soil, the techné of the framers, and an artisanal pride in the craft skills. The storytelling mode of the folk tales imprinted on the paper brings a sense of poetics at risk of erasure. The more amorphous layers of embodied experience are thus brought into play, into dialogue, with the linear realm of political discourse.

Moving beyond the question of epistemology, *The Sovereign Forest*, at 'documenta' and in its other iterations, suggests that the installation context can also be enabling in other ways that derive specifically from the move out of the theatrical auditorium. For Kanwar, the installation form enables the production and exhibition of the work as incomplete – as a work in progress

7. These materials form part of an ever-growing archive. According to Saffronart blog, 'the evidence on display includes photographs, lists of residents, land records and tax receipts, proofs of occupancy, maps of acquired villages, documents' (ambikarajgopal 2013). Parts of this archive were then included as part of the Yorkshire Sculpture Project installation (Pattnaik 2012).
8. Krauss is here writing of the work of William Kentridge. How this might work for different viewers would of course be variable and a phenomenological approach must always encompass this variability.

that can be continually added to, adapted to new sites and contexts. Accounts of the permanent installation of *The Sovereign Forest*, on Samadrusti campus in Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha state, document the constant morphing of the work, as spectator-participants add objects. Visitors to the installation are invited to add 'a photograph, a film, a document, a text, an object, seed, cloth, pattern, drawing, or any evidence in any form to the constellation of evidence presented' (Pattnaik 2012).<sup>7</sup> The hybridity has allowed a point of entry for people whose lives are addressed in the work to take ownership of it, to grow it with their own contributions. Kanwar asks how to 'find the threads that tug at many hearts?' (Rutherford 2011: 120). This openness to viewer-generated additions gives the work an extraordinary scope to bridge, on the one hand, the most cosmopolitan of international art audiences and, on the other, the dispossessed local communities whose struggles inspired the work that it documents and with which it engages.

In a further extension of this flexibility, in an installation for the Yorkshire Sculpture Project in the United Kingdom in 2013, Kanwar added site-specific sound installation works that evoked connections with the history of mining that Yorkshire shares with Odisha.

Thus the modular, multimedial structure allows for the moving image to be assembled into ever-changing constellations, to become one part of an open-ended configuration that can be inflected and oriented in different ways with the addition of new material reconfigured for new contexts. It allows for new montage connections to be enacted. The very hybridity of this work – its montage structure – makes this a flexible, mobile, contingent and responsive medium in a way that an edited single channel film, once 'in the can', can never be.

#### A 'FUSION OF MEDIA'

For some viewers, this work might be seen as an assemblage – as the addition of the moving image to a three-dimensional sculptural installation in a way that evokes a viewing practice analogous to the viewing of other sculptural assemblages in the gallery. However, an interdisciplinary, intermedial perspective highlights the way the work has been conceived as 'a fusion rather than an accumulation of media' (Pethő 2010). The installation work appeals to the viewer to actively re-synthesize the hybrid, multisensory elements of the work into a whole, albeit an uneasy, uncertain one. This emerging installation work demands that we learn new viewing practices, that in the process of 'inventing a new medium', as Rosalind Krauss writes in another context, this work is also inventing new modes of reception (Krauss 2000: 14).<sup>8</sup>

The curator of 'documenta 11' in 2002, Okwui Enwesor, described his task as constructing 'a horizon of the possible' (Downey 2014). The work of Kanwar at 'documenta 13' integrates this reinvention of the formal possibilities of the medium with a vision for its potential as a means of engagement in the social-political sphere. Erika Balsom situates Kanwar as part of a 'fourth generation' of installation artists, 'interested in exploring the spatialization of narrative ... sharply attuned to the material specificities of the media in which they work [but working to] use the moving image to turn outwards and open artistic production to an encounter with subjective and/or historical experience' (Balsom 2013: 157–58).

As Giuliana Bruno writes, the 'genealogical life of film is being extended [...] in the space of the contemporary gallery' (1997: 12–15). Kanwar's work suggests a further extension of this genealogical life: a potential future for an

expanded cinema, enabled by digital projection, that takes the moving image out of the auditorium and the gallery and into historically and culturally resonant spaces beyond the museum, to bring alive the memory, the connections, the significance of that site. Indeed, Kanwar has spoken of his plans to take *The Sovereign Forest* out onto the commons in India; he says, 'people are asking and are giving us locations and venues to show the project' (Bailey 2014). This form of expanded cinema has the potential to facilitate the emergence of the unique capacity of film, in all its forms, to integrate sensory and affective experience with images of actuality, modes of storytelling and modes of experience, however fragmented or elliptical. Kanwar's work shows us that this potential can come alive in juxtapositions, montages that jump across different media, across space, across different temporal regimes, across disparate modes of experience, and it is in negotiating these phenomenological hybrids that the astonishment and pleasure of the work erupts.

### EMBODIMENT AND SPECTATORSHIP: THE SPACES BETWEEN BODY AND WORK

An exploration of the hybrid sensory experiences generated by *The Sovereign Forest* highlights the need to shift focus away from the trope of the mobile spectator to a more complex understanding of how moving image installation work can mobilize intermedial encounters to produce a montage of phenomenological modes. The trope of the mobile spectator brings with it an assumption that the active spectator is the sovereign spectator – he or she who masters the space and can move through it at will. In cinema studies, the primacy of the sovereign spectator has been systematically challenged by models of spectatorship that emphasize the quality of mimetic experience generated by cinema – that tactile, sensory mode of engagement in which the boundaries between the subject and the object become blurred. Indeed, the sense of transport that both Marks and Bruno position as pivotal to cinema spectatorship is a psycho-physical experience characterized by that porousness between spectator and screen – by our capacity to 'pass out of ourselves just a precious little bit for a precious little while' as Adrian Martin describes it (2000). Bringing this understanding to bear on installation work gives us a way to think about how the work happens in the spaces *between* viewer and work – in the psycho-sensory processing that the viewer must make to integrate the disparate experiences. The insights of cinema studies into the complex, mobile psycho-geography of spectatorship help us to reframe how we understand modes of viewing moving image installation work.

Conversely, moving image installation work helps us to rethink and sharpen our understanding of embodiment in cinema spectatorship. Experiencing *The Sovereign Forest* involves a synthesis of the moving image with physical movement, touch and hybridity, in an event and an environment that are mobile and haptically alive. The comparison with this concrete physicality of the installation highlights the ambiguous nature of cinema spectatorship that is both material and energetic, tactile, kinaesthetic, imaginative and virtual all at the same time.

The sensory experience we have of the tactile cinematic image is actual, because vision itself is embodied. We experience the image of movement materially, with our bodies and musculature, because vision is by definition kinaesthetic. And yet, in cinema these images are not 'filled in' with the

actual passage through tactile, three-dimensional space or the touch of hand on surface. We have to fill in the gaps to make the experience complete: to move out of our sense of self as an intact sovereign subject into the space between the spectator and the screen, bringing with us our own mobile psycho-geography.

Juxtaposing the embodied experience of cinema and that of moving image installation work suggests that, paradoxically, there is something specific to the sedentary viewing of film projected in the auditorium that engages these sensory registers of perception in a more complex way that is not immediately extended into physical, motor action but instead folds back into the psycho-physical, sensory-affective experiences that make up cinema spectatorship: that the capacity of cinema to produce a heightened experience of embodiment is specifically tied to the relative containment of the physical body and the absence of actual physical movement and touch. What if it is this tension between actual movement and spectatorially induced kinaesthesia that produces a *heightened* embodiment for the cinematic spectator – that we have to draw in more of our embodied experience to fill in the gaps, to make the image full? What if this dynamic is *more* active, specifically because of the relative immobility of the body in the auditorium? This demands a more sophisticated understanding of the body itself and the ways that cinema spectatorship is embodied.

This understanding gives us a way to sharpen our understanding of cinema spectatorship, suggesting that, in so far as a ‘commitment to duration’ is pivotal to it, it is not duration per se that generates the immersive, embodied qualities of cinema spectatorship, but the potential of duration to enable the kind of porousness – the crossing of boundaries that happens slowly – and the dilation, the sensory awakening and kinaesthetic engagement that are enabled by duration. This sense of transport gives an understanding of immersive experience that is not reduced to a commitment to duration. As soon as we recognize that spectatorial mobility cannot be reduced to physical movement, it becomes clear that the experience of a moving image, whether in cinema or in installation, always requires us to move into the work to complete it. Just as Erich Auerbach wrote that, in the context of storytelling, the story is always ‘sensuously remade in the body of the listener’, so too is the moving image sensuously remade in the body of the viewer (Auerbach quoted in Marks 1999: 138). It is to the rich and diverse phenomenological manifestations and possibilities of this sensory integration that we should direct our attention.

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