



## In Slow Motion

As so much critical and curatorial attention fetishises Art's capacity to express rupture; its perpetual becoming'ness, I propose, by way of contrast, within the space assigned to me here, to reflect on how some of Art's most consequent properties are those of continuity. Culturally speaking, we are in a transhistorical moment where sentimentality and nostalgia have enveloped terms like *contemporary* and *criticality* denuding them of their agency as meaningful paradigms. Arguably, we now inhabit an everlasting moment; a matmos fuelled singularity where the economies of globalisation have erased the distinctiveness between the hitherto separate stratum that made up the alluvium of the past. The collapse of contemporaneity has obliterated the chronologies that held stylistic categories in a strict relationship to the present (before it morphed into the everlasting moment). Within the vacuum created by this event there can be no substantive hierarchy among the concurrence of historical styles occupying the void sustained by the current implausibility of rupture. Further to this, I suggest that becoming, as an expression of fluidity, has been eclipsed by a reinterpretation of extant media such as painting. Particularly by re-examining their past in the context provided by the momentary; expressed often as a series of promiscuous dalliances with the theory and practice of entirely different media, such as film.

Slow Motion is an effect in film making in which time loiters with intent; its 24 frames per second hobble, trying to move forward against an invisible force attempting to hold them in near stasis. Slow Motion is the temporal slippage produced by the disjuncture between the rate at which the film is recorded and the speed with which it is played back. In painting it is an affect where time becomes immanent, slippery within an image, encrypted through some of the processes that paint shares with film. In an eponymous series of gradated abstractions by Nancy Constandelia temporality could be considered the subject of an object attempting to haunt the intertidal zone between painting and cinema. Gradation's inherent incrementality allows the artist to occlude the difference between making and unmaking by applying a filmic idiom to the vernacular of painting; paradoxically erasing and reinscribing the differences between them. Continuity is articulated as the correspondence between two traditional techniques that are both visualised through colloquialisms that are specific, yet not unique to them.

In *The Truth about Painting*, Derrida writes that "an attempt to translate an idiom into another language always and necessarily results in a remainder – an idiomatic excess". He states, "For what is idiomatic is always outside of translation". The implications for painting of *slow motion's* untranslatability extends beyond the interdimensional viscosity of paint, to what it invariably embalms between its patiently aggregated layers; aligned like the frames of a film or the overlapping panes of tinted glass in Gerhard Richter's *8 Scheiben* (2012). In these recent works, Constandelia is not directly transcribing onto the canvas the breakdown of synchronicity between the speed at which film is shot and that at which it is projected but rather she is rendering film's idiomatic capacity for temporal slippage as an expression of paint's facility for nuance. In the everlasting moment, a creative act that is slow, ponderous and deliberative is destabilising of conventionality and Constandelia's meticulous methodology can be construed as a site of passive resistance to the orthodoxies of her era.

In this series of variously sized works *slowness* is how poetic content is encoded by the artist at the juncture of the idiomatic and the vernacular, where the rhetoric of painting and cinema intersect. Slowness as a cypher for durational observation is common to both media and the languid is one of their constant, abiding indices. Inseparable from the nature of how painting and film enter the world through the emulsive, is their mutual capacity to concurrently represent and embody time at variable rates of passing.

Gary Carsley 6.20 pm 27<sup>th</sup> February – 9.56 am March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020