The Imaging of the City:
The Production of Subjectivity within the Dazzlement of the Affective Networked City

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Signed

Grant Petrey   30th April 2023

The Imaging of the City:
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Contents

The Imaging of the City:
The Production of Subjectivity within the Dazzlement of the Affective Networked City

The Imaging of the City:
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Abstract

This research conceptualises the networked city as a machinic screen. The affective forces of technology upon the city-as-screen is framed by a Deleuzian methodology, where affect theory is central. Research focuses on the Thatcherite imaginary connected to East London and then to discussion of other contemporary cities. This research claims that the increased technological networking of the 'smart' city to light-emitting diodes (L.E.D.s) creates increased screen-like luminescence that plays a key role in sense-making experience, but importantly, also in the imaging of the city within a neo-liberal imaginary. Steven Shaviro's concept of 'post-cinematic affect' is applied to the reading of the city as an affect-laden spectacle. Research is conducted into the visuality of the city within modernity, using the symbol of the skyscraper as a thread to connect the Empire State Building, One Canada Square, and the Burj Khalifa. There is an exploration of the relationship between the imaginaries of the city and the modulation of the subject within it. Hocquenghem's queer affect theory is used to examine queer representations of the city and as a method for remediating the spectacle of the city. This process involves mapping the affects encountered in East London to examine the dazzlement of the networked city. This affective mapping is used to develop a creative practice that aims to resignify the neo-liberal spectacle through a queer narrative. This form of 'détournement' of the city is also explored in examples of cinema and art where it operates as a form of resistant agency.

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Introduction

This research into the emergence of the 'smart' city considers the implications of affective changes and how they relate to the imaginaries that influence subjectivity. There is a focus on the increased dazzlement of the city via the networked light-emitting diode (L.E.D.) light. Research into the affective and cinematic qualities of the networked L.E.D. is undertaken. The ways these qualities transform the experience of the city and its imaginaries is considered. There is a focus on the imaginaries of Thatcherite neo-liberalism in East London and its transformation from the 1980s to the present. This is used make connections to the imaginaries of contemporary cities and how they are developing from mechanical machinic cities into networked computational machinic cities. Research into the implications of the machinic networked city upon subjectivity focuses on queer imaginaries. Queer subjection within the spaces and representations of the city is examined through a range of visual culture and cinematic case studies. A method of resistance to the affective narratives of neo-liberalism is proposed via a critical creative practice that involves remediating the affective architectures of spectacle within the city.

The city as an image is a conception that frames it within narratives of representation and the imaginary. It can be understood as having symbolic resonances that are connected to complex narratives that produce its image. The materiality of the city creates sensory experiences, and it is vital to consider these in relation to the imaginaries and representations of the city when forming an interpretation of it. The relationship of these imaginaries and the sensory to subjectivity is complex and involves an interplay of the legacies of the past with contemporary forces and narratives. Therefore, any notion of the city requires a process of 'imaging'. The imaging of the city and the imaging of the self within the city connects the sensory and affective architectures of the city with internal subjectivity. This thesis explores how subjectivity is influenced by the sense experience of the city and the imaging of the city. The emergence of the 'smart' city is a focus because it marks a change in the materiality of the city. Research is conducted into the resulting changes in sense experience and how new affective regimes impact upon the imaging of the city and subjectivity. The significant sensory change brought about by the networked city is its relationship to light and the increased luminance created by the proliferation of L.E.D. lights. Research into the

implications of this new luminescence for affect and the imaging of the city become significant.

Gilles Deleuze's ideas on imaging and affect are the central theoretical references for this research. The relationship between the image of thought and cinema developed by Deleuze is important to be able to investigate how the dazzlement of networked L.E.Ds creates an affective spectacle within the city. There is research into the increase in networked computation within new 'smart' cities such as Dubai, as well as older cities that undergo similar transformations such as London. Within this thesis it is proposed that the networked L.E.D recasts the city as a networked screen that increases the luminosity of the city with a dazzlement of new significations. This dazzlement and the new affective intensities of the smart city is central to this research endeavour. The city-as-screen, or screen-city, is conceptualised to examine its implications upon sense experience and the imaginaries of the city that influence subjectivity. Paul Virilio's (2008) engagement with the city and encroaching technologies within neo-liberalism is an important theoretical reference. His idea of the city as cinema connects the imaginaries of the cinema and the city to recognise that the computational mode of production of early digital technologies is linked to cinematic anaesthetics. Deleuze's (2005) take on the early developments of the digital image is crucial to this research on affect. Deleuze is able to connect affective forces to the culturally produced narratives of imaginaries and this is expanded upon and applied to develop a method for research practice. This direct relationship with the imaging of thought and the cinematic can be transposed onto the concept of the screen-city.

How can Deleuzian affect theory and concepts of imaging be utilised to examine the unfolding manifestations of techno-capitalism within the city? What are the implications for subjectivity when conceptualising the city as an affective cinematic machine that is bound to the flows of virtual power and its aestheticisation? Deleuze's development of affect theory from *Difference and Repetition* (2004), *The Logic of Sense* (2015) and his collaboration with Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (2005) are significant starting points. Affect is understood as autonomous forces and intensities that are produced within human, cultural and machinic interactions. Writing in *The Powers of the False* (Deleuze, 2005), he places emphasis on the structuring of reality as part of complex interconnected systems of forces and representations that produce affects and multiple imaginaries. The fundamental idea is that symbolic systems and the flows of affective forces displace the philosophical idea of a univocal truth. In the flow of affective forces, the multiplicity of relations and conditions create change and new configurations. The implications of this upon the structuring of ontology is significant

because it outlines that constructed imaginaries are not fixed. Affect is generated through systems of production and signification that contribute to the complexity of imaginaries and narratives that are social, economic, political, and cultural. This research into the imaging of the city considers how affective intensities work through the city and influence subjectivity via neo-liberal imaginaries.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* (2005), Deleuze and Guattari develop a critique of the forces of capitalism upon the city and their implications for subjectivity. Their concept of megalopolis positions the city within a critique of a globalised neo-liberal imaginary. They conceptualise the city as an abstract rhizomatic machine that serves capitalism, and they explicate the relationship between subjectivation and the machinic city. The impact of the skyscraper upon the cityscape is researched as part of the imaginaries of the city. It is explored through different chapters to position it as a key signifier within the neo-liberal megalopolis. There is an analysis of the Empire State Building, the Twin Towers, the Eiffel Tower, One Canada Square and the Burj Khalifa to consider their relationship to affect and their cultural narratives.

From his engagement with Deleuzian affect, Steven Shaviro (2010) develops 'post-cinematic affect' to reformulate the new affective relationships of the digital era with its pixels and digital screens. Shaviro considers how digital modes of cultural production, dissemination and consumption within capitalism conjure new aesthetics and also new affective intensities and attributes. With the proliferation of various forms of digital content such as streaming platforms, gaming, social media, and cinema no longer dominating the cultural landscape, the notions of affect ascribed to it require reappraisal in the digital era. The cultural move from analogue and indexical image creation into processual imaging changes the affective relationships. The computational acceleration of technology is reflected in new affective rhythms. Cultural engagement is much more dispersed and diverse across a range of platforms and mediums, and these bring their own temporal relationships and affects. Increased intensities, exaggerated physics, disjointed temporal rhythms and sequences, and hyper-real resolution, all at high velocity are key attributes of post-cinematic affect across different screen media. Shaviro develops a method of analysis for emerging affects and aesthetics within the digital era with a process of affect mapping. Shaviro develops his critique of capitalism by mapping changes in manifestations of affect within screen media. Shaviro uses another term from Deleuze, that of "modulation", which is crucial to understanding contemporary affect and subjectivity. He considers how the subject is modulated by the new affects of the digital era as a digital subject within capitalism.

Modulation is the somatic structuring of the subject within a complex ontological framework. In the present day, an increasing amount of daily activities involve some form of networked digital mediation. The subject as consumer, user and producer within the digital era has their subjectivity modulated within techno-capitalism because it enters greatly into their personal psychic realm of affective labour. The concept of the machinic city that captures the affective labour of the subject within capitalism is laid by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus (2005).* It is further developed within the context of the attention economy by Maurizio Lazzarato in *Videophilosophy* (2019) ,which is also a key theoretical reference for this research. Lazzarato details changes within digital technologies and affective labour being tied to capitalism. Lazzarato, while not necessarily critical of the digital computational era in and of itself, is concerned with the ontological implication of affective labour and how subjectivity is modulated by capitalism.

The mapping of affect within the city as a critical method has similarities with the strategies of disruption linked to Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* (2009). Debord is concerned with the virtual narratives of capitalism and the shaping of society around consumerism. The image and appearances have supremacy, and the subject becomes disconnected from material actualisations that produces an agency that is crucial to resist forces of the state and corporate influence. Debord, working as part of the Situationist International (1950), developed of a process of 'dérive' that involved walking the city to discover its creative potential and also to engage in acts of 'détournement'. Détournement within the city is a creative act of disruption to remediate the space of the city and how it might regulate behaviour in the city. Disruptive acts of détournement within the cityscape in combination with affective mapping have potential for critical creative practice. Sites within the city that have engaging imaginaries and interesting affective qualities can be sources of critical analysis and creative practice. What agency and resistance does an examination of the affective spectacle offer in terms of queer remediation of the visual and material culture of the city and its representations?

The development of affective mapping into a queer method requires considering desire and subjectivity in relation to the intensities of the city. Different subject groups inhabit different parts of the city in different ways. The spectacle of queer subjectivities within the city does not always align with heteronormative narratives. Therefore, the sites of inhabitation and representation for queer people within the city have their own particular characteristics. The development of a queer affect is always contingent given the equivocation of term queer, but this research uses the work of Guy Hocquenghem as a

starting point for considering desire, affect and remediating narratives. In *Homosexual Desire* (1993), Guy Hocquenghem develops queer affect theory from Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti Oedipus* (2000). Desire is central to Hocquenghem's reading of affect and it is specifically focused on queer desire. His analysis of heteronormativity via queer affect enable him to deconstruct the imaginaries of patriarchal phallocentric Freudian psychoanalysis. He critiques how heteronormativity spatialises concepts of the public and private in relation to the body and desire, and how this restricts desire for queer people and heterosexual women. How homonormativity and shame are created within restrictive social and affective systems is outlined as he develops a conception of queer affect. His analysis takes in the city of Paris and its sites of homosexual desire. What Hocquenghem is able to do is remediate narratives that restrict desire within the city and the body by acknowledging affective intensities that disrupt the implications of phallocentric patriarchy. Hocquenghem provides a methodology for locating queer affect that has profound implications for desire, sensory pleasure, and subjectivity. A method for a queer affective analysis of the city is possible via the mapping of affect. This enables a disruption of affective relationships within the city and also to enable a remediation of the imaginaries of the city.

I will define my use of the term queer for this research. Drawing from Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* (2006), queer is not understood as an identity that is definable. Rather, queer is a transitive term that is used to encompass a sensibility that is questioning of dynamics within different contexts, places, spaces and frameworks, to open the potentiality of subjectivity. Queer must question heteronormativity and indeed, homonormative conventions.

My contribution to research is to use Shaviro's conception of post-cinematic affect and apply it to readings of the cityscape and the skyscraper, but more specifically to an analysis of East London. The networked computational city conceived as a luminescent screen-city extends the reach of techno-capitalism via sense experience in new ways. What differentiates the screen-city from its predecessor, the machinic city of modernity, is a new materiality and luminance that aligns its affects much more closely to the cinematic by its digital mediatisation. The proliferation of screens in cities such as London gives cause to engage with research into its affect and imaginaries. Post-cinematic affect is part of the screen-city as part of a neo-liberal imaginary that impacts the attention and affective labour of the subject within it. Utilising the method of affective mapping to research the affective intensities of the cityscape at night involves paying attention to the contexts of the cityscape and the imaginaries that they evoke. Specific research has been conducted into mapping

affect within East London. Mapping the affects of East London reveals how areas have been moulded from a Thatcherite neo-liberal imaginary. The imaging of East London into a financial service economy hub came from Thatcher's neo-liberal blueprint. A declining post-industrial Docklands landscape was remade from what was the heart of British Imperial colonialism. Subsequent East London regenerations, including the development of the Olympic Park in 2012, have continued to transform East London. However, affective mapping also reveals that the areas surrounding these grand urban plans are inhabited by other types of imaginaries and subjectivities. This cohabitation of Thatcherite and alternative imaginaries within the cityscape of East London was explored in a 3D digitally animated film. The film takes in the different sites of East London that are part of regeneration plans. The city as a computational machine that produces affects is key imagery within the film. Particular attention is paid the green L.E.D. light of an A.T.M in an unremarkable street in East London. The ATM is remediated as a site of desire to suggest resistance to the surveillance of the neo-liberal city and also the co-joining of corporeal and machinic labour and affect. The film has a dazzling aesthetic that is meant to be seductive, but also aggressive. A soundtrack of intense electronic music accompanies the film as different space made of light are shown. The research for the film involved a process of mapping affect to consider the imagery of the film and its affective imaginaries. Queering space and place through remediating the spectacle of the city is a research based method of trying to decentralize dominant narratives and subjective norms to produce responses to the entangled sociopolitical, machinic structures that produce affective flows and narratives. The original contribution of this research is to contribution to the field of visual culture by exploring the city and the representations of the city and its relationship to sense experience via affect theory. There is focus to the imaging of East London and the imaginaries of this area. This research adds to the conceptualization of the city as screen and its relationship to subjectivation though material and cultural analysis. This research contributes to the existing discourse on the cinematic and affect theory in the digital era, and engages with creative, academic and queer resistance.

The research is organized over six chapters, starting with an outline of the Deleuzian framework that looks at technology and the spectacle. Chapter two explores the city of modernity and the birth of an imaginary of the city that coincides with specific technological developments as well as the growth of cinema as a cultural force. Chapter three considers the skyscraper as emblematic of capitalism, with a focus on its role in the imaginaries of a developing East London. There is analysis of the Thatcherite imaginary attached to One

Canada Square in Canary Wharf. The screen-city and the affective impact of its neo-liberalisation is explored to consider the Burj Khalifa as the world's largest screen. L.E.D. drones that now take to the sky in a range of ways from advertising, entertainment and as propaganda is developed in chapter four. Chapter five looks queer nocturnal desire and the coding of subjectivity within the city and its relationship to light. The chapter forms a narrative from queer film analysis that includes; Kenneth Anger's *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (1965) to Fairmen and Goharty's *Chemsex* (2015) that analyses the conditions in which queer subjectivities are formed within the city. Chapter six looks at queer affect and Steven Shaviro's critique of Deleuze and Guattari's dismissal of the beautiful and its affective force. This perspective is then applied to examples of remediating the spectacle of the city in the creative practices of Krzysztof Wodiczko and Prem Sahib.

1 – The Dazzlement of the Affective Networked City

This introductory chapter sets out the theoretical discourses around technology, spectacle affect and luminescence that frame the investigation into the imagining of the city within a dazzling cinema mode and considers a queer position to affectivity. The smart networked city continues to emerge, and the city transforms within the digital era. New utopian technological cities in dramatic development in the Arabian gulf peninsula. China, which is also investing technology into African states, has an advanced smart city and infrastructure development program, with the city becoming a highly networked and algorithmic machine. In Europe cities more slowly and subtly refurbish with networked technologies. Other cities in the world are not so networked and this undoubtedly will have repercussions for them, politically and economically. The imaging of the city of the future owes much to its historical cultural representations of the city as a technological utopia or even a dystopia. The imaginaries of what the city is and can be shifts within globalised capitalism. The city as conceived by Deleuze and Guattari as a rhizomatic abstract city of material and forces of the cultural imaginary within capitalism has implication upon subjectivity. For Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, (2005) the machinic city and its spectacle modulates sense experience for the subjectivities of its inhabitants. Nothing is constant and all narratives and places can be remade within the concept of the 'megalopolis' in globalised capitalism. The sense experience of the city is an affective experience of its spaces and the relationship with the cultural imaginary representations and the subject within the city.

"The modern State that gives capitalism its models of realization, what is thus realized is an independent, worldwide axiomatic that is like a single City, megalopolis, or "megamachine" of which the States are parts, or neighbourhoods. We define social formations by machinic processes and not by modes of production (these on the contrary depend on the processes). Thus, primitive societies are defined by mechanisms of prevention-anticipation; State societies are defined by apparatuses of capture; urban societies, by instruments of polarization; nomadic societies, by war machines; and finally international, or rather ecumenical, organizations are defined by the encompassment of heterogeneous social formations." (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000, p435).

The machinic networked city of the digital era is a city of networked L.E.D. luminescence and screens that heighten the affective experience of the city. The smart city

becomes screen like, increasingly cinematic and bound to cultural significations of the city in popular culture imaginaries. This cinematic mode of the city binds cultural imaginary into its unfolding materiality, and this is an area of aesthetic research for urban imaginaries and creative practice. Turning to affect theory and a techno-capitalist critique offers a methodology to be able to examine the imaginaries of the dazzlement of the networked city in this moment. Engaging with the theoretical narratives of globalism to consider the city and its imaginaries that are tied to capitalism and emergent technologies can be approached from closer and specific readings of the city that are more localised. This can offer some agency in situating these developments to grasp how the affective flows can be mapped. A focus on East London as a site for the reimagining of the city from Margaret Thatcher's 1980's neo-liberalism, into the digital era is the specific localised cityscape with which this research utilises the discourse on the politics of aesthetics and the emergent imaginaries connected to the machinic cinematic city.

Focusing on Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's work on affect, the sensible and politics, and taking in extensions made by Steven Shaviro in *Post-Cinematic Affect* (2010) and Mauritizo Lazzarato in *Videophilosophy* (2019) and *Signs & Machines* (2014) to explore desire within the digital post screen context will be applied to the operations of techno-capitalism within the cityscape. A queering of affect by Guy Hocquenghem will be applied to the city and the affective intensities of space and temporality from *Homosexual Desire* (1993). Engaging with a survey of the increased machinic context of the city and the development of cinema provides a method to explore the spectacle of networked capitalism and how it creates affective architectures through the integration of digital technology into the materiality of the city.

The Becomings within Affective Forces

Affect is a series of ongoing becomings, for the subject, within ever shifting contexts of interaction (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). These contexts of interaction or assemblages create dynamics of affective forces that are bound to the social, cultural, political, and economic and have an impact on the body of the individual and the collective bodies politic (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). The assemblages that create affective forces are part of complex multiplicities of connected systems. These forces of affect exist within the virtual, invisible plane of power dynamics, and are manifested through form, but importantly not as form, in the social structures and cultures that organise our lives and influence our perceptions. Affect is always virtual for Deleuze and Guattari, and the invisible virtual flows of power are

experienced by the collective and the individual body, and they determine what the body can do and what it can undergo within different assemblages. Affect is always a force that works through and upon, but not within, because it cannot be capture due to always be in a state of flux. Affection is the combination of affects within the social to create types of agency (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004).

John Protevi in *Ontology, Biology, and History of Affect Political Affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic* (2009) defines Deleuzian affect as, immediate, unmediated, and nonrepresentational due to its virtual composition as non-divisible intensities, yet it is translated within the body via social and cultural subjectification processes that codify affect as emotion and then as representational semiotics. Affect enters the symbolic of representational signification via objectification so that it can be temporally packaged in forms that can be communicated through signification within the subject, and the spatialisation and materialisation of the social cultural body. The flows of affect are multifarious because they exist within the world that is both natural and constructed. The complexity of the flows of affect within the constructed world are social, political, economic, machinic, technological, biological, and psychological. Affective forces are none representational signs because they are none divisible intensities, forces, and powers. What remains of affect is its impact as affectivity or affection within a system or body. Guattari defines the nonrepresentational force signs of affect as working in tandem with representational signs within culture. The familiar cultural representational signs of significations are the semiotics of language, that manifest as, audio, and logocentric signs of text, speech, sound, and image signification. Guattari succinctly defines the virtual nonrepresentational flows of affects as asignifications. The asignifications of affects work with representational cultural significations.

The City as Affective Machine

The city is a machine that produces multitudes of affect laden spectacles. This spectacle of the city is connected to the language of the cinematic and enables an analysis of the political aesthetics of the affective spectacle in the networked city, and in the representations of the city. The relationship of the cinematic to ontology by Deleuze in *Cinema 2* (2005) extends Walter Benjamin's ideas of the influence of machinic aesthetics and the force of images upon the world in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. "Benjamin's article set itself inside cinema, in order to show how art of automatic movement was itself to coincide

with the automation of the masses, state direction, politics became art." (Deleuze, 1992, p271).

Steven Shaviro's (2010) concept of "post-cinematic affect" considers moving image in the post digital era and utilises a research method of affective mapping to engage with a critical analysis of capitalism and the forces in the world as affects of the computational. "They are invisible abstractions, existing only as calculations in the worldwide digital network, and detached from any actual productive activity. And yet they are brutally material in their "efficacy," or in their impact upon our lives - as the current financial crisis makes all too evident. Financial flows are the motor of subjectivity.." (Shaviro, 20010, p6).

Engaging with a surveying of the spectacle within the city and its relationship to cinema, requires a materialist engagement with aesthetics to consider research that maps affective intensities for academic critique and explorations for creative practice. These ideas will be used to explore the dynamic spectacle and affective intensities of the city, that manifest this relationship between techno-capitalism being spatialised within the city's materiality and its representations. A process of mapping the affective intensities of the spectacle of the city and its relationship to the cinematic will create counterpoints for analysis, resistance, and creative production to remediate the spectacle into new narratives and experiences. Theories relating to technology, spectacle, affect and luminescence within the creation of the imaginary of the city and its relationship to subjectivity will be laid out.

Luminescent Spectacle

The relationship between technologies of spectacle and the production of desire raises questions about the modulation of digital affects relating to the spectacle and its role on shaping subjectivity. The screen projects sociologic signs and codes and the cinematic machine that produces affects and desire with representations of the city, have in turn, not just shaped the image of the city, but also shaped the material manifestations of the city. Both the cinema and the city are bound historically by technologies of luminescence that create seductive dazzlement.

The computational and the extension of human experience by the networked screen is now fundamental to the conditions of life within cities in the global north. The computationally networked Light Emitting Diode (L.E.D.) has become the pervasive technology within post digital screen culture. A digital machinic networked city, positions the screen as a significant part of our daily lives, from the widescreen television, laptop computer, personal tablet and screens that run all through cities with advertising and

information, to the physical intimacy and present ubiquity of the smart mobile phone with its touch screen control. The same networked technology that utilises the L.E.D. connects the materiality of the city to the screen. The dynamic spectacle of the city of luminescence is a spatialisation of techno-capitalism.

City as Medium

The acceleration of technological development in the post war 20th Century as outlined by Marshall McLuhan in *The Medium is the Massage* (2008) saw the extensions of man by emerging technologies become increasingly influential. The event of television replaced cinema as the main mass medium of entertainment and information, until the arrival of the internet. With the development of each medium comes a more individualised relationship with technology as the proximity of technology becomes more intimate, and more insidiously pervasive. Mass subjectivation by the forms of affects connected to medium, shift with each technological development. The critical positions of Jean Baudrillard in *Simulation & Simulacra* (2006) and Paul Virilio in *Open Sky* (2008), engage with how subjectivity becomes increasingly enmeshed by the techno-sphere in conjunction with neo-liberal capitalism, as computational media technology becomes ever more the dominant medium. The internet at this point in 2024 encompasses all realms of information as Klaus Schwab outlines in '*The Fourth Industrial Revolution*' (2016), where computational digital machinism accelerates and will have huge implications, but the societal structuring and the divisions between the 'global north and south'. The city is developing so that it does not just carry the material infrastructure of wires, cables, and warehouses full of servers to deliver information and media content to screens, but the city as a machine becomes increasingly screen like. The machinic city and the city as screen become interlinked with the shifting forces of neo-liberalism. With this the influence of affect upon subjectivity in the spectacle of dazzlement within the city, provides an area of research.

The authors mentioned all engage with a critique about increased human/machinic interactions because of the harnessing of subjectivity connected to closer relations with machinic processes and humanity that become significantly magnified in the networked digital era. Deleuze and Guattari (2005) particularly see the connection between capitalism and subjectivity within the megalopolis as the basis of ontology. They write about the megalopolis and on the totality of capitalism to not just produce subjectivation but enslavement to the system. "There is a machinic enslavement, about which it could be said in

each case that it presupposes itself, that it appears as pre-accomplished; this machinic enslavement is no more voluntary than it is forced." (Deleuze & Guatarri, 2005, p460).

Deleuze builds on this collaborative work exploring capitalism and its relationship to subjectivity in his postscript to Foucault's writing about emergent 'disciplinary society' in *Discipline and Punish* (2020) that outlines the forms of structuring subjectivity and institutional discipline that is based on forms of legal catergorisation and predicated on forms of surveillance. In his post script, Deleuze develops the term 'modulation' to describe the discrete forces that work to shape subjectivity through multiple means, and positions subjectivity as the ultimate capital. Deleuze's short writing that expands upon Foucault and the term modulation that is only used twice in the text has been adopted by Shaviro et al to discuss the digital era and techno-capitalisms surveillance as outlined by Deleuze recalling an Guattari anecdote about the dividual and tracking movements. "Enclosures are molds, distinct castings, but controls are a modulation, like a self-deforming cast that will continuously change from one moment to the other, or like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point." (Deleuze, 1992, p3-7)

Lazzarato takes up these ideas within the digital era to examine more specifically how the attention economy develops from the beginnings of the networked digital era in the 1990's (2019). Lazzarato contends that the power of modulating subjectivity and social capital must be flexed by corporate, media and state entities to be able to transcend fact and influence subjectivity. The transcendence of fact by the multiple means and processes of subjectivation then enables the technological spectacle to operate as a means of politicised and weaponised influence with substantial reach. Lazzarato argues that in the attention economy fact can only be transcended by belief, and the modulation of affective forces by the technological spectacle is the significant change in how the networked era operates upon subjectivity through sense experience and systems of subjectivation, (Lazzarato, p169-, 2019) He outlined that networked technologies now penetrate the systems of media and communication so that ontological sense experience is for a large part governed by digital mediation and this has implications upon the modulation of subjectivity. The entanglement of belief with identity, values and most importantly, behaviours are created by the habitation of subjectivity. The transcendence of belief over fact us when emotional responses dominate beliefs. This and modulating of subjectivity en mass, by cultural systems becomes important within techno-capitalism. The affective forces operating through digital culture and into the creation of subjectivity have the complex multiplicity of the technological sublime. The turn to Deleuzian affect by Masumi, Lazzarato, Shaviro et al becomes more pertinent in the digital

era. Grasping the flows of affects within the complex assemblages of human/machinic extension that shape ontological life can reveal shifts in processes of modulation that are how the subject is formed within the city and to the sense experience in the emergent networked smart city. As the city takes on technology to become increasingly machinic it is becoming increasingly luminescent. The networked city with increased luminescence and screen presence within its architectural forms can be thought of as medium, where the city and its cinematic qualities transform it into a screen. The relationship with the city and the cultural imaginaries of the city fold into each other when the city is cast as a cinematic screen. Virilio in *The Lost Dimension* (1991) outlines the city as cinematic screen and the relation of the imaginaries of the city and its material relationships shall be explored in the further chapters of this thesis. To explore the city as an affective machine of luminescent spectacle I will define the critical framework for the imaging of the city and its imaginaries within techno-capitalism.

Spectacle and Sense Experience

For Guy Debord (2009) the spectacle is multitudes of events that create an illusion of the unity of sense perception and sense experience. The spectacle is totalising and acts as a cover for the complex heterogeneity of existence and the material reality of production and its effects. The stratified actualisations of existence become bound up with the subterfuge of capitalist narratives within the spectacle and ultimately the spectacle defines existence, so that it becomes totalising and controlling of all aspects of experience. The spectacle as the modality of existence governs reality, and the spectacle is a means and weapon that is governed by capitalist production. The spectacle is the manifestation of the virtual political dynamics at work within society and how they are spatialised, materialised and encoded into every aspect of society; in the arrangement of social public space, and activities of navigating through this space to encounter and participate in a spectacle of events (Debord, 2009, p2-). The navigation of the spectacle is cultural and completely mediated by the spectacle of the culture industry and the technologies that perpetuate it, "The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation." (Debord, 2009, p4). Considering what this increased screen based and networked spectacle entails for the city and our experience of it within a dialectic of aesthetic politics is important.

The world of appearances creates narratives that are actualised and produce consciousness and influences perception, and the increased visuality of culture through

technology, and the networked screen is now central to this. The visual takes dominance over other faculties to be the primary mode of engagement within the social, and the economy of the sign creates a world increasingly mediated and increasingly about appearances. Debord (2009) charts a move in capitalism that sees the creation of a form of subjection in culture that is superficial in interests, centred around consumerism and increasingly, culturally dematerialised. There are shifts in systems of valorisation that demonstrate the virtual power of capitalism, but also the increased illusionism of media constructed reality that is disconnected somewhat from the material world and its actualisations. The spectacle and its dominant narrative of capitalism is the only known reality, and politics, economics and culture tied to the spectacle become a shaped by the consumption of images related to capitalism as a way of life. The 'false consciousness' of the spectacle and consumerism within capitalism distracts from the actualities of the production that is extractionist, detrimental to environmental and social justice, and part of the dominant economic and political hegemony of the global north over the global south. The development of a subjection where existence is defined by a system that creates valorisation through action and doing has been replaced. Being an active agent and being defined by doing is replaced by having. The accumulation of having has to be circulated publicly, or rather culturally to demonstrate status within the system of valorisation. For Debord (2009) this amounts to a system of appearances and the spectacle of appearance. The valorisation of appearances is the problem for Debord (2009) in that it creates a set of false values that are fictitious and move away from the actualities of material production, and the critique of the political, to create forms of behaviours and actions that are methods of control. If appearances are valorised then, the question of truth is raised.

Détournement

Debord's (2009) strategy for undoing the spectacle, both the dynamic spectacle of the built environment and culture, and the diffuse spectacle as a dialectical function of capitalism, is to use reflexive parody (Debord, & Wolman. 1956). To hold up a mirror of the spectacle is to reveal its construct, reframe it and reveal its operative modes in order to break its fiction. This was developed by The Situationists International as détournement, the act of breaking meaning by questioning and irreverently reframing through acts of appropriation and intervention. Détournement, requires that the modalities and language of the spectacle are engaged with to offer counter narratives that remediate the spectacle to expose the operations embodied within its systems and manifestations. The détournement of reconfiguring

appropriated signs within new remediated actions and narratives reveals their construction and breaks their place within the systems of making meaning Debord (2009). The appropriation of signs for détournement can take place within every sphere of social life, from the obvious proliferation of images, moving images, texts, to the architectural, ceremonies and in object value and use. The truths and issues presented by the many modes of the spectacle can be undone. It opens up the possibility of a practice research that positions fiction as method to undo narratives, modes of engagement, communication, and behaviours, but also to potentially create and construct different modalities, practices, organisations, and narratives. Where there is some relationship between Debord's détournement within the city to create disruption and Deleuze and Guattari ideas of affect and contingency. In *What is Philosophy?* (1994) they outline how contingent creative acts can harness the potentiality of affective assemblages so that an outside rupture and sensory violence of a sublime event can enter into the process of creation to disrupt, reconfigure and remediate. This mirrors the détournement sentiment of the Situationists, there are however, many differences in their methodologies. Debord infers a Hegelian Marxism by calling for an engagement with knowledge and a universal history, that can empower by giving contextual knowledge as a totality, and this is where any similarity breaks down between the two projects (Debord, 2009). The power of knowledge to reveal issues and constructed truths about the modes of subjection and control of capitalism and to end alienation, is a powerful idea. The problem with this idea is in universal totality, this is a belief in a modernist narrative of utopian, universal Marxism, that weaponises knowledge for democratic liberation and to potentially break the means of production control that create the diffuse spectacle. Debord's observations are of course hugely accurate and easily transposed into the accelerations of the contemporary. The faith in knowledge to shift consciousness by revealing constructed truths is compelling, and there is a workable strategy for resistance in many ongoing forms through détournement practices. However, the philosophical premise of a "universal history" suggests a totality, and a homogeneity of experiences that does not exist. This paradigm falls short of the complexities of the operations of the spectacle and the heterogeneity of histories and the belief in a univocal truth. This view is missing the multiplicities of forces and recognition of the role of desire.

City as Extraction Machine

The cinematic representation of the extension of man within the machinic context of the city can be found in the film *The Matrix by* Wachowski, L., Wachowski, L., (1999) where the

protagonist, Neo, wakens to find his body connected to the capitalist extractionism of the city. Neo's subjectivity is connected to the production of the machinic city and the spectacle. In *The Matrix* state and corporate power are represented by the anonymous Agent Smith as the surface representative of the totalising power of the digital era. Agent Smith is a white male, and is infallible, multifarious in response and attack, shapeshifting, unceasing and omnipresent. Surveillance is everywhere in this representation of the city as a control state and Smith could be viewed as the embodiment of Deleuze's 'electronic image' where in the era of digital computerised systems the digital image is part of an apparatus of labour and subjective capture (Deleuze, 2005, p272-).

The film represents a questioning of the spectacle and its relationship with material reality. The character Neo is part of a spectacle of imaginaries within the city as a computerised system. Neo's subjectivity produced as part of a modulation of power relations that produce imaginaries. The first reveal of the city as a constructed imaginary is a scene where the protagonist Neo is being chased by Agent Smith, and everything within the scene is transfigured into computerised code. Neo is able to see beyond the surface spectacle of the city and see the active code at work in creating the material conditions of the city and his known reality. This special effect of green dot matrix code characters fill the screen, and the hallway outside Neo's apartment becomes moving code to reveal that it is creating the spectacle of the city. The film reveals that the physical structure of the city is a spectacle of aesthetics that are coded within the totalitarian techno-capitalism control society that Neo has until this point unquestioned. The city as a coded construct that forms the subjectivity of the bodies within the space of this fictional city including Neo's identity is brought into question. The surveillance by the spectacle of the techno-capitalist matrix is represented by the omnipotent bureaucratic Agent Smith, who ensures the system is maintained. Smith is a representation of the collapse of state and corporate power into one entity. Neo marks the potential to rupture systems that perpetuate systems of the spectacle that create control societies and modulate subjects.

The body, identity, and the city, are all subject to a control society that codes the spectacle of the city and all other appearances as simulation, to hide the actual enslavement of the controlled body, the psyche, and the planet. Behind this simulation is the truth of capitalism as the machine of extractionism, where the body is extended by the machine and engages with the affective labour of the spectacle. The queering subtext of the film is present in the critique of the structuring of society, the body and identity. The question of freedom beyond the machine and the protagonist of Neo having another role, another possible identity,

and another life outside of the modulations of the machinic spectacle, is shown in the depiction of the split body and mind in a state of subjugation. These scenes acquire new meaning within the subsequent transgender actualisation of the film's creators The Wachowskis, who break accepted surface gender codes to be able to resignify and remediate subjectivity beyond the binary system of gender coding.

Machines and Crystallised Time

The impact of accelerated speeds and what this will imply for temporal life within the digital era was opened many questions. The collapse of space and time in the physics of digital computer processing in communication networks is the cause of this temporal shift. The digital era has seen a shift away from the knowledge-based critiques of post structuralism, where the informational and communicational sign systems form the dominant focus of study. The development of studies into the cognitive and precognitive have emerged because of the increased interactions of the human/machinic assemblage and the rise of machine or artificial intelligence, where new temporalities that have been revealed. Building on Deleuze and Guattari (2005), Lazzarato (2019) outlines that affect is the most powerful and important part of the complexity of how ideology manifests culturally in the attempt to broadly engineer subjectivity. "Machines that crystallize time intervene directly in the processes of the production of subjectivity, since they deal with affects, perception, memory, language, and thought." (Lazzarato, 2019, p170)

Considering machines and systems that produce a crystallization of time is taken up by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (2005), because here lies the key to the accessing of the inner life of the subject. Machines crystallize time through our engagement, but they also produce blocks of affects. The affects that are produced are not singular or reductive to the knowable, but are complex and multifarious, as well as being largely unquantifiable. The most significant generator of affects at this time in digital culture, are computational machines, that can deliver an abundance of effects and affects in temporality, medium, form and content and connects everything within the networked world.

Working from a mapping of ideas from other philosophers Deleuze develops his conceptualisation of affect. In *Difference & Repetition*, Deleuze (2004) outlines the importance of the experiential and the relationship between the virtual and the actual. Variables of intensity and forces are not divisible processes, but they have qualitative properties in the transformations that create change, and they also have differential qualities. In his critique of Kant, Deleuze expands on the notion of the fragmentation of the faculties

and opens the potentiality of the virtual by replacing substance with multiplicity and essence with unfolding event. For Deleuze there are no fixed or homogenous points, but the potentiality of the relationship between the virtual and the actual. For there to be transformation there needs to be an intensive process that is structured by dialectics. Actualisation is never a fixed point of arrival, but it a series of ongoing 'becomings'. These forces and intensities become structured as actualisation or states within a system. The repetition of the system that uses a shared virtual structure will see the differential affective forces create change for each individual actualisation event and be revealed over time. Deleuze illustrates the context of the virtual structures and its differentials that create change within any assemblage or system, be it scientific, language, legal or meteorological. (Deleuze, 2004, p165). *Repetition & Difference* (2004) is significant because a network of forces and intensities come to the fore in their interplay with the virtual and point the way to affective theory. In the realm of the virtual, nonvisible forces and intensities emerge as the forces of affect, this is then detailed in *A Thousand Plateaus,* with Felix Guattari (2004). The invisible asignifications that are forces beyond capture and how they are formulated in assembles, forms the major shift in philosophy that is a break from how other contemporaries view asignificantion.

Beyond the Visible

Jean Baudrillard (2003) refers to asignification as the moment when meaning breaks down within a system of semiotics. On semiotics and implosion of meaning, Baudrillard talks of signs and medium with the missing component of affect, the quantity and quality of signs creates implosion due to the surfeit of media:

"Beyond meaning, there is the fascination that results from the neutralization and the implosion of meaning. Beyond the horizon of the social, there are the masses, which result from the neutralization and the implosion of the social. There is not only an implosion of the message in the medium, there is, in the same movement, the implosion of the medium itself in the real, the implosion of the medium and of the real in a sort of hyperreal nebula, in which even the definition and distinct action of the medium can no longer be determined." (Baudrillard, 2003, p65).

Lazzarato (2019) contends, that Deleuze and Guattari take a different view to Baudrillard. The complex asignifications of affect are present as a semiotics that are virtual,

and they are not a breakdown of meaning, but rather they are the contrary. The asignifications of affect constitute to the production of meaning by working in conjunction with the signification of representational semiotics. Affective asignifications are systemic, or rather working through an assemblage that creates them, and this assemblage creates asignifications that operate in a differential relationship that both generate significations of meaning, and are also generated by significations of meaning within the assemblage system:

"While signifiying semiotic and machines engage with the global person and easily manipulated subjective representations (ideas and feelings), asignifying semiotics and machines assemble the infrapersonal and infrasocial elements of a "molecular economy of desire that is much more difficult to contain within stratified social relationships. In a deterritorialised world where things, to speak like Bergson, lose their solidity and stability and appear instead in the form of tendencies and flows, capitalism is described as "the integral of power formations" work on memory". (Lazzarato, 2019, p176).

Maurizio Lazzarato extends Deleuze and Guattari in *Signs and Machines (2014)*, to explore how the flow of affective asignifications are tied to the tensions within neo-liberal capitalism, cultural production and representational informational semiotics.

Multiplicities of Asignification

Deleuze and Guattari's affect counters the universal with an anti priori position, to put forward thought as a multifaceted complexity of differential relations, and outline a project that is against closure, against the hermetic, the stable and against the definitive of any univocal, centralised philosophical position. The asignifications of affects are part of the continuum of ongoing interrelated states of connections in flux, that realise varying intensities and potentialities through rhizomatic assemblages, and these relations shape the ontological. This is where there is agency within Deleuze and Guattari's (2005) notion of affect. In recognising the affective forces at work there can be change through acknowledging and rerouting systemic flows that impact subjectivity and entering a process of critical remediation. Change is a force within time and so therefore resistance is also a force to create agency. On becomings and forms of relationships;

"Becoming is a rhizome, not a classificatory or genealogical tree. Becoming is certainly not imitating, or identifying with something; neither is it regressing-progressing; neither is it

corresponding, establishing corresponding relations; neither is it producing, producing a filiation or producing through filiation. Becoming is a verb with a consistency all its own; it does not reduce to, or lead back to, "appearing," "being," "equalling," or "producing,": (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p272)

The flow of cultural code of signification and the force of affective asignification work to produce more means of reach for capitalist systems. The flows of knowledge and the flows of asignification affects are linked to the production of wealth. The flows of knowledge and the flows of asignification affects are linked to the means of production that are temporal, and this is why the temporal becomes the most important commodity of capitalism within the attention economy that has grown up around the digital (Lazzarato (2019). The ultimate commodity is that which has the most value for modulating and maintaining power. Machines that create subjectivity via cultural production are the same machines that create meaning and blocks of affects. This engagement requires the attention of the subject, and the attention economy has grown with technology to harness the excess of subjective labour beyond the domains of employment. As Lazzarato details:

"What capitalism manufactures is not only the flows of raw material, the flows of energy, and the flows of human labor but also the flows of knowledge and signs that reproduce affects, sensations, attitudes, and collective behaviors. The apparatuses for the production of subjectivity thus tend to identify themselves with the processes of wealth production." (Lazzarato, 2019, p174).

A shift in time, space and material has occurred in the machine age that is intensified with the digital era. The subjectivation process of the cinema as a social cultural activity or behaviour that was public was replaced by the television, that took place as a cultural activity and crystallisation of time inside the domestic space. Television has been replaced by networked technological devises that include both film, television, gaming and other interactive as applications and activities. Digital networked appliances increase the proximity of mediated sense experience. The distance between the modality of the spectacle of cultural subjection that existed en mass with cinema and sporting events, has collapsed. I contend that the networked city and the screen as part of the spatial architecture of the city in conjunction with networked personal devices creates a totalising affective reach upon the corporeal

architecture of the body and the interiority of the mind. The subjective labour of the individual can now be fully harnessed within the flows of new affective temporalities.

Post Cinematic Affect

Steven Shaviro (2010) takes up the issues of temporality and affect that trouble Frederick Jameson in *The End of Temporality,* (2003) to assert a Deleuzian position that engages with unifying Marxism with the philosophies of affect. He develops the phrase 'post-cinematic affect'. He builds upon and extends Jameson's critical engagement with digital culture and its relationship with capitalism as a critique. He engages with the flows of affect and sees the temporality of the cultural digital space differently and draws upon Deleuze's postscript on control societies and how capitalism works with multiple strategies of flexibility and adaptation for the modulation of the subject within its systems (1992). He identifies these qualities of modulation manifesting within changes to temporality in the digital era. He asserts that temporal changes of the digital era have seen an increase in the intensity of affect, or rather a surfeit of affect. This position counters Jameson's view on temporality in the digital era, as a time of flattening and the waning of affect. Shaviro's position is to find the critical and political cultural agency in Deleuze and Guattari that Jameson cannot in his damning critique of *A Thousand Plateaus* (2005). Shaviro is active in looking for new affective manifestations within culture that have been overlooked or dismissed as his method of cultural analysis. He draws upon Deleuze and Guattari's (1986) writing about the importance of minor literature works within culture. Looking in the margins of popular culture, the overlooked or what might be considered as cultural anomalies or even failures. Systems of collaboration, co-production and networks that are productive within the digital era produce nothing but affect within the temporal flow of digital culture linked to capitalism. Affect is not waning, it is heightened. Jameson's issue is of course not the end of temporality or affect, but rather the reduction of cognitive quality because of a flattened affective life via technocratic control and superficial systems of cultural immediacy. Shaviro cites and extends Massumi and places a surfeit of affect at the very centre of cultural life within capitalism (2010). He borrows Jameson's call for cognitive mapping to develop a method of affective mapping, as a method for surveying the manifestations of capitalism in the digital era."Beyond this, Jameson expresses the hope that cognitive mapping (to which I would add affective mapping as well) may help us to "regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralized by our spatial as well as our social confusion" (Shaviro, 2010, p138)

Shaviro suggests that we engage with the digital era through cognitive and affective mapping. He suggests this process can help chart the visible signs and invisible flows of technocratic culture to analyse the affective intensities present within culture. Affective mapping is a process of using a method of acknowledging the rhizomatic and the relationship between the temporal, cognitive and affective within the computational and the post digital screen era.

"contemporary film editing is oriented, not towards the production of meanings (or ideologies), but directly towards a moment-by-moment manipulation of the spectator's affective state. Computer code is a "language" (if we can still call it that) that does not generate signification, but rather directly impels action. For code is not composed of signifiers, but of commands." (Shaviro, 2010, p118)

Post cinematic affect is a recognition that affective forces in the digital era impact temporality with a pervasiveness that is more significant and abundant than that of the age of cinema. In the digital era of the screen, the connection of the computational, mediated digital image within capitalist production creates new affective qualities upon subjectivity that requires this new 'post cinematic affect' turn of phrase. 'Immaterial' affective labour within the attention economy is a key component of the reach of 'post cinematic affect' that creates this new temporal landscape:

'Just as film habituated the "masses" of Benjamin's time to the shocks of heavy industry and dense, large-scale urbanization, so postcinematic media may well habituate Hardt and Negri's "multitude" to the intensities arising from the precarization of work and living conditions, and the unleashing of immense, freefloating and impersonal, financial flows" (Shaviro, 2010, p138)

Shaviro foregrounds the supremacy of the image, but more importantly, the increased supremacy of the digital image and a hyper-mediated culture that is processual in digital real time. The digital brings cultural production to a place where there is a break from material reality, where representation is indexical. The shift is towards a culture that is digitized so that it is increasingly not materially indexical. This is a creation of images that are digitally modelled digitally or generated from digital artefacts. The image is processual in that it becomes digitally mediated, whether in the light touch of the formatting of social media

images, or fully processual computer-generated reality of game engines, cinema, television, advertising images, extended reality technologies, and artificial or machinic intelligence algorithmic content.

Affect and desire being central to modulation processes in the digital era and the shift in temporality is connected to modulation. For Shaviro, (2010) the emerging new temporalities of the digital processual language within moving image, has resulted in the development of post continuity within the temporality of mainstream cinema and other forms of moving image. Relating to intensities, he argues that post continuity is more than just a series of intensified traditional technical editing techniques for shock value, but represents a new temporal language of affect that abandons the rules of cinematic continuity altogether, that is developed from Deleuze's writings on the crystal regimes of the time image in *Cinema 2 (2005)*

I extend Shaviro's concept into the networked urban space as a method for analysis of the city and its imaginaries and also critical creative practice. Let us begin to open up discussion about the manifestation of these affective forces within the contemporary cityscape within the conceptualisation of the city as a machinic screen. The cinematic mode of the spectacle within the material fabric of the city can be mapped as a form of affective détournement to research what the intensities of luminescence can reveal about the city and sense experience.

Mapping the Luminescent Spectacle of East London

Mapping the luminescent spectacle of the city involves a method of engaging in critical research practice that is founded upon Debord and the process of détournement, in combination with a Deleuzian approach to affect theory. The experience of the materiality of the city as a spectacle is analysed with recognition of the city as a desire producing machine of affective forces. An expansion of Shaviro's concept of 'post-cinematic affect' into the urban cityscape triangulates these methodologies for an approach to research practice that conceptualises the networked city as a screen. Engaging with the networked city to experience and map the affective intensities of cinematic luminescence within it, can be used to examine the affective architectures that structure sense experience and what this might reveal about aesthetics of the city and its projected imaginaries within capitalism. I apply this approach to the shifting aesthetics of the built environment in East London and the affective luminescent qualities present can provide critical narratives and practice-based responses to the experience of the networked city.

With East London and its developing sites of urban gentrification and the areas that are surrounding and in between these development projects, the affective mapping of experience at night to focus on luminescence, reveals that there are differential affective experiences in East London in relation to the cinematic. This mapping of post cinematic affect in East London reveals stratifications of affect that are linked to the materiality and aesthetics of these areas, and their socio-economic stratifications. The luminescent cinematic qualities of the developed areas of East London bear the markers of a computer modelled spectacle made real. The image of the city as a technological utopia of seamless, smooth efficient experiences of transport connections, entertainment zones, malls, work districts with fountained public squares containing corporate public art and balconied 'luxury' tower block real estate owes much to the computer simulated models for architectural planning and real estate marketing. This is a composed urban imaginary of the city as an organized spectacle. This smooth affective aesthetic gives way to a more complex and diverse historical fabric of urban space that has different qualities of luminescence and experience in the areas that fall outside of this grand urban planning. The diversity of architecture outside of these developing areas of gentrification is often a mirror of the diversity of the socio-economic inhabitants of these spaces that have different generations of colonial immigrants and more recent newcomers. Engaging with a process of affective mapping across East London reveals different affective intensities in these urban spaces and how they are organised, and this has implication upon sense experience within the city. Capturing these different affective intensities within a cinematic mode of luminance and what this entails is the research of this practice. These areas of East London both embody the cinematic mode of the city, but in different ways and the difference between these two versions of the city is one of scale and its relationship to the spectacle and the cinematic qualities of the networked city.

The affective intensities of the developed networked city comprising of Canary Wharf, Canning Town and Stratford City, form part of an urban designed cityscape where the spectacle of the city is tied to its projected urban imaginary. There is a corporatised branding of space and sense experience that utilises the cinematic luminescent qualities of the cultural imaginary of the city in visual and popular culture to create direct signifiers to these cinematic images. Here the city attempts to compete with other capital city districts as part of a globalized megalopolis. The city in these spaces is on a grand urban scale and deliberately creates spectacle, that often involves 'starchitecture'. The urban imaginary is linked to the cinematic projection and the creation of the vista. The vista is essential for the cinematic spectacle of the city to be cast out before its inhabitants and create placemaking. The role of

the cinematic and the highrise within the spectacle of the city is explored further in chapters two and three. East London's regenerated, or gentrified project areas of the city are lit by L.E.D walkways and dramatic lighting at night. It is an aesthetic of 'looked-at-ness' to take in the spectacle of the city through its vistas and the large vertiginous scale. These spaces have an affective quality that is dazzling yet controlled and stable due to its familiarity to the projected cultural imaginary codes of the city represented in cinema and moving image that it borrows from. The city outside of these grand urban plan areas that are often nearby to these hubs of technological cityscape, have altogether different relationships to the spectacle and the L.E.D cinematic luminescence that defines their sense experience.

These more liminal spaces of the city that can be found in Bethnal Green, Poplar, Forest Gate and Manor Park where there is a hub of highstreet activity, have a relationship that is on a more intimate scale that is not grand and does not involve the distance of taking in the vista within public space. The affective mapping of these spaces reveals that they contain a multitude of more uneven and diverse intensities of experiences and affective luminosity. These experiences may not be as cinematically grand, as the developed space of Canary Wharf which becomes more sedate as the night progresses, but these more liminal areas of the city invite participation in the night. The shops and other establishments stay open longer and their spectacle of dazzlement is made up of multiple competing intense and often garish technologies of networked L.E.D.s. The shops have signage made of flashing and moving multicolored L.E.D text with animations offering services. L.E.D. screens with high contrast particle special effects animations that offer food deals. Laser lights are projected onto the pavement and dance around branded product identities. Changing coloured L.E.D. strips of light around shop windows frame good and other L.E.D screens and signs that all vie for attention. Intensely blazing white L.E.D lights bleach the street at night to indicate that garages and hand car washes are still available into the night. The aesthetic is not that of a corporate and regulated urban space, but brashly commercial and frenetic. The street has a shifting vibrancy that is akin to the affective energy of the arcade game venue. This more intimate affective spectacle experience of the city is not at the distanced remove of the vista but is an experience that is more carnivalesque with the spectator being within the affective experience.

The city as seductive dazzling spectacle is distracting, coercive and modulates experience through affective relationships. In a process of research to reassess the relationship between the cinematic and the city, a critique of this relationship can provide agency. The critique of the spectacle by remediation is an endeavour to create new affective

intensities within the language of moving image and engage with the complexity of machines that produce desire and how light and specifically the networked L.E.D. is used to control the spaces of the city. Affective forces create and shape the experience of the machinic city, but within this luminescence and control, seeking out the liminal, queer spaces of desire becomes more urgent.

Queer Affects

A queer affective mapping of the intensities of the city must sit within queer theory. Judith Butler's seminal *Gender Trouble* (2011) builds upon Michel Foucault's Post-Structuralist critique of sexuality and agency, in *The History of Sexuality; Vol 1,* (1998) through examining the histories and systems of institutional regulation for an anti-essentialist view of identity and biology. However, it is Guy Hocquenghem *Homosexual Desire* from 1972 who will form the focus for queer affect theory in this thesis. Hocquenghem utilised *Anti Oedipus* from Deleuze and Guattari in the same year of publication, 1972 to explore cis gay male pleasure and affect within homosexual culture and was part of their pro queer discourse. Queer affect theory has now become established in the work of Eve Sedgewick, Jack Halberstam, Mel Y Chen, Sara Ahmed, and Luciana Parisi, to name a few, who form a multiplicity of intersectional emerging perspectives.

In the 1990s *Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins* (1995) Eve Sedgewick amalgamates queer theory with affect theory in a reading of the psychologist Sylvain Tompkins to explore queer shame in relation to Foucault, and the aspects of control within emerging cybernetic culture. Into the noughties, Jack Halberstam (2005) in *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives,* focuses on the queer temporalities and place making within queer culture with De la Grace Volcano as a subject for analysing trans visibility and the lesbian subjectivity. There is a focus in this research on the formation of civic and creative spaces and practices as lives lived as contra temporalities. The consideration of the potential for a transgendered gaze is raised and new readings of contemporary popular culture where this may be remediated and criticism of trans representations is taken up.

Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* (2006) draws upon Maurice Merleau Ponty, Emmanuel Kant, Edmund Husserl, and Henri Lefebvre to consider how different factors for subjective orientation. Orientations that constitute subjectivities and the ramifications of ecologies where there is an orientation within or towards places, objects and identities considers queer and ethnic ideas of identity in London from Ahmed's subjective narrative.

Mel Y Chen in Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect, (2012) draws upon Foucault and Ahmed to explore sexuality and race with some attention to trans issues and the ecologies of identity conceptualising animation as a focus. Luciana Parisi in *The Adventures of a Sex* (2009) specifically follows Deleuze and Guattari's affect and the neoliberal production of subjectivities through assemblages of signification, asignification and biopolitics. There is specific attention to how subjects can react to the passive synthesis of affects and conditioning to become active in responding to and creating micro subjectivities that deterritorialize existing notions of gender identity.

There is a tension within assemblages that create passive synthesis and embodying experiences that create new relations and responses within affectivity. The active identification and reorganisation of experiences and relations within these emerging multiplicities of subjectivity and manifesting relations, is where the production of agency lies. As a thesis it is an embracing of Deleuze and Guattari's (2005) mode of deterritorialization that is positive and experimental within the social and affective field.

As a contemporary of Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault, and Hocquenghem has been recuperated to consider a queering of the city. The method of affective mapping is taken up by Hocquenhem (1993) with his undertaking of 'queer schizoanalysis'.

"The challenge to these false choices made by homosexual desire calls for a different pattern. The gay movement denounces both the idealistic sublimation of the social sense and the merciless confrontation between "individuals". It knocks down the dividing wall between biology and psychology, turning Nature from a guilt-inducing reference to a term of equivalence with the immediacy of desire." (Hocquenhem, 1993, p180)

Asignification of affective forces and modes that modulate subjective identity can expand the actuality of what identities are and what they can be, but can also regulate them. Queer is a shifting signifier with multifarious contexts, locations, histories, identities, sexual predilections, practices, and politics, but is often defined broadly and generalised within a dominance of cis homonormative cultural visibility within heteronormative society. Identity can be thought of as a condition that is against enclosure and queerness itself is multifarious. Affect itself is understood in different terms and used within queer theory within different strands of discourse. The subjectivity of homonormative identities are characterised by the enculturing of the subject to different degrees within the identities that inhabit queer coded spaces that are visible and commercialised within capitalism. The more conforming the

homonormative subjectivity, the more visible it is and adjacent to heteronormative society. The binary identifications of gender and same sex attraction will be tied more closely to heteronormative standards of body image, and gender performance, as well as to the exclusion and opposition of identities that are less standardised. Queer affect theory has numerous distinct concerns about locating queer subjectivity. The historicization of queer experiences, culture and spaces is important in charting a narrative for a future by acknowledging the past. This can define the queer experience and also analyse the factions within queer histories and how desire was expressed and captured in the asignifications and resignifications within cultural output, including moving image. The consideration of affect within a machinic context critiques some of the discourse of homosexual liberation, which is also centred on affect and the body.

Queer Liberation and Affect

Hocquenghem (1993) focuses on desire and homosexual identity by focusing on the biology of the sensory male body to schizoanalyse homophobia as a construction of heteronormative sexual and gender identity regulation. The homosexual identity constructed within deviance, shame and disgust is undone by deterritorializing this narrative and by further critiquing the Oedipal narrative which centralises and privileges phallocentricity. The sensory body and desire are remapped by Hocquenghem in his version of gay male liberation by disrupting the phallocentric narrative and the penis within gay culture as the signifier of pleasure.

Hocquenghem proposes a gay liberation by specifically resignifying the homosexual male body within sense making and desire. Hocquenghem positions male queer sexual pleasure and identity as a site of anality. The affective sensory capacity of the male prostate and anal penetration is celebrated and established a critique that disavows the shame associated with homosexual sexual pleasure and anal sex as a controlling factor within heteronormative patriarchy is addressed. The operation of the Oedipal complex as a narrative attributes homosexuality as a condition negates anal pleasure, so that anal sex becomes an internalised shame within homosexual culture of emasculation. He critiques the binary of active and passive sexual roles within gay male culture as being defined by a heteronormative binary narrative that reduces pleasure and the scope for subjectivity. He valorises the shifting sites of pleasure beyond the domestic space into cityscape and nature as part of sexual liberation. He sees the different relationship modes and spaces of homosexuality desire and affection as a challenge to the heteronormative marriage institution that is regulatory and tied to capitalist systems of production.

"The anus is not a substitute for the vagina: women have one as well as men. The phallus's signifying-discerning function is established at the very same moment that the anus-organ breaks away from its imposed privatisation, in order to take part in the desire race. To reinvest the anus collectively and libidinally would involve a proportional weakening of the great phallic signifier, which dominates us constantly both in the small-scale hierarchies of the family and in the great social hierarchies" (Hocquenhem, 1993, p103).

His position of gay liberation is male centred, but he was part of much broader critical circles, and espoused that those who are marginalised systemically to undertake their own schizoanalysis. Those who are stratified by hierarchies in society are the site of socio-political confrontation for agency and change. Desire is positioned at the centre of social and class struggle and identity. Hocquenghem, (1993) follows Deleuze and Guattari by rejecting binaries and so disavows a split between heteronormative and homonormativity because both become entrenched binaries that are themselves, social constructs. The liberation homosexual desire as a challenge to the establishment of social constructs through affect is his contribution to extending affect theory as queer affect theory:

"Homosexual desire" - the expression is meaningless. There is no subdivision of desire into homosexuality and heterosexuality. Properly speaking, desire is no more homosexual than 49 heterosexual. Desire emerges in a multiple form, whose components are only divisible a posteriori, according to how we manipulate it. Just like heterosexual desire, homosexual desire is an arbitrarily frozen frame in an unbroken and polyvocal flux. The exclusively homosexual characterisation of desire in its present form is a fallacy of the imaginary" (Hocquenhem, 1993, p49-50)

To build on a configuration of these ideas, the affective intensities of the city will be researched to explore the relationship between the city and subjectivity. The city and its relationship to the cinema and the screen are linked by light. The coding of behaviours, bodies and queer identities within the city's spaces and screen experiences modulate the enacted subjectivities within the affective intensities of the machinic city as screen. I will now explore a queer reimagining of the affective luminosity of the liminal spaces of East London.

Queering Imaginaries in the City

The process of engaging with the dazzlement of the networked city and the affective intensities of post-cinematic affect can be used to locate within London affective experiences. These dazzling experiences of the city can acknowledged as motif for resistance to a homogenising of sense experience and grand urban plan schemes that modulate the subject within the blandishments of the East London city spectacle.

The once ubiquitous cash machine within the city now becomes rarer in the age of instant digital contactless payments and apps linked to services online and services within the city. Yet the cash machine or automated transaction machine (A.T.M.) that is now an archaic device was once one of the first instances of the materiality of the city being networked. The ATM is part of the city that produces desire linked to commodification and capital. The ATM in the city marks a point of resistance in that cash taken from the machine can be spent in any way, any place and on anything to the service of desire. Hard cash goes off the network and can become part of a resistance to digital forms of surveillance that track and commodify the subject with data points and GPS to be crunched by servers running algorithmic process to categorise the subject. The ATM becomes a portal between the networked and material architecture of the city where different types of affective forces flow, and it also becomes a point of transformation. In the city the green L.E.D. light surrounding most ATMS transforms them into an altar of desire, or a porthole between the materiality of the world and the virtual digital space of commerce and the computational. The link between the virtual worlds of the digital and the virtual of capitalism is present. The intense green light can be given a queer remediation to become an affective asignifier of desire.

The cash machine is now a rather archaic thing in the era of smart phones and contactless transactions, but it is a machine that is intrinsic to the forces of desire, and the green L.E.D. light is an aesthetic manifestation of complex forces and relationships at play. These forces and relationships are shifting and connected to agency and subjectivity. The cash machine as desiring machine can be remediated so it is viewed not just as an agent of the networked city, but a more subversive presence in the city of digital surveillance. A resignification of the intense green L.E.D. light marks it as a place where the extraction of cash enables some resistance to digital surveillance. Hard cash can be exchanged from hand to hand without a trace of its use. There is greater freedom in the agency for the subject with cash. The pursuit of desire and the agency of capital exchange that is not monitored when it happens in the "dark" that is offline. The lurid L.E.D. green light that surrounds the cash machine has an intensity that gives the cash machine a seductive charm and transforms it into

a cinematic presence in the city as screen. As it glows in the night the cinematic language of science fiction or the unnatural green light of a psychological thriller is projected. It has seductive qualities in its intensity, but it is also ersatz, brash, and unpleasant, so it produces equivocation in the combination of signifying and asignifying impact.

Most remaining ATMs in London now have an intense green L.E.D light. The green light glows in an inlay surrounding the ATM with the radiating glow of a sci-fi film special effect. The green light in the night as a signifier for capital and the desires of what money can buy. This intense electronic green is linked to commerce, the green of capital value and the green digital glow of old stock exchange screens. This electronic green L.E.D. intensity has an equivocation of feeling that is used within the history of cinema. This cinematic language connects it to the digital green of the film *The Matrix*. (1999). The glow of a steaming egg pod containing alien life in *Alien (1978)*, and dozens of kitsch 1980's black humour video nasties and sci- fi films and more commercial franchises films such as *Gremlins* (1984) and *Critters* (1986). The unnatural green glow of the city across the harbour described in F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel of wealth, greed, and decay in *The Great Gatsby* (1925). Soylent Green (1973) is of course all about the city as an extraction machine. The Emerald City from *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) resignifies this equivocal green of the city within a queer semiotic reading. In more recent practice it is present in the intense green of Lawrence Lek's *NOTEL art installation (2018)*.

The spectacle of dazzlement in the collision of the cinematic into the materiality of the city offers up agency for it to be reappropriated as a mediation on the forces of technology, political narratives, and the shifting affective forces of the networked machinic city as a screen. The spectacle of dazzlement can be resignified into critique via creative practice. The intensity of the green L.E.D. light spills across a pavement in the darkness of the city night. The ATM is part of the city as a machine that produces desire. The ersatz green light of the ATM and its cinematic aura and strange affective qualities of both seduction and tackinesss lends itself to a queer reading of camp that encapsulates the promise of the night and the promise of the cinema. The ATM is a point of exchange that is heralded by this theatrical light, the machinic orifices form part of an affective exchange of inputs and outputs of entangled assemblages of human and non-human desiring machines. The L.E.D light with its affective intensity transforms the city as a networked screen that is a manifestation of different types of labour linked to desire, that are intellectual, that are affective, that are computational, and that are corporeal, and all of them are part of the forces that shape and are shaped by subjectivity.

The ersatz and the spectacle within the digital era offers critical and creative agency. The affective and political forces that shape the city, are always in flux and they work to shape our experience and subjectivity. The queering of the spectacle in creative practice, and the inhabitation of queer spaces within the city is a critical resistance and a productive unfolding mode of becoming. The resignification of affective intensities and evaluating the city through analytical and speculative creative practice is a productive force for discourse.

2 - The Promise of the Cinematic Empire.

This chapter considers the machine age of modernity in the early twentieth century to consider what can be learned about the relationship between technology and the spectacle within the city from early modernity? The early conception of affect in the machine age as 'aura' in 1939 by Walter Benjamin (2004) when considering the mass subjectivation of cinema as mass entertainment is aligned with the early work of Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov. Vertov's response to the technological and social changes in the Soviet Union demonstrate the affective shift in the machine age and the machinic city. The bilateral relationship between the developing medium of cinema and the developing cityscape in the US from the 1930s is explored to consider their bonds in the creation of the cultural imaginaries that were produced by interdependent social, cultural, political, and economic systems. There is an examination of the skyscraper as a key actant tied to the cultural imaginary via cinema, and what this entails by looking at The Empire State Building in New York City and the World Trade Centre Twin Towers and their historical representations on screen. The Wizard of Oz, (Fleming,1939) is also analysed to consider the cultural impact of the imaginary of the city upon queer subjectivity and affective labour.

Merill Schleier details in *Skyscraper Cinema* (2009) the imaginaries created in the socially moralising and gender narratives of US cinema are framed within the US cityscape, and tie the cityscape to these narratives. The skyscraper becomes a prominent feature in contributing to the narratives of how cinema images American life and values. US historical contexts are woven into the narratives of the films and Schleier makes explicit links to how the representation of the skyscraper and architectural environment mirrors the social and political changes unfolding in the USA. There is specific attention to how space is narrativized around gender and class within cinematic representation. Schleier positions post war US prosperity that are present in narratives that play on the utopian imaginary of the US city of modernity, were the city as towering and vertical. The city and its towers represent the economic, cultural and political might of post war USA. It can be deduced that 1930s Hollywood was significant in creating hegemonic narratives linked to US capitalism. Hollywood of "Tinsel Town" becomes globally emblematic of US mechanical modes of cultural production and content and ties Hollywood in California to being a city of dreams that creates both machinic and human labour to produce multiplicities of affect.

The city's towers become beacons that draw in bodies and dreams. The construction of the modern city and the growth of cinema in the age of the machine in the late 1920's

would see a rapid expansion due to emerging industrial mechanical technologies. The imaginaries of the city and subjective imaginaries become bound together more acutely in the mechanical age. The skyscraper and the cinema populated US cities rapidly, with the skyscraper and its relationship to cultural consciousness being linked to its place within cinema. The Empire State Building in New York The skyline of the city changed forever with the event of the multi storey skyscraper. The verticality of the tower and the image of the city on the horizon became an image of modernity, and it is so used so often that it is now a cliché for what the promise of the city holds. The skyline upon the horizon is a destination for potential, change and the making of a new life for the subject. The energy of the city and the harnessing of human endeavour is encapsulated within this skyline image upon the horizon. In the *Wizard of Oz* (Fleming, 1932) the journey of the characters towards the towers of the city on the horizon is a conceptualisation of the imaginary of the city as symbolic of the promise and freedoms of what can be and might be in the future.

The Skyscraper and Capitalism

The domes and spires of religious buildings that historically dominated the skyline, and the grandeur of palaces and state buildings was surpassed by the skyscraper. The skyscraper commands not just the territorial space of the city line of sight upon the horizon, but also brands the space of the city as a space of technology and commerce. The shift from state and religious power to the power of commerce, and the culture industry is encapsulated in The Empire State Building in New York, U.S.A., and its cultural significance. The Empire State Building characterised place making and the spectacle of the city under capitalism. Opening in 1930, 11 months after the Chrysler Building with its Art Deco glamour, they form part of a shift in the materiality of the city and the projection of capitalism manifesting architecturally in commercial buildings as spectacle. Both buildings are illuminated to project their presence in the night to create allure. Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927) projects an image of a towering cityscape at a time when it is being made real in New York, with the stylised buildings that form the silhouette of the cityscape of modernity. The materiality of the city as a visa of skyscrapers upon the horizon at the beginning of the 1930s is then refracted back into the cinematic cityscape at the end of the decade and is ever present on the horizon as in The Emerald City in the film *The Wizard of Oz* (Fleming, 1939*).* The Emerald City, with its art deco stylings is a place of hope and promise where one can be remade. The presence of the skyscraper and its symbolic cultural image reiterated by cinema can be viewed through

Walter Benjamin's seminal 1936 text, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (2004).

The City as Affective Assemblage

Benjamin (2004) writes about the 'aura' in his exploration of the shifts that modernity brings to relationships with time, space and materiality. The Empire State Building develops the aura of place and also becomes reproduced within the cinematic to extend its aura. Benjamin explores the idea of the "aura" from Henri Bergson as an early conceptualisation of a form of affect, but within a modernist narrative. The aura is related to authenticity within the materiality of site specificity, and its historical context. The art produced via mechanical reproduction that is a copy of an original does not have this aura of authenticity for Benjamin. What Benjamin (2004) outlines is the generation of a new aura when something is removed from its original context and is replicated as at reproducible copy because the aura of the contextual meaning is tied to this primary experience of site. The dissemination of the copy amongst the populous marks shifts in the time and space that the reproduction creates.

"One might subsume the eliminated element in the term "aura" and go on to say: that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art. This is a symptomatic process whose significance points beyond the realm of art. One might generalize by saying: the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence. And in permitting the reproduction to meet the beholder or listener in his own particular situation, it reactivates the object reproduced. These two processes lead to a tremendous shattering of tradition which is the obverse of the contemporary crisis and renewal of mankind. Both processes are intimately connected with the contemporary mass movements. Their most powerful agent is the film" (Benjamin, 2004. p20)

The increased levels of mediation of the copy creates an abstraction that removes its original aura from its original context and produced new auras in new contexts. These shifts in materiality, time and space that dislocate the original aura, in addition to the process of popular consumption to create a new set of phenomena. The reproductions are made from a new technology, and this technology has a new temporality of production that differs hugely from the original artefact, site or event. The new technology therefore requires a very different temporality with which to engage with the cultural artefact. Every medium has its

own temporality of production and temporality for engagement. What is lost for Benjamin through mediation is the contextual experience of the original and its aura, or to follow Deleuze and Guattari, the original affective assemblage, that cannot ever be regained by the copy. What is lost in the mediation by the copy is the context of meaning that the new material, space and time contexts (assemblages) of wherever the copy is distributed. A truth may be lost in this mediation, but importantly for Deleuze and Guattari (2004) a new truth emerges in a new system of distribution and, with this, its new situations of affects. The original meanings are unfixed because they become dependent on the time, context and mediation of new technologies which they that are formed, but also form new ontological possibilities. Benjamin acknowledges that the most powerful of the processes of mediation at that time was the new arrangement of moving image.

On writing about abstract machines and the functions of the assemblage within discussion about shifting relationships of deterritorialization they say "We are now in the intra-assemblage. Its organization is very rich and complex. It includes not only the territorial assemblage but also assembled, territorialized functions" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p311). This can be viewed as giving cinema the power to create new affects of spectacle and remediate established meanings from new experiences from cinematic affect and thus create change. These changes are temporal and affective that shift cognition, perception and different types of agency within the world for subjectivity. These changes are documented in the work and sensibility of Dziga Vertov.

The Tempos of the City

The poems of the Soviet Modernist; Dziga Vertov in *Kino-Eye*, (1924) contain the shifts in the experience of life occurring as Soviet cities increasingly mechanised. The eye that is machinic and technical is the Kino-Eye as an idealisation of the objectivity offered by the machine, from the camera to the microscope to the x-ray and reveal new truths. The increasingly mechanical city as a functional entity was reorganised as automated, industrialisation developed to serve production, state and people. The functionalism of modernity is epitomised in imaginaries of technological progressiveness that serves the people. "Art into life!" was the Soviet Constructivist phrase that positioned creative practice with technological modes of production and functionalism. It is seen in the work of the Bauhaus at the time in Germany and in Corbusier's architectural manifesto of 1927 describing the home as the "machine for living". The layout of the city involved spatialising in its plan and aesthetics, vistas that created the spectacle of wealth, state power and

municipal authority. National identity was coded into architecture to visibly draw upon historical national and Eurocentric Greco-Roman myth narratives, as well as symbols of colonialism casts the city as a place of constructed imaginaries. The spaces of commerce, leisure, and culture were important markers of civilisation and collective wealth. The clearing of the old for the new within this expansionism also incorporated civic spatial relationships that ensured the ease of martial and military manoeuvres to control the populace, should this be needed as in Haussmann's grand plan for Paris (Paccound, 2015). The mechanised modes of production were matched by modes of transportation. The machine, in its various forms, introduced increased movement and speed into the lives of urbanites and the changing rural landscape that are captured in the poems of Dziga Vertov.

Vertov's poems capture the impact of this increased movement and speed that created a new temporal experience of life in the city. Vertov's poems such as *Kino-Eye* (1924) as part of his poetic creative manifesto outline the extensions to humanity these mechanised tools brought and how they shaped the way the world can be experienced and conceived. The mediation of experience with the speed of the machine is clearly thrilling. To read them using affect theory, we see the augmentation of the body via the machine and the affective forces upon the body is built into the structure of Vertov's poems:

"I am an eye. A mechanical eye. I, the machine, show you a world the way only I can see it. I free myself for today and forever from human immobility. I am in constant movement. I approach and pull away from objects. I creep under them. I move alongside a running horse's mouth. I fall and rise with the falling and rising bodies. This is I, the machine, maneuvering in the chaotic movements, recording one movement after another in the most complex combinations.

Freed from the boundaries of time and space, I co-ordinate any and all points of the universe, wherever I want them to be. My way leads towards the creation of a fresh perception of the world. Thus, I explain in a new way the world unknown to you." (Vertov, 1984, p79)

Culture is flooded by analogue print media because of the machine, whether is it the images replicated in photographs, text, or film. The growth of this media creates new types of experience and creates the emergence of what Theodore Adorno in 1939 refers to as not just culture in itself, but the culture industry, which is totalising (2001). Vertov's writing illustrates directly how the shift in temporal and affective experience creates a new vision and a new cognitive outlook for thinking through the framing of the world by the camera

viewfinder, lens and in the editing process. The thrust of a new cognitive sensibility because of the machine to reorder the imaging of the world in a soviet utopian form is present in his writings and in his ideas about the liberation of technology. (Michelson & O'Brien, 1984)

The image of the city is an image that is machinic because this image is a reality that can be captured and then reorganised by the machine and then mediated into cultural circulation. Vertov's poems and writing pre-empt the work of Walter Benjamin in his examination of the machine, and Vertov is specific in turning his attention to the city as the site of modernity. Vertov clearly marvels at the increased connection of how the mind and body are drawn closer to the machine, and the increased agency that machines give.

Vertov relocated from Soviet Poland to Russia via the machine and reinvents himself from Denis Kaufman in the image of the machine with the name Dziga Vertov that translates as 'Spinning Top' in Ukrainian. For Vertov the city as a machine was a city where the machine brought agency and the promise of elevated human capacity. His endeavour was to capture the essence and excitement of machinic speed and energy, but within the context of the industrialisation and modernisation of the Soviet Union and the collective. The progressive utopianism of this Soviet modernism was aligned to technological advancement that the Italian Futurists had in their blind belief in the machine and the rejection of the dogma of the past.

"Kino-Eye means the conquest of space, the visual linkage of people through the entire world base on the continuous exchange of visible fact, of film-comments as opposed to the exchange of cinematic or theatrical presentations.

Kino-Eye means the conquest of time (the visual linkage of phenomena separated in time). Kin-Eye is the possibility of seeing life processes in any temporal order or at any speed, inaccessible to the human eye.

Kino-Eye makes use of every possible king of shooting technique, acceleration, microscopy, reverse action, animation camera movement, the use of the most un-expected foreshortenings – all these we consider to be not trick effects, but normal methods to be fully used.

Kino-Eye uses every possible means in montage, comparing and linking all points in the universe in any temporal order, breaking, when necessary, all the laws and conventions of film construction.

Kino-Eye plunges into the seeming chaos of life to find life itself the response to the assigned theme. To find the resultant force amongst the million phenomena related to the

given theme. To edit, to wrest, through the camera, whatever is most typical, most useful, from life into a meaningful rhythmic visual order, a meaningful visual phrase, an essence of 'I see'." (Michelson & O'Brien, 1985, p25-)

The *Kino-Eye* (1924) manifesto was written before his 1928 film *Man with a Movie Camera,* yet it is a poetic script that acts as an embodied manifesto for imaging some of the opening scenes that would be reimaged exactly in the film that came later. What is clear to Vertov is the potential of the interplay between the creation and shaping of subjectivity by the machinic through the camera, within the machinic city. The forces of speed and their impact upon a newly emerging machine enhanced human temporality within the city are interlinked. The affective flows that influence thought, agency and machine were part of a Soviet aesthetic that differed from Italian Futurism due to their historical and political contexts. The iconoclasm and machine aesthetic that linked both movements were in the Soviet sense, at odds with the politics of fascism and the war machine embraced by the Italian Futurists. The Soviets' initially embraced film for their own nationalist sensibility and propaganda that went beyond the stylisation of the energy of the machine by the Futurists. The collectivism of the Soviet ideal also positions this early modernism within a rhizomic social and political structure imagined but not achieved by Vertov's concept of the '*Kinoki*' as a democratic ethnography created by the people for the people using technology against emerging cinema so that and how technology would reflect a truth to reveal the conditions of life.
Vertov's work demonstrates that he is highly aware of the malleability of reality and human temporality through the structuring of experience within the context of automation. The construction of sensation within the machinic city and the construction of sensation within the cinematic city and their correlation for the production and construction for the imaging of life is laid out in his Kinoki manifesto for pursuing a modernist Soviet truth. For Vertov there is a connection between the materiality of the machinic technologies developing and the temporal as well as the content of the illusionistic imaging of the world as a sensory cinematic experience.

Cities as Ideological Machines
In Vertov's film Man with a Movie Camera (1928) the cognitive process and the collective process of working with the machines that capture the city through framing, abstracting, fragmenting, facsimile, and then the machines that are involved in cutting, rearranging, splicing, replicating to reimage the city and to create it anew, involve the structuring of its

temporal from in the edit of the film. This is a process of reorganising the matter of light to create a poetic image of distortion, repetition, magnification, and exaggeration that can hold a cinematic ideological truth. The means of production are represented in the film and the collective workers making the film are represented too. This representation was important for showing the post revolutionary dynamic of Soviet life, but the film also contains the materiality and processed based reflexivity of modernism within its aesthetic, to reveal that it is, what it is, namely a cinematic construction and this is where its truth is. This constructed positivist truth within of the construction of the film is a representation of the rebuilding and potential of a post-Czarist nation. The Soviet Union system was keenly aware of the power of technology to create material changes to the organisation of life and subjectivity. Huge movements of people and reorganisation of industrial and agriculture productivity took place during the first 5 years plan, (Davies, 1993). It was also quick to integrate the use of mechanical technologies as the agent of its ideology to build the image of the Soviet Union. The images were created for internal and external validation of a new nation and project its success.

What is important about Benjamin is that he writes about the relationship between emerging technologies from a historical viewpoint, and the relationship between technology and ontology as being tied together. In the U.S.A. we see the city as an ideological machine at work in other ways that are more dispersed than direct propaganda, but filtered through the glamour of the entertainment spectacle as it emerges within capitalism and the spectacle of the city as it emerges. We see this in The Empire State building and the cityscape of New York City, and its subsequent cinematic reproduction is films like *King Kong*, Cooper (1933) from the same time and then later in Andy Warhol's *Empire* (1964). Benjamin recognises the extension of reality via cinema as a new technology for capturing and presenting reality. Benjamin on the profound impact of film upon the masses as technology develops at the turn of the 20th Century:

"Around 1900 technical reproduction had reached a standard that not only permitted it to reproduce all transmitted works of art and thus to cause the most profound change in their impact upon the public; it also had captured a place of its own among the artistic processes. For the study of this standard nothing is more revealing than the nature of the repercussions that these two different manifestations—the reproduction of works of art and the art of the film—have had on art in its traditional form." (Benjamin. 2004, p20)

The technology of film captures time and enables new perceptions. The formal aspects of film present a temporal shock to the audience. If we turn to Dziga Vertov's manifesto writing, poems and indeed his self-styled name, they capture the affective temporality of speed mechanisation within the industrialisation of the Soviet Union, and this will be returned to later. Vertov's excitement with mechanised technology and its possibilities in how it gives him agency to think about the world and also create an image of Soviet life. Thought is enhanced via the new temporality created by the mechanized world, and this is translated into his films as he captures the city via reflexive cinematic processes. The camera is used as a tool to extend vision of what is known, and the editing processes of film reveal the temporality of mechanization, but also create the shock of the cinema. This shock of cinema is the configurations of reality in new ways by capturing time. Benjamin (2004) says that cinema as an art of the masses is used to capture the subjection of the masses within the spectacle. The cinema is a technology of mass subjection which via its form, content and movement penetrates reality. Cinema embodies the moment and a reality of the moment that is constructed, and absorbs the masses within the modality of this reality with its shifts in the temporal liked to the machine.

The Image of the City

The interplay that technology has with mediating experience demonstrates the construction of reality by technologies of mediated information. Cinema as a technology of subjectivity reveals the ontological role of media within society. Benjamin is more explicit about the shaping of the ontological by technology when he links the uses of the machine to war and capital, and this is the premise that Paul Virilio builds on in his critique of technology. Writing on Marinetti's 1909, Futurist Manifesto that links technology and political dialectics with social forces and art to the war machine.

"To him, the aesthetic of modern warfare appears as follows: if the natural use of productive forces is impeded by the property system, then the increase in technological means, in speed, in sources of energy will press toward an unnatural use. This is found in war, and the destruction caused by war furnishes proof that society was not mature enough to make technology its organ, that technology was not sufficiently developed to master the elemental forces of society." (Benjamin, 2004, p42).

Benjamin connects the technology of the machine with the political drives of fascism and capitalism. Benjamin links the co-opting of culture within the war machine aesthetic of capitalism by using the poetic fascist imagery of the Futurist manifesto to illustrate his point.

The digital computational networked era also creates a shift in the temporal and the affective flows experienced in the course of the dialectical relationship between technology, aesthetics and capitalism that are all equally as intertwined. Cinema is no longer the main cultural phenomenon that it was for crystalising time and producing subjectivity in how we relate to the world via media images, narrative, and forces. The machine at the heart of this endeavour is now the remote server that connects all forms of screen experience, yet the process remains the same and the aura of the machine is everywhere. Virilio extends the extension of the machine upon humanity to make similar connections in *Open Sky* and the implications of digital technology and totalitarianism. He writes on the growing role that technology has on the environment and the computations of real time upon the body as a controlling force. "The growth of the immaterial, the "body terminal" of man as interactive being as both transmitter and receiver (Virilio, 2002, p11).

The Empire State Building being emblematic of US capitalism and a cityscape shaped by emergent technology and the construction of cultural imaginaries connects the luminosity of the lit skyscraper and its role in wider imaginaries to this idea of aura and the cinematic. The illuminated building has cinematic presence and becomes reproduced beyond its original context to transmit its ideological message further and extend its aura.

The Empire State Building has entered into the global cultural imaginary because of its illumination and height at night and also because of its relationship to the cinema. It housed a media transmission centre, commercial office space, tourist attraction with viewing platforms, and was frequented by celebrities in its function rooms. It acquired cultural cache as a symbol of power almost immediately (Tauranac, 2014). It was a functional piece of architecture with no specific identity other than as a power sign that was still as direct an embodiment of nationalism and ideology as other ideological totems such as the *Eiffel Tower* in Paris, or the proposed Constructivist *Monument to the Third International* by Vladimir Tatlin (1919). The Empire State Building functions as Roland Barthes (1964) suggests in his essay of architectural space and the Eiffel Tower in Paris, as an empty signifier that stands on the horizon of the city and that has a creates place making function that can have multiple and shifting meanings transposed upon it. The Empire State Building initially it had a search light on top of it that turned it into a beacon and gave it additional presence and cinematic spectacle. It had status and fame even before it appeared in the hugely popular 1933 film

King Kong by Merian C. Cooper because it represented the potential of the economic, technological, and cultural growth of the U.S.A. It hosted celebrity and socialite parties that were reported in the press (Tauranac, 2014). It developed a positive narrative despite being built in the aftermath of the economic crash that caused the U.S. Great Depression that decimated the lives of millions. This building and its image contributed to the city as a place of modernist progress as opposed to one of dust bowl poverty. As a building it embodied a fiction of capitalism through the spectacle of the city. It was the operations of the city that caused the economic crash, but from this it uses the spectacle to reinvent itself anew and links the city to the futurity that is present in the unfolding imminence and imaginary futurity of the cinema and its potentiality. More on the tower or 'skyscraper' as an imaginary power sign within culture will be covered in chapter four.

In the 1976 Guillermine remake, Kong climbed one of the *Twin Towers* that made up the World Trade Centre, that were completed in 1973. These towers surpassed The Empire State Building in height and status, with many of the inhabitants leaving it to occupy the Twin Towers. The destruction of the World Trade Centre Twin Towers in 2001 was replicated on screens around the world, with the collision of the second tower being relayed in real time by digital technology. Their destruction being played over and over, and in the jolt of this spectacle, often played whilst being rewound. Post cinematic affect upon television screens globally created shockwaves. The targeting of New York City through these iconic buildings by Al Qaeda in an orchestrated multi U. S. target operation, was a devastating attack on U.S. imperialism that successfully demonstrated the fallibility of U.S. domestic protection. It was a moment of political and cultural shock when the psyche of western security within its own borders was ruptured by the live broadcasting of explosive horror (BBC, 2001). The image of war and destruction often inflicted by the U.S.A. and the northern hemisphere on other far-off cities was now very close. The image of the city with these towers embodying globalised capitalism became a spectacularly surreal moment when the material and the cinematic worlds collided. The spectre of fictional anti U.S.A. narratives of terrorist attack in the Thorp *Die Hard* (1988) film franchise and Cameron *True Lies* (1994) were now actualised. Unexpectedly, the cinematic image of the city was reflecting back onto the city, and this was bewildering to the developed nations of the northern hemisphere. Recalling this event in London on this day on Tottenham Court Road which was known as a centre of media technology sales in London at this time, every screen in every shop the length of the street showed this event on the news. People lined the street as a large crowd, dumbstruck in awe. The audience of the traditional cinema several people deep was lined up

at this public screening. It looked like a *Die Hard*, McTiernan, (1988) film was being played on every screen simultaneously. The affective power of this event as a screen event created mass panic and enabled the neo-liberal right to further shape the private international military industrial complex, (Klein, 2007). The re-assertion of US and NATO military dominance generated more images of destruction to create the desired narrative and effects. Other drone bombings before and after 9/11 continued in Arabian and African states outside of the spectacle and interest of the media, in places far away.

The Digital City

The 2005 Jackson remake of *King Kong* was set in the 1930s again, and again used the *Empire State Building* with 1930's New York City replicated this time in C.G.I. The scale of the rendering of the city in this highly digitally processed film is immense, and flexes both the technological might and conjures the mythology of the cinematic and cultural legacy of the city. Armies of 3D modellers, texture artists, lighting artists and other postproduction labour went into produced the sweeping architectural landscape view from on high and the detail to the architectural models. This invisible labour to create the illusion of the city in the digital space involved the machinic labour of the computer server to render all of this information, to create the illusion of depth, space, mass, and complex physics for the materials and lighting. The time to develop the software and hardware capabilities to be able produce engage with the work for this virtual digital cinematic spectacle is immense. The development and creation process is often inanely, frustrating banal and lengthy. As the digital era has increasingly developed the data mining the software use and the digital projects themselves that have been created has been analysed and is now used by artificial intelligence to create such scenes through accelerated machinic labour that renders the teams of human labour increasingly obsolete. The time temporal acceleration of production because of A.I. creation is minutes instead of the months taken by legions of specialists to create these images of the city. 'Creation' is now creative direction and curation in the digital space using the A.I. machine. This power of the algorithm has breached public consciousness because it has entered the creative arena and raised questions of human labour and the identities and financial dependences attached to digital creative roles. A.I. generated creative content can now be almost instantaneous (Leonhardt 2024). But these same A.I. algorithm technologies that are causing debate about the impacts of the developing 4th industrial revolution have been used within finance, media, and the war machine for decades. They were used in the training simulations and strategies for the US and NATO Gulf Conflict in the early 1990s.

They have guided and manipulated markets and social media information and opinion modulation.

The Empire State Building has a firm place within the US and global cultural imaginary where its original context and 'aura' have been untied and remade through the cinematic projections. From here the vista of the spectacle of the city as a place of romance from *How I Met Your Mother,* Thomas & Bays (2005-)*, to* where *Superman* rescues Lois Lane, Lester, (1980), and Cary Grant romantically meets Debera Kerr in *An Affair to Remember McCarey* (1957). It appears in many other films and television appearances that create other narratives that both deflect its direct meaning as a power sign and also reinforce it in new shifting cultural imaginary narratives.

Andy Warhol's Empire

Warhol's *Empire*, (1964) focuses singularly on The Empire State Building in an unchanging frame starting at dusk as the lights of the city begin to illuminate. It is a silent film. Warhol's career was built around the spectacle and signs that come from commodification and the image of fame. His work replicated this fame and commodification, and so he and his work attained this status also within the flow of signs and capital. The temporality of the film and the grain of the film give it heightened reflexive qualities, along with the light bleed where one of the ten reels of film that were used during filming was exposed to light. The constructed meaning for both the film and the building become tied. The footage for *Empire*, (1964) runs for over eight hours, but it is not captured in real time as is seemingly present. *Empire*, (1964) has the markers of Deleuze's 'time-image' conception of modernism written about in *Cinema 2* (2005) ,where the temporality of post World War Two cinema becomes reflexive and incorporates the flow of time outside of narrative genre. This is sensibility to time is seen in the work of film maker Andre Tarkovsky and Structural art film. It is a sensibility used in the formalism of Structural art film, however Structural film makers shunned the brash celebrity Warhol was caught up with. The cool detachment of modernism upon the Empire State Building in Warhol's film focuses on and reinforces the building as celebrity, icon, and spectacle. The building is inanimate but everything around it creates what it is. The film's temporality is slower than real time and so represents a mediation that excludes it from Strucutural film. The twenty-four frames per second for the shoot of *Empire* (1964) was slowed to sixteen frames per second for playback and this extends the original six-and-a-half-hour shoot to eight hours and fifteen minutes. The film is slower than real time and presents the problem of endurance for anyone that is able to watch it. The temporality is

exaggerated spectacle precisely because it is drawn out. It is seemingly unfettered, but it is mediated and hides this. Nothing much happens in the film, but unfolding time, until it does and from the darkness the building is suddenly floodlit. Reflections of the film makers are occasionally glimpsed in the window. The comfort of the unchanging and the illusion of permanence is present. The screen shows this icon of the city, and the city itself is a screen. It is simple in that it draws attention to the building as a spectacle and framing draws focus and analysis. The abbreviated title of the building into *Empire (1964)* alludes to financial empire as well as the cinematic empire. The affective labour of enduring the spectacle due to the film's length is key to its critique. The film reveals that it is not just the minutiae of what happens within the frame, but in the systems at work that created what this building is. The critique brings into question the symbolism and use of the building in the city as materiality, and in the virtual operations and affective forces connected to what it represents. Warhol's *Empire* (1964) crystalises time, the affective labour of viewing cinema or moving image and in doing so becomes a critique.

Maurizio Lazzarato (2019) focuses on Benjamin's observation of the contradiction of the cinema as a machine for crystalising time and producing subjectivity, in that it produces the absorbed state of the passive spectator, but also requires the attentive concentration of the senses by engaging with the film. Lazzarato reading Benjamin from a Bergsonian perspective and how the affective shock of the cinema engages a stationary viewing within active labour and how technology crystalises time.

"…Cinema produces a shock of the unconscious, enabling the masses to appropriate forms of perception of the psychopath, the hallucinator, the dreamer, reversing the subordination of time to movement and including more reality than the perception of a healthy individual." These new features of collective perception are, for Benjamin, a clear indication of a change in the function of the apparatus of human apperception. But "the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at historical turning points cannot be performed solely by optical means-this is, by the way of contemplation. They are mastered gradually-taking their cue from tactile reception-through habit." Here we find, surprisingly, another Bergsonian theme, a direct and unambiguous critique of the optical model. Vision without passive syntheses of habit would be impossible. Any apparatus of vision needs passive syntheses. The first objective of machines that crystalise time is not the eye (which, as we know, essentially functions as an extension of the intellect) but the body and action. First the body, the rest will follow." (Lazarrato, 2019. p202)

From this we can ascertain that whilst the body is passive; it is temporally active in receiving the film content. The body is not exactly passive, but rather it is a stationary body that is active in receiving the shock of the cinema, or rather its asignified affects. Whether watching the news of the World Trade Centre, Twin Towers on the street outside an electronic media store or enduring Warhol's, *Empire* (1964), the body is engaged with the flow of affect and engaged in a process of affective labour. The collision of this paradox of attentive concentration and passive affective reception form the conditions of capturing and also producing the subjectivity of the masses, and this is at the heart of capitalist politics. Deleuze and Guattari further Benjamin's dialectical model linking aesthetics and politics. They ascertain that capitalism operates at every realm of lived sense making experience. They argue that in systems of capture and value and how there is no real distinction between private and public when conceptualising labour because all types of labour are part of state sanctioned machinic enslavement.

"We start with the archaic imperial State: over coding, apparatus of capture, machine of enslavement. It comprises a particular kind of property, money, public works—a formula complete in a single stroke but one that presupposes nothing "private" and does not even assume a pre-existent mode of production since it is what gives rise to the mode of production." (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p448-).

They go beyond Marx's crystallization of time within economic labour-based production for the creation of capital, to expand the processes of valorisation in the production of capital within culturally produced subjectivity. The engagement with the culture industry outside of employment marks a subjective labour, that is an excess to productive labour.

Affective Labour

The semiotics of signification and asignification work to produce more means of capitalist power at every level of reality. The flows of knowledge and the flows of asignified affects are linked to the production of wealth. The flows of knowledge and the flows of asignified affects are linked to the means of production that are temporal and this is why the temporal becomes the most important commodity of capitalism. The temporal is the ultimate commodity because it is that which forms reality and perception and so therefore the

temporal has the most value for modulating and maintaining power. The spectacle and its link to the attention economy that is technocratic engages the viewer in "immaterial labour" or "affective labour". On the relationship between enslavement and subjection within assemblages of extraction.

"There is enslavement when human beings themselves are constituent pieces of a machine that they compose among themselves and with other things (animals, tools), under the control and direction of a higher unity. But there is a subjection when the higher unity. Cybernetic and informational machines form a third age that reconstructs a generalised regime of subjection: recurrent and reversible 'human-machines systems' replace old non recurrent and non-reversible relations of subjection between two elements; the relations between human and machine is based on internal communication, and no longer on usage or action" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p456-).

Affective labour is the subject investing not just their time, energy, and money, as labour, but also their internal, private psychic life of desire, hopes and beliefs connected to their subjectivity. The spectacle informs and entertains in that it enthrals, tantalises and dazzles to reach the subject outside of working life. Affective labour enables capitalism to harvest the private world of the subject and inculcate the subject further into its virtual apparatus that governs ontology. What does this mean for resistance within the city and how affective labour can be transformative and productive within subjectivities that are marginal or opposed to the city as an extractionist machine?

The shift in the technical quality and the emerging language of narrative cinema between *King Kong* at the beginning of the 1930's to *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) at the end of the decade was huge. There was a rapid growth in the culture industry and the number of cinemas built in the 1930's globally. *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) was one of the first films to use the 'technicolour' process to capture its bold, colourfully baroque, picture book aesthetic. The set design, costumes, and the colour in the film blaze like a fever dream. It takes place on elaborate sets like a lavish pantomime stage. It is highly constructed, performative and melodramatically camp. It is joyous, fun, physical and hugely sentimental. It is deeply loved.

Somewhere Over the Rainbow
The Emerald City looms ever present on the horizon as the characters journey there. The Emerald City represents the modernist belief in centrality and order. The city is presented as

having the answers that will help remake these lost and dysfunctional characters. The patriarchal, all knowing and powerful *Wizard of Oz*, (1939) has what they seek. The Emerald City appears as a sparkling mirage on the horizon, the promise of the city, the potential of progress and modernity. The stylised, sleek, abstraction of Art Deco and the green of the dollar bill, is present in the minimalist crystalline towers that form the city. It is an idealised version of what the city can be. It is the city as a representation of futurity, power, wealth, and happiness. It is also an imperial city that is a fortress and is at war with the forces from outside who threaten it. The Wicked Witch of the West is juxtaposed as a middle-aged woman against the youth of Dorothy and the rule of the *Wizard of Oz*, (1939) and so perpetuates all kinds of fairy tales. The Wicked Witch lives in a castle run down set within a dark thorny landscape and is primitive in comparison to the sheen of The Emerald City. Upon arriving at the city and being terrified by the spectacle of the wizard that is a projected image, of fire, smoke and doom, Dorothy's dog, Toto, pulls back a curtain. Revealed behind the curtain are the machinations of the spectacle of power. The spectacle is produced by the labour of a privileged white American male, orchestrating the labour of the machine to produce the images of power that create the status of the city. The power of the city is built upon spectacle and the affective desire of the subjects who come to the city to be remade by it. It reveals how the image of the city is produced by the machine and the city governed by the machine.

The affective labour generated by *The Wizard of Oz,* (1939) has seen its popularism remediate the film within a queer context. The link between the utopian yearning for a place of belonging in the song from the film, *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* (Arlen & Harburg, 1939) and the initial queer pride rainbow colour design and ideals attached to it are a bonded imaginary. Judy Garland's status as a queer icon and her role of Dorothy Gale, along with the overall camp spectacle of the film cements it within queer culture (Robbins, 2018). The term "Friends of Dorothy" has long been a euphemism for cis gay men due to the affection the film hold in the queer community. This affective labour reframes the experience of the film so that it has become emblematic of the city holding the promise of a queer utopia. The self-made family on the same journey. The relocation to the city to construct the self and draw strength from the self-made family in this process. The affective labour of the performance of the self as a construction with the systems of what the city has to offer within capitalism to create agency. The inspired drag performances and the rainbow flags that define places and queer identities within the city. We see this in the Jenny Livingston documentary *Paris is Burning*, (1990) set in New York City, where the shelf made bonds of new organisations of a

family made up of the differential identities of the queer community support each other, find solace and create their own space and spectacle of selfhood within the city. The "Friends of Dorothy" phrase places Dorothy as the appointed "mother" of this self-made family on their journey of self discovery and she can be likened to the "mother" of the self-made families depicted in Paris is Burning, Livingston, (1990).

In *Paris is Burning*, (1990) and other queer histories within the city such as *The Queen*, Simon, (1968) The *Life & Death of Martha P. Johnson*, France, (2017) and *I Hate New York*, Sanchez, (2018), the city as a stratification of rhizomatic forces and experiences creates a place for queer subjectivities to find connection. Within the imaginary of the machinic city of modernity and functionary rationalism the narratives of other more tangential and precarious queer imaginaries also develop. Queer identities within the city can form of confluence so that some form of resistant collectivity develops in social structures that are differential. The narratives of the lives in these documentary films foregrounds mainly non-white ethnic queer and trans people that push against heteronormative homogeneity within the structures of the city. Cultural spaces are created by cultural activities that find created their own forms of valorisation within specific queer communities. The pursuit of self-determination within the city from a position of marginality that defies the social, sexual, and legal structuring of society has much joy, but should not be easily romanticised. The genre of the 'documentary' frames the content and bitter struggles of queer black and people of colour, whose lives are represented with often tragic and deadly narratives. The subjective imaginaries are not contained within a language of cinematic genre in these documentaries, because the narratives of their lives are not reducible in complexity and are inhabited within the subjects themselves as they strive to imagine, create, and actualise within the city.

The hope, and potential that the image of the city and its imaginaries for subjectivity that is created by the affective flow of bodies, ideas, and opportunities within its architecture is alluring, poetic and powerful. The promise of the cinematic and the promise of the city create an imaging within a symbiotic relationship of affective spectacle with each other and with it the potentiality of the imaginaries that can be produced by this complex exchange.

3 – Canary Wharf and the Image of Neo-Liberal London

Within the forces of time and the flux of commerce, the permanence that cities seemingly have as static material entities, belies the constant creep of change and their materiality being redefined and remade. The material spectacle of cities take on the blandishments of steel and glass common to all international style skyscrapers and rely on 'starchitecture' to create statements like the branding of fashion labels. This chapter considers the Isle of Dogs in East London to explore how the materiality of the city changes to embody a history and its relationship to capitalism and the trends of how the image of the city develops within a localised and globalised narratives. The redefining of the Isle of Dogs in East London from the colonial extractionist trading hub of the British Empire, into a new digital service financial empire, is one such reinvention, both materially and conceptually. It is an image that is still an ongoing transformation to become yet again reimaged. How is the image of the city created within the processes of capitalist deterritorialization from the spectacle and what is its relations to the production of subjectivity? Looking specifically at East London and its deterritorialization within capitalism and what this entails for the experience within regulated cities is explored. Docklands was originally a marshy wetland that was known as 'Lands End' and was transformed into a hub of Imperial colonialism from the 1850's using the latest engineering technology (londonsroyaldocks.com n.d.). Much of the land was bought and developed by private industrial entrepreneurs such as Samuel Silver to develop warehouses for the importing of rubber and other materials. Silver Town is named after him, and the Tate and Lyle sugar refinery is still located there. The transformation of a marshland into an extension of the built environment expanded London and tied this location to colonialism forever.

As a site it remains interconnected historically and ideologically to capitalism from this first material transformation of East London. The development of the Isle of Dogs continues to embody the unfolding narrative of capitalism. Utilising Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "deterritorialization" from *A Thousand Plateaus* (2000) we can consider the image of the Canary Wharf as an image of London's reinvention as a power of colonial empire into a neo-liberal digital financial hub, and how its urban development is related to historic and emerging global trends within capitalism shaping urban space. The language of moving image in capturing these shifts and the narratives of capitalism that resignify the ideological will be considered in the work *Descent* by the artist Katherine Yass, (2002), the title sequence to the television show *The Apprentice, UK*, BBC (2005-) Patrick Keiller's film *London,*

(1994) and Lawrence Lek and Kode9's work *NOTEL.* (2018). I shall examine these works and how they form part of the imaginaries of East London shortly. Firstly, the transformation of Docklands in capitalism will be framed with the concept of "deterritorialization" developed by Deleuze and Guattari (2000). This theoretical framing will be used to explain the development of the historical imaginaries linked to Docklands and how its narrative and affective signifiers relate to Thatcherite neo-liberalisation.

Deterritorializations

Deleuze and Guattari (2000) write about the historical as a narrative that is tied not just to the boundaries of geography, social and national narrative, but ultimately as a history tied to the flow of labour and capital. They are able to unite the libidinal drives of Lacan and material production and valorisation of Marx by developing their theories of "deterritorialization" and "reterritorialization" in *Anti Oedipus* of 1968.

"Deterritorialization is always double, because it implies the coexistence of a major variable and a minor variable in simultaneous becoming (the two terms of a becoming do not exchange places, there is no identification between them, they are instead drawn into an asymmetrical block in which both change to the same extent, and which constitutes their zone of proximity)." (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000, p306).

Lacan defines libidinal energy as a territorialisation of desire linked to the subconscious, Deleuze and Guattari's reading of Marx outlines the binary of the flow of capitalism to reinvent and shift to new contexts and return to the old to reap capital gain. Described by Marx, as accumulation and how the workers were deterritorialized from agriculture and then reterritorialized into the city to work in the factory. The physical shifts of people and movement to the city and the machinic are part of the redefining of subjectivity in this process of reterritorialization. The binary of good and bad is attributed to the two terms by Marx is overwritten for a more complex relationship of the forces of change in *Anti Oedipus*, (2000). The subconscious of Lacan's libidinal territorialisation of the body is replaced by desiring forces that are not just humanist, but produced in much more complex social and non-human realms of forces, and dialectical conditions that create subjectivation.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari (2004) critique their former volume of *Anti Oedipus* (2000), and these two terms are compressed into one term, "deterritorializations". The state simply "all the dualisms that are the enemy, an entirely

necessary enemy, the furniture we are forever rearranging," (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000, p21). The transformation of deterritorialization and reterritorialization is compressed because the rhizomatic multiplicities of existence, contexts and assemblages and the term 'body without organs' is used so that the binary of language structures to create meaning and oppositionality is deconstructed.

"They set up language as a form of exclusive expression and operate by signifying biunivocalization and subjective binarization. The super linearity proper to language is no longer coordinated with multidimensional figures: it now flattens out all volumes and subordinates all lines. Is it by chance that linguistics always, and very quickly, encounters the problem of homonymy, or ambiguous statements that it then subjects to a set of binary reductions? More generally, linguistics can tolerate no poly vocality or rhizome traits: a child who runs around, plays, dances, and draws cannot concentrate attention on language and writing, and will never be a good subject. In short, the new semiotic needs systematically to destroy the whole range of primitive semiotic systems, even if it retains some of their debris in well-defined enclosures." (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000. p180)

The operations of capitalism are all part of an ongoing movement of multiple forces and, therefore, cannot be split into dual or binary terms. Binaries are restrictive to recognising the complexity of assemblages that create exchanges and systems, and the forces that run through and are productive through them. New terms for signification are therefore necessary. 'Deterritorialization' is a process of displacement within the shifts of exchange and a term tied to affective regimes. Within capitalist regimes there is only the shift of focus and context for labour power and desire attached to valorisation and capital, and this involves a recoding for the means of capital production. This can explain how the narratives attached to imaginaries that make up the city and subjectivation within the city change over time. The spectrum within a binary is limiting, whereas within a rhizomatic ontology of power there is no beginning or end. To dismantle the binary is to comprehend that there is the flow of the ongoing "au mileau", the middle of, the between, a state of becoming, with all variable factors in flux within the flow of time. "It is a question of a model that is perpetually in construction or collapsing, and of a process that is perpetually prolonging itself, breaking off and starting up again," (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000, p20). There is no stable and unstable, but always a motion of developments that are a continuum disruption of colliding, reactive forces, and events within time. Deterritorialization is on-going and can take more than one

form depending on the conditions or the regime that dominate the semiotic production of power dynamics. "A quality functions only as a line of deterritorialization of an assemblage, or in going from one assemblage to another." (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000, p306)

In the three regimes Deleuze & Guattari identify, the first is relative deterritorialization, within the conditions of a "despotic regime" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000. In the despotic regime, meaning is seemingly fixed when the regime creates a central narrative to fix meaning and stabilise the process of meaning for its own end. This despotic regime is centred around the cult of the individual, where one charismatic individual becomes a leader and embodies the values of the regime. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000) This relative deterritorialization is centred around the mythology of the political and religious despot in an attempt to modulate deterritorialization for its own aims and shut down, or gloss over, descent to perpetuate a dominant semiotic regime. Deterritorialization occurs within the logic of the regime in order to secure itself and present stability. The stability and centrality of the narrative is a fiction, with deterritorialization used consistently to justify the regime in the wake of change, or perceived threat or failure. This is of course very familiar, because this kind of structure is how most organisations and institution's function. It is a relative deterritorialization because of the limitations for genuine change. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000) The centralisation of a narrative is of course used within deterritorialization to remove agency, visibility, and voice to aid fascism, colonialism, morality politics and other reductive strategies from racism, sexism, to transphobia etc.

The second form is "absolute" deterritorialization, and this occurs in the power vacuum when there is no centralisation and despotic figure to create unified narratives for meaning. It is negative in that productive processes of discourse have no critical aims and can produce nostalgia and sentimentality that can lead to more despotic regimes to resume. The third manifestation is absolute deterritorialization that occurs within a positive regime. Positive absolute deterritorialization occurs when a regime is a decentred collective, which is able to cast off the needs for containing meaning and is open to the exploration of new modes of conceptualising and organising agency. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000)

Creating Neo-Liberal Subjects

What Deleuze and Guattari (2005) recognise is that subjectivation processes within a machinic context of capitalism see deterritorialization occurring via more complex means to modulate subjectivity. Ongoing deterritorialization presently is an engagement that deliberately and consistently destabilises market, political, and social conditions within

accelerated and authoritarian capitalist regimes. Capitalist regimes are therefore able to exploit the potential (of the modulation) of the forces of change for capital and control. Desire is a vital element to capitalist regimes in the flow of forces that deterritorialize because the affective power of desire is connected to the processes of subjection and identity. The city as a desire machine is an engine of capitalist production.

"We think the material or machinic aspect of an assemblage relates not to the production of goods but rather to a precise state of intermingling of bodies in a society, including all the attractions and repulsions, sympathies and antipathies, alterations, amalgamations, penetrations, and expansions that affect bodies of all kinds in their relations to one another. What regulates the obligatory, necessary, or permitted intermingling of bodies is above all an alimentary regime and a sexual regime." (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000, p90)

We can consider from this that the city is a machine that creates subjection and also creates an image of itself, drawing upon semiotic legacies from culture and building new narratives in the process of deterritorialization. The imaging of subjectivity within the city and the imaging of the city are closely tied together. The city as a capitalist mechanism needs to deterritorialise itself materially to create valorisation by producing new conditions and territories for capital. In London the neo-liberal Thatcherite expansion eastwards was a key vision in neo-liberal capitalist expansion. It was not just about physical territory but also about ideological and subjective territory.

At the proposal for Crossrail in 1988 Thatcher apparently said; "Why would people in Chelsea want to go to Hackney?"(Glanville, 2021). This was in a context of huge divide, socially, economically, culturally, and politically, between the affluent west London borough and the poorer East London borough that was historically socialist. In her flippant comment, Thatcher is acknowledging that the image of the city is made of of different social, political, class and economic stratifications because of the differences between the affluence of West of London and the economic deprivation of East London and that the city has different imaginaries. As an agent of neo-liberalism, but also a conservative with a small c, she was apparently unable to grasp the ideological reasons to connect these disparate locations with infrastructural development. But the interpolating of the east of London through infrastructural development and gentrification is an ideological victory that deterritorialises and changes it. The political landscape of a left-leaning city borough becomes more complicated when capital can be extracted from it and, with this process of

deterritorialization, its demographics of social, economic, and political affiliation are altered. Within the spatialisation of ideology the image of Thatcher's city must keep pace with the demands of capital and neo-liberalism and this requires material change.

The colonial legacy of the Isle of Dogs is present in the naming of the various wharfs that took in the goods from the British Empire. The deterritorialization of the narratives and the materiality of this part of East London connected to imperialism is linked to the rise of neo-liberalism via Thatcher. Much of the building of this area initially took in the stylings of 1980's post-modernism, because of its affective semiotics of being fresh and contemporary, but also linked to the superficially playful and the seemingly "apolitical" surface aesthetics of consumer economy focused on style.

Patrick Keiller's London
Patrick Keiller's film *London.* (1994), maps the study of London as a psychographic exploration of the year 1992. The film is the first of a wider trilogy of films that examine the UK. The film plays upon modernist romanticism but mocks it with a détournement narrative that reframes the image of London as a fiction. Images of London that chart its geography, history and current affairs are tied together via a voice-over narration. The film is made up of fixed frame compositions of London, like snapshots of landmarks. The fixed-frame scenes depict the passing of time, they do not follow any action. They take in the city as observation attached to the narrator. This structure to the film could be positioned within a Deleuzian conception of the cinematic as the '*time image'*, (Deleuze, 2005) where the construction of the film is a reflexive fiction but contains the flow of real time. The fictional narrator combines the mundane with speculative and subjective fiction. London is remade with this narrative and the magic of the cinematic for reinvention and the powers of the false that are intrinsic to cinema is present. The narrative is a weaving in of the historical, factual, mythological, and the material fabric of the city to weigh up the city's constant change. It forms a critique through this narrative that is as convincing and constructed as the image of London itself. The narration comes from the partner of a fictional character called Robinson and he relays and speculates upon Robinson's left-wing commentary and personal dismay of political events as they explore the city. The film appropriates the confessional narrative character and other formal characteristics from H. G. Wells's *A Modern Utopia* (1905), which itself borrows from Daniel Defoe's, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). The socio-political landscape of the year unfolds in the run up to the general election and its aftermath, with a win by the Conservative Party under John Major. The city is depicted as a melding of

contemporary events and historical legacy that are merged within its materiality. The film essay explores the psyche of the UK to form a critique of national identity centred around London. The image of the UK is explored via the icons of architectural London and other landmarks that facilitate a narrative about the decline of its colonial power set against the arrogance of its perceived world position. This colonial legacy of belligerence is marked by its European scepticism, anti-intellectualism, cultural conservativism, and systemic racism. The dismay and anxiety about the ongoing dismantling of civic structures and social care in a post Thatcherite neo-liberal service economy, forms a central concern of Robinson. The growing division between the wealthy and the poor is illustrated, in a commentary that could be transposed into current events, and it perhaps reveals a lot about the British psyche.

London in Negative Deterritorialization

Many of the images of London are used recursively, contrasting the mundane with the spectacle of the city's financial and cultural institutions with the municipal spaces, social housing, shops, and pubs. The exterior of the *Financial Times* is used frequently and the digital display of the stock market F.T.S.E. to show the rise and fall in the value of British currency. This ebb and flow connects the fortunes of those in power to the workings of the economy and its trickle-down effects. Close up shots of the swirling river Thames as the time image are shown in juxtaposition to the flow of finances and other connected fortunes.

The narrative draws upon the supposed academia of the protagonist Robinson as a university lecturer whose research into early modernist literature from European Romanticism and the connection of some of these writers, such as Rimbaud, to London, has heavy irony given the political discord with Europe during the filming. The narrator and the film draw upon the modernist mode of critique that is situated within a materialist historicity where the flaneur draws observations and connections, to map, chart and analyse life in the spectacle of the city. The tone of regret and loss tinges the romantic whimsy of Robinson who, as an aesthete, longs for a culturally rich romantic utopia. His neurosis and fanciful ideas bring levity to the film and in the arch comments by the narrator. These two fictitious characters, despite some cultural privilege present a critique from a decentralised position, that enables a queering of the narrative that circles back in homage, to the queer French writer Rimbaud. There is a hint of more queerness with the sporadic meeting of two Peruvian musicians Aquiles and Carlos, who are then visited in their bucolic canal boat idyl on the outskirts of London, but a more overt queer narrative is not taken further. This omission is rather striking given the H.I.V. crisis at the time of making the film. We could situate this

work as a process of deterritorialization of the pomposity of the British psyche and how it is tied to the image of London. It is a détournement of London as a colonial power. The narrative of deterritorialization of the U.K. as a post-colonial power and an emerging neo-liberal one, depicts the UK struggling to locate meaning and identity. The lack of a despotic regime following the ousting of Thatcher and the waning of royal support amidst scandals of infidelity create a negative deterritorialization. This is compounded by the narrator's lamentation of the failure of the left to be galvanised against neo-liberalism in the UK.

One narrative episode outlines the historical use of the Thames busy with the traffic of trade, or rather the extractionism from the British Empire, that has now disappeared and been usurped. The main traffic is now produced at night by multiple barges transporting tons of garbage into landfill sites on the periphery of London in Essex. The East London docklands contains wharfs that are named after the far-flung places where the British Empire colonised and deterritorialized resources, labour, industry, national identity, sovereignty, agency and also the dignity of people. At this point in the 1990s they are mainly desolate, but on the Isle of Dogs these spaces are being reimaged with the development of One Canada Square. The area that has declined post empire is being resignified through the process of deterritorialization.

One Canada Square Deterritorialized
Within the shopping mall of the pyramid topped One Canada Square at Jubilee Walk, there are three photographic light boxes that are part of the art project *Descent* by the artist Catherine Yass, (2002). The project also includes an art film of around eight minutes that is not on display. Both the tower at One Canada Square and the film *Descent* refer to the established legacies created by the spectacle of capitalist aesthetics present in more well known Empire State Building, and also pay homage to Warhol's film *Empire,* (1964). What do we learn from the image that is created from the spectacle of this redefined site, and how does the language of moving image creates narratives that are loaded with neo-liberal ideology?
The light boxes have images on them that have been taken from above to show the foundations being laid in the docks for new buildings taking their place alongside One Canada Square. The project was commissioned by the Canary Wharf Group, the private equity firm who manage the development of this site. Two images have been manipulated so that the colour is altered to become fluorescent through the emitted light. The composition of the images creates abstraction with the grids, and along with the primary colours in the scene,

are reminiscent of Mondrian's *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, (1943) painting. The other image shows the scene in transformation, capturing the motion of the camera so the features of the building site are elongated into blurred streaks. The image becomes unrecognisable and captures the movement. Unlike the busy movement and musicality of Mondrian's New York painting, this image seems to dematerialise as representation disintegrates into something more phantasmic.

The film for *Descent* (2002) has a different aesthetic to the light boxes in that it lacks the intense colour manipulation typical of all of Yass's photographic works of the built environment and interiors. The film was made by a camera being attached to a crane running at the side of one of the buildings that became the Citibank offices. The other building mirroring it on the other side of One Canada Square became the HSBC offices. The concrete structure is seen by the side of the primary tower of metal and glass that is topped by a pyramid. The film is edited footage of camera sequences ascending to the top of the tower, but it is reversed so that it becomes a decent and the footage is inverted to explore the formal qualities of the footage playfully. Yass's other film works also explore height and leaving the ground. The pace of the film matches the smooth motion of the camera as it travels on the crane. We see the One Canada Square tower dissolve in the mist that engulfs it and then emerge. The ascension and descension of the camera is like the action of the many elevators that these buildings have and enable a surface of the landscape. The movement of the markets on the stock exchange going up and down might be attributed to this yo-yoing motion as well as the careers of those directly involved. The footage is a creative take on the site as a historical document of the changes taking place to the landscape at Canary Wharf and the shifting weather conditions.

The stock images of Canary Wharf available on search engines chart the rapid expansion of building works from the time that One Canada square stood alone. The sudden increase from 2000 coincides with the event of the networked digital era. These photographic images have a strange quality because they look like they are computer generated images, and much of the development of East London such as Canary Wharf, Canning Town nearby, and Stratford have this artificial look. The main reason they have this polished C.G.I. aesthetic is because they were designed on computers using 3D rendering software, and the facades of the buildings are machine engineered. The algorithms of artificial intelligence that are so emmeshed within the world of stocks and finance are also at work in the drag and drop architectural elements of the software that creates these buildings and work out the complex physics to be able to render the qualities of light and texture in these digital cities. The

virtual feedback loop of virtual and material space being colonised by the digital to create the image of the city perpetuates. The scenes look static, the buildings look solid and contained. They sit in the landscape of clear sky and reflective water as if they are meant to be there. The metallic and glass surfaces reflect both. The aesthetic of minimalism, sleekness with definitive forms, cleanness and a retro future gloss can be linked to the direct, solid, uncomplicated "strong and stable" narratives of neoliberal politics particularly used by the UK Conservative Party in various iterations and aligned their media outlets. The language of illusion operates concurrently in the spaces of the screen, the architecture of the city and politics to render the imaging of a variety of imaginaries connected to 'Britishness' and neo-liberalism.

The Tower and Narrative

These stock images of Canary Wharf extend the same aesthetic that we see in BBC television series *The Apprentice UK*, (2005-) titles and position the buildings within the international language of the representation of the successful city. The place of commerce is always represented with dynamic angles. There are some striking images of the buildings shrouded in mist that show Canary Wharf from the air on a bright day. The buildings appear ethereal with all detail lost in the haze of the atmospheric perspective. In other pictures they seem to sit upon the fluffy brilliant white clouds as if in a dream or apparition. The allusion to other cultural narratives associated with the clouds abound and are more exaggerated than the title sequences. The heavenly divine light of Baroque paintings, the Romanticism of Germanic castles, and fairy tale mists, and of course the utopian techno floating cities of science fiction. These images replicate the other images within culture. They reflect other images in them, borrowing from history. The production of machine-made spectacle generates more images and appropriates the old. In the age of the algorithm the mists and clouds surrounding these towers takes on the ironic association of the digital cloud and the increasing territorialisation of the dematerialised and the virtual.

Since 2014 the area has been reinventing itself again. The narrative of the financial hub is being deterritorialized so that capital can be made from residential development rather than investment banks and corporate space. It is developing quicky to become an urban development of housing in expensive apartment tower blocks, which is centred around the image of finance rather than municipal, state, or civic architecture. A C.G.I. rendered promotional video markets the tallest residential building in Europe, the Landmark Pinnacle as containing everything for living within one building. Access to gym, pool, spar, bars,

cafes, restaurants, working spaces, cinema, and communal spaces all without leaving the building. Atomised habitats close to one's office and the city in miniature within one contained footprint. Height is important within the economies attached to these buildings. Height is commodified as status and the views of the sun's glare blistering off other glass buildings and water below as the desirable aesthetic experience. Being at ground level is not desirable. The views from this promotional video and in real life from building and others like it on the Isle of Dogs resemble the same views that are posted on social media from residential tower blocks are close copies of the images posted on social media 'stories' of the residential towers in Dubai with the same golden light. It is an internationally desirable aesthetic to be replicated again and again physically by colonising new areas prime for development and virtually on social media. The sun's rays become reflected on the glass surfaces of the building so the experience of this sublime event in nature is magnified by with the building acting as screens to create a spectacle of dazzlement that has an affective intensity that is more than what nature can deliver. The city as a screen to create its own cinematic images that recycle and recreate the image of the city by working with urban build environment phenomena such as 'Manhattan-henge' in New York (deGrasse Tyson, 2001) The sun is aligned to the grid of streets from Houston Street to 155th Street like that of a constructed land work for a pagan solstice ritual. However, this time the sun works at the service of the belief in the cycles of capital.

The Tower and Alienation

The Landmark Pinnacle and other residential towers are reminiscent of the novel *High-Rise* by J. G. Ballard, (1975) that was made into a film in 2015 by Amy Jump and Ben Wheatley. The narrative takes place in a tower block that encompasses all of the communal amenities that the Landmark Pinnacle in Canary Wharf currently also boasts and more, and it is also in a newly developed suburb of London. The building is organised with the luxury apartments commanding the best views, and so the social economic hierarchy is manifested physically in the spatial architecture of the buildings. The narrative sees the atomisation of the inhabitants and their containment within this hierarchical system as unsustainable. The dysfunctional practicalities of the building increasingly mount and the division between the inhabitants increases until there is a breakdown of all civic functioning. The film is set within the interior space of the building to focus on the isolation and growing paranoia that the characters within this critique of individualism face. What is significant is that the film focuses on the internal life of the building and not surface gloss or spectacle, that may have been its promise and

marketing. The representation of the city as a building, is the representation of a body of people and relations. It is a satire of how capitalism creates systemic failure within its hierarchy and the impact this has on the internal and civic health of the characters, due to the segregation, lack of movement and communication the system imposes, as manifested by the building. It is the representation of the city as a prison. The film takes place like a play, with stripped down set, flat light, and muted colours, and it is deliberately without cinematic qualities of light and sound. This staging is so that the focus is on the characters to bring the paranoia of this psychodrama to the fore. The isolationism of the living conditions and the rigidity of the social system are a failure of the promise of the city and of modernity. The development of the Thamesmead estate build in the 1960s in south East London acts as a prototype for the narrative of *High-Rise* (1975). As a new suburban development, it also went rapidly into civic and material decline, partially due to its isolation. Yet it is the isolationism represented in *High-Rise* (1975) that seems to be the goal in the development of these new residential amenities all-inclusive buildings in Canary Wharf. Their arrival may mark the end of the building of banks and offices in this post-Brexit city of commerce.

The night-time skyline of Manhattan Island in New York on the east coast of the U.S.A., has been replicated the world over and again here, it is transposed onto the Isle of Dogs at Canary Wharf in East London. Further east the architecture of the former British colony Hong Kong and also economic rival Beijing in China represent more extreme versions of this aesthetic of towers to match the swell of their expansive economies, and twinkle, glow, and flash in the night. The image of the city in the dystopian film of the future now seems to be the template for the development of real future cities. From *Metropolis*, Lang, (1927) to *Blade Runner*, Scott (1978), and *The Fifth Element*, Besson, (1997), and many other films and television representations. The plethora fan art online and recent A.I. generated art, continues to generate images of these dystopias that fundamentally produce an imaginary of the future that marks the failure of capitalism. The density of the dystopian city with its filthy air, extreme high-rise buildings, hi-tech, hi-speed machinic aesthetic, its seediness, crime, and the dazzlement of screens and holograms, affirms the city of the future within a technological accelerationist narrative. These representations of the city as the technological machinic sublime have acquired the unfixed and wandering power of semiotics that codes these techno-dystopias with the sign of 'cool'. This power sign of being 'cool' has an affective lure that obscures the reality of the ecological and social conditions that these dystopian representations of the city bely, and yet these images repeat and endure to perpetuate become more manifest within the world.

Canary Wharf and Gamified Subjectivity

Images of Canary Wharf appear on the screen, and it signifies the cool image of success to become a power sign. The despotic regime is restored in this image of the building as a persona. The building is centralising a narrative of competition and success. The actual despotic character is represented by Lord Sugar in the UK version of *The Apprentice* (2005-). On the screen, vertiginous planes of the office buildings recede sharply when viewed from above. The camera frames them from a much higher position to create the intensely acute angles and the helicopter from which it is filmed moves quickly and smoothy over the buildings that are approached to create dynamic lines within the composition of the screen frame. The office buildings of international banks are lit by the brilliant cool morning light. The light radiates brightly on the clean sharp lines of their metallic frames and glass windows. The building framed in the centre is topped with a pyramid and a small light flashes, on and off. This stylistically post-modern building includes a pyramid to connect it historically as an important symbol of hierarchy. Adjacent to the buildings in the canals and basin below the light sparkles on the waters' surface. The start of the day is that start of opportunity. These buildings are important. This whole sequence is no more than two seconds in duration before the frame changes and perspective lines are now inverted and we are at the base of one of the buildings to reveal the clear flat blue sky and the shiny glow of the light that hits the building. A group of young people marching determinedly in formation, wearing business attire. The soundtrack that accompanies the moving image has a repetitive tempo that evokes moving up and down. It is solemn, yet quick, like a military march. We are being introduced to these people and they have a seriousness and energy that implies this is a competitive race. For now, they are on the ground, outside at the bottom of these important buildings and they have to ensure their individualism can lead to a more elevated social and financial status as they compete in this entertainment programme to win a job placement. The title sequence sets up and reflects not only the values of the show and its premise, but it is an image of the city that also has these values. The fate of the contestants in this entertainment programme is determined by a tax exile who attained billionaire status when this East London financial district was first conceived in the 1980s. His background in humble working-class beginnings in the old East London. He is a success and rules the game because firstly he was made a knight and then a Lord. Here he is the Lord of a newly fashioned East London of success, international commerce, and the future. The deregulation of the financial industry in the 1980s was a deterritorialization of the financial system, and a physical move from the old

historic streets of the City of London, to a new space that meant expansion and the promise contained within the architectural spectacle of the new streamlined gleaming future by deterritorializing the space of the old empire with the new neoliberal one. The spectacle and the process of deterritorialization being the strategic operation of capitalism in a multiplicity of ways and contexts. It is here, in this and expanding city, where they will face him inside the pyramid. The city is a city of potential, of opportunity and wealth for them should their individualism in the race make them successful. One by one he points a finger at them to say; "You're fired!" and they are eliminated. For one of them who he will say, "you're hired!". In fact, this does not happen inside the pyramid of One Canada Square at all, but it takes place in a purpose-built warehouse studio set on a vast industrial estate next to a large home improvement and gardening store on the other side of west London in Action. It is in such none descript places where the reality of the labour that produces the spectacle takes place. The winner can then metaphorically take their place at the top of the pyramid scheme and maybe, someday, be one of the few who can rise even higher to glide above the city in a helicopter. The imagery of hierarchy and to be exalted literally and bathed in light is not new, because power is mediated by the spectacle.

This entertainment show with the prize of employment at the end of it is very popular with ratings on average of over 6 million in the UK (BARB 2024), and it has been franchised all over the world. In the U.S.A. it was Trump Tower that replaced One Canada Square. Both hosts have vast wealth and rather untransparent tax arrangements and right-wing politics. The spectacle of neo-liberalism within architectural form is not just within the title sequence of the television programme but it is a very real manifestation of the values of neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism takes the form of competitive entertainment where its overt and covert politics, are revered, and winning can will change the lives of the contestants. The losers may go on to develop their business skills or use their celebrity to become television presenters. One infamous contestant, Katie Hopkins, has carved out an international career as a white suprematism racist, right wing truth commentator and conspiracy theorist. Images proliferate more images to perpetuate the narrative and imaginaries of neo-liberalism.

Capital Cities, Cities as Capital
Lawrence Lek & Kode9's *NOTEL*, (2018) artist film installation explores the shifting nature of capital and the virtual. The capturing of capital in real estate and the new ventures into digital space are explored. It is a work of art that takes on the language of the C.G.I. real estate marketing video with a futuristic edge. The future is always the space for the potential

of capitalism because it captures the hopes, promise and affective labour required to be able to capture hard capital. The virtual language of online, digital virtual commodities or hyper-objects is also pre-empted in the virtual luxury hotel that forms the work. As an area of East London that housed many creatives, Hackney Wick became deterritorialized as a creative space with the 2012 Olympic Park, and in the wake of its post-Olympic redevelopment, Arebyte gallery relocated to one of the new residential developments in East India Docks. It is a gallery and artists' studio project organisation that engages specifically with the ramifications of unfolding digital culture and the gallery commissioned the artwork *NOTEL*, Lek, (2018).

Laurence Lek's work was presented on a large screen descending from the ceiling. A circular structure taken as an architectural motif from the work was below the screen and incorporated an intense green L.E.D. lighting. A section of the gallery's modular raised floor structure was removed beneath the installation to highlight the materiality of the building in contrasted with the virtual digital architecture within the work. *NOTEL*, Lek (2018) was created within a game engine and is experienced by the viewer either by a Virtual Reality headset, or simultaneously on the large screen. It is interactive with the work being navigated by gaming controls. The gallery space was constructed to represent a marketing suite for a virtual concept living space, to explore capital and territory. Arebyte gallery itself holds a temporary position within the recently developed London City Island regeneration site of East London, where old industrial and brownfield land has been reclaimed in Canning Town, next to Canary Wharf. Further substantial residential building has continued since with more planned, (Canary Wharf Group, 2024). The branding of other real estate areas of the former East India Docks nearby since, as *Bow Creek, Orchard Wharf*, *Good Luck Hope at Trinity Buoy Harbour*, use the same marketing speak and C.G.I. visuals that are present within the parody that is *NOTEL (2018)*. The branding of these deterritorialized spaces is about creating communities, which seem to be communities of affluence. *NOTEL* (2018) is a virtual space that can be navigated to see the luxurious amenities that are on offer for the super-rich. What about the spaces of the city that are not regenerated by being generated on computers and networked? The aesthetic is of seductive reflective surfaces, and L.E.D. lighting that borrows from gaming, and notions of future cool that hark back to the neon of the videogame landscape film *Tron,*Lisberge (1982) and its AI assisted sequel, *TRON: Legacy,* Kosinski (2010). It is an aesthetic language of the future that seems to be rooted in the past and nostalgic conceptions of the future.

NOTEL, (2018) engages with the idea of what a future city could be and presents the city not as a technological spectacle that infers the cinematic in its L.E.D aesthetic, but as a place that is intrinsically part of the technology that creates the cinematic spectacle. City as technology driven, but also the city as technology within a roaming game of capitalism. *NOTEL, (2018)* is a canny precursor of Mark Zuckerberg's commodification of digital space as the Metaverse, which is experienced with virtual reality headsets and looks to a future of networked totality. In the Metaverse digital space is commodified and territorialised as real estate online in a rebranding of Second Life that was launched in 2003. Lek's work follows the trend of the increased commodification of culture within the digital space and prefigures not just the Metaverse, but the arrival of Non-Fungible Tokens, (NFTs) commodities, or as they are now known as Digital Art on the Blockchain (DABs).

The Corporation City

NOTEL's (2018) parody positions the future city as part of an accelerationist endeavour that builds on the previous notion of the city as a machine, part of Modernist utopia. The modelling of control excerpted by the layout of cities that were characterised by the complexity of road systems, particularly in the U.S.A. as the oil economy and the individualism of capitalism was the driving force of urban design. The oil economy saw the automobile surpass the train as the symbol of liberal freedom, primary mode of transport, design engineering and status symbol. In Michigan, Detroit was home to General Motors that was known as Motor City, and the Dearborn the headquarters of Ford. The machine city populated by machines. The car came to define the city and its expansion. Services related to the car, such as the drive-in cinema, or drive through burger joint, plotted out the space of suburban development (Schlosser, 2001). This capitalist extractionism and its socio-economic impact was named after its main proponent: Fordism. The power of technological positivism attached to Ford's brand of modernism was not always successful on the surface. The devastating decline of mechanical and manufacturing industry globally under the development of neo-liberalism lead by Reagan and Thatcher also hit Michigan. In particular Detroit exposed the transience of any utopian ideal based upon capitalist extractionism. The very early failure of the Brazilian utopian city built by Ford under his name of Fordlandia pointed to this (Gandlin, 2009). Ford was just one of many industrialists whose private corporations built towns and cities to populate the machinery of their industrial expansionism with human labour. Much of the former East London docklands site is also now private land. Private land and public use of the land regulates the way we experience the city. What is

paradoxical to the ideals of freedom espoused in the U.S.A. is that many of the cities are completely controlled by the relations built around and exerted by the car and other road vehicles (Schlosser, 2009). Having experienced cities in the USA, often they cannot be traversed on foot, and this lack of freedom to roam is not questioned, due to the enculturation into a city as a car reliant machine. Walking can be restricted after a few blocks by the barrier of meeting lanes of freeway or the sidewalk ends. The spatial relationships in city planning require a vehicle and it creates vistas that have impersonal spatial relationships, planned around the alienation of being inside a vehicle, and not within a space of bodies mingling on the street. Therefore, the bustle of people gathering becomes restricted to certain areas or zones that have specific function. Transit across a city is built for the spectacle of the car and from the car. It creates a surveillance culture where anyone who is not in a vehicle somehow seems out of propriety, out of place, outside of the machine, maybe they are economically ostracised and cannot afford a car, maybe they are potentially criminal.

Cop Cities

In the U.S.A. another development in the evolution of the city is the development of the *Atlanta Public Safety Centre*, otherwise known as 'Cop City', a $100 million project to develop a contained training facility that is seen as a means to increase authoritarian control in the U.S.A. (Shahshahani, 2023). There has been an acceleration of the development of the Atlanta project that is funded by private business since the 2020 death of George Floyd and the increase in protests against racially motivated police related deaths. At present in 2024, the number of other 'Cop City' projects in development in the U.S.A is 69, with hundreds of millions of dollars of corporate funding to finance these 'cities'. These developments follow the corporatisation of space within the city but spatialise the imaginary of the city within a very specific authoritarian and corporate relationship that is troubling.

The City as a Prison

The critique of the city was the intellectual and creative labour of The Situationist International from the late 1950s until the early 1970s, by bringing together a grouping of different intellectual and creative Marxist factions into discourse and critical actions engaged with the city, Debord. G & Gil. J. Wolman, (2022). Their configuration recognised the politicisation of capitalism in every aspect of life and the city as the fulcrum of politics and aesthetics. They engage with the restrictions of the city as a form of resistance to the coding of the city as a law-scape of control. Their practice was about engaging with the materiality

of the city to undermine the various manifestations of the spectacle and the power relations that existed within it. The city as a machine is a city that is a prison. The expression of the virtual power of the state and corporations was present in the materiality of the architecture and planning of the city to corral and condition the proletariat. The covert soft power of the city acted to divert authentic desire towards capitalist accumulation, consumerism, and appearance. The détournement of the city is much harder to engage with if the city is not able to be freely roamed. The developments in East London differ to other older parts of the city, in that the main infra-structural engine is public transport and in new cities the regulations of space and modes of transport and freedom and the condensing of living into towers. Public transport and the building of new utopian cities in authoritarian capitalist countries favours public transport in the high-tech city because it can structure space and civic encounters more formally. Space in development areas of East London differs from other parts of the city in that the grand schemes, take in grand vistas towards 'starchitecure' building. The public spaces have a regularity and orderliness that the older parts of East London do not have in their unplanned historical development. The new utopian city and its smoothness and seamlessness of experience is present in the aesthetic of Laurence Lek's *NOTEL* (2018).

    NOTEL (2018) represents a future utopia that parodies the development proposals for utopian cities across authoritarian capitalist states, particularly the Arabian Peninsula. These developments move to attract investment and wealthy foreign migrants to develop a future economy not reliant on oil. Embracing and reviving old ideas from architectural utopian grand scheme megacity plans. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, there are multiple city developments claiming to revolutionise the concept of the city and what living can be in them, such as the megacity scheme 'Neom' (Neom, 2017). From one of many C.G.I. animated sales pitch videos, 'Neom' will be a private city inviting global investors that will dissect K.S.A as a horizontal line through the desert like a wall. The linear city will have connecting transport with all amenities within a 15 minute connection zone and replicated along its planned 170km. It will be entirely encased by a continuous, huge, mirrored façade wall. The technological and environmental credentials of the Neom as an engineered smart city utopia are pronounced in the marketing. The potential for a technological control society dystopia within this autocratic context is also probable. The city with a wall to contain it and as a linear experience and everything zoned into the immediate vicinity implies a flattening of the experience of the city. The regulation of the city into a non-organic linear structure takes the organising geometric grid of modernism to a new organisational extreme. There is no meandering, no surprise to such a city. A surveillance technological networked city as one

big production line. The 1960s detournement project of The Situationists within cities as acts of disruption and antagonisation to rebuff the schematisation of the city within capitalism, seem to be more urgent within the context of the smart city. Détournement actions in new smart cities may become more difficult in such controlling conditions, with spaces that are seemingly public space actually being on private land. The development of these urban city schemes point to the failure of resistant actions against the utopian imaginaries that capitalism can produce for a smart city future.

Where is the variation and differentiation within a city that is schematised? Where is the life of the city that develops within spaces that are not controlled, surveyed, illuminated, and networked? Where does the flux of a city take place, socially, aesthetically, ideologically if everything is so rationalised? The failure of such urban 'New Towns' within tight rationality is well known from the post war era, from Milton Keynes, Thamesmead to Basildon, (Smith, 2018). Wherever there is a space within the city that is deterritorialized within the image of an emerging ideological plan, there are always other spaces that fall into marginality. Where do the queer spaces exist, or do they become restricted and forced to be invisible within private spaces? What does the increased regulation of the networked and luminescent city entail for subjectivity, and what do the spaces outside of the glare of technology say about the conditions of capitalism?

4 – L.E.D. City as Screen

In this chapter I will consider the affiliation of authoritarian capitalism with technology and the spectacle of the city. For the city to function with efficiency it uses machinic systems and technologies. The city as a dynamic technological spectacle creates an image that ties it to notions of progress and opportunity. The city as technological machine structures experience to extend regulation and the networked affective luminescent spectacle shapes the semiotic regime imposed upon the city. At night, the city obviously takes on cinematic spectacle, but the language of the cinematic is not just transposed upon the city, but it has become the city. The matter of light is material and temporal. The structuring of sense-making by the materiality of light within the machinic city is a manifestation of the accelerationism of capitalism utilising the digital era to create the ontology of the digital image. The emergent smart networked city is a screen. This is not a philosophical conceptualization of imaging ideology upon the city, but rather it is a literal, material statement of how the networked computational technologies that run through the city transform it into a screen to both embody and carry the ideology of capitalist spectacle. The light emitting diode, (L.E.D) is now part of the materiality of the city and extends the computational into the fabric of the city for it to become a screen that plays out the spectacle of the political aesthetics of capitalism. Advertising screens on bus stops, information displays, big screens combining public art, with entertainment, information and again, yet more advertising are found everywhere in the smart city. Buildings are not just lit with L.E.D. lights but architectural itself is networked and buildings become screens. Surveying the development of the materiality of the city as screen and the role of the L.E.D., reveals the mechanisms of the digital image and how it works to modulate affective temporalities that form ontology and the subject within this.

Cities of Light

The increasing encroachment of light within the structuring of the city as informational was decried by both Baudrillard (2009) and Virilio (2008) and extends Debord's (2009) critique of the capitalist spectacle. Baudrillard sees hyperreality within cities in an aesthetic of light in places such as Las Vegas. The dominant glow of light within the city is a "whitewashing" of all experience and the breakdown of meaning (Baudrillard, 2009, p49)**.** On the rise of technology and the electronic glare of the screen and the intensity of information in the techno-capitalist contexts creating ontology and their implications on subjection and political accountability.

"Ours is rather like the situation of the man who has lost his shadow: either he has become transparent, and the light passes right through him or, alternatively, he is lit from all angles, overexposed and defenceless against all sources of light. We are similarly exposed on all sides to the glare of technology, images, and information, without any way of refracting their rays; and we are doomed in consequence to a whitewashing of all activity - whitewashed social relations, whitewashed bodies, whitewashed memory in short, to a complete aseptic whiteness. Violence is whitewashed, history is whitewashed, all as part of a vast enterprise of cosmetic surgery at whose completion nothing will be left but a society for which, and individuals for whom, all violence, all negativity, are strictly forbidden. In these circumstances everything which is unable to relinquish its own identity is inevitably plunged into a realm of radical uncertainty and endless simulation." (Baudrillard, 2009, p49-50)

He outlines that the increasing glare commodifies space and sense experience with light-based information that alters reality.

Virilio foresaw the city as becoming "overexposed" by luminosity and the changing temporality of the computational image within, as he calls it "spectral" and "photonic" landscape where spatial relationships are forever changing and influencing our perceptions of the world. Virilio on the exposure of light attached to the computational real time impacting on the human animation with the loss of the horizon and being able to ground human activity outside of the machinic: "The electronic dazzlement, the telepresent being only ever the sudden catastrophe of the reality of the present moment…. exposure take over from duration. Light as event, 'photonic'", (Virilio, 2008, p14-15).

He writes of the impact of real time temporalities and the loss of the horizon as cities engage with making real the images of the cinematic city. He draws a line from the Lumiere Brothers to cinematic special effects and then digital video, because the same technologies link the cinematic spectacle to architectural design, and also military configurations of the spatial. The "electronic dazzlement" of the exposure of technology and screens dominating with a sensibility of the "photonic" that overexposes the sensory. Light as a digital event shapes and masks reality for Virilio with machinic real time replacing human virtual cognitive time. Temporality is subject to the intensities of information and the kinematics and intensities of light. The digital standardises reality in the way it creates shapes temporal experience through the machinic extensions of humanity. Spatial experience with screens and light also shape the city as experience. Baudrillard and Virilio concur with Foucault in his description of the perpetually blazing arc light in the asylum that mesmerizes. The asylum

inmates are so dazzled by their condition that they do not know night from day to be able to get a bearing.

Foucault writes about the classical notions of reason tied to the binary of light and darkness, night, and day and how they structure thought and judgement. Here I use this is quote of unreason as a way of framing affect within the city and the new forces that create dazzlement and forms of becoming and being modulated within the machine context of the city of light.

"And if, now, we try to assign a value, in and of itself, outside its relations with the dream and with error, to classical unreason, we must understand it not as reason diseased, or as reason lost or alienated, but quite simply as reason dazzled. Dazzlement is night in broad daylight, the darkness that rules at the very heart of what is excessive in light's radiance. Dazzled reason opens its eyes upon the sun and sees nothing, that is, does not see; in dazzlement, the recession of objects toward the depths of night has as an immediate correlative the suppression of vision itself; at the moment when it sees objects disappear into the secret night of light, sight sees itself in the moment of its disappearance. To say that madness is dazzlement is to say that the madman sees the daylight, the same daylight as the man of reason (both live in the same brightness); but seeing this same daylight, and nothing but this daylight and nothing in it, he sees it as void, as night, as nothing; for him the shadows are the way to perceive daylight. Which means that, seeing the night and the nothingness of the night, he does not see at all. And believing he sees, he admits as realities the hallucinations of his imagination and all the multitudinous population of night. That is why delirium and dazzlement are in a relation which constitutes the essence of madness, exactly as truth and light, in their fundamental relation, constitute classical reason." (Foucault, 1988 p108-109).

Virilio predicts the rise of artificial intelligence utilizing data and sightless vision machines dominating the screen to produce a blindness to the truth of the material and temporal conditions of the world beyond the machine. Virilio writes on the city as a cinema and the material changes in the city and the falsehoods created by the media controlling reality. The computer and the screen are part of the shift in physical, political, and social relation in the city.

"The screen abruptly became the city square, the crossroads of all mass media. From the aesthetics of the appearance of a stable image - present as an aspect of its static nature -to the

aesthetics of the disappearance of an unstable image - present in its cinematic and cinematographic flight of escape we have witnessed a transmutation of representations. The emergence of forms as volumes destined to persist as long as their materials would allow has given way to images whose duration is purely retinal. So, more than Venturi's Las Vegas, it is Hollywood that merits urbanist scholarship, for, after the theater-cities of Antiquity and of the Italian Renaissance, it was Hollywood that was the first Cinecitta, the city of living cinema where stage-sets and reality, tax-plans and scripts, the living, and the living dead, mix and merge deliriously. Here more than anywhere else advanced technologies combined to form a synthetic space-time." (Virilio, 1991, p26 –).

Crystalline Regime

The continual present of the temporality of the machine and the screen and its affectivity that dazzles and mesmerizes. The experience of time is governed by machinic time and the speed of light. The temporality and the shaping of experience by light and the machine, is a conditioning of the subject within the spectacle.
Within these ideas outlined subject moves further from what is true within this spectacle of light and the construction of subjectivity within this ersatz landscape of mediatized signs within the city and an economy of light, bears some similarity to Deleuze's "crystalline regime". On how cinematic systems create a crystalline regime where referents within a system refer to themselves to create their own systems and new modes for meaning. "crystalline descriptions, which constitute their own object refer to purely to optical and sound situations" (2005. P131).

The crystalline regime within sense making "imaging" is where a system becomes detached from material reality to forge a truth on its own terms and within its own systems. This process of the crystalline regime is elaborated on in the *Powers of the False* (2005). There are clear echoes of Baudrillard's procession of the simulacra here, not as critique, but rather as a process in the relationship between thought, signification, affect and perception making within the affective flows of the dialectical. The cinematic or mediascape is part of the development of the crystalline regime. Deleuze sees that process of the crystalline regime as a mechanism that produces sense making and truth. Within the city as screen the mode of production is always dominant in shaping reality and the digital computational image is supreme. The L.E.D. is its agent. Lazzarato's position is to build on this critique, but he engages beyond the informational and the temporalities of signs within Baudrillard and Virilio to consider the role of affect. Extending these positions with a surveying of the

material manifestations of the L.E.D. in the city enables us to view the spectacle of the city as an affective machine and how it operates.

Machinic Temporalities

Lazzarato mentions Virilio, when he critiques of post-structuralism for its lamentation of deep thought and the reduction of temporal cognitions due to the speed of processual, digital real time**:**

"The concept of real time may lead to misunderstandings about the temporalities of video and digital technologies, since it refers only to the simultaneity and immediacy of the flow of information, which we see, for example, in the work of Paul Virilio. The acceleration of time increases out capacity to perceive rather than diminish it, because acceleration is an operation that allows us to contract more reality within the same instant. This synthesis intensively increases out possibilities for acting in time. It increases our capacity for delaying, for indetermination, therefore, choice," (Lazzarato, 2019. p96).

Lazzarato's view developed from Deleuze and Guattari (2000) is that our imaging of time and our scope to comprehend time shifts because of the machinic real time of digital processes, and this contains a post human truth, that reveals the operations of human temporal cognition. Lazzarato on how machines have made us aware of the different stratifications of temporality that are machinic and non-machine, human and non-human and the temporalities that are present within us, is expanded upon further. "Machines that crystallize time enable us to see and feel something of these flows, in which we find just as we do within the brain, nonhuman speeds," (2019. P153). The speed of digital real time reveals the truth that there are different durational temporalities that coexist. Beyond the unitization of time there are different levels of reality operating and at play within the universe and within technologies due to different durational events and their temporalities. Machines that crystallize time with our engagement have their own temporal intensities and offer different extensions of experience and reality. The affective assemblages of technology crystallize time in different ways. Virilio's (2008) critique is that the human animal in the digital era has a temporal cognition that operates in a duration that is not in digital real time and is created by an ontological actualization that is bound to the conditions of gravity, rather than the physics of digital real time. Lazzarato recognizes that the realm of cognition that operates virtually, or

rather that the realm of precognition that operates virtually, is closely linked to the flows of asignified affects.

"Optical and temporal paradigms entail two radically different conceptions of intellectual labour. In the first, activity is mechanical; it does not interfere with and does not require a transformation of the system. In the second "on the contrary, an act of attention implies such a solidarity between the mind and its object, it is a circuit so well closed that we cannot pass state of higher concentration without creating, whole and entire, so many new circuits which envelop the first and have nothing in common between them but the perceived object".." (Lazzarato, 2019. p57-).

The virtual precepts of precognition that the body operates in outside of consciousness, in somatic affective form, makes up most of human existence. Human ideas of time are fictions with shifting temporal interpretations. The age of the computer and the real time of computation decentres anthropocentric temporality and therefore any lamentations of the loss of temporal quality to ontological existence by the digital is to mourn something that did not really exist, it was a fiction. The fiction of loss is a nostalgia that does not offer any methods for agency, and there can be no return to the fictionalised centrality of a totality of being. There can be no return to a pre machinic temporality.

Lazzarato links the creation of subjectivity and affective labour to the attention and concentration of the mind enraptured within the duration of machines that crystallize time and create affects. The multiplicity of operating temporalities that create affects that produce subjectivity operate precognitively and with the dialectics of capitalism to create new ways of creating valorisation. "Machines that crystallize time intervene directly in the processes of the production of subjectivity, since they deal with affects, perception, memory, language and thought." (Lazzarato, 2019, p169). Lazzarato elaborates on the idea of capitalism enslaving people via the affective labour that captures and creates subjectivity. When the relationship between the subject and subjectivation is unequal, the benefits of the exchange for the subject are hugely outweighed by the extraction of value by the temporal machines of affect. On affect and subjection from Deleuze and Guattari: "It is upon the basic ground of perceptual, sensory, affective, cognitive, and linguistic behaviours that the capitalist machinery is grafted, because individuals are equipped with modes of perception and normalization of desire as if they were factories, schools, and territories," (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p174).

This is an exploitation of the subject. If the subject has no recourse to disengage from the inherit processes of valorisation and value extraction that create capital and is being manipulated at the unconscious level of affects, then this denotes a form of systemic enslavement. The key issue with the impact of affect on subjectivity, is the creation of and modification of behaviours within the subject at an unconscious level that is unknowingly enculturing. The emergence of the behavioural engineer as an occupation within the digital economy is testament to the power of capturing subjectivity and attempting to modify subjectivity via the forces of affects within the networked era. The behavioural engineer works as a key agent of the networked attention economy for online platforms, but as the networked screen becomes an integrated the smart city it is important to consider the city as a networked screen, and what its manifestations entail for sense experience.

Affective Coercion by the Networked City
On the 8th of September in 2022 in the late afternoon as the natural light started to wane, the images upon the advertising platforms all across the more affluent areas of London and also in cities nationally across the UK, changed at the same time. This was not a routine update of seemingly innocuous advertising. At this point in the late afternoon all of these platforms beheld the same image simultaneously. Many of these advertising platforms throughout London and other UK cities are mainly attached to the transport network at bus stop shelters and on the London Underground at escalators and train platforms. The flow of people and the flow of information is tied together. This flow of people and their social economic demographic data is all carefully crunched by algorithms that track the G.P.S. data obtained from the mobile phone users. Their social and economic status harvested from their phone apps is used to help determine which advertisements should be placed in specific locations for maximum efficiency of product exposure. Replacing posters, they have for decades been lightboxes with bulbs illuminating their advertising images from behind. When events unfold that break the mundanity of the city, its apparatus is revealed, and this day was one of those rare events. When the conditions of the city's materiality shift under the force of time as an agent, there can be a breach that offers up an occurrence for analysis. Such events can create a new awareness of the affective relationship with the apparatus of the city and its luminescence. The event that caused the synchronisation of the same image, revealed that these advertising platforms are no longer light boxes, that have semi opaque gel images, but that they are networked L.E.D. screens. These L.E.D. screens light up the city and vie for our attention, so that we might look up from the emitted light and information of our mobile

phone screen, to see yet another screen and more information and advertising. On this occasion it was clear that these L.E.D. screens were all networked, because the image they all simultaneously displayed was that of the dead UK monarch, Elizabeth II.

Sometime after the official announcement of her death at 18.30 hrs, the same image of her dominated all these platforms. The synchronous repetition of the same image of the former monarch replicated on so many public screens all at once, through the streets, was surreal. The streets were changed by this screen spectacle and charged with what this might bring forth. The affective spectacle of the corporate space and state power were interlaced at once. The city as a network of screens, that are manipulative and manipulating in real time, was made apparent by this event. Seemingly the cinematic city of light and screens from Sci-Fi are readily present, albeit in a much less spectacular, and much more mundane form. This event highlights the stealthy creep of an increasingly technocratic networked cityscape that organises space and experience through networked light. The materiality of the city has immense, filigree architectures that is made of technological fibre optic threads that are transmitting light. This industrialised network of fibre optics branch and enmesh the city like machinic mycelium, so this information-laden light can deliver a consumerist spectacle. The city is machinic, cinematic, screen.

A few days afterwards there was some short outrage involving a report on social media that the touch screens for ordering food in McDonalds also had the same image (Reuters, 2022). This was an online meme of a doctored image, and the work of someone parodying the imposition of this widespread screen spectacle for public mourning. It of course raises the issue of the disciplining of subjectivity in the post-screen era through this highly affective moment that ties death and second-hand grief to social conditioning and nationalism. The performance of grief via the element of light, where light within the city-as-a-screen is used to shape and perhaps discipline. Beyond this moment of state spectacle, a question is raised by the manipulation by networked images within a city screens and the disciplining of space via light and the luminosity of the screen.

Transforming the City into Screen

The L.E.D., is ubiquitous, from screen to keyboard, vehicles, household and industrial use, and architectural element. The L.E.D. can be programmed when networked to change colour or transmit not just as medium, but media. Light can be used to regulate the city at night. In East London's emerging real estate, buildings are not just lit by light projected and bouncing off their surfaces, the buildings and surrounding environments incorporate L.E.D. lights into

their material fabric. The residential building, Stratford Halo, is a 48-storey tower completed in 2013 that has its shape outlined in colour-changing L.E.D. to pronounce it against the skyline. The link to cinematic representations of the city and to the city itself, is a continuing semiotic relationship that is ongoing. The projections of the future city through cinematic representations of the past become actualised many decades later. Stratford Halo is relatively timid in its reference to the legacy of cinematic spectacle compared to recent more audacious towers. The former NatWest Tower in the City of London rebranded as Tower 42 in 2011 and had the section at its summit covered in L.E.D.s to emit coloured light in this rebrand. From 2021 it was upgraded to convey more complex graphics against the London skyline from Valentine's Day hearts, the Children in Need Pudsey Bear, Team GB Olympics, to the Facial Palsy Charity, etc. It is a giant message board over the city for charity, and social campaigns, and also changing the way we relate to this building as a form of branding (a commercial building). It has far greater visual reach over the city than the advertising screens of London's Piccadilly Circus or New York's Times Square. These spaces are buildings with screens, mainly for advertising.

Tower 42s engagement with light and screen is part of an emerging architectural phenomenon that is part of the heightening of affect in the city via technology and light with popularist spectacle. Tower 42's wrap-around screen engages with whimsy and social messages rather than advertising. This is technology taking a role in creating place and identity, but also in how the spectator might respond and feel about a building and its place in the city. What the proliferation of that single death day image of the late Queen and Tower 42 tells us is that the networked L.E.D. is increasingly part of the materiality of the city and is becoming fundamental to shaping evocative responses within the city.

The development of regenerated areas within London, follows a corporate model in that infrastructural development and buildings where spaces that are seemingly public spaces, are in fact owned privately like that of the City of London Corporation where Tower 42 is located and the Canary Wharf Group on the Isle of Dogs. Global corporations, Westfield Group and Lendlease both own much of the Stratford City area in the former 2012 Olympic Park. Near to the Stratford Halo tower, the MSG Sphere entertainment venue for over 21,000 people at capacity was proposed (Lydall, 2024). It was a building covered with a surface of L.E.D.s on its 90ft tall spherical exterior, as well as within its interior surface. It is a proposal for a building as screen and is similar to the MSG Sphere that opened in Las Vegas in 2023. It recalls the playful ideas of the exploratory 1960's UK architectural design group Archigram.

Materiality, Matter and Luminosity

The materiality of the city was questioned in the works of Archigram, and their legacy informs the spaces that drive technological capitalism and are also linked to the current shift in the matter and luminosity of the city. Post-war, the context of reimagining the city and ways of living to rebuild the UK saw the development of new social housing schemes, and architects such as Archigram conceived the city as a space for experimentation and transformation. Archigram developed grand schemes to reimagine what cities could be, within a modernist utopianism. The permanence of the city and its dogmas where reimaged as a deconstruction that swept aside conventions and utilised the machinic age to foster social flux. Archigram openly embraced technology and consumerism with their mainly "paper architecture" conceptualism of megastructures and impermanence. They appropriated and remediated ideas from The Situationists about shifting contexts, intervention, and contingency, as well as from Buckminster Fuller. They produced blue-print ideas of idiosyncratic city schemes to create dynamic events and embraced modularity within an imaginative technological fantasy landscape (Fierro 2023.). They cherry picked what they wanted to form a Neo-Futurism that ignored the anti-capitalist and environmental concerns of the Situationists and Fuller. As they dispersed their ideas took form in British Hi-Tech architecture, that favoured quick to construct, pre-manufactured steel frames on a concrete base, clad in corrugated aluminium panels. In the 1980s Hi-Tech was adopted in the UK because of the speed and cheapness of construction. In Hi-Tech capitalism embraced the legacy of Archigram and it manifested in the petrol station, large chain supermarket buildings and industrial park constructions (Fierro, 2023). The digital era owes much to these constructions, in that globally the vast server warehouses that drive the computational economy and the digital affective spectacle are housed within them.

In 2003 Archigram's group founding member Sir Peter Cook produced the Kunsthaus Graz, in Austria, a blob shaped cultural media design and architecture museum. It has a black glass polymer membrane surface and solar panels in an amorphous shape merged in-between and around existing historic buildings. The buildings surface incorporates a lighting system in its curvy linear form, that could be programmed to display moving image patterns at 20 frames per second. The Kunsthaus Graz is a precursor to the trend of the building as screen that is emerging. The MSG Sphere buildings utilise the advanced technological ideas of Archigram and Cook, but less of the playfulness and even more of the commercial popularism. The kinetic dynamism of conceptual modular cities that were proposed to be

mobile from Archigram has been replaced in the digital era by building that can create different kinds of movement. Cook's Kunsthaus Graz building reconceptualised the relationship to the built environment so that the movement that occurs in relations to technology and the city casts off mechanical kinetics for a static building of appearances where it is the digital movement that is affective in flux. Kunsthaus Graz embodies technological positivism that has been manifested further with L.E.D. technology to become networked and the materiality, matter and luminance of the city as affective and semiotic abstract machine has also regenerated in an emerging neo-liberal form.

The MSG Sphere Stratford was specifically designed as a music entertainment venue. Its planned construction has been cancelled by the MSG group after lengthy delays due to local objections by Transport for London (Lydall, 2023). The version in Las Vegas, USA by the same company has been completed. Las Vegas is the hub of post-modern surfaces and ersatz spectacle with a history of incorporating dazzling animated lighting and signage into casino, theatre and hotel building facades. The Las Vegas version of the MSG Sphere is a 17,000-capacity curved cinematic screen built within a specific entertainment and leisure park, as a landmark spectacle opposite a hotel. The proposed London version of this light emitting moving image globe was to be located within a much more condensed urban city space of mixed-use retail, and residential dwellings. Whilst Canary Wharf develops a cold, austere retro modernist aesthetic of restraint, Stratford City has a more brash aesthetic. Whilst both versions might be grounded in dystopian visions, what does this intensification of architecture and the luminescence attached to buildings mean for the city? Stratford City and the Olympic Park bears with conceptual commercialism of Archigram, with the temporary event transforming the run-down fringe of the city for technological and financial gain. As a park it borrows from the zoning of space in a US model and utilises the theme park layout of Disneyland with wide boulevards and areas that have temporary purpose and lightweight temporary Hi-Tech structures waiting to be replaced. As the city is increasing zoned with the use of light and technology it extends the reach of the spectacle to regulate space through its materiality and affective impact.

Cinematic Affect and Cultural Capital

The Eiffel Tower as a symbol of modernity since it was built for the World's Fair hosted by Paris in 1889 is lit by projecting golden light onto it. The World's Fair was an event for showcasing and promoting cultural and economic growth to transform the city and the Eiffel Tower was built initially as a temporary structure, in Paris, the city of light (Editors, 2017). It

had an additional 20,000 programmed L.E.D. lights added in 2000 for the millennium celebrations, and these additional lights make it appear to sparkle for 5 minutes every hour. The effect is to animate the building in randomised flashlights. The Eiffel Tower's use of L.E.D. lights to increase its visibility as a agent of the image of the city of Paris, is a precursor of the Tower 42 and the MSG Spheres buildings London. As a structure it is no longer passive over the city horizon, but actively coaxing spectator attention by creating a spectacle. The glamour of camera flashbulbs updates this icon of modernity as a branded space as event and encourages participation in its extra qualities of cinematic animation and the intensified affective quality this has. It can reference French cinematic culture and celebrity, or the fizz of champagne bubbles catching highlights. The increased affective energy and branding of the building as temporal event adds to its mythology within the global popular cultural psyche. Roland Barthes (1997) outlines how it becomes iconic as an empty signifier that then becomes a structure for dreams and materialises imagination (Barthes, 1997, p8-). This mass of iron is no longer an ode to the engineering of architectural skeletons for modernist high rises, or a static image from its cultural position in photography or cinema. It is remade by the L.E.D. to now embody the temporality of the cinematic in the flowing flash of images it creates as a now heightened experience in the cinematic mode. It is a structure as tantalising screen. It is no longer passive on the horizon of Paris but with its L.E.D. additions that burst into life, it becomes charged and demands our attention in the era of the attention economy. Originally built as an emblem of the mechanical age and industrial technology, with its networked L.E.D lights, it is upgraded as emblematic of the digital post-screen age. It might hark back to early kinetic modernist sculptures but within the digital age it is an example of an architectural structure that has special effects as part of its actual material constitution. Its unique place as signifying icon without any particular use means than it can has flexibility to utilise its power as cinematic screen and shifting signifier (Barthes, 1997). It deploys the magic of cinema as an affective experience of light emitting matter that becomes culturally coded to acquire significance. It has however, undergone a process of 'Disneyfication' through the additional animated sparkles, that are much like Tinkerbell's trail of stardust as she encircles the Disney Castle.

The old castles of Europe from Spain to Prussia with added icing sugar inspired the Disney Castle and this sparkling version is synonymous with the opening animated title sequence to Disney productions. This tower of magic is based on the 1950 animated film *Cinderella* and realised in the Walt Disney World theme park in 1971 and other Disney theme park iterations globally since. Disney theme parks borrow from the layout of World

Fairs to take in the sights at different venues with specific function. It was translated into brand identity in the Disney film *Return to Oz*, (Murch, 1985) and of course also related to the green crystalline towers of the original Oz movie. The architectural structure as screen that is present in the entertainment edifice of the MSG Sphere, and the Eiffel Tower as a spectacle of technological, cultural, national prowess are combined in the world's tallest mixed-use edifice, the Burj Khalifa, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, built in 2010.

New Ideological Monuments

The Burj Khalifa is a Sci-Fi illustration made real in steel and glass, dominating the built environment's skyline of other nearby towers that encircle it. It represents the rising economic might of U.A.E.'s oil economy in a tax free, service economy paradise for the internationally wealthy. The built environment has literally grown from virtually nothing in the desert, and a series of man-made residential islands expand the city into the sea. One island complex aims to take the shape of the major land masses of the world and there are two palm shaped complexes. The Burj Khalifa is fitted with 1.2 million L.E.D.s and additional laser lights to transform it into the world's largest screen with RGB light being mixed to create detailed images on this vast structure. The building's spiralling shape is based on the spiralling minaret of The Great Mosque of Samsara, but this building hosts residential, hotel and office space and also becomes an entertainment event by hosting a 30-minute light show from dusk every day that is also co-ordinated with a fountain display in the large man-made lake in the park that surrounds it. The link to that other city of light in the desert of Las Vegas in the U.S.A. with its hotels and water fountain shows of entertainment spectacles is a precursor to the Burj Khalifa. The Burj Khalifa also amalgamates the celebrity factor of the Eiffel Tower that dominates the landscape in scale and is a global cultural icon and place maker, with the direct communication images and entertainment akin to what we see in London's Tower 42 and the developing MSG Sphere buildings. The spectacle in neo-liberalism can generate cultural events as a focal point and encourage the group dynamics. In the cold winter months following the winter sales, light festivals in London and other areas of the UK emerge as installed spectacles of ersatz cultural event. These festivals of light appropriate other cultural events that use light as a focal point as a form of communal and cultural bonding. The Burj Khalifa light show is linked to festivities such as Guy Fawkes night, the Christmas lights, and other festivals such as Diwali, and the Night of Lights in southern Italy. The subjectivation of mass affect created by the projected cinematic light beam is replaced by a post-cinematic affect in the orchestrating of communal commercial

spectacle within the public space of the city. The break of the monotony of the dark, cold winter months with this festival of light is mainly to brand commercial spaces and encourage consumerism within a fake festival that promotes habitual social behaviour and circulates money.

What is important about the city-as-screen development is the cinematic implosion of the entertainment spectacle into these new urban spaces. The means of the spectacle within the networked city of dazzling light, amalgamates residential abodes, commercial consumer spaces, leisure venues and parks with office and workspace into close proximity. The differences that exist economically, socially, politically, ethnically and with gender behind the curtain of the machine that produces the spectacle, seems to be bleached out by the blinding light show.

L.E.D. lights and computational images and messages are everywhere within the surfaces and fabric of the technocratic city, but now the new territory of the L.E.D appropriates from the light aircraft with trailing message and the airborne blimp with advertisements to become spatialised within the skies. L.E.D.s are now often used in conjunction with flying drones to create entertainment and advertising spectacle. The complex formations of drones with L.E.D.s are increasingly used within the cityscape skyline for festivals as an extension to ground based screen visuals and laser lighting for a more immersive and grander visual experience. They become an airborne three-dimensional motion graphic, giving the illusion that form and logos are moving and transforming with carefully programmed precision into new shapes and forms, to create more three-dimensional images, in a surfeit of brilliant affect. They can then form giant Q.R. codes in the sky to offer access to other computational images on L.E.D. mobile phone screens, to enter further into the digital realms of capitalism and the machine (Zhou, 2021). Drones mounted with L.E.D.s have been used to visualise the completion of buildings such as the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain, and more recently by combining the entertainment spectacle. Drones are often used to complement the light shows of the Burj Khalifa where drones in digital space are translated into aerial objects such as, two dancing skeletons that move around the building. This represents a territorial take over, or deterritorialization of the skies into a neoliberal platform for affective information. The spectacle of the airborne L.E.D. drone in the city provides an example of the link between the developments of cultural technologies and the development of the aestheticisation of war. Indeed, the drone was first used as a military technology for surveillance and delivering targeted bombs. The drone as an entertainment device fitted with L.E.D.s now enters the spectacle of propaganda within the city.

Affect and Truth

At the beginning of the Russian invasion of the Ukraine in February 2022, the Russian navy had fired missiles at a Ukrainian army outpost on a small land outcrop called Snake Island in the Black Sea. The recording of the communication where the Russians asked 13 Ukrainian soldiers to surrender for their safety or be attacked by missiles made international news with highly evocative responses of condemnation. The Ukrainian response to the call for surrender was famously "Russian warship, go fuck yourself!" (Harding, 2022). The Ukrainian soldiers were announced as dead by the Ukrainian president Zelensky who said they would be given post humous military honours. Their brave defiance against the Russians in becoming Ukrainian martyrs in the face of Russian aggression, was widely reported. The phrase very quickly became an emotive slogan of resistance. The screen-based media spectacle of the war saw a viral image circulate a few days later, depicting the gigantic soviet era, Ukrainian Motherland Monument in Kyiv set upon by L.E.D. drones beside it. The drones, with blue lights spelt out the phrase as a spectacular act of defiance. The night sky of the city becomes a screen in this moment where the L.E.D. drones interact with this striking nationalist monument in the fight of sovereignty upon the global stage. The city becomes a screen and Kyiv becomes recognisable as a place flighting for liberty. The monument becomes connected to its closest international ally in this war, the USA. The Ukrainian Motherland Monument becomes twinned ideologically with the Statue of Liberty in the U.S.A. The recognisable image of liberty and freedom, creates a shared signifier that both place-makes the Ukrainian identity that is rousing for those spectating on media platforms, and gives it a larger globalised and shared neo-liberal identity. The spectacle of the drones against the Kyiv Motherland Monument functions similarly to the way the cinematic spectacle functions with the L.E.D.s that heighten the affective intensity of the Eiffel Tower and the Burj Khalifa. They work in this instance as part of the spectacle of war, as a representation of the fight for freedom to draw attention to Ukrainian national identity. Here there is a consolidation of the networked L.E.D. of the drones in the Kyiv sky in the city-as-a-screen, with the networked L.E.D. of social media and news platforms on televisions and smart phones. This is a collision of media platforms, entertainment, and war with technology in the creation of this spectacle that is a significant shift in material sense experience and the influence of luminance within the cityscape.

A war is always fought upon emotive propaganda campaigning within the affective flows of violence, commerce and nationalism, and the phrase became part of this. It quickly

circulated to become a social media meme, placards of protest, billboards, but also became commercialised with t-shirts and other merchandise and eventually on commemorative stamps. The story built its own momentum and became powerful, yet the story of the death of the 13 Ukrainian soldiers and their martyrdom was not quite what it seemed, and neither was the image of drones in the Kyiv city night sky. There were conflicting stories about the fate of the soldiers' death, by both sides (Dwivedi, 2022). They were thankfully not killed. They were captured by the Russians and then paraded on Russian television as part of a counter propaganda move, and then eventually released as part of a prisoner exchange. The drone spectacle in Kyiv was apparently a fake image that has been Photoshopped and originally posted on the social media site of a commercial drone event company, before becoming detached from its context and then entering into the flow of media communication technology to become a truth. Neither of these more complicated actualities gathered much attention within the continuous unfolding horror and propaganda of the war. The power of the image and this gamified cinematic image of the city with the drones is an extreme version of the relationship between the media spectacle and the momentum of autonomous affects mediated by machines and the production of the truth. This blurring of fact and fiction relates to Deleuzes "crystalline regime" where the powers of the false within a system create a truth. The changes in the materiality of the city because of these airborne drones and the increased luminescence of the networked city-as-screen creates an ontology that is closer to Deleuze's predictions of how totalising the digital image can be within neo-liberalism (Deleuze 2002).

With the machinic spectacle of the city as screen and the interplay with the screens of media content, and the changes to the materiality of the city, the flows of affect produced by machines and the affective labour of the subject in this flow of signs, is an ontology that is a much more mediated. Lazzarato (2019) is joined by a range of contemporary theorists in suggesting that the flows of affect are not entirely autonomous and can be modulated with political impact in the shaping of our ontology. Dominic Pettman (2016) calls this "hypermodulation" as a development from Deleuze's term that takes in the increased affect temporalities of the digital age, details the impact of social media on relationships and mental health. Pettman also places the causes of hypermodulation within the socio-political sphere of a corporate and government pacts to use technology. Pettman locates the manufacturing of desire as the interplay of the subject and technologies of mediation. Desire is located outside of the subject and an engagement with affective labour because desire is always virtual. Pettman draws on Baudrillard to frame the machinic engagement as a form of enslavement that captures emotion and worse upon affect, to create the illusion of agency.

"We ourselves are guinea pigs who signed our mental welfare away as soon as we clicked on the interminable '*End Use Agreement*'. No wonder we feel so drained by noon, or even before we get dressed. We are being hyper modulated, our nipples tweaked, our nosed turned, and our eyeballs twisted. We are being played like a giant keyboard, even as we ourselves same to be the masterly Mozart figures, tapping keys and making things happen." (Pettman, 2017, p37)

The extension of the screen into the architectural space and the production of desire that forms subjectivity territorialises many aspects of the subject's sense making experience. Within the machinic city as networked affective screen where luminescence structures temporal and affective architectures of space and the psyche, the subject must find where there can be agency. The subject's recourse is to find the spaces within the city that can either evade this structuring in more liminal spaces or to find a means of undermining, appropriating, or remediating the spectacle to create new relationships, spatialisations and experiences. The resignifying of the spatialisation of the détournement of Debord and the Situationists seems to have a place as a strategy for recognising the affective intensities of the networked machinic city as screen, but we must consider the actualities of where this may be already manifested within the city and also within the cinematic spectacle.

5 - The Nocturnal City of Queer Desire.

The mythology of the promise of the city and its queer spaces is explored to consider the imaginary of the queer city. This investigation of the city and its representations can create an alternative mapping of how light codes space and uncover queer temporalities and queer affect. What can be learned from queer affect theory about the coding of subjectivities within the city and its representation by what is seen and what is unseen? The liminal spaces of the city are the sites of resistance and the representation in moving image captures this relationship to the city as well as creating its own affective regimes. In this chapter, I explore the nocturnal city of queer desire to form a critique of the city as a capitalist machine of extraction, but also as a place of agency, subjectivation and desiring forces for queer people. The movement of desire through the city and how queer identities inhabit the city via cases studies and moving image representation is explored. The treatment of the spectacle of the nocturnal queer city within moving image as a queering of space and temporal relationships reveals inequalities of social stratification and methods of resistance. Kenneth Anger's *Kustom Kar Kommandos*, (1965) will be considered as a moment when subjectivity and the development of the city accelerated machinic affects and desire. *Chemsex*, Fairman. W., Gogarty. M., (2015) examines the alienation that the city can create and the retreat into chemically induced intensities of desire. The film *Paris 05:59; Theo & Hugo*, (2019) is analysed as a narrative encapsulating concepts of queer liberation and affect with reference to Guy Hocquenghem's *Homosexual Desire*, (1972). *O Fantasma,* Rodrigues, (2000) critiques the promise of the city as a capitalist extraction machine and represents how desire and alternative subjectivity formed within these conditions.

The Production of Queer

The productive aspects of desire formulate subjective experiences that are bound to the city and can be developed as a critique of the relationship between the spectacle of the city as a capitalist assemblage and the forms of subjectivity that are possible to be articulated within it. A limitation with these choices is that they all have the privileged dominance of visible cis gay white male representation.

Light acts to code the liminal spaces of queer desire in different ways within the city. The red light of desire is now a cliched schematisation, but it is cliched because of the affective signification that red has with the sensory. Yet the seeking of pleasure and fulfilling of desire has been reduced to the semiotic form of the red light and its asignified affective

power of what it promises within the space illuminated by the red light. The glittering disco lights of bars code a social and cultural visibility of queerness. The socialised space of camp spectacle is adjacent to but more intense than heteronormative social spaces. The glittering light creates a space that has a language of luminosity that is readable and acceptable for the performance of queer identities socialising. The identities in these spaces can often represent the commodification of queer culture into accessible stereotypes of subjectivity. The dazzling laser lights of queer space in niche clubs and warehouse parties are more often out of sight in basements, behind unassuming facades, and can inhabit parts of the city that are far from commercial cultural centres, by being temporarily housed in light industrial zones. Queerness that inhabits these spaces can move away from the subjectivities performed in more visible locations of the city.

Queer Spaces

The affective map of queerness in the city and in moving image representation, exists in zoned spaces. Queer spaces are rarely planned as part of the designed urban fabric of the city, but have become sanctioned over time through resilience, and are created and made out of necessity and desire. Queer spaces have been formed through resistance and persistence to create agency, identity, and community. Against the regulation of the city, queer affective labour has organised to find and transform the space of the city, even or especially, when and where this is not welcomed. The spectacle of queerness becomes more visible in the spaces of the city when it is commodified and regulated into a language of homonormativity. Homonormative desire can be more easily assimilated into heteronormative society to occupy public space. The "othering" of queer desire is a process of commodifying and containing queer subjectivity as homonormativity, so that it mirrors the subjectivity of heteronormativity, and this be accepted by liberal society. This process of other also means that homonormative can be easily identified as "other" and set apart by this categorisation. The representation of desire and gender identity and sexuality is politically charged as a challenge to dominant hegemonic narratives and systems that create authority. Othering is of course a form of objectification that is a systematic, negating fiction to justify and enable the enactment of the actual regulation of desire and subjectivity. It involves affective regimes of control that work to centralise reductive moralising binary narratives to create friction and political traction.

As J.Cotterill points out in *Queering Architecture* (2023), individual identities within the queer spectrum of desire, are largely placed in opposition to heteronormativity because

heteronormativity is systematic in producing divisive structures for queer identities within social and political relations. These divisions translate into spatial relationships within the city as exclusion and disenfranchisement. Cotterill contends that the ghetto-isation of queer space in the city is also problematic.

"Though the oxymoron is apparent to many critics, he believes that queer space has a concrete form, a productive purpose and a need for analysis. He does not see this space as ephemeral and invisible, but real and visibly apparent. These spaces are not solely about the body but have political implications. It is a claiming space against the dominant frame of heteronormativity." (Cotterill, 2023. p363).

Hocquenghem (1993) states 'ghetto-isation' is a process that happens to a subjected group within a dominant hegemony, and to be a subjected group is to be oppressed. To be a subject group is to have organisation and agency. The subject group is a form of subjective identity that can arrive a critical mass of shared identifications, accepted individuations and largely shared aims. The subject group is self-defining and this is Hocquenghem's thesis for homosexual desire in breaking the heteronormative conventions by utilising the schizo-analysis of Deleuze and Guattari (2000).

He confers that working towards the end of subject and object power relations is the aim and he ends with a quote from Anti-Oedipus in recognition of potential transexual identity. Hocquenghem on homosexuality in relation to psychoanalysis and the subjection of gay identities. "The produced homosexual has only to come and occupy the place reserved for him, to play the part programmed for him, and he does it with enthusiasm and even asks for more," (1993. p79).

What does this mean for the coding of the spaces of the city and their representations regarding desire? The city as desiring machine creates different instances of affect. Different affective assemblages produce different types of subjection that modulate behaviour. Considering the coding of space by light and the affective intensities present within the luminescent city as a screen and its representations, can add to queer critical discourse with a queer semiotics.

Machines of Queering Desire
Kenneth Anger's film *Kustom Kar Kommandos*, (1965) captures the adulation of the machine in the form of the automobile and the acceleration of consumer culture in the USA in the

1960s. The film is about different types of desire relationships and the automobile as a status symbol within the city and its link to the creation of subjectivity. This relationship occurs with the automobile itself as an object of desire, and its wider cultural system, but also with the film as a desiring machine product. The film is a fragment of what was meant to be a larger project that was never fully realised. But it is a fragment that encapsulates of the material and cultural conditions of the time. *Kustom Kar Kommandos* (1965) is an art film and does not follow the narrative conventions of Hollywood cinema. It uses the sleek product focused language of advertising as a basis to formulate its own language of critique and desire in relation to the automobile within the city. Anger explores commodity aesthetics as they emerge in the sixties, with his choice of the automobile as the literal engine of the U.S.A.'s oil economy. The automobile as an object of fetishised desire is linked to the emergence of the teenager being inculcated into the social and economic ecology connected to the car. Anger explores ideas of masculinity and links the automobile to the construction of the identity and the sexuality of the young adult within capitalism. The acceleration of Fordism post-world war two in the US meant that, along with the machines of media production, such as the television, the automobile at this time was central to the development of the image of the U.S.A. as a democratic capitalist state, and the material growth and sprawl of the suburban city. The car was intrinsic for the production of desire within this system, and it still has this allure and cultural position today. The car is part of a wider affective architecture of desire linked to the city and to the spectacle of commodity, as well as the libidinal drives of identity, and sexuality. The car was the fulcrum object within the U.S.A.'s domestic and social structure, due to being tied to the oil economy (Schlosser 2001). The oil economy influenced, economic policy, politics, urban design and the car had high cultural capital value. In the car, these social factors converged, to be centred around the agency and desire that the culture of these vehicles produced, and still produce. The car was the symbol of individualism and freedom, but also of status and wealth. The car represented then, and still does represent the privileged middle class American child entering into the adult world, with a vast increase in personal and social agency, linked to the system of production. This privilege was culturally coded within advertisements, television, and films at the time as 'white'. In *Dr No*, Young, (1962) the first James Bond franchise movie was released and connected masculinity, status, and sexual prowess to the Aston Martin for this modern superhero. Bond was not too far removed from the childhood superhero of Batman with the Batmobile using the same gender power trope. In the late 1970's we see a nostalgic reimagining of the teenage cult of the car in the fantasy sequence for the song *Greased*

Lightening in the film *Grease*, Kleiser (1978) that has many similarities in setting to Anger's film. The projection of the American dream was the projection of the privilege of the U.S.A. and its emerging post war empire.

Kustom Kar Kommandos (1965) captures the culture of individualism by highlighting the trend of customising your own car to make it a unique self-expression of identity through the accumulation of possessions, which in this case is the automobile. It is part of a wider competitive social climbing culture of commodity, wealth, and social status accumulation. Within this system, this Anger's film examines and exploits the spectacle of commodity and a culture of appearances within the public sphere. Affective labour in the construction of the self and the automobile within the public space of the city forms the focus of the film. The gaze and desire are central to this spectacle and Anger's desiring gaze is subversive in what it reveals and what it produces. Desire in Anger's films are examined in-depth in the works of Robert L. Cagle (1994) and Vincent Brook (2006). The language of this film reveals socially constructed desire and creates homosexual desire in the process of this reveal through the language developed that uses object desire and plays upon emerging codes of queer desire. Anger's film has high production values that mirror those of the cinematic spectacle and commercials to show the commodity of the car being fully showcased and fetishised.

At the start of the film the gaze of two teenage boys look admiringly at the shiny exposed engine and this admiring gaze is then mirrored by the camera framing as the viewer takes in the highly polished gloss of car's materiality. The film contains images that are full of affective sensory intensities. There is a heightening of spectacle in the language of the film from the intense studio lighting that removes shadow. The close-up camera is used as a device by Anger to create an intense special relationship with the scene, and the visual intimacy brings the viewer to the object of desire. This close framing is used throughout, and it abstracts the car so that it is reduced into an array seductive surfaces, shapes and textures that are fundamental to the process of imbuing the power of the fetish (Krauss, 1993). The specificity of refining the detailing of the finishes to the vehicle is important to the owner and the camera. There are obvious phallic references with the shots of the gear stick in this ode to auto-erotica. This seduction of the car in Anger's (1965) film is now a standard in the language of car advertising. The connection to the culture of teenage aspiration sees the car used in popular music videos and is extended into mainstream cinema with the ongoing Fast & Furious, (Thompson 2001-) franchise.

The teenage owner of the car is older than the initial duo at the beginning for the film, and he is imaged as an ideal of US white supremacy with his lightly tanned skin and blonde

hair. He too is a product as much as his vehicle is, and the controlled aesthetic of the baby blue uniform he wears and his expressionless demeanour, to the deliberate, slow caressing movements over the vehicle with the pink feather buffer. The teenager character is as blank as a machine in the way he moves, he is also a projection of identity and desire. Whilst the rubbing over of the machine is part of the object desire appreciation, it is also a representation of affective labour. The labour to participate, create and maintain desire is represented but here Anger draws attention to affective labour subversively invoke to resignify the codes within a seductive affective spectacle.

The teenager character recalls the Hollywood heartthrob or the plethora of Hollywood wannabes working in queer beefcake male physique magazines and gas stations as male prostitutes as detailed by Scotty Bowers in his 2012 autobiography and developed into glossy television by Ryan Murphy in *Hollywood, (2020)*. We see a version of the stereotype many times culturally with the film *Drive* by Nicolas Winding Refn (2011), being a direct descendent, where Ryan Gosling is the blonde-haired white protagonist who has little to say as he roams the city in his most important possession, his vintage car. Gosling wears a visceral satin varsity jacket, slicked back blonde hair as a simulacrum of the same architype in Anger's film. The colour temperature of the film and its lighting is highly cinematic and seductive. In all cases, the car is the conduit for the multitude of affective forces of desire within the city.

The affective qualities of the materials present in Anger's film are the most interesting thing in his objectification process. The critique present within the film lies within these affective qualities and their seduction as the car and human, subject and object become confused in his aesthetic. Anger (1965) depicts "the teenager" as he refers to him, not as the focus of the film, but as an addition to the focus on the vehicle. The treatment of the teenager is just as fragmented within the frame as the treatment of the car. The teenager is seen reflected in the mirrored surface of the car with his reflection distorted and following the contours of the car. It is no mistake that the car acts like a mirror for the character to see themselves, but also that he is melting into the car. The teenager has no individuality in this film, he is a stereotype but melts into the car as they are both consumed by the totality of the capitalist system of production. The car literally is a screen of projected ideals and identity. The Californian registration plates situate this car within the Hollywood movieland where cinematic dreams are manufactured, and this is also present in the song *Dream Lover* by the Parris Sisters (1964) that is used over the footage. The slick aesthetic along with the music functions like a precursor to a music video decades later. Anger's desiring frame makes the

materiality of the car more than it is. The scenes dazzle because of their abstraction and the affective flow of senses created by the close framing. The rich colour of the scenes is highly saturated with intense warm colour, with hot pink, orange, and deep red. The metallic surfaces are reflective to create high contrast areas of shining metal and dark shadow and there are lingering moments where the vehicle's chrome surface is almost a blank screen of darkness as the camera moves and the vehicle surface undulates. The flow of abstract material light in these short scenes have a sensuousness that has an iridescent liquidity, as the camera moves over the body of the machine. It is this material transformation through film into a state of affectivity where the real seduction of the film lies. The revving of the engine at the start of the film and at the end to sign the power of the machine and the control of the machine by the teenager is a link to desire, power and masculinity, but it is also a performance.

The minimal studio environment with flat colour backdrop that frames the car has the aesthetic purity of modernism, but this constructed environment it is a stage and is makes the viewer aware of the performance of what is being presented and desired, both in terms of the automobile and the male teenage actors. It brings a reflexivity to the construction of this spectacle that is an important part of Anger's equivocal position in making this short film. Mainstream consumer culture and gender stereotypes are represented in the film and the relationship between the subject and object and the agency supposedly attached to the teenager and the car. The space of the film can be viewed as a queering of the screen space and a resignifying of commodity desire towards a homosexual desire. Anger is able to blur the relationship between the subject and the object in his film so that both the car and the teenager become object, through their representation and framing. The making of the self through the cultural and economic system and the extension of the self through the machine is present in the work. The commodity of the car and the care of the individual to personalise it and attach the self to the culture of affective drives associated with individualism is bound up with identity and desire. The treatment of the representation and the framing of the desiring machine objects is through a distinctly queer gaze. Anger's queering of the space to resignify meaning is to set up the falseness and constructed nature of consumer culture as well as identity, through mimicry and camp parody. It is an acknowledgement of the seduction of the spectacle and a play with the semiotics coded into the system of gender and commodity through his queer lens. Anger exposes and subverts by remediating representation and desire within a queer context. The same processes of mimicry and camp parody that exist in society through the performance of gender and the surfaces of culture, are concentrated

self-consciously in this film. The teenager emerges from the 1950s as a construct of society for regulating the worker into the conventions of desire and adult working life. Anger examines this in the film, but he is also partaking within this system and being seduced by what it has to offer him as a homosexual exploring desire and the augmenting identity. The queer gaze is present in the modernist focus that work has, in that the staging recalls the ersatz camp of earlier cinematic extravaganzas of musical theatre, such as those of the hugely popular Busby Berkeley productions in the preceding decades. The stage was always present in these lavish productions and the framing of the artifice was always apparent, and it is equally as apparent in Anger's *Kommandos* (1965) work. This reflexivity of the staged space is a queered seductive spectacle.

Machines, Masculinity and Affect

If we transpose this performance of power, desire and identity into the 2020's we see the current context the oil economy and the car has developed into a culture of toxic masculinity linked to the alt right's denial of the climate crisis. The misogynist, alt right 'hero' figure of Andrew Tate embodies this, who mocks climate crisis activist Greta Thunberg on social media with his 33 super cars and his ridiculous yet dangerous posturing. His subsequent arrest and imprisonment by Romanian authorities for suspected people sex trafficking and other alleged illegal activities came from him being tracked down because of his derogatory Thunberg Twitter post. Once arrested he stated that "The Matrix got me!" (Tate 2023) and continued to reference *The Matrix (1999-)* franchise to position himself as a victim of authoritarianism because he positions himself is a truth finder like the character Neo. *The Matrix* (1999-) has also been cited by other alt right figures since such as Elon Musk when avoiding responsibility for being caught out for dubious actions. What is significant about *The Matrix* reference is it plays on the premise of the film's presentation of reality as a spectacle that creates a false consciousness. Alt right figures such as Tate reappropriating *The Matrix* (1999-) within the swell of their support is attached to the paranoia of deep state and conspiracy theorists such as QAnon. This appropriation deterritorializes the intention of the film to undo the film's critique of right-wing authoritarianism, and the other narratives that that have developed out of the cultural wake of the franchise. The remediation of the spectacle with the film to be resignified by the alt right demonstrates the flux and fragmentation of cultural dialogues and agency occurring through media platforms and the weight of desiring machines that create political hegemony. The readings of the film that are

queer coded regarding sexuality are negated by such resignifying of the film within an alt right affective narrative.

The Nocturnal Queer City

The film *Paris 05:59; Theo & Hugo*, Ducastel & Martineau, (2016) opens in a dark bar that is lit in deep blue and a multitude of circling orbs of light are reflecting around the space from a disco ball. We follow the gaze of a naked middle-aged cis gay man and participate within the looks of desire amongst the inhabitants of the bar that constitute the queer cinematic gaze. It is unclear who the protagonist of the film is because the gaze is exchanged between different people as the viewer descends into a basement darkroom that is intensely lit in red. It is an exchange reminiscent of the intense searching stare of the protagonist of the film *Nighthawks*, Peck (1978) set in London. The interior of the gay discotheque in *Nighthawks (1978)* is a colourfully lit and energetic space where the hunt for love takes place. It is contrasted with drab scenes of a grey London during the day and the mundanity of life and professional life as a schoolteacher in the closet. The fairly miserable protagonist is lonely and alienated in London. Urban London is captured as a land of bedsits and post war social housing redevelopment, as the protagonist visits East London and docklands with his interest in urban photography. By contrast the city is transformed at night into something more abstract and glamourous, with the glowing orbs of streetlight light in the dark being alluring. The film is rather slow paced, and the protagonist is seen to be punished somewhat in his frustration of being unsuccessful in the pursuit for love in gay culture. It is a stark contrast to the humorous German film *Taxi Zum Klo (Taxi to the Toilets)* Rippploh, (1980), that depicts Berlin at night in a similar manner and the protagonist has the same teaching profession, but this is a film with a lot of levity. Gay liberation within Berlin depicts a city that is a playground of sexual desire from public toilets, park spaces, streets, and homes. All made accessible by the convenience of the automobile and city taxi service. The nightlife of Berlin is more carnivalesque, the gender performance more fluid and fun within the gay club space, and ideas of relationship expectation more fluid and less heteronormative.

Revealing the Stratifications of Subjectivity

Paris 05:59; Theo and Hugo, (2016) is also an optimistic film that is about love in Paris, that is synonymous with love. This film, however, does not focus on the romantic clichés of representation Paris, instead it negations the spectacle of these clichés, and that is what makes it interesting. The film is in the tradition of French New Wave cinema using its conventions

under a queer lens, and name checks the work of Balzac. The themes and sex scene draw comparisons to the queer films *Shortbus*, Mitchell, (2006) and the *Weekend,* Haigh, (2011). The two cis gay male protagonists talk about how the city at night belongs to women, fags, and immigrants. They decide that the city at night is either kept going by these people, or they use the night to find their own power, even if it is small. The characters first meet in the opening twenty minute sequence of the film which is a graphic group sex scene under the intense red light of a basement sex cruise bar. The scene is filmed in a real place, called L'Impact Bar in Paris. In this place of the voyeuristic gaze of desire there are no words spoken just the language of looks, body language and sex. Under the red light the bodies writhe half in shadow and techno music accompanies the growing intensity of the group sex. In this sexual melee, Theo and Hugo haphazardly kiss and their connection is made with a white light isolating them. After their intercourse scene they leave together and then spend the night traversing the city getting to know each other and somewhat reversing the expected norms of a new relationship progression.

Their journey involves a moment of panic and concern about the HIV status of one of the characters and having to go to an A&E department to receive emergency HIV anti-viral medication. Through them the audience briefly meets some of the other inhabitants of the city at night; the women, the fags and the immigrants who consist of a nurse in A&E, a convenience store worker, a security guard and an elderly cleaner. Each person has their own small story of the city. It is a glimpse of the city's social and economic stratification, wrapped up in an alternative 'lovers belong to the night' romance. The different existences of marginality that encompass race, economics, sexuality, and age within the city are touched upon as the film plays out in real time from 04.27am until 05.59am. The social stratification in the city at night is also a temporal stratification of what the city means to people and how they live and experience their lives within it depending on the circumstances of their subjectivity. These people are people of the city at night and subject to the forces of society within the city that is prison like. The city is the material structure of the forces that create the conditions of their subjectivity. The convenience store worker is an immigrant who was an architect previously in Syria. The elderly hotel cleaner has a shortfall in her pension and is forced to continue to work beyond retirement. The city is a container of life and, most importantly, people and their desires and hopes that makes them more than their current situation. It is a city that functions with and because of 'failure' and the systemic injustices that the city contains.

The focus of the film is always on the two protagonists, Theo and Hugo, and their burgeoning romantic relationship by placing them nearly always centre within the compositional frame. A cinematic city is not the star of the film, this city is municipal, functional, static, and isolating, with deserted streets. It is a city of urban banality, anonymous architecture, roads, signage, advertising, bus stops, bridges, and walkways, all lit with a flat cold and artificial phosphorescent light. Boring shuttered shop-lined streets have nothing interesting about them and most of the scenes show Paris to be indistinguishable from any other impersonal European urban area. The city is depicted as secondary to the aliveness of the inhabitants and their desire. It is mainly depicted as truncated and fragmented with shots obscured by close-up framing of Theo and Hugo. The romance associated with Paris is not presented as spectacle, but rather it is presented in the bubble of the hope and desire that Theo and Hugo have. There is a moment when Theo and Hugo look out onto a view of the city reflected in the St Denis Canal, and say how amazing the night view is. However the audience does not see their view. The spectacle of the city is blocked by Theo and Hugo as we watch them in front of the view while they embrace. We see Theo and Hugo's expressions, and this places desire, the interactions of people and the possibility of love and the future at the heart of the film while the city is merely a frame. In a later conversation the new lovers talk about the bureaucracy and systems of the city and how queers live within these systems, but how queers and other marginalised people must also live by pushing against these systems too. This is the role of desire because "love is dumb" and from their romantic perspective pushes against the control of society.

Coding the Queer Body in Light

The sex scene at the opening of the film is coded with the similar aesthetic to the club sex scenes within the *Chemsex*, (2015) documentary, and whilst both are situated within real spaces of queer desire a question must be asked about this convention of the space of desire. Does the coding of the red and blue lighting represent a space of freedom for sexual desire and expression within the city, or does it represent a schematisation of sexuality and desire within a containable space of spectacle legitimised by a commercial sex license? Is this schematisation of the space of desire a form of gender identity conformity or even, control? The impact of technology upon the city and the shifts in the affective landscape and the affective labour of cis gay men is documented in William Fairman and Max Gogarty's 2015 documentary *Chemsex*. The documentary charts the changing fabric of the queer city and queer cis male desire in London. The rapid growth of a culture of dating and 'hook up' apps

that use smart phones is described as redefining and shaping social and sexual behaviour. Smart phone social media culture along with a growing clandestine culture of combination drug use such as MDMA, Ketamine, Crystal Methamphetamine, Mephedrone, and Gamma-Hydroxybutyric acid, is depicted and its impacts on sexual and mental health. The shifts in the spaces of the gay community from a subculture of relatively public communal spaces in the city from bars, pubs and clubs to private domestic spaces is shown. The spaces of cis gay male desire related to chemsex shows the domestic 'chillout' sessions and specialist private sex clubs. These spaces are coded with intense red light and also blue light. The use of coloured L.E.D. light creates the desired furtive ambience and denote the spaces of desire for staging the sexual acts that take place within them. Although not part of the documentary, this shift in queer culture is also marked by a decline in the physical spaces of the queer community in London.

The Shrinking Queer City
In London many queer spaces have closed due to a decreased use and the rise of social media apps. Spaces have been lost to the gentrification of urban areas where residential neighbours have licences revoted because of noise and remove the culture that made the area attractive in the first place (Coates, 2024). The loss of light industrial areas of the city that housed part of the gay clubbing scene have seen a reduction in locations whether it is Peckham, Old Kent Road, Tottenham, or Hackney Wick. Dance clubs have moved from industrial estates in one area to other areas eventually to be earmarked for redevelopment in Canning Town in East London and become part of a cycle of cultural entrepreneurship that becomes part of the process of gentrifying an area. Infrastructural and residential developments in London that have also impacted creative spaces have seen queer space reduced. The atomisation of the individual into a digital commodity culture mirrors that of other social media platforms such as Instagram but specifically territorialises the area of desire linked to identity and sexuality. The temporal impact of this culture is the heightening of sensation and the flattening or loss of time in sessions that last days in a state of induced wakefulness, drug use, mobile phone app use and sexual arousal. The documentary is about a crisis of addiction, and of city life split between public professional life and private life and affective desire that is remapped by technological machinic affect and chemicals. The performance of corporatised public identity in the workplace is contrasted by the implosion of identity in the private space of chemsex parties. This points to a crisis of collective cis gay male identity as part of the city and within the operations of capitalism.

The visibility of queer identities is reduced by chemsex culture as it becomes more atomised and underground, and the queer spaces of the city that encourage visibility, social exchange, community and culture that are depicted in the famous queer New York ball subculture documentary film, *Paris is Burning*, Livingston, (1990) is not present. It could be said that the spectacle of ersatz glamour, energy, performing identity and the subcultural liminal space of the drag ball and dance scene are expansionist in their baroque sensibility of creativity. The struggle to force a self-determined identity within the city is a form of resistance against state and social oppression. The documentary shows the fight for a space, for social equity and recognition, for non-punitive legal status, for medical care and for security. By contrast the chemsex scene in *Chemsex* (2018) is depicted in this documentary as engaged with an often, reductive, toxic masculinity of performing cis gay male identity codes of fetish leatherwear, all under the red light. There is no fundamental fight for a space in society and for social justice, but what is represented is queer being that is a withdrawal from the world.

Affect and the City as Neo-Liberal Prison

The squalidness of dependency, anxiety and shame is captured in the filming of many of the documentary's participants. The domestic home chemsex scenes of the documentary, show gatherings where desire is located outside of the public spectacle and in the private space. The chemsex scene has a language that precludes it from a subjective collectivity that can enter into socialised process to create agency. These documentary scenes in the domestic home space depict a few dozen naked men engaged in chemsex. The documentary shows a reduction of identity in these parties in an induced state of catatonia. Chemsex induces the intensities of Artaud both revered and warned against by Deleuze and Guattari (2000). It is a becoming and subjectivity created by subjects in an induced exalted state of pure affective desire. An obliteration of the self into the oblivion of the flows of the chemical and the sensory high. The self is put into a holding pattern of affective intensity that is a negation of the city outside and an experience of life within the city because it has little to offer. It is an escape into desire and the landscape of desire that is constructed within but against the city. The agency is formulated and coded within the private domestic space and borrows from the codification of spaces that are more public by the use of the red light. Whilst the documentary is a grim look at a crisis in mental health and desire it is not a condemnation of drug use or sexuality, but rather outlines the impacts of a cultural manifestation.

There are spaces in London where desire and identity moves beyond cis gendered white male dominance and push against traits of toxic masculinity in techno parties and clubs such as Riposte and Fold, as well as in the creative community Queercircle in north Greenwich. The creation of spaces that are safe, inclusive and have public visibility are important for dialogue and enabling the becoming of subjectivities that explore what identity can be within the city. Spaces that can be inclusive and accept differences of unfolding queer subjectivity become important vectors of power within the city. The temporary nature of many venues due to gentrification and the regulation of space within neo-liberalism means that for subjectivities to manifest and be spatialised in a social setting as a collective subject group, becomes an essential movement against increasing authoritarian legislation and regulation. McKenzie Wark's (2023) recently writes about the practice of raving and the communal affect of the machinic and chemical assemblage that the queer and trans raving community produces. It is in line with Lazzarato (2019) in that the machinic opens up the potential of new temporalities and sensations upon the body creates new possibilities of formulating cognition. It is a lyrical work that is important in the wake of anti-gay and trans legislation across the U.S.A. that makes public visibility, expression and living illegal.

The City of Waste
The infrastructure of the city at night is the setting for Pedro Rodrigue's film *O Fantasma* (*The Phantom*) of 2000. The film shows the fringes of Lisbon at night to depict the city as a place of decay and waste caused by the excesses of consumption. The narrative circles around young, displaced refuse workers who clear up and process the surplus of the city. The surplus of consumption as waste creates an aesthetic that is claustrophobic in the economy of the mid shots and the affective qualities of the sound. The city at night has blazing cold intense lights, but they are absorbed in the darkness and the space of the city is condensed and made surreal. These refuse workers are essential to the function of the city, but they are those who are overlooked. The nocturnal city reveals its workings, as a city that has socio-economic injustice keeping it functioning and where desire also develops out of sight. Rodriques worked with the nocturnal city refuse collector for six months to research the film (Turner, 2018). At the beginning of the film, we see the young protagonist, Sergio, riding the city of waste framed by the back of the of garbage truck with the only song that is used in the film *Dream Baby Dream* of 1979 by the punk band Suicide being played. It is later replayed at the end of the film when this shot of Sergio riding the back of the refuse truck is reconstructed. The soundscape is made up of heightened field recording of the city to draw

attention to the materiality of the city as a system where the sound is a biproduct of the city as a moving animist machine. It produces excesses of sound, just as it produces different forms of excessive waste. The soundscape creates a narrative beyond the frame, where there are relatively few wide shots or establishing shots. We hear a built environment that is divorcing human experience from nature and is established by the constant noise of traffic, machinery, airplane noises and punctured by the sound of dogs barking. In the dimness of the night the film turns away from illumination to concentrate on the sensory, on the non-verbal, body language, and intimate incidental sound is favoured over dialogue which is fairly minimal to drive the narrative.

The film opens with the silhouette of a Doberman pawing and whimpering at a door in a corridor and cuts to the other side of the door and a sex scene with 'The Phantom' in a sleek, shiny, black latex body suit. The rear exposed, this is a close-up gratuitous shot as 'The Phantom' is having aggressive, domineering sex with a submissive man. The sound of the latex suit squeaking, and rubbing is emphasised. We are then introduced to Sergio, riding the back of the refuse truck, and he is relatively monosyllabic and closed as a character. He appears to have more affinity to the dogs that roam the city at night than the people. Sergio and the other workers have come to a capital city to find their place and construct themselves within the promise of the city. The protagonist leads a nocturnal life working as a city refuse collector and lives in shared accommodation with other young anonymous strangers. Like the dogs of the city, the refuse workers scavenge what they can, and the critique of the film draws correlation between the fringes of society, the trash, the dogs, and the treatment of the city's itinerant workers. The surplus of a city that produces a flow of different types of waste. The other young refuse workers are subject to the abuse of their older manager, and of course the wider socio-economic system, but there is some levity early in the film where they are seen in a childlike scene of catching some joy by playfully chasing each other through the streets at night in the range of refuse vehicles they drive. Sergio tries to establish a relationship with a female co-worker, but his emerging homosexuality leaves her frustrated and dejected. The relationships in the film are tinged with emotional cruelty and the relationship with the city's dogs seems to be the most genuine interactions of emotion within their state of alienation.

The Fantasy and Fantom of Self-Made Agency

The film charts Sergio's decline into obsession and emergence as 'The Phantom', after a chance meeting one night with a young man called Joao, who has a sleek black motorcycle.

Sergio periodically stalks him as he becomes more obsessed, and he psychologically develops into becoming his constructed alter ego of "The Phantom". On encountering Joao, he obtains the stranger's worn swimming trunks and leather riding gloves and wears them as much as he can. He desires the gloves, and they are used in a masturbatory scene. Rather than admiring Joao, or aspiring to become like him, possibly because both of these are not an option for him in his current socio-economic conditions and because his desire is misplaced on the heterosexual Joao, Sergio compounds his desire and Joao's material possessions, the motorcycle into fetishisation. His desire for Joao and the wealth and agency represented in the slick black Suzuki motorcycle is conflated into objectification as commodity fetishism. The desire Sergio feels has no language and the complexity of this desire and its surplus as affect is channelled into desiring the motorcycle and all its accompanying paraphernalia, including a pair of Joao's discarded worn out leather gloves. The clichéd stereotype of the performance of desire object masculinity in homosexual culture is drawn upon. The motorcycle as a fetish object is a well-worn trope from Kenneth Anger's *Scorpio Rising* (1964) and Tom of Finland illustrations (Finland, 2024). There is a direct homage to the latter in a sex scene involving a policeman. Sergio had been caught by the policeman earlier in a scene where he was on top of Joao's motorcycle in an act of autoeroticism. The heat of the recently used machine is a substitute for the warmth of the human body.

Sergio continues to stalk the object of his desire and approaches him like a wary scavenging dog, eventually breaking into his bedroom to mark his territory by urinating on his bed. After seeking anonymous sex in the differing nocturnal spaces of the city, Sergio metamorphoses into 'The Phantom' guise. The harshness of the city has led to the production of this self-constructed persona. He wears a black shiny, PVC body suit and the used riding gloves in the conflation of obtaining his desire and maintaining his distance from it. He embodies the power and the glossy materiality of the black motorcycle as this manifestation of the excess of desire, and he kidnaps Joao, dragging him through the streets. He soon abandons Joao because he is now actualised as an anti-superhero figure. He personifies a skulking graphic novel character with his animalistic gestures, drinking from a park pond. Sergio is replaced by 'The Phantom' and almost disappears into the darkness of the shadows as he prowls and rides in the back of a refuse truck. He is barely visible in the street lighting as it spills onto the body suit to create a moving liquid tromp l'oeil outline. His excessiveness stands against the backdrop of the mundane. He rides to the waste processing plant of a landfill site in the outskirts of Lisbon on the back of the garbage truck in a filmic composition that mirrors the shot of him at the beginning of the film. At times he vanishes completely out

of the light into the dark void of the garbage truck. There are mountains of rubbish, rivers of black plastic covering the refuse. Here 'The Phantom' seeks agency, turning away from the city. He drinks the filthy water and hunts a rabbit. In the final scene lit by the glare of artificial light he defecates on the machinery processing the city waste. Pushed to the margins of the city, Sergio becomes alienated and in a conflation of the subjection he is constrained by, and his own agency becomes a self-constructed persona that can only find a space to be productive in extreme liminality. The critique of capitalism and social injustice is present in the surplus and excess waste produced by the city. The treatment and objectification of people through the stratifications of capitalism that lead to poor working and living conditions is represented in this film seeing the protagonist seek alternatives in subjectivity. This alternative subjectivity is a position of a future that will be built upon the legacy of a system that is alienating and toxic.

Made Subjects and Making Subjectivities

The regulation of the networked city increases an encultured subjectivity that perpetuates its politics through a consciousness that is a fiction of beliefs, identities, attitudes, and behaviours that are accepted as natural and innate, and this is achieved by affective politics. Such a culture is also pervasive throughout technological capitalism that is centred around the individual and their 'authentic self', that negates the post-structural decentring of the subject in para-social functions. If we apply this idea of bio cognitive affect to the shifts in temporal life that we see in digital culture and their 'immediacies', coupled with the affective content and the affective labour of the subject, then the affective landscape of the city and the coding of space and desire within the city as a hub of affective multiplicities, becomes more obviously political. The subject potentially becomes enslaved through affective enculturation and interactions as they are subjected to the rhythms of the nocturnal city that are created by networked luminescence that is informational and networked. The manufacturing of space though technology using light and also the way in which the socio-economic stratifications of the city create different experiences and temporalities of the city create control. Affectivity can be directed and modulated via the enslavement of the subject within an enculturing machinic system that is pervasive from hand-held screen technologies, to the material fabric of the city. The intensities of asignifying affect upon the body become an endurance through their distraction and codifying of space and the demand for the investment of affective labour. The intensities of experience that were the pursuit of Artaud and that are valorised as the schizophrenic and are explored in *Anti Oedipus* (2005), are not so dominant within the

discourse of *A Thousand Plateaus* (2005) because of the awareness of the increased acceleration of affective forces and of modulating machinic capitalism that are developing. The ontology of the subject and the forming of subjectivity becomes more exposed to affects of the machinic forces of capitalism, and how they shape sense experience as well as create regulation without any conscious awareness of these operations. The grand multiplicities of operations upon the body by affective forces and the body politic and its implications, works through the city as a machine. As Hocquenghem (1993) writes, and also as Wark (2023) advocates, how we choose to organise experience and collective subjectivity within the conditions of the capitalist technocratic city is where resistance lies. The nocturnal city reveals much about the conditions of society through its temporality and through the affective experiences of the people who inhabit it and how and where they inhabit it. The problem is how to organise collectively from a position of marginality and how to balance the politics of visibility and invisibility to be in order to fulfil desire and be effective collectively.

6 - Resignifying the Spectacle.

Considering how creative practice can remediate the spectacle of the city and its affective intensities will be examined. Work that intervenes with luminosity and a cinematic mode within the cityscape is analysed, with the work of Kryzysztof Wodiczko and his '*City Projections*' (1984-) site specific work in London, and also the work of London based-artist Prem Sahib. The role of affect within aesthetics focuses on Steven Shaviro's (1998) critique of Deleuze and Guattari's conception of 'the beautiful' to frame the analysis of creative practices that resignify the spectacle in the city.

The operation of deterritorialising the spectacle to find agency within the dynamics that structure experience within the city, can be the endeavour of a critical creative practice to create discourse. The flows of power within a machinic context creates social movement by acknowledging that the power dynamics of social systems are not fixed. Affective, intellectual and machinic labour are part of a dialectic that is an economy of valourisation and exchanges that create subjectivity and individuated behaviours. The operation of deterritorialising the spectacle with the rhizomatic entanglement of machinic and affective labour has to acknowledge the role of desire. The desire to engage in an ecology of endeavour, critique and potentiality that is in flux within the rhizomatic structures of society and the networked luminescent city of the technological sublime. Ecology, as a term is used here to acknowledge the multiplicities of interconnected factors that construct the spectacle of the city as an assemblage and human subjectivity and desire as part of this assemblage.

How then can the resignification of the spectacles present within the city offer agency for the production of subjectivities?

Returning to Shaviro's (2010) concept of 'post cinematic affect', where he states that the increase of affect within contemporary digital culture requires a mapping of affective intensities to provides a critical and analytical means for critique. I will reconsider affect theory within this increase of affect to utilise the dazzlement of the spectacle to create new multiplicities of affective experience and enter into a process of modulating discourse from decentralised cultural, social, and economic positions that is espoused by Lazzarato (2019).

In the process of engaging with the intensities of the affective sublime I will engage with emerging associated aesthetics which through the practice of living, exploring and experimenting create new subjective experiences as acts of agency that critique, resist and redirect through resignification. Within the context of affective intensities, I utilise Shaviro's

critique in *Beauty Lies in the Eye*, (1998) of Deleuze and Guattari's focus on the sublime over the beautiful in *A Thousand Plateaus* (2005) and *What is Philosophy?* (1994).

Deleuze and Guattari (1994) dismiss the surface cultural semiotics of the beautiful in favour of the intensities of the affective sublime, that they see as a strategy for resistance. Shaviro takes up the beautiful as an agent within the social and its place within an affective order that plays a part within desire and affect in shaping subjectivity. What I draw from Shaviro will be explored in this chapter. Shaviro argues that the beautiful and its variations that are cultural and machinic have affective forces to contribute to the construction of desire and subjectivity, in powerful ways that are differential to extreme affective 'sublime' moments. The engagement with the affective forces of the beautiful and the ersatz is to understand the potential of the aesthetic manifestations of affective labour and its potential weaponization both against and for resistance within entangled forces of discourse, (1998).

Digital Image & New Psychodynamics

Returning to affect within the digital era, Deleuze is very wary of the digital or 'electronic image' as he calls it at the precipice of the digital era.

"The electronic image, that is in the tele and video image, the numerical image coming into being, had either transform cinema, or to replace it, to mark its death… The new images images no longer have any outside (out of field), any more than they are internalised in a whole, rather, they have a right side and a reverse, reversible and non-superimposable, like a power to turn back on themselves. They are the object of perpetual reorganisation, in which a new image can arise from any point whatever the preceding image." (Deleuze, 2005. p272-3).

Deleuze sees the assemblages of the digital era that create the electronic image as all-encompassing and that they will form a new 'psychomechanics' of how ontology is formed. Deleuze sees the dawn of the computational image as a vast shift from the analogue forms of the machinic production of time and the image of thought.

"The organisations of space loses its privileged directions. And first of all, the privilege of the vertical which the position of the screen still displays, in favour of an omni-directional space which constantly varies its angles and coordinates, to exchange the vertical and horizontal. And the screen itself, even if it keeps a vertical position by convention, no

longer seems to refer to the human posture, like a window or a painting, but rather constitutes a table of information, an opaque surface on which are inscribed 'data' .. …refers to a new psychological automata," (Deleuze, 2005, p272-3).

On speculation of the potential of new forms entering into production within the emerging digital image. "What are the new forces at work in the image, and the new signs invading the screen?" (Deleuze, 2005, p279). New images will emerge from the electronic image in the digital era, and new affective forces will form novel organisations of experience that are sensory and impact on the subject's pre-consciousness and consciousness. Within the digital era the electronic image is everywhere and takes on new forms. The post-cinematic era is a post-screen era that validates Deleuze's idea of the mind as the screen (Deleuze, 2005). The implosion of the image of thought into the screen/mind of the subject is the new space that the ubiquity of the digital creates in all its forms of spectacle for deterritorialization. The extension of the digital into the fabric of the city and the networked L.E.D. furthers the reach of the psychodynamics of the digital image and the grip of neoliberal capitalism on affective labour.

The digital electronic image changes our relationship to the spectacle in its dynamic and mathematical, or diffuse form, because, whilst the commercial forces at play operate to reduce the aesthetic of the digital, the conditions of the beautiful, (aesthetics) and the sublime, (affect), or rather experience itself, opens up to the change. The relationship between aesthetics and affect are complex and there can be a tension between what is beautiful and seductive, with the extremely intense. This equivocal relationship between the aesthetics and the affect is interesting, in that like the affective turn in philosophy it is difficult to ascertain given the heterogeneous or rhizomatic multiplicity of how the relationship between the beautiful and the sublime unfolds and continually alters, moves, 'modulates' and how they contend with each other. The sensory visual, audio and haptic that make up the experiential and lend themselves to the spectacle can be manipulated within the scripts of the neo-liberalism, but also into finding the languages of the new. The equivocation of the relationship between the seductively beautiful, and the ersatz and what this can entail in the digital era provides a research method of creative critical practice. The relations of the aesthetics of the beautiful and the extra sensory, or sublime as new configurations of the electronic/digital image is an interesting point of potential for creative and critical endeavour.

Inside the Digital Image Machine

Deleuze positions the operation and impact of affect upon the body as the apex of experience. The digital era with its diffuse and dynamic spectacle on the surface, offers a world where there is much more mediation, and so therefore a greater engagement with what can define the ontological conditions of experience and the role of affective forces. It is a world that is more technological, but the work of technological mediation does not change the relationship between humanity and the truth. As Deleuze says, the real world is useless, unless it is made material and structures the virtual. On the systems of valorisation of how we constitute ontology within a fiction of appearances, Deleuze says:

"The true world.. in itself is an inaccessible and useless world. Like the cathedral, its only quality is to have been made by men. Thus, it is not hidden by appearances; it is it, on the contrary, which hides appearances and provides them with an alibi. Behind the truthful man there is a forger, the scorpion, and the one who constantly refers back to the other. The expert in truth gives approval to Van Megreen's false Vermeers precisely because the forger has created them by reference to the expert's own criteria. In short, the forger is not simply a copier, but already the model. Should we not say then, that the artist, even Vermeer, even Picasso, is a forger, since he makes a model of appearances." (Deleuze, 2005, p151)

The virtual currents of the real world organises, manifests and creates the spectacle of appearances. Any claim to a fixed truth is the fiction that clings to the order of appearances and form, and this is a form of fascism. There is no loss in Deleuze's viewpoint, nothing is lost, nothing is hidden, because the truth is always multifarious and cannot be reduced. The truth is always experienced and resides in the open waiting to be constructed or revealed. The electronic image foregrounds the screen, and the augmentation of experience through other forms of screen, such as online gaming, augmented reality, and virtual reality. The engagement with these different screens of the electronic image will change the ways in which time is crystallised to form reality. The shifts in the temporal and the forces of psycho-mechanics in the digital era open up new modes of experience, just as television shifted mass subjectivation away from cinema, and the contributed to the invention of a people. The mediations of the screen reveal the construction of experiencing the real in every context. The real time of the digital electronic image reveals a heterogeneity and the operation of the machines that create spectacle and crystallise time. The experiential, immersive qualities of the electronic image take the cinematic into a new sphere of experience, in that they are often interactive in their immanence. The subject's body is the apex of the experience that is not

necessary to the mode of static reception or physical paralysis to give attention like that of the cinema or television. The city as an extension experience and particularly the networked luminescent city becomes key in the production of the image of thought, that extends Deleuze and Bergson's conceptualisation of cinema and ontology. The dynamic spectacle involves a separation from the spectator where there is distance. The distance between the spectator and the screen, or the parade in the live event has distance, but the digital image with new modes of engaging with moving image such as gaming, AR & VR that involve a mode volition within the spectacle for interaction and reaction are similar to the development of networked cities as screens in their immersion and modulation by the computational desire machine. This is significant in that the subject/object relationship within the electronic digital image of gaming, augmented reality and particularly virtual reality, collapses, this collapse also extends to the city as screen. The spatial relationship collapses in these developing modes of experience that the electronic digital image brings. The subjection to a sensory experience that is immersive and immanent takes the cinematic into new temporal territories of affect. The apex of experience has the potential to be closer to Deleuze's and Guattari's exploration of rhythms of movement in the process of counter-effectuation, in that in the unfolding temporal event responses of the sensory projected onto the subject and their response opens up the potentiality of new languages within art practice and cognitive response (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p310-). The relationships between the material and the digital, and the virtual unfold to produce another historical movement in experience, as they did in the early industrial mechanisation and reorganisation of society around the machine explored by Benjamin (2004), that then created new temporalities and new affective experiences. The dynamic spectacle or sublime, and the diffuse spectacle or mathematic spectacle also collapse together in new modes of the electronic digital image. An ontology that is dominated by being inside the electronic digital image ongoing event is emerging. The networked city as a screen is productive in being part of the electronic image creating affect. The participant is also connected to the machinic much more directly within this mode and so therefore the diffuse spectacle that is ideological is able to operate more directly with the subject also. The mathematical, technological sublime connected to the machine experience, extends the reach of the subject and their experience, but also involves them in a feedback loop with the diffuse spectacle to a much greater degree. The emerging configurations of the technological bring shifts in the affective flows within the body and also bring a new psychodynamics to the subject. The mapping of these intensities and what they can mean and also the search for new

languages of desire and being within this context is unfolding. Turning to Shaviro to be able to grasp the process of resignifying the spectacle and what this can offer is important.

Sensation and Shifting Aesthetics
Shaviro (1998) points to the paradox that links the beautiful and the sublime, in that the beautiful leads to intuitions for which there are no adequate concepts, and the sublime leads to rational concepts for which there are no adequate intuitions. The sublime tests the limits of subjectivity, to then be mastered in his model of universality, but the beautiful remains more undefined. Shaviro highlights that in Kant that the judgement of beauty is singular and there is no conceptualisation of it, and that the aesthetic judgement of the sublime, is also unmediated by concepts as it is experienced. Shaviro outlines the aesthetics of beauty as indeterminate and creates different affects and responses because free harmony is unfixed, and therefore cannot be contained to a universal ideal: "The universal communication of a free harmony of the faculties thus paradoxically implies a pre-existing separation. Indeed, what is communicated publicly in the formal condition of possibility for there to be such a thing as a private aesthetic pleasure at all." (Shaviro, 1998, p103)

The relationship between the beautiful and the sublime is more complex than being able to separate one from the other and dismiss the beautiful. The universal agreement of aesthetic judgement is something that can be expected, as Shaviro points out from Kant, but it cannot be enforced. The beautiful is singular in that its contemplation involves a subjectivity that is more equivocal and shifting, and the many examples of the beautiful, cannot be foreclosed conceptually, but are always in negotiation. The beautiful is always in the process of definition and any theory of the beautiful, as Shaviro paraphrases Kant, is always inadequate to its examples. The beautiful defies definition, and with this the beautiful can be positioned as a forever shifting signifier, that is subjective and contextual and unfixed, as the free accord of the faculties are attracted to the conditions of the beautiful: "Beauty, therefore, is everything, and nothing, all at once". (Shaviro, 1998 p103). He this outlined that the beautiful is an unfixed signifier in his critique of Deleuze's reading of Kant on the beautiful and the sublime.

Shaviro argues that this also provides the moment of singularity, where beauty can avoid cliché and can also present the new. Working from Kant, what determines the beautiful and how it is defined with its empty conceptual shell, will always mean that the beautiful is free floating and as open as any other sign whatsoever of a communicational system, because the conceptualisation of what is beautiful is always differential, differed, and contingent.

What is missing from the beauty, despite its shifting conceptual signifier, is the moment of violence or limit. Whilst the definition of beautiful may be shifting and contingent, the temporality of the beautiful is containable. There is no dynamic spatio-temporal schism in the beautiful as in the sublime event, and yet the beautiful and the sublime can be coexistent. The failing of the beautiful for Deleuze is that there is a focus on form that impoverishes the vital forces of metamorphosis, and also there is a quantitative mediocrity present within the beautiful which the machinic and political apparatus sustain through reproduction of (Delueze, 2008). The focus on form will always be reductive and this closure dampens transformation. However, the beautiful does not have to be tied to constraining narratives of form and it must be accepted that any occurrence that is exceptional is also extremely rare, and the exceptional is what heralds the new, and this can be present in both the beautiful and the sublime. The affective intensities of the sublime are present in the beautiful and this is a site that can be a productive remediation of aesthetics for resignification and critical agency.

The Visible and the Invisible
Guattari (1992) states that the role of art practice in creating blocks of affect is to create a sensory impact that is a rupture of perception, and this is productive in that there is recreation and reinventions that shapes cognition and causes change within the subject. He outlines the shifts that occur temporally, corporeally, and intellectually through art to create rupture.

"The work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment, which leads to a recreation and a reinvention of the subject itself. A new existential support will oscillate on the work of art, based on a double register of reterritorialisation (refrain function) and resingularisation. The event of its encounter can irreversibly date the course of an existence and generate fields of the possible "far from the equilibria" of everyday life. Viewed from the angle of this existential function - namely, in rupture with signification and denotation - ordinary aesthetic categorisations lose a large part of their relevance," (Guattari, 1992, p131).

The sensory, experiences and desire occur within immanence and shape temporality and ontology. Creative practice involves processes of mediation of affective labour, intellectual and physical and machinic labours and through this a remediation occurs that is intentional and unintentional in aims and affects produced.

Connecting Shaviro's (1998) reading of the affective role of the beautiful to the The Situationist strategy of détournement provides a method for resistance in creative practice. Détournement as a process recognises and uses the language of the spectacle to create a disturbance to create a rupture in the spectacle and break accepted codes of spatialisation within the city and in art practice. This idea can be transposed to explore the affective sublime of intensities and resignify existing languages of the beautiful that create new aesthetics and new affective experiences. The beautiful itself is unfixed and subjective and this gives it its power for potentiality and disruption within creative practices and cultural practices. The liminal and marginal, positions and experiences within the subject groups of the city and how they occupy the city are active in producing affective aesthetic experience that creates ruptures in normativity. The negation of authority within practices and identities, in the making strange, absurd, and queering of experience to produce new aesthetics and new affects happens within the stratification of experience within the city. The charge of desire to produce new counter systems, experiences and aesthetics that function within the material architecture and the networks of the city and create new architectures of feeling, experience, and organisation, are acts of resistance whether knowingly or not. The dazzlement of queer spaces with the shifting of light and shade, what is visible and hidden in the laser light and the queering of the spectacle of the city with the appropriation of cinema can be an important strategy for introducing the absurd, for transforming the mundane into the cinematic universe and to use this to create critique and also explore the entanglement of the systems that create value and desire that are tied to the machinic. Let us consider some practices that engage with London and the cinematic to explore affective experiences in different ways.

Hegemonic Resistance

Kryzysztof Wodiczko, a Polish U.S. citizen began producing projection artworks in the early 1980s known as *City Projections*, that took the form of interventions within the city with polemical images on sites that were charged by their function or cultural significance. Wodiczko used large scale projection onto public buildings as a method of disrupting the spectator's relationship with specific buildings within the city. In 1984 he projected a photographic image of US president Ronald Reagan onto the AT&T building in New York City. The image was of Reagan's hand upon his chest in a pose pledging allegiance to the US. The cropped image was of his hand with the wrist showing a white cufflinked shirt and the sleeve of a suit. The intervention onto the 40-story skyscraper came during Reagan's election campaign and his aim was to link Reagan's affiliation to corporate media. The tower

is striking because it has no windows and houses the telecommunication centre of AT&T and took five years from 1969-74 to construct. (Fabrizi, 20The covert architecture hides the transit of information that is processed through the building and was deliberately built as a fortress to protect US communications in the context of the cold war. The architect who designed the building developed a career with design bespoke corporate and governmental structures in the USA. The Intercept alleged that the building was used by the US National Security Agency as a significant surveillance hub due to the national and international communications that were processed there. They cited documents from the Wikileaks files that were given to them that implied this NSA involvement. As a strange and iconic building with an urban legend and mystery surrounding it, this was used built upon when it was used for external shots as the headquarters of an US government alien security agency in the comedy film, *Men in Black*, Sonnenfeld, (1997).

The building with no windows has it a strange presence in the city. It does not reflect light during the day like other skyscrapers and it does not emit light at night. The blankness of the structure is reminiscent of a fictional foreboding medieval tower, the eerie anonymity of a sci-fi monolith, and the plain boringness of a giant grain silo. This blankness and affective strangeness in the context of the rest of the cities in Tribeca becomes highlighted by having attention drawn to it by the projection of an image upon it. This act of détournement highlights the secrecy of the operations within the building and their link to corporate and state collusion.

In 1985 Wodiczko was commissioned to produce a two-day artwork in Trafalgar Square, London, and he chose to highlight the relationship between the US and the UK and the 'special friendship' between neo-liberal allies Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. His projection onto *Nelson's Column*, itself a national ode to the history of British imperialism, was of a nuclear warhead that was clearly market with US insignia. The warhead was wrapped in barbed wire. The choice of the US warhead has contextual currency given the controversy and activism from 1981 until 1990 of protests again US nuclear warheads and military being present within the UK. The Greenham Common Airbase involved ongoing actions mainly by women in anti-war and protest for nuclear disarmament. Protest actions included a 14-mile-long human chain to produce disruption. Whilst Wodiczko saw these architectural interventions as a critique on how space functions within patriarchal power structures. The link of this public art with connections to power and the phallic form of *Nelson's Column* within this narrative are very direct. Whilst this work was a legitimised form of protest in Trafalgar Square with an anti-war and imperial message that was current,

Wodiczko decided to intervene in the artwork on its final night by redirecting the projection beam onto the South African embassy in Trafalgar Square. Protests throughout the 1980's at South Africa's apartheid government and the imprisonment of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela with a significant march of 150,000 people in London protesting. Margaret Thatcher was opposed to sanctions against South Africa and was involved in negotiations over South Africa's rule of Namibia. A demonstration outside of the embassy during Wodiczko's installation took place due to Margaret Thatcher approving a £30milion payment to the South African Defence Forces, who were key enforcers of apartheid. Wodiczko seized this charged moment to project a Nazi swastika onto the portico of the neoclassical façade of the building. The Nazi swastika covered that image of a boat that had obvious references to trade and colonialism, as well as covering the words 'good hope'. The projection intervention lasted less than two hours before British police intervened and Wodiczko, took the image down to avoid arrest. Whilst few people saw the actual work, the documentation and a press release the next day saw the work enter into the public realm. Wodiczko's press release spoke of need to unmask the fictions present within architecture:

"This must happen at the very place of myth, on the site of its production, on its body–the building. Only physical, public projection of the myth on the physical body of myth (projection of myth on myth) can successfully demystify the myth. The look, the appearance, the costume, the mask of the buildings is the most valuable and expensive investment. In the power discourse of the "public" domain, the architectural form is the most secret and protected property. Public projection involves questioning both the function and the ownership of this property. In defending the public as communal against the public as the private, the projection reveals and is effected by the political contradiction of the culture of capitalism. As a private property, the architectural appearance is well protected by the police, the guards, and the city bylaws. The attack must be unexpected, frontal, and must come with the night, when the building, undisturbed by its daily functions, is asleep and when its body dreams itself, when the architecture has its nightmares," (Wallis, 2008).

This remediation of the public city space by Wodiczko draws stark comparison to the nationalist white supremacy of the Nazi party and that of white European colonialism. The involvement of the UK in South Africa historically and by Thatcher at this moment by financially and politically supporting racism and white suprematism is highlighted in this détournement action. Wodiczko is able to work with the context of the city and the flow of

contingencies in that moment to work with a confluence of narratives and reroute them to create a spectacle as critique.

The practice of projection onto city architecture still occupies a place of activism despite its subsumption into the commercial and ocular motion graphic decoration. The spaces of the city with L.E.D. screens such as the 'Outernet Building' with its large. L.E.D. screen public square at Tottenham Court Road in central London, that showers cute, blissful emojis or transforms into a surreal castle space are benign and dazzling affective spectacle. Projection mapping onto prominent public buildings with dynamic motion graphics and dramatic transformations has been common for some time and its intent is very much removed from the work of Wodiczko. I will now look at how the intervention by Wodiczko's in his '*City Projections'* series has been commercialised in London and can be narrativized to consider digital technology, the city as a screen and what can be viewed as the shift in agency from the late 1990s as networked capitalism grew.

In 1999 a men's 'lifestyle' magazine projected an image onto the UK Houses of Parliament, that was visible from the river Thames, of the model and TV presenter Gail Porter, apparently without her knowledge. The digital projection of the nude image of Porter projected almost as high as the building was taken from a photoshoot published in the magazine. It was a publicity stunt to promote the magazine's campaign to find the UK's sexiest woman of the year in a vote off and promote the magazine. The various narratives of commercialism and culture issues that are tied to this stunt, demonstrate how acts of resistance within the spectacle of the architectural space of the city can be remediated within the systems of capitalism to suit its own ends. Here, not only is the commercial product of the magazine that typified the 1990s UK culture of the "lads mag" being promoted, but the values within cultural production that operate to perpetuate the objectification and hierarchical ranking of the female form. Whilst the use of the Houses of Parliament for this nude that showed Porter's bottom is deliberately irreverent and mocking the importance of the vote, it locates agency for young British males within the cultural imaginary by asserting heteronormative desire and beauty. This agency and desire are constructed within the paradigm of the cultural industry spectacle in the form of a "lads mag" lifestyle magazine, and ironically, it is not located within the Houses of Parliament itself. The shifts that were occurring in the UK of the political options available within the Houses of Parliament at the time and changes to the mediascape of the digital era are perhaps epitomised by the example of Porter's image protection. The internet saw the decline of print-based publishing in the 2000s and with it the "lads mag". The complexity

of the mediascape and the attention economy of the networked spectacle developed rapidly in the 2000s. The disappearance of the misogynistic content of the "lads mag" in the public space was not because of social progressiveness, but rather the content became dematerialised on the internet and took other forms of a more extreme and varied type and become more accessible online, and perhaps contributed to more extreme misogyny with current Incel culture.

The win in the 1997 UK general election of the Labour Party under the rebrand from the left as "New Labour" under Tony Blair embraced neo-liberalism with gusto. When asked what her greatest achievement was, former Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said it was "Tony Blair and New Labour" (Komlik, 2018). The shift towards loosening ties with Trade Unions and embracing the private sector and private military industry in the Iraq War by "New Labour", demonstrated the subsumption of UK leftist politics within capitalism. The development of the traditionally socialist political party into New Labour in the mid 1990's leads to now, where it has eradicated its leftist voices of descent and protest against neo-liberalism to become virtually indistinguishable from the Conservative Party. Capitalism has eradicated the viability of the left as a political party force in the UK. Within UK parliamentary political party politics capitalism has collapsed agency into the appearance of agency and therefore it has weakened democracy.

The détournement action of projecting images onto buildings used by Wodiczko has been continued in the UK by the protest group Led by Donkeys founded in 2018. They initially formed in response to the lies told by Conservative politicians about Brexit and a campaign of guerrilla billboard posters using Tweets that were lies and some of which had been deleted by the politicians who wrote them, were propagated by social media. They garnered a significant viral momentum in the UK to demonstrate the agency within the social media communication in an attempt to hold the government and media outlets to account for creating the affective environment of urgency attached to the Brexit referendum. Since Brexit they have continued to be critical of the government and different political parties, from the handling of COVID19 to other scandals. Their interventions have involved digitally projecting text and also short documentaries on public buildings and spaces in the UK from the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, and the European Research Institute, which are then filmed lived to be disseminated on the internet. These acts of détournment are like Wodiczko's practice and use site specific public architecture to draw attention to the narratives attached to the actions of politicians to raise awareness details that are often not reported upon or deflected. The city has become a territory for the screen and the cultural

imaginary as spectacle is now framed within the screen. The Led by Donkeys projections, just like Wodiczko's work in Trafalgar Square, are short lived resistance acts where the city as a screen is transformed momentarily, but mainly these acts inhabit the L.E.D. screens of computers, tablets, and mobile phones on social medi. The actions of Extinction Rebellion use the same approach to light up parliament, or fossil fuel headquarters in London. It seems important to consider what this territorialisation of the cityscape as a screen space now means when the cityscape and buildings are remediated to have extra semiotic meaning that is politicised within different narratives.

The spectacle of the luminescent cityscape as a screen-like medium for communication is seen in commemoration events, such as Armistice Day poppies and also national flags commemorating patron saints and also support for countries who have endured some form of tragedy with public buildings and landmarks being lit up. From the Empire State Building in New York City, Sidney Opera House, the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, to the National Gallery in London, these important buildings were transformed into the tricolour of the French Flag after the attack on the offices of the satirical French magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris in 2015 after the publication of an Islamophobic image of the prophet Muhammad wearing a bomb instead of a turban. Turbans are predominantly worn by Sheikhs not Muslims. These cinematic acts globally were in solidarity for freedom of speech and liberal democracy against terrorism and oppression. After the invasion of the Ukraine the Russian Federation in 2022, public buildings were globally adorned with coloured light of golden yellow and blue in solidarity with the Ukrainian plight. The Israeli flag in 2023 was seen worldwide on public buildings after the attack by Hamas. Months later, after the displacement of most of the 2.3 million inhabitants of Gaza, the destruction of most schools, all universities, graveyards, administrative buildings and hospitals by Israel and many other genocidal atrocities, a projection of the Palestinian flag onto the Houses of Parliament drew criticism upon the police from media sources for not stopping it (Strudwick, 2024).

The co-opting of night-time interventions into the cityscape by commercial and state bodies demonstrates the impact that the cinematic mode of communication has on transforming how we relate to urban space. The urban imaginary in this cinematic mode with its post-cinematic affect extends the city in this mode and the affective reach of the cityscape as a medium of communication and signification. What we can see is that the détournement of the cityscape to form critique can be undone by the deterritorialization of these acts by commercial and state actors who have appropriated and remediated this approach to make it ubiquitous as part of the luminescent visuality of cityscape and within the fold of state and

commercial hegemony. The smart city as an affective networked screen that is shaped by neo-liberalism may require other approaches within the cinematic mode and the exploration of aesthetics to find new ways to ensure critique. Int the following section the work of London based British Asian artist Prem Sahib will be analysed to consider how the language of minimalism remediates the city in a cinematic mode to create a new sense experience of the city.

Minimalism Repositioned

Prem Sahib has a creative practice focused on spatialising queerness, to connect personal narrative to the experiential and broader queer sociological issues and histories. The language of traditional minimalism in art practice is invoked but transformed within the way Sahib frames and remediates the everyday. Sahib's practice has developed to exploit the potential and affective qualities of golden yellow in a range of sculptural and installation works. Sahib remediates golden yellow into encounters that play on making the familiar, extraordinary to create peculiarity and corporeal presence via the stark minimalist object aesthetic he fabricates. *Do you care? We do!* (2017), is an installation that takes the discarded lockers from an East London gay sauna and transforms them into art. The sauna at the edge of Shoreditch and Bishopsgate closed due to the redevelopment of this area next to the financial square mile of London, and partly due to the digital era of app and chemsex culture. The old, used blue and grey metal lockers that are commonplace stand in the white cube space of the gallery on low plinths in different configurations within the installation. They are now elevated and are no longer common lockers but as 'objet trouvre', they are now art as well as historical artefact and an archive of a lost queer space. They are like figures standing in a room, with some singular, others doubled, or triple aligned. They are not arranged grid like on the short plinths but do have minimalist orderliness. They seem to be in dialogue with each other and the absence of the human belies the humidity, heat, physicality, and passion of the original space, to the extent that it is then evoked as phantom. They carry their history from the site they were taken from: a patina of rusted mould on their backs from the humid atmosphere, they have scratches and bumps and stand open and unused as vessels. A crusty hand towel, signage, sexual health stickers, community information cards and other discarded items such as condoms and sachets of lubricant lie inside with the built-up grime of dirt and soap. The installation, that is now owned by Tate Gallery, has a lightweight suspended ceiling with gridded foam ceiling tiles and an erect floor-to-ceiling architectural column that resembles the original space and also

is redolent of the nearby office spaces of the financial square mile. Cold white light from above sterilises the scene. Some of the ceiling tiles have been removed and peeping through, a blue L.E.D. strip lighting loops above to break the linearity of the installation. The electric blue light has an intensity against the cold white light that draws the eye upwards to the cavity above. The heavens are evoked and those who have lost their lives to H.I.V. and also the loss of this queer space as a living, functioning part of East London instead of becoming memorial. A kitsch plaster circle relief featuring an ancient figure of a clichéd adonis adorns the wall to evoke the ritual of bathing and historical same sex desire. The bodily is evoked by large stainless-steel piercings penetrating into the object. A series of photographs of the abandoned space also document the space as memorial. In this work Sahib finds beauty in the mundane to reawaken the affective history of queer bodies and desire by aestheticizing the inverse in a glaring minimalism.

Resignifying the City as Queer

Sahib's series of works using the colour golden yellow remediate the use of this colour within the architecture of the cityscape to create an affective queering of public spaces using light. This colour and its use to reflect or refract light, or be made of light is explored throughout Sahib's practice. *Work that body yellow III (2013),* is an anodised aluminium and resin vertical rectangle that resembles a bathroom, or gym locker room mirror. It has an opaque reflective quality where a dull softened reflection bounces back to the spectator. It is covered in beads of resin that catch the light like dew drops to further evoke the body and play on the connotation of the presence and labour of the body in the pursuit of different forms of desire that are narcissistic, sexual or both. Yellow clearly connotates the corporeal, be it sweat, piss or non-white ethnicity.

Glory (2016) is a black beer crate suspended in a rectangular block of yellow resin, born from experience of seeing these crates used in piss-play in a sex club in Berlin. Affective intensity is relayed by the spectator moving around the object to experience it transformed and made more than its materiality, The geometry of the crate abstracts and refracts in the surface of the resin like a giant yellow crystal.

Sahib's use of the yellow light in the work *Liquid Gold* (2013 – present) explores how light within a space can create an affective experience to release new perceptions and transform relationship with the space. *Liquid Gold* (2013 – present) is a temporary artwork that takes different forms depending on the context of the space it is presented in. The minimal simplicity of Martin Creed's *Work No. 227: The light going on and off* (2000), and the

intention to use light to playfully antagonise the spectator is a line of experience that is found in this work by Sahib due to the intensity of the yellow L.E.D. lights. The intervention of the work and the relationship to the shifting context is akin to Daniel Buren's colour works such as *Catch as catch can: in situ,* Baltic Gallery Gateshead, UK (2018) and the use of natural light upon coloured architectural panels and also electronic light works to create détournement that changes the temporal relationship with a space and how we inhabit it. Sahibs '*Liquid Gold*' (2016 – present) started from an earlier experiment in the 'Whitecubical' gallery in 2013 of the now closed George and Dragon queer pub in Shoreditch, East London. It has been represented and remade in different contexts from the Phillida Reid Gallery in central London (2022) where the large windows of the gallery at night bathed the quiet narrow street in a gold light like something from a fairy tale. From the upper floor windows of the Grand Union gallery in Birmingham, UK located in a light industrial area, where the work radiates ominously like a science experiment gone wrong. In the Gothenburg Biennale (2023) the work was in the public space, replacing the usual advertising light boxes of an escalator, and filling the metal surfaces and reflective tiles of the site with an arresting golden light that intensified the space by removing the mundane extraneous noise of advertising and daily accumulated grime, to heightening and glamourising the mechanical aesthetic of the space with an uncanniness. The work was also installed in the Sharjah Art Foundation in the United Arab Emirates (2021). The formalism of the golden yellow L.E.D. light and the affective shifts of perception that colour can bring when intervening into a space connect it to the modernist language and canon of minimalism,

Sahib is able to remediate these codes to integrate other codes that are located in personal and social contexts: the queering of a space via the affective properties of the intense yellow light and Sahib's personal experiential narratives and contexts of gender, queer sexuality and being British Asian. The work bridges the formalism of historical white cube minimalism to be connected to social, cultural, and personal contexts, and this gives the work its power. Spaces are transformed by the affective impact of the work that create new temporal relationships within the city locations the work is installed. The work potentially shifts perceptions about how these spaces can be related to and inhabited. The affective intensity of the work creates new relationships of the beautiful to the space that queers the space to make it strange but is also strongly bound to a queer narrative. This public queering of space is significant given the international public and cultural contexts that the work has assumed. The contextual narratives of Sahib's work become elevated by

the public visibility of his work as architectural intervention in the cityscapes it inhabits. The formal affective qualities and the affectivity of social discourse that the work can create is where it transcends the canon of minimalism. The title of the work is named after a brand of 'poppers' solvent popular in the queer community for clubbing and sex, and it has a relationship to the packaging and also to the bodily.

Recently, for a solo exhibition at Phillida Reid gallery *Liquid Gold* (2016-) was reworked to take the form of a UK streetlamp that was installed into the gallery upside down to span two floors via a metal spiral staircase. A speech by the UK Conservative Party, Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, also a British Asian entitled *Alleus* (2023), which is Suella reversed, filled with hate about immigration was played backwards and transcribed by an electronic exciter machine to produce sound against the metal of the staircase frame spiralling around the lamppost and its golden light for a combined work entitled *What you need to know to get rid of these blood sucking parasites (in the form of a whisper),* (2023).

The hostile environment within the UK and the affective force of this within the mediascape is remediated into a new affective tempo as art practice and combined with the power of the yellow light. The ubiquitous lamppost and its amber light locate Sahib within the urban landscape of the UK and as a British Asian pushing back against Braverman and the politics of the Conservative Party. New affective intensities and narratives are created by Sahib as resistance and shift the meaning of Braverman's' original speech.

The endeavour of artists is to consider how affective aesthetics and intensities can be explored to engage with research into the imaginaries of the city. Artists contribute to the creation of critique and the formulation of new imaginaries that enter into cultural discourse and form resistance by sensory dazzlement and the bewilderment of art practice about the city and within the city and its multifarious contexts, stratifications, and temporalities.

Conclusions

The political apparatus will always work to modulate experience to serve the means of the ideology dominating production. Modulation of the subject sustains hegemonic control. Production can be taken as systems that produce the schemas of valorisation that create forms of capital and power. Subjectivities are formulated within a multitude of means of valorisation, to regulate and perpetuate ideological systems. Ecologies of valorisation central to capitalism are key to the modulation of subjectivity, but contra-ecologies of valorisation are also key to resistance against control. This thesis into the dazzlement of affects that create the image of the city and the subject, outlines that desire, and affect within the abstract machines of ideology are enacted through different types of labour within sense-making experience. This labour takes many forms to be affective, intellectual, material and machinic, as part of the rhizomatic valorised systems that create ontology. Desire and affect require various forms of labour to engage with them in systems of valorisation and are the key components of subjection. Emerging technologies adhere to ideological maintenance and increase the means to monitor and regulate, using desire tied to agency and the creation and flow affective forces from multitudes of sources. The spectacle of the city and the technological spectacle become increasingly enmeshed, and with this dominates the affective architectures of the city through increased luminescence and screen presence sense experience to change the city and the relations within the city. Technologies will move to keep or fold any emerging dissent into a marginal, peripheral position of minimised agency in society, and so the development of spatial and temporal control through urban planning regeneration of the built environment of emerging megalopolis cities squeezes spaces that harbour the potential for differential subjectivities into containable marginal spaces for disenfranchisement. Subjection of the differential identities that make up the precariat are seemingly disarmed or contained within these systems. With increased mediation of experience through the regulation of space, across virtual temporal space and physical spaces within the city, the eradication of conditions to formulate differential subjectivities or resistance to hegemony seems to be the objective of autocratic techno-capitalism. The deterritorializations of digital modulation operate virtually and materially within the changing fabric of the city's materiality and work through the rise of the networked L.E.D. The city as a screen is part of this techno capitalist drive to modulate sense experience. The rise of the occupation of the behavioural technologist within the big data digital era, and the rise of networked artificial intelligence works to produce computational hypermodulations that

shape subjection within the attention economy, (Citton, 2017). The city as a networked screen increases the reach of modulating the subject within digital surveillance through the valorisations of the spectacle. But the rhizomatic exchanges and experiences within social relations will, or can respond to the conditions of subjectivation to produce new power dynamics and relations in a process of what Deleuze calls counter actualisation.

The affective and virtual dynamics cannot be prefigured and are in flux, and the contingencies and potentialities that this opens up is where agency is against hypermodulation and control. Affective forces and desire work within the conditions of subjectivation to create differentials that can be responded to and develop further differentials of identity and experience. The contingency of social formulations and narratives that counter fascistic modulation in authoritarian techno-capitalism are tied to desire and affect. Desire and affective forces are the uncontainable and unquantifiable powers that form subjectivation, and within this quanta, is the point of resistance, and the push back to elucidating the ever-evolving problem of the deterritorializing modulations of techno-capitalism. These differentials will occur as the conditions of the city develop. Ideological narratives within the spectacle will always belie the stratifications present of differential subjectivities present within the city. These differential subjectivities are those who inhabit the city in different temporal and subjective experiences beyond those presented by centralised narratives. These identities are inhabited through a mix of circumstance and choice. The dazzlement of the post screen era and the ever-present digital image of surveillance in techno-capitalism within the computational city as a screen, insidiously creeps, but we should consider the liminal spaces of the city, and the practices within them as where forms of dissent and resistance emerge from.

New affective relationships, behaviours and practices emerge within the stratifications of the city and the social body. They take place in the spaces of city that offer communal exchange and they also take place in conjunction with online platforms, within social media communications that are visible, and also the supposed invisible online spaces of the darknet. These relationships and developing subjectivities have affective multiplicities that are transitive and become coded aesthetically through spatialisations within places, somatically, and also as conscious choices. The capitalist promises of liberal freedom and self-made subjective definitions are somewhat of an illusion in the reality of the precariat. Identity, therefore, becomes the site of agency within machinic enslavement, and differentials of aesthetics and affects create new codes. The interplay of spectacle, performing identity and expression takes place within the flows of affection. These relations take place to create an

oscillating tension between what is considered public and private, and the equivocation of what these states may entail. The convergence of a critical mass of practices, values and identities relating to desire and valorisation creates a recognisable force as a becoming of subjectivity. These factors converge as a social force when there is acknowledgement through visibility, reaction, and the creation of discourse of a subjective identity. Discourse creates subject groups and also subjection. This process of counter actualisation can work to remediate experience within the spectacle and resignify codes to create agency. The mapping of affect within the city becomes part of this process of production and contra actualisation manifested as critical, creative acts and inhabited in spaces within the city and performed subjective identities. Decentred subjectivities developed in subjection and become by circumstance, a resistance to hegemony. Historically, we see sub and marginal cultures appropriated or interpolated into the mainstream and with this the flow of important productive shifts in discourse and actions within the social body occurs over time when this happens.

The projection of the beliefs, lives, behaviours, and values that are a counterpoint to the norms of subjectivity that make up the dominant hegemonic norms, can also create affective drivers that gain cultural capital and can be valorised within their own system, before breaching visibility within more established platforms for subjectivity and discourse. The peripheral, alternative, and counter existences, views, and politics, must utilise the processes of social capital and the valorisation of affective labour for their own ends. The value system at work is a constructed one based on socialisation, so to offer up differential subjectivities will face a backlash of political or moral ridicule, negation, disagreement, and aggression, that accompanies any counterpoint, but it can also foster curiosity, debate, and genuine political movement. Engaging with the production of the spectacle within the machines that crystalise time and shape the temporal is to create subjectivities and flows of affect within the systems of social and capital valorisation. There is no outside of the system, just the peripheral, disenfranchised agency and stratifications within the system of the those who do not fit into narratives of the spectacle that are centralised and normalised. It becomes inevitable that a process of self-objectification is essential in order to create a narrative of performed subjectivity that can enter into the dialectical flow and form a dynamically affective community that becomes political by affective labour and the generation of social capital, political capital, and economic power. This agency happens in the places and spaces of the city, and these become the sites of subjectivation through exchange, movement, and action.

The increasing incorporation of technology into the cityscape turns the city into a vibrant screen. Affective shifts occur within the dazzlement of the networked L.E.D. cityscape that can be critically reinterpreted through creative practices. The development of techno-capitalism manifesting in the smart city brings changes to temporality and involves different types of labour that that shape subjectivity. Queering the spectacle through local and specific interventions within sites of a city, is an engagement with the materialits, contexts, cultures and people to be able to learn more about the city and its imaginaries. A considered, sensitive, and analytical approach to these specific sites of the city have much to offer creative practice. Creative practice can remediate the conditions of the smart city and offer resistance and agency to evolving modes of being. Mapping the varying tempos within the materiality and contexts of the city's spectacle offers a way to navigate and interpret the politics that construct and drive productive discourse it through an ongoing process of imaging the city.

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What the submission consists of:

A practice research project comprising of a written thesis and a digital film.

Link to the film Empire: https://vimeo.com/700243731/b82b50cb1a?share=copy