



ATTUNINGS:

Multilinear Ways of Thinking About, Making With,
and Sensing the World

A project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

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DECLARATION

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the project is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

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Hannah Brasier,

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXAMINERS

I See You, Grey Skies/Blue Skies, Sunny, Rainy, Foggy, and Sometimes I See Palm Trees, as the creative components of this research, can all be viewed from the USB provided.

Each project has its own folder where you will need to open the “index.html” file within each folder, in a web browser, to view each work. You will need to open these files in the Mozilla Firefox browser, as I have found other browsers do not support loading web pages locally from a computer.

Grey Skies/Blue Skies, Sunny, Rainy, Foggy, and Sometimes I See Palm Trees can also be viewed online from the following links:

Grey Skies/Blue Skies: <http://projects.hannahbrasier.com/grey-skies>

Sunny, Rainy, Foggy: <http://projects.hannahbrasier.com/sunny-rainy-foggy>

Sometimes I See Palm Trees: <http://projects.hannahbrasier.com/sometimes>

I recommend you view the works whilst you read the dissertation because this reflects the entangled nature of how writing and making weaved together throughout my research journey.

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ABSTRACT

This research project finds ways to make multilinear nonfiction and then considers ways to think about what this multilinear nonfiction practice does. This approach moves iteratively from the fragmented and relational qualities of the online network, the Korsakow authoring software, the essay film, and the list as ways of making interactive nonfiction, to ecocriticism as a way to understand what this practice does. *I See You, Grey Skies/Blue Skies, Sunny, Rainy, Foggy, and Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, as the creative components of this research, compose the world in fragments and soft relations which respond to multilinearity as a specific quality of the online network.

After developing a practice of listing to notice the unnoticed I find the ways ecocriticism and posthumanism think about the world as appropriate lenses to understand the projects I have made. I see particular affinities between how these fields think about the world as indeterminate and my own fragmented and relational practice. The understanding which culminates through applying these evocative lenses is a non-narrative audiovisual nonfiction practice which composes the world in fragments and soft multiple relations. I propose this practice thinks about and senses the world ecocritically.

INTRODUCTION

BEGINNINGS

I was introduced to the idea of multilinearity as a way to make media through creating multimedia websites, Korsakow interactive films, and blogs, although I did not understand this as multilinearity at the time. Through this making of media online, alongside more traditional practices of short films and essays, I gained an interest in whether the networked online environment requires a significantly different way to think about and make media. For example, when I created a multimedia website I sourced discrete images and pieces of text which I linked together by finding resonances. Likewise, a film I authored using the Korsakow software, *On Est Le Flâneur*, collects short videos of the streets, graffiti, a river, and buildings in Melbourne, and creates clusters of linked videos based on visual resonances of water, pattern, and colour (Brasier et al.). Over the past ten years I have maintained various blogs where I write individual posts and use tags to link posts together based on similar topics or ideas (Brasier *Hannah Brasier*). Making multimedia websites, Korsakow films, and writing blogs required me to think about media as individual fragments that can be linked together in multiple ways.

This research therefore began by asking, why and how does the online network invite a different approach to making and theorising audiovisual nonfiction? To investigate this question I have created four online audiovisual nonfiction projects, entitled *I See You*, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, alongside examining how the online network has been theorised and how it has been approached in other online audiovisual nonfiction projects. This development of a practice through what the online network offers and how my creative projects respond is what “Ways of Making” as the first part of this dissertation narrates. “Ways of Thinking About and Sensing the World” as the second part asks, why does this practice matter to software, practice, nonfiction, and the contemporary world? I did not begin this research with a defined practice or background in nonfiction audiovisual production. Rather, my approach aimed to find a practice through the particular affordances and theoretical frameworks of the online network and Korsakow. Hence, what this research offers is an in-depth understanding of how the online network and Korsakow offer a multilinear way to think about, make with, and sense the world.

Korsakow as Software

Korsakow is a piece of software for creating browser-based interactive audiovisual projects and was selected because the way the software maintains media in fragments, and offers multiple possible connections between parts, seems to rhyme with the sort of interaction which happens online. An interaction with a Korsakow project involves the selection of a piece of audiovisual media from a number of options made available on a webpage. In Korsakow, when we select a piece of media we are mostly uncertain about what options will be available to us next, and Korsakow has the ability to offer multiple options to each selection, each time. Online, a webpage gives us multiple options as links—in text, image, or video form—which lead us to new sets of content. Projects authored using Korsakow then parallel online interaction in some ways, because when we select a media link a new set of audiovisual objects become available, usually sharing subtle, or obvious, qualities and connections with what we previously saw. In “Ways of Making” I look at the specific qualities of the online network and Korsakow, to then consider how these qualities could inform the production of audiovisual nonfiction.

Ways of Making

I describe ways to make multilinear nonfiction through the first half of this dissertation, entitled *Attunings: Multilinear Ways of Thinking About, Making With, and Sensing the World*. I begin from a technological perspective by considering how multilinearity works online, then consider whether Korsakow truly allows multilinear making. Arising early in my research, the essay film and the list became ways of making interactive audiovisual nonfiction because they share qualities with the online network. The essay film and specifically Chris Marker’s *Sunless* became integral to the development of my practice, where the essay film’s often fragmented and tangential organisation of nonfiction images has particular resonances with the fragments of media we mostly experience online. Further, as *Sunless* can be read as a film which lists “things that quicken the heart”—a reference to Sei Shōnagon’s *The Pillow Book* from within the film—I soon came to realise how the list, along with the essay, maintains things in fragments and offers multiple possible connections between parts. The essay film and list offered ways for me to think about and make audiovisual nonfiction using Korsakow. I made my first creative project *I See You* and subsequently *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* to investigate the viability of the essay film and list for making audiovisual nonfiction online. Therefore, these essayistic and listing

ways of performing multilinearity in Korsakow are examined through these two projects and developed further in my two following Korsakow projects: *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*.

Ways of Thinking About and Sensing the World

While the first part on “Ways of Making” outlines the development of a practice from multilinearity as a framework, the second part considers ways to think about what this multilinear nonfiction practice does and why this matters. Throughout this research, finding these lenses through which to look at and understand my work has been the most challenging component. Initially, I looked to documentary film and interactive documentary scholarship as my theoretical frameworks, and these informed the making of *I See You* and *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*. Korsakow films are often nonfiction and are subsequently theorised, for the most part, as interactive documentaries. As I was collecting video images from the world and using Korsakow to organise this content, documentary film and interactive documentary seemed the most appropriate lenses at the time. I saw what I was doing with documentary content in Korsakow as offering a way to look at the world which did not simplify the messiness of what was out there into a finalised structure, and that is why I thought my practice mattered to the field of interactive documentary.

The mistake I was making here lay in the assumption that most interactive documentary attempts to find a way to perform complexity removed from the restrictions of having to offer a complete film. This lack of completeness mattered to me because the online network and Korsakow offer pliable and evolving boundaries with the potential for indeterminate projects to be made. Upon this realisation—that the field of interactive documentary did not have the theoretical frameworks to truly understand what I was making—I found I needed to look for lenses in less familiar scholarship in order to understand what I had made. In the fields of posthumanism, new materialism, and ecocriticism there is a call to consider the world and subsequently maintain the world in practice as: fragmented, relational, fluxing, dense, changing, and complex. As this research concludes and what the final half of *Attunings* narrates is how these particular affinities between multilinear making in Korsakow and the indeterminate world these posthumanists and ecocritics describe have come to matter the most.

“Ways of Thinking About and Sensing the World” then shows my divergence from understanding what I was doing as documentary to thinking about it

through more appropriate and evocative lenses. I begin with a discussion of the world, by theorists such as Jane Bennett, Kathleen Stewart, and Anna Tsing, as “knotted ... of vibrant matter” (Bennett 13), “plastic,” “dense” (“Atmospheric Attunements” Stewart 446), “indeterminate[,] and precarious” (Tsing 20). What these theorists propose is not simply a way of looking at the world but ways of attending to this world as the precarious and indeterminate place it is. To find more sophisticated ways to understand what my projects do, I reconsider the creative works I have made, particularly *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, through these modernist, eco-aesthetic, ecocritical, and posthuman lenses. Here, I see the affinities between the terms of multilinear making and concepts including Bennett’s “thing-power” (xvi), Stewart’s “atmospheric attunements” (“Atmospheric Attunements” 445), and Andrew Pickering’s “mangle” (xi). These resemblances attend to the world as fragmented and relational.

An Iterative Approach

The trajectory of this research has developed through a process of: writing responding to reading, responding to making, to a multilinear nonfiction practice and towards a way of understanding why this practice matters in the contexts which informed it, and beyond. Therefore, *Attunings* continually returns to my creative works again and again where each chapter offers a different theoretical lens to look at these Korsakow films through. This movement through chapters, from ways of making as multilinearity in the online network to Korsakow, to essays, to lists, and to understanding what I have made as an attendance to the world as fragments and relations through an ecocritical lens, has then been a truly iterative process driven by an approach with no defined teleology. This undefined teleology of not knowing where I would arrive at the end has allowed for “unexpected encounters” (Tsing 20), “emergent redefinition” (Pickering 582), and “new thought” to unravel (“*Ten Skies*” Panse 42), between myself, camera, software, and world. These moments of discovery, divergence, and redefinition are noted throughout this dissertation to show how this research shifted as I found more evocative ways to make and look at what I had made. *Attunings* develops an ecocritical way of thinking about, making with, and sensing the world that responds to the multilinear online network as a specific site for nonfiction practice.

PART ONE

WAYS OF MAKING

ONE

MULTILINEAR MAKING

This chapter sketches out what multilinearity is, largely from the perspective of interactive documentary, indicative of this field's influence in helping me understand what online networked new media was at the beginning of my research. In reference to the scholarly work of Adrian Miles (who widely advocated for Korsakow-authored interactive documentary ["Critical Intimacies"]) and Sandra Gaudenzi (who coined the term i-Doc [i-Docs "About"]), I will argue that multilinearity is a particular characteristic of thinking about and making web-specific audiovisual nonfiction. The writing below centres on online documentary multilinearity, where database, fragment, and soft relation are key terms in conceptualising what this is. While I consider these terms in relation to interactive documentary, mostly they are transferrable to any online networked practice.

Interactive Documentary

In beginning with an interest in how the online network opens up new ways of screening and viewing audiovisual media, I started this research by looking at what audiovisual nonfiction was online and how these projects were being theorised. My previous experiences using the Korsakow software (*Brasier*, *Close Up* and *Noticing*) led me to other Korsakow-authored films, commonly referred to as K-films. As most K-films are interactive nonfiction, they have been commonly theorised as interactive documentary by the likes of MIT's Open Documentary Lab and UWE Bristol's i-Docs project, which in an academic framework are the two leaders in digital documentary practice and scholarship in the anglophone world. The Open Documentary Lab lists Korsakow as "creating browser-based dynamic documentaries" ("Korsakow") and K-films, notably Florial Thalhoffer's *Forgotton Flags*, have been used as examples of the i-Docs group's "hypertext mode" of interactive documentary (Aston and Gaudenzi 127). My research expanded from looking specifically at K-films, which I will discuss in the following chapter, to projects considered as interactive documentary and how the networked online space was theorised by these two groups.

Over the past ten years the field of interactive documentary has been largely consolidated by the i-Docs group through its five i-Docs symposiums, its

"i-Docs Special Edition" of *Studies in Documentary Film*, and its recent *i-Docs: The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary* anthology. Gaudenzi, Judith Aston, and Mandy Rose, who co-founded and continue to run i-Docs, define interactive documentary as "any project that starts with the intention to engage with the real, and that uses digital interactive technology to realise this intention" (1). The "real" for i-Docs is a "shifting concept, which lends ... many twists and [further] possibilities to Grierson's 'creative treatment of actuality'" (Aston, Gaudenzi and Rose 1). When I began this PhD I projected that the creative works I would make and the research I did around them would contribute to the field of interactive documentary. I projected this because I intended to film what was out there in the world and use Korsakow as my "digital interactive technology" to realise this intention (Aston, Gaudenzi and Rose 1).

In reference to the potential of new digital technologies, the Open Documentary Lab and i-Docs respectively suggest technology can "enhance the documentary project by including new voices, telling new stories and reaching new publics" ("About") and create a "dynamic relationship between authors, users, technology and environment that allows for fluidity, emergence and co-emergence of reality" (Aston and Gaudenzi 135). I saw these propositions by the Open Documentary Lab and i-Docs as correlating with my own interest in Korsakow's affinities with the online network, and saw potential in what these affinities might offer audiovisual nonfiction production.

New Media

Lev Manovich describes new media as happening when "graphics, moving images, sounds, shapes, spaces, and texts become computable" (20). So, I begin by questioning whether new media technologies truly offer new ways to think about and make documentary. While Gaudenzi affirms that the "evolution of the so-called new media has created new opportunities to document reality" (37), Miles does question how "synonymous" these emerging interactive documentary projects are "with the deeper implications of the network as a site of practice, a site that produces its own habitat and ecology of media artefacts" ("Affective Ecologies" 81). In the context of this research, I will argue that multilinearity is one of these "deeper implications of the network" which offers an opportunity for audiovisual nonfiction to be "synonymous" with the network (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 81).

As I look at multilinearity as a quality of the network which offers something to documentary, I echo Miles's approach to look at "what new media scholarship might offer documentary, rather than the point of view of documentary and wondering what 'new' media offers it" ("Sketch Notes" 205). This chapter, which describes what multilinearity is, builds on the significant work undertaken by Miles that sees granularity, faceted relations, and multiplicity as "deeper implications" of the network (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 81). As I did not really have a documentary practice to start this research with, multilinearity evolved as a framework to develop my practice from and this is why Miles's research, which looks at new media first, is particularly relevant.

Databases

Jonathan Harris and Greg Hochmuth's *Network Effect* is an example of what the Open Documentary Lab calls an "interactive collage" of visualised data ("Network Effect"). The data visualised in the project includes videos, tweets, news headlines, qualitative graphs, and audio which respond to 100 human behaviours, including to give, dance, marry, pray, hug, push, shower, rinse, relax, and tie. *Network Effect* can be described as an interactive documentary in relation to Aston, Gaudenzi, and Rose's definition because information from the online network provides the "real" content which networked algorithms organise and make available to us (1).

In the opening screen of *Network Effect* these behaviours flow across the centre as text-based links. Once you select one of these behaviours, you are sent to the predominant screen of the project, which consists of horizontal menus across the top and bottom of a window with a montage of videos taking up the larger centre portion, and a soundtrack plays which responds to the particular behaviour you have selected. For instance, if "listen" was the behaviour you selected, you would see videos related to listening and hear a soundtrack of voices that mention "listen" including: "I'm not listening to", "listening is my escape", and "I listen because". Accompanying these vocal fragments would be an ambient soundscape of a heart beating that continued constantly as you explored different aspects of the project.

In this main screen of *Network Effect* the top horizontal menu predominantly consists of the list of behaviours as text links in alphabetical order. The bottom menu provides links to online data on brands, genders, news, people, reasons, usage, and words related to the particular behaviour you have selected. For

instance, in the case of “listening” these bottom menu links might show you: that 51 percent of people who mention listening are females; that the usage of the term “listening” has fluctuated over time; news headlines about listening; the number of people “listening now”; tweets which include the word “listening”; and a list of synonyms for “listening”.

If you select one of these links in the bottom menu of *Network Effect*, you will be taken to a new screen which lists this particular category of data. Some of this data is updated every hour as new content is contributed to the internet and fed into the project (Harris and Hochmuch, “Epilogue”). For example, if you were to select one of the tweets related to “listening” a new screen would open showing a list of “definitions of listening” sourced from Twitter feeds from the beginning of 2016 until now, where new tweets related to listening are added hourly. This ability for the project to accumulate data, have multiple screens, and allow a viewer to access data within these screens, via links, is what makes this project specifically networked. *Network Effect* provides a good example of how multilinearity performs online because the project “mirrors the experience of browsing the web” (Harris and Hochmuch, “Epilogue”); we read, watch, scroll, and select text, video, and sound content.

You can navigate through different pieces of media and different screens in *Network Effect* because data, information, and audiovisual content are not edited into a fixed sequence unfolding over a particular duration. Rather, links from one piece of media to another are programmed to be made available in the various menus, where it is your actions that make connections in selecting various links. The spatial arrangement of menus, links, video content, and data in *Network Effect* is called the interface of interactive nonfiction. *Network Effect* has multiple interfaces because the spatial arrangement of media on the screen changes as you select new links. For instance, with the “listening” behaviour described above, the interface changed from a list of text-based links to two horizontal menus with video in the centre to a list of Twitter-sourced definitions. *Network Effect* as a data visualisation project consists of individual pieces of media content provided to users to explore in various ways through what is made available via its various interfaces.

Most online interfaces work in a similar way to *Network Effect* in offering links, as either text or media thumbnails, which allow users to select new interfaces of different content. The screens of the network offer multimedia components that link together via thumbnails and allow multiple pathways through content.

Manovich describes making media online as the “construction of an interface to a database” (226) “of items on which the user can perform various operations” (219). Manovich considers making in the network as significantly different to making traditional media because an interface must be made so as to allow access to content (37). These databases, as Miles notes, are “list[s] of information” where interfaces “enable us to find new things in different ways and relate items in different lists” (“Affective Ecologies” 72). To navigate the online network, viewers become users because they must make actionable relations, between screens and media, by selecting links and thumbnails, and so they open new interfaces of information through this navigation.

Fragments

The data of *Network Effect* is the tweets, videos, gender data, and news headlines sourced from Twitter, YouTube, Google Books Ngrams, and Google News (Harris and Hochmuch, “Epilogue”). This data, such as tweets, is self-contained because the text-based originally 140 and now 280 characters or fewer exist separately as individual pieces of media. This individuality of media fragments is exemplified in the interface of *Network Effect* which shows a list of “listen” definitions sourced from Twitter, where the fourth tweet says “listening is just as important” (@MelitonCornell). If you were to select this tweet you would be transported to M Cornell’s Twitter page in the Twitter social media application (app). On this page, “listening is just as important” is positioned in a pop-up, in the centre of the screen, surrounded by links which invite you to reply, retweet, like, follow, copy link, and embed. If you were to select the link saying “M Cornell” you would be taken to a profile which listed all the tweets this user had posted. If you were to select a tweet which stated “prioritize things that matter” from this screen, a new pop-up would open centralising this particular piece of text (@MelitonCornell). All tweets published on Twitter are self-contained pieces of media because they each have their own URL and interface, meaning they can be linked to from various sources.

Other social media websites work with these self-contained fragments as well, where along with tweets each status update on Facebook, image uploaded to Instagram, video uploaded to Vine, document written in Google Docs, and post added to a blog generates its own URL, making each piece of media online individual, and therefore separate and distinguishable from others. While each tweet, status update, image, video, document, and post is added to the profile

or site of whoever authored it, they do not accumulate into a cause-and-effect narrative about this person, because a user might arrive at any fragment from any number of directions. Unless media is deliberately automated, each piece of social networked media provides an insight into, or fragment of, what a person was doing, or thinking about, at a particular time. For instance, we do not need to read all of M Cornell's tweets to understand "listening is just as important" or "prioritize things that matter". These tweets as fragments of online networked media make sense in themselves as they are, and it is how a user arrives at this particular piece of online data which implicates the context of the media.

Gaudenzi, Andrew Murphie, Matt Soar, and more notably Miles and Andreas Treske all affirm how the online network can maintain media as fragments. Gaudenzi talks of a "fragmented aesthetic ... where coherence is not given by authorial narrative but by the journey of the pro-sumers" (189). Murphie proposes that one of the "most enduring effects of digital and networked (signal-based) media has been to fragment media forms" (189). For Soar, "it is self-evident that any non-linear or multilinear narrative, regardless of the medium, must be built from smaller, discrete components" ("Making (with) Korsakow" 161). And for Miles and Treske there has been a significant shift in the editing paradigm from traditional to networked video production. Miles notes how the network maintains the granule and Treske describes this granule, in the context of online video, as a clip. According to Miles, a medium is "highly granular if it is made up of small parts that are self-contained to the extent that they make sense by themselves as is" ("Affective Ecologies" 74).

Even though Twitter retired the Vine app in late 2017, it provides a pertinent example of how fragments function and mostly proliferate online. Vine was an app you downloaded onto your smartphone to film videos, where the app determined the constraints for this filming; your video could not exceed six seconds and would be filmed in a square aspect ratio. Once you had finished filming, you would share your video through the Vine app to your profile, where you could add a caption and tags. From your profile, your Vine would loop continuously and be added to a feed of Vine videos that played automatically as you scrolled through them. Vine videos could only be recorded with your phone and were predominantly viewed through the app on handheld devices. The granules of Vine are the videos of up to six seconds which contain up to three shots, where each of these Vines can be viewed individually from others and make sense as discrete media objects.

Treske talks specifically of Vine emphasising a “practice of use of small short units, or shots, or clips” where each Vine is a clip because it is the “smallest possible element or item for video as moving image” (Treske 22). In other words, the smallest piece of media we can view on Vine is a video of six seconds or fewer, shared by a user to their profile, and if you follow this user their Vines appear in your feed. While these Vines may consist of multiple shots, we cannot break these down further within the Vine app system. The maintaining of these clips as “smallest possible element”, or what I will term fragments, is what Miles describes as a significant shift from linear filmmaking to networked video production (“Affective Ecologies” 71). A linear film is made up of smaller parts (shots) and these parts are edited into a fixed whole, whereas a networked online video work or system such as Vine maintains the granularity of its parts. As the network can maintain granularity, then small parts, fragments, or clips matter to multilinear video production. While apps such as Vine, Instagram, and Snapchat insist on the interconnectedness of their parts through practices such as tagging, they do provide examples of fragmented online video making because they put durational constraints in place which favour the maintaining of video as granule, and the connections users make between pieces of media do not edit them into fixed wholes.

Soft Relations

Viewfinders

Another example of a nonfiction project which uses the implications of the network to accumulate and display media fragments in an interface is Gerda Cammaer and Max Schleser’s *Viewfinders*. Unlike *Network Effect*, which collects and accumulates online data as “real” content through algorithms, *Viewfinders* invites users to upload videos which become the documentary content for the project (Aston, Gaudenzi and Rose 1). This content is 50-second or fewer tracking shots of travel visualised as a landscape filmed from the inside of a moving vehicle. This durational constraint dictated by the project reflects the online tendency of apps such as Vine to maintain media in short fragments. Once a contributor has uploaded their video to *Viewfinders*, they are asked to add metadata including GPS coordinates, time, tags that describe “key characteristics”, mode of transport, tracking shot direction, and orientation to the clip via an online form. These clips and their metadata are then added to the project. *Viewfinders* is described by Cammaer and Schleser as a “collaborative

travel film project" which combines mobile media making, the essayistic travelogue, and new technologies ("*Viewfinders*" 63–74).

Upon entering *Viewfinders* the interface shows a world map plotted with symbols of different transport icons, a vertical menu on the left-hand side listing six "key characteristics"—"water", "day", "calm", "busy", "nature", "urban"—as transport ticket thumbnails, and above this menu a section stating the city and country where the clip currently playing was filmed. From this interface, you can open a clip by selecting a mode of transport thumbnail on the map or one of the ticket thumbnails in the left-hand menu. For instance, if you were to select a thumbnail of a bus located in Iceland, a new interface would open with a clip filmed from inside a bus showing the sun setting in a small snow-covered village. The left-hand menu would then change to only list the ticket thumbnails of what this particular clip was tagged with: "day", "nature", and "calm". The top menu would read "Siglufjörður" with "Iceland" below it, along with information telling you the clip length, mode of transport the clip was filmed from, what the video was filmed with, who it was filmed by, and the option to "begin journey". If you selected "begin journey" you could move through all of the different tracking videos contributed to the project. If you selected a particular ticket thumbnail such as "nature" you could move through the clips that are all tagged with "nature". Or you could navigate via the map by selecting a new transport symbol thumbnail. In *Viewfinders* there are multiple ways to navigate through the different tracking shots of travel and, as more clips are added through more contributions, the project will continue to expand and change.

An implication of clip fragments in networked video production is that media can have multiple possible relations to other media, allowing a user to access content in various ways. Miles describes the extent to which a media fragment can have "many faces of possible connection" as "facetted relations" ("*Affective Ecologies*" 75) and Treske talks of media fragments as LEGO pieces which "can assemble into any kind of shape or spatial object" according to the particular ridges that allow one piece of LEGO to clip into the next (22). Treske calls these LEGO pieces or online video fragments "temporary items" because we can use the same building blocks in new configurations to create new things all of the time without fixing these compositions together permanently (22).

The clip fragments in *Viewfinders* provide "facetted relations" of "temporary items" because, when interacting with the project, you can create different and new relations between the content blocks. For example, you could connect all of

the videos which share the same tag together via selecting the ticket thumbnails, or connect all of the videos of the places you have visited by selecting various transport thumbnails on the map, or you could select "begin journey" and move through the different videos randomly, or realistically you could perform any combination of these different connections. In *Viewfinders* clip fragments are "faceted" because you can view any clip in relation to any of the other clips depending on how you decide to interact with the work (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 75). These compositions of particular clips are "temporary" because user interactions do not fix these particular clips together permanently; rather, each experience offers a different composition (Treske 22). As new clips are continually added to the project via contributions, these multiple possible relations will expand. This tagging system of *Viewfinders* mimics the tagging which takes place online, where giving a particular online media fragment multiple tags allows that fragment to be accessed and viewed in multiple possible contexts.

Quipu Project

Likewise, Maria Court and Rosemarie Lerner's interactive documentary *Quipu Project* uses a tag-based system to provide multiple possible relations between audio fragments. The audio content is testimonies from mostly indigenous rural Peruvian women who were forced, without consent, to be sterilised during the government's reproductive health and family planning program in the 1990s (Court and Lerner "About"). These stories are visualised in the interface of the project as individual Quipu lines which you are told, in the introduction to the project, are "knotted strings used by the Incas and Andean civilizations to keep records [and] thought to have been used to tell stories through the generations". These knotted strings are shown in the main interface of *Quipu Project* as individual lines with multiple coloured dots along them protruding from a semi-circle, where each line is a selectable link to open a voice recording of a particular woman's story. A menu tells us that each dot on the Quipu lines represents a different theme, where yellow is "the sterilisation programme", red "the operations", blue "the life after", and green "looking for justice". These themes, as some of the menu options of the project, provide different modes of navigation through the audio fragments and allow multiple possible relations between testimonies.

Like *Viewfinders*, *Quipu Project* contains media fragments and invites faceted temporary relations, as these fragments can be linked together in multiple

ways in every experience and revisit. For instance, if you were to select “the operations” menu link, all of the other coloured dots would disappear, leaving you to interact with the red parts of each line which indicate the particular part of a woman’s testimony where she discusses the sterilisation operation. This theme-based navigation allows you to listen to the various ways these women describe the different aspects of their stories. There is an “all testimonies” menu link as well which provides access for you to listen to each individual testimony as a whole individual recording. Further, another option within the menu is to listen to the “responses” which have been contributed to the project via a “take action” button located in a small menu at the top of the browser window. Similar to *Viewfinders*, although less significantly, users can add content, which allows *Quipu Project* to continually expand. The interface of *Quipu Project*, which consists of menus, lines, and coloured dots as selectable links, allows you to browse the project in multiple ways without fixing the connections you make together permanently.

Faceted Temporary Relations as Soft Relations

As *Network Effect*, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project* invite faceted temporary relations between their fragmented parts, they can be conceived of as soft, because the relations between media parts are not predetermined by the authors of the work, nor fixed into static, unchangeable compositions through user experience. While *Network Effect*, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project* provide frameworks for viewing and navigation through their particular interfaces and clip metadata, there is a degree of pliability to them which allows them to be composed in indeterminate ways depending on user-contributed content (*Viewfinders* and *Quipu Project*) and user decisions (all projects). I consider “soft” to be an appropriate term to describe these works because there are variable degrees of pliable indeterminacy about what relations can take place between discrete audiovisual elements. A project is soft when new versions of the project can be made temporarily through each and every user interaction.

Network Effect, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project* can all be described as evolving due to their pliable boundaries that expand either according to user-contributed content (*Viewfinders* and *Quipu Project*) or through algorithms feeding data into the project (*Network Effect*). We can see this evolving quality in *Viewfinders* when Schleser and Cammaer note that the project “effectively produces itself, emerging organically without intervention in the form of shared conventions across the footage” (“About”). Likewise, Court and Lerner note that the themes

in *Quipu Project* evolved out of what the “Quipu participants chose to speak about” (“About”). *Viewfinders* and *Quipu Project* are soft because a user comes to the interactive documentary and makes different configurations between its parts, while nonfiction content is contributed and the project grows. *Network Effect* evolves in a different way whereby algorithms mine data from the internet and add media automatically into the project, allowing it to expand hourly. *Network Effect*, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project* embrace the malleability of networked practices where media fragments are continually added and new links are formed in indeterminate ways. In these interactive documentaries there are very few predetermined relations between parts, nor is the content itself fixed.

Fixed Relations in Cinematic Nonfiction

The soft relations performing in these interactive documentaries contrast to the type of relations which take place between shots in linear audiovisual work. In Marker’s *Sunless*, Chantal Akerman’s *News From Home*, and Joris Ivens’s *Rain*—three of the key film examples I use throughout *Attunings*—cinematic screens require the relations between shots to be fixed together into a film which runs for a certain duration and according to a particular pace. For instance, in *News From Home* panoramic images of people waiting at subway stations, cars traversing, and the buildings of New York City are fixed together in a film running for 86 minutes. A slow pace is achieved through these long shots because we are not moved from one particular shot to another rapidly; rather, we are asked to contemplate a particular scene for an extended period of time before the edit moves us on to something else. The duration of *News From Home* emerges through Akerman’s selection of and decision about how long the shots to be included in the film will be. Marker, Akerman, and Ivens provide you with their content to watch, a pace to follow, and an amount of time to watch these images for.

Of course a viewer can rewind, pause, stop, and fast-forward a film to change the duration and pace when watching on a DVD or a streaming service. However, the film has been made with the expectation that a viewer will make sense of its parts by viewing it from beginning to end in its prescribed order. In saying that cinematic nonfiction is fixed, I do not imply that films, including *Sunless*, *News From Home* and *Rain*, lack interpretative or open qualities. I have very deliberately chosen these films to look at because repeated viewings invite a viewer to notice new detail and connections, and each is open to multiple

interpretations. With the interactive audiovisual projects I have described, a notable difference with linear production is how a user has the ability to contribute content and order fragments at their own pace, making the duration and experience of the work indeterminate. Soft indeterminacy is a distinctively networked implication of making audiovisual work online.

End

Network Effect, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project* as well as apps such as Twitter and Vine provide examples of how the network offers multilinearity. Multilinearity as a way to make audiovisual nonfiction, in fragments and soft relations, encourages users to experience media in multiple ways. Further, because these projects and apps allow content to be continually added, their boundaries extend and, in doing so, the possible relations which can take place between their parts also expand. *Network Effect*, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project* can be considered interactive documentaries in light of Aston, Gaudenzi, and Rose's definition because they "engage with the real" and use "digital interactive technology to realise this intention" (1). In *Network Effect* online data related to different behaviours is realised through network-based algorithms, in *Viewfinders* places of travel are realised through an augmented reality interface, and in *Quipu Project* the voices of the sterilised women of Peru are realised through an online interface. These projects specifically matter to my research because they offer pertinent examples of "what new media ... might offer documentary" (Miles "Sketch Notes" 205) as they use the specifically fragmented and relational qualities of the network to realise their nonfiction idea. While this chapter has argued that multilinearity is the specific milieu of the online network generally, what I will consider next is, to what extent do fragments and soft multiple relations operate in the Korsakow authoring software? Korsakow was selected as the authoring software for my creative outputs due to the specific ways it implements multilinearity, similar to the online network.

TWO

KORSAKOW AS MULTILINEARITY

My understanding and use of Korsakow is largely informed by and builds upon the research of Soar and Miles, specifically Soar's "Making (with) the Korsakow System" and Miles's "Materialism and Interactive Documentary: Sketch Notes". In this chapter I propose that in Korsakow fragments are the clips which show video content and soft relations are formed through a process of pattern making. Consequently, I argue that soft relations in K-films allow them to unravel indeterminately between maker, software, and user. I view my use of Korsakow, to iteratively develop a multilinear nonfiction practice, as a furthering of the work of Soar and Miles because, like them, I am looking at how we make from what Korsakow offers, in light of its parallels with how the online network operates. In this way, the projects which make up the creative component of this research have truly evolved iteratively through using Korsakow to think about fragments and soft relations in the development of interactive nonfiction. This chapter applies Soar's and Miles's theorisations of Korsakow to the K-films I have made and, in doing so, considers the extent to which I have used Korsakow to enable fragments and soft relations. From this I ask, how useful is Korsakow in developing an audiovisual nonfiction practice from networked multilinearity?

Korsakow as Authoring Software

Korsakow is a piece of software which allows you to author online interactive audiovisual works without programming skills. These works are described as K-films and the majority of the films made with Korsakow use video as their media fragments, although most encompass audio and still images as well. While the video projects made using Korsakow may not fit neatly into what we commonly consider film, I use the terms "K-film" and "film" to describe these projects as this is consistent with those who have already theorised and made Korsakow projects ("Korsakow Film"). Korsakow can be used to author documentary, experimental film, and narrative; however, the software has almost exclusively been used to make nonfiction. To author a K-film you import media fragments into a project, prescribe particular rules (to dictate how these fragments can possibly relate to each other), design an interface, and export the project as an HTML file. You can then open and interact with this HTML file in a browser window and further upload the project online via a web server.

Interface to a Database

The video fragments of *I See You*, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, making up the creative component of this research, are made available to a user, in each work, via a currently playing video and a set of three thumbnails displayed in the interface of a web browser. The interfaces for all of these K-films show the playing video and thumbnails as the same size displayed in a list-like line (fig. 1). This equal design in the interface is different to the majority of current K-films, which tend to have a larger currently playing clip and a set of smaller thumbnails, as thumbnails and playing videos in Korsakow can be a range of different sizes. This preference for equal-sized audiovisual fragments in the interfaces of my K-films emerged through a practice of listing, where, as I will discuss in the “List” chapter, each item is relatively equal. These equally sized fragments contrast to K-films such as Florian Thalhofer’s *Forgotton Flags*, a documentary about the flags Germans left in their front yards after the 2006 Soccer World Cup, that opens with an interface showing a large rectangular currently playing video taking up two-thirds of the screen and six variously sized thumbnails taking up the other third. As there is a white background above and below the playing video and thumbnails, and no space between these elements, the interface looks almost identical to a letterbox presentation of a film. Across the body of K-films made there is a large variety of interface designs in terms of number, positioning, and size of playing video and thumbnails.

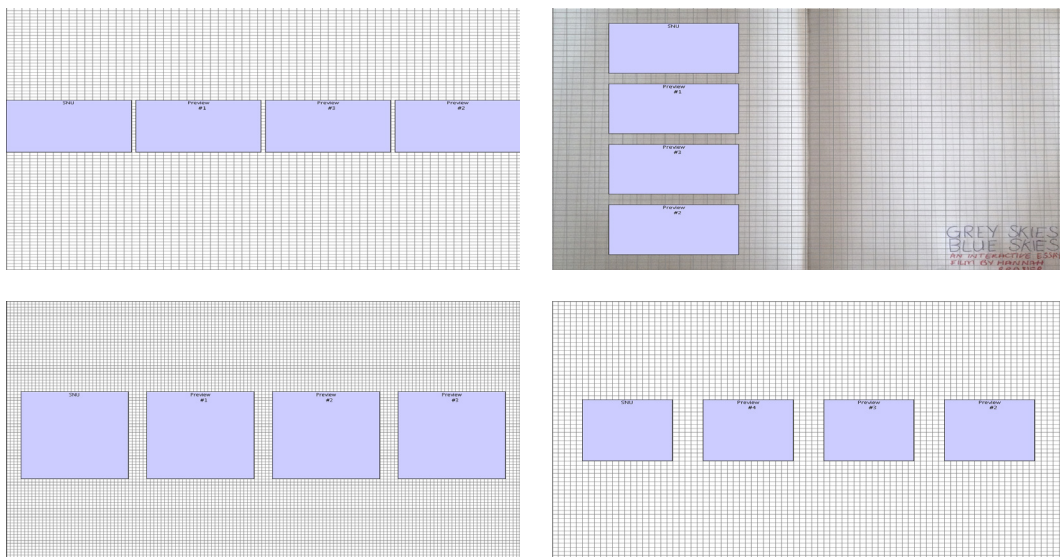


Fig. 1 The list-like interfaces of *I See You*, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*. The SNU is the playing video and the Previews are the thumbnails.

A K-film can have multiple interfaces as well, where the placement of currently playing clips and thumbnails can change in terms of how many there are, placement on the screen, and size. For instance, in *I See You* four interfaces are used because the position of the currently playing video moves between the first, second, third, and fourth positions on the list (fig. 2). I designed these four different interfaces in this way because I wanted to draw a user's attention towards the different lists of animals, faces, crowds, and images posterised in the "zone", which I noticed more so than others in *Sunless*. As you will notice in figure 2, when you are in the animal list the video plays from the first position, faces in the second, crowds in the third, and "zone" in the fourth to invite the user's awareness towards these lists. In Soar's *Ceci N'est Pas Embres*, which diarises his family's six-month stay in the south of France, there are more-noticeable interface changes where the size of the currently playing clip and thumbnails, the number of thumbnails made available to a currently playing clip, their position on the screen, and the background image all change frequently. What is consistent across all video-based K-films is that they contain a database of media fragments which are made available to a user, via an interface or interfaces, and include a currently playing video and a set of thumbnails.

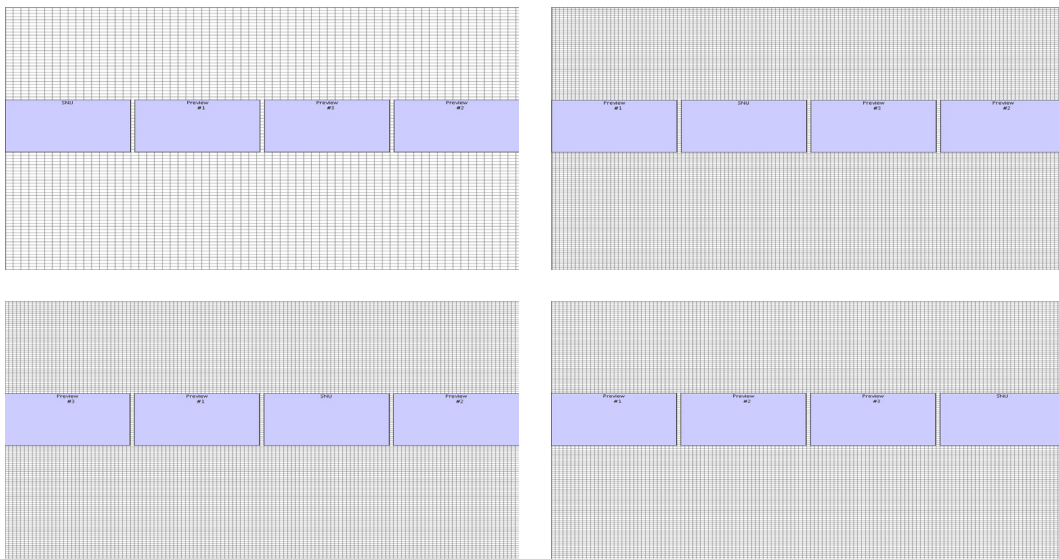


Fig. 2 The four interfaces of *I See You*, where the playing video (SNU) moves position in each interface.

If we consider K-films as a collection of media fragments accessed by a user via an interface, then K-films largely reflect Manovich's key understanding of new media "as the construction of an interface to a database" (226). The clips in a K-film provide a collection "of items" and the interface allows "the user

[to] perform various operations" (Manovich 216). Unlike *Viewfinders* and *Quipu Project*, which evolve as users contribute content, K-films have been described as "closed" by Gaudenzi (italics in original, 49). Gaudenzi considers K-films to be "closed" because the audiovisual material which makes them up is fixed to the number of fragments the author has decided to include at the time when the interactive film is published to the web (italics in original, 49). As I discuss in more detail shortly, "closed" may be too harsh a term to describe K-films because it is relatively easy for an author to add content, change rules of navigation, export, and then upload this newer version to the web (Gaudenzi, italics in original, 49).

Like *Network Effect*, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project*, a user of a K-film can make decisions about what they would like to look at and listen to through interacting with an interface. However, unlike *Viewfinders* and *Quipu Project* a user of a K-film cannot contribute content as part of their interaction. Gaudenzi theorises these two different ways of interacting with a web documentary as hypertextual (users navigate through content) and participatory (users can contribute content) in her "modes of interaction" (italics in original, 18). For Gaudenzi, these different modes provide "ways of conceiving the relation between users and digital content; they give different levels of agency to the user and they set the parameters of the interaction between the users and the interactive artefact" (18). In other words, Gaudenzi's interactive documentary modes describe to what extent a user has agency in navigating and adding content to a nonfiction project.

In the hypertext mode, Gaudenzi considers this relationship between user and interactive documentary to be "exploratory" because a user navigates through a reality which is given to them and where the rules of navigation are already decided (121). For Gaudenzi, the participatory mode gives more "agency to the user" because they can explore through content that is already there and "then can choose to add content", what Gaudenzi describes as a "configurative" relation between user and artefact (56). Out of my examples *Viewfinders* exemplifies this participatory mode the most because a user can interact with the travelling videos already added to the map interface and are invited, via the online form, to add content as well; these additions of content continually configure and evolve the project in different directions. Gaudenzi's hypertext and participatory "modes of interaction" (italics in original, 18) provide two ways that interactive documentary facilitates different "set[s] of relations" between the "author, the user and the media" (38).

In K-films audiovisual content is decided upon by the author and does not change within an interaction of a film. A user operates a K-film by selecting a thumbnail from the interface provided to them which opens a new currently playing video. Consequently, a new set of thumbnails opens for the user to select from which might be contained in the same or a different interface. Unlike *Network Effect*, which links externally to the Twitter application as discussed in the previous chapter, the thumbnails provided in K-films can only link to audiovisual media which is internal to the project. With the introduction of Korsakow 6 you can now link outside of a project; however, as my K-films and the K-films I refer to, apart from Thalhoffer and Berke Baş's *Planet Galata*, were made predominantly using Korsakow 5 I will discuss Korsakow in the context of what was available to do in its fifth version. In terms of multilinearity, this limitation of Korsakow 5 does implicate the creation of truly faceted relations, as the fragments of the project cannot be seen in relation to other fragments made by others online, which might to a greater extent continually shift the context and allow the project to evolve.

However, Thalhoffer and Mahmoud Hamdy's *Love Story Project* prove that K-films can have evolving qualities, where the film begins by interviewing people from Berlin and Cairo on the topic of love, later growing to include interviews from Singapore, Ireland, Israel, and the United States, and "every now and then new interviews are added" ("*Love Story Project*"). This unfinished potential of new media documentary is discussed by Patricia Zimmermann and Helen De Michiel as offering projects "without boundaries or endings" (8). I argue this ability for a K-film to change and evolve as new content is filmed, added to Korsakow, exported, and published online affords K-films a "configurative" quality (Gaudenzi 56). Further, you can feed user-generated content into a K-film, so there is nothing to say it cannot be participatory either.

Clips as Fragments

I See You, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* all consist of a set of video items which span one minute or less. Apart from *I See You* all of the clips which make up the databases of these projects were filmed by me using an iPhone camera, and for *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* I used the Vine video app for filming. As Vine videos can only be filmed in a square aspect ratio, the fragments of *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* are square as opposed to rectangular. Unlike the other projects, which are either silent (*I See You* and *Sometimes I See*

Palm Trees) or contain diegetic sound (*Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*), *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* includes a voice-over narration which reads diary entries. This voice-over is not connected to the clips; rather, it plays continuously in the background and is not influenced by a user's decisions.

I See You has 37 clips, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* has 60, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* 40, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* is an ongoing project which at the time of writing has 86 clips. *I See You* is what I consider a precursor test film, as it consists of clips showing faces, animals, and crowds selected from Marker's *Sunless* as opposed to videos I filmed myself. The clips of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* combine observations of movement and stillness in natural and urban environments, along with fragments of my body walking and waiting. *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* consist of similar content accumulated through a daily practice of filming, in Europe for *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and predominantly in Melbourne for *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*. The content of *I See You*, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* can largely be described as observations of everyday occurrences, travel, weather, environment, and landscape.

While all of the clips in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* are single six-second shots filmed with Vine and imported raw into Korsakow, the other films I have made consist of edited sequences and in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* every clip is a sequence. Throughout these K-films the sequences either show different perspectives of the same thing or accumulate a particular visual detail or item in their multiple shots. Sequences which show different perspectives of the same thing predominantly occur in *I See You* and *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*. For example, there is a clip in *I See You* showing different angles of maneki neko cat statues at a temple and in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* a clip shows the same bedsheets blowing in the wind shot from different angles (fig. 3). *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* predominantly includes either sequences of a thing or visual detail repeating in its numerous forms, whereby a clip showing five shots of different autumn leaves (fig. 4) and a sequence accumulating the movement of lights at night-time (fig. 5) provide examples of these two different types of repetition respectively. Whether as sequences or individual shots, the clips of all these K-films pay attention to visual qualities, either leaving this detail as is, as in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, or repeating it in an edited sequence. This attention towards discrete visual qualities of movement, stillness, light, colour, tone, and reflection is what I later theorise as visual aesthetic noticing.



Fig. 3 A sequence of bedsheets blowing in the

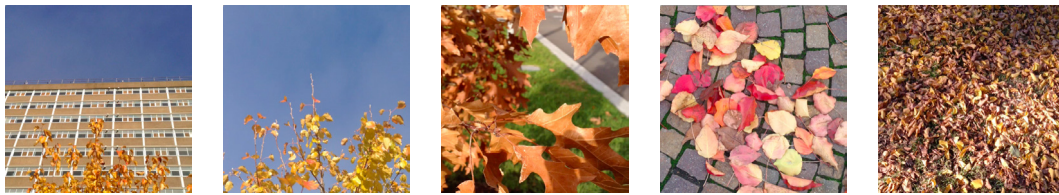


Fig. 4 A sequence of autumn leaves from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

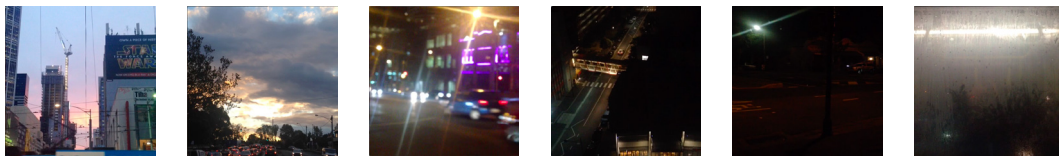


Fig. 5 A sequence of lights moving at night from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

Simply describing things, such as the number of clips each of my K-films has, shows that Korsakow invites a way to work with video which is significantly different to how you would edit a film with software such as Premiere Pro. In some ways Korsakow is restrictive because you cannot cut a clip into smaller parts, nor is there a timeline for you to structure your shots into edited sequences. Korsakow then should not be considered editing software because you bring your assets into the system, which can be individual shots or pre-edited sequences, and once in Korsakow these clips are referred to as SNUs (smallest narrative unit.) As evidenced already in relation to my own work, these SNUs can vary in number and duration, where Soar notes that typically the clips of a K-film have “durations of 1–2 minutes, with films being comprised of anywhere from a dozen to over a hundred SNUs” (“Making (with) Korsakow” 162).

Granules in K-films

While the video content of my three later K-films largely observes visual detail, in urban and rural environments, through an everyday practice this is not

indicative of the norm for K-film production. Similar to my films are the SNUs of Soar's *Fibonacci 2*, where everyday objects of plates, baskets, clocks, and fans are framed as semi-circles spatially arranged in the interface as a Fibonacci spiral. Miles's *Fragments* is observational as well, where the 57 clips show lakes, mountains, and skies, with the occasional clip of people interacting with these environments as well. In contrast Thalhfer, as the inventor of Korsakow, has created a large body of collaboratively authored K-films where the audiovisual fragments mostly consist of interviews with people responding to a particular topic or place. For instance, in Hamdy and his *Love Story Project* each clip shows a talking head of a person discussing love, and in Baş and his *Planet Galata* the clips show edited portraits of the people who live on Istanbul's Galata Bridge, and the clips of Kolja Mansing and his *13th Shop* show interviews along with reflexive montages of Thalhfer living at a shopping centre for 31 days. Short film narratives, interviews, animations, human gestures, portraits, and archival materials provide the range of nonfiction styles utilised in K-films.

While the clip fragments of a K-film can take numerous forms, there is an emphasis on maintaining granularity throughout the body of films authored with the software. The clips of *Love Story Project* and *13th Shop* provide examples of this granularity, where longer interviews are edited into short fragments of singular ideas. For instance, in *Love Story Project* you may see the same woman in the same scene discussing cheating, her body reacting differently to her mind, and her being afraid to talk openly as a woman, in three separate distinct clips. Similarly, in *13th Shop* you see the same people appear in the same context in numerous clips, such as a woman discussing someone's body hair and in another clip reminiscing about a festival she went to. These, along with the majority of the other clip fragments in *Love Story Project* and *13th Shop*, are obviously longer interviews which have been edited down by Thalhfer and his collaborators into distinct individual ideas prior to being imported into Korsakow. Both of these examples show how granularity performs in a K-film whereby each clip fragment does not specifically rely on any other coming before or after it to "make sense" (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 74). This granularity is important to K-films because they have varying degrees of indeterminacy in how the clips can relate to each other. As an author, you cannot completely know how the fragments will become available to a user and how the user will make selections from what the software offers to them. Granularity matters to Korsakow because the software promotes a way of making audiovisual nonfiction which leaves the relations between clips soft.

Degrees of Indeterminate Relations

In *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* the relations between each clip are soft because connections are generated between clip, interface, software, rules, and user in the moment of interaction. This softness occurs right from the beginning of *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* because any clip from the database can play first and is generated by the software in the moment when a user opens the film. As established, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* consists of six-second Vine videos and the interface shows four equal-sized square videos across the centre of the screen, where the first one is the playing video and the next three are thumbnails. While there are rules in place mediating what thumbnails can become available to any playing video as I elaborate upon below, the Korsakow software variably chooses which three thumbnail clips will become available for the user to select from. The user can then choose a thumbnail from the three made available to them and the video linked to the thumbnail they selected will start playing.

If, for instance, a user of *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* watches a video of scattered pink clouds and the software selects a grey sky through a window, clouds hovering over the ocean, and tree branches cast against a grey sky as the thumbnails, then the software is selecting three out of a larger set of options. In *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* this set of video options is far greater than the three thumbnail positions, meaning that what the software selects to be thumbnails is indeterminate. Further, as each clip can be viewed an indefinite amount of times, meaning there is no defined ending to the film, softness occurs because the software can provide a different set of three thumbnail choices every time this clip is selected and reappears as a playing video. Similarly, if a user returns to interact with *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* different configurations of clips across the interface will be shown, producing a new version of the work for every interaction. Korsakow films such as *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* are soft because new versions of the project are composed temporarily through each and every user interaction. The ordering, pace, and duration of all of my K-films are not predetermined and fixed by me as the author nor by the user in their interaction.

K-films can have different degrees of softness depending on how you implement the rule-making principles available to you in Korsakow. This application of rules to clips is described as "SNUifying" by the Korsakow community. Soar describes "SNUifying" as "adding metadata to each short film including keywords, probability, lives, etc., and then refining this assemblage based on repeated viewings and test screenings" ("Making (with) Korsakow" 163). Soar's use of the

phrase “short film” here refers to the clips imported into Korsakow to include in a film and emphasises the granularity Korsakow relies upon; each clip should make sense in and of itself as is. Importantly, a user who interacts with a K-film cannot see any of this metadata, meaning the rules which govern the work generally remain invisible to the user.

This invisibility of the metadata makes K-films distinctively different from *Network Effect*, *Viewfinders*, and *Quipu Project* as discussed in the previous chapter, because in all of these interactive films the relations between audiovisual parts are visible to the user. In *Network Effect* the list of behaviours link to data and media that are directly related to a particular behaviour, while in *Viewfinders* the thematic ticket thumbnails and locations on the map directly lead to content tagged with that theme or located in that place. In *Quipu Project* the menu tells you that the different-coloured dots of yellow, red, blue, and green along the Quipu lines relate to “the sterilisation programme”, “the operations”, “the life after”, and “looking for justice” respectively. In the case of these projects, the interface tells the user the particular resonances and relationships that the media assets have with each other, which in turn guide their experience of the work. This telling of what the relations between clips are does not happen when the user experiences a K-film, leaving them to imagine or think through what the relations between clips are. The degree to which the rules may become apparent to a user varies across the body of K-films depending on what the rules between clips are and a user’s own experiences.

Making decisions about what possible relations your clips can have with one another, how likely it is that your clips will appear in the interface, whether or not a clip will start or end your film, and how many times a clip can repeat or be rewatched are the decisions Korsakow offers to you as an author of a K-film. In turn, these authorial decisions alter how soft a K-film is. If softness alters according to the degree to which an author makes predetermined decisions about the relations between clips, then defining a start SNU and end SNU provides a simple example of how a K-film can vary in degrees of softness. A K-film without predetermined start and end SNUs is arguably more soft because the clip which starts the film is variable on each and every viewing of the film. In relation to degrees of softness in a K-film, Soar notes “Korsakow filmmakers have at their disposal a vast conceptual narrative space, between (and sometimes including) the poles of absolute linearity and complete randomness” (“Making (with) Korsakow” 163). Or, as Bettina Frankham notes in reference to interactive documentary more generally, the “issue becomes one of finding the

balance between offering a definitive, unquestionable single pathway at one extreme and presenting a loose collection of raw *documents* at the other" (italics in original, 145). When making a K-film, the decisions you make in the SNUifying process alter how indeterminate your film is. In the K-films I have made for this research, the relations between clips are hidden from the user, soft, and indeterminate, so the software and the user both have a significant amount of agency in deciding how the film will be composed.

Possible Relations

In *I See You*, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* the software has agency in deciding what thumbnails will be made available to a currently playing clip. These decisions the software makes are mediated by the rules I have prescribed in the SNUifying process. The main part of this SNUifying process is to designate "in" and "out" keywords to clip fragments, where "in" keywords describe a clip and "out" keywords search forward for clips with matching "in" keywords. For example, each clip in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* has keywords which describe its visual qualities as "in" and "out" keywords, where the four keywords of "movement", "light", "shape", and "colour" have been attributed and distributed across the clips in the database. If in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* a clip has "colour" as an "out" keyword, then what can appear in the three thumbnail positions is any clip that has "colour" as an "in" keyword. Further, clips can have multiple "in" and "out" keywords, so a clip with "colour" and "light" as "in" and "out" keywords could be found by and searches for any clip with "colour" and/or "light". In Korsakov "in" and "out" keywords dictate what the software can provide as thumbnails.

Across my K-films, the collection of clips the software can select from to take up thumbnail positions is constrained from the whole database of clips by my decisions. Yet the pool of clips the software can potentially select from always exceeds the three thumbnail positions. For example, a clip showing views of mountains in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* has 42 possible connections, which are mediated by this fragment having "light" as both "in" and "out" keywords. In a particular user experience, this clip of mountains playing might have the roof of a blue house, a shadow cast on brown flats, and a flashing forty km/h sign as thumbnails (fig. 6). As this mountain clip has "light" as both "in" and "out" keywords, these three thumbnails have been selected by the software from the pool of 48 clips with "light" as an "in" keyword, because as previously noted "out" keywords search for matching "in" keywords.



Fig. 6 A possible interface of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, where the first clip of mountains is the playing clip and the following three are thumbnails

As the software always makes a small selection out of a larger pool, what will appear as thumbnails is always highly indeterminate upon each interaction. In contrast, if a K-film had three thumbnail positions and only three clips with “light” as an “in” keyword, then the same three clips would always appear as thumbnails every time this mountain clip played. Indeterminacy in what will become available to a user next, and in every experience of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, is an integral component of the particular multilinearity which K-films afford, yet can be utilised to varying degrees depending on how you use your keywords and design your interface.

Repetition and Probability of Korsakow Fragments

Your choice as an author about how many times a clip can repeat or be rewatched in a K-film further implicates how indeterminate the relations between clips are. In Korsakow you can program a clip to reappear one to five times before it is unable to be viewed again. Alternatively, you can program clips to always reappear during a user experience. If only one appearance is prescribed to a clip, then once it is selected from the thumbnails and played, it will not reappear in any interface. In contrast, a reappearing clip will always be available to an interface as a thumbnail to be played again. Apart from *I See You*, every clip in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* can reappear indefinitely, where each clip always has the possibility to reappear and to be seen in relation to a vast range of other clips during a single interaction.

This vast range of potential relations which can occur between clips can be seen in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*. For instance, when I edited the sequence which shows concrete steps, brown water flowing down a gutter, a tram door, a dog lying on a wooden deck, and floorboards with a shadow of trees blowing in the wind, I was clustering vertical lines as a quality which reappeared in all of

these shots (fig. 7). While this clustering of vertical lines may not be immediately apparent to the user, it may become apparent when the clip is seen in relation to other clips which show distinct shapes, and this is why this clip has been given “shape” as one of its “in” and “out” keywords. However, because some of the shots in this sequence show shadows as well, “light” has been attributed as an “in” and “out” keyword also, which could invite the user to notice the light qualities of the clip. I say “invite” because, as noted previously, Korsakow does not make visible in the interface that these particular things have been grouped together because they all share light or shape; rather, it is in the repetition of these qualities that a user’s attention may be drawn to particular resonances depending on their own engagement with and noticing of the clips.



Fig. 7 A sequence of vertical lines from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

This sequencing based on visual similarities is not unlike the associational form of more traditional forms of filmmaking, because *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* does “juxtapose different images” to “guide our emotions and to arouse our thinking” (Bordwell). However, an exception in the case of this K-film is that, as the author, I do not know what visual qualities will occur and potentially repeat before the user opens and plays this clip of vertical lines. What a user attends to in a soft K-film depends on what clips the software has provided as thumbnails, as well as what the user has previously viewed in their current or previous interactions.

If this clip of lines repeats in a user’s experience of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, light and the vertical visual qualities of the clip may become apparent, as the software provides new thumbnails and a user begins tuning into the abundance of light and shape in the work. As I will discuss in the following chapter, it is the abundance of particular things in Marker’s *Sunless*, in conjunction with its essayistic qualities, which drew me to the film and by which my K-films were informed and made. This invitation to notice particular visual qualities as they resonate throughout makes the experience of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* one of composing with bits of the world. While the rules of the work encourage attention to light, colour, movement, and shape, as these qualities are abundant, the user’s own noticing guides them, weaving their own patterns and producing

new compositions of parts. As *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* provides users with the opportunity to see clips again and again in different constellations, an invitation to notice and compose with these visual qualities of the world forms.

In contrast to my other K-films, *I See You* as a precursor test film has limits on how many times a clip can reappear and certain clips are more likely to appear than others. In *I See You* clips of faces, animals, crowds, and images transformed in what the female narrator calls the "zone" from Marker's *Sunless* are clustered into "in" and "out" keyword pools of "face", "animal", "crowd", and "zone" respectively. Each clip in the animal, crowd, and face pool can reappear two times, while the zone clips can reappear indefinitely. In addition, the probability of a zone clip appearing is less likely than all of the clips in the other pools; a zone clip is only likely to appear after clips in the face, animal, and crowd have played twice. An imagined user experience with *I See You* might look something like them navigating from animals to crowds, returning to animals, to faces, to crowds, to arriving in the zone. These limits on how many times a clip can appear were put in place to reflect that what I noticed in *Sunless* was limited to the images Marker included in the film. Further, I lowered the rating of "zone" clips because they are less prevalent in *Sunless* than images of animals, faces, and crowds.

Allowing indefinite reappearances and lowering the probability of "zone" images appearing in *I See You* mean the majority of the animal, crowd, and face clips will be watched and then disappear because they can only be viewed twice. As a user experience with *I See You* concludes, the user may be left in a looping circle of images from the "zone" if they stay with *I See You* long enough, an ending because these indefinitely reappearing zone clips, with only "zone" as "in" and "out" keywords, will continually loop among themselves via user interaction. This prescribed ending to *I See You* responds to the end of *Sunless* where the final sequence is a montage of earlier footage visually reinterpreted in the electronic synthesised environment of the "zone". The synthesised nature of these "zone" images encourages this sort of endless looping because they are images which exist as memories to be reinterpreted again and again. Once you have "entered the 'zone'" in both *I See You* and *Sunless* you no longer see any other images and the film ends (Marker). *I See You* is then more predetermined than my other films because I know more-or-less when and how the work will end and that clips in the "face", "crowd", and "animal" pools have finite relations with other clips because they can only appear twice. *I See You* is unique within my creative projects because this repetition of zone clips provides what could be described as an ending to the K-film.

K-films and Narrative

While none of my K-films have a specific clip to start or conclude them, some K-films do have a certain linearity that guides a user from a beginning through to an end. Soar's *Ceci N'est Pas Embres*, for example, has specific start and end SNUs (where a visual map of the structure of his film is shown from his article "Making (with) the Korsakow System" [164]). These start and end SNUs encase a narrative where clips are "story fragments" documenting Soar and his family's experiences in their six-month stay in a small village in the south of France ("Process/Processus"). The clips in *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* can be considered "story fragments" because, for the most part, each clip is an edited sequence which narrates, generally via a voice-over, a particular observation, thing, or event which happened in the village in a form similar to a short story ("Process/Processus").

In conjunction with having start and end SNUs, Soar has attributed other rules and images in the interface design which visualise the structure of the film to a user. In *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* every clip can only appear once, the probability function has been used to lower the chance of particular clips appearing, and there are a small number of clips in each of the keyword pools to provide thumbnails. In this way *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* provides an example of how you can use Korsakow to make a multilinear diary film which follows a particular chronology. This chronology of *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* proceeds from "early impressions" in winter through to "negotiations/discoveries" in spring and to "settled/reflective" in summer, because of the SNUifying decisions Soar has made ("Process/Processus").

Soar has created this seasonal structure for *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* through a clustering approach to his keyword design, where every clip except one in each of the seasons has the same "in" and "out" keyword, indicating these clips can only search for and find each other. The one-clip exceptions in each seasonal cluster provide a bridge or what Soar describes as a "pinchpoint" from one season to the next ("Process/Processus"). These "pinchpoints" have the "in" keyword of the season they are in with an "out" keyword which searches for the next season. For example, the clip which "pinchpoints" from winter to spring shows a video collage of people opening and closing their windows, so this clip has "winter" as its "in" keyword and "spring" as its "out" keyword, allowing a user to move from one season to the next. Soar has lowered the rating of these "pinchpoint" clips as well, to make them less likely to appear than the other

clustered clips. This lowered probability invites a user to see most of the other clips in each season before moving on. Once you have moved from one season to the next, you cannot return to the previous season because of these closed keyword clusters.

Like other K-films, the keywords of Soar's film are not made available to the user; however, Soar has interfaces with background images in place which do visually prompt the user to notice they are entering a new season. The most explicit of these images is a composition of two photographs of a vineyard side by side. In the first photograph the vineyard is leafless and "winter" is scrawled across the top, whereas in the second photo the vineyard is lushly green with "spring" scrawled across a blue sky. These visual markers in *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* invite users to explicitly see they are moving through the seasons of Soar's family's stay in France. Due to these decisions, the user's journey through *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* is guided by Soar, who wants them to follow the chronology of his family's time in France, so the experience of the work is not unlike reading someone's diary.

Open Documentary Lab describes *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* as a "database diary" because each clip can be considered a self-contained diary entry and, in an experience from start to end, the user is invited to notice how things change and attitudes shift through the seasons ("Ceci N'est Pas Embres"). While we may open and watch a clip we have not seen before in a seasonal cluster, the narrative of Soar's "pursuit of creativity and ... attempt at self-reinvention" follows the same chronology ("Process/Processus"). The world which Soar creates is then reasonably determinate because, if we were to return to the film, it would unfold similarly. This approach Soar has taken with *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* reflects Gaudenzi's hypertext mode of interactive documentary where the "amount of options given to the user makes sure that all the important points of the story will be visited" (Gaudenzi 51). This chronological approach conceives of *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* as a "database diary" because it invites the user to tap into the distinct moments and follow the personal journey Soar's family experienced in France (MIT Open Documentary Lab "Ceci N'est Pas Embres").

Linear and Random K-films

By looking at video-centred nonfiction films made by others with Korsakow alongside my own work, it is easy to see how a range of different types of films

emerge, from Thalhoffer's largely interview-based nonfiction to Soar's personal diary and to my own largely observational work. In all these films there is a degree of indeterminacy, with constraints in place via metadata which invite particular types of experiences for the user. I describe my K-films as sitting somewhere in the middle of being completely soft, where any clip can connect with another, and being completely linear, where only one clip can precede and follow.

On the one hand, in a linear K-film each clip would have its own individual "in" keyword, while its "out" keyword would link to only one other clip, creating a chain of single relations; there would be the same number of keywords as clips. On the other hand, a completely soft K-film would have the same singular "in" and "out" keyword attributed to every clip, which would indicate to the software that every clip within the database could possibly connect to any other. The way these K-films perform would be quite opposite, where in a linear K-film only one thumbnail option would be available for a user to choose from and in a random K-film all clips within the database would be made available at all times. Of course, to make this completely random K-film an author would have to design the interface to have the same number of thumbnail positions as clips included in the database of the project. Therefore, numerous types of projects can be made using Korsakow, although to make a multilinear K-film there has to be a degree of indeterminacy to allow soft relations to form between fragmented parts. As multilinearity is a "deeper implication" of the network I am working within, Korsakow is a piece of software which allows the creation of multilinear audiovisual nonfiction, as long as you maintain soft relations between its heterogenous parts (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 81).

End

I See You, Grey Skies/Blue Skies, Sunny, Rainy, Foggy, and Sometimes I See Palm Trees are K-films which are "synonymous" with multilinearity as a "deeper implication of the network as a site of practice" (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 81). These K-films are soft because the software and the user both have significant degrees of agency to compose different versions of the work with the bits of the world provided. The clips rely upon granularity because each fragment shows either one thing or one thing repeated. They are relational because each clip has possible connections to numerous others and variable because what clips will become available to the user next is indeterminate and changes as the playing clips repeat. These projects reflect the network's multilinear affordances

by enabling fragments and soft relations because “shots and sequences can now vary, and from any particular moment some extent of the virtual possible other shots and sequences is made available via an interface, procedurally, or programmatically, to the viewer” (Miles “Affective Ecologies” 72).

While Gaudenzi proposes that systems like K-films are “closed” because they do not open up beyond themselves, I argue that a soft K-film always invites different indeterminate compositions with the world (*italics in original*, 49). These indeterminate relations occur when neither the user nor the author know what clips will appear as thumbnails or that these thumbnails will change when a particular clip is selected to play again. Therefore, K-films made with a larger pool of clips than thumbnail positions for a specific keyword have a higher degree of indeterminacy because the software has agency in selecting what to show. On finding that K-films can open indeterminate spaces, I started to research other nonfiction forms that might offer fragmented and relational experiences for the viewer. This was an attempt to find suitable nonfiction comparisons for the multilinear indeterminacy offered by Korsakow.

THREE

ESSAY FILM

My search to find suitable comparisons and ways to make multilinear nonfiction began with Marker's *Sunless* and expanded to the essay film more broadly when I discovered this form privileges an indeterminate and uncertain knowing of the world. I saw potential in the fragmented and indeterminate relations between images and voice in the essay film to test the affordances of Korsakow to make fragments and soft relations as the qualities of the multilinearity. Timothy Corrigan's *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker* and Laura Rascaroli's *The Personal Camera: Subjective Cinema and the Essay Film* are key texts that have shaped what I understand the essay film to be. While the rapid pace of *Sunless* flicks us through the images of the world, Akerman's *News From Home* lingers longingly on the people, streets, and buildings of New York City. What these two essay films have in common is their use of the letter to organise the thoughts of the essayist. After viewing a range of essay films, I decided to look closely at *Sunless* and *News From Home* to compare how they utilise similar qualities towards quite different viewer experiences. In this chapter I discuss how the essayistic qualities of *Sunless* and *News From Home* informed the making of *I See You* and *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* to see whether the essay film offers a way of making multilinear nonfiction.

Sunless and News From Home

While you are watching everyday occurrences in Japan, Guinea-Bissau, the Cape Verde Islands, Iceland, Paris, and San Francisco, a female voice-over reads letters she has received from an enigmatic traveller who talks of his experiences in these places. These letters largely reflect upon memory and time, where filmic representation, travel, conflict, war, and nostalgia are reflected upon as well. Near the beginning of *Sunless* the voice-over notes, "I will have spent my life trying to understand the function of memory." The letter in *Sunless* fragments the thoughts a cameraman has about time, memory, and perception in the places he visits. As *Sunless* explores and makes complex subjective encounters with multiple public spheres, it has been widely acknowledged by Corrigan and Rascaroli, along with Nora Alter, Paul Arthur, and Phillip Lopate, as a hallmark of the essay film form.

In *News From Home* a slow pace is achieved, as few edits interrupt the extended and lingering shots Anne-Sophie Dinant fittingly describes as relying on “slow observation” (52). Similar to *Sunless* a voice-over reads letters to accompany the visuals. The letters are from an anxious mother writing to her daughter, who has moved from Belgium to New York. We can safely assume this daughter is the filmmaker because one of these letters begins with “Dear Chantal”. Through these “slow observation[s]” of the city, we neither see Akerman in the images of New York nor hear any of Akerman’s letters in response. The daughter’s elusiveness in *News From Home* creates a characteristically destabilised essayistic self.

As the voice-over of *News From Home* reads intimate letters from Belgium and the images show New York, the words and images of *News From Home* feel almost separate, a typical quality of Akerman’s work. This distance between voice-over and image, as well as place and time, marks another significant component of the essay film which *Sunless* emphasises as well. These spaces between elements invite the viewer to think with the essayist as they reflexively think in and about the world. Does this emphasis on opening space in the essay film offer an opportunity to think about and create fragments and soft relations in Korsakow-authored multilinear audiovisual nonfiction?

Multilinear Affinities

In the fragmented letters and spaces offered between voice, image, time, and space in *Sunless* and *News From Home* I saw affinities with making multilinear K-films. Still using my lens of documentary to find a way to help make and think about multilinear audiovisual nonfiction, I saw potential in the fragmented and relational implications of the multilinear form for the essay film to be re-realised online, particularly considering that multilinearity is a form Marker has embraced in works like his interactive multimedia CD-ROM memoir *Immemory*. In *Sunless* and *News From Home* the visualisation of thinking, destabilised subjectivity, experiences of place, and openness of form operate to situate these films as essays.

The essay film is defined by Corrigan and Rascaroli as a documentary hybrid presenting thoughts and ideas filtered through a strong subjective voice. Corrigan defines the essay film as having a “tripartite structure of subjectivity, public experience, and thinking” (63) and Rascaroli as “the expression of a personal, critical reflection on a problem or set of problems” (32). As an essay

film is organised through the thinking of an essayist, there is a looseness of structure and softness of form which have affinities with the multilinear qualities of Korsakow. *I See You* and *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* were made to see whether the affordances of multilinearity in combination with qualities of the essay film could enable the creation of essay films in Korsakow. This chapter discusses what happened to essayistic qualities when re-realised through the fragments and soft relations of multilinearity in the making of *I See You* and *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*.

Fragmented Thinking

The visibility of thinking is considered a distinguishable quality of the essay film by Corrigan and Rascaroli, although thoughts never materialise in a straightforward way. Corrigan uses Richter to propose that essay films make “visible the invisible world of concepts, thoughts, and ideas” (qtd. in Corrigan 63) and Rascaroli notes that the “authorial ‘voice’ [of the essay film] approaches the subject matter not in order to present an ostensibly factual report (the field of traditional documentary), but to offer an overtly personal, in-depth, thought-provoking reflection” (33). The female voice-over in *Sunless* reads the letters she receives from a travelling cameraman introduced by the phrases “he told me”, “he wrote me”, and “he described me”. While this may appear straightforward, there are moments in the voice-over when it is “unclear whether she is voicing independent thoughts ... or whether she is merely continuing with the reading and relaying of the letters” (Bruzzi 68). These multiple modes of address, conveyed through the content of the letters and the narrator, are indeterminate in *Sunless*, because it is unclear whose thoughts are whose and it is difficult to locate these thoughts as no “body” is given to either of the characters. While Rascaroli suggests the thinking done in the essay film must be through a “singular authorial voice” (33), I argue that Marker makes his authorial position unclear in *Sunless* as it is indeterminate and multiple.

As essayistic thinking happens reflexively in the voice-over, Corrigan notes how these tangential, unsure, and hesitant thoughts often “shape and direct the film ... complicating traditional narrative” (30). In *Sunless* the ordering of images take us from the crowded streets of Tokyo to the villages of Guinea-Bissau. Sometimes the images shown are guided by the thoughts in the voice-over, other times there does not seem to be a clear connection at all. For Stella Bruzzi the images of *Sunless* are “usually linked by a random association rather than causality” (71). While the relationship between images may not be causal, I question whether they are truly random as they are ordered sequentially

together through editorial decisions, presumably in an essayistic sense to allow Marker to think tangentially through the world he had filmed. Further, in the voice-over the use of letters provides a structure where there is a lack of causality from one letter to the next, as the letters exist independently in what could be considered a granular form.

The relationship between letter and image functions quite differently in *News From Home* because the letters do not respond to or reflect upon the locations we are seeing in the images. While the images present a seemingly aimless wandering around the streets of New York, the letters are filled with anxious interrogations. The letters *Sunless* and *News From Home* use realise thinking in fragments, in *Sunless* as a set of musings and in *News From Home* as a set of worries from far away. While themes repeat in the letters of both films, there is no narrative gluing the letters together into a story about something. Thinking in the essay film is most directly realised in voice-over, while the essay film's images are organised into an often "analogously fragmented and unstable" structure in response to this destabilised voice (Corrigan 31).

For *I See You* I excerpted video images of faces, animals, crowds, and the posterised images of the "zone" from Marker's *Sunless* and made them clips for the K-film. As I was interested in what multilinearity could offer the essay film and how it could further the essay film's key aims, I started thinking about how *Sunless*'s already fragmented images and segmented voice-over would translate into a networked form. I was required during this editing of *Sunless* to remove the sound from the clips, otherwise only a nonsensical fragment of the voice-over would be heard. As *I See You* heavily repeats faces, crowds, and animals in clustered groups, the user is invited to think with me as I thought through the recurring visuals in *Sunless*. The user thinks with me because they are encouraged, via the clustering of similar clips and movement of playing video along the interface, to notice the abundance and categorisation of faces, crowds, animals, and "zone" as explicit similarities between these pooled clips. When I viewed *Sunless* these were the visuals I noticed more so than others, so the user is encouraged to see this and perform the same categorisation I did through their interaction.

In this multilinear K-film, the user thinks with me through the choices they make in a process Miles describes as "notice, decide, do" ("Affective Ecologies" 79). A user must look at the interface in front of them, decide upon a thumbnail, and select this thumbnail to choose the next video. This process then repeats. If the

user does not select a new thumbnail, the K-film stops. So, the user's thinking shapes the audiovisual work along with me as the essayist who has selected the set of clips and provided rules which invite the user to notice what I noticed. In response to user decisions, the software generates thumbnails framed by my rules. This dispersal of thinking between the essayist, the user, and the software develops a thinking for multilinear nonfiction which differs from that of the linear essay film. The user actions their thinking through the decisions they make in response to the software, which in turn composes the film indeterminately in each and every experience.

While thinking in *I See You* becomes evident in the patterns of the work and the interface design, it does not articulate thinking in a voice-over, as I removed the voice-over from *Sunless* and did not add my own. In response I made *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* as an attempt to find an essayistic voice as voice-over within the multilinear affordances of Korsakow. In conjunction with adding a voice-over, I designed an alternating rhythm between stillness and movement simultaneous with upbeat and downbeat alternation, as a way to think through the footage and then as the rules to organise this footage. I achieved this concurrent alternating rhythm by designating each clip with two opposite "in" and "out" keywords in Korsakow. For instance, a clip that is still and upbeat can only search for clips that move and are downbeat, and vice versa. Therefore, the pattern of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* formed through me looking at my images and thinking reflexively about what feelings they evoked.

In *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* thinking is spoken in diary entries, which share the granular qualities of the letter because there is no direct causal relationship from one entry to the next; each entry attempts to think through an idea which might be quite different to what preceded or comes next. As no dates, times, or titles are deliberately spoken in the voiced entries, what results are short, fragmented, and note-like realisations of my thoughts. An example of this thinking through diarising is when I voice concern "about my images not reflecting me", referencing Cecilia Sayad's *Performing Authorship: Self-inscription and Corporeality in the Cinema* to unpack this concern. In the act of diarising to think through this idea, I realise that what we see, choose to film, and include in our films "is not necessarily what another person with a similar objective would select to represent what they see" (Brasier *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*). The diary entries read in the voice-over of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* demonstrate this essayistic tendency of privileging and making the process of thinking visible.

Even though these diary entries of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* are recorded into a 20-minute voice-over which continuously runs through independently of a user's interaction with the clips, the experience of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* is indeterminate because the relations between clips are soft. As the user can create different associations between the clips, they can make their own connections between the voice-over and images of the film. *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* is shaped by the user's decisions as mediated through what the voice-over says, the clips show, and the possible connections between clips which constrain what the software decides upon as thumbnails. An implication of multilinearity on the essay film appears to be that we can no longer consider essayistic thinking to be expressed by a "singular authorial voice" (Rascaroli 33). Multilinear essayistic thought occurs between essayist, user, and software.

An Ambiguous Self

While a strong subjective presence is commonly evident in shaping an essay film into a fragmented form, this self is often complicated. As Rascaroli notes, "all these [essayistic] texts ... point to the enunciating subjects in an extraordinarily strong (although never unproblematic and straightforward) manner" (33). As already noted in relation to *Sunless* the articulation of thought in the voice-over bleeds the thoughts of the omniscient female narrator into the thoughts of the unseen cameraman. Voiced thought does not stem back to a clear source. Murray Pomerance in "Notes on Sans Soleil" describes the female voice-over and cameraman of *Sunless* as "acousmètres" because they are heard without their "source[s] being seen". The woman talking is omniscient and we only hear the cameraman's thoughts in his letters as read by this female voice. For Pomerance, this makes the "he" who wrote the letters an "acousmètre's acousmètre, removed from us ... by a distance that could be expressed by an infinite number raised to the power of infinity". We neither definitively know who the voice-over belongs to nor who the cameraman is, and "have no reason to think" this cameraman is Marker (Pomerance). The credits of the film emphasise this ambiguity by attributing the fictional name of "Sandor Krasna" to the travelling cameraman and Marker for the concept and editing. The self is detached in *Sunless* because we never see, hear, or know who this traveller is; his thoughts are conveyed in the letters he writes, sometimes entangled indistinctly with the words of the voice-over.

Further complicating this subjectivity in *Sunless* is that images are borrowed from other sources. The most explicit of these sources is Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, although

there are other, less distinguishable shots, such as the shot of the cat crossing the road in Iceland from Haroun Tazieff, which seamlessly blend into the flow of images. The film consists of such an immense amount of words and images that it almost feels as if a collage of things have been gathered from multiple sources into an all-inclusive travelogue. As Sayad notes, "neither the images of Japan, Iceland, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde Islands, nor the words which mediate on them seem to originate in the author" (146). The self realised in *Sunless* remains detached from Marker, to leave the viewer with impressionistic fragments of places travelled, animals noticed, and people seen, amalgamating a variety of things without a reliable source of subjectivity. This idea that the self of an essay film fragments itself to become multiple is articulated by Smiljana Glisovic in relation to her own essayistic practice, where she notes:

these images are documentary, these places are "real". The Voice is genuine. But their interaction is not unambiguous. In their relation they take on some poetic qualities; together, in their dissonance, they point beyond what each, on its own, is able to express. (10)

Often in essay films the self is enigmatic or, as Rascaroli notes, "the relationship between narrator(s), enunciator and author is never unproblematic or unreflexive" (33). These reflexive qualities of the essay film as seen in *Sunless* invite a noticing of thinking as it happens, because the essay film's images and words feel stitched together at the time the essayist is thinking them through.

Similarly, *News From Home* could be described as stitching together fragments of New York City to create a far more intimate, yet detached travelogue of the people, cars, buildings, and trains of the city. Like *Sunless* we never see the essayist, although we do hear Akerman as the voice reading the letters from her mother. Nevertheless, we never hear Akerman's responses to her mother's letters; all we do hear about her time in New York is through her mother's writing in statements such as "I know you don't like summer", "I'm glad you've learnt English", and "I'm glad you have lots of new friends". These short sporadic insights are largely overwritten by the mother's anxiety as to whether her daughter has received money sent and whether she will be coming home. We hear of the marriages, divorces, illnesses, pregnancies, seaside trips, and everyday occurrences in Belgium as well.

What does accumulate to become quite pronounced towards the end of *News From Home* is the escalating detachment of Akerman. This detachment is found

in passages in the voice-over where her mother complains of Akerman not writing “about how you’re really doing” and asks her to “please write about your work and your life there”. The long pauses between the mother’s letters being read in the voice-over, sometimes quietened by the noises of the city, emphasise this distancing of the daughter. Corrigan describes the physical and responsive withdrawal of Akerman from the film as enacting “an alternate point of view of herself” through the letters from her mother (106). We do not get a sense of Akerman through these letters, more a sense of the mother’s anxiety, events in Belgium, and a portrait of the people, buildings, and streets of New York through the images we see. *News From Home* makes the self as author indistinct because the mother’s persona and New York City are more realised in the film than is Akerman as essayist.

As noted previously, the rules of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* offer an alternation between stillness and movement, simultaneous with an upbeat and downbeat alternation. However, the user might notice these relations only after numerous interactions, or perhaps not notice these relations between clips at all. Unlike my other K-films, the clips of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* are not gathered into visual clusters; rather, they are subjectively organised in response to the feelings of restlessness I experienced at the time. This ruling of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* according to my own personal thoughts makes this K-film more obscure than the others, obscure because there is less repetition of particular qualities and the subjective metadata is not explicit in the visual content of the clips. For instance, a clip of postcards presents a happy moment for me, as I was receiving news from someone I loved. However, this sense of happiness may not be evoked in the user as there is nothing visually obvious in the clip itself which indicates this happiness. In addition, while the voice-over does read some of these postcards as diary entries and does at times refer explicitly to the content of the clips, there is no way for me, as the author of the film, to know whether this clip will be made programmatically available as a choice for the user and whether they will select that clip or not while these moments are read in the voice-over.

An implication of the indeterminate nature of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* for the construction of the essayistic self is a loss of a determined pace as well as a sequence of images that could amount to expressing a strong subjectivity. Unlike the long contemplative pace of *News From Home*, which summons Akerman’s subjectivity as detached and longing, the subjectivity of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* is less certain, as it depends on the software’s choices and the user’s decisions. What I propose is that the ambiguous self in the essay film evolves

as more fragmented in the multilinear form because the self is fractured to exist somewhere between the video images, voice-over, software, and user, although the limitation of Korsakow only allowing one continuous voice-over track and that this will always be consistent in every viewing of the work may make the self articulated in the voice-over of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* more dominant than the indeterminate images. As an essay film stitches images and voice together in the moment the essayist is thinking the images through, a multilinear K-film does the same, with the exception that the thoughts of the software and the user shape the film in response to each other indeterminately through the rules of the work.

Unstable World

While the visibility of thought and the ambiguous self are agreed on by Corrigan and Rascaroli as essayistic characteristics, Corrigan puts forward public experiences as a third quality of the essay film, an aspect which Rascaroli places less emphasis on. For Corrigan, public experiences become places for essayists to “rethink the self as a function of a destabilized public sphere” (63). Like the voice and self in the essay film, these public spheres are precarious. As shown in *Sunless* and *News From Home* these “experiential encounters that ... test and reshape the subject are, naturally and culturally, the spaces of the world” (Corrigan 104).

In *Sunless* the “spaces of the world” are the crowded streets of Tokyo, the villages of Guinea-Bissau, the Cape Verde Islands, Iceland, Paris, and San Francisco. While these locations are culturally different, the cameraman uses them to contemplate the topics of time, memory, place, and looking, showing that there are certain visual and thematic resonances and contrasts between these places. We see cats, people’s faces, and crowds, for instance, repeat in each of these locations, drawing attention to how these things exist in different ways across time and space. We get a sense in *Sunless* that the places travelled offer rich environments for the cameraman to interrogate, contemplate, and ponder ideas in a manner which is much less evident in *News From Home*.

In *News From Home* wide panoramic shots of New York City contrast with the intimate close-ups of faces and animals we see in *Sunless*, appearing like postcards, from what Corrigan describes as a “touristic gaze” (106). As opposed to intimately engaging with the discrete components of place, *News From Home* creates a distance between the essayist and the city through the use of wide shots. This distant “gaze” seems to make New York City an impossible

place for Akerman to inhabit (Corrigan 106). The long shot at the end of the film which draws further and further away from New York City exaggerates this impossibility, suggesting Akerman has in fact left the city and perhaps her mother's insistence has prompted her to return home. While *Sunless* and *News From Home* present themselves as essayistic travelogues, which seems pertinent to the development of my own multilinear practice, this thinking through place manifests quite differently. *Sunless* presents as an essay film which discovers through travel and *News From Home* loses the self through being elsewhere.

In *I See You* the places of travel pronounced in the voice-over and established in the sequences of *Sunless* are softened, and in doing so the link between image and place is loosened. We know the shots in *Sunless* of crowds in Tokyo and women's faces in Guinea-Bissau are in these locations because the voice-over sets this up for us, explaining early on that this film is predominantly about the contrast between time in Africa and Japan. In *I See You* place is not clearly identified; rather, faces, animals, crowds, and "zone" clips are clustered together, showing how these qualities of things exist in a myriad of forms, partly fractured from their actual locations. Making *I See You* allowed me to use *Sunless* to think with fragments and make patterns from what I noticed in a multilinear audiovisual nonfiction project. Its lack of situated place did not matter. In *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* all of the clips were shot in Melbourne, where the alternation of rhythm emerged through a period of time I spent rather aimlessly walking and catching transport to and from places. Although not obviously expressed, I somewhat used *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* as a way to think through whether or not I would move away from Melbourne, by writing a diary of my thoughts and collecting images to see if I could reconnect with the place.

Openness of Form

Lastly, a quality of the essay film which Rascaroli stresses more so than Corrigan is how it creates a dialogic relationship between essayist and audience. Rascaroli argues the essay film "interpellates not a generic, broad audience, but an embodied spectator; for the purpose of directly involving her in the construction of textual meaning" (84). In other words, an essay film addresses the audience in a way which invites the individual to contemplate and formulate their own sense of knowing, because the film does not do this for them. The essay film affords space for contemplation because the voice-over does not always make "sense of, and create links between, the images it is covering [nor] explicate the visuals, telling the spectator how he or she should interpret them" (Bruzzi 64).

While in *Sunless* there are times when the voice-over uses the images directly to think through an idea expressed, such as the scene when the voice-over asks, "how to film the ladies of Bissau?" with the sequence showing a montage of women looking away from the camera, this is mostly done in a way which ponders and is therefore open to question. There are other times in *Sunless* when the voice-over explores an idea which does not analyse the images shown. Bruzzi considers one of these scenes to be when the "voice-over discusses means of remembering ... [while] the images show people praying at temples in Japan" (69). She notes, "in the place of an analysis of these images is an analysis of the event-film relationship" (Bruzzi 69). In *Sunless* interpretative spaces open in the openness of the cameraman's thoughts and the dialogue the film creates between images and words, as well as between Krasna, Marker, and the female narrator.

In *News From Home* the letters from Belgium and the shots of New York City provide what Alisa Lebow terms an "ironic distance" (56), an "ironic distance" because Akerman is in New York City filming these images, yet what we hear is coming from someone who is not her, although it is read by her, and who is far away. This voice-over in *News From Home* does not explicate the images we see and therefore allows an interpretative space to emerge between its words and images. As Rascaroli notes, there is an openness to the essay film which allows "answers to emerge somewhere else, precisely in the position occupied by the spectator" (36).

According to Bruzzi, what this interpretative space does is elicit "connotative meaning" as an associative and emotional engagement with the film (64). This "connotative meaning" (Bruzzi 64), emerging in the interpretative space between voice-over and image, became a central idea for me to explore in the already soft relations afforded by Korsakow's multilinearity. While *I See You* creates an interpretative space between images, it does not use words. Between the essayistic and multilinearity, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* creates a voice specific to the fragments and soft relations of Korsakow. The strong essayistic thinking voice-over lost in *I See You* may be found in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*.

For *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* I recorded the voice-over by reading my diary six months after I had written it, to allow a critical distance between the person who wrote the diary and the person reading. I knew a distance existed because during the six months between writing the diary and recording the voice-over, the restlessness I had been experiencing about being in Melbourne mostly

diminished. I recorded the voice-over when I felt quite settled in Melbourne. This change I experienced between writing and recording helped develop a hesitant, amused, and sentimental tone in the delivery of the voice-over, as the entries expressed moments I was now ashamed of, seemingly thoughtless notes, and occasionally a happy moment that conjured a feeling of wishing to be back in that moment. A distance is created between the words and images of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* because the diarising and filming existed mostly alongside, rather than in response to, each other. Similar to *Sunless* and *News From Home* the voice-over and nonfiction images of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* are quite separate and rarely explicate each other. In creating this space between words and images, I was attempting to conjure this “connotative meaning” which Bruzzi proposes occurs when such a distance exists (64).

While, as noted, there are a few diary entries in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* which do reflect upon the images I filmed, the indeterminate relationship between the voice-over and clips softens the possibility of the voice-over explaining the images. For instance, there is a clip showing a dead tree branch cast against a blue sky (fig. 8) and an entry read eight minutes into the voice-over which discusses how this clip of a branch reminds me of my dad’s tendency to photograph trees (fig. 9). The likelihood of this particular section of the voice-over correlating with the dead tree branch playing in the interface is unlikely because the relations between clips and thumbnails, what the software makes available, and the user’s decisions have no consequence for the continuous and fixed voice-over.



Fig. 8 A clip of a dead tree branch from *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*

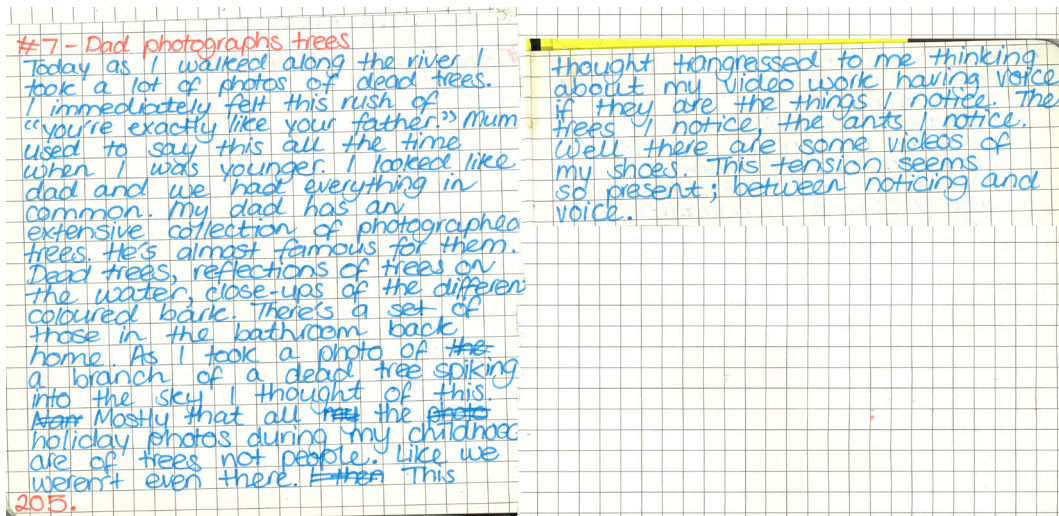


Fig. 9 A diary entry read in the voice-over of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*

This choice to have the voice-over track run separately to the images of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* was an informed essayistic decision made by me, as opposed to a necessary and symptomatic characteristic of K-films. If the voice-over was attached to each clip, then an indeterminate relationship between voice-over and images would not exist, although other qualities could definitely be explored. For instance, K-films such as Soar's *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* and Thalhofer's *Money and the Greeks*, which attach spoken voice to the individual clips, allow multiple voices to be heard and for contrasts to be noticed in how different people respond to different circumstances. I deliberately chose to separate the voice-over and images in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* in the hope of extending the "connotative meaning" Bruzzi talks of (64). A distance is created between myself as diary writer and the voice-over, as well as a distance between the image and text elements of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, heightened by the fragments and soft relations of multilinearity.

From Connotative to Affective Engagement

An implication of this extension of space between expressed thoughts and images, in a multilinear K-film, is that it positions the user physically between *Grey Skies/Blue Skies'* elements, encouraging them to think with me through their actions. As a user interacts with the project, they watch the clip currently playing, the rules and software provide them with three thumbnails, and they select a thumbnail to open as a new currently playing clip. The software then provides a new set of thumbnails as mediated through the rules of the keywords. If the user does not select a new thumbnail, the images of the project will stop

although the voice-over will continue. As the voice-over continues, the user is invited to think through which clip to open next from the thumbnails available to them, without the video continuing forward, while they are still contemplating what they are seeing and hearing in the browser. *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* allows users to occupy a physical space between the movement of images, as they can stop the film, by not selecting another thumbnail, to contemplate the images they see. This agency to stop and think in between the flow of images allows their contemplation to inform what they will do and what the K-film will show next.

A user of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* can be considered partly as an editor to help create what Soar describes as a "final, non-definitive version of the film in that specific encounter" ("Making (with) Korsakow" 163). Arguably, this role of the user as someone who can stop, contemplate, and then decide on their trajectory through essayistic K-films has particular implications for the essay film and I argue it exceeds an editorial position. Miles describes the position of the user in "pluralist, multivocal, multilinear, associative and poetic" digital documentary as a "centre of indetermination" in reference to Bergson's *Matter and Memory* ("Affective Ecologies" 80). For Miles, these forms of digital documentary open this space for indeterminacy because they are not encyclopaedic or didactic. Miles considers a user of these more poetic multilinear documentary works to be a centre of indeterminacy between seeing and doing because "different actions are possible as a consequence of such noticing" ("Affective Ecologies" 77). In other words, because a K-film can offer multiple options for the user to choose from next, they are centred between watching and selecting in a decision-making process.

The user's position as an indeterminate thinking centre provides, as Miles notes, an "interval between noticing and that affective understanding becomes the proper province of documentary in digital domains" ("Affective Ecologies" 80). In *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* the qualities of fragments and soft relations combine to afford indeterminate relationships between video clip and video clip, voice-over and images, positioning the user between filmic elements. Arguably, this softness achieved between elements allows for "affective understanding", a knowing which emerges from the ability for the user to contemplate, think through, and then act to find understanding in their indeterminate position between project elements (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 8). This ability for the user to think with the film by pausing and then actualising this thinking, to influence the unfolding of the work, potentially exceeds Bruzzi's description

of “connotative meaning” (64). As the user physically occupies the space of thinking with the film as thinking happens, this allows them to use their decisions to compose new iterations of the film.

End

In *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, multilinearity provides a productive milieu for a multilinear essay film by bringing the essayistic elements of a spoken voice thinking restlessly into Korsakow. The multilinear qualities of self-contained fragments and soft relations seem suited to the openness of words and images in the essay film and the self-contained, scattered quality of diary entries. In *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* the voice-over makes thought visible as the images show the everyday personal. The multilinear qualities of the project allow these sound and image elements to remain indeterminate, unlikely to be explained by each other. This indeterminacy between words and images in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* obscures the essayistic self by giving agency to the software’s choices and the user’s decisions. As the essay film can be said to generate “connotative meaning” (Bruzzi 64) in the space between image and sound, multilinearity provides the user with a physical space to pause, contemplate, and then realise the connections between a thinking voice-over and images of public space. The outcome of the user’s agency in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, and potentially other soft Korsakow multilinear nonfiction, is a form of “affective understanding” that a user acts upon in order to navigate the work (Miles “Affective Ecologies” 80).

In contrast, *I See You* loses some of its essayistic qualities, as there is no strong authorial voice as voice-over thinking through or running parallel to the video content. What *I See You* does encourage the user to notice in *Sunless* is lists of faces, animals, crowds, and posterised images of the “zone”. As Korsakow limits you to having one continuous voice-over, I saw *Grey Skies/Blue Skies* as concluding my exploration of the essay film in Korsakow. Therefore, what remained for me to explore, from the completion of *I See You*, was why lists had evolved in my noticing of *Sunless* with Korsakow. A query which emerged from how I used Korsakow to think through *Sunless* was whether the multilinearity Korsakow performs is better suited to thinking about and theorising a multilinear nonfiction practice which is more about using the list to notice.

FOUR

LIST

What I have argued so far is that fragments, indeterminate relations, and openness are things which matter to multilinear making, making with Korsakow, and the essay film. However, while I was attempting to make a multilinear essay film with *I See You*, I made something which is more a list of things to notice. Rather than giving you a voice to follow, the categorising of faces, animals, crowds, and “zone” in *I See You* performs a type of list making which invites the user to think about what they are noticing within the images they are interacting with and to connect these via association. While *Sunless* does this listing as well, it is the user of *I See You* who is invited to make lists through their interaction. A question this poses for me is, does the list provide an alternative to the essay film as a way of making multilinear K-films?

This chapter outlines how the list operates in film, documentary, new media, and literature, and as an ontographical tool. Through this discussion of the list, I show how my research shifted from thinking of what I was doing as audiovisual documentary to thinking of it as a form of list making. While this chapter looks at how the list provides a multilinear way of making—because it performs fragments, indeterminacy, variability, and openness—I further propose that the list evolves as an ontographical tool to attend to what goes unnoticed.

In Film

As Organisational Device

Perhaps the most obvious place to consider the list in an audiovisual context is the shot list, whereby in narrative cinema a shot list is written to break down the script into its individual parts. These individual parts describe the graphic and photographic quality of the shot including what the image will show, how the action will be staged, the size of shot, the choice of lens, and camera angle. These features guide how each individual shot will be filmed, what will be shown, and often how this shot contributes to the overall narrative. While we break down a script into its individual shots so the film crew knows how and what to film, there is always a consideration of how each of these shots will contribute to the narrative whole.

In *Film Directing Shot by Shot: Visualizing from Concept to Screen*, Steven Douglas Katz notes that the director of narrative film "is ultimately interested in how the photographic qualities of the shot determine the narrative effect of the scene" (106). He further suggests that, to write a shot list, you should consider the relationship between the graphic and the narrative by asking questions such as "where is the camera stationed" (graphic)? And "whose point of view is being expressed" (narrative) (106)? In narrative film practices, the script is broken down into its shots where these shots are always considered in relation to the whole. In post-production, these shots are most commonly edited into a continuous self-contained film based off the original script and the footage filmed. The common function of a shot list, in narrative film practices, is as an organisational device to envision the film in all its discrete elements, and then becomes a to-do list for the producer and director.

As Non-narrative Device

While the list as shot list provides a set of things to do in narrative film production, the list is considered a device for non-narrative cinema as well. Corrigan and Patricia White, for instance, consider non-narrative to be films which "eschew or de-emphasize stories and narratives, instead employing other forms like lists, repetition, or contrasts as their organisational structure" (263). While we cannot consider the essay film as entirely non-narrative, we can consider some of them to "eschew" narrative because the often tangential thoughts of an essayist are privileged over other ways to organise the film (Corrigan and White 30). Corrigan and White consider non-narrative and documentary together in their book, reaffirming why the beginning of my research was framed and informed by the elasticity of documentary film over narrative. For Corrigan and White, Diane Keaton's *Heaven* provides an example of a non-narrative documentary because the film presents a "litany of faces and voices to answer such questions as 'Does heaven exist?' and 'Is there sex in heaven?'" (264). The film is therefore "better understood as a playful list of unpredictable reactions to the possibility of the life hereafter" rather than a "religious mystery tale" (Corrigan and White 264). In *Heaven*, multiple responses to the idea of heaven accumulate to make the concept of heaven itself multiple.

Offering Openness

Similar to Corrigan and White, Frankham proposes that "fragmented and list-like structures" (138) "effectively de-form familiar story shapes" (137) and, in doing

so, develop a poetic approach to documentary. A poetic approach for Frankham is “an openness of form that facilitates moments of pause and contemplation” (137), resonating with the essay film’s creation of “connotative meaning” between words and images (Bruzzi 64). Frankham refers to Shōnagon’s lists “of rare things, splendid things, worthless things and things that quicken the heart” in *The Pillow Book* to demonstrate how lists realise the poetic (146). In *The Pillow Book*, Shōnagon’s observations and musings are collected under headings such as villages, plants, kinds of moon, elegantly intriguing things, things that create a disturbance, and slovenly-looking things. Under a heading of “Stars” Shōnagon lists “the Pleiades. Altair. The evening star. Shooting stars have a certain interest. They’d be even finer if it weren’t for their tail” (203). What lists similar to this do in *The Pillow Book* is accumulate multiple things and at the same time allude to Shōnagon’s own preferences. According to Frankham, lists in *The Pillow Book* give a quality of Shōnagon’s “world and a glimpse of her mind ... evoked through both the items that each list gathers and the topics under which they are assembled” (Frankham 147). The lists in *The Pillow Book* then take on an essayistic quality in that they offer subjective views through astute observation.

For Frankham, the list provides a form of non-narrative documentary because it can be “broken up into its constitutive elements ... so that new relations, new metaphors and new ways of thinking can emerge” (146). Frankham’s list provides a poetic approach to documentary because there is a potential openness of form which invites a distance between items as “spaces for interpretation” (140). Spaces can open between items on a list when the relations between them are not explicitly obvious, and Frankham proposes that these more interpretative lists gather concepts, themes, emotions, gestures, and aesthetics (139).

This suggestion by Frankham that lists have varying degrees of cohesion between items is reminiscent of Soar’s scale between “absolute linearity and complete randomness” in a K-film (“Making (with) Korsakow” 163) and Miles’s distinguishing between encyclopaedic and more poetic forms of digital documentary (“Affective Ecologies” 80). In other words, for Frankham’s “spaces for interpretation” in poetic documentary, Bruzzi’s “connotative meaning” in the essay film (64), and Miles’s “indeterminate centre” in digital documentary (“Affective Ecologies” 80) to occur, there needs to be a sense of distance and indeterminacy between things. It could be proposed that the list, like a multilinear K-film, can offer Miles’s “affective understanding” because a list can facilitate pause, contemplation, and multiple insights depending on the degree of interpretative space between items (“Affective Ecologies” 80).

Offering Abundance

While I originally came to *Sunless* through researching the essay film, I soon came to notice how *Sunless* is widely acknowledged as a film which lists. This is explicit at the beginning of the film, when the voice-over references *The Pillow Book* by noting that Shōnagon “one day ... got the idea of drawing up a list of ‘things that quicken the heart.’ Not a bad criterion I realise when I’m filming.” In conjunction with its essayistic qualities, *Sunless* can be viewed as a film using Shōnagon’s list of “things that quicken the heart” as a prompt for what a cameraman films in the “two extreme poles of survival”: Japan and Africa.

Another list which seems prominent in *Sunless* is everyday occurrences; this list is similarly set up early in the film by the voice-over when it notes, “I’ve been around the world several times and now only banality still interests me. On this trip I’ve tracked it with the relentlessness of a bounty hunter.” This everyday quality of *Sunless* is described by Bruzzi as the “mundane, the inconsequential and the ephemeral” (71). As noted in the previous chapter, there are repetitions and accumulations of animals (especially cats), women’s faces, posterised images, crowded streets, transportation, television screens, and ceremonies throughout *Sunless*, which give it a list-like quality.

This listing characteristic of *Sunless* is emphasised by the fast rhythm of images which are “quickly launched, flipped, scooted, pushed and removed” by a rapid editing pace (Mavor 747). Images appear, disappear, and repeat as we move quickly through different spaces and places of the world. Cats in particular accumulate throughout: as animations on television, as statues, on a roof, crossing the street in Iceland, and wearing red hats. However, because of the accelerated rhythm, a viewer may only realise the dominance of these cats after several viewings, a practice the film seems to encourage. As Adrian Danks notes, “there is an openness, a kaleidoscopic quality that makes ... [the inclusion of cats] ‘inevitable’, ‘feasible’, but not predictable; though the range and regularity of their appearance speaks of obsession.” These open, kaleidoscopic, and unpredictable qualities which suggest *Sunless* as a list are further emphasised by an equal characteristic which occurs due to the quick succession of images we see. As Danks proposes, “all images are ‘equal’, but some images, particularly if they are of cats or other favoured animals, are more equal than others.”

While I first unpacked *Sunless* through an essayistic lens, I came to realise through the scholarship on the film, and by paying closer attention to its form

and structure, how its open, kaleidoscopic, unpredictable, and equal list-like qualities have quite obvious affinities with fragments, soft relations, and indeterminacy as key terms of multilinearity. *Sunless* consists of equal fragments which are compiled in a somewhat random way which asks for multiple viewings from a viewer in order to notice new things. Perhaps more so than being essayistic, these list-like characteristics of *Sunless* show why this film heavily influenced the beginnings of my research. *I See You, Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* can all be discussed as K-films which compile images of the everyday, sometimes in places of travel in a somewhat random way, where their indeterminate qualities ask the user to notice and notice in more depth through multiple experiences and list-like repetitions.

In New Media

Equal

It can be argued then, that these “equal” yet not-so-equal qualities of *Sunless* provide a precursor to the sort of equalness we see in networked new media environments (Danks). For instance, new media scholars Matthew Fuller, Korinna Patelis and Manovich all describe the list as a form appearing abundantly online. Fuller notes that the network of the web demonstrates a “manyness” where content is “equally great, being all the same” (15). Similarly, Patelis notes how new agencies consider “internet neutrality” as an “automatic technological reality” because the web can offer “balanced and fair access point[s] to all existing resources” (57). For Manovich, new media objects are “collections of individual items, with every item possessing the same significance as any other” (218). As an example, Manovich sees a web page as a “sequential list of separate elements—text blocks, images, digital video clips, and links to other pages” (220) and Fuller puts forward “menus in applications” and HTML as examples of lists online (15).

Closer to Danks’s argument that some images “are more equal than others” in *Sunless*, Patelis does remind us that the web is made of “telecommunications, software, Internet provision, navigational tools, and online content provision”, which function to draw our “attention to certain content” over other content (51). An example of this sort of “attention drawing” which happens online is the interface of my research blog, where the reverse chronological hierarchy of my blog’s theme draws a user’s attention to my most recent blog post, where they have to scroll down to see the rest (fig. 10). If we were to consider a K-film, the

rating function would be an instance of how the software can be programmed to draw the user's attention to some clips more so than others. While each blog post and each clip in a K-film can be described as equal, because they are all items in a database which resemble a list, there are particular layout properties or aspects of algorithmic programming which can make some properties, like the cats in *Sunless*, more "equal than others" (Danks). If the list exists across *Sunless* and the online network as a collection of items with mostly equal, indeterminate, and variable qualities, then does the list provide a way of making multilinear nonfiction?

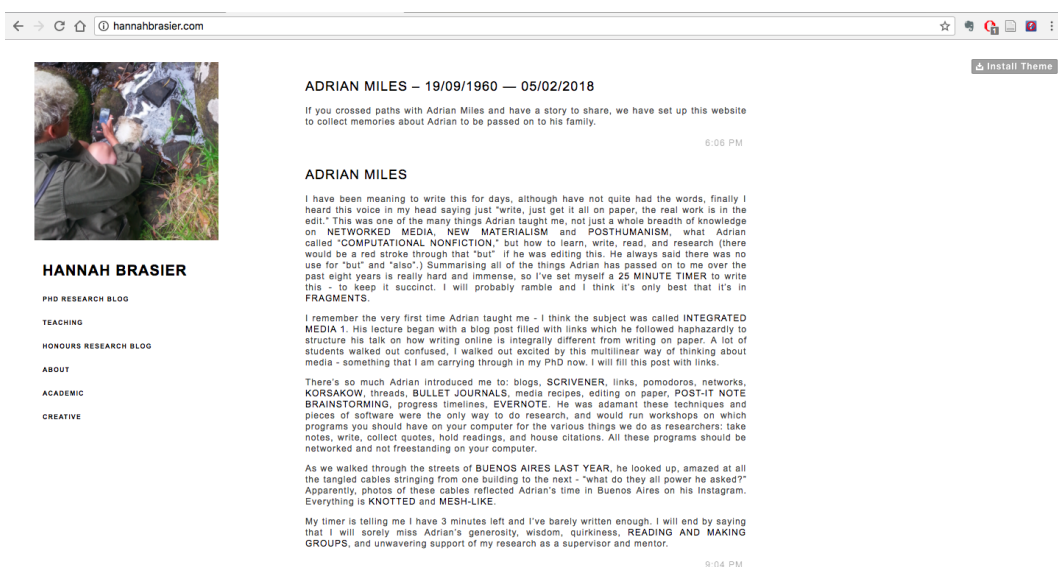


Fig. 10 Hierarchy of blog posts at hannahbrasier.com

Made up of Heterogeneous Parts

One of the first lists I wrote, to think about what excerpts from *Sunless* would make up the clips for *I See You*, was a list of images with their time codes (fig. 11). In each of my multiple viewings, I would write a new list of things I noticed, until I noticed repetitions of words accumulating in my lists. In these first few viewings, I wrote broad and general lists, simply noting images from *Sunless* as individual things. As a list maintains parts as heterogeneous items, it appeared lists could provide a tool to create granular clips from the fast-paced immensity of *Sunless*. The first step in making *I See You* was to glean clips from *Sunless* which expressed a singular thing or idea, as opposed to narrating a series of events. After generating multiple lists, I began editing out clips from *Sunless* according to these listed items, while attempting to keep intact the relationship

between voice-over and images, so each clip had to span the length of an idea expressed by the voice-over. I wanted to maintain the relationship between words and images because I was attempting to make a multilinear essay film.

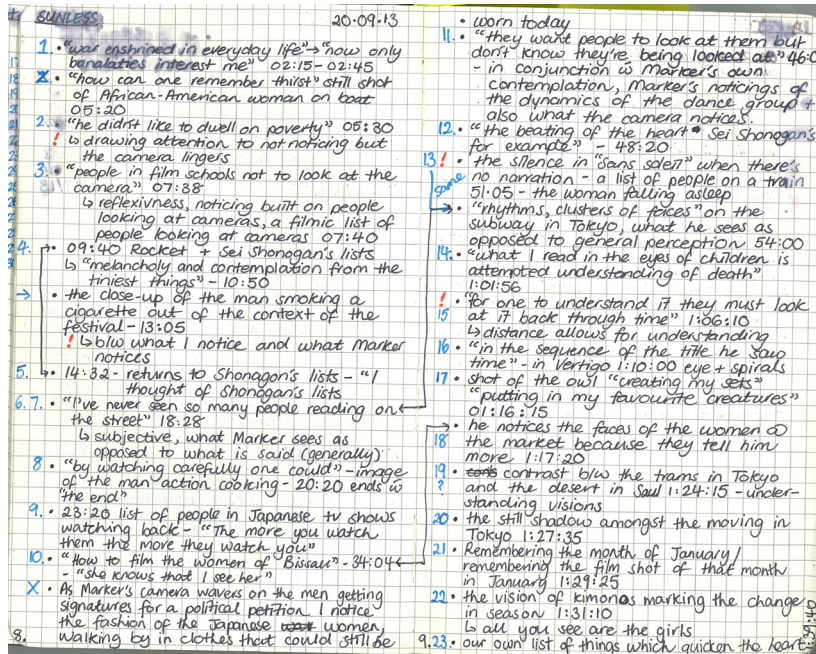


Fig. 11 A list of images and their time-codes which I wrote whilst watching *Sunless*

In this first attempt at editing granular clips from *Sunless*, "owl" as a listed item became a 35-second clip showing an: owl, grassy road through a corridor of trees, grassy park, darkened room, bedroom, small circular lake, and rain hitting the top of a circular surface. This clip showed multiple things that exceeded an owl, because I was waiting for the voice-over to finish reading a letter before I made the edit to cut out the clip. I found in numerous cases that, if I maintained the voice-over and image relationship, then the images of the clip would exceed the item listed to become a sequence of multiple things that were not granular or list-like. While the image of an owl is not simply an owl because it contains other more discrete elements—such as feather, green background, and bench—I did find that, if I edited according to voice-over, then it would be difficult for the user of *I See You* to list the images of *Sunless* through their interaction because these lists were to some degree already made for them. In contrast, I did find that, if I edited according to what I had listed and removed the sound, then I could edit out fragmented images from *Sunless* to become granular clips for *I See You*.

"Pirate radio: transmitter, microwave link, antennae, transmission and studio sites; records, record shops, studios, dub plates" is an example of a list Fuller provides in *Media Ecologies: Materialist Energies in Art and Technoculture* (15). Fuller describes the list as: enumeration, roiling concatenation, detail upon detail, accumulation of detail, inventory, index, iteration, an "agglomeration of heterogeneous parts", and a "signature of digital abundance" (14-15). For Fuller, these things together are lists because they are "hungry combination[s] of many heterogeneous parts" (14), heterogeneous because each item on a list is something which exists independently of all the listed items preceding or following such that you can take an item out and place it elsewhere. In Fuller's "Pirate radio" list, "record shops" is an existing thing that can be placed anywhere in this accumulation of properties which make up pirate radio. There is no inherent hierarchy or order which determines that one of these listed items is more important to pirate radio than another.

Further, as a list gathers items, Fuller notes how it moves towards a "composition with as yet unknown combinatorial potentials" (14). What the list is, as a combination of things, is indeterminate and multiple because a list is always open to flux—items can be added, removed, and reshuffled—changing and multiplying what the list can potentially be. If "pirate radio" was removed as a heading to Fuller's list, then the combination of these items could refer to multiple things and, as items are added, the list could turn into further multiples, shifting original perceptions of what the relationship between these gathered items could be. A list, for Fuller, is speculative because an accumulation of heterogeneous items does not have a way of understanding or meaning ascribed to it.

In Literature

In *The Infinity of Lists*, Umberto Eco provides the list as a device to suggest the ineffable by looking at Homer's catalogue of ships in the *Iliad* as an example. The list is ineffable for Eco because the writer is faced "with something that is immensely large, or unknown, of which we still do not know enough or of which we shall never know, the author proposes a list as a specimen, example, or indication, leaving the reader to imagine the rest" (49). While the qualities of ships in the *Iliad* will always exceed the "possibilities of the human mind", what the list does is allude beyond itself to these infinite possibilities (Eco 50). Similarly, there is an infinite quality to a K-film where clips can reappear indefinitely if programmed to do so. While nobody can interact with a K-film for

an infinite amount of time, the ability for a clip to reappear indefinitely affords a K-film indeterminacy in that the user can imagine but does not necessarily know what will come next even after multiple experiences. As clips can be easily added to and exported from a K-film, there is no reason why a K-film cannot continue to evolve without ever being finished, allowing a listing practice, such as the qualities of ships, to expand indefinitely.

As Ontograph

When I found the list in the context of non-narrative cinema, most notably in *Sunless*, and then in new media, I soon found the list to be theorised as a form in less familiar fields. In Ian Bogost's *Alien Phenomenology, or What It's Like to Be a Thing* lists are written about from a new materialist perspective, where he proposes the list as abandoning "narrative coherence in favour of worldly detail" (42). Beyond the list's suitability for multilinear making, due to its fragmented and multiple qualities, it was Bogost who informed my understanding of what the list can do. The list, for Bogost, becomes an ontographical recording tool to "draw attention to the countless things that litter our world unseen" (51). Bogost considers the list to see the "unseen" because it can gather and explode (51).

For Bogost, the "Latour litany" is an example of a list which "gathers disparate things together" (49) because the commas in a list, such as "'a storm, a rat, a rock, a lake, a lion, a child, a worker, a gene, a slave, the unconscious, a virus'" (qtd. in Bogost 38), demonstrate there is an "inherent partition between things" (40), yet this gathering together suggests each item "ought to be considered conjunctively" as well (39). While a list separates items to draw attention to its individual parts, it evokes speculation about why these disparate parts should be considered together. This is speculative because the relations between items are not provided, leaving them to be imagined by the reader or viewer. In this way, the list creates space between items in a similar way to multilinear making and the essay film, because a list is made up of granular parts that provoke thinking about what lies between its individual items by not providing cohesion, only a comma or a break between one item and the next.

Gathering

In the making of *I See You*, the granular clips focusing on individual things which emerged out of my first listings of *Sunless* became a collection of short

video clips removed from their context. These items were no longer attached to their voice-over, or to the other images preceding or following them. For instance, the clip showing an owl is no longer contextualised as a “favourite animal” by the voice-over and the clip showing a close-up of a woman slowly looking up towards the camera is not contextualised as the only woman who looks at the camera in a sequence of women who do not. These individual clips appear as a list “of objects without explication”, which Bogost proposes does the “philosophical work of drawing our attention toward them with greater attentiveness” (45). Now that these attenuated images from *Sunless* were individual discrete items with indeterminate breaks between them, I could move through them as relatively separate things in order to notice their individual visual qualities.

Upon gathering a small number of these granular clips, I imported them into Korsakow, giving them all the same “in” and “out” keywords. I exported what Soar would call a random K-film because every clip could now connect to each and every other (“Making (with) Korsakow” 163). I exported this random iteration of *I See You* to see if there were particular qualities shared by my clips that I would notice when they were gathered together via an interface. It was at this importing stage that it seemed appropriate to design my interface as a set of equally sized clips, spaced out horizontally across the centre of the screen, separately with breaks between them, to reflect the equal, separate, and gathering qualities of a list. As I clicked through the various clips, I noted qualities shared by certain clips and began a second process of listing to notice. Noticing the qualities shared by my clips in a randomly exported K-film evolved as a noticing with Korsakow. This attending to what Korsakow did with my images is a process I followed, built upon, and theorised in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*.

An example of one of these lists I wrote as Korsakow randomly listed was: happiness, everyday life, travel, Japan, animals, women, prayer, and nature. The process of making *I See You* became an iterative process of continuing to import more clips into Korsakow and listing by interacting with random exports. What resulted was faces, crowds, animals, and “zone” as the dominant qualities each of my clips could be identified with. I gathered clips into these face, crowd, animal, and “zone” clusters through attributing the same “in” and “out” keywords. To allow a user to move between each of these clustered parts, I provided numerous keywords to the clips showing multiple characteristics. While creating granular clips from Marker’s *Sunless* allowed attention to be

drawn to the individual qualities of the clips, what this secondary gathering process did was draw “attention to the couplings of and chasms between” these images (Bogost 50). This listing process proved a productive device for making with Korsakow, as the list created granular parts and gathered things based on qualities shared.

Exploding

The second quality of the list which allows attention to be drawn is the list’s explosive quality, what Bogost calls “exploded views” (40). For Bogost, this “exploded view” reminds us that the “stuff of things is many” (40) by expanding things already gathered into their “tiny, separate, but contiguous universes” (49). Bogost provides Stephen Shore’s landscape photographs of largely urban environments as examples of media which explode things gathered, because Shore’s photographs do not privilege any item in the frame by focusing on it. Rather, the composition of Shore’s photographs, such as Beverly Boulevard and La Brea Avenue, uses a wide shot and a wide field of view to draw attention to the many objects which make them up. “Swath of pavement”, “pneumatic cable”, “plastic numerals”, “soft vinyl tube”, and a “station wagon’s transmission assembly” are some of these objects, which make up the Beverly Boulevard and La Brea Avenue intersection in Los Angeles (Bogost 49). These photographs function as a list because each item is in focus and more-or-less equal in the frame, allowing us to notice the multiple objects as individual things across the image.

Other examples of these “explosive” lists which Bogost provides are the “*meanwhile*” in language, assembly instructions, and technical books, as all these forms list the many different parts which make them up (italics in original, 50). When we use “*meanwhile*” in language, we can list all the things happening simultaneously, exploding a moment into the almost infinite number of things taking place and existing at a particular time (Bogost italics in original, 50). In assembly instructions and technical books, diagrams are used to list all of the components which make up a device.

From Bogost’s perspective, if we want to draw attention to things “unseen” we firstly have to gather things together, provoke speculation between each of these parts, and then expand them by listing their inherent qualities. While I argue that we cannot physically see the “unseen” (Bogost 51), specifically in a visual film practice such as my own, what we can do is attend to the unnoticed,

as underlying or previously unconsidered details which make up an environment, media object, or thing, allowing us to reconsider them as multiple. This explosive quality of the list resembles the faceted quality of Korsakow's multilinearity, as it recognises how things have multiple qualities which may or may not resonate with others, and that might have previously gone unnoticed.

Seeing the Unnoticed

The process of selecting granular images from *Sunless* and testing in Korsakow by applying face, animal, crowd, and "zone" as keywords became an iterative process as I continued to return to *Sunless* in search of more clips to add to each of these clusters. When I returned to *Sunless*, it was more in the vein of the "bounty hunter" who searches for banality in the film. In these viewings, I searched for and listed all of the images of faces, crowds, animals, and "zone", realising as I did so how littered *Sunless* is with repeated images that had gone unnoticed in my previous viewings (fig. 12). I realised that by searching, listing, and then editing out these items to be added to my lists of animals, faces, crowds, and "zone", I was performing a condensed version of Bogost's ontological project—to "draw attention to the countless things that litter our world unseen"—because I was drawing attention to some of the images that had gone unnoticed in my previous viewings (51).

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • woman blow men throwing bricks/ construction • girls in prayer tossing coins • TV-women in horror movies-stills • woman on a boat who glances back at the camera • the face of a woman put through the zone • woman singing in the zone • woman face on train sideview night • faces of women at a museum - sideviews • the shoes of a woman dancing - parade of women dancing <p>crowds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people walking past various artworks • people walking through a train station • people crossing a zebra crossing • validating tickets at train station • men electronics market • crowd walking behind all of flowers • people walking down stairs • people/group of people standing out in a crowd • upper-shoulders → heads of people moving through a crowd • getting on the train/on the train from various angles • crowd all displaying PERCE signs ⊗ • a shadow amongst a crowd of moving feet (stationary) • crowd moving towards camera <p>ANIMALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • owl sign that moves • various animals filtered through zone • swans in lake, bird walking along grass | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carcassus • cartoon of a cat • statues of animals • cat on roof • cat + owl in zone • cat statue behind sound desk • cat lying in sun • cat in the middle of the road • cats in the zone • white cats on TV • statue of cat + cats on TV in a studio • prancing emu from various angles • statue of frog • statue of dog • llama • haired monkey, cat on street in car, fake panda, owl sign • owl owl in the wind • horse painting → statue of horse • dogs running down the beach • bird and then image of bird reflected in the lake • white cat statues • stills of deer on TV • TV-owl at nighttime • vultures eating dead giraffe • waterbird - emu • white cat in city |
|---|--|

Fig. 12 A excerpt of a list of faces, crowds, animals, and "zone" that I wrote as I watched *Sunless*

Through this listing I was creating an “exploded view” of the face, animals, crowd, and “zone” images of *Sunless*, expanding each item into its multiple perspectives (Bogost 50). What I realised through this process of listing as drawing attention was the potential of the list to provide a way of noticing which attends to discrete items and then explodes them into multiple perspectives, a way of making which is granular and multiple. This type of listing that notices the discrete and the multiple enables a multilinear audiovisual practice which attends to the unnoticed and uses these discrete qualities to iteratively inform further noticing and making. This is a process I built upon when I made *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* using my own footage.

For *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* I filmed all of my footage using the Vine video app on my phone, so I started listing shortly after I had collected some of these videos in my travels around Europe. This listing process began by noting everything I noticed while I replayed a Vine until there was nothing else I could think of to list. Aqua, glimmering, light, shimmer, fish, movement, ripples, water, swim, shine, blue, and dance is one of these lists that describes a Vine I filmed when I noticed a school of fish swimming as I glanced over a pier in Barcelona (fig. 13). While I noticed the fish as I glanced, took out my phone and held my finger on the screen for the six-second length of a Vine video, my phone camera noticed light, colour, movement, and beyond. From this viewing and listing, I noticed the fish are less visible in the frame than the brightness of the sun pulsing, glimmering, and reflecting off the water. Further, as I was doing this listing while gathering, these listed qualities began to inform the images I continued to film.



Fig. 13 A clip of sunlight glimmering off water in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*

While I could have used the focus, exposure, and zoom capabilities of a better camera to centrally frame the fish in a close-up, the automatic and somewhat uncontrollable affordances of my iPhone make it somewhat indifferent to what it sees. This indifference allows the Vine videos I collected for *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* to function as lists which see what went unnoticed by me in a similar way to how Bogost describes Shore's photographs as lists because they focus on things equally (48). This affinity between the lists in Shore's photographs and my Vines for *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* is the lack of focus on a particular item which would have diminished the image or video's explosive quality. In *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* I used these lists of qualities noticed to guide how I keyworded the project, where this fish clip was designated with "reflect" and "moves" as keywords. *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* uses the list to explode each clip into its multiple visual qualities and, by doing this, allowed me to attend to unnoticed aspects caught by the indifference of my phone camera, paying attention to the world through my own guiding intelligence. I then used these lists as a way of designing the relations which take place in my K-film.

Following *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* I used the list to create sequences that became my clips, before I used the list to inform the keywords. These sequences in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* are made up of multiple Vines and emerged through an iterative process of listing the qualities of each of my clips as I added raw footage to a folder on my computer. Generally, as new Vines were added, listing would reveal unnoticed visual qualities, qualities that appeared in my lists which I had not consciously seen in the moment of filming. As our brains tend to look for order, shapes, and patterns, I came to notice the horizontal lines that two streamers make through the sky when "horizontal lines" repeated in a list of qualities noticed. These repetitions of particular listed items became the process by which I started creating sequences from my raw Vines. In the case of horizontal lines, I noticed that the Vines of streamers in the sky, a shadow a beer makes on a blue table, the shadow of a step on a floral projection, the alternation between black and white on a flannel shirt, and venetian blinds all create horizontal lines. These became an edited sequence in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* (fig. 14). This process of watching, listing, and editing together sequences from noticed resonances in my lists provided the process by which I made *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*.

After I had edited together some of these list-like sequences in the making of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* two types of lists emerged: lists as collections of

things, and lists as studies of something. A sequence showing five different palm trees in five different locations I considered a collection of palm trees, whereas five different angles of the same palm tree was a study of a palm tree. While the sequences as studies of something attend to how a particular thing has multiple qualities, I found these different perspectives were largely staged by me while filming. Generally, I would film from a different angle as a way to frame a particular aspect of something in a more interesting way. I found the lists as collections of things more desirable, as they were less staged, using the indifference of the camera to simply notice something that then formed a visual resonance, or aesthetic moment, when seen in relation to the other Vines I had filmed. As I have already said, I was not noticing the horizontal lines the streamers make in the sky while filming, but only noticed this pattern through listing. I consider these sequence lists of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* to be comparable to how faces, animals, and crowds accumulate in *Sunless* as things that repeat, yet it is only after watching *Sunless* numerous times and cataloguing it that we fully notice this abundance. In this way, *Sunless* is a precursor film to the “returnability” encouraged by my K-films.

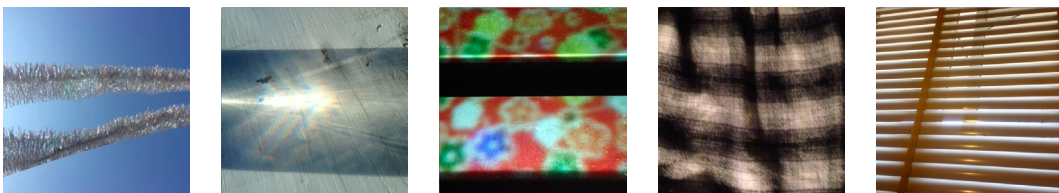


Fig. 14 A sequence of horizontal lines from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

A Priming to Notice

A second layer to how the list allowed me to see the unnoticed density of my images become apparent in making *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*. This layer that I became aware of was how the qualities noticed through listing started to shape what my attention was drawn to when I went out to film. In the iterative nature of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* I did not simply film a set amount of Vine videos, list, and then make sequences; rather, I filmed, listed, made sequences, and continued to film in a circular process. What I have come to realise is that this continual filming is often primed by the unnoticed qualities of my list that I have not made sequences with yet. For instance, an item on one of these lists, which only repeated a few times, was a “shadow of a building on a building”. As I walked and noticed in the following week, I became susceptible to noticing this

particular quality which I may not have paid attention to before, because the list-writing process had primed me to notice this visual quality out in the world. This priming was evidenced when I collected four other Vines showing shadows of a building on another building, all filmed as I walked home in the late afternoon, as the position of the sun at this time allows for things to cast shadows (fig. 15). What I propose is that list writing and list filming become not only a way to maintain fragments and multiple relations in audiovisual multilinear nonfiction, but also a device for noticing unnoticed visual patterns in the world as captured through media, which then primes us into a habit of informed noticing.



Fig. 15 Four Vines of buildings reflecting off buildings collected for *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

End

I See You should not be read primarily as an analysis of its essayistic affinities with *Sunless*, nor should it be considered primarily as a reading of Marker's film. Rather, the images of *Sunless* were used to see whether fragments and multiple relations, as the conditions of multilinearity, could create networked essay films. What I discovered was the multiple, heterogeneous, open, random, equal, and ineffable qualities of the list offered a way to make multilinear audiovisual nonfiction that I used, and developed, in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*. From these K-films I found the list allows a simultaneous gathering and exploding of the world which primes us to notice discrete details.

Therefore, *I See You* should really be considered a precursor experimental test film which prompted me to find ways of collecting videos based on the list. By using the list iteratively to make *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, what I have found it to do is offer an engagement with the world that breaks things down into discrete fragments and, in doing so, allows qualities unnoticed to be noticed in video footage and then out in the world. Why this type of engagement with the world matters will be discussed in the following part.

PART TWO

WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT AND SENSING THE WORLD

FIVE

THINKING ABOUT THE WORLD

Through making *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* I found the list could provide a multilinear way to make, and subsequently allow me to see, previously unnoticed visual qualities in my Vine videos. Stemming from this new materialist view that the list provides a seeing of the “unseen” (Bogost 51)—or in my visual film practice an attention towards what had previously gone unnoticed—I started to look for similar practices and conceptual lenses in less familiar places in order to understand and make sense of what I had made in Korsakow. The first of these parallels was found in the ways modernist, avant-garde, and experimental nonfiction filmmakers compose the world in patterns and rhythms. The second, and more important, affinity I found was in the fields of posthumanism and ecocriticism, where theorists—including Bennett, Stewart, Rosi Braidotti, Timothy Morton, Nicole Walker, Deborah Bird Rose, Annemarie Mol, Tim Ingold, and Tsing—think about the world as knotted, plastic, dense, indeterminate, precarious, and mesh-like.

My aim here is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of experimental and posthuman ways of looking at and thinking about the world but, rather, to offer a mapping of the evolving affinities between these ways of looking and my practice of listing to notice the unnoticed. In this chapter I track how experimental filmmaking and posthumanist thinking became lenses through which to understand how I made *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* via the different iterations of my process, switching between them in the writing as I go along. Further, I argue this iterative process primes a specific ecocritical attention to the world for non-narrative multilinear nonfiction.

After the completion of *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, I went to Europe for a three-month research trip and began *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*. I found that being overseas provided a suitable opportunity to make a third creative output. Now that I had found the list, I wanted to use this travelling context to think about why listing to notice the unnoticed, as a way of making multilinear audiovisual nonfiction, mattered to the fields of interactive documentary and documentary film. Largely, I saw what I was doing as offering a different “construction of reality”, which Gaudenzi claims happens when a documentary is online and interactive, as opposed to being a digital “linear documentary that is distributed through the

Internet" (36). As my way of making evolved iteratively from the fragments and indeterminate relations of networked multilinearity to Korsakow, to essay, to list, I saw what I was doing as constructing an interactive film which composes the world in fragments and multiple relations. While I thought this mattered to documentary, as it created a reality in contrast to stories, which "tend to make sense of the world according to narrative's terms, which are of course a much smaller and more limited account of the world than the world is", I realised that seeing and making with a world of fragments and relations is not the intention of most documentary projects (Miles "The Gentleness of the Comma").

Through a Modernist Lens

On a particularly cold and unusually snowy day for early March, I walked up to the Communications building at Leeds University. This was the first time I had ever seen snow in movement, falling from the sky and bouncing gently as it hit the ground. In Leeds, far from home in Melbourne, I had motivated myself into a habit of filming when I woke up and at 12 pm, 4 pm, and 8 pm, using the Vine video app on my phone. I had decided Vine would be appropriate for such filming as the original limit of six-second videos would constrain what I filmed to distinct granular moments. Another constraint I had decided upon was not to move my phone as I was filming, because I wanted to let things move in front of the camera as opposed to making movement from what would otherwise be still. I selected these times of day, used the durational constraint of Vine, and held the camera still while filming because I wanted to minimise my own selection and framing of the world through my own preferences. I wanted to test whether this sort of filming would attend granularly to individual things and, in doing so, create a list of items which attended to my three-month research trip in Europe.

What I started to realise as I filmed in Europe were the affinities between this constrained way of making and modernist formalist nonfiction. These resonances between documentary and modernist filmmaking are notably articulated by Bill Nichols in "Documentary Film and the Modernist Avant-Garde" and Scott MacDonald in "Avant-Doc: Eight Intersections". For Nichols, modernist filmmakers of the 1940s utilised fragmentation, defamiliarisation, collage, abstractions, relativity, and anti-illusionism to invite a visual appreciation of the world (593). Likewise, MacDonald notes that films which intersect documentary and the avant-garde appreciate rhythm, as can be seen explicitly in the Lumière brothers' films where "their primary fascination was the documentation of motion, specifically human activity" (51). For Nicholas and MacDonald films

which intersect documentary and the experimental notice and compose the world in fragments and rhythms.

For Nichols, this emphasis on rhythms and patterns in filming and editing comes closer to the world because “narrative clearly leads elsewhere, toward fiction” (589) and “narrative adds a resolution which may not be necessarily there” (591). In other words, it is this filming and organising of the bits of the world in non-narrative patterns that arguably make these films more documentary than expository and didactic modes. It is in how these experimental and documentary hybrids emphasise patterns, rhythms, and effects of happenings, not simply to humans but among things themselves, over the presentation of a nonfiction argument or idea which resonated with what I collected in Europe.

If these modernist documentary films do not convey an explicit point on a subject, what opportunities do non-narrative forms of presenting nonfiction images offer? My interest was in the affinity between Nichols’s proposition that there is an intrinsic shared impulse between the avant-garde and documentary to show images of the world that are not bound in the potentially unworldly characteristics of narrative storytelling, and the potential of multilinear nonfiction to provide an alternative to story. While I was noticing rain gathering on my skylight, snow falling, fog clearing, and blue skies occasionally emerging in what felt like a very cold European spring, Ivens’s *Rain* particularly resonated as a modernist documentary film which pays specific attention to the aesthetic details of rain falling in Amsterdam.

Through the Visual Aesthetics of Rain

Ivens’s *Rain*—a 14-minute black-and-white, silent, and observational film—shows a storm in the city of Amsterdam. The film begins with a storm brewing—birds begin to flock, clouds get darker, rain falls—and culminates with the clearing of the sky to mark the end of the storm. As the storm happens, we see a rhythmic montage of: women with umbrellas, windows capturing raindrops, water flooding over gutters, rain glistening as it splashes on the road, and drops of water rippling circular shapes, like the grain of a tree trunk, on puddles and rivers. For Nichols, the “puddles and umbrellas of Amsterdam ... became a staple of modernist work” because the film “imaginatively reconstructed the look of the world with images, or shots, taken of this world” (592). Similarly, Ivens considers *Rain* to consist of the multiple qualities of rain—“raindrops, wet people, dark clouds, glistening reflections moving over wet asphalt, and so

forth"—with a pace which reproduces that of a storm (35). By drawing attention to an array of rainy images that span the entire city, the experience of watching *Rain* evokes the feeling of a storm. In a similar way to how *Rain* attends to the various ways that rain makes patterns in the environment of Amsterdam, *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* consists of the movements, reflections, water dripping, and stillness I noticed through constrained filmmaking as list-making in Europe.

This quality of *Rain*, which attends to how rain creates visual patterns in an environment, is discussed by Michael Renov. For Renov, documentary films can generally be categorised into different documentary tendencies: "to record, reveal, or preserve; to persuade or promote; to analyze or interrogate; to express" ("Poetics" 21). *Rain* is considered by Renov a documentary which "express[es]" ("Poetics" 21) as it serves an "aesthetic function" ("Poetics" 32) by combining "purely photographic properties ... with the possibilities of editing to create explosive effects—cerebral as well as visceral" ("Poetics" 33). *Rain* serves this "aesthetic function" because it details the visual qualities of rain and uses the edit to accumulate these properties into the explosive effect of a storm. Renov argues for *Rain* as a "sensory experience" defined by the "flow, drip, streak, puddle, pool, and cascade" as the aesthetic qualities of these watery images (Subject of Documentary 102).

As opposed to revealing, persuading, or interrogating, the expressive tendency draws attention, through the images and the edit, to visual characteristics. In *Rain* the edit continues this sensory experience because the rhythm of the film performs the storm as it builds slowly, quickly affects the different components of the city, and evaporates as the sun rises. *Rain* conjures the atmospheric experience of a storm by attending to the discrete visual qualities of how the environment of the city appears when rained on. What is fruitful in Renov's description is how *Rain* creates a sensory experience through its listing of rain qualities, and it is this sensory—as opposed to narrative—experience of aesthetic detail which has affinities to what I was doing in Europe.

Ivens's practice of noticing the discrete qualities of rain afforded me a lens through which to think about *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and how my six-second videos attended to the discrete visual qualities of my time in Europe. This construction of an audiovisual project from the discrete visual qualities of the world is what I consider a practice of aesthetic noticing, because what is noticed in the clips is visual patterns of how water ripples, glass fogs, and buildings reflect over the water, glass, and buildings themselves. Nevertheless, a distinguishing factor that

differentiates Ivens's and my practices of aesthetic noticing is that Ivens had a particular intention to notice the qualities of rain and to build the atmosphere of a storm from these collected qualities. My approach was less teleological and open to how software and listing primed me to notice particular visual qualities I may not have noticed before.

This difference in practice is emphasised by Ivens when he notes he had "designated 'rain spotters'" (Schoots 56) and a "dedicated attention" (Van Domburg qtd. In Schoots 58) to rain as "prolonged and creative observation" (Ivens 29). For Ivens, this prolonged, dedicated, and creative observation was the "only way to be sure of selecting, emphasizing, and squeezing everything possible out of the rich reality in front of you" (29). Even though my developing practice of listing to notice the unnoticed in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* was less focused than Ivens's in *Rain*, I too saw my practice as a dedicated attention to visual qualities and detail in Europe.

In the making of *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* I collected 23 Vine videos of the sky outside my skylight, providing a dedicated attention to a singular thing. There is also dedicated attention to aesthetic detail throughout. What I noticed in my act of pointing my phone towards something, holding my thumb down on the green circular button on Vine, and recording for six seconds was often in response to a particular colour, reflection, movement, glimmering, or unusual placement of something catching my attention and standing out from its surroundings. My Vine videos, like Ivens's catalogue of rain, pay attention to subtle movements, light reflections, glimmering, brightness, shadows, and patterns that occurred around me. It was the indefinite quality of how something can appear when struck by different lights at different times in varying weather conditions that became the focus of *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*. Intersections between modernist avant-garde and documentary, and within it Ivens's *Rain*, provided a suitable lens through which to understand that what I was doing while making *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* was aesthetic noticing.

Through an Eco-aesthetic Lens

While for *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*, I set myself time-based constraints to find a rhythm for filming, for *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* I considered this rhythm a habit; I filmed when I travelled to and from places on foot or public transport. For instance, on a walk home from a busy day at university—where I had had a teaching meeting, finished reading two articles on new materialism, edited

a small section of a paper, filled in a reimbursement form, and completed four repetitions of a set of hand exercises for a broken wrist—I found it difficult to string a sentence together in speaking to my partner. While walking, I thought about Vines to film for *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, groceries I needed to buy, and the conversation I was trying to maintain. On this particular walk I filmed five Vines of: shadows on concrete as I walked looking down on a path; a pile of autumnal-coloured leaves covering the ground like a rug; an uneven sunlit brick path; the underneath of a group of palm trees as I looked up at them from below; and the shadow of a building cast on a high-rise in Carlton. I bought groceries and ran into a friend. The walk home took about 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, on this walk home there were many other people walking down the street, cars moving slowly in peak-hour traffic, seagulls hovering over rubbish bins, a cockatoo on a phone box, shadows cast by the setting sun, leaves on tree branches swaying in the wind, ice-cream freezing in rectangular boxes and occasionally scooped out into a cone or cup, wind rustling rubbish across the footpath, books resting in a window display, and a selection of rubber ducks with a sign next to them saying they had been reduced in price to four dollars. When I returned from Europe and began collecting Vines for my next project, *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, in Melbourne, I realised the aesthetic detail of my project evolves iteratively through a dance between the world, myself, the phone camera, Vine video app, and Korsakow. Unlike Ivens, who teleologically searched for rain in an environment, I let the relationship between my perspective, camera, and environment accumulate aesthetic details in an indeterminate way.

The main difference, then, between the way I made *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and how Ivens made *Rain* is that he collected with the intention to make a film about rain, whereas what I collected evolved through environment, technological constraints, and iterations of listing, without a defined teleology. As I realised that environment, constraint, indeterminacy, and noticing had come to matter to my practice, I became fascinated by the film work of James Benning, particularly in how it is theorised by Silke Panse. In an interview with Benning, Panse observes that a “lot of filmmaking is about re-creating an idea that existed beforehand, even documentary. There are not many films that actually *look*” (“Land as Protagonist”, italics in original, 66). The argument that Panse seems to make here is that, even though documentary has a responsibility to the “real”, it sometimes privileges responsibility towards an argument and, in doing so, filters the world through ideas formed before the act of filming. In other words, filming

becomes a process of selection from all that is out there towards the realisation of this particular idea or argument. I became curious about how noticing could become a method to allow a nonfiction audiovisual project evolve from the environment filmed, as opposed to only the intentions of a filmmaker.

For Panse, Benning's utilisation of the extreme long take and what she calls the "external structure" of the duration of the shot being dictated by the length of a film reel, how long it takes someone to smoke a cigarette, or how long it takes a train to pass through the frame allows Benning's films to evolve from what is happening in the environment he is filming (Panse "*Ten Skies*" 43). This "external structure" of the length of a film reel is utilised in *Ten Skies* where Benning filmed ten shots of skies for ten minutes each and in *13 Lakes* where he filmed 13 shots of lakes for ten minutes each. When Benning transitioned from film to digital, he utilised other "external structures" such as the time it takes someone to smoke a cigarette in *Twenty Cigarettes* ("Berlinale 2011") and in *Ruhr* the time it took for a train to pass through and exit a frame (Panse "*Ten Skies*" 42). These structures or constraints can be considered "external" because something outside of Benning's own subjectivity decided when a shot would end.

Along with these durational "external structure[s]" a static camera is used in all of Benning's films in what he describes as a "fixed gaze"—"you see everything that moves, because the camera doesn't" (Panse "Land as Protagonist", 61). "External structure[s]" and "fixed gaze[s]" became Benning's constraints, which allowed him to make films "that actually *look*" (Panse "Land as Protagonist", italics in original, 66). They "look" because what they come to notice evolves indeterminately from the environment and a preconceived structure, as opposed to a preconceived idea. For Benning, his approach to filmmaking highlights that "maybe nothing's true, but what's out there. What you look at is true, but what you look at is always changing" (Panse "Land as Protagonist" 67). Through these constraints in Benning's films, what results is a particular attentiveness to "what's out there" in its "always changing" forms because he does not know what his camera will film of the unpredictable environment in front of it (Panse "Land as Protagonist" 67).

For Panse, this "external structure" ("*Ten Skies*" 43)—of camera and world in Benning's films—"bring[s] out the *imperceptible*" in what she proposes as an eco-aesthetics of "what cannot be directly perceived" ("*Ten Skies*", italics in original, 37). For Panse, the "*imperceptible*" (italics in original, 37) emerges in Benning's films because he looks and listens "for a long time in a not very

eventful space” and, in doing so, “different assemblages to those perceived at the time by the filmmaker” take place in the film (“*Ten Skies*” 46). In other words, because Benning places his camera in a largely uneventful environment for a long amount of time, he gives his camera the opportunity to film the world in excess of what he can possibly notice while filming.

An example of how the “imperceptible” emerges through Benning’s impulse, camera, and world is provided by Panse in relation to an 18-minute shot in *Ruhr* of a frame filled with foliage. At the beginning of this shot, for nearly two minutes the foliage is completely still; there is absolutely no movement in the frame. The lack of any movement in this particular nonfiction image is a result of: the foliage being completely still at the time of filming; the camera not moving as it was presumably mounted on a tripod; and the image rendered completely still because the footage was shot digitally. If this particular image had been shot on film there would have been movement, as the “film grain would still be moving, or the projection would make little jolts, even if nothing moved in front of the camera” (Panse “*Ten Skies*” 46). After nearly two minutes of complete stillness, a plane flies from the back of the frame over the foliage—yet the foliage remains still—and it is only after a short pause—when we can no longer see or hear the plane—that the foliage starts moving. This process of complete stillness, plane flying, pause, and then leaves moving repeats throughout this 18-minute shot.

While digital video can render stillness in the frame so we can notice the subtle movements of the leaves in this shot of *Ruhr*, we could argue that this stillness of digital video is a limitation as well: nothing in the world is actually still. This stillness creates uncertainty in *Ruhr* as to what makes the leaves move, where digital video and Benning’s static shot allow for a noticing of the ecosystem that the “plane generates ... which the movement in the moving images is part of” (Panse “*Ten Skies*” 48). Panse proposes that *Ruhr* as a high-definition video “brings the material labour of the nonhuman protagonists to the fore” because the “materiality of the medium does not prevent contemplating the material connections of the world it depicts, but instead brings out the imperceptible” (“*Ten Skies*” 48). What is available to be attended to in the image is what happened at the time of filming as a result of the environment, Benning, digital video, long take, and static shot. What Panse proposes is that, through Benning’s constraints, a film practice emerges that is not separate from the world but part of the environment it depicts.

While the six-second constraint I utilised in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* can be considered an “external structure” because my subjectivity did not determine how long something was filmed, I wondered whether this extremely short duration enacts “actually look[ing]” (Panse “Land as Protagonist” italics in original, 66). *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* evolve indeterminately from a position of noticing; however, they do not notice small changes happening over time in a rather still environment, as this can only really be noticed in a long take (Panse “Land as Protagonist” 67). If we consider Benning’s “external structure[s]” as favouring the extreme long take towards an aesthetics of the “always changing” (Panse “Land as Protagonist” 67), then the six-second constraint of the Vine video app as the “external structure” of my practice might be considered an aesthetics of the repetitive glimpse. However, this glimpse still resonates with Benning because six seconds of little movement can be considered quite long in the context of online video production.

I discuss these clips as glimpses because only one moment is recorded and repetitive as a Vine video loops indefinitely, both originally in the Vine app and in the K-films themselves. In *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* each currently playing clip continually loops until the user selects a new thumbnail to open and play. There are, then, two indefinite qualities to these K-films: clips can always reappear; and they loop endlessly. While each moment of noticing in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* is short in duration, their ability to loop and reappear invites the user to spend time noticing the multiple visual qualities which made up a particular sky, field, river, wall, ground and so on at the time the video was filmed.

Indefinite Loops

This looping quality of the clips in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* allows glimpses to be studied in a similar way to how Panse talks about the environments of Benning’s films—water, sky, wind—as “collective forces of moving materials (unlike human or nonhuman animal nature, there is no individual wind or sky)” (Panse “Ten Skies” 43). As Benning’s films, such as *Ten Skies* and *13 Lakes*, fragment the sky into ten long glances at the sky and 13 long glances at water, we can start noticing the particular “moving materials” and aesthetic details in these environments (Panse “Ten Skies” 43). For instance, the “moving materials” of *Ten Skies* are the clouds, birds, smoke, Sun, and Moon which we see in the sky fragments, and the aesthetic details of these “moving

materials" are shifts in colour and light (Panse "Ten Skies" 43). For Panse, these "collective forces ... can be framed ... but cannot be separated from another in terms of its matter, only arbitrarily in a frame or by a set point in time" ("Ten Skies" 43). By fragmenting the sky into ten glances at the sky, we can see how the matter of the sky is "always changing" (Panse "Land as Protagonist" 67).

In the case of *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* there are multiple clips showing environments of collective force; sky and water in particular. While these clips are short in duration, it is the looping which repeats the aesthetic details and "moving materials" of each clip to invite the user to tune into what makes up the sky or water at a particular time. For instance, one of the clips from *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* shows a flying bird reflecting off water (fig. 16). The "moving materials" of this particular shot are the bird and the soft ripples of water, where the aesthetic details of reflection are made possible through the water's ability to reflect. What this looping quality of clips in my K-films does is invite the aesthetic qualities of a particular glimpse to be noticed by giving the user time to pay attention to how something appears at different moments. This affinity between Benning's attending to "always changing" forces and my own work made me realise that it is how the environment creates visual qualities which matters to my practice of listening to notice the unnoticed.



Fig. 16 A clip of a bird reflecting off water in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*

This quality of the loop to draw attention, as things repeat over and over again, is a particular characteristic which appears abundantly in networked online practices. Perhaps we could argue the loop is the equivalent of the long take

for online, fragmented viewing experiences. For instance, Treske considers the looping feature of Vine videos to perform similarly to other web-specific media such as the animated GIF and the cinemagraph. The animated GIF creates and then loops movement by layering still images together, and Beck and Burg's cinemagraph animates something in a still photograph and loops that animation. Treske describes these cinemagraphs as containing within themselves a "living moment that allows a glimpse of time to be experienced and preserved endlessly" (113). The endlessly repeating "living moment[s]" of Beck and Burg's cinemagraphs include bubbles blowing from a person's mouth, cola pouring from a can into a glass, and water rippling around a person's body (Treske 113). The cinemagraphs are not unlike Benning's films because small moments of movement intensify in largely still environments.

In *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* Vine videos fragment an environment into aesthetic moments or aspects—stillness, movement, light, shape, colour, dripping, reflection, shadow—and, as these moments repeat indefinitely, visual qualities intensify and become more noticeable. Treske's "living moment" and "glimpse" to describe the cinemagraph seem appropriate terms for the Vines I collected through phases of noticing and listing to notice. The Vines that became clips in *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* intensify visual "aspects of the moment" into a priming of attention towards the discrete details of the environments which surround us (Treske 103). If the clips in my films perform a dwelling on visual detail, why does this way of noticing the world in repeating fragments matter?

Through a Posthuman Lens

From making *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* I realised that what my K-films do is quickly stitch together and highlight details of the world through juxtaposition, gathering, and repetition. What this highlighting allows for is a tuning into the discrete qualities which make things up. This tuning in then sets up a priming to these qualities when I iteratively go out to film again. It was from here that I started to see parallels between how theorists in materialism and posthumanism think about the world and how I was describing my projects as attending to the world in fragments and soft relations. For instance, Bennett in *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* thinks about the world as "populated by animate things rather than passive objects" (vii), while Stewart considers matterings, complex emergent worlds, enigmas, oblique events, and background noises to make up the world ("Atmospheric Attunements" 445). For Ingold, animals and

organisms are “knots in a tissue of knots” inseparable from their relations to each other and the environment (70). Tsing proposes that “precarity is the condition of our time” made up of “unpredictable encounters”, “shifting assemblages”, and “indeterminacy” (*italics in original*, 20). Can we use these ways of thinking about the world as a way to think about and describe a multilinear nonfiction practice which lists in order to notice the unnoticed using Korsakow? By mapping affinities between multilinear and posthuman ways of thinking about the world, I wondered whether listing to notice the unnoticed contributes a relational and fragmented way of sensing the fluxing and precarious world.

As “Precarious” Landscapes

From anthropological perspectives, Stewart and Tsing both consider the world precarious because it is an “emergent form” (Stewart “Precarity’s Forms” 519) “without teleology” (Tsing 20). Stewart describes precarity as the “singularity of emergent phenomena—their plurality, movement, imperfection, immanence, incommensurateness, the way that they accrete, accrue and wear out” (“Precarity’s Forms” 518). Tsing describes precarity as the “condition of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters transform us; we are not in control, even of ourselves” (20). Precarity is an unpredictable and emergent movement of things that affects us uncontrollably.

Stewart writes about two precarious forms, being frailty and regionality. She discusses how precarity has different registers, from the “obvious and totalizing dramatizations” of frailty to the “precious without melodrama, ... attachments, or ways of living” of regionality (“Precarity’s Forms” 519). Stewart outlines the precarious conditions of frailty imposed on her mother after her father’s death as “useless expenditure”: forgetting numbers without realising; loss of eyesight and consequentially a driver’s licence; secret falls on uneven ground, off stools, and into corners which led to unknown broken bones; and the final twist of a hurricane causing a tree to split her mother’s house in half. Regionality is another precarious form Stewart specifically draws on because, for her, a region and arguably any place is always “emergent” where people, seasons, houses, and trees come together to compose the aesthetic tone and rhythms of place (“Precarity’s Forms” 519). Stewart provides New England as her example of a region where winter creates “dark tunnel[s]” and summer creates “yellow light passing out to yards” (“Precarity’s Forms” 519). She further notes that, all year long, the people lining up for ice-cream create different configurations of shadows on a wall (“Precarity’s Forms” 520).

For Tsing, precarity forms ecologically in the indeterminacy of the news we hear everyday: people losing jobs; animals “at the edge of extinction”; and rising seas swallowing islands (20). Frailty, regionality, loss, extinction, and rising seas mark the world as precarious because they cause unplanned, unpredictable, shifting, and indeterminate things to happen all the time outside of human control. For Tsing, precarity is the “condition of our [Anthropocentric] time” (20), although I argue precarity has always been a condition, because we can never predict the things that will transform us and others; nothing is protected or certain.

In the filming of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* I encounter a precarious landscape on an overcast summer day in the bush up the road from where my grandparents live in Bendigo, a regional town in Victoria, Australia. My dad and I take my parents’ dog, Archie, for a run in the bush. Dad and I follow the dirt path and Archie zooms off out of sight among the trees, resurfacing momentarily when my dad calls him back and then running off again. As we walk, I film five fragments of Archie resurfacing with the Vine app on my phone (fig. 17). Unusually, as Bendigo is renowned for being dry, there has been a downpour of rain in previous days, causing large puddles, which my dad and I step around and Archie cautiously walks through. Clouds move and the sun emerges, causing an increase in humidity, mosquitoes, and shadows as trees emit vertical lines across the landscape; I film these lines. As I walk, swatting mosquitoes away, I stumble into a long blackened log, presumably burnt down by fire. This log stands out against the relatively green bush, so I film its circular end in close-up, letting it float in the middle of the frame. Filming this circular end of the log primes me to notice the presence of other logs and circular things as I walk, where I end up collecting six Vines of circles in this bush environment (fig. 18). Archie’s movements through the bush, the way the sun creates humidity with water, mosquitoes and shadows, and the circular patterns which make up this bush environment describe some of the visual details of the hour or so I am there. What I notice and film respond to how movements, elements, and objects precariously operate to create shifting aesthetics of landscape.



Fig. 17 Five Vines of Archie in the bush



Fig. 18 Six Vines of circles in the bush

Ross Gibson, from a digital humanities perspective, opens the introduction to his book *Changescapes: Complexity, Mutability, Aesthetics* by describing a raked clearing surrounded by “stacked short bolts of timber” he encountered deep in the Pilliga Scrub (1), a native Australian forest. Within this clearing, Gibson talks of three structures: one made of timber housing an old wheel-less truck—with drive-belts attached and presumably functioning as a sawmill if powered—a small wooden shack enclosing someone’s bed (3); and a “kind of miniature temple” with “‘relics’ of the forest” including a skeleton of a marsupial, a melted telephone, and a skull of a cat (4). Gibson describes this assemblage of sawmill, bed, and temple as “aesthetic ‘power plants’ ... inside the bigger force-field” of the raked clearing (4). For Gibson, these structures become “power plants” because they emit a particular charge as he approaches which exceeds his own particular knowing or understanding of this environment. As he notes, this clearing:

rendered each structure into a compressed zone that intensified a particular emotional charge within a larger compound which was already extraordinarily atmospheric, so deliberately rarefied and intensified in comparison to the rest of the forest. (4)

Upon his return to this clearing on the following day, Gibson meets with the resident and designer of the space who, after a short chat, powers the mill to cut some timber. Gibson notes that, “when I asked him why he continued to work so hard every day making this cache of lumber that he plainly never made any attempt to sell, he said that the forest is always offering timber ready for cutting” (7). For Gibson, this clearing prompted his notion of a “changescape” as a “predominantly meditative, albeit laborious construct that was internally maintained and always evolving in concert with a dynamic environment that pressed in from outside” (9). A “changescape” for Gibson is a work altering with the world as it continually shifts to perform the changing environment it is within.

The sound of Archie running, the emergence of the sun, accidentally running into a log, and the blackness of that particular log can be considered similarly

to the timber of Gibson's experience: as an environment offering visual details for filming due to its precarity. This is largely how I collected the initial Vines for *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, when I would commute to and from places and collect these aesthetic offerings from the environments I was in. In addition, *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* has affinities with Gibson's "changescape" because it evolves in concert with how my camera notices an environment which exceeds myself, where the list and Korsakow prime attentiveness to particular qualities in further noticing.

I have already described two instances of how particular noticed qualities of the world generated sequences and primed further noticing. In the previous chapter, I used the clip of horizontal lines to discuss how I built a sequence based on this previously unnoticed visual quality which came to my attention through listing. I described how listing primes further noticing by explaining how the listed item of "a shadow of a building on a building" prompted me to notice this quality when I went out to film. Listing invites a noticing of patterns and rhythms in the world collected by myself, Vine, and my phone camera, where my iterative process uses these qualities listed to evolve the project according to the visual details gathered by the list. I use the word "evolve" because *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* is an ongoing project that continually repeats this iterative cycle of noticing in the world, listing to notice the unnoticed, and then using these unnoticed visual qualities to prime further attention. *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* could be proposed as a "changescape" which evolves "in concert with a dynamic environment" that presses in from the outside (Gibson 9), because my process dynamically dances between environment, technology, and project to feed unnoticed aesthetics into the K-film, then out into the world, and back again.

As "Vibrant" Things

Similar to Gibson, although from a political sciences perspective, Bennett describes an encounter she has with an assemblage of things in a particular environment. These things she comes across are a glove, oak pollen, a dead rat, a plastic bottle cap, and a wooden stick "on a sunny Tuesday morning on 4 June in the grate over the storm drain to the Chesapeake Bay in front of Sam's Bagels on Cold Spring Lane in Baltimore" (Bennett 4). She proposes that she came to notice these things, at this particular time, in this particular place because of the "fortuity of ... [this] particular assemblage, but also by a certain anticipatory readiness on [her] in-side, by a perceptual style open to the appearance of

thing-power" (Bennett 5). For Bennett, "thing-power" describes how items of the world, such as this pile of what some would consider rubbish, exceed and become independent of their human use (xvi).

For Bennett, this assemblage of things lying in the gutter exceed their human use and emerge not as rubbish but as "vibrant" things in the world independent of our understanding and use of them (viii). As Bennett explains, these things "commanded attention in ... [their] own right, as existents in excess of their association with human meanings, habits, or projects" (4). By removing the container of human understanding of what things are and how they are used, things are allowed to be seen ecologically as having freedom and agency, what Bennett describes as "vibrant matter" (viii). Looking at the things of the world as "vibrant matter" affords an ecological noticing and care towards the environment because we can begin to see human and nonhuman entanglements outside of our own personal trajectories (Bennett viii). To develop "anticipatory readiness" to this "vibrancy" of things, we must try to notice what things are and do beyond our initial understanding of them (Bennett 5).

In relation to noticing this particular constellation, Bennett proposes there was a "nameless awareness of the impossible singularity of *that* rat, *that* configuration of pollen, [and] *that* otherwise utterly banal, mass produced plastic water-bottle cap" (italics in original, 4). This moment, for Bennett, is an "impossible singularity" because this particular pile of stuff at the particular dot-point moment she was there, walking down the street, in that particular light, in a certain mood primed a noticing of this happenstance collection of things. As Bennett notes, "for had the sun not glinted on the black glove, I might not have seen the rat; had the rat not been there, I might not have noted the bottle cap, and so on" (5). Bennett, glove, rat, pollen, bottle cap, street, weather, morning, and sun provided some of the things that created this entangled moment of agency. Of course this list is not exhaustive and there are limitations to what is possible to be selected and noticed by us as humans. For instance, Bennett notices these things as things, not as their molecular makeup or as a collection of atoms.

Each of these things, together and inseparable from each other, in this particular moment, along with Bennett's own attentiveness, prime a noticing of this constellation. For Bennett, the world is made up of "vibrant" dense things in an entangled web of agency (viii). By discussing the images of my practice as emerging from an entanglement of environment, myself, lists, Korsakow, and

phone camera, I can start seeing how an “impossible singularity” may form (4). This attention towards the different components of my practice is important because it shows how we can become more aware of how our practices respond to and shape the world.

Thinking about the world as “contingent tableau[s]” (Bennett 5) of “impossible singularit[ies]” (Bennett 4) provides a way to think about the fragments and multiple soft relations in my non-narrative mode of interactive filmmaking. I came to notice the many visual qualities of my videos when I began my first phase of listing (when viewing my raw Vines), and this density is maintained in the K-film because the clips have multiple possible relations to each other. In *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* the 23 Vine videos of the view outside my skylight provide an example of how we can talk about a K-film as thinking about the world as “contingent tableau[s]” of “impossible singularit[ies]”. I collect a lot of these views outside my skylight because it is where I wake up in Leeds. Every morning I flick the blind on my skylight to let light pour into my room and subsequently this becomes what I film as my “when I wake up” Vines. When I view this collection of Vines, filmed through this somewhat banal morning ritual, and list what I notice, I become attentive towards the varying shades of grey, white, and blue, how water gathers in different configurations, and how rain splashes on the glass, as words associated with colour, weather, and light repeat on my list (fig. 19).



Fig. 19 Views from outside my skylight collected for *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy*

As I watch these clips of the sky outside my skylight and list, I notice the intricacies of the sky in a similar way to Benning, as not much action ever happens in the frame. Small movements such as birds flying, clouds drifting, and water drizzling come to be noticed as the visual qualities of the sky in these particular six-second moments. This sort of listing, which uncovers the particular aesthetic qualities of the sky in a particular place, at a particular time, on a particular day, attends to the sky as an “impossible singularity” of the things that make it up and (Bennett 4), because each of these sky clips loops, reappears indefinitely, and has multiple keywords, it is always in a “contingent tableau” with other clips beyond the sky clips in the project (Bennett 5). Therefore, the list in this multilinear context reveals the sky outside my skylight as not simply the sky, but as shapes, colours, light, movements, stillness, organisms, glass, rain, reflections, and so on, and what the user comes to notice in the sky is indeterminate because the software partly determines what make up the “impossible singularit[ies]” of the film. In *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* clips which may appear at first to show the same thing always remain separate and granular. Through interaction with these repetitions of similar scenes, the user is encouraged to notice how the same sky outside the same skylight, or the same landscape outside a train, will always shift depending on other factors such as time and light.

As “Meshes” in *Flux*

Like Bennett, Ingold describes the world as consisting of individual things which cannot be untangled from their relations with others and the environment they are part of. Ingold describes the world as a “*meshwork*” of “interwoven lines” of human and nonhuman relations (italics in original, 60). Ingold uses three simple line-based diagrams to explain how everything is a relation: a closed circle; a squiggly line (69); and a tangle of numerous lines spindling out from a central source (70). The outline of a closed-circle represents a view of the world where everything is contained within itself, disconnected and “against a surrounding world” (70). The singular line details things of the world as trails of movement, and the multiple spindly line diagram shows the things of the world as “extend[ing] along not one but multiple trails” (70). For Ingold, the world is this final diagram because living things are not closed off from the environment they are in; rather, they flow through as always-moving lines.

Further, because these things as lines cannot be separated from the various relations they have with this environment, they “extend along multiple pathways

of their involvement in the world" (Ingold 70). For Ingold, then, there is no "boundary" to organisms and therefore no surrounding environment (70) but, rather,

lines of growths issuing from multiple sources [that] become comprehensively entangled with one another, rather like the vines and creepers of a dense patch of tropical forest, or the tangled root systems that you cut through with your spade every time you dig in the garden. (71)

The world as "*meshwork*" for Ingold is a "tangle" of organisms and environments. These things as multiple entangled relations see the world as flux because everything is moving along their multiple paths, affecting each other's paths continually.

Pickering, from a science and technology perspective, uses the term "mangle" to consider scientific practice as a "dance" of "resistance and accommodation" between scientists and the "material agency" of the world, resonating with Ingold's "*meshwork*" as a tangle between human, nonhuman, and environmental relations. For Pickering, the world is "filled ... with agency" of "continually *doing things*" that "bear upon us ... as forces of material beings" (italics in original, 6). An example Pickering provides to show how the world is made up of forces that constantly do is the weather. For Pickering, weather is a material agent because conditions such as "winds, storms, droughts, floods, heat and cold ... engage with our bodies as well as our minds, often in life-threatening ways" (6). These conditions are "life-threatening" because if we did not have buildings, clothing, and heating, "one would die quite quickly" (6). Weather conditions, then, provide an example of a force "continually *doing things*" because these conditions constantly change (Pickering, italics in original, 6). Further, as these shifts cannot be isolated from the things they affect, such as the ability for grass to grow, lakes to flow, and animals to drink, the weather is a material agent. For Pickering, these emergent relations between things "*doing things*" (italics in original, 6) is a "dialectic of resistance and accommodation" (xi). These dialectics of things adapting and changing with each other, for Pickering, are the patterns of the world (xi).

Similarly, Ingold uses the weather as an example of the world as "*meshwork*". He notes that "weather is dynamic, always unfolding, ever changing in its currents, qualities of light and shade, and colours, alternately damp or dry, warm or cold"

(73). Further, he notes how the weather affects moods, motivations, movements, and possibilities of subsistence of everything making its way “through” the world, sculpting and eroding the “surfaces upon which inhabitants tread” as well (Ingold 73). So, because weather always changes and in doing so affects the many things which move through the world in various ways, we can consider the patterns of the sky and the earth as made up of relations that change and adapt to each other constantly and continually in indeterminate ways.

In Ingold’s thinking about the world as “*meshwork*” and Pickering’s as “*mangle*” lie affinities with how I describe multilinearity as fragments with multiple soft relations. Take a clip which shows a sequence of sunset-lit pink clouds from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* as an example, where “colour” and “light” have been attributed as “in” and “out” keywords. What this keywording means is any clip with “colour” or “light” as an “out” keyword can find this clip as a thumbnail, and this pink-cloud clip searches for any clips with “colour” or “light” as “in” keywords to become available in the three thumbnail positions. As there are 13 clips with “colour” as an “in” keyword and 42 clips with “light” as an “in” keyword, then there should be 57 possible clips that this pink-clouds clip can find. However, because a clip in a K-film cannot search for itself and there are seven clips which have “colour” and “light” as “in” keywords, we must subtract eight from this total, meaning that this pink-cloud clip searches for 47 other clips and there are 49 other clips which can find this clip. If I was going to draw a diagram of this clip, I would draw 49 lines coming into a point from the left and 47 lines emerging out towards the right as visualised in figure 20. Each clip in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* could be drawn in this way and if linked together in a diagram would appear entangled.

In this way, a clip which is a sequence in a K-film is multiple because it is made up of different views; it then has multiple possible connections both in and out so, while it always remains granular, it is always entangled in its relations with other clips as well. What the clips in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* look and perform like are the “multiple trail” entangled lines of Ingold’s “*meshwork*”, “extend[ing] along not one but multiple trails, issuing from a source” (70). The interfaces of my K-films further evoke this entanglement of granular things as each playing video always appears in a line, in equal size, with three thumbnail options. It can be argued that the soft multiple relations which take place between clips and the reinforcing interface design allow my K-films to perform the world as Ingold’s “*meshwork*”.

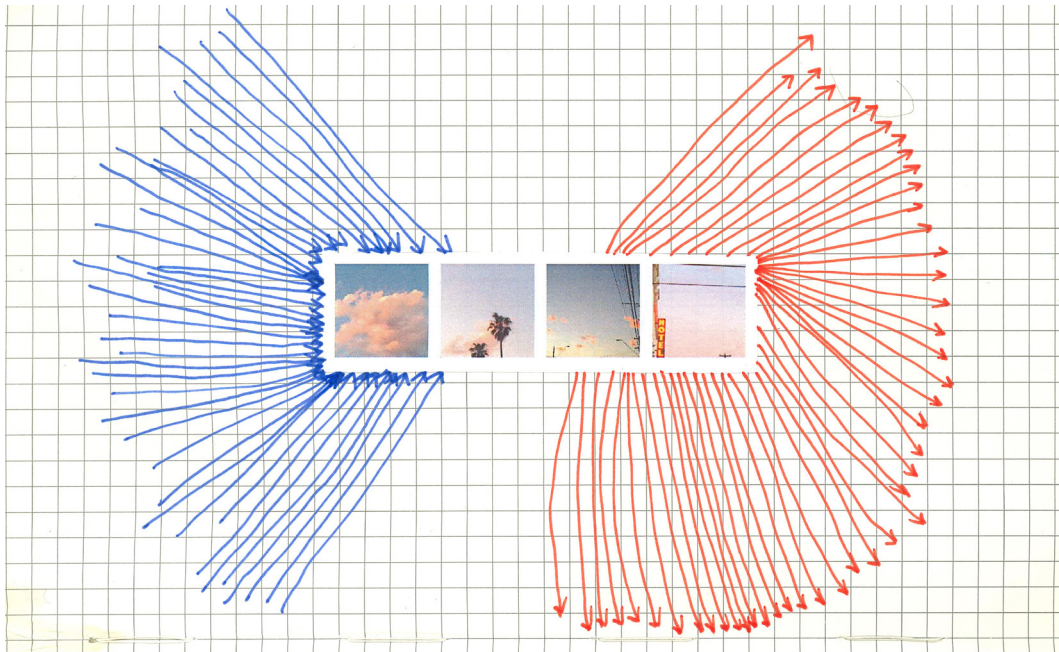


Fig. 20 A clip of sunset-lit pink clouds as “meshwork” from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

End

I have found that an implication of the list, as a way of making non-narrative multilinear nonfiction in Korsakow, is a priming towards noticing the unnoticed. The modernist avant-garde, Benning’s eco-aesthetics, Tsing’s and Stewart’s precarity, Gibson’s “changescape”, Bennett’s “impossible singularity”, Ingold’s “meshwork”, and Pickering’s “mangle” all provide lenses through which to understand this practice. What all these ways of thinking about the world do is see the world as made up of dynamic individual things in entangled relations. From a nonfiction film perspective, these dynamic things are the rhythms of rain Ivens searches for in Amsterdam and the skies which Benning watches with his camera in *Ten Skies*. Although Benning’s oeuvre is highly consistent and Ivens’s is much more variable (although he does return to weather and climate often), what I came to realise is that Ivens searches the world for the multiple ways rain appears in Amsterdam, whereas Benning to a greater degree lets patterns materialise in his films. My iterative process, which lets unnoticed visual aesthetic qualities feed into the project and then out to shape the way I notice the world, is one that explores how patterns are found in the relationship between myself, the phone camera, Vine as an app, and the Korsakow software.

From here, I came to realise that this way to think about the world in fragments and multiple soft relations resonates with posthuman ways of thinking about the

world as precarious, fluxing, changing, and mesh-like. Stewart, Tsing, Gibson, Ingold, and Pickering think about the world as made up of dynamic things which are always changing and affecting their relations with other things. Listing in order to notice the unnoticed as a non-narrative mode of interactive filmmaking performs the world as precarious, fluxing, and mesh-like, because the things of the world are drawn attention to both as individual and relational things which change indeterminately in a dance between what the clips show, how they have been programmed, what the Korsakow software provides, and what the user notices. While this chapter has focused primarily on how the process of making invites a posthuman thinking about the world, what I will consider next is what these K-films do as machines which perform fragments and soft relations, and how this offers an ecocritical practice.

SIX

SENSING THE WORLD

What I have done so far is discuss the two key outcomes of this research, which have emerged iteratively through the four K-films I have made. The first outcome is a fragmented and relational non-narrative multilinear nonfiction practice, developed from the implications of multilinearity as a site for networked audiovisual practices. The second is a list practice which invites attention towards the unnoticed, being the underlying or previously unconsidered details which make up an environment, media object, or thing, allowing us to reconsider it as multiple. This way of attending to the world has strong affinities with ecocritical and posthuman ways of thinking about it. What is left for me to consider is, why do thinking and making with the world in fragments and soft multiple relations matter to the contemporary world?

For the theorists John Law, Pickering, Gibson, and Tsing, respectively, practices of noticing come closer to attending to the messy, “continually *doing*” (italics in original, 6), constantly changing, and entangled qualities of the world, qualities often left out of more teleological practices. Murphie, Craig Hight, and Miles argue that digital, multilinear, and interactive forms offer opportunities for sensing the world in this indeterminate way. As my practice notices in fragments and soft multiple relations, what I propose is that listening to notice the unnoticed as performed through K-films contributes a sensing of this unruly world as an ecocritical multilinear nonfiction practice. As such, I largely refer to what *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* does as the most significant work within my creative outputs.

In Fragments and Relations

As Messy Textures

For a while I thought of the K-films I was making as messy in light of how Law, from a social science context, describes the world as consisting of “potentially endless” textures (6). For Law, mess as the texture of the world is things such as:

pains and pleasures, hopes and horrors, intuitions and apprehensions,
losses and redemptions, mundanities and visions, angels and demons,

things that slip and slide, or appear and disappear, change shape or don't have much form at all, unpredictabilities. (2)

In light of these ungraspable qualities, I considered my K-films, especially *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, to be performing Law's mess because moments of noticing are not clearly or programmatically structured and "appear and disappear" in the interface (2). The interface and the films then change shape as new currently playing videos are opened indeterminately, where the software and the user have agency that cannot be predicted. Yet as I kept thinking about my work as messy because it performs these qualities, I realised "mess" may not be quite the right term, as there is an overwhelming aesthetic neatness in how my work is presented and the utilisation of a systematic approach as well. The equally spaced video windows, white background, and keywording do impose a soft ordering, both visually and structurally, of these fragments of noticing which make up the K-films.

If the world is messy for Law because it changes "like a kaleidoscope, or doesn't have much of a pattern at all" (2), I cannot argue that my K-films are strictly messy, because my process of listing specifically looks for patterns which I then use to loosely organise the films. While my K-films, or any K-film for that matter, cannot and do not perform all of the messy textures of the world, what I argue is that my K-films do perform some of Law's textures due to their softness. If "simple clear descriptions", "orderly accounting", methodological auditing, regulating, and standardising are practices, for Law, which miss the unruly nature of the world, which is "not itself very coherent" (2), then the soft indeterminacy of my K-films may be considered a way to begin attending to the world's incoherent textures. Evolving from this argument that orderly methods fail to capture the world's textures, Law asks, "how might we catch some of the realities we are currently missing" (2)? Perhaps listing in order to notice the unnoticed is a way of catching "some of the realities we are currently missing" within audiovisual non-narrative interactive nonfiction (Law 2).

In *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* different qualities of clips come to be noticed as they repeat in relation to a variety of other clips. For example, in an imagined user experience the first video which plays might be a sequence showing waves crashing on a beach (fig. 21). The three accompanying thumbnails might show: different scenes encompassing the same dog; another sequence showing water; and the third showing a sequence of traffic at sunset. Your attention may be drawn to the first two thumbnails because they appear to resonate with

the clip of waves playing. If your interests lie in looking for resonances, you might select the clip showing another sequence of water because it connects visually with the waves in the clip you are currently watching. Upon looking at the new thumbnails—of feet hiding in the corner of a darkened frame, an open hand, and a clenched fist—which appear as this new watery image starts playing, you do not quite see how these clips relate. All of the thumbnails seem to be movements of body parts, while the playing clip shows movements of water. As you leave your cursor on the clip of hands moving and watch it play simultaneously with the currently playing clip, you notice a similar pattern in how water ripples in a rock pool and how a clenched fist uncurls into an open hand. You select this uncurling hand to open next.

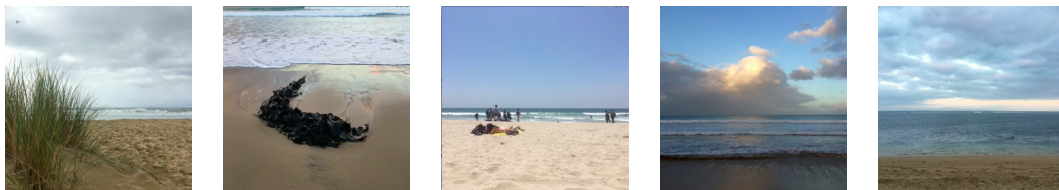


Fig. 21 A sequence showing waves and sand at the beach from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

As the next set of thumbnails open in relation to the uncurling hand, you immediately notice the clip of waves has reappeared as a thumbnail (fig. 21), along with the dog in a puddle, and a third thumbnail shows bodies of water. You select the thumbnail of the dog, thinking there might be a living creatures thread. However, the thumbnails appearing surprise you as they are all of buildings: a blue house; an abstract building; and the edge of a hotel at sunset (fig. 22). You notice buildings as a similarity between the thumbnails, although you do not quite see how they relate to the different perspectives of a dog. You are unsure, so you select the clip of the abstract-looking house because it visually stands out in contrast to the rather mundane buildings of the other thumbnails. After watching this new sequence loop a few times, you notice a pulsing sun reoccurs in all of its shots, shifting your attention from buildings to the circular light of the sun (fig. 23). Upon noticing this quality of light, you notice light in the thumbnails: glimmering off streamers; casting shadows on a public housing complex; and as small white dots in an otherwise black frame.

As you move through a few more clips by looking, scrolling, deciding, and selecting, you begin to notice a repetition of clips showing different perspectives and variations on light. Further, you begin to see that it is not only that light repeats across clips, but it is framed as a central component throughout

numerous clips. For instance, in the images shown in figure 22 it is the colour and light of the sky that are emphasised in the framing, as opposed to the building themselves. What *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* does is encourage attention to be drawn to the visual qualities which make up particular moments in time as they reveal themselves through repetition, composition, and framing. The K-film draws attention towards the multiple visual textures of things and environments, which may have gone unnoticed had particular moments not been repeated and therefore not seen in relation to new visual things. As visual details in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* are emphasised in the framing and repetition, a user who stays with the work long enough will presumably tune into the multiplicity of things and environments.

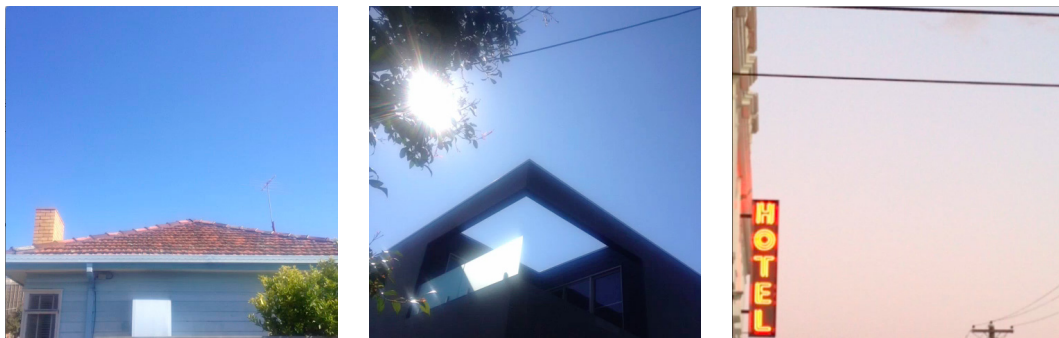


Fig. 22 The thumbnails of buildings which become available to an imagined user while watching a clip of a dog in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

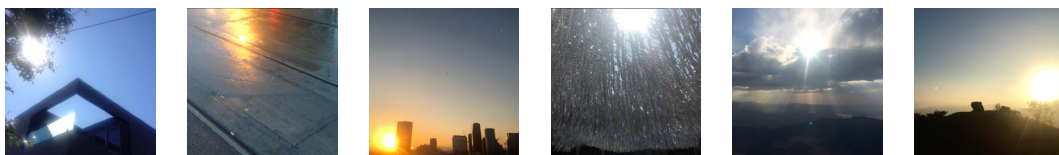


Fig. 23 A sequence of the sun glinting from *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*

By “Tuning” in

Pickering’s thinking about science as a process of resistance and accommodation between human and nonhuman agency provides another comparative lens through which to understand what *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* does. Pickering considers science a resistance and accommodation for the performative idiom, which he contrasts with the representational idiom. While the performative idiom, for Pickering, can attend to the “material, social, and temporal dimensions” of scientific practice, the representative idiom leaves these things

out because it considers “science-as-knowledge” (6). In other words, the representative idiom reduces the complexity of what scientific practice does to an “activity that seeks to represent nature” (5), whereas the performative idiom seeks to attend to nature as agency, as “forces upon material beings” (6). For Pickering, if things are “continually *doing*” then representing things as facts and observations to be turned into knowledge leaves this doing and shifting out (*italics in original, 6*).

Further, in the representational idiom scientists use machines to produce knowledge, whereas in the performative idiom what these machines do matters. As Pickering notes, science consists of the material agency of the world in relation to the intentions of scientists and the machines they use to:

variously capture, seduce, download, recruit, enroll, or materialize that agency, taming and domesticating it, putting it at our service, often in the accomplishment of tasks that are simply beyond the capacities of naked human minds and bodies, individually or collectively. (7)

A machine example which Pickering uses is a windmill which “grinds grain very much faster than a miller could do by hand” (7). For Pickering, moving from the representative to the performative idiom of science allows science to be “regarded [as] a field of powers, capacities, and performances, situated in machinic captures of material agency” (7). In the performative idiom, science is about “tuning” into the material agency of things doing things, where the machine provides this “tuning” device (14). This “tuning”, for Pickering, is like tuning a radio, with the exception that you do not quite know what the outcome of that tuning will be. In Pickering’s performative idiom, tuning “*works both ways*” where nonhuman agency finds things out about human agency and vice versa, and where machines like radios and windmills provide ways of performing this “tuning” (*italics in original, 16*).

Using similar terminology to Pickering, Gibson proposes “initiative-and-repercussion” as a method which affords the creation of “changescapes”, which are, as noted previously, artefacts which evolve with the shifting environment they are within (87). This method which Gibson provides is:

that we need to treat all discernible patterns as momentary sets of contingent principles in motion; then we have to take those principles *into* the boisterous environment, knowing that these precepts will soon

fail or need adjustment. Once we sense those failures and adjustments registering in our analytical faculties, we are momentarily stalled again, proposing another batch of contingent principles which we then take back into the system to see if they help us understand how all the dynamics are tending. (*italics in original*, 89)

In other words, what Gibson proposes is that we need to have an adaptive practice which looks to the world, creates from the world, brings back into the world, and changes again as the environment the work is made within continually shifts. Gibson values these “changescapes” because they “generate knowledge about change” (86) and embody his idea of complexity as an “event that is altering from moment to moment” (88).

While they come from different fields, Pickering and Gibson both call for a way of doing practice that requires evolving with the constantly changing world, in contrast to representing the world statically in a moment of capture. If we consider things to be always altering in their relations with other things, then what Gibson’s “changescape” allows for is the generation of works which perform flux, evolving and changing, without ever becoming locked-off, static, or representative of a moment which no longer exists. We can think about the relationship between the user, the clips as relations, and the software of a K-film, made through a process of listing to notice the unnoticed, as performing the world similarly to Pickering’s “resistance and accommodation” (xi) and Gibson’s “changescape”. To use Pickering’s terms, the Korsakow software provides a machine to prime the author and maker to tune into the discrete details of clips, and what is key to these works is that all users contribute to this “changescape” as well.

As noted previously, the four K-films I have made sit somewhere in between Soar’s scale from a linear to a completely random K-film (“Making (with) Korsakow” 163). While I have designed particular pools of visually linked clips, the number of clips in these pools always exceeds the number of thumbnail positions. Consequently, the software, alongside the possible relations attributed, has agency in “tuning” what the user’s attention will be drawn to. Further, the user “tunes” their experience of the work through deciding which thumbnail they will open next as a playing clip. However, they do not know where this selection will lead them, as a new set of indeterminate thumbnails will open. In this way a K-film operates similarly to Pickering’s “tuning”: as a “*dance of agency*” between user, possible relations, and software (*italics in original*,

21). To elaborate, in the user experience I described earlier in this chapter this imagined user notices buildings as a similarity between the three thumbnails showing a blue house, an abstract triangular structure, and a hotel at sunset, because the software has selected them to appear next to the clip of the dog (fig. 22). The user, in this particular scenario, notices buildings as a similarity because the first shot within each of these sequences shows a building.

While “building” is not a prescribed keyword in *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*, these clips appear next to a clip of a hand with “light” as an “out” keyword because they have “light” as an “in” keyword. Because there are 28 clips with the “light” “in” keyword, the software’s decision to select these three clips of buildings has material agency in what the user is likely to notice, which extends beyond the aesthetic pools of light, movement, shape, and colour, as the possible relations I have programmed. In an experience with a K-film, what the clips show, the software’s decisions, and the soft multiple relations programmed all invite is the user to tune into and attend to the multiplicity of certain things and environments, while the user tunes the K-film through their own actions. In Pickering’s terms, things “*doing*” in the world tune humans, and humans use machines to tune into the discreteness of the world (*italics in original*, 6). What *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* does is perform as a “tuning” device or “changescape” because it generates feedback loops between what the possible relations, software, and user notice. In this way, the K-films which make up the creative component of this research can be considered performative because pattern, software as machine, and user compose with bits of the world indeterminately. This indeterminate composing parallels Pickering’s “tuning” in science with tuning a radio where you do not quite know what the outcome of that tuning will be (14).

Through Software

Law’s mess, Pickering’s “tuning”, and Gibson’s “changescape” afforded me lenses through which to think about *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* as a “tuning” machine which composes the world in fragments and soft relations. Further, this composing forms through the shifting material and human agencies of user, software, relations, and fragments. This composing to “tune” has particular resonances with how Hight and Murphie consider digital and networked technologies to offer new ways of sensing the world. Hight proposes that in interactive documentary the “‘creative treatment of reality’ ... involves a hybrid of human and machine” (“Automation within Digital Videography” 235), while

Murphie proposes that digital and networked technics—including GoPro cameras, computer cameras, interactivity, locative, and mobile media—offer new ways of sensing the world (190), new ways which extend beyond offering “meaning” as a way of making sense (190). By looking at Murphie’s and Hight’s propositions that new digital and networked technologies offer new ways of making sense for interactive documentary, and offering my own work as an example, I wish to show why thinking about the world as fragments and relations matters to the field of digital media. To finish this chapter, I return to the new media and interactive documentary landscape where this research began by providing my response to what posthuman and ecocritical “new media scholarship might offer documentary” (Miles “Sketch Notes” 205). Looping back to the beginning to see where I am now seems like a suitable way to close this iterative cycle of my research trajectory.

As Sensory Experience

In Murphie’s “Making Sense: The Transformation of Documentary by Digital and Networked Media” he proposes that digital and networked media technics change how we make sense of the world. Murphie uses the GoPros utilised in Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Verena Paravel’s *Leviathan* as an example of how such media technics foster new ways of making sense. To make *Leviathan*, described by Murphie as a “direct record of a trawler at sea”, GoPros were flung into the ocean (off long planks of wood), strapped to crew members as they went about their daily tasks onboard, and strapped to the filmmakers as they “waded through dead and dying fish” (193). Because these GoPros recorded what they saw indifferently, Murphie considers *Leviathan* to “not [be] ‘shot’, in the full sense of fully authorial, intentional shots” because the filmmakers could not plan or control what the GoPros noticed (193). What the filmmakers did control was when the cameras filmed. For Murphie, GoPro aesthetics favour “movements and experience” because they literally move with the movements of the things they are attached to and, in doing so,

decentre the ‘human’. Even the movement of human bodies seems less human, more part of the broader world. Of course, the human is literally no longer ‘behind the camera’. The camera is more immediately moved with the forces of the world. (194)

This force of the world which the cameras move with in *Leviathan* is mostly water.

For Murphie, the affordance of the GoPro, as digital technic, in the viewing of a film is one that performs “intense sensuality” (194), “intense sensuality” because the camera literally moves with what it sees and this direct relationship between technic and world is rendered in the moving image. No narrative forms; rather, what we see is the GoPro itself sensing the world it notices. Arguably, these GoPros in *Leviathan* can be conceived of as priming or “tuning” machines because they materialise their relationship with fishermen and the ocean as the elements which relate in the trawling experience (Pickering 14). *Leviathan* thinks about the trawling experience in terms of the movements of a GoPro, partly exceeding human-centric meaning and evolving into a sensory experience. Arguably, these images only partly exceed human-centric meaning because they are combined into a sequence, in accordance with human-centric editorial decisions, which may imply particular meanings in the relations between shots. Murphie proposes that digital and networked media can think about the world as sensory experience. Although I did not use GoPros, the list in my practice does de-centre my own noticing to attend to how Vine, within my phone camera, and Korsakow sense the bits of the world I collect.

As Synthesis

Further, in Murphie’s article he explicitly discusses how platforms including Korsakow “necessitate an increasingly complex exploration of sense without guaranteed meaning” (195). Murphie suggests these networked ways of making sense “are just intensifying, if greatly, the kind of work performed on analog electronic technologies” such as the synthesiser (196). For Murphie, there is a similarity in the “sensate joy” we get from mixing, modulating, turning knobs, and making new relations using a synthesiser, and how we participate in a digital or networked documentary (196). For me, there are parallels between how my K-films compose the world in fragments and relations, and modular synthesis, where we are “physically twisting knobs, for cabling and plugging and unplugging components to make a new kind of music” (196). While each experience of *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* does not compose a completely new film, what can be proposed is that the user, software, and rules indeterminately synthesise different versions of the audiovisual nonfiction film with the same set of examples to produce a new mix.

This musical synthesis of new versions made with the same bits of the world mimics John Cage’s *Fontana Mix*, where:

Instead of a sequence of notes to be played as prescribed by a composer, Cage offers a finite system of elements that can be layered into infinite compositions. Hand-drawn on sheets of paper and clear acetate, Cage's wandering curved lines, randomly placed dots, rectangular grid, and single straight line all intersect when layered, becoming musical score of indeterminacy. (Tsing et al. x)

Thinking about my K-films as a synthesising of visual qualities, using the same notes in different arrangements, is helpful in re-thinking interactive nonfiction made using Korsakow: not as creating new realities through user experience, but as creating indeterminate sensings of the world. Through performing this affective experience as a dance between samples, rules, user, and machine, *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* does not offer a making sense of the world; rather, it invites a way of attending to the visual details of the world through the physical experience of what Murphie defines as "sensation" (196).

The process of making *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* can be thought of as sampling (collecting fragments), listing (while watching raw videos and exporting random K-films), and then sampling once again (when I go out to film again). Here, I pay further attention to this sampling again as it becomes a process of reworking, where Korsakow becomes a machine which "tunes". As the list picks up visual qualities, Korsakow primes me to notice particular things which inform what I sample (film) again, and these feed back into the work I have composed in Korsakow. My relationship with Korsakow is, then, a reciprocal "tuning" where it tunes me and I tune it in this particular way (Pickering 14). This iterative feedback loop of my own process and then the user's experience is an "ongoing mixing of signals, sensations and sense" (Murphie 196). My K-films can be thought of as sampling the world and reworking these samples through listing to notice which shows how the technics of my phone camera sense the world. The ongoing nature of this mixing is emphasised by how video content is added to *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* on a continual basis, where I collect more Vines, make more sequences, and add these to the project. As new clips are added, new relations form between its parts, continually shifting and expanding how this K-film senses the world.

As Incoherence

Hight approaches interactive documentary from a software studies perspective, making a similar argument to Murphie's through his proposition that software has

particular agency in how an interactive documentary makes or does not make sense of its parts. For Hight, interactive documentaries are intrinsically mediated through the particular affordances and constraints of the software tools they employ, and this mediation informs the type of sense-making the interactive documentary does (84). In relation to my K-films, the Korsakow software as machine primes and “tunes” attention towards visual qualities and then invites a priming of the user to notice these things as well. Multiple experiences of my K-films offer visual qualities for users to attend to in multiple ways. This conception of Korsakow as a “tuning” machine aligns with Hight’s proposition that Korsakow is an exception to the aims of most other interactive documentary projects. As he notes:

making sense suggests aiming for an underlying coherence in the cognitive and/or affective experience of the user—something which remains an ideal for interactive documentary because of the common-sense assumption of most designers that the ultimate aim of any interactive documentary is to tell a story. This conceptual approach toward interactive documentary seems to be embedded in most of the tools built for interactive designers. Again, one exception is Korsakow. (90)

As my fragmented and relational practice has evolved through the particular multilinearity Korsakow offers, there is no singular “underlying coherence” to be discovered through interaction, as there is no “underlying coherence” to the world (Hight 90). While my work does have a certain visual coherence in the framing of visual qualities and interface design, the films themselves do not attempt to find coherence; rather, they attempt to compose with and sense the underlying visual details of what commonly goes unnoticed.

Through “Arts of Noticing”

This attending to what commonly goes unnoticed, which Korsakow as a “tuning” machine primes me to notice, resonates with Tsing’s proposition that noticing offers a way of attending to the “divergent, layered, and conjoined projects that make up worlds” (22). For Tsing, noticing often-ignored practices such as, to use her example, mushroom foraging, offers a multifaceted sensing of the world in contrast to human-centric narratives of “progress” (1). A narrative of progress which Tsing describes is when logging companies came to Oregon in the 1980s and with these companies new towns were built and settlers came. This narrative

of progress ends when environmentalists lobbied and all the prime timber was logged, which moved the loggers elsewhere. Ecologically, a consequence of this tale of progress is what Tsing describes as a damaged landscape, because an environment was destroyed to aid human-centric prosperity (18). What Tsing call for attention towards is “what emerges in these damaged landscapes” (18). In the case of this forest in Oregon, mushrooms and a mushroom trade came into existence from the damaged, cut-over trees. Like Law, Pickering, and Gibson, Tsing argues for an attentiveness towards the world that uncovers and reveals unruly and entangled detail.

For Tsing, the problem with tales of progress are that they do not “tell us how to think about collaborative survival” (19), which is the “patchy landscapes, multiple temporalities, and shifting assemblages of humans and nonhumans” (20). She urges that we find “arts of noticing” as a sensing of the commonly unnoticed multi-species, multiplicitious, entangled webs, and meshes we are only one part of (37). She proposes that, by noticing these entanglements in damaged landscapes, we will become more attuned towards the anthropocentric damages we have caused and, from this, care for the environment better (37).

Although the practice which has emerged through this research has not looked specifically at “damaged landscapes” (18), I want to offer listing in order to notice the unnoticed as a building block towards an “art of noticing” for multilinear nonfiction (37). As my work using Korsakow places indeterminate relations at the centre of what the films do, I can move towards a non-narrative mode of interactive filmmaking which comes closer to sensing some of the world’s precariousness and detail. If precarity and indeterminacy are the qualities of the world, largely unnoticed by more teleological practices, then listing in order to notice the unnoticed emerges as an “art of noticing” which can “look around rather than ahead” (Tsing 22).

End

Through a privileging of constraints, travel, daily practice, landscape, and environment, what my projects do is notice discrete detail. The practice which emerges is a hybrid, much like the audiovisual examples I have used throughout, which combines multilinearity, the essay film, lists, and the posthuman. Murphie’s and Hight’s argument that digital and networked technics invite new ways for digital and interactive documentary to think about the world is the kind of theoretical landscape this research contributes to. Through modes of

attuning, the creative works perform a visual sensing of the world, in opposition to a making sense of it. There is only a soft and indeterminate “underlying coherence” to my K-films and, for theorists such as Law who describe the world as “kaleidoscopic[ic]” (2), we can think about the world as having no “underlying coherence” as well (Hight 90).

If progress, for Tsing, draws everything into a forward march ignoring what is around it (21), if “orderly accounting” for Law puts limits on what we can see (6), and if stories for Miles “make sense of the world” in a “much smaller and more limited account of the world than the world is” (Miles “The Gentleness of the Comma”), then it appears that multilinearity, lists, and Korsakow, as the tools of my practice, “reorient our attention” towards things unnoticed (Tsing 22). I offer this practice of listing in order to notice the unnoticed as a way of doing ecocritical nonfiction work that senses the world in a way that is closer to what it is. In the process, this provides a sensing of precarity, change, vibrant things, meshes, material agency, and indefinites. For theorists in this ecocritical field, noticing as an attunement to things as relations “continually *doing*” largely offers a way of sensing the world without making sense of it through human-centric narratives (Pickering, italics in original, 6). These unnoticed things gathered through a compositional dance with different agencies, in these intimate works, are the aesthetics of colour, movement, stillness, movement, light and shadows forged by me, my camera, and composing in Korsakow.

CONCLUSION

ENDINGS

It seems only appropriate to offer multiple possible endings to this research and to note that they are not really endings, but threads and lines into other threads and lines which in some way perform Ingold's "meshwork". These endings are intended to highlight some things learnt through a process of finding a practice and seeing what this practice does when performed through particular creative projects. While I came looking to find a multilinear practice which responds to the granular and faceted qualities of the networked online environment, I leave with a multilinear practice and a way of noticing which responds and contributes to posthuman and ecocritical ways of thinking about the world: a thinking about the world as fragmentary, relational, precarious, unpredictable, changing, always doing, and vibrant. What results is works which reorient attention by attuning to commonly unnoticed qualities through a composing between human, software, and environment. Does listing in order to notice the unnoticed emerge as a way of doing posthuman and ecocritical nonfiction work?

From Korsakow, the Essay Film, and List as Ways of Doing Multilinear Nonfiction

I would, firstly, like to take a moment to reflect on the beginnings of this research, with Korsakow, essay films, and lists as ways of doing multilinear nonfiction. Korsakow, essay films, and lists, in one way or another and to varying degrees, privilege a multifaceted thinking about the world. My use of Korsakow maintains moments of noticing as discrete things, always with multiple and indeterminate relations. *News From Home* and particularly *Sunless* perform the world as short letters through the rhythms of emus prancing, people falling asleep on trains, commuters crossing the road, birds flying over the water, cities disappearing in fog, and a person walking slowly through an empty parking space. By asking whether the affordances of multilinearity combined with the qualities of the essay film could make essay films for the online environment, I found that a multilinear online essay film could offer an "affective understanding", as the user performs acts of noticing, deciding, and selecting (Miles "Affective Ecologies" 80). The user and software in the case of a multilinear essay film become part of the thinking assemblage, actioning their own indeterminate thinking to think with the essayist and compose with the world. Without *Sunless's* conscious referencing of the list, I would not have

found the list as a method, where the banal, equal, ephemeral, accumulative, open, kaleidoscopic, obsessive, and unpredictable qualities of *Sunless* make it a list in its execution. The list, like the essay film, through privileging non-narrative thinking, made openness, abundance, equalness, heterogeneity, ineffability, and an ability to explode become a way of doing multilinear nonfiction for me. The list maintains parts as individual fragments and invites a dwelling upon the multiple possible relations things have with each other.

Danks's comment that all images in Marker's films "are 'equal', but some images, particularly if they are of cats or other favoured animals, are more equal than others" emerges as an adequate way to describe how listing entangles with noticing in my body of K-films. What *I See You*, *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* reveal are images I am drawn to more than others, as well as how I frame them with technology within the relative equalness of how I allow clips to perform in Korsakow. Palm trees, sunsets, skies, raindrops, and shadows could be the "more equal than others" clips in *Grey Skies/Blue Skies*, *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*. From thinking about the list in relation to nonfiction film, literature, new media, and then new materialism, I realised that the list offers not only a way to do multilinear nonfiction, but also a way to draw attention to the commonly unnoticed. Bogost proposes that the list's ability to gather things together and explode these things into their many disparate parts becomes an ontographical tool to "draw attention to the countless things that litter our world unseen" (51). However, I use the term "unnoticed" because what is unseen cannot be captured by film. The list as a way of doing multilinear nonfiction has evolved as a tool to see the commonly unnoticed through accumulating the world in loose relational fragments. In the making of *I See You*, *Sunny*, *Rainy*, *Foggy*, and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees* the list became a way to attend to the unnoticed visual qualities in my nonfiction images and practice by seeing these qualities in their multiple discrete forms and environments.

To Thinking About and Sensing the World in Fragments and Soft Relations

My projects as "tuning" machines which attend to and perform the world as fragments and multiple soft relations offer a sensing of the world in flux, a sensing of colour, movement, stillness, movement, light, and shadows. I argue these aesthetic visual qualities of the world that are often unnoticed by progress, orderly accounting, and stories as human-centric ways of making sense of the

world. Listing in order to notice the unnoticed as a way to attune and attend to the world as discrete detail, without “making sense” of these parts, senses the world in a way which aligns with modernist, eco-aesthetical, posthuman, and ecocritical ways of thinking about the world, as seen in Ivens’s *Rain*, Benning’s films, Stewart’s and Tsing’s precarious landscapes, Gibson’s “changescape”, Bennett’s “thing-power”, Pickering’s “mangle”, and Ingold’s “meshwork”. These posthuman and ecocritical ways to think about the world see the world as made up of relational things continually doing, as do my K-films, particularly *Sunny, Rainy, Foggy* and *Sometimes I See Palm Trees*. If the dilemma posed by these theorists is that our current ways of knowing simplify, reduce, and neglect things, then perhaps my K-films and the practice which has emerged from them become a tool for better noticing, composing, and sensing some of these unnoticed rhythms, patterns, and textures.

Towards an Ecocritical Multilinear Nonfiction Practice

My contribution is a way of doing multilinear nonfiction which does not assume there is a static coherency out there; things have agency and so do K-films. While aesthetic detail may be only one of the textures caught by this body of work, there is potential for other rhythms to be seen as well, perhaps in Tsing’s “damaged landscapes” (18)? I see potential for different and new rhythms, textures, and patterns to be caught in these lists and performed in these works, without ignoring that there will always be “realities ... missing” (Law 2). I can conceive of a multilinear nonfiction practice which is guided by what Bennett calls a “certain anticipatory readiness on my in-side”, an “anticipatory readiness” (5) which lets rhythms, patterns, and textures evolve, without a defined teleology, through an entanglement between the world doing, an author noticing, technological constraint, a camera’s indifference, software’s agency, and a user’s decision. What results is an emergent method of “anticipatory readiness” for making audiovisual nonfiction which combines the everyday, travel, landscape, environment, constraint, and duration, to attend to the world as soft, multiple, open, indeterminate, precarious, repetitive, excessive, and fragmented (Bennett 5). In a time when orderly systems, progress, and regulations have “stopped making sense”, Tsing notes that “it is in this dilemma that new tools for noticing seem so important” (25). Perhaps this practice of listing in order to notice the unnoticed is evolving as a “new tool” for sensing the world in this way.

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