

§5 Photography remembers by addition, cinema remembers through subtraction.

In the Photograph, something has posed in front of the tiny hole and has remained there forever (that is my feeling); but in cinema, something has passed in front of this same tiny hole: the pose is swept away and denied by the continuous series of images.

Roland Barthes

Information is the difference that makes a difference.

Gregory Bateson

In photography we are dealing with the *pose*, while in cinema we are dealing with the *gesture*. Of course, the one can be appropriated by the other: a gesture can be compressed into its symbolic moment and thus rendered as a pose in a photograph (I am thinking of Eddie Adams's 1968 photo of a Vietcong execution); inversely, the pose can be sustained until it becomes a minimal Butoh gesture (Andy Warhol's *Screen Tests*). What this means formally is that a photograph produces its image by waiting until the right moment and by collecting light until its exposure is correct. The image manifests itself chemically and intentionally by *adding* the surrounding time into a pinnacle moment. Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Theaters* series illuminates this idea with a rare lucidity. His photographs of "empty" movie palaces with a single luminous rectangle of light floating in the darkness have become iconoclastic icons remembering how we worshiped in the 20th century. Conceptually, his photographs are constructed by way of a relatively simple procedure: the collection and *addition* of all the light projected by a film over a several-hour-long exposure delineated by the duration of the cinema projection. Instead of watching a film and seeing the differences between the frames and thus the movement of the movie, his photographs keep adding light to the negative past *reciprocity failure* and into the clearing of a Zen *ukiyo-e* (pictures of a floating world). Cinema relies on an opposite operation. What we are actually looking for when we watch a motion picture is not the images but the slight *differences* between the images that in turn reveal the gesture transpired across time. Cinema and motion pictures in general function because we sense movement by *subtracting* one reference point from another, one frame from another. Our nervous system and our senses behave this way and thus watching and processing a film follows suit; we sense and process information as difference. In short, the cinematic memory of movement is recalled through the process of mental subtraction—by observing what is not present on the screen.

§6 The lacunae between frames allows for the fantasy of movement.

Fantasy space functions as an empty surface, as a kind of screen for the projection of desires.

Slavoj Žižek

The cinema is truth 24 frames per second.

Jean-Luc Godard

Chris Marker's film *La Jetée* (1962) navigates the temporal difference between the still photograph and the motion picture. Fittingly, the film deals with time travel, or the psychological fantasy of time travel—a state not only ambiguous for the protagonist in the film but for the spectator in the act of watching the film. Marker composed *La Jetée* with a photomontage of Pentax still photographs which were optically printed to form a cinematic narrative. Because of this hybrid technique, most of the film resides in a state of limbo between photography and cinema—except for one famous moment, where it almost seems the birth of cinema takes place before our eyes. Importantly, this scene of a woman blinking in the morning light was originally shot on an Arriflex movie camera. Afterwards the interframes were subtracted to ramp from the speed of a still photo to the ephemeral movement that makes film magical. While this is a special case in cinema history, it reveals an operation shared by all cinema: that the movement from photography to cinema is not the addition of multiple images, but rather the subtraction of images. The failure of the camera to capture full time resolution creates empty spaces between the photographs where the spectator can fantasize that movement exists. To say that film is 24 photographs a second is to miss the paradox of motion pictures entirely. The mental subtraction between these 24 frames a second is the essence of cinema. To rephrase: the meaning is not between the lines, it is between the frames. Truth is not 24 frames a second, it is the 23 black lines we never see.