The San Francisco of Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*

Place, Pilgrimage, and Commemoration

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CHAPTER TWELVE

The Vestiges of *Vertigo* in Contemporary Art

Cindy Bernard, David Reed, and Douglas Gordon

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In the early 1960s, Robert Whitman created his series of eight *Cinema Pieces*, or "film sculptures," a subgenre of that protean designation "expanded cinema." With titles like *Window* (1963), *Bathroom Sink* (1964), and *Shower* (1964), each addressed issues of realism and illusion, conventions of representation, and the practices of viewing associated with different media—namely, sculpture, cinema, and painting. Each did so by fusing tangible material objects with filmic images, by pairing ordinary domestic items with footage of routine actions associated with them. For *Window*, Whitman projected 16-mm film of someone gardening within the contours of a window frame mounted on the gallery wall. In *Shower*, he installed an actual shower stall complete with running water and projected an image of a woman bathing. Apparently the illusion was so convincing that several visitors thought they had witnessed a live performance.[1] However, as the film progresses, close-ups of skin, the drain, and showerhead shatter the believability of the rear-projected image. So, too, do moments when the water turns to paint.

For Lynne Cooke, these gestures establish *Shower* as a work that recalls traditions of nude bathers in Western painting and, more pointedly, Yves Klein's use of models as the "living brushes" with which Klein applied his signature International Klein Blue during an infamous 1960 performance.[2]

Cooke suggests that these allusions are far more pertinent to an understanding of Whitman's work than what is perhaps, for many of us, the more obvious one: Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). And yet, it is hardly surprising that a filmed image of a woman taking a shower, at points under a stream of red paint, whose image is intercut with close-ups of skin and a drain, should also encourage speculation of a Hitchcockian influence.[3] In fact, *Shower*'s connection to *Psycho* has become a common refrain in reviews of the work's various restagings. What is more, it is a connection that happens to be extremely productive. When approached with *Psycho* in mind, *Shower* opens up a series of specific trajectories into questions of voyeurism, fetishism, realism, suspense, narrative, offscreen space, materiality, phenomenology, modes of exhibition, and the extradiegetic life of films and their iconic sequences. This capacity for an artwork to initiate meaningful explorations of cinematic concepts will be a key concern here. In particular, I want to make a case for the ability of contemporary artistic practices invested in *Vertigo* to activate sophisticated engagements with notions of place as well as broader theoretical issues to do with the cinema itself.

With *Shower*, Whitman inaugurated a rich multifaceted and multimedia set of artistic practices invested in the aesthetics, legacy, and significance of Alfred Hitchcock's films. Not just broad in scope but plentiful in number, these works have populated several exhibitions dedicated exclusively to this subject. In 1999, the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford staged *Notorious: Alfred Hitchcock and Contemporary Art*, collecting together works from the late 1970s to the late 1990s by artists situated in diverse traditions. Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills* (1978–1991) series of photographs of filmic moments infused with suspense, Christoph Girardet and Matthias Müller's encyclopedic found footage video work *The Phoenix Tapes* (1999), and Christian Marclay's sound installation *Vertigo: Soundtrack for an Exhibition* (1990) speak to the range of practices that explore Hitchcock's filmic worlds. In 2007, Solar in Portugal organized *Under Hitchcock*, an exhibition of contemporary works, such as Johan Grimonprez's *Looking for Alfred* (2005), a film that re-creates Hitchcockian moments, and Laurent Fiévet's *Portrait a l'Écume* (2007), a two-room installation devoted entirely to *Vertigo*'s Madeleine. In 2008, the Austrian Film Museum presented *Hitchcock Experimental*, featuring, for example, J. Tobias Anderson's *879 Colour* (2002), a digital video assembled from 879 hand-drawn, comiclike stills of *North by Northwest* (1959), and *Nine Piece Rope* (2002), which, through spatial montage and temporal condensation, multiplied the filmic image by nine but cut the running time of *Rope* (1948) to two minutes and ten seconds. Dominique Paini and Guy Cogeval's *Hitchcock and Art: Fatal Coincidences*, which showed at

the Centre Pompidou and Montreal Museum of Fine Arts in 2001, took a rather different approach. With the aims of documenting Hitchcock's *oeuvre*, illustrating the artistic influences on his filmmaking practice, and evoking the profilmic spaces of his films through select iconic props and staged settings, this exhibition found multiple ways to unpack the relationship between art and film and included, as part of its program, a few contemporary works by such artists as Alain Fleischer and Merry Alpern.[4] Some of the pieces featured in these shows have become iconic in their own right, appearing in the service of curatorial mandates to chart the development of "gallery films" or the very broadly defined "cinematic impulse" in contemporary art. In the process, exhibitions such as *Spellbound* (1996), *Hall of Mirrors* (1996–1998), and *Cinéma Cinéma* (1999) have done much to cement the reputation of Douglas Gordon's *24-Hour Psycho* (1993) or Pierre Huyghe's *Remake* (1995) as quintessential examples of Hitchcock-inspired art.[5]

Artistic responses to Hitchcock's filmmaking are part of a long and complex history of exchange between the worlds of cinema and art. Thus, while the question "Why Hitchcock?" may be impossible to answer comprehensively, it nevertheless deserves some attention. Speculation may lead us to the visually sophisticated, detail-oriented nature of a Hitchcock sequence that lends itself to all sorts of analyses and creative interventions. It may point to the impact of decades of cinephilic writing and the fan and filmmaking practices that keep his films firmly entrenched in the public imagination.[6] Part of the answer may be found in the availability of his work and the accessibility of technologies required to scrutinize its components. It may also be discovered in the nature of Hitchcock's own engagements with modernism, which find parallels in the art world, and his profound investments in art, which are now being duly reciprocated. Through repetition and rehearsal across the visual-media landscape, the iconic sequences and images that, for many, define his films have come to occupy privileged positions in what Victor Burgin calls the "image envelope," that visual register of the "already seen," the debris of films, including filmic moments detached from their original contexts but nevertheless saturated with affect and personal and cultural significance.[7]

All this is especially true of artistic practices focused on *Vertigo*. These artworks, of which there are many, tend to concentrate on the film's details: key props and settings, the architecture of San Francisco and its environs, characters, aesthetic devices, and pivotal moments. Artists have dismantled the film and cut deep into its visual and narrative fabric to extract that which they find compelling or confounding. They have transformed it, nearly beyond recognition in some instances.[8] *Vertigo* has been retooled and

reinvented, and yet, however destructive some of these acts may seem to the integrity of the film or Hitchcock's vision, they nevertheless perform a preservational function by keeping *Vertigo* alive in the cultural imagination. They confirm that the film's importance hasn't diminished in the half century since its release, nor has its fascination for us been exhausted. Instead, these acts suggest that much remains to be gained from continued and continually renewed creative interventions in the film. And, as I argue, there is also much to be gained from considering these interventions themselves. To do so, I want to look at one of the driving forces behind such art practices—namely, cinephilia and, specifically, how the cinephilic pilgrimages pursued both physically and theoretically by artists have yielded complex explorations of *Vertigo*'s profilmic sites. By focusing on the works by Cindy Bernard, David Reed, and Douglas Gordon that take *Vertigo* as their object of study, I also hope to make a case for the valuable contributions that such artistic practices make to our understanding of cinema in relation to time and space, history and memory.

If the artworks themselves do not always reveal their origins in cinephilia, then the essays and interviews published in catalogues accompanying their exhibition certainly do. In these catalogues, cinephilia is often exposed as one of the driving forces behind the inception of such works and the curatorial mandates that bring them together. Cinephilia is also used in these publications as a lens through which to analyze and interpret creative practices. However, I also argue that these creative practices have the capacity to offer, in turn, critical insights into cinephilia itself and allow us to expand even further our conception of a term that has enjoyed a fair bit of attention of late. Christian Keathley's evaluation of "cinephiliac moments" and their revelatory potential, Thomas Elsaesser's "cinephilia take two" and its implication in contemporary reconfigurations of memory, and Laura Mulvey's "cinema of delay" and its production of new forms of spectatorship have, in recent years, opened up rich discussions on the subject of cinephilia.[9] Perhaps unsurprisingly, these authors often describe their appraisals of cinephilia as responses to the confluence of two key events at the end of the last century: cinema's centenary and the rise of digital technologies. (For the purposes of this discussion, we can add the centenary of Hitchcock's birth in 1999.) Coupled with enduring investments in history, affect, and ontology in film studies as well as various neighboring disciplines such as art history, these forces have generated an environment in which our thoughts might naturally turn to how, why, and in what ways we love the cinema.

Even a cursory inspection of cinephilia reveals its multiple forms and the richness and diversity of its many expressions. Recent research has also uncovered its varied history, privileged moments, and defining features and speculated on its possible futures. It has identified its stages and assessed the significance and value of what cinephilic energies produce. By entering into debates about the impact of new technologies and what constitutes a cinephilic object, scholars on the subject have also done much to complicate our understanding of cinema itself. Yet, beyond a general consensus borne out of the reasonably simple etymological equation that cinephilia equals a love of cinema, another point of general consensus seems to have emerged—that is that cinephilia produces something else. Cinephilia does not end with the experience or feeling of love for the cinema but compels us to act in some way.

For the most part, this act takes written form. In Paul Willemen's view, for instance, "it is as if cinephilia demands a gestural outlet in writing." It is a demand, he says, that stems from a kind of excess produced by the cinephilic experience, an energy that needs to be expended through "an extra, physical ritual, a gesture."[10] For some, this kind of writing—and especially that which defined the writings of the *Cahiers du Cinéma* critics during that publication's golden age—amounts to a "creative act of substitution no less important than the films themselves."[11] Since the 1970s, new technologies have led to the proliferation of new ways of taking part in cinephilic discourse, new sites of dissemination and circulation, and, of course, new practices as well. According to Elsaesser, the relative ease with which cinephiles can now own the objects of their affection has transformed them into archivists and collectors and thus transformed the experience of cinephilia from one intimately connected to the experience of going to the theater to one defined by repeat viewing in any number of contexts and through a variety of media platforms.[12]

It is important to remember that some of these features of contemporary cinephilia have antecedents in much older fan practices. As Mulvey explains, "since its earliest moments the film industry has given its fans things to hold onto—things to possess; a way to hold on to the elusive, fleeting image of cinema."[13] But these "things to hold onto" are expanding, not just in quantity, but also in kind and use. The film industry provides us with countless ways to deepen our connection to films and their stars through merchandising, conventions, online forums, or the supplementary experiences afforded by video game tie-ins, for example. Whether cinephiles choose to participate in industry-sanctioned practices or create their own alternative forms of engagement, these acts themselves are starting to gain attention as forms of reception and, quite crucially, forms of creative production. As I argue, such cinephilia-inspired acts are often aligned with another vital impulse, another love, epistemophilia—an intellectual curiosity, one motivated by a desire to

know and one that produces pleasure from knowledge gained. However, unlike Mary Ann Doane and Mulvey, who have explored epistemophilia's links with scopophilia, the focus here rests more on how the pursuit of knowledge about the cinema and, specifically, about Hitchcockian cinema, is a key drive behind certain artistic ventures and one that produces, in turn, critical examinations of film.[14]

When cinephilia, charged by epistemophilia, motivates artistic practice, the result tends to be a work defined by painstaking attention to detail and conceptual, if not theoretical, sophistication. Like much critical writing, this work often aims to reveal to us knowledge about its object of study, such as Hitchcock's representation of neurosis in Girardet and Müller's *The Phoenix Tapes*. In the process, some of these artistic investigations "break the toy," as Robert Burgoyne (quoting Christian Metz) suggests, and thereby "convert the mystery and fascination of the cinema into something else."[15] In many of these works, it is not the artist's initial cinephilic reverie that is celebrated or made available to viewers but rather knowledge about cinema gleaned from taking the film or its images apart. For Burgoyne, Douglas Gordon is someone particularly adept at "breaking the toy" (the toy being Hitchcock's *Psycho* or Ford's *The Searchers* [1956]) by slowing them down to "rethink the basic illusion of stillness and motion."[16] What starts out as cinephilia on Gordon's part produces an act also motivated and informed by a desire to understand and know more about the object of his affection.

To date, Burgoyne's analysis is one of only a handful that acknowledges such art practices in the context of studies on cinephilia or in the context of scholarship on contemporary cinematic art. What Burgoyne and other interested scholars share, however, is a belief in the value of such self-reflexive works. For instance, Annette Michelson draws our attention to the "highly productive" nature of these practices and the oppositional and transgressive impulses that motivate these artists.[17] Others, such as Federico Windhausen, regard the artist-cinephile as a cultural historian, someone with the capacity to offer us incisive cultural critiques.[18] Or, to quote Burgoyne again, these artist-cinephiles model for us ways of "customizing industrially produced pleasures, reconfiguring, in a personal and illuminating way, the objects of visual culture."[19] In short, cinephilia drives practices from which we may learn something about the cinema and culture more broadly.

To assess what specifically we can learn from such artworks, I want to turn now to Cindy Bernard's *Ask the Dust:* Vertigo *(1958/1990)* and *Location Proposal #2* (1997–2001); David Reed's installations *Judy's Bedroom* (1992) and *Scottie's Bedroom* (1994); and Douglas Gordon's public artwork *Empire* (1998). I selected these examples from the vast array of cinephilia-inspired

artistic gestures invested in *Vertigo* because of additional shared traits: the ways in which they stand as the product of, or complicate our notions of, the cinephilic pilgrimage; the ways they bring the pleasures and limitations of cinephilia into stark relief; and for the probing questions they pose about the cinema in terms of its relationship to place and history.

Cindy Bernard's *Ask the Dust:* Vertigo *(1958/1990)* forms part of her *Ask the Dust* photographic series of locations from well-known Hollywood films released between 1954 and 1974 (see photo 6.3 or 11.1). Like others in this series, the photograph prompts us to confront a number of things. It reminds us of the constructed, mediated nature of landscape and the ways in which representational practices and, in this instance, Hitchcock's cinematographic practices necessarily inflect what and how we see, what and how we remember, and, indeed, how we experience the spaces we inhabit. Whether we are acutely or only vaguely familiar with the sites captured in Bernard's photographs, we know from their titles that they refer to films.[20] And yet, because landmarks and markers of the passage of time are present in most of the images from her series, we also know (or at least suspect) that we are looking at a "real" place. Bernard appeals to the indexicality of the photograph to bring into collision fact and fiction, the real and the cinematic. These images, however much aligned with a particular film, now also belong to Bernard. Her authorship of photographs, of locations otherwise already embedded in cultural memory through earlier filmic representations, complicates the practice of appropriation pursued by many of her contemporaries. By eschewing the use of found footage or creation of visual pastiche, Bernard intervenes in the legacy of iconic cinematic places and asks, in this instance, what actually can be appropriated? What actually is there to appropriate?

These questions also motivate Bernard's *Location Proposal #2*, a series of eighteen rear-projected still images that "re-create" *Vertigo*'s redwoods sequence. In many ways, this project extends the theoretical concerns about cinematic mediations of place that underpin *Ask the Dust*, for *Location Proposal #2* also explores how films have structured our experience of landscape and what results from the appropriation of spaces already deeply embedded in our collective memories. These conceptual affinities with *Ask the Dust* end, however, with Bernard's eschewal of photography in favor of the digital image. As she explains in her interview in this volume, *Location Proposal #2* involved creating a 3-D digital model of a space that combined the floor plan of the Muir Woods trail with the scene in *Vertigo* that was actually filmed in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. She then used the camera function within the model-making program to reconstruct—through still images—the eighteen-shot sequence from the film.[21] A selection of these images have been

projected on large screens as part of multiroom installations and in a variety of public spaces in the United States and Europe.

This shift from photography to the digital in Bernard's practice has complicated even further her engagements with time and space. In *Ask the Dust*, the photographic image functions as the site where different registers of time come into contact with one another: the historical period represented in the film, the time of its inscription on celluloid, the cultural time of its release, the time of our reception of the film, and the time of the inscription of the photographic image. In *Location Proposal #2*, these registers, though alluded to, are much more difficult to access and differentiate. They must be imagined and reconstituted in the mind of the viewer, primarily because the digital image has all but lost its specificity in relation to both time and space. The images that compose *Location Proposal #2* lack indexicality; their referent is wholly indeterminate and thus virtual in every sense. They represent neither Muir Woods nor Big Basin; they hail neither from the cinema nor reality, neither from the past nor the present. Instead, they exist as representational spaces that accommodate the merger of allusions to all these things.

Though the lack of spatial and temporal specificity in *Location Proposal #2* may render its connection to *Vertigo* somewhat tenuous, it nevertheless creates the conditions necessary to think about the film's relationship to place. Bernard's digital projections highlight the virtuality of Hitchcockian spaces, themselves often painted, rear-projected, and teeming with unapologetic artifice. The exhibition of *Location Proposal #2* in spaces such as the Schindler House or at impromptu spaces within the public realm—in other words, places where inherent histories are permitted to penetrate Bernard's digital work (as opposed to "white cubes" and "black boxes" that aim to decontextualize their objects)—allows for an oscillation between reality and fiction, the real and the virtual.[22] In this way, the work recalls Hitchcock's own practice of blending the real and the virtual, of injecting manifestly fake visual constructions into ostensibly "real" settings.[23] Bernard explains that what *Location Proposal #2* offers us is not an experience of the film or the "Muir Woods" sequence in particular; instead, it provides us with the tools to analyze practices of representation and looking and to consider the relationships between images and their referents, images and the spaces they designate, images and the technologies out of which they are created.

Location Proposal #2 is thus a work charged by a potent epistemophilia. Bernard's own desire to interrogate the nature of images and their effects structures her work in a way that orients our experience of it in a conceptual direction.[24] This is not to suggest that epistemophilia overwhelms the cinephilia with which it was initially aligned. Bernard's cinephilic motivations remain present and accessible in *Location Proposal #2*. So, too, does the work's potential to satisfy visitors in search of an affective experience. As works that speak to what is past, lost, or never was, to the legacy of myths both within and around *Vertigo*, *Location Proposal #2*, like *Ask the Dust: Vertigo (1958/1990)*, taps into our memories and collective fantasies about the film and its sites.

Location Proposal #2 and *Ask the Dust: Vertigo (1958/1990)* exist as documents of mythic, coded, and mediated sites. They are also, quite crucially, documentation of Bernard's cinephilic pilgrimages. In his essay on the cinephilic pilgrimage, Douglas Cunningham explores this phenomenon, arguing that such journeys are the cinephile's "attempt to reify (that is, ground within the real) an inherently ephemeral experience of the past, while simultaneously utilizing real spaces as portals through which to once again access, personally experience, and even occupy the past."[25] Particularly compelling is Cunningham's acknowledgment that such visits tend to come up short for the cinephile and his identification of certain artistic practices (including those enacted by Chris Marker, Victor Burgin, and Cindy Bernard) as key to the process of rendering explicit these inadequacies. While visiting a site allows for some physical, material connection to a film, it does not necessarily allow viewers to feel as though they are inhabiting the world of the film. Missing, among other things, is the cinematic frame that contains and thereby shapes this world. As Cunningham puts it, "the human eye . . . can only fail in its attempt to re-replicate the two-dimensional framed vistas and/or details the camera sought initially to replicate. Such a re-replication requires the intervention, once again, of an 'optical crutch,' as it were, a camera, a telescope, or some such."[26]

By closely approximating the cinematic image, Bernard's photographs provide and draw attention to this "optical crutch." As such, these images are as much the product of her own cinephilic desires as they are about cinephilia itself, the ways in which a deep love for the cinema is acted upon, and the inability of these acts to bring back these objects of desire. In *Location Proposal #2*, the impossibility of return and the failure of reification are even more forcefully articulated. Here, the digitally manufactured "photograph" is an image lacking in indexicality and, thus, one without any connection to the place it purports to represent. There is no "real" in which to "ground the image." In this way, it also reveals the inevitable failure met by cinephilic pilgrims seeking an experience of *Vertigo* through an experience of Muir Woods. This place may be "represented" in the film, but it is not the actual site at which Hitchcock's image of Muir Woods was inscribed into celluloid. And yet, despite these shortcomings, there is pleasure in the process, in the

research and the search, in the journey and discovery of filmic sites—both real and imagined. There are also pleasures to be had for the viewer, ones that stem from Bernard's invocation of places that resonate with our own cinephilia, as well as the potential for analytical pleasures from her invocation of the theoretical problematics of film and photography, indexicality and the real, and space and memory.

Whereas Bernard's work is ostensibly about the cinephilic pilgrimage and the representational matters that its documentation brings to light, David Reed's concern rests more with the reification of ephemeral cinematic and cinephilic moments. Reed is perhaps best known for large-scale abstractions, conceptual interventions into the history of painting that have prompted Mieke Bal to propose a new genre into which to insert his work, namely, nonfigurative narrative painting.[27] For Bal, Reed's work is above all about time, something Reed surveys on canvass, through video, and in his installations. *Judy's Bedroom* (photo 12.1) and *Scottie's Bedroom* combine all three media in an attempt to document his cinephilic pilgrimage around the San Francisco of *Vertigo*. The project began with Reed's interest in "the way we are affected by movies," the imprints they leave on us, and the ways in which they become part of our cultural and personal memory.[28] In his travels, he sought out iconic locations that defined Hitchcock's film but also the seemingly more inconsequential sites, including, especially, the exteriors of Judy and Scottie's apartments.[29] For Reed, all this amounted to an act of surveillance, and as a result, he felt compelled to photograph everything he saw. But unlike Bernard's work, Reed's project did not end with his pilgrimage's visual documentation; such images could not do enough to reify the fleeting cinematic moment. So, to achieve an even greater degree of materiality, he restaged Judy's and Scottie's bedrooms. He re-created the profilmic sites of the film so that he (and others) could physically inhabit these spaces, so that the objects of his desire could become real enough to potentially touch. Though, like *Ask the Dust* and indeed all cinephilic acts, this gesture, too, was doomed to come up short in certain respects; it could not, after all, replicate Scottie's bedroom as we know it. To walk through Scottie's bedroom is, experientially speaking, very different from seeing it in *Vertigo*. Here, too, the cinematic frame is gone, this time replaced with an institutional frame (i.e., the art gallery) and, thus, one that prompts our awareness of different practices of looking, relationships with images and, also, registers of time.

As it turns out, the promise that this work makes to grant us access to the profilmic world is compromised by the very thing that makes it possible for us to have a material encounter with Judy or Scottie's bedroom in the first place: the art gallery. For one thing, the gallery forbids us to touch the art. As

Photo 12.1. *Judy's Bedroom* from David Reed's *Two Bedrooms in San Francisco*. (David Reed.)

such, what is perhaps the most exciting prospect of Reed's work, that we may physically interact with something that hitherto existed only as a cinematic image, is in fact not really an option at all under the watchful gaze of museum guards. For another thing, the gallery renders static a space characterized by movements, changes, and shifts. Scottie's and Judy's bedrooms are containers for action, sites inhabited, used, and traversed by these characters. Hitchcock's camera travels, too, navigating these spaces to reveal their contents and the signifying force of strategically placed props. Shifts in lighting, in terms of color and brightness, as well as in atmosphere through Hitchcock's use of filters, continually redefines the look of these rooms and, thus, their feel as either a "real" space or dreamscape. In Reed's reconstruction, the only thing that moves is the image—the looped clip from *Vertigo* that plays on a television monitor in the installation. But rather than introduce a sense of dynamism, this inclusion only encourages comparison between the vitality of the profilmic space and the static nature of the objects that compose its material reincarnation. This is especially true in the context of an institution with a mandate to preserve, to shield its objects from the effects of time; in such an institution, Reed's bedrooms start to acquire the aura of precious, mummified relics.

One final way in which the art gallery compromises the experience of the material encounter it proffers has to do with time. The inescapable presentness of our experience of this (or any) installation in a gallery is something that works against the pastness now inscribed in the film and associated with our memories of it. In other words, the presence of others around us, the sounds of their conversations and footsteps, and our own conscious awareness of being in space and time interfere with attempts to feel as though we have entered the film, to convince ourselves that Madeleine's clothes hang drying in the next room or that Judy will soon appear, hair upswept, eyebrows tamed, wearing a pale grey suit. What we first recognize as the conditions for an affective experience and the satisfaction of our cinephilic desires through a return to *Vertigo* quickly turns into something else as the nature of the gallery space intrudes. The conditions foster instead an experience in which questions of a conceptual nature emerge, questions about the cinema itself and its imbrication with the practices and institutions of art: What happens when a key prop is reinvented as a piece of sculpture or a set as an installation? What happens when something we only ever accessed as an image is transformed into a material reality, when something from the past becomes both spatially and temporally present? How effective can a replica of Judy or Scottie's bed even be as a conduit to *Vertigo* or our memories of the film, especially when other factors such as the foggy greenish glow are missing? This is not to suggest that affective sensations no longer factor into our experience of Reed's work; but feelings of nostalgia or loss do have the potential to overwhelm those we would expect to follow the realization of a desire to inhabit the profilmic world. Reed's act of transplanting the profilmic world of *Vertigo* into the art gallery does much to encourage confrontations with the analytical problematics embedded as puzzles in his work and to recognize them as products of the artist's cinephilia and epistemophilia. In his own search for meaning in *Vertigo*, Reed sets up the conditions to face head-on such questions about representation, ontology, and phenomenology.

But aside from the ontological or phenomenological points that this work makes, it also literalizes a specific desire: to place oneself in the film. To accomplish this, Reed replaces the artworks that hang over Judy's and Scottie's beds in the film with paintings of his own.[30] Moreover, to convince us of the authenticity of this new reality and to attempt to reconfigure our memory of these sequences, he edits *Vertigo* to reflect this addition and plays the altered scene on a television monitor that he displays at the front of the installation. In this way, Reed performs a variant of what is, in Cunningham's estimation, the quintessential act of the cinephilic pilgrim. That is, upon realizing that the "real cannot live up to the image," Reed performs a creative act that

redeems the "inadequacy of the real."[31] As Cunningham explains, "in order to occupy and control the space of possibility and meaning, then, the cinephilic pilgrim must exercise his/her own creative agency; only then can the cinephile redeem both the real and the image."[32] In fact, this is what Reed leaves us with—a reality and image infused with and transformed by his own cinephilic energy. It is also a reality and image redeemed by the something extra they offer us—namely, the creative and critical functions they perform and the dialogue about cinema that they invite us to enter into.

Douglas Gordon performs a similar gesture with *Empire* (1998), generating the conditions necessary to stimulate in viewers both affective and analytical pleasures. In Gordon's case, however, his cinephilic energies produce an object for the cinephilic pilgrimages of others. Moreover, whereas Bernard and Reed's practices are typically encountered within the space of the art gallery, Gordon uses Glasgow's urban environs to frame and contextualize his particular act of reification. *Empire* consists of a neon green sign, five meters in height, mounted on the side of a building with the letters of the word "empire" reversed. Reflective plates attached to the wall behind both sides of the sign function as correctives to this reversal. Commissioned by Visual Art Projects for their "Urban Icons" series of "deliberately non-grandiose" public artworks, *Empire* was initially revealed in Brunswick Lane between Glasgow's Trongate and Merchant City in January 1998. Gordon selected this site for what he felt was its distinctly "cinematic atmosphere," one enhanced by a suspended streetlamp that swung in the wind. He also wanted his work to enter into a dialogue with the space around it, including two nearby pubs, one of which repaired its own retro neon sign and promised to screen *Vertigo* for its customers.[33] *Empire* was then later moved to its current location, four blocks over on Tontine Lane.

Gordon's installation, of course, refers to the Hotel Empire sign in *Vertigo*. It reproduces that same jade-green glow that Hitchcock uses to engulf Judy, to bestow on her a ghostlike quality. This allusion to something there in appearance and yet not materially tangible finds an equivalent in *Empire*'s engagement with the cinema itself through its reversed lettering and mirroring effects. Gordon explains, "I liked the fact that I could make an artwork that would not look like an artwork. I could make an object which was a copy of something that doesn't actually exist except in fiction, and the only way you can read it properly is to look in a mirror which is a place that does not really exist either."[34] In this way, *Empire* also enacts the processes of mirroring, copying, reversing, and doubling so prevalent in *Vertigo*, through significant thematic ways involving Judy/Madeleine or through subtler allusions, such as the frequent use of mirrors or even the

Empire's own signage in the film that reads "Hotel Empire" in neon and "Empire Hotel" on its awning.

Gordon's intervention into the cinematic reality of *Vertigo* does more than point to themes in the film or, for that matter, assure passers-by that what they are looking at is art and not just another commercial sign. His modifications, like Reed's, signal the limits of practices seeking to reify elements of the profilmic world. To return to Gordon's own explanation, his *Empire* sign comes closest to replicating its referent as a two-dimensional image in the reflective surface of the mirror. As such, he reminds us of the very essence of *Vertigo* as a work of the cinema, as a world that exists only in the form of a representation on a screen. He also contends with a key theme of the film—namely, the desire to make "real" that which is fiction, to render tangible that which is an imaginary ideal. And yet, *Empire*'s capacity to spark appreciation for the ontological problematics of film is tempered by the fact that it is encountered out in the world. It cannot evade the contextualizing force of its setting in a Glaswegian alleyway: buildings of various architectural styles, the appurtenances of urban infrastructure, the sounds of city life, and the paraphernalia of a dense image culture. But as much as we are guided to think about *Empire* through the cinema and that which surrounds it, we are also, as in Bernard's work, prompted to consider how the cinema mediates our experience of place. In *Empire*, this is accomplished in a rather direct way, particularly at night, when it offers us the possibility of an immersive experience by casting the space around it in a green glow, a point to which I return in just a moment.

Certainly there is something a little peculiar about coming across *Vertigo* in Glasgow, especially given how strongly we associate the film with San Francisco. For many, this experience of a Hitchcockian moment will seem sheer happenstance. Some may feel delighted, while others with little or no knowledge of *Vertigo* might see it as scarcely more than a curiosity. Still others will see an encounter with Gordon's *Empire* as an end in itself: the art pilgrim and the cinephilic pilgrim, for example. Tontine Lane beckons art lovers and fans of Douglas Gordon's *oeuvre*. Those interested in his work trek to its location as one would to a museum to visit a favorite piece. After all, Gordon is one of Scotland's most prominent contemporary artists, a status secured by his Turner Prize win in 1996 and selection as Britain's representative for the 1997 Venice Biennale. As a result, *Empire* has become a crucial stop on Glasgow's Public Art tour trail as mapped out by Community Walk, a program dedicated to creating themed walking tours of the city.[35] For cinephilic pilgrims, *Empire* fosters a connection to *Vertigo* by evoking a visually distinctive and narratively important moment in the film. It is both an object

to be contemplated and, in the dark, a deeply affective immersive installation. It can trigger our memories of the film and having watched it. Perhaps it reminds us of Hitchcock's association of green light with ghosts, one fixed during his own formative spectatorial experiences of the theater.[36] *Empire* also supplies answers to the types of questions cinephiles might ask: What would it feel like to be engulfed by the eerie glow of a green neon light, to be convinced, if only for an instant, that one had stepped into a Hitchcockian dreamscape? What would it feel like to witness figures transform into apparitions as they pass through the illuminated space under the sign?

To reiterate, *Empire* is less the product of a cinephilic pilgrimage—though Gordon is, to be sure, a cinephile—than it is an object for the cinephilic pilgrim.[37] It entices us by promising an experience of *Vertigo*'s profilmic space within Glasgow's public space. This setting, as much as it may recall the alleyways navigated by Scottie in his pursuit of Madeleine, remains at a geographical, cultural, and historical remove from San Francisco. It is a remove that exposes a series of disparities that, in turn, factor into *Empire* in a number of significant ways. *Empire*'s setting amounts to a "reality" that impresses itself on the work, forming what Gordon calls the "conspiracy of circumstances" that, for him, "make or break" it.[38] His choice of words here suggests a lack of control over what accrues around his installation. This is certainly true to an extent. *Empire* draws its resonances from what is immediately and architecturally present but also culturally and historically inscribed in the space and the collective and personal memories of those who encounter it. However, through a simple amendment, Gordon effectively manages that which enters into *Empire*'s constellation of meaning.

This amendment involves dropping the word "hotel" from the sign as it exists in *Vertigo*. With "hotel" missing as an anchor, tethering it to a very specific kind of place, other associations are free to emerge and circulate. For instance, "Empire" was once a popular name for theaters in the United Kingdom and could possibly recall the type of signage advertising movie palaces of former eras.[39] Those first and foremost on an art pilgrimage may see it as a continuation of Gordon's interest in Andy Warhol, a sculptural homage to the American artist's famed 1964 structural film of the same name and perhaps a complement to Gordon's earlier 1997 film *Bootleg Empire*, for which he surreptitiously recorded a screening of Warhol's work. Still others see Glasgow's own history as the "Second City of the British Empire" as the key determining factor in *Empire*'s meaning. In fact, the city's nineteenth-century history of trade and the shipbuilding industry and the strong links still retained by the Merchant City area to an imperial past have led some commentators to overlook *Empire*'s connection to *Vertigo* entirely. For them,

Gordon's work calls into question official histories and challenges its viewers to reflect on the legacy of imperialism.[40]

Gordon's deceptively simple gesture toward *Vertigo* renders his work prone to a rich "conspiracy of circumstances." It opens *Empire* up to a myriad of conceptual engagements and initiates, in the process, what we may well describe as an ever-widening Bassian spiral of associations. But, while a broad array of meanings spiral outward from the work, they return to it and Hitchcock's film. Armed with thoughts about empire in the historical-political sense, we can return to *Vertigo* and its own thematic concerns with this topic. Imperialisms of a different kind may be evoked, not to mention thoughts about Manifest Destiny, westward expansion, and the Spanish colonial presence in the Americas.[41] Just as the past continually intrudes into the lives of *Vertigo*'s characters, so too does Gordon make it possible for the past to return in our encounters with his work. The possibility of such returns and others is the result of Gordon's sophisticated orchestrations, his creative interventions into cinema, place, and history.

In the end, Bernard, Reed, and Gordon's works are not just contributions to the realms and discourses of art. They are also very real and substantive contributions to Hitchcock studies and film theory more generally. They stand as testaments to the capacity for art to enrich and complicate how we approach a range of complex theoretical and aesthetic questions. Art's faculty for generating knowledge has been recognized in very general terms. As Mieke Bal writes, "if visual art makes any sense at all beyond the narrow domain of beauty and the affective domain of pleasure, it is because art, too, *thinks*; it is thought. Not the thought about it, or the thought expressed in it, but visual thought, the thought embodied in form."[42] But it is a faculty that should also be recognized in more specific terms as it pertains to the cinematic turn in contemporary art. Given the veritable explosion of artworks invested in cinema since the 1990s, not to mention the history of collaboration and confrontation between art and film since the latter's earliest years, now is the time to give serious consideration to how and what such creative works add to what we know and how we think about the cinema. In these practices, we find "thought" embodied but accessible, thought that determinedly reaches outside its object to engage those who come across it. Such thought is not fixed or immutable. Nor is it necessarily didactic. In the examples at issue here, it is thought of an inquiring kind. It is searching and encouraging of dialogue about time and space, history and memory, ontology and phenomenology. As such, these works can provide us with new ways into a film out of which new or alternate histories and analyses can be written. They exist as a form of metacinema with the capacity to raise philosophical

questions about the cinema itself—its past, present, and future forms, expressions, uses, and effects.

The case studies considered here also reveal that even practices inspired by love—and, thus, what is perhaps the most uncritical of impulses—still have much to teach us. The same can be said for artistic gestures that originate in deeply personal and idiosyncratic desires. Cinephilia, as we have seen, can lead to productive and nuanced explorations, especially when charged by epistemophilia. If we are willing to engage with what artists such as Bernard, Reed, and Gordon have to offer, we are often rewarded with affective and analytical pleasures as well as with knowledge. For Adrian Martin, "cinephilia is always about *thought*, always about theory, always about criticism."[43] So too, I would add, are many of the art practices inspired by its forces.

Notes

1. Lynne Cooke, "Through a Glass, Darkly: From Autonomous Artwork to Environmental Spectacle, from Spectator to Specter—Robert Whitman's Art Practice in the 1960s," in *Robert Whitman: Playback*, ed. Lynne Cooke, Karen Kelly, and Bettina Funcke (New York: DIA Art Foundation, 2003), 66.

2. Cooke, "Through a Glass, Darkly," 66.

3. Though Whitman himself never explicitly names the film in the context of discussions about his *Cinema Pieces*, it is not much of a stretch to assume that, as someone creatively invested in film in the early 1960s, he might have seen *Psycho* during it initial theatrical release or, at the very least, encountered promotional materials or subsequent news articles about its controversies. But, even if he had not, this does not detract from the fact that *Shower* allows us entry into discussions and analyses about Hitchcock's film.

4. There are several other exhibitions of note. *Moral Hallucinations: Channelling Hitchcock* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney in 1999 featured work by eleven contemporary Australian artists responding to the themes prevalent in Hitchcock's *oeuvre*. In 2007, Steven Jacobs organized an exhibition in Antwerp entitled *The Wrong House*. It featured a symposium and screening session of Hitchcock-inspired art called *The Wrong Artist: Hitchcock and Video Art*.

5. Douglas Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho* (1993) is perhaps the best known of all Hitchcock-related works. In it, Gordon projects *Psycho* on a large screen suspended above the viewer at two frames per second, thus stretching the film to twenty-four hours. For *Remake*, Pierre Huyghe restages *Rear Window* with contemporary actors reading the lines from the original script. It is an exercise that demonstrates the significance of Hitchcock's carefully crafted *mise-en-scène* and the performances of the film's stars.

6. A more cynical response might also point to gallery mandates to draw in more visitors through shows with popular appeal, the vagaries of the art market, and its

appetite for certain tendencies at certain times. After all, not all Hitchcock-inspired artworks advance the discourses of cinema in meaningful ways. In some instances, Hitchcock and his work have come to function metonymically for classical Hollywood cinema itself, recalling in very broad and often reductive terms a particular era of film history.

7. See chapter 1 ("Introduction: The Noise of the Marketplace") and chapter 4 ("The Remembered Film") for a fuller discussion of these issues in Victor Burgin, *The Remembered Film* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004).

8. For example, Les Leveque's *4 Vertigo* (2000) condenses the film to nine minutes by capturing one frame for every two seconds of the film's running time. As LeVeque explains, "the condensed film was then duplicated four times shifting the horizontal or vertical orientation of the frame with each duplication. The four films were then reassembled sequentially frame by frame generating a stuttering kaleidoscopic montage." See "*4 Vertigo*," *Les LeVeque: Index of Video and Soundwork, 1995–Present*, http://www.leslevequevideo.com/shorts.html.

9. See Christian Keathley, *Cinephilia and History, or The Wind in the Trees* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 30–36; Thomas Elsaesser, "Cinephilia or the Uses of Disenchantment," in *Cinephilia: Movies, Love and Memory*, ed. Marijke de Valck and Malte Hagener (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), 27–44; and Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 144–60.

10. Paul Willemen, *Looks and Frictions* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 239.

11. De Baecque and Frémaux quoted in Keathley, *Cinephilia and History*, 4.

12. Elsaesser, "Cinephilia," 40.

13. Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second*, 161.

14. See Mary Ann Doane, *Femmes Fatales: Feminism, Film Theory, Psychoanalysis* (New York: Routledge, 1991), and Laura Mulvey, *Fetishism and Curiosity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

15. Robert Burgoyne, "Customizing Pleasure: 'Super Mario Clouds' and John Ford's Sky," in *Cinephilia in the Age of Digital Reproduction*, ed. Scott Balcerzak and Jason Sperb (London: Wallflower, 2009), 162.

16. Burgoyne, "Customizing Pleasure," 163.

17. Annette Michelson, "Gnosis and Iconoclasm: A Case Study of Cinephilia," *October* 83 (Winter 1998): 9.

18. Federico Windhausen, "The Parenthesis and the Standard: On a Film by Morgan Fisher," in de Valck and Hagener, *Cinephilia*, 206.

19. Burgoyne, "Customizing Pleasure," 161.

20. The titles revealing the filmic connections are clearly important to how we as viewers interpret Bernard's *Ask the Dust*. However, as Bernard explains, she was initially hesitant about providing this information (see chapter 11 in this volume, "Proposed Locations: On Postmodern Tributes to *Vertigo* and Place").

21. Bernard, "Proposed Locations."

22. However, the "white cubes" and "black boxes" that promise to offer experiences of artworks free from interference typically disavow their own highly ideological and contextualizing effects.

23. The painted tower atop Mission San Juan Bautista is perhaps the most famous example from *Vertigo*. However, we might also consider the shots of Scottie driving through San Francisco in pursuit of Madeleine. In this sequence, the rear-projected image outside the rear window of Scottie's car offers us a view of the city that looks entirely different from the one we are afforded when the camera looks ahead through the front windshield. The former looks distinctly fake, while the latter, by comparison, appears very real. However, this oscillation is further complicated by the spatial geography of the city as revealed by Scottie's driving. No matter which way he turns, he seems to be driving downhill toward the water. He is enacting that Bassian spiral downward, not toward a real, physical endpoint, but toward the psychological abyss of obsession and madness.

24. As Bernard states, *Location Proposal #2* "was about a real self-consciousness about one's position relative to the image. I wanted the audience to be as self-conscious about looking as possible." See, Bernard, "Proposed Locations."

25. Douglas Cunningham, "'It's All There, It's No Dream': *Vertigo* and the Redemptive Pleasures of the Cinephilic Pilgrimage," *Screen* 49, no. 2 (2008): 126.

26. Cunningham, "'It's All There, It's No Dream,'" 128.

27. Mieke Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 176.

28. David Reed, with Carlos Basualdo, *David Reed: Two Bedrooms in San Francisco* (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute, 1992), 1; published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, shown at the Walter/McBean Gallery of the San Francisco Art Gallery in San Francisco, July 16–August 15, 1992.

29. Reed was particularly interested in the exteriors of the apartments. He explains that, "although the railing and other details of [Scottie's] house have changed, the doorbell and mail slot are the same as they were when the movie was made." He also says, "I found these ordinary objects, that I would normally never notice and which I barely remembered from the movie, to be perfect emblems of the sexual desire between Scottie and Madeline." Reed, *Two Bedrooms in San Francisco*, 2–4.

30. In the case of Judy's bedroom, this meant replacing the painting of the flower bouquet and thus removing one of the signs pointing to Judy as Madeline.

31. Cunningham, "'It's All There, It's No Dream,'" 138.

32. Cunningham, "'It's All There, It's No Dream,'"127.

33. Nicola White, "A City of Dreams Reflected in Bright Neon," *The Herald*, December 29, 1997, http://www.heraldscotland.com/sport/spl/aberdeen/a-city-of-dreams-reflected-in-bright-neon-1.362688.

34. White, "A City of Dreams."

35. See "Trail 4: Merchant City/Candleriggs," *Community Walk*, http://www.communitywalk.com/ActiveArtTrails4.

36. For more on Hitchcock's encounter with the Victorian convention of using green light for ghosts and villains, see Donald Spoto, *The Dark Side of Genius: The Life of Alfred Hitchcock* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1983), 22.

37. And a Hitchcockian cinephile more precisely. In addition to his well-known *24 Hour Psycho*, Gordon made a series of other works in response to Hitchcock and his films: *A Souvenir of Non-existence* (1993), *Airmail White Portrait* (1999), and *Feature Film* (1999).

38. White, "A City of Dreams."

39. "Trail 4: Merchant City/Candleriggs."

40. Indeed, for MacDonald, who makes no reference to *Vertigo* in the context of his discussion of *Empire*, this is the work's only meaning. See Stuart W. MacDonald, "The Trouble with Post-modernism," *Journal of Art and Design Education* 18, no. 1 (1999): 17.

41. For an analysis of the colonialist and imperialist aspects of *Vertigo*, see Christopher D. Morris, "Feminism, Deconstruction and the Pursuit of the Tenable in *Vertigo*," *Hitchcock Annual* (Autumn 1996–1997): 3–25.

42. Bal, *Quoting Caravaggio*, 117.

43. Adrian Martin, "Cinephilia as War Machine," *Framework* 50, nos. 1–2 (2009): 222.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

"Only One Is a Wanderer"

Guiding Tours of Vertigo *Sites*

Miguel Pendás

The *Vertigo* tour started for me on the eve of the 1995 San Francisco International Film Festival (SFIFF) when someone on the guest services staff asked if I would like to take guest filmmakers to see *Vertigo* locations while they were attending the festival. I was a full-time staff member of the festival and its parent organization, the San Francisco Film Society. The guest services staff member had heard that I was a *Vertigo* aficionado and knew all the locations. A few guests were asking for it, she said. Filmmakers come to the SFIFF from all over the world, and some have one dominant image of the city: the places they saw in *Vertigo*. Naturally, I said yes. My job title for the SFIFF at the time was publications coordinator. The biggest part of the job for me had ended when the festival catalogue was put to bed, so the guest services rep reasoned that I would have plenty of time on my hands. Leading a tour was a fantastic idea. It would be easy, she surmised. The festival had a fleet of minivans on hand for general transportation purposes. I insisted on having a driver to avoid trying to drive and conduct the tour simultaneously. No problem, there were plenty of volunteer drivers.

Now all I had to do was create a tour. That would not be hard, I figured, because I had already scouted the locations extensively on my own. I caught the *Vertigo* bug in 1985 while attending film school at San Francisco State