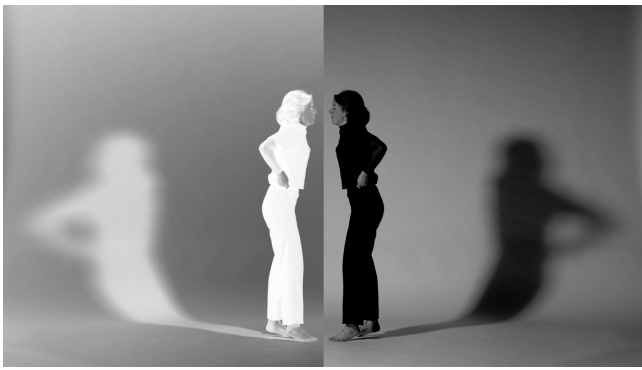


TEXT ON PRACTICE



TOM PAROLIN

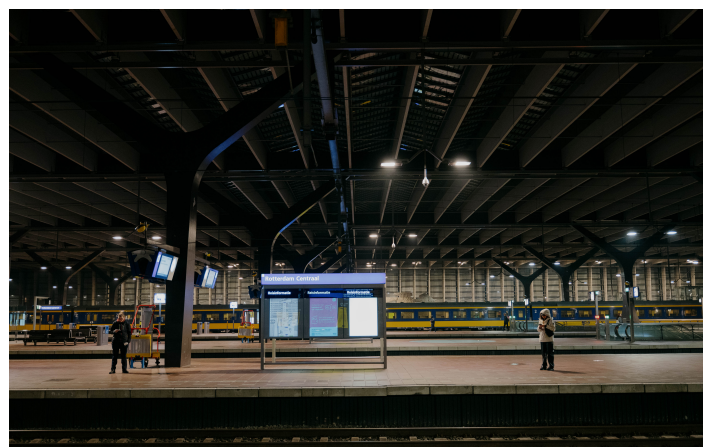
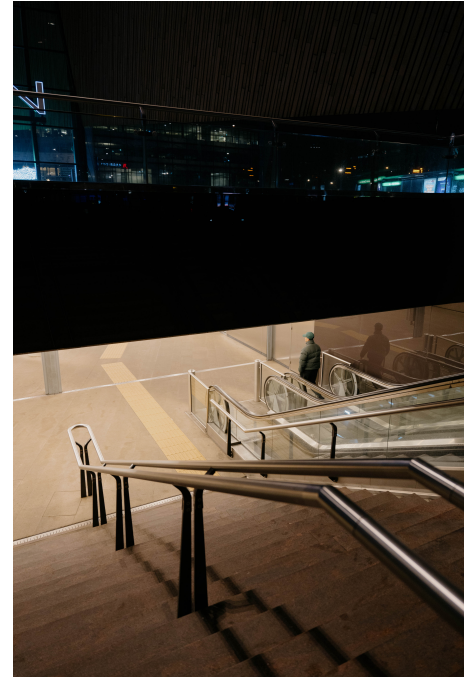


Stills from the EYE research lab project 'Enantiidromia', showing the trajectory of turning into ones opposite through a dance sequence.

In hindsight, I believe I've overworked this film, thinking it feels too much like an advertisement. I wish to revisit this project in the future, experimenting with stripping down the layers and constructing it with a non-linear approach. The idea of the work being presented in an installation comes to mind, having the video looping on two separate screens depicting the unconscious and conscious poles. This would allow the audience to engage at their own pace, seeing where they fit within the Enantiidromia continuum. Overall, this work served as a starting point which provided me an awareness of a core theme present within a majority of my past practice and current concepts - dichotomy.

During the methods classes, the rapid prototyping sessions allowed me to quickly produce concepts of interest that could be executed immediately and potentially lead to works that could be further explored. One of the prompts I assigned myself was to 'create a photo montage of different textures within my current environment'. This led me to looking outwardly at my surroundings and noticing the external space in which I occupy. I became aware I was spending an extensive amount of time within transitional spaces; not having a car, and therefore often using public transport, predominately trains. Within the 'Project That May or May Not Be Made' workshop, I took this observation and proposed to create a photo series or video, exploring my fascination in encountering a diverse range of train passengers being forced into a universal carriage. During a free writing exercise and peer-review with a colleague, I was introduced to the book, *Non-Places* (Augé, 1995). Augé (1995) argues in our contemporary world, we spend a significant amount of time in non-places; such as trains, supermarkets, airports and motorways. These places provide a sense of anonymity to the individuals who inhabit them, as people are brought together through a common cause, becoming consumers or passengers (Augé, 1995). Inspired by this new line of thinking, I began regularly equipping myself with a camera, allowing me to photograph and video various non-places I was transitioning through within Rotterdam. I realise this relates to the overarching theme of my current practice, as I am again exploring a type of dichotomy, showing the duality of isolation and connection that seem to manifest within these non-places. The observational style of filming and photographing, is also reflective of my work previous to the masters program. My short film, *Brookside* (2018), aimed to showcase how individuals act when they feel they are being watched, or anonymous, contrasting various experiences at a bed and breakfast through surveillance cameras.

I hope to collate my material into a more concrete video or photo work, or combination of the both through the means of installation. Moving forward, I intend to explore more non-places; such as supermarkets, hotels and airports. I've also considered travelling to other locations outside of Rotterdam, to inspect how there may be differences between the same non-places depending on the territories they inhabit. Perhaps, I will also begin to reveal facets of my own identity within the reflections of these environments, questioning my role as a spectator or participant.



Collection of my photographs depicting non-places around Rotterdam

Another concept I have been developing involves further exploring my interest in dichotomies. Having recently been commissioned to edit a music video from found footage, I was introduced to a style of archival multi-channel editing. I decided to test this approach within my own practice, searching internet archives for footage in which I could compare contrasting activities. This experiment allowed me to trial and juxtapose seemingly different yet related footage, such as a buddhist monk meditating, and a sweaty high-energy raver. Both practices I see as pursuing a transcendence of the self; despite one approach being private and silent and the other being communal and tumultuous. The links I've chosen to make are already proving to reflect dichotomies I have experienced within my own life, as well as the lives of those close to me. I wish to create this work to propose the universality of human nature, depicting different human responses driven by shared goals. Showcasing these contrasts and commonalities between people and activities, I hope to unfold a greater understanding of our shared human condition and myself.

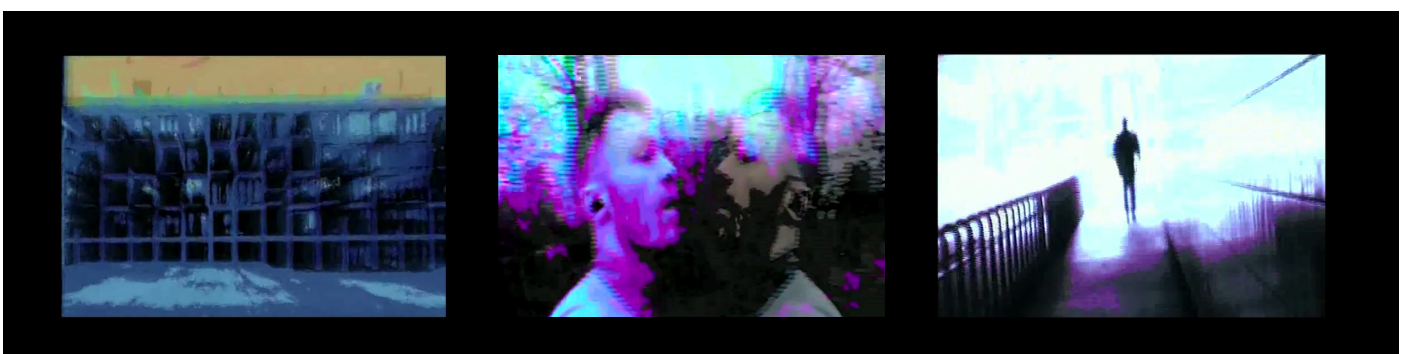


Commissioned music video I edited which prompted the style for this concept.



Experiments with found footage, showing the similarities between opposite yet similar activities (meditation & raving)

The most recent concept I have been expanding, is a more playful exercise in noticing my environment, in an attempt to emulate the process of painting through film. Perceiving events whilst going for runs around my neighbourhood, I was often frustrated I could not capture them. This led me to take an old camcorder on my usual route, filming myself and surroundings whilst in motion. I payed attention to striking organic and non-organic forms, stopping to capture moments of intrigue. I later treated the video through an analog video mixer, allowing me to change parameters of the footage in real time. The effect was a distortion and blending of the footage, which I executed whilst listening to music to help maintain rhythm. Throughout this exercise, I again noticed I've naturally focused on dichotomies within my surroundings, also choosing to mirror the image in certain instances.



Stills from the experiment

Looking at the broader scope of my direction, I've come to understand the act of my creation as an outwards approach to grasp my current standing. Curious to more profoundly make sense of the domains myself and others dwell in. I have been particularly inspired by Zbigniew Rybczyński's short multi-channel film, *New Book* (Rybczyński, 1975). Rybczyński captures the lives of inhabitants within a quaint Polish city; as they move through public spaces such as busses, shops and restaurants in a surveillance style. An evident connection exists within my explorations into non-place. I was also intrigued by the work of Inge Bjørlo, with his installation, *Inner Space V The Goal* (Bjørlo, 1990). Bjørlo created a structure from stainless steel that one may enter, its narrow walls and the sound of walking through the space create a claustrophobic impression and awareness of the body. This work steered my focus to the design of space and its effect on behaviour and mood. The work of Douglas Gordon has also been a significant inspiration, as he explores dualities and interplay between opposing forces. To conclude, my current practice is a dialogue between the internal and the external, the individual and the collective, inquiring dichotomies in search of underlying connections and truths.

(1497 words)

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