Anne Friedberg in 2006. Photograph courtesy of Howard A. Rodman.

The Moving Eye

Film, Television, Architecture, Visual Art, and the Modern

EDITED BY

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For Anne Friedberg, in memoriam

The cat will mew and dog will have his day.
—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet*

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Introduction

Edward Dimendberg

Once produced by a strip of celluloid physically moving through a camera and a film projector, today the moving image is most commonly generated by digital technology, whose algorithmic calculations are invisible to the naked eye and the nature of whose "indexical" trace of physical reality continues to provoke debate among scholars. More than a few spectators have had the experience of watching a film in a theater and suddenly realizing that the long-familiar, continuous mechanical whir of the 35 mm projector has vanished, replaced by the icy silence of digital video projection.

The ontological status of the images viewers see before them is just as uncertain, likely an amalgam of conventional cinematography and computer-generated and manipulated imagery. Yet despite—perhaps because of—the myriad possibilities digital technology enables, analog photography and film technologies continue to inspire art photographers and filmmakers, such as Tacita Dean, João Maria Gusmão, Pedro Paiva, Rosa Barba, Luis Recoder, and Sandra Gibson, and suggest that reports of the death of celluloid photography and moving images are premature.[1]

The continued manufacture of celluloid film and photographic paper evokes the long period during which handwritten manuscripts alternated with printed books. It provides good reason for thinking that the digital revolution is unlikely to develop in a linear fashion, especially if current developments in book publishing and the failure of the e-book to eliminate traditional printed volumes provide any indication. Rather than a convergence of media or the replacement of one technology by another, our immediate future is more likely to be one of media overlap and the nesting of technologies within each other. Older technologies return nonsynchronously, whether as a consequence of nostalgia, the quest for aesthetic impact, or economics, and jostle against each other in unpredictable ways. They define the media culture of the current age, perhaps of every

35. In a later text, Saalschutz summarizes this "classic example of representation" in *The Street* as follows: "The wayward clerk sees his wife's image going away from him, as he looks at his wedding ring before staking it in the gambling hall. He is considering his wife's 'nearness' . . . not materially, spatially, but in the abstract sense of conjugality. The abstraction has already been evoked (in us) by facial expression, but here is the introspective mental process itself in dramatic form: spatial nearness being destroyed." See L. Saalschutz, "Mechanisms of Cinema II," *Close Up* (November 1929): 195.

36. L. Saalschutz, "The Film in Its Relation to the Unconscious," 33.

37. See Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 293.

38. See Ruttmann, cited in H. A. M., "Why War? Einstein and Freud: International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation," *Close Up* (June 1933): 159.

39. Saalschutz's use of technical terms remains ambiguous. Here, "mix shot" likely is used to indicate multiple exposures.

40. Saalschutz, "The Film and Its Relation to the Unconscious," 34.

41. The most texts with the most impact on technique and ideology were published by Jean-Louis Comolli in the early 1970s, in *Cahiers du Cinéma*.

42. See Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier*, 128.

43. Here Metz advances Roman Jakobsons's linkage of rhetoric and linguistics. He is interested in particular in the four terms *metaphor/metonymy* and *paradigm/syntagm* (as well as, with Lacan, in the pair *condensation/displacement*). Metaphor/paradigm/condensation are based in similarity, and metonymy/syntagm/displacement are based in difference; through this distinction, a set of homologously opposed pairs can be formed. Metz emphasizes—contra Lacan—the autonomy of individual instances, since he is less concerned with the homologies between pairs than with the processural aspect of the work of the signifier.

44. See Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier*, 275.

45. Ibid., 243.

46. Ibid., 280.

47. Ibid., 277.

48. See Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 307–308.

49. On this process, see Jean-Louis Comolli, "La profondeur de champ 'primitive,'" *Cahiers du Cinéma* 233 (November 1971): 40–45.

50. Thierry Kuntzel, "Le travail du film, 2," *Communications* 23 (1975): 183); and Kuntzel, "The Film-Work, 2," trans. Nancy Huston, *Camera Obscura*, no. 5 (Spring 1980): 56.

51. Analogous to Freud's *dreamwork*, Kuntzel used the term *film-work* in the 1970s. See "Le travail du film," *Communications* 19 (1972) and "Le travail du film 2" (1975). Kuntzel, "The Film-Work," trans. Larry Crawford, Kimball Lockhart, and Claudia Tysdal, *enclitic* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1978): 38–61; and Kuntzel, "The Film-Work, 2," 6–70.

52. With reference to Melanie Klein, Christian Metz speaks of a relationship of the critic/theorist to cinema similar to that of the spectator to the "good" object. See Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier*, 9.

53. Anne Friedberg turns Metz's warning to film theorists onto the editors of *Close Up*, writing as if to counter that liability, *Close Up* writers attempted a discursive reversal—"they advocated a cinema that mirrored the aesthetics and production of their own discourse *about* the object, artfully designed, psychologically astute, independently financed, free from commercial constraints." See Friedberg, "Introduction," 3.

3

Nicholas Ray's *We Can't Go Home Again*

Multiple Windows in a Delirious Time Machine

Patricia Pisters

When I learned about the restoration[1] of Nicholas Ray's last film project, *We Can't Go Home Again* (1972–1976), I was intrigued by its description as a multiple-screen film and the mixed reception it initially encountered. Ray's Hollywood films *They Live by Night* (1949), *In a Lonely Place* (1950), *Johnny Guitar* (1954), *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), and *Bigger Than Life* (1956) are cult classics with a modern sensibility. They were identified as auteur films by the *Cahiers du Cinéma*; cherished for their recurrent themes, such as a fascination with young people and social misfits; and valued for their consistent dark sensibility and unconventional style. Yet gradually "the poet of nightfall," as François Truffaut called Ray, became a Hollywood misfit himself.[2] In 1972 he took a two-year teaching position at Harpur College, State University of New York at Binghamton, where he taught in the form of a collaborative film project.

We Can't Go Home Again experiments with multiple screens and mixes fictional performances, self-reflexive meditations on filmmaking, actual news events, and political demonstrations. Super 8 mm, 16 mm, and video-synthesized images provided by Nam June Paik were projected and filmed on a single 35 mm image. As a reviewer observed, the collaborative experiment created "an image overload, only sensation and emotion exist: narrative is dead, logic unknown, time disrupted, and identity discontinuous."[3] Even future collaborator Wim Wenders admitted to being shocked by the film's "total negation of any sense of image," and Jonathan Rosenbaum described the film as "cinema at

the end of its tether."[4] And yet Ray's delirious last images could also be seen as visionary. I suggest the prescience of *We Can't Go Home Again* by turning to Anne Friedberg's readings of another provident filmmaker, D. W. Griffith, and his musings on screen and media technologies of the future.

Griffith's Premonitions

In 1915 D. W. Griffith made the following prophecy about cinema's future:

> Imagine a public library of the near future, for instance. There will be long rows of boxes or pillars, properly classified and indexed of course. At each box a push button and before each box a seat. Suppose you wish to "read up" on a certain episode in Napoleon's life. Instead of consulting all authorities, wading through a host of books, and ending bewildered without a clear idea of exactly what did happen, you will merely seat yourself at a properly adjusted window in a scientifically prepared room, press the button, and actually see what happened. . . . There will be no opinions expressed. You will merely be present at the making of history.[5]

This prophecy returns at three crucial points in the work of Friedberg, each time with a different emphasis. The first time Friedberg quotes Griffith is in "A Properly Adjusted Window," an article on early cinema's narrative and spatial framing and Griffith's Biograph films.[6] In this context, the quote suggests Griffith's optimism about the future of cinema and its beneficial social and mental effects. As Friedberg demonstrates, in 1915 Griffith saw cinema as a "saloon-surrogate" where "men could go somewhere, see something" and then return to family and home sober and safe. Given early cinema's bad reputation, to consider this form of entertainment capable of any mental or social reform, it had first to be reformed itself.[7] Griffith assisted this reform by developing narrative structures that became classic Hollywood narration. In an ingenious and sophisticated way, Friedberg uncovers the development of the typical Griffith narrative through a reading of the character of the lunatic in his early Biograph films, made between 1908 and 1909, when he produced several one-reel films per week. Friedberg reads these films within the social framework of the mental hygiene movement of 1908, which fought for more humane treatment of the insane. Thanks to its efforts, mental institutions were no longer "asylums" (without hope for a cure) but "hospitals" (with hope for a cure). Also during this period, Freud visited the United States, and ideas about mental health and sickness altered quickly. The figure of the madman was a frequent protagonist in Griffith's films of the period. In the early Biograph movies that Friedberg analyzed, such as *Where Breakers Roar* (August 1908), the lunatic is a dangerously disturbed character who needs to be contained and placed in custody. But the preoccupation with insanity may be seen more

broadly in the context of the development of cinema as a new technology, Friedberg maintains: "madness as a disturbance that needs to be textually contained, maybe metaphoric for textual regulation itself, and acting-out of Griffith's own struggle with narrative conventions."[8] Madness is narrative incoherence, which Griffith seeks to control and contain.

At some point in this Biograph period the narrative of containment changes into a narrative of transformation. Friedberg mentions *The Drunkard's Reformation* (February 1909) as an important transitional film. In this film the foolish drunkard is cured after seeing a play about a drunkard and his family. After this film, Griffith produced many others with deranged characters whose mental conditions are determined by what they see erroneously. And the cure always lies in finding a way to see correctly: "Madness was an error in *seeing*; a delirium curable by reinvestigating the same image with a different meaning. For the characters and the spectator this is . . . a retrospective rewriting of the mental, cognitive frame through which the image was first seen."[9] Thus the first time Griffith's premonition appears in Friedberg's work, it is framed within the context of narrative cinema and the possibilities of film performing a sort of "seeing cure" by telling the story in "correct" cinematographic style. By commanding vision as the "father" of cinema style, Griffith establishes rules for Hollywood narration (with certain narrative roles and subject positions for men and women) as a *"properly adjusted window in a scientifically prepared room,"* as Friedberg emphasizes from the initial quote in the conclusion of her article.[10]

The second time Friedberg presents Griffith's quote is in the conclusion of *Window Shopping*.[11] In this book Friedberg gives an in-depth account of cinema and the postmodern. Here she not only develops an invaluable account of the problematic notion of postmodernism in relation to consumer culture, popular culture, modernism, and the avant-garde, but also investigates the postmodern condition in terms of gendered spectatorship. In spite of her critical distance from postmodern consumer culture, Friedberg argues that with the advent of new technologies that offer "new windows," Griffith's "properly adjusted window" of patriarchal narration is opened up and becomes more accessible for women, as "flâneuses" in postmodern culture, too. Besides the spatial framings and reframing of cinematographic narration, Friedberg is now increasingly interested in the temporal effects of cinematic and televisual spectatorship, which is characterized by a "mobilized virtual gaze": "[T]he subjectivity of the 'postmodern condition' appears to be a product of instrumentalized acceleration of these spatial and temporal fluidities. Postmodernity is marked by the increasing centralization of features implicit (from the start) in cinema spectatorship: the production of a virtual elsewhere and elsewhen, and the commodification of a gaze that is mobilized in both time and space."[12]

With this gradual shift toward the fluid temporal dimensions of visual culture and postmodern spectatorship, it makes sense that Griffith's premonition is now emphasized differently and considered within a temporal framework, placed within the context of

the media technology of the early 1990s: cable television, remote controls, VCRs, faxes, the Walkman, personal computers, and modems. Friedberg describes a visit to the Vidéothèque de Paris,[13] which was located in the Forum des Halles, the underground shopping mall at the center of Paris, and which housed a collection of films on the city of Paris. In addition to two large screening theaters, the Vidéothèque provided one of the first audiovisual archives in the world, long before Google and other search engines made audiovisual databases accessible to individual viewers, a facility for individual consultation. With the push of a button requested images could be called up, and a robot arm in the mezzanine library searched for, found, and pulled the requested title from a shelf, inserted it mechanically into a VCR, and connected it to an individual monitor. The VCR brought the already temporally mobile form of the cinema to a new degree of accessibility: "At the push of a button you are not, 'present at the making of history,' but you have, instead, the history of cinema at your fingertips. . . . With the VCR the cinema is more directly a 'memory implant,' a component module of memory that can be added, removed, replaced."[14] "*At each box a push button and before each box a seat*" is the phrase that Friedberg now emphasizes.[15] This indicates how domestic electronics gradually follow the interactive model of dialogic telephone communication and thus transform the more monolithic "properly adjusted window" of Hollywood narration that was highlighted in the first appearance of Griffith's words. It could even be argued that the "proper adjustment" increasingly means "customized to individual desires." In respect to the fluid temporal dimensions of audiovisual culture, Friedberg concurs at the end of *Window Shopping* with Fredric Jameson and other postmodern critics that in the endless supply of secondary representations, nostalgia becomes the dominant form of access to the past at the expense of history. And yet, contrary to Jameson, Friedberg also recognizes nostalgia's potential to create a new and possibly more empowering relation to the past.

The third moment for restaging Griffith's words is at the end of *The Virtual Window*.[16] In her last book Friedberg continues to investigate the frame, the screen, and the metaphor of the window in relation to technological media, as well as the ways in which these technologies have changed our perception of space and time. Thanks to this consistent attention to the changes in media technology throughout her writings, Friedberg's work is a guide to understanding the changes in our media landscape, their media archaeological predecessors, and the larger developments of art and cinema history and theory. According to Friedberg, one of the main changes with the advent of digital technologies is the challenge to a fixed perspective and the multiplication of the screen: "Digital imaging technologies not only make it easier to conduct 'cut-ups' and collages, to construct seamless substitutions and simulation effects, but also ease the use of inset framing devices to facilitate multiple 'windowed' screens."[17] While the multiplication or repetition of frames has always been part of cinema history, this multiplication was by and large sequential. Digital technology and the computer window make it possible to show simultaneous multiplication (not unlike the fractured point of view in cubist painting) and to show simultaneous windows that do not necessarily relate to one another: "Our new mode of

perception is multiple and fractured."[18] In a historical taxonomy of variables, Friedberg shows how different forms of multiplication of screens have been part of screen-based technologies in earlier periods: the technique of the split screen to show simultaneous actions in separate spaces is already a practice in cinema that ranges from Lois Weber's *Suspense* (1913) to Brian de Palma's *Sisters* (1973). The self-reflexive use of frames within frames or the screen as part of the diegetic world can be found in *Uncle Josh at the Moving Picture Show* (1902), *Sherlock Junior* (Buster Keaton, 1924), and Woody Allen's *Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985). And films projected onto multiple screens have been famous since Abel Gance's three-projector *Napoleon* (1926), Andy Warhol's two-screen projection *The Chelsea Girls* (1966), and other multiple screen experiments of the 1960s, described in detail by Friedberg. She also shows how multimedia became part of multiscreen projects: the television screen and video technologies were introduced as part of the multiplication of the screen in Warhol's *Outer and Inner Space* (1965) and Jean-Luc Godard's *Numéro Deux* (1976). Yet Friedberg also makes clear that these predecessors of the multiplication of frames and screens are exceptions that confirm the single frame and its sequential unfolding of events, which both have changed more dramatically with the advent of digital technology and the fragmented narration of interface culture. *The Virtual Window* addresses media culture of the twenty-first century, in which computers combine functions of television and cinema screens, and cell phones, car navigational systems, gaming consoles, and other electronic devices, small and large, determine our screen-based audiovisual culture. Friedberg continues to question the differences between these new screens but wonders about the persistence of the old metaphor: "[O]n the fractured plane of the computer screen, the metaphor of the window has retained a key stake in the technological reframing of the visual field. The Windows interface is a postcinematic visual system, but the viewer-turned-user remains in front of a perpendicular frame."[19] In the conclusion, where Friedberg discusses the future of windows, she returns one more time to Griffith's predictions, with yet another emphasis: "*You will merely seat yourself at a properly adjusted window in a scientifically prepared room, press the button and actually see what happened. . . . There will be no opinions expressed. You will merely be present at the making of history.*"[20] Friedberg maintains that Griffith had a keen insight into the ways in which media technologies would be involved in "storing time," in making time and space more fluid, fragmented, multiplied in dimensions and aspects. She is critical of Griffith's lack of recognition of any mediation to the "history pictures" these windows would record. But even if our interaction with the screen has changed drastically, the "intransigence of the frame" and the persistence of the metaphor of the window remains "a chilling constant, one with inexorable cultural power."[21]

By reframing Griffith's words from 1915 in different contexts, the quote itself becomes like a little time machine that reflects developments and recurrent themes in Friedberg's work over the years. Framed within Griffith's oeuvre, the quote shows Friedberg's interest in early cinema and transformations in cinematographic narration and its representation of "sanity through vision." Considered in light of postmodern nostalgia and

technologies such as the VCR that bring the history of film within reach of individual viewers and "window shoppers," the powerful effects of fluid temporality, memory, and history are emphasized. And finally, in the digital age the explosion of virtual and simultaneous windows has replaced singular and sequential ones. Griffith's premonitions seem to have come true, albeit with the important footnote that these windows are everything but transparent and that in the age of media convergence, the differences between the "large, small, long, short, high, low, wide, narrow, light, dark, bright, gloomy" screens and the screens of the twenty-first century are to be taken into account as well.[22]

Nicholas Ray's Postcinematic World

In many respects *We Can't Go Home Again* resonates with Friedberg's ideas. That the film was restored and redistributed in 2011 transports us back to the late 1960s and 1970s in a mobilization of our virtual gaze through the repeatability that Friedberg identified as cinema's postmodern condition.[23] The film opens with footage of the Democratic Convention of 1968 in Chicago and the riots that took place at that time, when political protests and civil unrest in the wake of the murder of Martin Luther King and during the Vietnam War led to extreme violence in the streets of American cities (see figure 3.1). In voice-over Ray remembers how he went to Chicago for "The Festival of Life" that was held during the convention and had his camera confiscated within three hours after arriving. He also comments on the trial of rebel leaders of that time, such as Jerry Rubin, Rennie Davis, John Froin, and Abbie Hoffman, wondering where everybody has gone.

Ray then announces that he was offered a job in upstate New York, which he decided to take. We switch to images of students, while in voice-over they answer Ray's question: "What is the first traumatic experience you recall?" with memories of the night of the Bay of Pigs, John Kennedy's announcement on television of the invasion of Cuba, the fear of dying at the age of eight, and running to bomb shelters. Then the title of the film appears, over which Suzy Williams sings in a blues voice, "Bless the Family." The film cuts to multiple frames of students performing and gatherings in university buildings and classrooms. Ray, wearing his characteristic eyepatch, appears in several instances, sometimes with a camera. In the opening scenes Ray meets his students, who, unimpressed, remember his films ("You the guy who did *They Live by Night*, right? And *Johnny Guitar*?"), and he gives them their first assignment: to film a demonstration for prisoners. In its reference to the social political moment, as well as to the youth culture of the early 1970s, the film brings back an elsewhere and an elsewhen acutely described by Friedberg. While the film transports us back in time on one level, at another level it is also ahead of its time. In an interview published in the *New York Times*, Susan Ray, who initiated and supervised the restoration of the film (it premiered at the Venice International Film Festival in 2011 to celebrate the centenary of her husband's birth), declared: "It was an experimental film, a difficult film, and I think a visionary film that is particularly important today."[24]
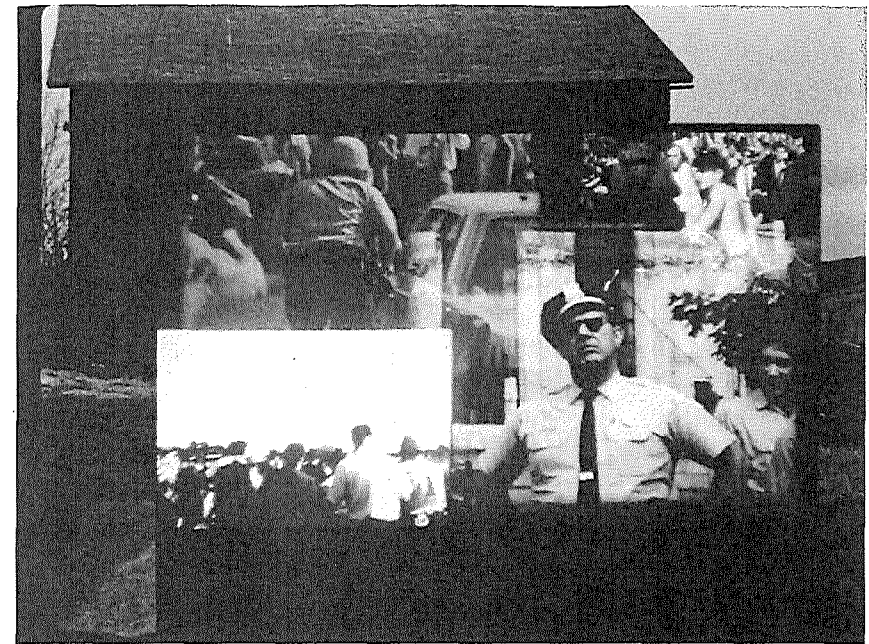

FIGURE 3.1 Still image of multiscreen footage of 1968 Chicago Democratic Convention, from Nicholas Ray, *We Can't Go Home Again* (1972–1976). Courtesy of the Nicholas Ray Foundation. *We Can't Go Home Again* © 2011 by The Nicholas Ray Foundation. All rights reserved.

We Can't Go Home Again does not present a straightforward sequential narrative on a single screen, but rather is a multiple-screen project, what Ray called a "mimage." Images shot with different cameras were projected simultaneously on the screen and captured on 35 mm. Ray's film can be compared to the multiple-screen projects of Andy Warhol or Harry Smith's four-screen *Mahagonny* (1970–1980). But there are several characteristics of Ray's film that make it seem particularly contemporary with the avant-garde of the multiple screens of audiovisual culture today. The multiplicity of the screens, which constantly change in number and composition and present heterogeneous contents and various images and formats, give it the feeling of several open computer windows that are not always directly related, sometimes overlap, and are often too much to grasp. As Patricia Cohen observes, "Today's digital techniques would make it very easy to create the effects Ray painstakingly tried to achieve on a shoestring budget."[25] But at the time the fragmented layers of the multiple screens gave it a feeling we today recognize as digital. Throughout the film we often see Ray and the students with cameras, clapperboards, and projectors. This self-reflexiveness is but one instance of images on the multiple screens, a "diegetization of the apparatus" that creates another frame within frame.[26] Again, this is not new, but what is interesting is that these references to the film process by several

different people (not just Ray as the auteur, even if his presence is never far away) emphasize the collaborative and "amateur" nature of the project and evoke the do-it-yourself aesthetics of the YouTube generation. Moreover, the students and their teacher play versions of themselves. "There are no rehearsals here. Not in this film that we are making. We don't work like that," one of the students, Leslie, tells a journalist who appears on the set in one of the sequences. Through the students' directing the camera consciously at their own community life and performing as themselves, *We Can't Go Home Again* could be considered reality television *avant la lettre* (including the extreme camera consciousness, but without the game show element). Another type of image is "documentary" images from demonstrations, political protests, riots, and conventions, filmed by the students or taken from newsreels. Images of Nixon's election, Jane Fonda speaking against the Vietnam War, and the opening images of the Chicago demonstration and the police violence during the Democratic Convention were filmed by live television, while the demonstrators shouted "the whole world is watching." The sense of immediacy and worldwide distribution of these images "pre-calls," for instance, the images of the recent Arab revolutions distributed through social media.

In any case, watching these images now renders the "exact temporal referent of each of these films quite slippery."[27] In the overflow of images, which mostly play against a dark background (covering for the most part a background film that is looped throughout the whole film), there are some images that stand out and are repeated with variations. One is a film consisting of superimposed images of one student (or several students; it is not exactly clear) descending a staircase naked. The reference to Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)* (1912) may have been intuitive, but it does seem significant in relation to the innovative aspects of the whole project (see figure 3.2). In *The Virtual Window* Friedberg refers to Duchamp's painting and to cubism in general as the art form that broke with Renaissance perspectivism and introduced multiple points of view, no one of which has exclusive authority. She quotes György Kepes, who acknowledged the influence of cinema on cubism: "Painters shifted the point of vision into a kind of cinematographic sequence, and represented the projection of several points of view in one picture."[28] It is known that Duchamp was familiar with the chronophotography of Étienne-Jules Marey and Eadweard Muybridge's locomotion series *Girl Walking Downstairs*. Yet as Friedberg demonstrates in her work, multiple-screen cinema is again closer to the simultaneous juxtaposition of points of view in cubism than to the sequential and single-screen medium of film. This clear art historical reference in *We Can't Go Home Again* could therefore be seen as an homage to cubism's multiperspectival and fragmented perception.

Another set of recurrent and striking images in *We Can't Go Home* is the video manipulation by Nam June Paik (see figure 3.3). While the Duchamp references relate to the past, Nam June Paik's work addresses the future of media technology and "the need to create alternative forms of expression out of the very technologies that impact our lives."[29] Paik, who coined the term *telecommunication superhighway* in 1974, is known for his artistic experiments with media technology. His satellite performance *Good Morning Mr.*
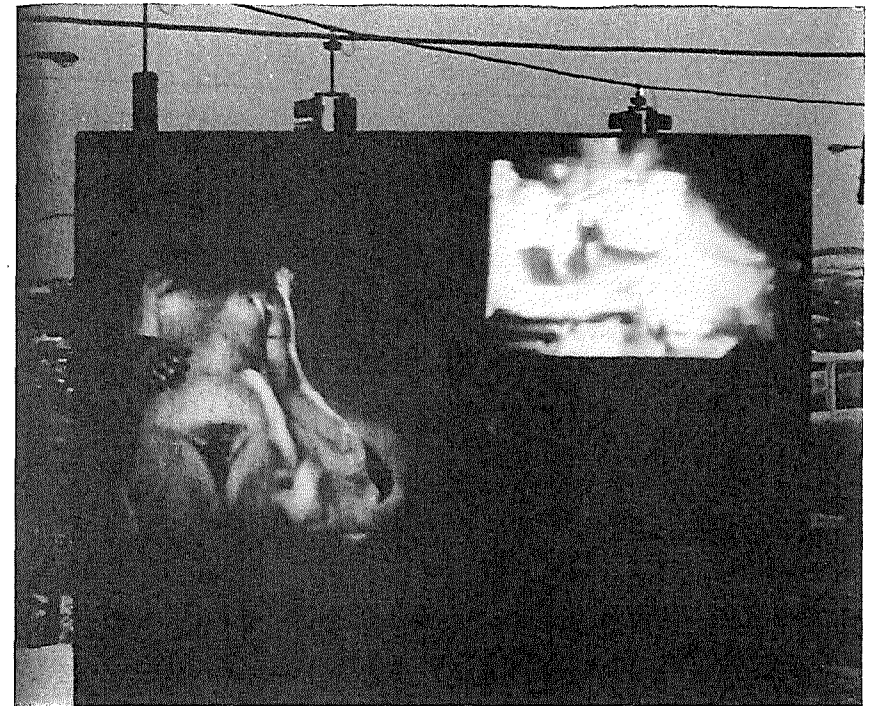

FIGURE 3.2 Visual allusion to Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase (No.) 2* (1912), from Nicholas Ray, *We Can't Go Home Again* (1972–1976). Courtesy of the Nicholas Ray Foundation. *We Can't Go Home Again* © 2011 by The Nicholas Ray Foundation. All rights reserved.

Orwell, which brought together in 1984 artists such as Laurie Anderson, Peter Gabriel, John Cage, Philip Glass, and Joseph Beuys, was edited from live satellite broadcasts from France, West Germany, and the United States and can be seen as an early example of net art. Paik has argued that the video synthesizer, which he used to manipulate images of *We Can't Go Home Again*, was actually somehow the beginning of the Internet. "Because you were able to create media content yourself, like you can do on the internet now. It is very important to make media yourself."[30] Furthermore, he saw very early on the possibilities of worldwide collaboration and the revolutionary potential of the Internet for creating a new type of art in which video, literature, graphics, and music can merge. Paik believed the Internet might create new terms of politics, helping democratic processes and revolutions: "George Orwell was wrong after all, when he wrote *1984*: He did not foresee the Internet."[31]

As an artist, Paik challenged the traditional use of media technology, turning television, video, and satellite into artistic instruments and thus demonstrating alternative forms of expression and uses of these technologies, liberating them from conventional
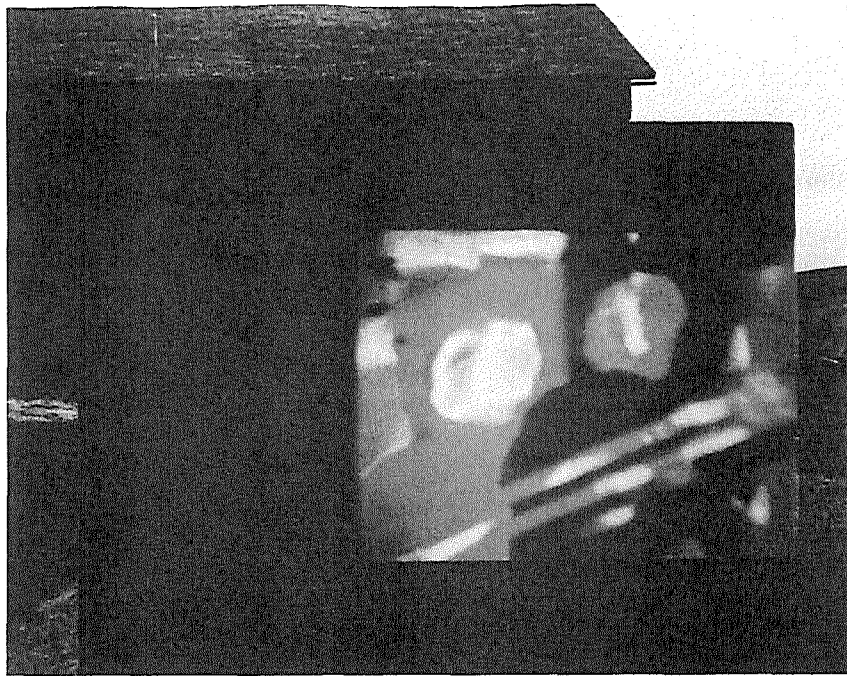
FIGURE 3.3 Video manipulation by Nam June Paik, from Nicholas Ray, *We Can't Go Home Again* (1972–1976). Courtesy of the Nicholas Ray Foundation. *We Can't Go Home Again* © 2011 by The Nicholas Ray Foundation. All rights reserved.

(commercial or military) purposes. Bringing Nam June Paik's images into *We Can't Go Home Again* demonstrates Ray's sensibility to the changes in media culture at the moment of its filming. If the film is "cinema at the end of its tether," Paik's collaboration on this project anticipates the postcinematic landscape that cinema was about to enter. The film previews a new mode of perception that, as Friedberg has shown, is multiple and fractured: "It is 'postperspectival'—no longer framed in a single image with fixed centrality; 'postcinematic'—no longer projected onto a screen surface as were the camera obscura or magic lantern; 'post-televisual'—no longer unidirectional in the model of sender and receiver."[32]

In terms of the quality of the synthesized video images themselves, it is interesting to compare these electronic manipulations of light to Steven Shaviro's discussion of Grace Jones's music video *Corporate Cannibal* by Nick Hooker (2009). Shaviro's description of the manipulated images of Grace Jones (her head and body mutating constantly like an oil spill, but always remaining present in the materiality of the image) is interesting because it indicates a postcinematic materiality of the image that is comparable to Nam June Paik's earlier experiments with some of the images in Ray's film: "[Nick Hooker's,

PP] earlier videos are about free-flowing metamorphosis; but 'Corporate Cannibal' is about *modulation* which is something entirely different. Metamorphosis is expansive and open-ended, while modulation is schematic and implosive. Metamorphosis implies the ability to move laterally across categories; but modulation requires an underlying fixity, in the form of a carrier wave signal that is made to undergo a series of controlled and coded variations."[33] Even though Paik's synthesized images are not digitally manipulated in the way *Corporate Cannibal* is, they do emit an electromagnetic field that does not follow the rules of classical perspectival space, nor are they self-reflexive in the sense of the frame-within-frame construction (that appears in other images in *We Can't Go Home Again*). Rather, comparable to *Corporate Cannibal*, these images create their own space through modulation of an underlying fixity. Just as we still recognize the image of Grace Jones in these modulated images, in the synthesized images of Paik we do recognize some of the characters who are on other screens within the screen in front of the camera. But as Shaviro maintains, "the video's *ontological consistency* does not depend, in the way that film would, upon the fact of this prior physical presence. . . . Where classical cinema was analogical and indexical, digital video is processual and combinatorial."[34] I am not arguing that Shaviro's excellent analysis of the *Corporate Cannibal* video corresponds in all aspects to Nam June Paik's manipulations in Ray's film. Yet we here begin to see the emergence of a new image regime that critiques the older image regime of (perspectival) representation: by delving beneath the surfaces, into the "electronic depths" of the bodies, these images "discover a dense affectivity that is not subjective any longer."[35] These images go beyond representation to create an emotional effect of color, movement, and time. Shaviro argues that *Corporate Cannibal* gives "voice and image to the vertiginous 'globalized network society' that we live in today."[36] Nam June Paik's manipulations in *We Can't Go Home Again* suggest one beginning of this development. We have come a long way from Ray's iconic images in *Rebel Without a Cause* to the electronically manipulated images of Ray and his students, which are no longer indexical but have affective force in their experimental form. Yet the film is also emotionally powerful because of the vulnerability of its "protagonists" (see figure 3.4). Clearly we see here a group of people, Ray included, who are in search of new ways of living and communicating. A group of people who can no longer go home to their parents or old communities or even to society at large. A group of people who are often lost in their search, but who, as Ray warns them in the only full-screen sequence of the film, should "not expect too much" from life or their teachers. In a way this is another invitation to "do it yourself" without any prefixed paths and models and to confront dangers and mistakes.

Filmmaker Victor Erice recognizes *We Can't Go Home Again* as a groundbreaking movie, ahead of its time, yet also full of failures, a failed movie "that turns failure into something exemplary. It is alive. It helps us recognize, touch, the aching of a community, so intensely moving, and so different from the official portraits of the time."[37] Part of the film's "failure" is related to the fact that we are possibly witnessing the manifestations of Ray's own mental breakdown: "The symptoms of the disorder—paranoid delusions,

FIGURE 3.4 Nicholas Ray with student, from *We Can't Go Home Again* (1972–1976). Courtesy of the Nicholas Ray Foundation. *We Can't Go Home Again* © 2011 by The Nicholas Ray Foundation. All rights reserved.

warped expectations, withdrawal from everyday life, behavioral irregularities, and a global splintering of one's consciousness—are the threads of Ray's delirious tapestry."[38] The postscript of the film, "No one does it alone. Not even the madness," emphasizes that even this madness is a collective process. The madman who can be cured by "properly adjusted" sane vision through a single window, as established by Griffith and described by Friedberg, no longer exists. And just as Griffith's fools augured developments in cinema, much of Ray's film gives us a preview of the delirious overload of contemporary image culture. *We Can't Go Home Again* demonstrates that windows can no longer be properly adjusted. Even if we still live in the age of windows, we cannot go back to the "origin" or home of cinema again. The title of Ray's last film evokes Thomas Wolfe's novel *You Can't Go Home Again*, which ends with the words: "You can't go back home to your family, back home to your childhood . . . back home to a young man's dreams of glory and fame . . . back home to the places in the country, back home to the old forms and systems of things which once seemed everlasting but which are changing all the time—back home to the escapes of Time and Memory."[39] With their sensitivity to new and ever-changing media conditions, both Friedberg and Ray were extremely conscious of this irreversibility of time. Luckily, we can still go back to their work again.

Notes

1. I want to thank Giovanna Fossati and the EYE Film Institute Netherlands for allowing me to see an early version of the restoration copy at the editing table and as a preview screener.
2. François Truffaut, *The Films of My Life*. Translated by Leonard Mayhew (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 143.
3. Cullen Gallagher, "We Can't Go Home Again," *Not Coming to a Theater Near You*, http://notcoming.com/reviews/wecantgohomeagain, 2.
4. Ibid., 2, 5.
5. David Wark Griffith, "Five Dollar 'Movies' Prophesied," *The Editor*, April 2, 1915, excerpted in Harry M. Geduld, ed., *Focus on D. W. Griffith* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 35.
6. Anne Friedberg, "'A Properly Adjusted Window': Vision and Sanity in D. W. Griffith's 1908–1909 Biograph Films," in *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (London: British Film Institute, 1990), 326–335.
7. Ibid., 327.
8. Ibid., 331–332.
9. Ibid., 333.
10. Ibid., 334.
11. Anne Friedberg, *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 181.
12. Ibid., 179.
13. In 1998 the Vidéothèque was renamed Forum des Images, and in 2008 it reopened its audiovisual facilities. See http://www.forumdesimages.fr/fdi/Forum-des-images/Histoire.
14. Friedberg, *Window Shopping*, 182, 188.
15. Ibid., 181.
16. Anne Friedberg, *The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 242–243.
17. Ibid., 193.
18. Ibid., 194.
19. Ibid, 232. See also Anne Friedberg, "Virilio's Screen: The Work of Metaphor in the Age of Technological Convergence," *Journal of Visual Culture* 3, no. 2 (2004): 183–193.
20. Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 243.
21. Ibid., 244.
22. Ibid., 243.
23. Friedberg, *Window Shopping*, 177.
24. Nicholas Ray, quoted in Patricia Cohen, "Reclaiming Causes of a Filmmaking Rebel," *New York Times*, June 17, 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/06/17/movies/17ray.html.
25. Ibid.
26. Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 202.
27. Friedberg, *Window Shopping*, 177.
28. György Kepes, *Language of Vision* (Chicago: Paul Theobold, 1944), 95, quoted in Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 194.
29. John Hanhardt, "Introduction to The Worlds of Nam June Paik," Guggenheim Museum, 2000, 3, www.paikstudios.com.
30. Quoted in Tilman Baumgaertel, "I Am a Communication Artist: An Interview with Nam June Paik," 2001, 1. https://noemalab.eu/org/sections/ideas/ideas_articles/pdf/baumgaertel.pdf.
31. Ibid.
32. Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 194.
33. Steven Shaviro, *Post-Cinematic Affect* (Winchester, UK, and Washington, DC: O-Books, 2010), 13.
34. Ibid., 17.
35. Ibid., 24.
36. Ibid., 34.

37. Victor Erice, quoted in press release, "The World Premiere of the Restored/Reconstructed Copy of Nicholas Ray's Posthumous Masterpiece *We Can't Go Home Again* in Commemoration of the Centennial of His Birth," Venice Film Festival, 2011.

38. Gallagher, "We Can't Go Home Again," 1.

39. Thomas Wolfe, *You Can't Go Home Again* (New York: Harper and Row, 1934), 699.

4

The Eisenstein Effect

Architecture and Narrative Montage in Sergei Eisenstein and Le Corbusier

Anthony Vidler

To occupy a Le Corbusier house is to inhabit a film.
—BEATRIZ COLOMINA[1]

The mutually informative relations between the media of film and architecture have a long history, one that stretches back to the first investigations in time and motion studies by Étienne-Jules Marey, through the first motion pictures, and into the movie era. It includes the special relations between directors and set architects as modernism, as defined in different ways by the avant-gardes, beginning with futurism; explored the relations between space and the body, time and movement, and space in all its post-cubist forms; and most important, investigations of space and the psychology of individuals and crowds. Cut to the television era, in which the relations between media and space in everyday life were and are still being radically transformed, and then to the video era, the webcam and social media era, in which the relations between private and public, sexuality and display, gender and ethnicity are continuously tested, socially and politically. All these moments have had distinct and sometimes structurally related effects on architecture. Reciprocally, theories and designs in architecture have also played a formative role in changing media environments.

In this chapter I explore a particular moment in these relations—one that has been noticed before but has not, I think, yielded all of its potentially rich inferences. I speak of the relationship between filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein and modernist architect Le Corbusier. My title refers to what I call the "Eisenstein effect" and what Eisenstein called "montage," a theory well known in film studies. It could equally have been called the "Le