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RIALT06

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Radical Gestures (Acto I)

Tatiana Macedo

Nothing can guarantee that the empty chair in a particular corner of the museum will ever be sat on, or whether the motionless, and seemingly stiff body of the museum attendant will continue to remain so. Harder still to guess will be what images almost imperceptibly are reflected back at us, in the mirrored surface of a red velvet stanchion rope. Among the uncertainty of possible outcomes, infinite minimal gestures take place in a quasi-secret choreography that prefers to remain unseen and couldn't care less about the works hung on the museum's walls, an unrehearsed dance that does not prepare us for the imaginary, almost perfect circle the body of one such attendant makes in the space, when changing position. Minimal gestures that inform a liminal climatology where, besides intimating bodies and objects, subtle affectivities and ephemeral nuances are expressed, that are nonetheless real and vibrant, with a consistency dependent on a gaze which devotes enough time to them to put everything into relation.

In this game of endless variations and false repetitions, these gestures denote another time scale. In the words of Maria Teresa Horta, the gerund is used to represent a particular mode of being: “trabalhando devagar o rigor do tempo” (slowly working through the relentless passage of time). Indifference and automatism can once and for all be deferred, only for a lofty proximity to the subtle temporal shifts of experience to take their place, prolonging and intensifying them in order to simultaneously coexist, unsubmitive to the vortex, linear and successive on principle, of Chronos. It is in this simultaneity that time unfolds and sensorial textures are rearticulated by what, in another form, would get lost in the apparent unimportance of interstitial states.

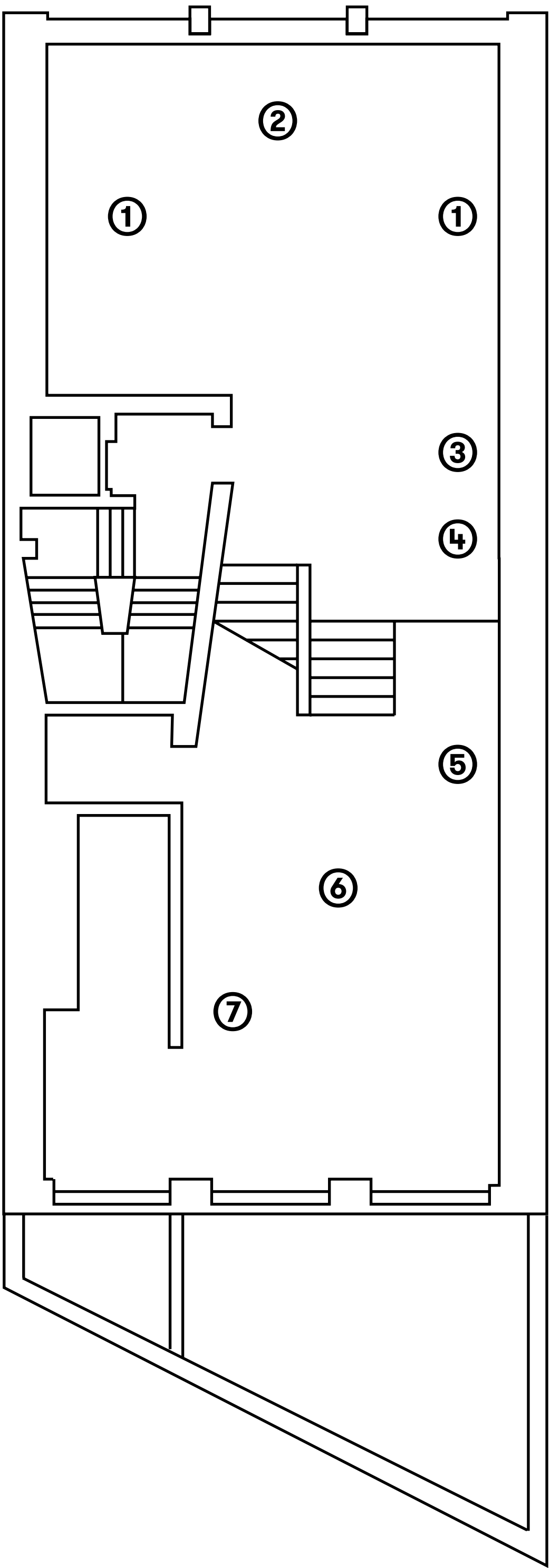
In the fixed camera lens of “Seems So Long Ago, Nancy”, Tatiana Macedo lingers on different points of Tate Britain and Tate Modern. It lingers on veiled mysteries, observing those whose job is precisely to observe. The point here is not, in spite of everything, to surveil as would a security camera, but as a camera-being, in turn operated by another being possessing a gaze. The filmed bodies rarely are seen in full, appearing fragmented and cropped where we just catch the face, or a pair of hands, a lock of hair or the intimation of breath. These bodies are not meant to be legible. If the operative purpose of surveillance tends to break up the visible into recognisable, classifiable or anticipatable elements, here the opposite happens. Rather than solving the mystery, the proximity of the image, and our doubt whether whoever being filmed is aware or not of the fact, adds new layers of ambiguity. The camera lingers long enough for the hands, faces, hair, intakes of breath and silences to be endowed with a density they would fail to have under the quick glance of recognition. As it lingers, the camera seems to lose its desire to spy on us, to rather become a witness to something. The institution no longer manifests itself solely in the architecture, its protocols or entrenched rules and becomes insinuated in the way these observant bodies apportion attention, modulate the act of waiting, negotiate repetitiveness and, once and for all, inscribe time in space. Might it be based on such a premise that Tatiana Macedo asks the question: “How is the body a microcosm of the institution?”

In one of the last shots of “Seems So Long Ago, Nancy”, the camera focuses on the glassy surfaces of a door leading to the street and we catch a glimpse of outside the museum. For the first time, the gaze leaves behind the corridors, galleries, museum attendants and visitors to fall upon the movement of tree branches. The twist in this shot resides in its dual perspective: looking out while looking in. In both, there lies the possibility of nudging the boundaries of any microcosm, recognising its fleeting nature whether it be a museum gallery or any common work environment, of cinematography or the time implicit in each one. The exterior introduces a modicum of distance, enough for whatever appeared to fall into place to begin once again to wobble.

This uncertain feeling continues beyond the film itself. In “Radical Gestures”, Tatiana Macedo returns to these images to reformulate them through other mediums, blurring the unstable distinctions between cinema, painting and sculpture. Their characteristics are tweaked, the viewer’s perspectives are meddled with, colour, in each case, is carefully wrought. These are no secondary attraction, but as intrinsic a part, whereby in the gallery space these works and the film together suggest new possibilities for our attention. We are no longer spectators sat watching a film, but we circulate, flitting in its shadows. From its myriad perspectives, time remains “out of joint”, as suggested by the images of two clock faces in “Quantum Theory”, where the hands dance as if they no longer recognise their own supposed forward motion. Perhaps here is the key, reminiscent of the discreet indecisiveness of Leonard Cohen’s lyrics which serve as title for the film “Seems So Long Ago, Nancy”, of a time that constantly remoulds the experience we take from it.

Manuel Bogalheiro

Level 1



①

Quantum Theory
(diptych)

Full HD video on 49” flat screens,
metallic poles, paint, loop, colour,
sound

⑤

Extra Dimensions #01
(diptych)

Full HD video on 32” flat screens,
light pink wall, loop, colour, silent

②

String Theory

Full HD video on 49” flat screen,
metallic pole, paint, loop, colour, silent

⑥

Underscore #01

Full HD video on 49” flat screen,
metallic pole, paint, loop, colour, silent

③

Uncertainty Principle
(Door, Tate Modern)

Full HD video on 49” flat screen,
metallic pole, paint, loop, colour, silent

⑦

Father John

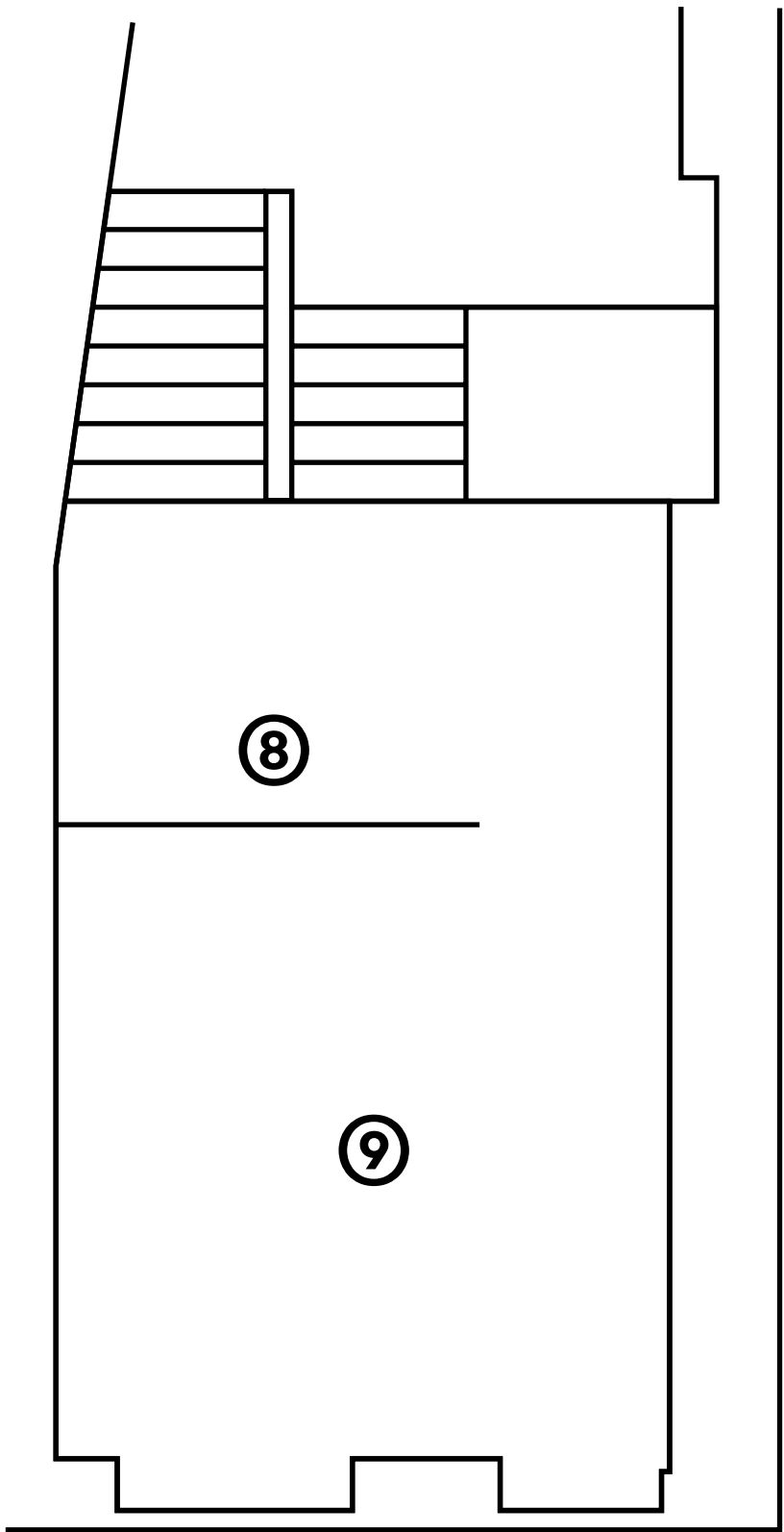
Full HD video on 32” flat screen, loop,
colour, silent

④

Gravitation
(Chair, Tate Britain)

Full HD video on 70” vertical flat screen,
loop, colour, silent

Mezzanine



⑧

Super-positioned Speech (diptych)

Full HD video on 32” flat screens, loop,
colour, silent

⑨

Artist’s Cinema: A Cinema of One’s Own

2 – 31 July

Seems So Long Ago, Nancy

Tatiana Macedo, 2012
Shot at Tate Britain and Tate Modern
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, Sound, 45’

Post-production supported by
the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

3 September – 3 October

The Museum Body

Seems So Long Ago, Nancy

Tatiana Macedo, 2012
Shot at Tate Britain and Tate Modern
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, Sound, 45’

Post-production supported by
the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

The Forbidden City

O que Faltava ao Cinema Moderno

Tatiana Macedo, 2014
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, Sound, 17’06”

Foreign Grey / Five Stars

Tatiana Macedo, 2014
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, Sound, 4’56”

A Few Coloured Tears

Tatiana Macedo, 2014
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, Sound, 8’17”

Praça T. 4 de Junho de 2013

Tatiana Macedo, 2014
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, Sound, 2’33

The Archives to be

Film Book Film

Tatiana Macedo, 2023
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, B&W, Sound, 7’18”

First Presented at the issue 04 of The Garage
Journal, now part of The February Journal
Archive, Berlin

Mixed Feelings: A Composition for Chamber Orchestra

Tatiana Macedo, 2018
Shot at Iwalewahaus, Bayreuth
Full HD, 16:9, Colour, Sound, 17’42”