



The Hours: A Gaze, a Kiss and the Lapse between them. An Eventalization*

Asmund W. Born, Christian Frankel and Niels Thyge Thygesen

abstract

In this article we make an event of a movie. Our ambition is to elaborate on what emerges when we observe, and our purpose is to use a film to reflect upon the practical implications of Foucauldian eventalization. What we offer is an experiment with eventalization. Instead of a philosophical and conceptual debate, we suggest an experiment, where we walk the method and create a singularity, an existence that is neither *the* film nor *us*, but an enriching in-between, from where we may reflect upon eventalization as a method. In this eventalization, we use time as a tool of observation, which grants the freedom of confronting different conceptualizations of time with the same 'epistemic object'. The specific object eventalized is *The Hours* (USA, 2002), but it could have been any movie. However, as the film *The Hours* invites to an observation through the concept of time, the experiment becomes self-referentially entangled from the very outset. Three different time perspectives are applied; the Luhmannian concept of temporal modalities, the Ricoeurian concept of mimesis, and a hybrid version of Bergsonian and Deleuzian notions of intense time. Through time modalities planning is established as the vehicle of our expectations, while the mimetic configurations show how subject positions are folded into a creative, a reflexive, and an actualizing figuration. Finally, 'intensive' time focuses on the folding of expression and content in the orthogonal inclusion of the viewer. Reflecting on eventalization as cognitive practice, we argue that in eventalization the invitation is the point. Not as a superficial gesture, but as a committed offer, at the same time transparent and closing around itself, because only under these conditions will eventalization remain worthy of eventalizations yet to come.

In Medias Res

'Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.' So runs a pivotal sentence in the film *The Hours*,¹ a sentence rife with time, with time ahead, with time now, with time before. With a single sentence we are *in medias res*: in Edwardian England in the 1920s, when the book is written; in optimistic and utopian America in the 1950s, when

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1 *The Hours* (USA 2002), directed by Stephen Daldry, based on a novel by Michael Cunningham. This article is eventalizing the meeting between the film and us, thus there are no intentions involving interpretation neither of Cunningham's novel nor of Virginia Woolf's.

the book is read; and finally in late modern New York in the new millennium, when the book is enacted.

'Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself,' is the opening sentence of the book that Virginia Woolf is writing in *The Hours*. It does not open with 'Call me Ishmael', which is the first sentence of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, where the reader is welcomed and invited directly into the now and the moment of actualisation. Instead, 'Mrs. Dalloway said she would...', and the reader is invited to expect and to observe, in past tense and even unseen.

'Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself,' Laura Brown reads in Woolf's book as the film cuts to her suburban home in the fifties, where she lies in bed alone, and we are immediately aware that Laura is an observer who at one and the same time shares our fate and is an element in the film's narrative. Laura is an observer of a trace from a past, a time before, but also an audience, like us, crossing ages and generations through the book and the sentence.

'Sally, I think I will buy the flowers myself.' The sentence finally arrives in the present tense and we know that we have met Mrs. Dalloway herself and in person, here in the person of the publisher Clarissa Vaughan, who utters the sentence in New York in 2001 before she leaves her apartment for the florist, then leaves the florist for the apartment of the writer, Richard Brown. This is the Richard Brown who has given Clarissa Vaughan the nickname 'Mrs. Dalloway' as a mark left by a shared past, a passing remark that 'stuck', and as a promise of what we can expect in the film's future, the content of the time to come.

The sentence is symptomatic of a film in which time is *modalized* as planning, is *compressed* into a web of narratives, and yet constructed in moments of *pure intensity*.

The event and the gaze

'Symptomatic of a film in which time is ...' as if it is the true essence of the film, as if there is a true essence to be found, when what there is, seems to be a flickering of sound and light, of visions and words in ever-changing figurations of appearing and disappearing, 'an anonymous murmur'. By stating the essence we have short-circuited the question to be asked before we even ask it through the Cartesian distinction between subject and object. Our ambition, however, is not to state what the film is or is not, but to elaborate on what emerges when we observe. Among the flickering stream of films we want to reflect upon, what happens, when we single a film out as an event and start discussing it, neither in order to make a film review nor to engage with cinema as art form in the Deleuzian sense (Deleuze, 2005a, 2005b).

Our purpose is to use the film to reflect upon the practical implications of Foucauldian eventalization. In the famous interview, 'Questions of Method' (2000), Foucault offers a sparse outline of eventalization as an epistemic method, emphasizing its ability to destabilize what seems self-evident while simultaneously opening to new and rich spaces of insight. With eventalization, what is to be observed is created as a singularity, as something distinct from the anonymity of the murmur, something in itself and for itself. The very singularity of the observed is the absolute precondition for its

multiplicity. Only by stating singularity can we sustain a demand of reality in our observation, while simultaneously accepting its heterogeneous and multiple quality.

What we offer here is an experiment with eventalization. Instead of a philosophical and conceptual debate, we suggest an experiment, where we walk the method and create a singularity, an existence that is neither *the* film nor *us*, but an enriching in-between, from where we may reflect upon eventalization as a method. As an experiment it is so self-referentially entangled from the very outset, that it can nothing but implode. This is due to the fact that the film invites an observation through the concept of time, and time is of course the hidden machinery in any *eventalization*.

And that is the real content of the claim that the film is about time. In the interaction between the film and us, time came up as a ‘function of existence’ in a double sense. First, it singularized the film as a film about time, and not only a film full of ‘time-’ and ‘movement-images’. Second, ‘time’ opened to a rich world of conceptualizations, where different concepts of time might interact with the singularity, thereby elucidating its multiplicity. Again our sentence about the film is misleading. It is not a film in which time is modalized, compressed or rendered as pure intensity. They are the three conceptual frames of Luhmann, Ricoeur and Bergson/Deleuze that operates on the one side in our eventalization, while *The Hours* is the other, the object of eventalization, and from there we hope to gain a non-trivial insight. And of course, what eventalization fears most of all is to be trivial. In the scene where Clarissa Vaughan talks about what a specific look from Richard does to her, she says that it makes her feel trivial, and being trivial is what Clarissa is most afraid of. Being trivial means existence without individuality. Something indistinguishable that no one can see. For a creator of plans and life, indistinguishability is death. But even for the non-trivial, nothing exists outside the event, where the gaze is a necessity as well as a possibility, and with choice of necessity and possibility all other compossible worlds die. Thus, there is no eventalization and henceforth new singularity, be it trivial or not, without death.

Leonard: ‘And who will die? Tell me.’

Virginia: ‘The poet will die. The visionary.’

Time as Modality

‘Mrs Dalloway said ...’ and the sentence drags a past of possibilities with it, alluding to agreements previously made. Before the ‘now’ of the sentence these agreements reached out towards a ‘future present’ still ahead. The definite article even reaches out towards a ‘future future’, the time of the purpose. However, taken at face value the sentence imparts what Mrs. Dalloway will do in the near future – she will be buying flowers, and the observer will be one step behind her.

On the surface the film is rife with temporal modalities distinguishing between ‘past’ and ‘future’, in between which the ‘now’ is omnipresent and yet not accessible, as the ‘now’ is nothing but the actualised difference between past and future (Luhmann, 1982a, 1982b; Moe, 2001). Past and future, however, are minimalist semantic figures suffused with complex forms such as ‘future futures’ or ‘past presents’, where the

distinction is folded into highly reflexive forms. The alleged 'past presents' might even be modalized according to how 'before' was distinguished from 'after' at a given time in the past (Luhmann, 1982a: 272). And with slight changes of vocabulary the modalities are connected to causality. 'Before' isn't just 'before' the 'now', but is typically observed as a specific past, which is to say, as a past in a longer chain of causally linked 'past presents' that leads up the past, as it is observed in the present. In the same vein, we can talk of 'present futures', which is to say, of a horizon of futures observed from our actual present, and then 'after' might typically be observed as a 'future present' which is the causal result of present choices. And this future present might even be modalized into future futures, where possible future choices reside (Luhmann, 1982b: 308).

Modalities are what meets the eventalizing eye in *The Hours*, not as a hidden structure, but as living semantics, and observed through the modalities the world appears and makes sense as the result of proactive plans and reactive decisions. Not necessarily in the sense that everything happened as planned or not, but in the sense that they offering horizons of meanings to even minor events as 'coming too late or too early', i.e. life as deviations from a plan.

Plans and futures

'The plan' is fundamentally how time is established in *The Hours*. The book, *Mrs. Dalloway*, unfolds in a single day, from morning to evening, and it is about the planning of a party. This means that the 'present future' of the whole day emerges as plans for 'future present'. This kind of 'present future' is also at work in the film's story about Clarissa Vaughan. Who is planning a party for the poet, Richard Brown? All the day's errands are subsumed under this goal, set by the planner.

The plan, meanwhile, does not just impose itself on the two narratives about Mrs. Dalloway but also in the narrative about Virginia Woolf, who writes. While she is the master planner of her stories, she finds that her own life, too, is controlled by plans. Her husband, Leonard Woolf, has planned a small town life for her in order to stabilize her life and keep her sane and Leonard insists on their obligation towards the plan on every programmed level. Virginia Woolf, despite the fact that she is, it is said, afraid of the servants, also makes plans for them, sending one of them to London to fetch ginger for her guests, who according to the plan will arrive later in the day. Thus, plans are weaved into the very texture of Virginia Woolf's life, organizing her spaces of action as well as reaction.

Plans also serve as the axis of the story of Laura Brown. Here it is Laura Brown's husband who has made the plan. Already as a soldier in the Pacific, he planned to form a family with Laura, the life she now leads. They have one child (Ritchie) and are expecting another. Both are children that one cannot imagine are anything but planned.

What these plans have in common is that the present future installs intentionality, or an objective, in relation to which actions are then seen and assessed. Once the distinction between the 'present future' and the goal in a 'future present' has been established, a metrical time is also established, a temporal space, a lapse to be filled in a particular way in order to arrive at the terminus. When an objective like a party is determined, the

many preparations, for example, are assessed already in terms of the 'future present' that the party will hopefully constitute. In other words, the party comes to constitute an imagined future from which the present is observed and corrected. Planning permeates the film, but Leonard Woolf and Dan Brown's plans for their wives are vague and mainly oriented towards keeping the 'future present' alive as a 'present future'. There are no milestones by which to judge whether the plans have been carried through to their conclusions. The plan becomes all encompassing for Virginia Woolf and Laura Brown because it can reach its conclusion only when death parts them with their planners, or by the negation or termination of the very plan. The modalities create a prison and imbue the eventalization with an air of claustrophobia.

Plans and pasts

The self-referentiality of plans is by no means diminished by the way in which the past is brought into the story. The goal-directedness of the plans implies that the past, both as present past and past present, is of only secondary importance in the film. The past is rendered actual, or present, in the light of planning, i.e., in relation to future goals. By these means the past becomes a 'future past' aligning the present with pasts in a long line, seen from the imagined future. Leonard Woolf, for example, tries to restrain Virginia in her flight from Richmond by saying, 'You have a history'. Here Virginia's past is not primarily interesting in relation to the present (they stand at the platform at the station) but in relation to the planned future. The past becomes an argument against fleeing back to London, against leaving the stability of the suburbs. The past is invoked as a brake.

Laura Brown also has a past, which is described by her husband. He describes how he wanted to bring her 'to a house, to a life, pretty much like this.' Dan Brown says all this with Laura and Ritchie as his audience and along the way he is able to refer to the house they are living in and the life they are leading, as a realisation of his plan. The past appears here as a past in which the plan that is currently being executed was made. In this way the plan is articulated as a success, enhancing the importance of the plan as well as the present, which also becomes past in the light of the future. No matter whether the past appears as a brake or as enhancer, it contributes to the claustrophobic atmosphere, where the past is invoked to keep the plan in place. In this perspective pasts, futures and plans are each others constituents, and even if deviations from the plans might happen, the plan is fundamentally immunized to questions from the past.

In the story about Clarissa Vaughan, the past appears to contain an enormous energy to be released in the planning of the party, so that the party to a great extent marks the end of the past. The present is about a past life that Richard has set down in a book. It contains recognizable nicknames, addresses and remembered events through which the past is solidified into reality, and this past even becomes a question of ownership when Clarissa claims that it was Louis that was the love of Richard's life, not her. An imagined and authored past is actualised and finalized, and that constitutes a living, actualised reality in which new questions are put to the relation between past and present. The florist connects the past to the present when she asks whether Richard's book is about Clarissa, whereas Clarissa's daughter denotes the significance of the past when she calls her mother's friend a ghost.

Plans and ruptures

The plans constitute a web of diverse logics and this is evident in all those episodes that appear as breaks with expectations. These ruptures are possible solely because there are plans to be broken with, and they occur in all three subplots. In the story of Virginia Woolf, the sister arrives early and complicate Virginia's rigorously planned afternoon, which had been intended to give the guests a warm welcome. Virginia Woolf also arrives too early for the train she intends to take to London, and precisely because of that she never makes it onto that train. Her husband catches up with her and prevents the journey. In the story of Virginia Woolf these ruptures have the added dimension of being intricately bound up with her trade. As a writer, she is planning the very space of possible ruptures as a central dramatic construct, and that is copiously shown, when she is considering the question of who will die in the novel. Virginia Woolf is sitting still on a bench, in front of a backdrop of people hurrying past, the event of planning against the movement of plans being executed.

Here as elsewhere the story of Laura Brown frames the issue pointedly. Her husband is always and compulsively anticipating situations. This is not just the case when he, as mentioned, plans out his life with Laura from his cot on some island in the Pacific, but also when he in their shared existence does what she is expected to do. He gets up early on his own birthday and buys flowers for himself, flowers that she should have bought for him. The claustrophobic enclosing is executed in the slightest anticipatory realisation of the planned.

And finally, the ultimate collapse of plans into an irrevocable present. Richard's old friend, Louis, arrives too early at Clarissa's, opening a space for reflections over the past in the middle of her hectic preparations. During their conversation Clarissa suddenly collapses, as the fragile and morbid retrospective justification of the plan surfaces. Shortly after, Clarissa arrives too early in the afternoon to pick up the writer, Richard Brown, in order to take him to his prize ceremony. She thereby interferes with Richard's suicide plan and as a result becomes a witness to his suicide: the total collapse of past and future into the now.

While Laura challenges the planned life in her quiet way by omissions and delays (when she, for example, delays getting into bed with her husband in the evening), Richard challenges Clarissa's plans voicibly. Richard claims that Clarissa's planning of parties is a way of fleeing from silence, from the present. What will she do the day the plans cease to be? Will she then be able to bear the stillness that confronts her? A struggle is thereby sketched out between 'present' as intensity and 'present' as a machine converting future and past through planning.

Modalities are the arena of potentiality, and to observe through temporal modalities is to unveil the performative logic distributing closure or opportunity forming a horizon of expectations in the eventalization. This performative logic is what Deleuze labels the 'machine' (on machine and diagram Deleuze, 1998: 33; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 141-148). Here the modalities of time are a machine operating through the distinction between past and future, and there is no limit to its productivity. On the contrary, it incessantly produces new bifurcations and restless folding offering horizons, yet never encompassing all possibilities (Deleuze, 1998: 94ff; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, ch. 5).

As this 'time' machine is concretized in the 'before' and 'after' of plans three different subjectifications and henceforth, different horizons of agency are brought to the fore: the subject that defines the conditions for planning, the subject who actually make plans, and finally the object, becoming subject by being planned. They are not three different personalities creating their context, but possible subject positions created as crystallizations of modalities, and as such they are prepared for their faces to come. In the flux of time and modalities subjectifications offer a temporary reduction of speed while they at the same time yearn for a corpus.

Leonard Woolf: 'We brought you to Richmond to give you peace'

Narrative Time

The transition from modality to narrative is the move from bifurcating possibilities to the plane of organization, the realm where the concrete dramatic order of the film is played out. For the observer it is the movement from a focus on cool conditionality to the drama of life as it unfolds in the vitality of death and the mortality of life. It is the shift from Richie's dejected gaze from the car window to the compassionate gaze of the niece on her beloved aunt.

Paul Ricoeur discusses the philosophically fundamental relation between outer time and inner time, using *Mrs. Dalloway* as an example of the relation between clock time and internal time (Ricoeur, 1984; 1985: 102ff). It is precisely in the narrative, claims Ricoeur, that different forms of time are connected because the narrative constructs time, takes time, and expresses time. And time becomes, not least, human time when it is experienced and unfolds within the drama. Actions, then, take time and run their course through time, and when the narrative is actualized, time even finds its form as intensity.

At the level of narrative, Ricoeur focuses on the narrative configuration (called mimesis 2) where the narrative components are organized so as to open for a movement between prefiguration, i.e., existing experiences (mimesis 1) and refiguration of experience into new experiences (mimesis 3) (Ricoeur, 1984: 52ff). In the narrative configuration, history and fiction is combined into plots, where frames of reference and possible outcomes are organized into logics of possibilities (Ricoeur, 1984). These plots function as planes, as "[f]orms and their development, and subject and their formations, relate to a plan(e) that operates as a transcendent unity or hidden principle. The plan(e) can always be described, but as a part aside, as ungiven in that to which it gives rise" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 266). The three planes that we subsequently identify are labelled *a historical* plane, which precisely for this reason is universalising; *a fictional* plane, which introduces observation and reflection; and *the authentic* plane, which works on the creative boundary between fiction and history and for precisely this reason seems to make the film part of our own experience.

A historical plane

Virginia Woolf walks into the river and drowns herself. This plane really begins where it ends and has thus condemned itself to the logic of narrative sequentiality, where the end structures the plot right back to the beginning. And there might have been other beginnings, but there is only one end, so that the dramatic question becomes 'why'? The narrative is arranged causally and events as well as agents arise as consequences of and for each other. They act because they react to each other and this system of action and reaction is exactly what Virginia Woolf acts upon and reacts against. When her breakfast arrives at the door it is tantamount to an imposition; when the plans made by the servants have to be altered it is insurmountable; when her sister invited her to London it profoundly disturbed her. Virginia feels the new home outside the city as a prison, and its alternative, the city, appears as the only escape, but it is an escape allegedly endangering her psychic health. Staying is death, as is the city.

The narrative plane is historical. It draws on traces of the real life personage of Virginia Woolf and her actual suicide. This historicity establishes a distance between our time and the time on which the plane is established. We are contemporary, while she is of the past and both sides of the distinction are drawn by us in the present. Yet the external reference provided by history neither produces nearness nor distance. It produces universality. And it is done through our recognition of the universal signs of love: its conflicts and concerns, its longing for understanding and anticipation, not least, the recognition of irresolvable pain that arises at the station when a catastrophic decision becomes love's fateful exit. History becomes ahistorical and appears as a realistic narrative, precisely by evoking the audience's memory and vast store of signs (Ricoeur, 1985: 102ff).

Time is irreversible and historically Edwardian England, a petit bourgeois prison where Virginia Woolf literally is imprisoned in her environment. Pure claustrophobia, and it is overwhelming as it is refolded into Virginia Woolf the narrator. The very longing for fiction and love of signs drives her through life, as her only way out is to write herself into a virtual open space. The pen becomes the medium; out of it grows the novel and with it the flight from reality into fiction, and into suicide. She has to escape, and yet she fears being taken over once more by the voices of her fiction. Death is the answer.

A plane of fiction

Laura Brown lies in bed and reads. This beginning is not the end but the middle of a line of flight. It is an escape, a refuge and an excursion from her husband's planning. The way out of this life is the book *Mrs. Dalloway*, written by Virginia Woolf, and it indicates the twofold fiction of the plane. The fiction thus refers both to her life and to the book she uses as a passage. 'I had an idea of our happiness,' her husband says, sitting at the dinner table, and we are not disappointed. The city is the American dream of Pleasantville: a frictionless society made possible by the joy of consumption, the replacement of toil with technology and the introduction of codes of conduct defining the good marriage – fidelity, community, friendship. It is a candy coated presentation and the characters are bathed in soft light in an attempt to dim all disturbing signs of . . . life. In contrast to the earlier plane of narration, the people here are transformed into

characters that move around in a lifelike cartoon. Teeth: clean. House: clinical. Car: shining. People: smiling. This is the new middle class version of Edwardian England.

This plane condemns itself to another kind of time than the sequential and natural time. Instead, time is a passage leading from fiction into reality. It is a subtle time that so earnestly thrives on Laura Brown's longing for another life, which must remain uncertain and undiscovered. This is why this plane constitutes a thriller. It is at one and the same time both surreal and uncertain, and it enhances our expectations, suggesting a drastic collapse of the carefully constructed, albeit fragile fiction. It is a version of time already bursting with the consequences of acts yet to come; it is a loving salute to the openings of Hitchcock movies, it is so rosy that it must breed expectations of disaster in the observer. Here the opening is known and the end is open, and the logic of their relation emergent.

However, a single detail distinguishes this plane from the ultimate thrill, namely, the overt longing for alterity. For Virginia Woolf it was a longing that reaches out from reality to fiction. For Laura Brown the longing runs from fiction to reality. The book 'Mrs. Dalloway' constitutes the passage in both cases. In this light, the turning point for Laura Brown is her neighbour's visit, where the two women kiss. From here there is no way back. The spectator knows that Laura Brown has confirmed an insight, but where to go from here? Laura Brown only knows of her longing from the book. The boy is placed in the custody of Mrs. Latch, a hotel room is rented, and the suicide is committed . . . almost.

Here it is not the difference between present and past that creates the mimetic passage. Instead, it is the difference between reality and fiction. As such, the plane is brought to an end at the hotel, and it mimes a tragedy until the release with Laura Brown's return to the scene, as it happens on the next plane of narration, fifty years later, when Clarissa Vaughan receives the aging Laura Brown in her New York apartment. This is an arrival in two senses. It is the hug from Clarissa's daughter that recognises Laura Brown as a person, as a life, and not 'a ghost.' And it is not just life, the real and authentic plane of the film that meets Laura Brown. It is Laura Brown's book of passage, *Mrs. Dalloway*, brought to life. The amalgamation is complete, the difference annulled, time has contracted fiction with reality.

We recognise this mime from the narratives that are spun about strange journeys and uncertain returns. It is the mime of the grand tales of the journey, which we also know as that of Odysseus. It is the passage to the beyond, as we know it from Buddhism. It is the idea of suffering and salvation, as we know it in Christianity. But, like these great narratives, it also offers a distance and a space for reflection. A distance embedded in the double fiction, where history is on one side and caricature of the other, both being radically different from the lived presence. As such it is not the plane of universal signs, but the door to shared experience.

The plane of authenticity

'... I think I will buy the flowers myself,' says Clarissa Vaughan and that is how we meet her in the middle of her preparations for the party. The place is New York, 2001, and Clarissa moves at the same pace as the film's hectic metropolitan editing. She has

to arrange the party that is to follow the prize ceremony to honour Richard Brown, the writer, who has composed his magnum opus and, more importantly, who years ago was Clarissa's happiest moment in her own experience of intensity, of happiness, of the now. This narrative plane is the plane of construction. It installs the construction of time – preparation and predictability – through Clarissa's incessant planning. We see time, so to speak, come into being through Clarissa's gaze, running for the future: the party, the party, the party. We are familiarised with the party through Clarissa, but only as an idea of the future. The plot is organized from the end to come, and yet we do not know the end. 'I will buy the flowers myself', is the now and the middle pointing back and forward in the event of the now.

Clarissa sets up the frames, symbols and generations necessary for a successful party yet to come. She runs alongside her hurried attempts to arrange a fiction for others. Clarissa Vaughan is the author of time; the time that others participate in and are determined by. Persons are transformed into characters through Clarissa, who fits them into a plan. 'Do you mind? Is it alright?' asks her cautious friend, when he arrives too early for the party. And this goes for everyone except Richard Brown, whose unpredictability disturbs and interrupts the directedness of time. He imposes himself as a person – is not malleable as a character – and he forces Clarissa into a disquieting presence.

Clarissa takes care of Richard Brown, and this very caring is her existential ground, which Richard Brown continuously challenges. He addresses her as Mrs. Dalloway. He has created the Mrs. Dalloway who takes care of him and they form a zone of indiscernability, a life. The life that reveals itself, when Richard Brown throws himself out of the window and, in an overwhelming instant, interrupts this paragon of effective planners, depositing Clarissa in a painful now, from which there is no way out. The poet is to die, the party is never to come, and Clarissa is forced into the now.

This is the plane of immediate recognition, where authenticity is established as unpredictability, as loss of control, as ambiguous emotions, and as open-ended release. This is the plane where the very distinction between fiction and reality is created, not in categories, but as performance. And this is even taking ironic forms in pure performative self-reference, when the book that Richard Brown has written is discussed as a question of fact or fiction between Clarissa and the florist (of all people). This story is the story of the person in each story that makes the others possible and real and who herself isn't really granted a space of existence. Creating the novel and actualizing universalities, making plans possible and fiction corporeal and finally the spectator, us the absent observer pausing a moment for authentic experience.

It is the modern story of the modern decentred human being, who must take care of herself and of others, who struggles against the clock, and who never dares to let herself be anticipated or deposited in the now, because there is so much to be done. This plane of narration avails itself neither of history nor fiction. It does not universalize experience, as was the case with Virginia Woolf. Nor does it indulge in reflexive caricature, as was the case with Laura Brown. It makes shared signs and unique experience find each other on the 'authentic' plane of existence.

The three planes are not layered and sedimented but planes of possibilities and probabilities transversing the 'emplotment' of *The Hours*. As emplotment, i.e., the overall dramatisation (Ricoeur, 1984), the three planes converge into a narrative about creation and the other side of creation. Narrative time is not just the transversal development of the character Mrs. Dalloway – the person who is written, read and acted forth. It is the contraction of time in the form of creation. It is about life and death, and death becomes an opportunity for life. In all three stories, somebody 'sacrifices' themselves for the others, but it is the others who take death upon themselves. It is life and death all at once: as liberation and prerequisite, as a tension and as a choice that allows no alternatives.

Virginia Woolf: 'You cannot find peace by avoiding life, Leonard'

Intensive Time

The three planes produce a singularity enclosing even the audience in a shared moment, where the difference between creator and spectator dissolves into imperceptibility (on perception, see Deleuze, 1993). This folding in the event has a coexistent existential outside as a necessary precondition of the story told, and no mimetic observation will capture this notion, as it is the very now of pure intensity. The plane of intensity is not the plane of possibilities, nor the plane of life and death, because it is always actual and always life. It is the plane of becoming.

By tying time to consciousness, Bergson can speak of it as a particular kind of intensity that can only be described as its own independent singularity, where the sugar in the tea dissolves quickly when one is engaged with something else, and slowly when one waits for it (Bergson, 1911: 10). Time thereby becomes a qualitative property of the situation of consummation and as such it is inextricably bound up with existence in it. Everybody recognizes the experience of a film ending before one even got comfortably into one's seat, or, the opposite situation, in which a film is experienced as infinitely slow. Sometimes single moments of a film are so saturated with content that they will always last too long, no matter how brief they may be, as the kisses in *The Hours*.

The Hours is beyond doubt a film that operates in time and with time, albeit in a rather complex form, it wants, however, also to describe the boundary of time itself as a question of the boundary between creation and decay, between life and death and between sign and consummation. It even wants to do this directly and ruthlessly, and not by shrouding or by metaphor. The film begins with the picture of a river, and 'river' is precisely one of Ricoeur's favourite time metaphors. And then there is the suicide note, which makes the past irrevocable. And, finally, there is death, as the poet walks into the river and the film can begin from an equally irrevocable future.

Intense moments

The film opens with this clear division of the now in its intertwining of intensity and extensity in the moment of a creator's death (Ricoeur, 1984). Existential time is inevitable time, and for Virginia Woolf inevitable twice over, as any story must

submerge itself in it. *The Hours* even tries to install this outside inside the movie itself through a series of loopholes. But existential time is also ultimately that which evades all description. Whether one takes an Augustinian, Kantian or Ricoeurian view of it, intensity is transcendent, an immanent quality of the event, an immanent outside, only to be depicted as extensive time, and thus it is not to be shown or felt, but shared in the contraction of time and extension of the event (the *durée*) (Deleuze, 1991: 73ff; Pearson, 2002).

The moments ‘where nothing happens and everything changes’, as in Ritchie’s gaze, when he looks out the window of the car after his mother has returned to pick him up, having just abandoned her own suicide in a hotel room. This is an infinite gaze, total immobility, containing all past and future insight in the *durée* of the now. We also find it in the look Virginia Woolf’s niece sends her at their parting, and it is condensed, when Virginia looks upon the dead bird.

This intensity of the event is manifest to an agonizing level in the accompanying music of Philip Glass. Music that both maintains the deferrals and shifts as a minimum (a minimalism of difference) no matter how much they might incline to real transmutations, and at the same time ties the audience to a claustrophobic room of rhythm and repetition. The only time that the musical insistence changes format is in the kitchen scene, where Clarissa breaks down in her meeting with an overwhelmingly present ghost from the past. This breakdown is perhaps the film’s absolute self-reference and intensification of the now. It is here the narrative’s own preconditions as a narrative in the first place breaks down, as that which had been suspended between percept and recollection collapses. The now is undressed and rendered lonely by the loss of recollection as recollection. The recollected richness of the ‘Madeleine cake’ is replaced with an irrevocable ‘hand on the shoulder’, which already in the moment of action was a recollection of the night’s hands. It is the recollection of a recollection that was already a recollection. The ‘beginning of a happy time’ was the moment of happiness itself.

Glass is interrupted by nothing less than Hermann Hesse’s ‘Beim Schlafengehen’, music by Richard Strauss, the last verse of which runs (German text quoted from Strauss, our translation):

Und die Seele, unbewacht,	And the unguarded soul
Will in freien Flügen schweben,	Will hover in free flight
Um im Zauberkreis der Nacht,	To live deep and thousandfold
Tief und tausendfach zu leben,	In the magic circle of the night

This is the very moment of tragedy, where everything is at stake and nonetheless outside the reach of the players, not least because Clarissa is Virginia Woolf’s creation and Laura’s escape route. It is so infinitely fragile a scene. Mrs. Dalloway appears bereft of any plan that might organize her recollections or a recollection that might legitimize the plan. She simply ceases to exist or, more accurately, she becomes a now without a past or future. The moment is there as an extension (extended as a cinematic expression) while it is at the same time wanting intensively, as a qualitative property, because it cannot contain its own continuation. The now presupposes an outside in order to exist in its continuity, and throughout the film we are reminded of this in the little

death and in the greater death. The film deploys the little death as a recursive gesture throughout: the flowers and the kisses, death and resurrection, death and absolute change, always death as the other side of creation. In the flowers we find the infinite repetition of the relation between life and death as the other side of creation and the connection between beauty and decay, the unbounded transformation of the kiss that contains the opening to the absolutely different.

The film also contrasts the greater death with life's creation of nows and their continuity. For Clarissa, who is created by pure expectation, whether Virginia Woolf or Richard Brown's, life is as thin as the paper she lives for and on. That is, she is wholly dependent on the creative power of the creator. We actually see Virginia Woolf playing with life and death when she considers the question of whether or not her heroine will die, and in New York we see the consequences of the writer's death. When Richard Brown commits suicide, he finally releases his work and Clarissa becomes a now that not just lost its past in the kitchen scene but must seek a future. A future, we get a hint of, when Clarissa turns toward her partner and embraces her in a 'final' scene.

The narrative is about the price to be paid for being inside and outside all at once. The stories are an enduring folding of the difference between interior and exterior inside the story, and the energy comes from the very same place that threatens existence. The film's answers to the conditions set by the now and the boundary of times are tangles, tangles of narrative, tangles of form and colour, tangles of form and story, tangles of sight and sound. The impression they leave is claustrophobic, as there is no way to disentangle them, only a space for minimal shifts with awesome effects or radical negation.

Forming intense moments

Following Deleuze and Guattari, we might claim that the film to a great extent expresses time as a variable intensity and as an amalgamation in the now of the extensive and the intensive, or as an amalgamation of the experience and the recollection, and the element and speed in the affect (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 400). Time, then, is no longer an expression that stands for the experience, but the very bridge that connects the conditions of experience with the actualisation of the moment, like in the static gaze Ritchie sends us out the window of the car and the gaze that passes between Virginia and her niece as they part. These are gazes that contain a world of insight in a single moment.

In these moments of the now the event resides in the imperceptibility of form and content. Content has its form and form has its content and they are merging in the singular actualization, never to be repeated. And yet repetition is one of the strongest transversal affects in the film, where content and expression borrow from each other, so that one often doubts where the message resides, even through quite lengthy episodes. With repetition come ruptures, a beginning and an end, a cut enabling location, dislocation and relocation, and with rupture the very possibility of organizing continuity.

Repetitions tie the stories together so that they together appear to be a single narrative, but they also assign the three narrative planes their own life. The film lays out the same

plot three times, deferred in time, but also in such a way that this plot is shifted and becomes something else through the repetition. The flowers serve as editing cues, separating the stories visually. Hands on flowers: Clarissa Vaughan lifts a vase in the spirit of careful planning; Laura Brown's husband sets them on the table in the spirit of caring execution, and the servants tidy the flowers in the vase in the spirit of effective care. This is distribution through the repetition of materiality (Deleuze, 1998: 10). However, these cues do not only distribute intensities and moments on different narrative planes, but also link these narrative planes in sweeping movements transforming the performance of their very materiality. This is also apparent in the scenes from the bedrooms of the three main characters in the early morning. Virginia Woolf wakes up, obviously shifting from one mode of life to another; Laura Brown is lying in bed, her eyes open, obviously indifferent to modes of life; Clarissa Vaughan leaps up as soon as she awakes to model life. The scene is set and we experience, in retrospect, how these interlaces present the morning precisely so as to express the three main characters' vast difference, in their movements, their moods, and their facial expressions as deviations from expected yet never expressed similarities.

The interruptions have as strong an effect as the repetitions. They unite the three narrative planes, but emphasise the differences between them. Narrative time is also established here, but now through compression. This goes especially for the kiss. Here the existential conflict between life and death is compressed into a single, simple expression. The kiss is the anchorage of the narrative, the now of the story, the moment of intensity. It stops time in order to let it continue, but now in a different way. Clarissa's lips meet Richard Brown's lips as a challenge, Laura Brown's lips meet Kitty's as a bond, and Virginia Woolf's lips meet her sister's in destiny. Every kiss signals accumulated tensions and is full of future separations. From these moments on, nothing is the same. The kiss is a release from the past, which allows us to remember, and launches the horizon of the future, which allows us to act.

The material book, *Mrs Dalloway*, is neither distribution nor compression. The book installs narrative time in a third way and this makes it a trace that runs between epochs. This makes it a trace of generations: Virginia Woolf as the woman that struggles against incarceration and the stalling of time; Laura Brown as housewife that struggles against the empty optimism of the post-war dream and the inexorable progress of time; and Clarissa Vaughan who takes up the modern struggle against time itself. It is also a passage between conditions: Virginia Woolf's longing from reality to fiction, Laura Brown's longing from fiction to reality, Clarissa Vaughan's existence on the boundary between fiction and reality itself – our now, the audience's present. Through repetition and rupture continuity is left to the plane of interaction in consummation, and the spectator is an accomplice in the event. Thus, the claustrophobia, and henceforth release does not indicate an 'out there', but an inherent part of the very production of intensity.

Richard Brown: 'I wanted to write about it all – everything that happens in a moment...'

Eventalizing the Event

This final part of the paper is not going to add to the experimental eventalization of *The Hours*. What is said is said, and infinitely much more or something else might have been said, as it is a consequence of eventalization that it is always containing “too many lines of analysis, yet at the same time there is too little necessary unit” (Foucault, 2000: 228). Instead, we will reflect briefly upon the eventalization itself as a cognitive practice, and question our version relative to Foucault’s. Secondly, we consider the implications of using ‘time’ as tool and finally we consider the insight.

In *Questions of Method* Foucault outlines his reasons for eventalization as a research strategy, and his reasons are: “First of all, a breach of self-evidence. It means making visible a singularity at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological constant, or an obviousness that imposes itself uniformly on all” (Foucault, 2000: 226). “Second, eventalization means rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies and so on, that at a given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident, universal, and necessary. In this sense, one is indeed effecting a sort of multiplication and pluralization of causes” (Foucault, 2000: 226-227).

However, the singularity is not seen as a self-sufficient reality with its own *raison d’être*, instead “[the] procedure of causal multiplication means analyzing an event according to multiple processes that constitute it” and whatever process need themselves to be broken further down (Foucault, 2000: 227). A side effect of such a method will be infinite multiplication of causality, and ‘eventalization’ therefore sees the singular event as a “‘polyhedron’ of intelligibility, the number of whose faces is not given in advance and can never properly be taken as finite” (Foucault, 2000: 227). This method leads inevitably to polymorphism in several planes and Foucault lists “[a] polymorphism of the elements”, “[a] polymorphism of relations”, and “[a] polymorphism of reference” (Foucault, 2000: 228).

Whenever we ‘enter’ the singularity and start looking for the ‘sufficient reason’, it evaporates into multiple internal and external connectivities, the relation between which is the very hobgoblin that produces finite insight and infinite want. A never-ending affair, which might be brought to temporary halts through new eventalizations, offering new openings and therefore always an experiment (Deleuze, 1993, ch. 4; Sørensen, 2004). And, as there are no essential properties out there to determine the observation, any delimitation of empirical focus and any choice of experimental setting is creative, a moment of determination and activism (Andersen, 2003; Luhmann, 1993).

Two points springs to the fore when this is compared with what we have done. The first concerns the relation between singularity and multiplicity, and the second the relation between observer and event. Both questions are important, for without answers to them eventalization runs the risk of replacing its activist character and critical potential with implicit external foundations, be they critical, traditional, paradigmatic positivistic or interpretative. What the distinction between singularity and multiplicity creates within eventalization is a rich soil for heterogeneous observations and arguments. First, because it organizes the observations into planes (e.g., historical, fictional, and authentic

in our experiment), which on the level of multiplicities always permeate the membrane of the singularity and points towards the context. The singularity, on the other hand, points towards the internal mechanisms sustaining the membrane itself (e.g., as it emerges we maintain that we are talking about the same *The Hours*) (Deleuze, 1993: 110ff). This is the realm of the 'and', not the 'either/or' (Bay, 1998). The simultaneous presence of singularity and multiplicity also sustains the phenomenological experience that it is cognitively possible to oscillate between the singular identity and the fragmented multiplicities, until one more added trait changes the very nature of the singularity, i.e., until quantity on one level transforms into quality at another (Deleuze, 1991: 38ff; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 9). Together these effects create the very productivity and also the restlessness of eventalization.

Thereby the eventalization itself becomes an emergent singularity, in which all elements are co-constituted around the distinction between the observer and the observed, not as two essences, but as functions of the observation itself (Luhmann, 1991). To observe is to make a distinction and indicate a side, and this operation is the foundational ontology of eventalization, the productivity of which lies in its absolute self-reference, i.e., its own emergent character as singularity. It is not the subject before the object or vice versa, it is the in-between, where concepts in use become creators of webs of possible insight (Deleuze, 1993, ch. 6). Not an abstract insight born by discourse or a concrete insight born by intention, but an instant reservoir of possible insights stretching out in all directions, restless and ripe with new events. It is a machine, always producing 'too much and too little'.

On the level of actualization the challenge then becomes the choice of distinction, as every eventalization is and will always remain an experiment, through which all elements emerge in mutual constitution to disappear immediately after in a new deterritorialization, and with each actualization the observer/author as well as the observed/discourse is irreversibly changed (Foucault, 2001: 738). We have here chosen a distinction between time and space and indicated the side of time as our observation tool. This was done for two reasons, one being the intuitive reaction to the film itself and its manifest orientation towards time. The other reason was purely on the observer's side, as it was an attempt to escape perspectives that ontologized this or that trait in this film or films in general. The latter argument furthermore reached into our way of treating the concept of time, i.e. as a tool, and not as an ontological category.

Seeing time as a tool granted us the freedom of confronting three different conceptualizations of time with the same 'epistemic object' in order to let the chosen conceptualization highlight whatever it could. Even if we have attempted to treat each conceptual frame with due respect, it was never our intention to treat their relation on the theoretical and conceptual level in any depth. Yet it is obvious for the afterthought that there is some implicit passage from one to the next. One might claim that modal time is our attempt to approach the film from a universal time-sign regime establishing a regime of possibilities, while narrative time is irreverently used to substantiate our propositions around the concrete film. While these two framings run a parallel course, the third frame is used orthogonally. Bergson/Deleuze time is used for the observation of the bridging from the middle towards the observer as well as the observed,

connecting the actual and the virtual by processing potentialities of kind (Deleuze, 1991: 42ff).

At the same time the folding of approaches is not random, or at least not random with respect to the next actualization. By opening with modalities and ending with intensities we create a flight of steps where each step adds to the previous, as insights and attitudes are brought to the next time-regime whether one agrees or disagrees. The steps are even heterogeneous, so that they are not accumulating more of the same, but transforming what was into something else. From the rather cool and distanced observation of encompassing possibilities, over compassion with the claustrophobic narratives to the passion embedded in one's own identification (be it positive or negative) with whatever phenomenon in the movie. In this light eventalization is a case of prehension, where "an element is the given, the 'datum' of another element that prehends it", so that the event becomes a 'nexus of prehensions.' "[I]t is at once public and private, potential and real, participation in the becoming of another event and the subject of its own becoming" (Deleuze, 1993: 78).

And maybe the emergent mixing of 'plans' and 'planes' in our experiment is more significant for the insight than we imagined when we used it as bridge between modalities and narrative, because *plans* are the modality of potentiality operating between the virtual and the actual, whereas the narrative *plane* as actualization always operates between potential and virtual. And none of these 'planes of organization' would exist without the 'plane of consistency', where "[t]here are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules and particles of all kinds" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 266).

It is on this plane of consistency that the eventalization becomes singular. On this plane of 'imperceptibility' the distinction between author and text disappears to reappear as changed, or as Foucault states at the end of the introduction to the *Archaeology of Knowledge*: "Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same" (Foucault, 1972). During our experiment with *The Hours* we have incessantly had this feeling of amalgamation between epistemic object and subject positions in our discussions, the force of which seems to be that it offers restless connectivity, and connecting does not mean adding one more of the same. It actually transforms the very event and turns it into something new, a difference in kind, and that is a new singularity.

So let us finally give the insight a thought. Actually the term 'eventalizing' is developed by Foucault as a critical tool vis-à-vis the science of history. Foucault would talk about 'the event' as a counterstrategy to the search for 'the truth', 'the underlying continuity', or 'the idea' in order to elucidate that events are not becoming events through some inherent quality. They are made into events through intervention. And eventalization, or as it is put in 'What is critique' 'eventualization' (*événementialisation*) (Foucault, 1997: 49), is used as label for a research strategy focussing on the features of event-making searching for power. As such eventalizing is never interpretation (except in the Nietzschean meaning "There are no facts, only interpretations" (Sontag, 1983: 97). It is in itself an intervention.

As we are not particularly interested in the controversy with history, we have instead departed from 'Questions of Method', in which Foucault reflects on the method, not as antagonistic strategy, but as epistemic endeavour. And here it seems pretty obvious that eventalization is not about universal and generalizable knowledge, as it is critical towards any such claim. On the most basic level one might then ask, what is the relation between the movie *The Hours* and the eventalization as intervention? And the answer is significant for eventalization. On one side the fact that we let intuition direct our choice of conceptual frame brings us in the safe harbour of 'spotlight' research; on the other side it is rather apparent that we attribute a very activist attitude to our conceptualization that at best operates as a tool of observation and reflection, a tool that in this specific case blurred the relation between our 'epistemic object' and the position of the observer as the movie itself already operates with time on a very sophisticated level. And in the wisdom of hindsight any other movie might have served us with less friction as an experimental object, but on the level of reflection that would probably have led to a complacent satisfaction with Bourdieu and Wacquant's answers from reflexive sociology (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) instead of the repulsive lack of theoretical answers from Foucault.

Then one might say that eventalization is not about insight at all, as it is not some second order observation of first order life, but first order life itself. And that might be the core reason behind Foucault's suggestion. If one desperately wants to avoid installing yet another fascist despotic regime, second order regimes are the devil itself. The alternative might be affirmation, but then the question arises of what? Affirming critique, or affirming order, or affirming theories, or norms, or, or, or ...? Instead of affirmation of universals, eventalization might be it. In eventalization the invitation is the point. Not as a superficial gesture, but as a committed offer, at the same time transparent and closing around itself, because only under these conditions will eventalization remain worthy of eventalizations yet to come. Not through shared critique of ideology or shared evaluations of behaviour, but as an invitation to an open-ended problematization. As such one might say that Foucault's eventalization seems more radical than Deleuzian counter-actualization, as it even oversteps the line between actualization and counter-actualization and substitutes it with absolute affirmation of what never was and never will come as the affirmation itself changes it all (Foucault, 1972: 17).

Richard: 'Ah Mrs Dalloway, always giving parties to cover the silence'

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the authors

Asmund W. Born is Associate Professor at the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy, Copenhagen Business School. His field is organization theory, HRM and strategy and theoretically the approach is recent French philosophy and German systems theory (Foucault, Deleuze, and Luhmann). His current work is on emotions in organizations and heterophonic organizations and partnerships. Address: Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy, Copenhagen Business School, Porcelænshaven 18A, DK-2000 Frederiksberg. E-mail: awb.lpf@cbs.dk

Christian Frankel is Associate Professor at the Department of Organization and Industrial Sociology, Copenhagen Business School. Theoretically he draws on discourse analysis and systems theory. His current interest is in products as boundary phenomena in order to trace transformations of customers, of markets, of politics, of firms and of careers. Address: Department of Organization and Industrial Sociology, Copenhagen Business School, Kilen, Kilevej 14A, DK-2000 Frederiksberg. E-mail: frankel@cbs.dk

Niels Thyge Thygesen is Associate Professor at the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy, Copenhagen Business School. He is a well known lecturer in a Danish context and is occupied with the following three thematics in relation to public management: Trust, Technology and Time. The theoretical foundation of his work relies on a communicative approach in general and system theory in particular. The combination between empirical phenomena and the appliance of theoretical perspectives is fundamental for his research. This 'applied science' is both a matter of developing the basics of theories into observational programmes, as was the intention behind the present article, as well as contributing with new insights of relevance to a broader audience than science itself.

Address: Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy, Copenhagen Business School, Porcelænshaven 18A, DK-2000 Frederiksberg.

E-mail: ntt.lpf@cbs.dk