

“Repeat, revisit, recreate - Revisit, recreate, reflect.”

This presentation proposes a specific model or method of artistic engagement with photo media in an expanded sense. The method was developed in the context of the Academy of Finland funded research project How to do things with performance (2016-2020) and is further explored in the current artistic research project Pondering with Pines (2022-2024). As a lens-based practice of moving image production that uses a static video camera on tripod this method is interesting to consider not only in relationship to performance documentation and videography but to photo media in a broad sense. The work draws on the traditions of performance art with its emphasis on embodied presence, documenting practices on video as performances for camera, and the moving image culture within fine art, beyond the cinematic, including multi-channel installations. The method was first called “Repeat, revisit, recreate”, although today I would rather name it “Revisit, recreate, reflect”.

The idea of “revisiting” was developed by returning to the sites where I had performed for camera repeatedly for a year and created a series of video works called *Animal Years* on Harakka Island (2002-2014). While revisiting the sites I recorded myself trying to repeat the same action on the same site and with the same image. My aim was to record approximately the same view from the same spot and with the same framing – approximately because I now had another camera with another objective. The first six years of the series were recorded in DV quality and TV format, and the six following with HD quality in film format. I recorded a real-time image of the site in order to insert the old year-long time-lapse videos as small images into the recording of the revisit. In that way I could show how and if the landscape had changed and display the old multi-channel installation within one frame. Moreover, I could revisit the texts that I had previously written based on those videos, see whether my thinking had changed and add those reflections as a voice-over to the video compilation. By editing I thus created composite videos by inserting the old videos from the original installations into the more recent image. Commenting on the old texts that I had written using those works as examples and combining them with the videos I created video essays of all *Animal Years*.

The method that can be extracted from this way of working consists of the following steps: revisit the site, repeat parts of the performance, record a contemporary image of the same view, insert the old video (or multi-channel installation) into that image in miniature, return to texts discussing that specific work and reconsider them from today’s perspective. To return and repeat, to recycle and recombine, and to reflect and reconsider form a method that could be adapted to various types of practices, although it is especially convenient for lens-based digital practices, where the material and the works are easily reused.

During the project Pondering with Pines I have returned to this method in simplified form. The main concern of the project Pondering with Pines is how to develop ways of recognizing and engaging with the subjectivity of life forms such as trees, which we tend to consider as wholly ‘other’. How to develop acts of thinking, reflecting, pondering or speaking with trees,

next to them or in some form of collaboration with them. How to consider historical, cultural, material and local aspects when encountering specific trees. How to develop imaginative and poetic ways of encountering pine trees and engaging with them. One of the starting points for addressing those questions has been the practice of performing for camera with trees.

When returning to some pine trees on Öro Island in November 2023 that I had posed with previously during a month in November 2020 or during the year 2021 I explored the method again. I recreated the same image and a similar pose for the camera with the duration of the previously edited video in mind in order to insert the old time-lapse videos into the real-time recording of the same action performed only once as a frame. The juxtaposition of two temporalities is highlighted in the moving image, and it is evident in the still images, too. Rather than recording changes in the landscape this juxtaposition highlights the real-time ‘now’ of the background frame in contrast to the shifting light and weather conditions in the inserted rough time-lapse image. In these examples (see link below) the method, which was originally developed as a research method, is utilized as an artistic tool to create a temporally multi-layered image. Probably it can be further developed for other related purposes.

For the most recent examples, *Revisiting the Pine Next Door* and *The Pine’s Apprentice – Refresher Training*, see <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1323410/2402988/0/0>

The project archive <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/1323410/1589526/0/0>

The project blog <https://ponderingwithpines.com>

Some examples of earlier video essays based on *Animal Years* using revisiting as a method:

“The Shore Revisited”. *Journal of Embodied Research*, 1(1), 4 (30:34) 2018.

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.16995/jer.8>

“Return to the Site of the Year of the Rooster”, *Ruukku* #11, 2019.

<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/470471/470472>

“The City Skyline Revisited – From networks to trans-corporeality”, *Research in Arts & Education* 1/2020, 37-55 <https://journal.fi/rae/article/view/119301>

“Revisiting the Rock – Self-diffraction as a Strategy”, *Global Performance Studies* 3.2. 2020. <https://gps.psi-web.org/issue-3-2/gps-3-2-6/>

“Revisiting the Rusty Ring – Ecofeminism Today?” *PARTake Journal* Vol 3. No.1. 2020

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33011/partake.v3i1.473>

“Remembering the Year of the Tiger – Image, Memory, Site”. In Marja Silde, Outi Lahtinen & Tua Helve (eds.), *Näyttämö & Tutkimus 8: Muisti, Arkisto ja Esitys* [Stage & Research

8: Memory, Archive and Performance], Vol 8. 2020, 292-318.

<https://journal.fi/teats/article/view/122815>

“Calling for Zoe as a Utopian Gesture”. *Ruukku – studies in artistic research* #17 Everyday

Utopias and Artistic Research. 2021. <https://doi.org/10.22501/ruu.1112890>

“Returning to the Stairs – on temporality and self-portraiture”. *PARtake: The Journal of Performance as Research* Vol.5 No.1 2022.

<https://partakejournal.org/index.php/partake/article/view/1487>

“Revisiting the Aspen Tree.” *Screenworks* 13.1. December 2022

<https://doi.org/10.37186/swrks/13.1/2>