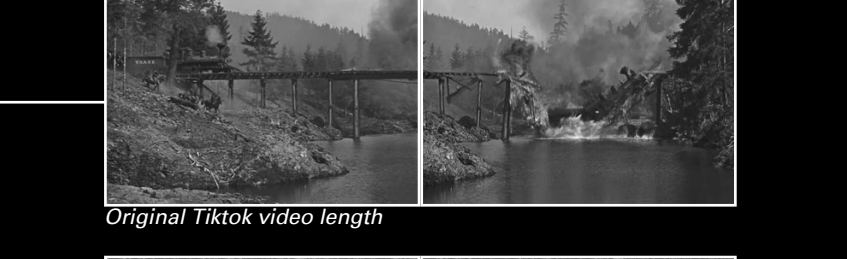
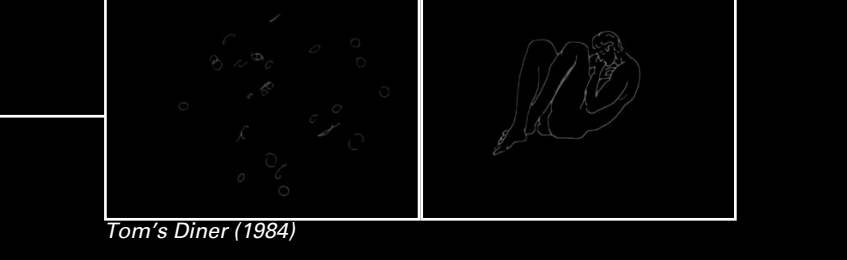
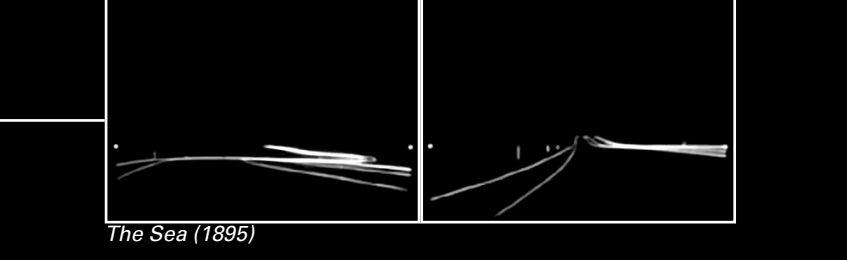
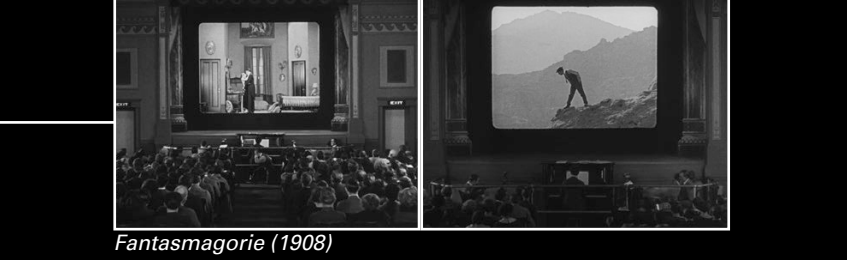
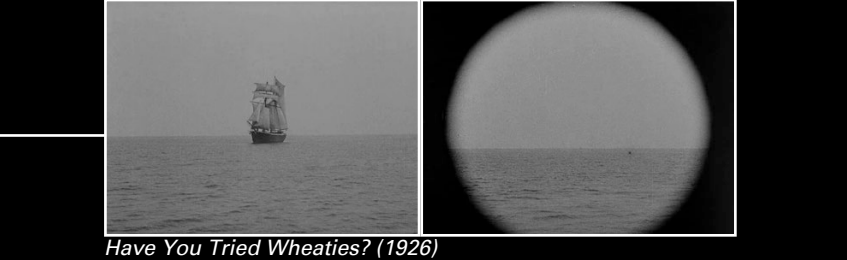
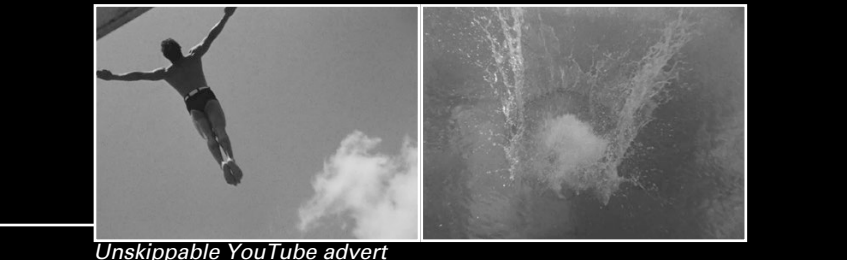
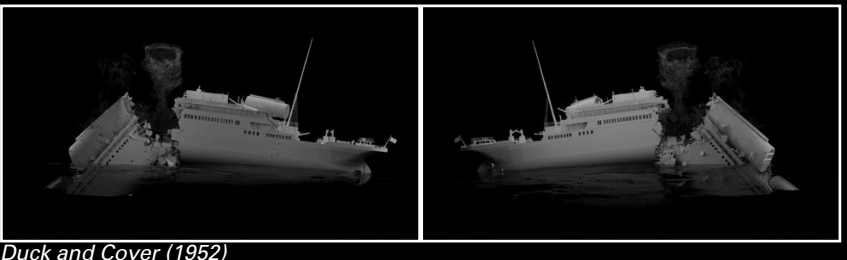
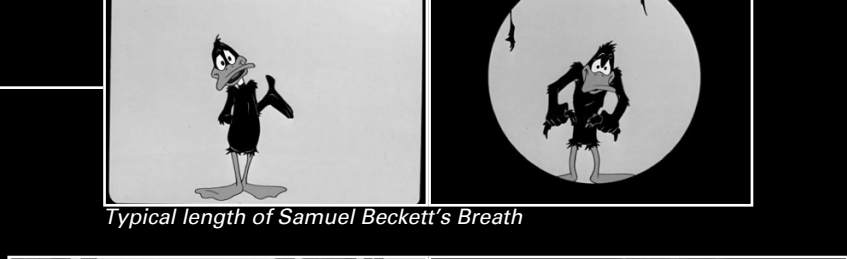
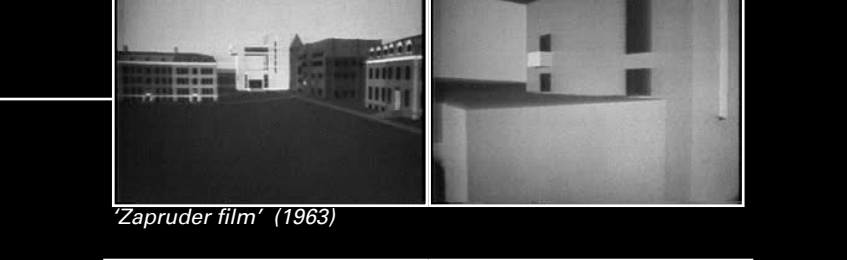
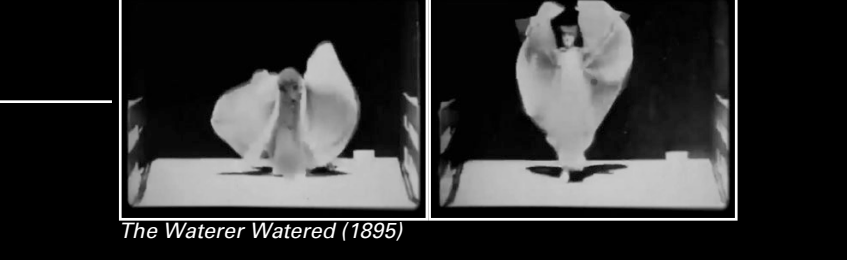
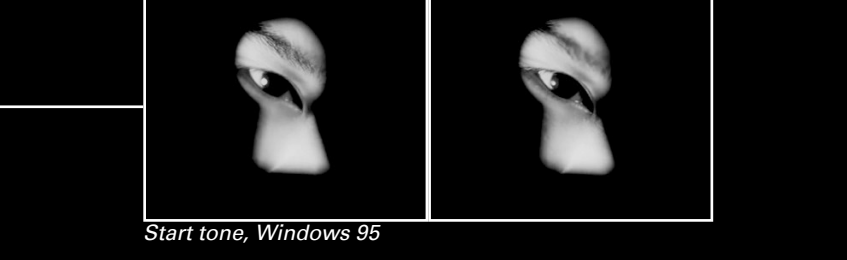
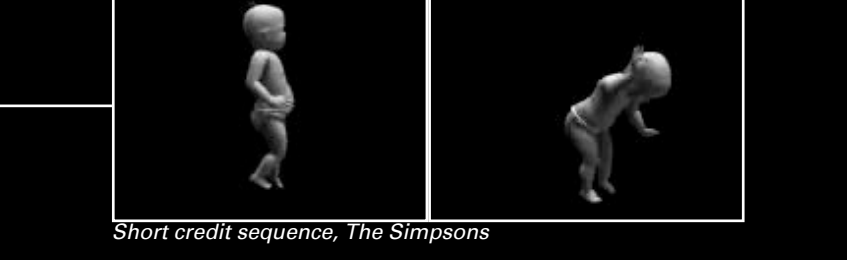
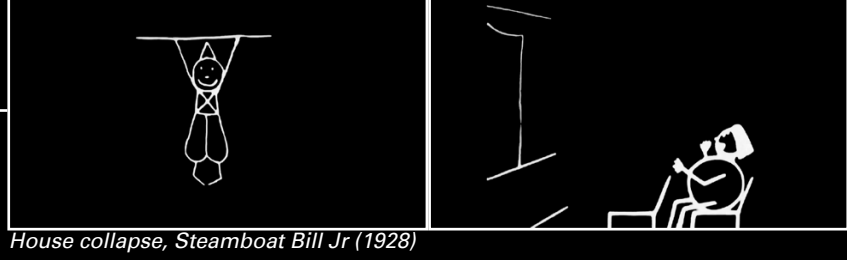
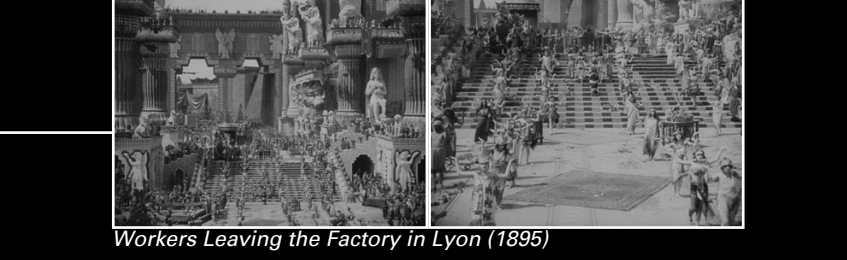
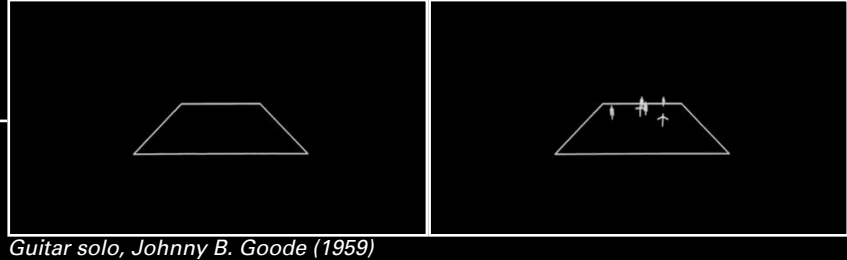
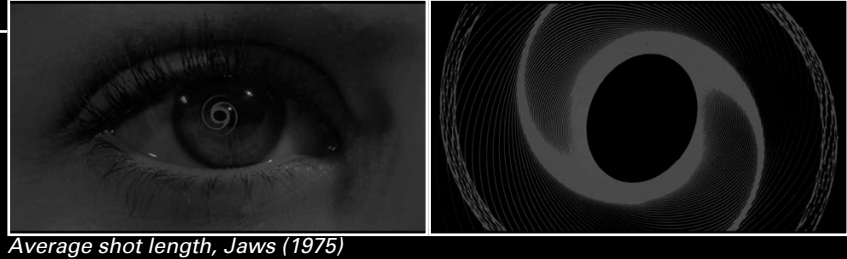
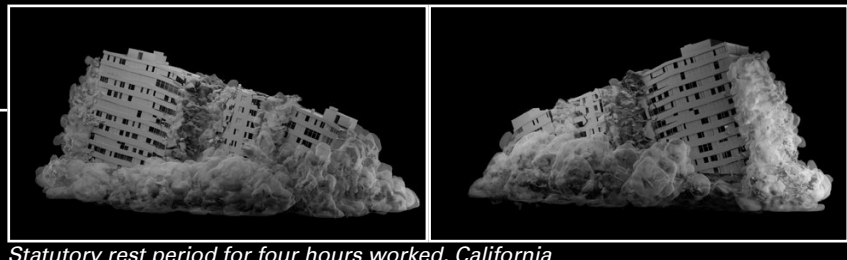
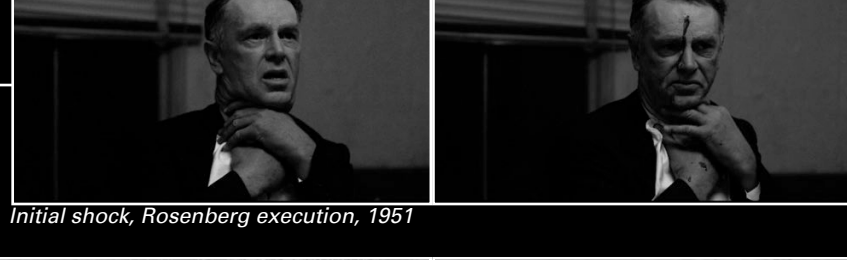
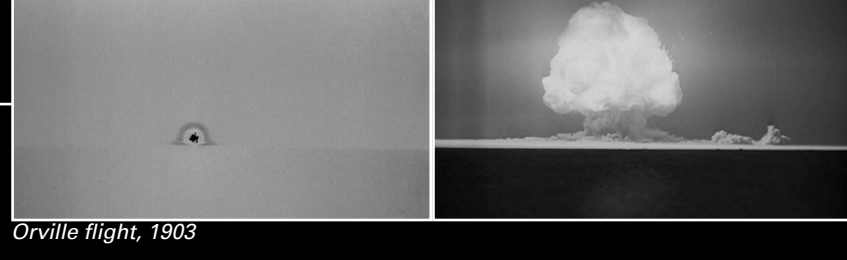
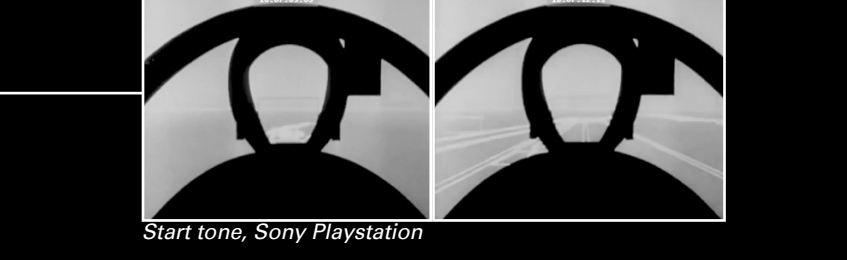
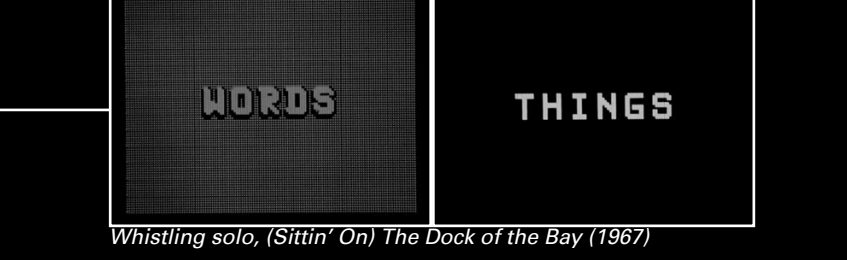
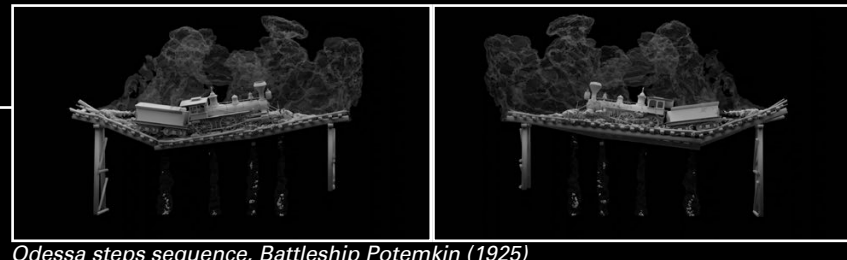


and so the curtain falls, a velvet wave crashes, spilling scarlet folds between you and it, between there and here, between the awakening world and the show beyond, where, isolated and unobserved, and purportedly over, you suspect the action continues, its music resuming, characters converging, for a plot that proceeds indifferent to the audience behind, unfettered by spectators who drift, serene and actionless, and wonder what happens next, the fate of which, you imagine, lurks in the silent marrow of things, ticking,

and so the house lamps rise and the illusion ends, the overheads aglow to beckon detail's return with a call accepted and seized before colour and texture resurface, their intricacies spangled across forgotten contours of upholstery and flooring, among discarded tickets, discarded clothes, dregs spent beneath persons waiting, pausing, or perhaps considering, like you, what the difference between the auditorium and the spectacle is, and why that exists at all, in a crack that gapes open, that widens,

and so gradually the murmurs louder, a rustle of pockets mounts whilst words rend the quietude, their speakers turned upright, disorganised, in a crowd whose stretches become steps, whispers a chorus, with banalities, some happier than others, cohering to whelm contemplation and divert reception, and to which reflection now yields, wondering when the clamour will cease, when the dialogue will stop, although you realise it will not but will relent only for the show, halting only for the show's return, when the show begins again



and now,
at dusk,
sauntering speechless through electric balms,
amid billboards, shops,
cars,
their glass refracting the passing world,
shards streaming,
we each see the other,
a brother, a sister,
traipsing home, to different homes,
where, with amusement waiting, we prepare to join banality's channel and course merrily forward,
progressing,
until one evening, pacific, reposed, we might recall what came before,
in infancy or adolescence,
in gardens, streets,
in which, rightly or wrongly, we fancy intimacy dwell, its impression wrapped in a sensation that floats mysteriously to consciousness,
rising,
as if somehow deposited and restrained and released, yet we grasp neither how nor why,
confounded by the shrouded mechanism that summons its outline, the dark workings of which we might seek but not find,
fumbling and furrowing,
to make memories of memory,
remembrances of remembering,
amassing illusions of history,
in content without form,
a wreckage for as long as one looks

and now,
catching sight of sight,
our countenances mirror fixed,
each rigid and mute,
thought plummets into history,
tumbling dizzily through age's fissure to where change and revision lurks,
revealed in chasms,
passages, the turns of which surprise us both,
exposing you and that lost boy beside,
a fleshy sibling,
who once sought sister's counsel,
wanting directions and puffed up platitudes,
in consolations and arrogations of care,
long since relinquished but remnant in silhouette,
in an outline you too recall, albeit differently, albeit obscurely, though which, partial and incomplete, you conjecture might reach others to build a picture of childhood,
of me,
in an ideal,
held tight and imagined,
as I consider the mnemonic architecture that could house its memory,
the labyrinths,
the atria that might host past atmospheres,
contemplating how one might visit, and how one might leave,
envisaging inner voyages,
shadowy and distant,
as yet untraversed

and now,
eyes reflected,
adrit between floor and face,
luxuriant with a friendly sense of inspection,
I see your brow dip, pupils focus,
in a mirror that launches its peremptory look to mine,
hurling an unswerving javelin to land a minimal unit of communication, an arrow,
as if to nudge,
to prod,
to insist,
on recognition,
its point piercing reminiscence to drip speculation outward,
leaking visions of siblings, children,
kin,
forms that flow,
aqueous and unbroken,
neither as solid as her there nor as firm as him here,
the two stuck in timeworn bodies,
figures whose immediacy draws attention near,
their profiles glimpsed and grabbed by a motion that warps recollection and affirms the moment,
its exigency, like storms of the past, eluding capture or confinement,
slowing comprehension of a closeness gone,
of a connection lost,
whose thought, however negative, I suppose you suppose, will suffice for now, insofar as we dream of one another,
a family

