



Still Moving

A work by
Joanna Callaghan
in collaboration with
Frauke Requardt.

Grief Notes

Or

'On the Passage of a Few People Through a Rather Brief Moment in Time'

By Gareth Evans

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow.
I feel my fate in what I cannot fear.
I learn by going where I have to go.
- Theodore Roethke, from *The Waking*

1. What is most rewarding is when form and content, media and material, intention and outcome, time and space, motion and stillness, interior and exterior reinforce each other without repetition. Rather, they reveal themselves to be one and the same, simply wearing different clothes. In this way the model is that of a mobius strip, whose surface is the bruised skin of the body under pressure.

2. Etymology is often a door, a point of entrance despite, initially, appearing to be the furthest point of access. So it is with *grief*, through grief but from, finally, the latin: gravare – to burden, and gravis – heavy. And yet, and yet... the unbearable lightness of being we were told about. How else to capture that except in the media of light.

3. Grief and the image. Perhaps the adam and eve of the modern (certainly the Siamese twins), although it is arguable which proffered the apple. The image, in a very real sense, *is* grief. The gone moment, the lost time; the terrible replicant quality of the image, as it seizes the space once occupied by warm, tormented, breathing flesh.

But, as with the image, so with grief. It goes on. It fails better. Not the same river twice, it changes all in which it lives and even if, like the source material of the image, it has 'passed', it remains. Grief becomes an altered way of looking. A decreation so that all might be made anew in grief's footprint, in its startling calendar. Because grief is both the past and the future of the image. An image is always an image of loss. One day. In this way, neither grief, or the image, are the beginning only. The strip turns, like film caught in a camera, on itself.

Maybe this is why we are asked to look at 'grief in action' via the outputs of almost abandoned technologies. It is never obsolete, the grief. Nor the reading of the grief.

4. And just as grief reconfigures time, so it remakes space. These are people unravelling in rooms not far from the apartments of Bacon's violent males. Their edges run and blur in spaces of brutal alignment. They are always naked whether or not they are dressed. A man crumples in the open maw of a doorway and, in the story of the image, he will collapse like that forever because the space in which he seeks to remain standing demands it of him. Its colours tell him his destiny, its walls rupture, its sleek reflections gift him, him, her no hiding place, unless one considers that, in a mirror, everything is concealed.

5. What is most ambitious is the decision to choreograph the turbulence through an aesthetic of seeming stasis. Seeming only because all matter is in vibrating dance. And yet, and yet so much of the work made in these all-too-unsettled times does not appreciate the value, the impact, the ethical requirement even, of being *still*. The eye that seeks to rest, to consider its life, to *reflect* in the older sense, where now can it go in the majority world? By offering us a chamber of the heart, made large enough to enter, and by lining it with what we might call the quiet of the image (however upset its visualisations and depths) *Still Moving*, more than any cacophonous construction of conflict, tells us what it is like to be undone, but also, in the doing, what it is like to come through this carnage of the private, and so to be *still moving*.

Gareth Evans is a writer, curator and editor of the magazines *Vertigo* (www.vertigomagazine.co.uk) and *Artesian* (www.gotoggetherpress.com).

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