

LOOPING THE URBAN EVERYDAY
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I hereby declare that this Master's thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for any other degree or qualification.

All sources used have been acknowledged.

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Our everyday experiences are to a great extent dependent on movement. Especially in the city, the execution of our daily tasks and following of our schedules rely on constant and often dynamic movement. From a broader perspective, all individuals together form repetitive patterns of urban activity through their personal rhythms and routines. As a result, these collective rhythms establish a shared pace of city dwelling, which mutually influences the activities of each individual.

This master's thesis explores the tension between stillness and motion through a photographic analysis of everyday dynamics in public urban spaces. By combining theoretical research with photographic experimentation, the project investigates how still photography can create a sense of movement, duration, and narrative. As it interprets the repetitive nature of daily existence in the city, it seeks to reveal how rhythm and repetition work as structural principles of both urban experience and human life. Furthermore, the concepts of rhythm and repetition are used as narrative elements in the final work.

INTRODUCTION

Movement is an essential part of human life. As we are constantly moving in space and in time, movement is both a physical and an existential condition. It forms the rhythm of everyday life and the ways in which we experience and shape the world around us.

Throughout history, people have sought to capture movement by pausing time for purposes of observation, reflection, and preservation. From early paintings to the technological innovation of photography in the 19th century, visual media have served as tools for fixing the elusive reality. Photography, in particular, has emerged as a unique means capable of preserving the transient through its mechanical precision. This has created a lasting association of the medium with stillness and a static way of documenting life.

However, even as photography freezes the flow of time, it can also evoke movement through techniques such as blurring, sequencing, repetition, or different interpretations and combinations of these methods. The tension between stasis and movement has long intrigued artists and theorists. While much has been written about the relationship of photography to movement and temporality, there is room for further research and experimentation into how still images can convey movement.

This thesis follows the question: *How can still photography, as a static medium, create a sense of movement, duration, and narrative?* In pursuing this question, the study engages more broadly with sociological, philosophical, and psychological perspectives on daily rhythm and repetition. It also challenges conventional understandings that photography is static and immobile. Instead, it proposes that photographic stillness can be transformed into dynamic narrative and immersive engagement. The final outcome positions this research in a broader conversation on the relationship between photography, time, and urban dynamics.

Photographic research is conducted in the urban environment of Vienna, which offers rich ground for exploring the topic. The research investigates how movement there is formed, experienced, and visually represented. Life in contemporary cities is often associated with speed, stress, and sometimes monotony. The reason for exploring these conditions through artistic means is to open up a window for reflection on the unnoticeable processes that occupy our time, attention, and physical energy every day.

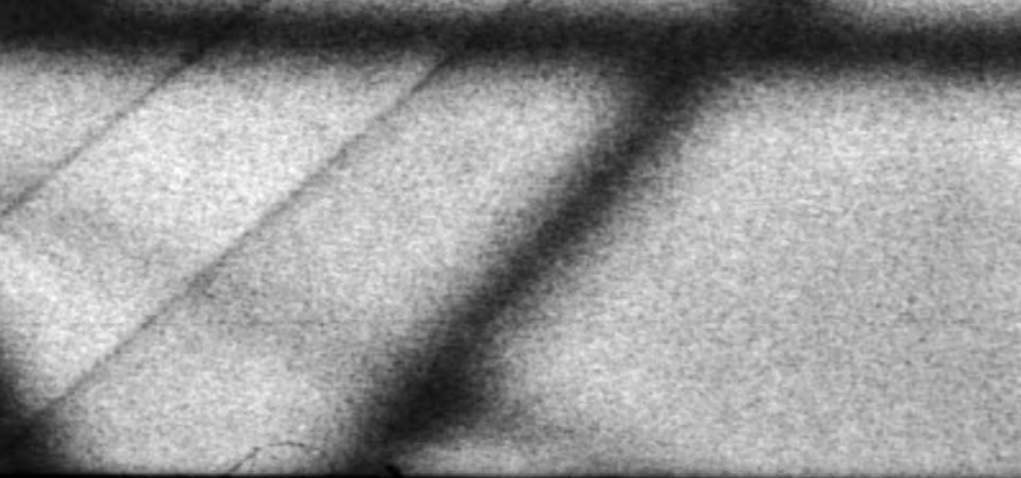
The urban environment both shapes and is shaped by the repetitive movements of its inhabitants.

The recurring patterns of commuting, walking, and waiting generate the rhythms that define urban life. As the project explores how photography can represent and also depict these rhythms, it not only contributes to photographic theory and practice but also enriches topics such as temporality and modernity.

Methodologically, the study combines different theoretical and practical approaches. It includes a historical and conceptual analysis of photographic attempts to depict movement (from the sequential studies of Eadweard Muybridge to contemporary experimental practices). These theories inform the idea of organising the photographs collected during the field research as looping, sequentially animated videos. The outcome takes the form of a photographic installation that integrates these theoretical and practical insights.

The thesis is organised into three main parts. The first examines the conceptual foundations of movement in relation to urban life, based on philosophical and sociological theories of rhythm and repetition. The second outlines the methodological framework and positions the research in existing theoretical and artistic contexts concerning stillness and movement in photography. The final section presents the results of the practical research.





*Everywhere
where there is interaction
between a place, a time
and an expenditure of energy,*

there is rhythm.*

* Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life* (London: Continuum, 2010), Reprint, 15.

MOVEMENT: RHYTHM AND REPETITION

[Conceptual Basis]

Movement is simply a change in position,² measured as the distance travelled over a period of time. In our daily life, however, movement is not just measurable but also something experienced.

This literature review aims to analyze human movement (more generally, human activity) by situating it in *everyday time* and *urban space*—a context in which it is often dynamic and recurring, though its patterns may vary by location and time. Here, *everyday time* refers to the socially and experientially structured passage of time in the way it unfolds in the everyday. *Urban space* refers to the public areas in a city, particularly outdoor environments (acknowledging that urban spaces also include other areas).

An urban area is a region encompassing a city and its surrounding territories. Urban areas are highly developed and have a dense concentration of population and infrastructure, including roads, buildings, and railways.³ Today, over half of the world's population (more than 4 billion people) lives in urban areas.⁴ Whether through natural population growth or migration influenced by various push factors (such as poverty, poor healthcare, and limited opportunities) or pull factors (such as better jobs, education, and security),⁵ people

2 Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "movement (n.)," September 2025, Oxford University Press, <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1550732203>

3 "Urban Area," *National Geographic Education*, last modified October 30, 2024, <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/urban-area/>

4 Hannah Ritchie, Veronika Samborska, and Max Roser, "Urbanization," *Our World in Data*, 2024, <https://ourworldindata.org/urbanization>

5 "Push-and-pull factors," *Oxford Reference*, accessed November 8, 2025, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100355608>

are more often choosing to live in cities in search of improved living standards. This trend, known as urbanization, has turned cities into areas of high population density and, consequently, of intense movement.

To understand how movement is distributed in cities, we can draw on Bill Hillier's argument that cities operate as *movement economies*. His concept describes the relationship between street configuration (the urban grid or layout), the flows of movement (pedestrian or vehicular), and the distribution of urban functions. Hillier argues that spatial configuration strongly shapes patterns of movement, but movement itself also has a reciprocal influence. It attracts certain land uses (for example, the emergence of shops in livelier areas), which then generate even more movement.⁶ In short, the city generates movement, and movement, in turn, shapes the city.

For De Certeau, movement, which actively outlines urban space, is seen as a creative practice. He describes the simple act of walking as a daily tactic which produces meaning. He compares it to language: just as speech produces meaning, walking produces spatial meaning. Through navigating and choosing their own movements from one place to another, people in a way create narratives in the city. The city becomes a kind of

6 Bill Hillier, "Cities as Movement Economies," *URBAN DESIGN International* 1, no. 1 (1996): 41–60, <https://doi.org/10.1057/udi.1996.5>, 43.

text that is constantly rewritten through the everyday activities of its inhabitants.⁷

In many aspects, movement plays an important role in everyday urban life. It influences not only the organization of the spaces but also the temporal rhythms of the city. Each citizen moves according to their own schedules and purposes, which makes urban movement sometimes appear random or uncoordinated. Yet, human activity tends to follow predictable patterns shaped by work hours, transportation systems, and social routines. These patterns contribute collectively to a general rhythm of the city, even though this rhythm can occasionally be disrupted or take different forms.

Under the word *rhythm* in the Cambridge Dictionary, we find the following definitions: “a regular movement or pattern of movements,” and “a regular pattern of change, especially one that occurs in nature.”⁸ These patterns, both in human activity and in natural cycles, influence the pulse of everyday urban life.

But what exactly is *everyday rhythm*? In the book *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, the French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre argues that rhythm emerges through repetition in both time and space. However, he emphasizes that this rep-

7 Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City,” in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 91–110.

8 “Rhythm,” *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/rhythm>

etition is not a repetition of the identical events, but of variations and differences. In everyday life, something new always emerges within the repetitive.⁹

To introduce this idea, he distinguishes between two types of repetition, which influence daily life through their constant interaction: *linear* and *cyclical*. Linear repetition arises from social practice and human activity—a “series of identical facts separated by long or short periods”. Cyclical repetition is found in cosmic and biological patterns, such as day and night, the seasons, or bodily cycles like sleep and hunger. He writes, “...everything is cyclical repetitions, through linear repetitions.” This is illustrated with the example of a clock’s hands, whose circular motion represents cyclical repetition, while its ticking sound creates linear repetition.¹⁰

Our everyday life is, to a great extent, characterized by an abstract, quantitative time. This is the time measured in seconds, minutes, and hours with the help of clocks and watches. This form of time measurement has gradually entered daily practice, as it coordinates various activities according to standard rhythms (a linear repetition). Over time, it has become the prevailing temporal framework, which often produces a sense of monotony and uniformity.¹¹

9 Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, Reprint (London: Continuum, 2010), 6.

10 Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis*, 8, 76.

11 Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis*, 73, 74.

In daily life, the constant interplay between cyclical rhythms and the routines imposed by linear repetition produces what Lefebvre identifies as *social time*. This social time is constituted by the stable “...rhythms and processes imposed by the socio-economic organization of production, consumption, circulation, and habit.”¹² Simply put, it is the way humans collectively structure daily life around work schedules (e.g., 9:00–17:00, Monday to Friday), school times, mealtimes, or other similar organizations. In modern society, at the core of social time stay the processes related to work. All other activities are organized around them.

While cities are physically composed of buildings connected by infrastructure and space, their functions involve different economic, social, cultural, and environmental processes.¹³ Historically, the emergence of cities has been closely linked to locations with favorable conditions for economic activity. Cities have consistently served as centres of trade and have typically developed in areas well connected to transportation networks.¹⁴ In this way, economic activity has always guided daily life and the urban processes. Nowadays, cities concentrate different businesses, industries, and services, which provide a wide range of jobs and, as a result, generate constant activity in

¹² Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis*, 73.

¹³ Hillier, “Cities as Movement Economies,” 41.

¹⁴ Maarten Bosker, “City Origins,” *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 94 (May 2022): 103677, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2021.103677>.

the spaces. In this way, much of the city's temporality is organized around work, and what does not directly relate to it is still for the most part dependent on it.

For example, in the context of this research, situated in a European city, there is intense commuter movement on public transport around 7:30–8:00, as the standard workday for many begins at 9:00. These flows contrast with those around 10:00, when most office workers have already arrived at their workplaces. The same pattern occurs around 17:00–18:00, when people are returning home.

While Lefebvre provides an important foundation for understanding *everyday rhythms*, the study “*Symphonies of Urban Places: Urban Rhythms as Traces of Time in Space*” (2010) extends the concept further by emphasizing that *urban rhythms* contain not only *everyday* (socio-cultural and natural) rhythms but also *spatial rhythms*. These spatial rhythms can be divided into *dynamic* and *static* rhythms. Dynamic rhythms involve movement with speed, frequency, and regularity, such as “cars starting or stopping at crossings”. Static rhythms are still objects and patterns, which are perceived as rhythmic through movement and can be seen in the “repetition of elements or colours in building façades.”

This notion of spatial rhythms includes not only human activity as a producer of rhythm but also the environment as an active participant in shaping rhythms.¹⁵

Hence, the urban activity turns into patterned rhythms for various reasons and can take different forms. Apart from work-related rhythms, which remain central to the organisation of the day in modern urban settings, there are also many other forms of rhythmic activity shaped by education (e.g., flows of school or university students), personal needs (e.g., shopping or sports), and leisure (e.g., going for a walk or meeting friends). Even the blinking of traffic lights could be considered as rhythmic. These examples illustrate how daily life generates many big or tiny socio-cultural, natural, and spatial rhythms.

All the separate rhythms, although occurring in different spaces and at different times, contribute to the dynamics and temporal organization of the city. For this reason, Lefebvre describes the urban environment as *polyrhythmic* (a site where different cyclical and linear rhythms coexist). Rather than forming a unified or harmonious whole, these rhythms overlap, intersect, and sometimes conflict, but remain simultaneously present in the same space. Lefebvre divides rhythms into *eurhythmic* and *arrhythmic*, depending on whether they are harmo-

15 Filipa Matos Wunderlich, "Symphonies of Urban Places: Urban Rhythms as Traces of Time in Space. A Study of 'Urban Rhythms,'" *KOHT Ja PAIK / PLACE and LOCATION Studies in Environmental Aesthetics and Semiotics* VI, January 1, 2008, 98.

nious and in sync with other social or natural processes (eurhythmic) or discordant and disruptive (arrhythmic).¹⁶ For instance, cars move in one rhythm, traffic lights in another, and pedestrians in a third, but this all happens simultaneously. These elements constantly coexist together, which forms the condition of *polyrhythmia*.

A notable example of Lefebvre's concept of polyrhythmia in visual form could be considered the 1982 non-narrative film *Koyaanisqatsi*¹⁷ (coming from the Hopi language, the title is commonly translated as “life out of balance”). The film does not state a specific message, but it is often interpreted as revealing how modern technological and capital-driven life has become misaligned with the rhythms of the natural world.¹⁸ Throughout the film, we see various repetitive and accelerated urban, industrial, and technological flows. By juxtaposing cyclical natural rhythms (such as clouds rolling across landscapes) with linear, mechanical rhythms (such as cars moving through traffic or crowds emerging from subways) the film is a great example that highlights the coexistence and tension of multiple rhythms. In Lefebvre's terms, *Koyaanisqatsi* perfectly visualizes polyrhythmia. It shows how overlapping natural, social, and technological rhythms interact, sometimes harmoniously, sometimes in conflict.

¹⁶ Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis*, 16.

¹⁷ Godfrey Reggio, *Koyaanisqatsi* (1982).

¹⁸ Philip Glass, *Koyaanisqatsi*, Philip Glass, accessed November 25, 2025, <https://philipglass.com/films/koyaanisqatsi/>

So far, we have seen that daily activity in the city often follows certain patterns of temporal and spatial organization. These repetitive patterns can create a kind of familiar and at times automated performance of daily activities. Human activity tends to rely on such patterns for a range of practical and beneficial reasons.

It is widely noted that daily experience carries a repetitive quality. Metaphorically speaking, Camus captured this sense of repetition through the example of Sisyphus,¹⁹ who is condemned to push a boulder up a mountain, only for it to roll back down each time. In the illustration of his endless labour, we can sometimes recognize aspects of repetitive daily life. Day after day, many people perform similar actions—waking up, commuting, working, eating, sleeping, and repeating (others follow less repetitive or variable routines).

*“In one day in the modern world, everybody does more or less the same thing at more or less the same times, but each person is really alone in doing it.”*²⁰

Such repetition can often produce a sense of monotony and automatic behaviour. This may be seen in urban

19 Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2012).

20 Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis*, 75.

spaces in the often monotonous flows of movement and routine behaviours. At the same time, the repetitive patterns of daily life have important functions, including their ability to provide order and structure through regularity. These patterns have social and cultural origins, as they are formed by established norms and behaviours, such as habits and routines.²¹

Repetition influences processes in cognition (in learning), behaviour (in forming habits and routines), and social interactions (in maintaining relationships). Repetition also affects memory, as it supports the retention of information. Through sufficient repetition, we can improve our mastery of certain content.²² In everyday life, gaining mastery over activities or tasks gives us predictability and can save us time and energy.

Charles Duhigg explains that when an action is repeated, the brain neurologically strengthens the pathways for executing that action, which can result in the formation of a habit. The more the habit is repeated, the stronger the automatization of our behaviours may become. In the beginning, the brain works actively to process all the new information; when this process becomes habitual, the brain may engage less consciously and rely more on automatic routines. Through establish-

21 RJ Starr, "The Psychology of Routine: Structure, Stability, and the Architecture of Daily Life," *Professor RJ Starr*, August 8, <https://profrjstarr.com/essays/the-psychology-of-routine-structure-stability-and-the-architecture-of-daily-life>

22 Hermann Ebbinghaus, *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology*, trans. Henry A. Ruger and Clara E. Bussenius (Teachers College Press, 1913), 4, <https://doi.org/10.1037/10011-000>.

ing habits, we save cognitive effort, and we can allow the brain to allocate attention to more demanding or novel situations. Repeating basic behaviours, such as walking, may require less conscious thought, freeing mental energy for other tasks.²³

Habits are actions or thoughts that a person performs repeatedly with little conscious effort. Routines, on the other hand, represent a more complex form of habit. They involve arranging and linking multiple actions, steps, or activities in a particular sequence, which specifies both what is done and the order in which it is performed.²⁴ Routine can be understood as a framework that organizes activities. The components of a routine can include both habitual and non-habitual activities. In this sense, daily routines consist of relatively coherent sequences of activities that individuals engage in throughout a typical day.²⁵

Seen in relation to everyday movement in the city, both our personal habits and socially established daily routines contribute to the organisation of movement in urban spaces. With their help, we can navigate familiar urban spaces with relative predictability by having a plan for action in mind (for example, estimating how much time we need to reach one place).

23 Charles Duhigg, *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business* (Random House, 2012), 17–18.

24 Florence A. Clark, "The Concepts of Habit and Routine: A Preliminary Theoretical Synthesis," *The Occupational Therapy Journal of Research* 20, no. 1_suppl (2000): 128, <https://doi.org/10.1177/15394492000200S114>.

25 Clark, "The Concepts of Habit and Routine," 127.

Navigation in the city is a complex process and cannot be fully described by repetitive, routine activities alone. Habitual movements form and influence urban mobility, but they exist together with moments of spontaneity, difference, and novelty. Other factors in the formation of activity include random movements, temporary events, unplanned situations, and various social interactions. All of them generate motions that are spontaneous and non-routine.

Just as rhythm and repetition are fundamental aspects of everyday life, they are equally central to the arts. Music, for instance, relies considerably on rhythm, while literature incorporates it in specific forms, such as poetry or prose. In music and literature, rhythms unfold over time through the flow of a text or the tempo of a song. Visual arts also employ rhythm, although it is mainly perceived spatially across a composition.²⁶ We can see this in photography and cinema, which integrate, in some aspects, both temporal and spatial forms of rhythm. Photography can only imply temporal rhythm through sequences or visual narratives, while cinema integrates temporal and spatial rhythm more directly in the unfolding of the action in time and space.

Generally, in visual arts, the deliberate use of repetition can serve different conceptual and aesthetic purposes. Even the simple repetition of the same element can give a sense of structure, movement, or guide the eye through the visual composition. The repetition of different or varying elements can further develop into rhythm. As in daily life, rhythm in visual art is rarely pure repetition, so variation between elements is necessary. This can suggest different perceptions, such as balance and harmony, or even more dynamic movement.

²⁶ Gregory Minissale, *Rhythm in Art*, Psychology and New Materialism, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2021), 6, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108917216>

Usually, it can be achieved through the patterned use of elements such as colors, shapes, lines, and textures. These elements can produce a cohesive pattern together.

There are different strategies for achieving rhythm. Similar elements can be repeated at regular intervals, as in *regular rhythm*. A similar interval between elements can be maintained to create a *flowing rhythm*. Alternatively, the rhythm can gradually change, as in *progressive rhythm*, where elements vary in interval, size, or intensity.²⁷

As an example of the use of rhythm and the way it influences the perception of the observer, we can take Mondrian's painting *New York City I* (Figure 1). The painting shows a grid of vertical and horizontal lines of equal thickness in three colors: yellow, blue, and red. The title refers to the city, and the rhythm of the lines helps us understand the dynamic patterns typical for urban environments. At first glance, the way the lines are arranged and the stepped use of colors creates some sense of harmony but also dynamism. We can compare the interweaving of the colored lines to the overlapping rhythms of the city. The lines are not repeated in a regular or monotonous way. They follow a rhythmic pattern with different pauses while keeping the same thickness.

27 Chiu-Shui Chan, "Phenomenology of Rhythm in Design," *Frontiers of Architectural Research* 1, no. 3 (2012): 254, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foar.2012.06.003>.



Figure 1. Piet Mondrian, *New York City I*, 1942, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Piet_Mondriaan,_1942_-_New_York_City_1.jpg

Overall, rhythm and repetition play an important role in how we perceive and experience a work of art. They help organize the composition, make it more engaging, and guide our eyes across the space. They can emphasize key elements, direct attention, and suggest movement—or even create the illusion of motion.





*Of all the means of expression,
photography is the only one
that fixes forever the precise
and transitory instant.**

* Henri Cartier-Bresson, *The Mind's Eye: Writings on Photography and Photographers* (New York: Aperture, 1999).

MOTION, DURATION AND NARRATIVE
THROUGH STILL PHOTOGRAPHY
[Methodological Basis]

In “*The Ontology of the Photographic Image*,” André Bazin writes that people have been preoccupied for centuries with defending themselves against time by attempting to hold and preserve fleeting reality as a memory. The portrait, he notes, helps us remember the model. In its earliest forms, painting, which was dedicated to symbolically representing the world, served this purpose. With the invention of the first scientific system for accurate depiction (*perspective*), made possible through the use of the *camera obscura*, painting became deeply focused on reproducing the external appearance of reality. It strove to create a convincing and precise reflection of the world. However, due to the subjective touch of the painter, true realism was not achieved until the invention of photography, which was no longer dependent on human skill of reproduction. Through its precise, mechanical means, it fulfilled humanity’s desire of preserving reality.²⁸

*“Photography, unlike art, does not create the eternal; it embalms time. It simply places time beyond the reach of its own decay.”*²⁹

Photography emerged as part of a broader scientific effort to understand and fix the fleeting nature of time. In the 1830s, cities were changing quickly, and modern

28 André Bazin, “The Ontology of the Photographic Image,” trans. Hugh Gray, *Film Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1960): 4–9, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1210183>

29 Bazin, “The Ontology of the Photographic Image,” 8.

life was full of constant movement and variety. Scientists wanted to capture these brief moments, freezing them so they could be seen and analysed. Their main goal was to take a piece of moving reality and turn it into a permanent record so that it can be studied.³⁰

Initially, photographic exposures required long durations, which made it impossible to capture moving objects. Later, technological advancements in the photographic process eventually made instantaneous exposure possible.³¹ This improvement allowed photography to capture, in a single still image, extremely brief and tiny intervals of time that the human eye cannot perceive. Thus, the still photograph became more closely connected to the fast-moving reality it captured.

Reflecting on how photography transforms time, Stephen Shore wrote, “*Just as a three-dimensional world is transformed when it is projected onto a flat piece of film, so a fluid world is transformed when it is projected onto a static piece of film.*”³² This highlights how photography can alter our perception of movement by converting it into something static.

Consequently, the photograph is understood as a static image whose main features generally do not change over the course of its existence. Because of

30 Chitra Ramalingam, “Fixing Transience: Photography and Other Images of Time in 1830s London,” in *Time and Photography*, ed. Jan Baetens, Alexander Streitberger, and Hilde Van Gelder (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2018), 3.

31 Andy Grundberg, Helmut Erich Robert Gernsheim, Naomi Rosenblum, and Beaumont Newhall, “History of Photography,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, September 23, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/technology/photography>

32 Stephen Shore, *The Nature of Photographs: A Primer*, 2nd ed. (London: Phaidon, 2010), 72.

this, it can only show what is happening at one specific moment. Its nature prevents it from directly showing movement or the passage of time.³³

Taking into account the efforts of humanity to overcome the fleeting nature of time by holding it still at a specific instantaneous moment for the purposes of observation, remembrance, or otherwise, photography is seen as a medium that pauses, suspends, fixes time, and in this manner, what moves. From this arises the opposition between movement and the still image.

However, the medium has evolved to reveal that it does not only halt motion; it can also suggest it, contain it, or even generate it.

33 Robin Le Poidevin, "Time and the Static Image," *Philosophy* 72, no. 280 (1997): 175, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0031819100056837>

Over time, various techniques have been developed and have allowed the photographic image not only to suspend motion but also to depict it.

In the early days of photography, when the technology had advanced enough to allow precision and immediacy, the recording and analysis of literal movement became an important method for scientific research. Two commonly mentioned figures, Eadweard Muybridge and Étienne-Jules Marey, are particularly significant in this context. Many technological improvements, as well as photographic and cinematic techniques, were developed thanks to the fundamental contributions of the two to the study of movement through photography. Muybridge's method, which will be discussed later, involved photographing a sequential series of individual images, while Marey's innovation, *chronophotography*, visualized movement as a fragmented flow (Figure 2) by capturing multiple exposures on a single photographic plate. With his invention, the mechanical chronophotographic gun, he was able to capture up to 12 exposures per second in a single image. Both methods sought to arrest movement not by recomposing it (as in moving images) but by decomposing it, aiming to examine the frozen form.³⁴

34 David Campany, *Photography and Cinema*, Exposures series (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 22.



Figure 2. Étienne-Jules Marey, *Bird in Flight*, c. 1882, photograph, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marey_-_birds.jpg, accessed November 5, 2025.

Around the 1930s, the American scientist Harold Edgerton invented the electronic stroboscope, which produced rapid flashes of light. This made possible the capturing of sharp images of extremely fast and imperceptible motion (Figure 3) by freezing it. In comparison to Marey's mechanical approach to analysing human or animal locomotion, Edgerton captured, through electronic means, objects in action at much higher speeds, such as bullets or drops of milk.

In contemporary photographic practice, technological advancements have significantly transformed the ways in which motion can be represented. There is now a wide range of methods that allow still photographs to evoke movement and depict the dynamic qualities of time. This can be accomplished in two main ways: by using a slow shutter speed to produce motion blur and convey a sense of movement, or by employing a fast shutter speed to capture a precise moment in sharp detail.

Through these examples, we can see that the consecutive phases of an action can be captured and made visible on a single flat photographic surface. In this case, motion is represented by being suggested through either a sharp, fragmented, or blurred depiction of a single moment of action.



Figure 3. Harold Edgerton, *Squash Stroke*, HEE-NC-38005, 1938, gelatin silver print, MIT Museum, accessed November 5, 2025, <https://mitmuseum.mit.edu/collections/harold-doc-edgerton/edgerton-iconic-images/iconic-images-1-2>

Moreover, when the depiction of motion extends from a single image to multiple images, new qualities, such as narrative and a sense of duration, can emerge. These qualities are constructed through the sequence of still photographs, allowing the viewer to perceive movement and the passage of time.

It has been recognized that meaning can emerge not only in a photograph but also between photographs. Photo-essays and photo-series have long been strategies to tell a story or develop an idea through multiple images. When images are ordered consecutively, they form a more coherent visual relationship between them.³⁵

Telling a story beyond the single frame can be achieved through different approaches of sequencing and juxtaposing images. Through these techniques, the arrangement of multiple static photographs—whether visually similar or distinct but connected by a shared theme—can generate rhythm. Meanwhile, the viewer can mentally construct duration and movement across the frames. These narrative approaches have apparent cinematic roots, although they manage to suggest action without producing smooth or fluent movement.

Sequences of Images

A single photograph can depict movement, but a sequence of photographs makes it more explicit and can actively construct it. Sequencing can be both a compositional strategy and a temporal strategy. In this way, photography becomes a medium of duration, not just of single instants. Duration is introduced by leading and keeping the viewer's attention across multiple images.

35 Daniel Palmer, "Corresponding Associations: The Poetics and Limits of Photography as Dialogue," *Photography and Culture* 12, no. 3 (2019): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17514517.2019.1641281>.

Chronological Sequencing

Duane Michals is considered a pioneer in approaching the photographic medium in a new and conceptual way with his use of photo sequences to create narratives. Often adopting suggested or actual chronological progression, as in films, his stories unfold frame by frame, even as they remain rooted in the still photograph. In his sequences, each subsequent shot usually extends the previous one, creating duration and suggesting a period of time in which the action unfolds. The fragmentation of the action into sequential frames, with pauses in some way, shapes the whole story, keeping intact only what is necessary.

For example, his sequence *I Build a Pyramid* (Figure 4) consists of six consecutive frames showing the character (himself) progressively constructing his own interpretation of a pyramid. We can observe the gradual unfolding of the action, where the moments in between are omitted and must be imagined.

Both conceptually and methodologically, his work relies largely on narrative. He often explores mystical, spiritual, and existential themes. Rather than documenting the real world, Michals often stages his photographs and constructs metaphorical scenarios.



Figure 4. Duane Michals, *I Build a Pyramid*, 1978, gelatin silver prints, DC Moore Gallery, accessed November 5, 2025, <https://www.dcmooregallery.com/artists/duane-michals/series/sequences?view=slider#5>

Another example is the work *The Sleepers* (Figure 5) by the French artist Sophie Calle, who also explored sequential and narrative structures through photography. For this project, she invited 27 people to sleep in her home, while, in the meantime, she photographed them. The photographs she took were then presented in a sequence that followed, chronologically, the order in which each “sleeper” stayed. This can be interpreted as creating not only a narrative but also a broader sense of duration that reflects the temporal passage of the entire project. To strengthen the narrative and documentation, she includes small notes under each photograph, revealing insights about the pictures.

Both Michals and Calle demonstrate how photographic sequencing transforms still images into time-based narratives. Their work shows that photography can extend beyond the single frame to construct meaning, emotion, and duration by the deliberate arrangement of multiple frames. This approach, to some extent, explores the boundary between stillness and perceived movement, as well as between simply documenting and storytelling.

Sequencing through Juxtaposition

Juxtaposing is a very important editing technique in cinema. It is often associated with the principles of montage



Figure 5. Sophie Calle, *Gérard Maillet, Fifth Sleeper*, 1979, text panel with eight silver gelatin prints, 18-3/4 × 24 in. (overall, approx. 47.6 × 61 cm), Fraenkel Gallery, accessed November 5, 2025, <https://fraenkelgallery.com/portfolios/the-sleepers>

theory, such as Lev Kuleshov's experiment in film montage, where he alternated one shot with various other shots, and the different juxtapositions acquired completely different meanings.³⁶ In this experiment, the meaning of a neutral shot changed depending on the shot it was paired with. In cinema, this technique focuses on temporal sequencing and creating a story through the relationship between shots.

This has a similar thread in photography, where the juxtaposition of images, in combination, also generates new meaning compared to the images being alone. Juxtaposition is used as a way of comparing or contrasting elements across multiple images, or suggesting associations between them. Here, meaning is created by pointing out similarities, contrasts, or other visual relationships. Unlike in cinema, this approach does not follow chronological order, it produces narrative through the arrangement of images in space.

Further, this can open up many possibilities for experiencing movement across the group as a whole. In this method, by structuring visual relationships between images, time is perceived not as a linear sequence but as a rhythm between recurring or contrasting elements.

36 Lev Vladimirovič Kulešov, *Kuleshov on Film*, ed. Ronald Levaco (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 200.

It can operate on a purely technical level—for example, through variations in color, light, or composition—or on a conceptual level, by contrasting subjects, contexts, or emotional tones.

An interesting example is the work of photographer Barbara Probst, which is not only conceptually intriguing but also unique and distinctive as a method. She sets up multiple cameras from different angles or locations and releases them simultaneously using synchronized remote triggers. In this way, she captures the same moment from multiple perspectives. The images, when juxtaposed next to one another, create a multidimensional feeling.

Probst often notes that she has influences from the principles of film production, which show a scene from different angles, creating shifts in meaning. She also draws her understanding of perspective from the way sculpture is viewed from multiple angles.³⁷

In her approach, movement is experienced not through successively ordered instants but through the possibility of seeing a single instant from multiple viewpoints, opening different interpretive possibilities rather than forming a linear narrative.

37 ADAGP, "Barbara Probst – Atelier A / ADAGP," video, 2023, accessed November 7, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-jr8C4kfbg>

The previous examples demonstrated how the static chronologically arranged or juxtaposed images can imply movement and duration by guiding the viewer's perception. This section shifts the focus to other narrative approaches that follow principles of cinematic grammar (incorporating elements like editing and sound) while using still images.

It is important to distinguish these approaches from conventional cinema, which gives a very smooth sense of movement and continuity. Film extends the principles of photography, as each frame is essentially a still photograph, and the illusion of continuous motion comes from the rapid projection of frames (typically 24 frames per second). Cinema creates an illusion of fluid motion, which we perceive as continuous movement. Stepping aside from the conventional cinematic look, we find other approaches, such as films created from still images or animated photographs, which use a different editing logic to suggest or generate motion.

In the late 19th century, there were multiple attempts to generate motion and translate the static image into something dynamic. A pioneering example is Eadweard Muybridge's experiments in depicting the locomotion of humans and animals. Muybridge made

it possible to decompose the imperceivable mechanics of motion by setting up multiple cameras to record sequential instants. This began with an effort to analyse locomotion, later developed into a scientific study of the frozen form, which had an important influence on photography and the illusion of motion created in cinema.³⁸

We see this in his seminal study *The Horse in Motion* (Figure 6), where Muybridge photographed a galloping horse in rapid succession, analysing each phase of movement to demonstrate that there is a moment when all four hooves of the horse are off the ground.

Films from Still Images

In this category fall movies that are made entirely or primarily of still photographs, for either aesthetic reasons or for documentation purposes. These films usually include sound, dialogue, or narration as an additional explanation of the images.

American historian Ken Burns is a key figure in the use of still photographs in documentary filmmaking. He employs panning and zooming effects, arranging historical photographs in a sequenced, often chronological order. This approach goes beyond a slideshow of images and integrates still photographs into narrative. Yet his documentaries are not entirely made up of still images.

38 Campany, *Photography and Cinema*, 22.



Figure 6. Eadweard Muybridge, *The Horse in Motion*, 19 June 1878, photograph, Library of Congress / Wikimedia Commons, accessed November 5, 2025, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Horse_in_Motion_high_res.jpg

Furthermore, this technique can be considered both artistic and experimental. The most notable example of a narrative film created from still images is Chris Marker's work *La Jetée*.³⁹ Although this method is not often used in conventional narrative cinema, Marker's film demonstrates its potential for constructing an engaging and cohesive story entirely through still images. *La Jetée* is a 28-minute short film composed almost entirely of black-and-white still photographs (Figures 7–9). The narrative unfolds through a thoughtful sequencing of images accompanied by voice narration. The cinematic motion is not conveyed through continuous fluid movement but is instead psychologically suggested through rhythm and associative connections between the photographs and the sound. The film contains one single moment of actual movement, which breaks the stasis of the surrounding images.

Animated Photographs

If we take Muybridge's sequentially captured phases of motion, arrange them in rapid succession, and project them as a continuous series—as he later did with his zoöpraxiscope—we can observe the basic principle behind early moving-image technology: the illusion of motion from still frames. This has become a fundamen-

39 Chris Marker, *La Jetée* (1962).



Figures 7–9. Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, 1962, film stills from Chris Marker's *La Jetée*, Provided by Film-Grab, accessed November 5, 2025,. (<https://film-grab.com/2015/06/05/la-jetee/>)

tal logic behind most moving-image technologies. We can track this logic back to early optical devices, predecessors of cinema, such as the *phenakistoscope*, the *zoetrope*, the *praxinoscope*, and Muybridge's invention, the *zoöpraxiscope*.⁴⁰ Later, this logic extended into other techniques such as stop-motion, which can merge the static quality of photography with the temporal flow of film. Stop-motion is a clear example of creating movement through assembling still photography using frame-by-frame manipulation.

An inspiring contemporary example of works integrating frame-by-frame animated photographic images are the animations of the British artist Edd Carr. His works adapt various alternative photographic processes into moving images. He usually explores ecological topics by using organic materials in the development of his images. In terms of approaches, in some of his projects he uses chronologically sequenced images that produce a smoother flow between the single frames. In others, he constructs continuously shifting sequences that combine fast-changing single still images with brief movements, creating rhythm. Sometimes he incorporates collages, sketches on the film stock, or short writings, which also contribute to the flow and the perception of the visuals.

40 Anday Türkmen, "Representation of Space in Pre-Cinema Moving Image Devices," *JOURNAL OF ARTS* 7, no. 3 (2024): 109–24, <https://doi.org/10.31566/arts.2391>.





However,
to grasp a rhythm it is necessary
to have been grasped by it;
one must let oneself go,
give oneself over,
abandon oneself to its duration.*

LOOPING THE URBAN EVERYDAY
[Project]

Coming from a background in book design, I have always viewed the photograph as part of a larger whole. Before, I hadn't actively engaged with photography. I had only worked with photographs as illustrative components of the book. My involvement was limited to editing, curating, and arranging them in the visual composition. However, during my master's studies, my relationship with photography shifted completely and became something much more personal and meaningful. I discovered a new tool for visual expression and got curious to explore it.

I've taken part in photography courses that allowed me to engage more deeply with the medium. The interesting processes encouraged me to go beyond the technical aspects and invited me to experiment and create. I also took a theoretical course on experimental (avant-garde) film, which sparked my interest in working with moving images and became an important reference for how I approached my thesis project.

At the start of my research, I aimed to work with movement, not through film or video, but by reconstructing it through still photography. This raised the question: *How can static images convey movement, imply duration, and create narrative?* To explore this, I decided to grab a camera and find out for myself.

This project originated from my interest in simulating movement from still images, similar to stop-motion techniques. Initially, I was more focused on using abstract images, but I eventually decided to explore this idea through photography. I began researching the possibilities that photography offers for this purpose, and I became particularly interested in sequential photography. My exploration was not limited to traditional analog sequencing; I also wanted to incorporate digital methods.

This led to the initial focus of the project: creating image sequences, and organizing them into videos edited using the principles of stop-motion. With this approach, I aimed to create a sense of narrative, and engage with the stillness of the photograph, while using it as a medium for constructing movement.

Choice of Camera

The development of this idea began with research into cameras that could help me achieve my goal. Although digital photography today offers a wide range of possibilities for specific types of image creation and manipulation, I chose to work with analog photography.

I was interested in the analog process of producing images because it requires a slower, more deliberate approach that, for me, cultivates a very essential skill in

photography: *patience*. At the same time, it imposes more limitations than digital photography, which I find intriguing because they reduce the possibilities for manipulation and encourage a more experimental way of working.

The choice of camera played an important role in guiding the visual direction of the project, and as a result, it influenced both its aesthetic and technical possibilities. My research led to a surprisingly simple but fitting discovery: the Lomo Action Sampler camera. Although it is not a professional camera and is essentially a toy camera with significant restrictions in operation and precision, I became particularly inspired by it.

I approached the photographic process from a fully experimental perspective, trying to challenge the concept that image quality relies on the technical features of the camera. The idea of using this camera was to embrace the imperfections of the images as expressive effects rather than striving for precise photographic quality. As its name suggests, it is specifically created to capture subjects in action.

Camera Characteristics

The Action Sampler camera, produced by Lomography, is a low-cost 35 mm film camera. It has four fixed-focus lenses that capture four sequential exposures on a single

35 mm frame (approximately 0.22 seconds per exposure, or 0.66 seconds in total). The shutter speed is fixed at around 1/100 second. The compact body, made of thin plastic, weighs roughly 100 grams, making it portable but fragile. The camera lacks manual controls for aperture and exposure, so lighting conditions play an important role in determining image quality. For the project, ISO 100 film was used under bright sunlight, and ISO 400 film was used in low-light outdoor conditions. The camera's simplicity and limited functionality produce unpredictable results, which, after all, contribute to its unique aesthetic.

Unpredictability is indeed the main characteristic of this camera. From its fragile plastic body to the constant possibility of light leaks, frame misalignment, or scratched film, it comes with a long list of potential technical flaws. Many of these challenges arose during the process. In fact, I had to buy a second camera after the first one was repeatedly damaged and repaired.

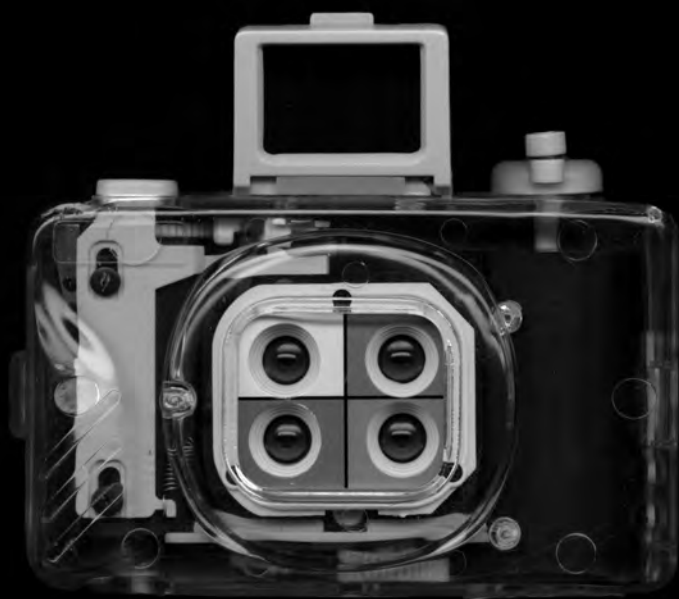
A serious challenge was the lack of an accurate viewfinder. The flimsy plastic viewfinder provides only a rough suggestion of the final composition. I learned this from the many misaligned and poorly framed shots that I had to discard.

Nevertheless, after extensive experimentation, the camera became easier to manage and, very often, even exceeded my expectations. It perfectly matched my needs and my method of photographing, as it allowed spontaneity and flexibility. I would describe working with it as unpredictable, inspiring, and entertaining.

Film

All photographs were shot on two types of 35 mm black-and-white negative film, chosen according to the specific lighting conditions of each shooting day. I used Kentmere 100 in bright daylight and Fomapan 400 for low-light conditions. The first has fine grain and good sharpness, while the other has more pronounced grain (especially in the shadows) but still delivers good sharpness.

The choice of black-and-white over color film was mainly intended to emphasize composition, light, texture, and contrast. By removing color, the images simplify the visual narrative and draw better attention to shapes and patterns. This decision also aligned with my observations of repetitive movement, because the absence of color emphasizes the monotonous rhythm of the actions.





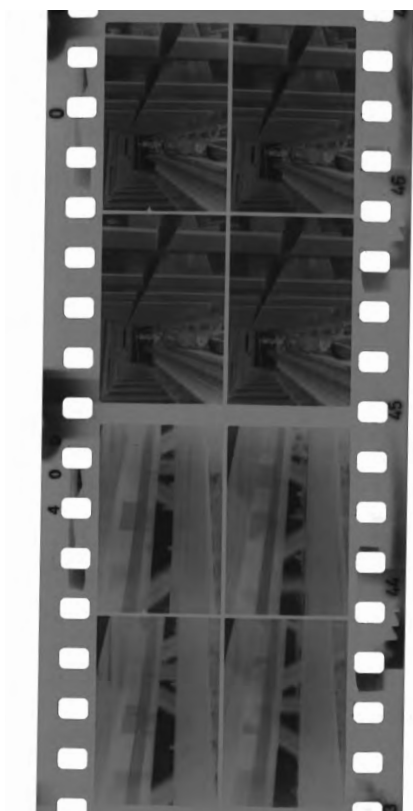
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I began the initial step of the project's development with a photographic field research focused on observing and documenting motion in the urban environment. The choice of setting had to align with the technical characteristics of the camera. Because of its simple design and limited capabilities, it required strong natural light and performed best only outdoors in bright, sunny weather. Due to this necessity, open spaces became the main environment for research and experimentation. Still, they offered good material for analysis.

At first, I didn't have a concrete idea of what specific movements to photograph, so I decided to walk outside and simply observe the activity. There is a 19th-century French term—*flâneur*—which refers to a person who walks around not doing anything in particular but watching people and society.⁴¹ In this sense, I adopted the role of a *flâneur*, strolling through the city, observing, and sometimes photographing movements I found interesting.

At some point, I became interested in capturing only the movement of people, as they are the main moving subjects in the urban environment. I was curious to observe how they walk or cycle through different settings and how their movements interacted and blended with the surrounding infrastructure.

41 "Flâneur," Cambridge Dictionary, accessed September 6, 2025, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/flaneur>

A Day of Shooting

Shooting sessions were guided more by intuition than by strict planning. There was only the requirement to be sunny weather. My main task was (as Lefebvre suggests)⁴² to simply immerse myself in the rhythm of the city and experience its movement first-hand. Each day typically began along my usual travel route, sometimes with changes in direction. The sessions consisted of three to four hours of walking through the streets of Vienna (and traveling by subway for longer distances). I photographed mostly between 9:00 and 14:00 because this was the brightest period of the day and also when the sun was casting interesting shadows on the surfaces. I usually ended each photographing session naturally, either when I became tired or when I lost focus during observation. By the end of that time, I typically exposed about one and a half rolls of film (approximately 50 shots).

Locations

During the first field trips, I explored multiple parts of the city, often starting and ending in different neighbourhoods. Later, I revisited places I found visually interesting, as well as rich in activity and subjects. For example, I was drawn to some subway stations, not only because they offered more moving subjects but also because of their

42 See p. 61.

environments and lighting conditions (wide windows, horizontal, vertical, or diagonal elements), which provided many background possibilities. Vienna offers many spaces, from authentic neighbourhoods to business districts and industrial areas, which are worth exploring. All of these spaces had contrasting rhythms of activity, from work routines and leisure activities to flows of tourists and many other forms of movement.

Subjects

I focused more often on photographing individual subjects rather than groups of people because I found it more interesting to observe how individuals blend with their surroundings rather than how they blend into a crowd. In public spaces, people are partially detached from their privacy and become more observable. I wanted to highlight the rhythm of each individual and compare it to that of other single subjects. This aimed to show how similar the movements of different people can be in comparable settings and that our daily experiences in the city are, to a large extent, alike.

On some occasions, I also photographed small and slightly larger groups of people to explore the movement of individual subjects within a collective. In order to emphasize the feeling of blending in or experiencing

alienation, I attempted to either isolate individuals from the crowd or juxtapose them against a busy setting.

Approach and Composition

Most subjects were captured spontaneously, while my composition was guided by the specific space, the moment, and the limitations of the camera. This unpredictability aligned with my goal to intuitively sense and capture the rhythm around me. Although Vienna is a mix of fast-paced and quiet urban environments, it offered enough curious situations to make spontaneous analog photography particularly challenging. The patience-demanding process of shooting with film required pausing and stepping out of the city's flow. Many moments could not be perfectly captured because subjects often moved too quickly, and I needed time to advance the film between exposures.

This lack of control was challenging and required some adaptation, but it became part of the research process, which influenced the visual outcome in a positive way. It also left me reflecting on how quickly moments come and go in the city, and how easy it is to miss what is happening around you, even when you have the intention and pay close attention.

During these field trips, I was able to observe and understand a lot about the processes happening on

a usual day in the city. Street photography allowed me to notice things I normally wouldn't. As I am usually a participant in these situations, I wouldn't have been able to reflect on them in the moment.

Ethical Considerations

I find it necessary to briefly address the topic of what is legal and ethical while photographing in public spaces, not only because it concerns my project but also because it is important for anyone with a camera. With the accessibility of mobile phone cameras, people photograph instinctively and tend to rely on their personal sense of what is acceptable.

In different countries, the legal frameworks for photographing in public spaces may vary. In Austria, taking photos of people in public does not usually require consent. Publishing such images is also allowed as long as it does not conflict with the legitimate interests of the photographed subjects (§ 78 UrhG).⁴³ However, exceptions are possible.

Nevertheless, what may be legal might not necessarily be ethical, and there should be a distinction. We personally form our ethical principles and must alone recognize when it is appropriate or inappropriate to take a picture.

43 Austria, *Urheberrechtsgesetz* (UrhG), § 78, BGBl. Nr. 111/1936 in der geltenden Fassung, via RIS (Rechtsinformationssystem des Bundes).

In the context of my project, I took all necessary considerations into account. Throughout the shooting process, I never photographed in situations that seemed inappropriate, however worthy of documentation they might have seemed. Although in many cases the subjects were unaware that they were being photographed, their personal space was never violated. When I photographed from the front, I made sure that people were either aware of the camera or could easily become aware of it. Most shots were taken from behind the subjects, as I often photographed spontaneously while walking among people.

P A N



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Notes

Stepping onto the street of Vienna instantly immerses you in the dynamics of the city. Whether the street is quiet or busy, the sounds, lights, and movements immediately grab you. If you were thinking about something before, the street now erases it from your mind. The moment you stop to look around, you start to notice many things you haven't seen before. But that requires some attention and intention. And what do you see? Easy. People and objects (including vehicles, as they are not people, although they are controlled by people). The people are mostly walking. They move from one place to another, get on the subway, get off the bus, enter stores, stop at traffic lights. They wait. Then they move on and disappear before you realize it. Then a new stream comes to take their place, and this whole shift happens instantly. Except at traffic lights and bus stops, where people don't have any other choice but to wait, everywhere else they just continue walking. It is interesting to note here how some are more patient, while others are not. Moments like random crossing, rushing, or not waiting are not excluded. Some walk quickly, sometimes even run, probably to catch the subway or cross the street faster so they don't have to wait. Patience is not always present, although Viennese people seem pretty patient. Others move slowly or at an even pace. They are not in a hurry, probably fortunate that their daily schedule is empty or at least not

very packed. When you look at them closely, you can often understand not only whether they are in a hurry, but also where they are going. Groups usually reveal their intentions fast, but individual subjects require more watching to discern their purpose. It is quite interesting to watch, especially the individually moving people, as they don't interact much with what's around them, which makes them somehow really mysterious. Although, if someone in front of you is carrying a shopping bag, it becomes clear where they are going or where they are coming from. In the same manner, a person with a backpack or uniform is probably returning home from work. Sometimes it is easy to guess, but not always. Naturally, when you go out at 8:30, you see a big cluster of people in the U-Bahn; and in just an hour or two, the scene is different. The same people who hurried in the morning seem quite different at lunchtime, as their purpose is much more exciting. Different times of day bring different waves of movement. At hours like 10:00 or 14:00, you usually feel a slight emptiness (except in the very central area). There is no group flow of people, just individuals moving like free electrons here and there.

Staying for a few minutes on the street, at least a few people pass by you, heading in different directions, at different paces, with different energies. But if you remain longer, these differences begin to blur. All walking subjects become the same—left foot in front of right.

The movement appears relatively mechanical and, of course, seems rehearsed and without requiring thought. In the busier spaces, the large number of people erases, in a way, each person's uniqueness. If not merging with the crowd, the individual merges with the environment and is absorbed by the infrastructure. Once they turn the corner of a building, they just disappear. From aside, the city is like a labyrinth where things appear and disappear at every step. In many places you see movement not only horizontally, but also vertically. People climb stairs and ride escalators, especially in underpasses and metro stations, which look like ascending and descending in space. If you decide not to walk, or you don't have another choice, you have to use some kind of transportation vehicle. Riding is often inevitable, especially if you want to get from one end of Vienna to the other. When you get on the U-Bahn, bus, or tram, you enter a time capsule that, much faster than your walking pace, drives you forward in space and time. It is supposed to shorten distances and save time. If you look out the window, you can see how time seems to compress. Everything around you blurs before your eyes, changing rapidly from one object to the next (except when you are underground; then you don't see much). Many people decide otherwise and choose alternative means of transportation, often bicycles, scooters, or other curious vehicles.

Of course, this is only part of the picture. Much more randomness happens in between. Someone drops something, while another stops suddenly because they missed the bus. But we leave them for a different discussion.

The steps following the shooting sessions were developing, scanning, and organizing the photographs. I developed all the film rolls myself, which made the process quicker and gave me better control over the results.

After developing the negatives, I proceeded with scanning the film to create digital files for both editing and archival purposes. The scanning process also involved cleaning the negatives of more visible imperfections while leaving smaller ones as part of the aesthetic. I additionally adjusted the scanner settings to achieve a balance between resolution and contrast. The specific characteristics of the frames required some experimentation with different scanning methods. Since the standard 35 mm frame is divided into four smaller frames, this made scanning more challenging. I had two options: to scan each of the four frames individually or to scan the entire 35 mm frame and separate the images manually. I chose the second method, and then cropped and adjusted each image in Photoshop.

I exposed, developed, and scanned a total of fifteen rolls of film, each producing approximately thirty-six shots, with each shot divided into four single frames. This resulted in a collection of over 500 four-frame images (or over 2,000 single frames). I carefully

reviewed all the photographs and categorized them into three groups: images suitable for use; potentially usable images; and non-usable images (frames that were damaged, poorly framed, or had the wrong exposure) (Figure 15). After preselection, more than two-thirds of the material remained unused.

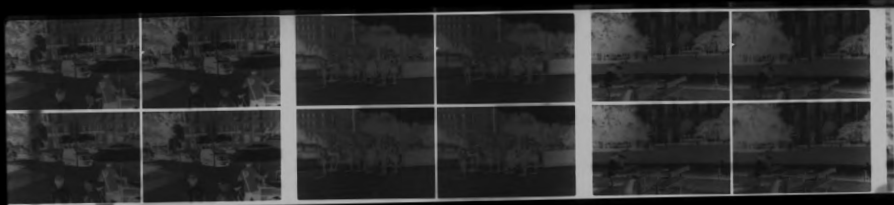


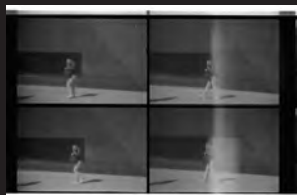




Figure 15







After collecting enough material, I began developing what I refer to as looping animated photographs. Influenced by my research and my reflections during the field trips, I decided to recreate the feeling of repetitive everyday movement by developing endlessly looping sequences of photographs. I separated the four frames into individual images and then arranged them thematically with other four-image sequences to create longer successions.

After revising the material, I began grouping the recorded movements according to their similarities into four categories. The most commonly observed situations included street walking and cycling, commuters in and around subway stations, people shopping, and various transportation dynamics. This selection process was challenging due to the abundance of content. I developed a structured system to organize all usable images. Some images did not capture motion effectively and were unusable. I kept certain damaged images and included them intentionally in the sequences as visual effects.

Editing of the Looping Videos

The editing focused on exploring the themes of rhythm and repetition. I experimented with various methods of digitally sequencing the images. I adjusted the speed, duration, and frame arrangement to generate different

rhythms and effects. This also aimed to highlight variations in the experience of time in urban settings.

These attempts engaged critically with the dynamics of motion and duration in visual storytelling. They demonstrated how small adjustments in timing and sequencing can transform the perceptual impact of the flow. Based on the way I grouped the material (Figure 17), I created six short animations (Figure 18). In addition, I made two other videos that combined and mixed visuals from different categories. The goal was to present both a clear flow, where individual images remain distinctly perceivable, and a more expressive approach that blends the material. Because the four single frames did not align perfectly due to the lens distortion, I manually adjusted the position of each frame to achieve smooth movement. Finally, I assembled the frames in video-editing software.

Printing

I selected some of the images used as a basis for the moving visuals and framed them in a dynamic way—moving the grid of four images in different directions—also to create movement in the still image. Then, I printed them in a small format (Figure 19), together with a large print (Figure 20) that displays a dynamic grid composed of three photographs.



Figure 17

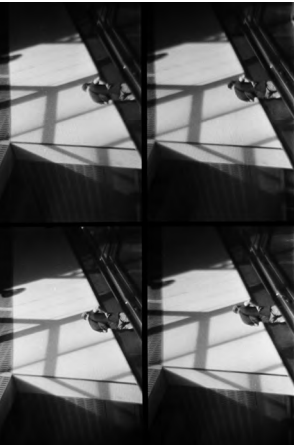




Figure 18





Figure 19





Figure 20



The final visual outcome of my photographic exploration resulted in an installation. My goal was to contrast the two central themes of the study: stillness and motion. The installation was planned to juxtapose static images with the looping videos to emphasize the distinctions between the two forms.

The central element of the exhibit is the large print, hung on the left side of a three-part yellow wooden frame. I constructed the frame myself, with some assistance, in the university wood workshop to create tall vertical presentation planes, which I see as reflecting the vertical structures of the city.

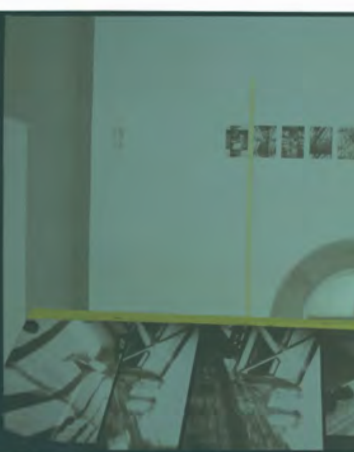
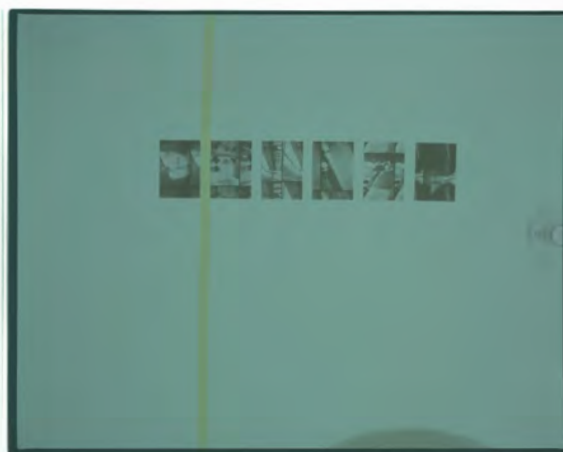
Both the middle and right panels are covered with translucent paper, which creates a soft, diffused background. In front of them, I display the moving images (the looping videos) on six small screens mounted on a separate wooden frame. The other two videos are presented on larger screens placed directly on the floor to enhance the spatial depth of the installation.

The printed still images are arranged on two adjacent walls as vertical sequences which form short narrative strips. I decided to include a yellow stripe across them, both to highlight the space and to add a sense of vertical and horizontal rhythm. The bright yellow

low color included in the installation references the typical street markings, which attempts to reinforce the urban context of the exhibition. The particular space I chose, with its circular windows, further strengthens the dialogue with the urban environment.

The installation additionally aims not only to encourage the viewers to explore the contrasts between motion and stillness in photography, but also to reflect on the repetitive nature of everyday life and how urban environments shape our perception of time and space.

To plan and prepare for the final presentation, I created a test setup (Figure 22), which allowed me to organize the space effectively. I documented this setup with an analog camera as well. In order to produce sharp and clear indoor images, I used Kodak Portra 400 film in a Pentax 67.





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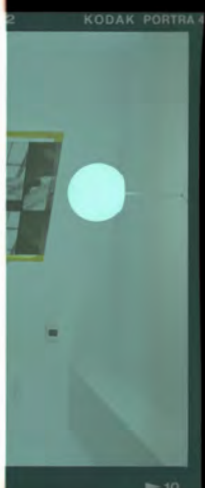




Figure 22







This project began as a curiosity about how still images can suggest and produce movement, or, simply put, be animated. To explore this interest, I began experimenting with different ways to animate images, which eventually led me to the use of analog photography for this purpose.

After narrowing down my direction, I ended up using a very specific tool for the production of my images, which introduced many difficulties and limitations. I jumped quite blindly into a long process of photographing, developing, scanning, animating, and documenting, which was followed by many unsuccessful attempts.

Although unique and engaging, my choice of camera carried many challenges, such as its limited capabilities, its reliance on natural light, and its inability to provide good alignment of the frames. Additionally, due to the lack of settings on the camera, many of the final images could not serve their purpose. They turned out poorly framed, under- or overexposed, or otherwise flawed. The main limitation was, in fact, the camera itself. Still, I believe this limitation gave the project a distinctive direction and outcome.

Additionally, since the field research and the possibilities were guided mainly by the camera—meaning that I could photograph only outdoors—I now see that

my conceptual direction became too strictly tied to open spaces. This reduced the possibility of exploring moments situated in indoor environments.

As for the focus of the photographic experiments, I chose a very universal aspect of ordinary life, discussing it mostly from my own perspective. Still, I acknowledge that the topic of the everyday has many layers and cannot be reduced to a simple conclusion. For this reason, my project reflects only a single aspect of the everyday, leaving open the possibility of approaching daily life from other perspectives and with other tools.

Overall, the research together with the experiments gave me many new ideas regarding image creation and manipulation. The results fully satisfied my initial curiosity and even went beyond it. I was also able to better understand and draw conclusions about aspects of my daily life, especially how movement, rhythm, and repetition structure ordinary experience. Although I worked on this project out of personal intention and interest, without necessarily seeking social relevance, I believe it turned out to be meaningful to anyone living in the city, and not only there. After all, in a normal day, we all do more or less the same things, but each of us does them alone.⁴⁴

44 See p. 29.

Finally, I believe and hope that my project opened a small window through which we can observe, from a distance, our lives, our everyday routines, and all the tiny movements that occupy our time day by day. The world has become so big, busy, and noisy that we rarely step out of its flow to simply see ourselves.

Through a photographic project, this thesis has demonstrated that still photography offers multiple ways of conveying and recreating motion. From techniques such as sequencing to stop-motion, the still image has shown its ability to engage with movement. Yet, there remains open space for other artistic approaches and reinterpretations.

Working with the Action Sampler camera and using sequencing methods based on rhythm and repetition has offered a renewed perspective on how motion can be perceived, fragmented, and reassembled through still photographs. The field research conducted in open urban spaces has not only provided extensive visual material for experimentation but also encouraged deeper reflection on the fundamental rhythms that shape urban life and everyday experience. It has revealed how even ordinary movements can hold conceptual, aesthetic, and narrative significance.

*

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Paper

Munken Lynx 170 g

Offset paper (IQ Premium) 350 g

Typefaces

Lora

Inter

Printing

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