This paper is part of a larger project, so I will only have time to highlight a few key notions that seem to me of importance for a refiguration of cinema studies in respect to new audio-visual products. I will start with the most fundamental claim of Deleuze's philosophy, which is the claim of immanence. Gilles Deleuze is a philosopher who places himself in an immanent tradition of thinking. Following Hume, Spinoza, Bergson and Nietzsche, Deleuze argues that everything there is is contained in this world, or in 'a life', as Deleuze states in one of his last texts "L'Immanence, une Vie." [1] Contrary to the transcendental tradition in philosophy (that runs from Plato, to Descartes and Kant), Deleuze thinks that there is nothing outside the life we have. He does recognize transcendental moments, but this transcendental field is always the product of immanence: an actualization of what is virtually already there.

In his cinema books, Deleuze proposes also an immanent conception of the image. [2] According to Deleuze an image has internal (immanent) qualities that have certain effects on us. Images are not representations of absent Ideas or original models. By the same token, according to Deleuze we are not in front (or above) images, but we are surrounded by images, we live in images and images live in us. Images can affect us and make us think. This immanent conception of the image seems to be very important in respect to new media.

To demonstrate this, I'll make five steps in my argument. I will first make a connection between classic animation and new images; Secondly, in order to show the connection between animation, new images and Deleuze's film philosophy, I will relate Eisenstein's work on Disney to Gilles Deleuze's film philosophy and to his concept of becoming. In his immanent conception of the image, Deleuze makes the distinction between the virtual and the actual which seems to be a very important one and which will be my third move. Fourthly, after these philosophical points, I will briefly raise some characteristics of the new image as conceived by Deleuze. I will end with Luc Besson's film The Fifth Element, which according to me is an example of such a 'new image' as 'anticipated' by Deleuze.

From Animation to Digital Images

As the title of this paper "From Mouse to Mouse" indicates there is a profound connection between traditional cel-animation and computer generated imagery (CGI). Lev Manovich has elaborated this point in several publications. [3] I'll just briefly indicate how purely on an esthetic level this can be noticed for instance in the parallels between Winsor McCray's 1914 animation Gertie the Dinosaur and Steven Spielbergs Jurassic Park. The flexibility and metamorphosis of many animation figures can be seen as morphing avant-la-lettre and fluid quality of the underwaterworlds in Disney's Little Mermaid can be compared to the encounter with 'sea Aliens' in James Cameron's The Abyss.

What cartoons and CGI have in common is that they are not limited to the confinements of photorealistic analogue images that have constituted film and media theory so far. This is also the reason why animation has generally been considered as a footnote in serious film theory; animation was something other than photographed film. However with the increasing technical possibilities of CGI, animated images become more and more photorealistic. This 'realistic' quality of animation, makes it necessary to reconsider the traditional cinematographic image and the status of the image as well.

Although Deleuze has never elaborated extensively on animation, he did consider this type of images as an integral part of cinema. At the beginning of Cinema 1: The Movement-Image Deleuze says about the cartoon film:

> if it belongs fully to the cinema, this is because the drawing no longer constitutes a pose or a completed figure, but the description of a figure which is always in the process of being formed or dissolving through the movement of lines and points taken at any-instant-whatevers of their course. [4]

Deleuze doesn't seem to be bothered by the 'unrealistic' or 'unfaithful' qualities of animation. It is the continuity of movement that makes that animation is part of cinema as a whole. Deleuze can make this claim because he does not see cinema as a 'spatial representation' but considers the cinematographic/audio-visual image as moving matter, changing through time (as Bergsonian duration and the coexistence of layers of time). Like Bergson, Deleuze is a philosopher of time.

Eisenstein's Fascination for Disney

The continuity of movement and change is also what fascinated Eisenstein about Disney cartoons. In Eisenstein on Disney Eisenstein called this the protoplasmaticness of the image, which he compared a.o. to the mysterious
Deleuze's perspective has not much to offer to narrative theory (according to Deleuze classic narration, for instance, is a conceiving narration. Narration is not something specific to cinema (there are stories everywhere) and in first instance a Deleuzian esthetics allows to think of new ways of virtually becoming indistinguishable. Again this cannot be elaborated here, but there are two consequences of the virtual and actual distinction. The virtual and the actual are important concepts for Deleuze. According to Deleuze virtual and actual are both real, but not everything that is virtually contained (immanent) in this world is or becomes actual. The difference between virtual and actual is an important philosophical claim that Deleuze makes which again needs much more elaboration than is possible to give here. To put it simply the virtual (dreams, memories, imaginations, pure qualities) is real insofar as it has an effect on us, the virtual insists on the actual.

Eisenstein's ideas on Disney are very close to Deleuze's philosophy. First of all Eisenstein considers animation as images in-themselves, images in their immanent quality, without reference to a model (beyond any image, without an image). "A line is a trace of movement and if it moves, its a life", Eisenstein says. Animation offers the senses a feeling of everything still being possible.

As for instance Keith Clancy and others have demonstrated, Eisenstein's plasmaticness is also very close to Deleuze's concept of becoming. Becoming is again related to the concept of time as duration and change: because of time, everything changes, everything is in constant flux (everything becomes).

In respect to animation, Eisenstein explores, for instance, how the human and the animal, the natural and the inanimated are connected to eachother: "man is an image--in the form of an animal," Eisenstein states. He relates this to the belief of an Indian tribe, the Bororo, who understand themselves as human beings and as a special kind of parrots: they are simultaneous both. Transferred to Disney, Eisenstein remarks: "Mickey plastically truly embodies the "ideals of the Bororo"--he is both human, and mouse!" Animation makes it impossible to decide who is immitating who: is man imitating mouse or mouse imitating man, who is the model, who is the copy; becoming goes both ways.

The undecidability of 'original' and 'model' or of 'dream' and 'reality' is precisely what happens in processes of becoming and what happens in modern images, which Deleuze calls time-images or crystal-images. In Cinema 2 Deleuze states that becoming (time; the undecidabilty between 'model' and 'copy') puts 'truth' in crisis. If we can no longer decide between the 'original' and the 'copy', 'true' and 'false', the whole western (transcendental) philosophy collapses. Animation was the first kind of moving image that demonstrated this. Deleuze has theorized the true/false or model/copy problem of the animated image for traditional cinema.

The Virtual and the Actual

In order to deal with this, Deleuze proposes to replace the true/false or real/unreal opposition by the actual/virtual distinction. The virtual and the actual are important concepts for Deleuze. According to Deleuze virtual and actual are both real, but not everything that is virtually contained (immanent) in this world is or becomes actual. The difference between virtual and actual is an important philosophical claim that Deleuze makes which again needs much more elaboration than is possible to give here. To put it simply the virtual (dreams, memories, imaginations, pure qualities) is real insofar as it has an effect on us, the virtual insists on the actual.

Ecstasy is a sensing and experiencing of the primal "omnipotence"--the element of "coming into being"--the "plasmaticness" of existence, from which anything can arise. And it is beyond any image, without an image, beyond tangibility--like a pure sensation. Eisenstein speaks of animation in terms of ecstasy, which he expresses as follows:

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In his cinema books, Deleuze demonstrates that in certain images (time-images or crystal-images) the actual and the virtual become indistinguishable. Again this cannot be elaborated here, but there are two consequences of the virtual and actual that are important to mention in the context of this brief paper.

The first consequence is related to the fact that the true and the false (real and unreal) can no longer be distinguished: in respect to cinema's new images we can no longer tell whether the dolphins in Titanic are real or created by the computer. And in a short while we can no longer distinguish between real characters and computer generated ones (it already happens with special effects of e.g. amputated arms etc.).

So therefore we have to look elsewhere to see who is "playing the image game," what the effects of the images are and for what reasons they have been created. In other words, we need to know what forces are in play. If we take it as a fact that all images are created, manipulated and 'simulacra', it is important to evaluate, as Deleuze calls this, "the powers of the false." This does not mean that there are no longer any values or that everything is fake. Deleuze is not as cynical as, for instance, Jean Baudrillard. It only means that there is no longer an Ideal (but abstract and absent) Model that gives us the criteria for a general judgement about what's real or unreal/good or bad.

According to Deleuze (who follows Nietzsche here), everything needs to be evaluated on its intrinsic qualities, actually and physically effecting/affecting us, virtually containing a multiplicity of forces. I think the idea of the power of the false, is an important one in evaluating all kind of new images.

A second consequence of the virtual/actual distinction is that a Deleuzian esthetics allows to think of new ways of conceiving narration. Narration is not something specific to cinema (there are stories everywhere) and in first instance a Deleuzian perspective has not much to offer to narrative theory (according to Deleuze classic narration, for instance, is a...
In his book *Towards a Post Modern Theory of Narration* however, Andrew Gibson talks about the significance of a Deleuze energetics. According to Gibson, narrative theory expresses in general to much nostalgia for a unitary space. But since we are ceasing to inhabit such a unitary space, it can no longer be that of our thought, says Gibson. He pleads for an aesthetics of force and proposes (a.o.) a Deleuzian energetics. This energetics is related to the principle of (virtual) multiplicities that form the actual narrative.

As Deleuze and Guattari state in *A Thousand Plateaus*, narratives are "permeated by unformed, unstable matters, by flows in all directions, by free intensities and by singularities" (Gibson 48). As such, narratives obtain the status of an event: no longer is narrative only a geometrical analyzable space, but also and maybe even more an ungraspable event in time that involves all senses. At the end of his book Gibson also refers more specifically to interactive narrative. Again the spatial (plot) structure is still there but every narrative line that is now actualized, is accompanied/shadowed by a field of virtual options. Or as Gibson puts it:

narrative or the experience of narrative -for with Interactive Fiction the two become inseparable--involve what the producers of IF call browsing in narrative environments, exploring different avenues leading in different directions, encountering frustrations and blocks to forward progress. Interactive Fiction makes the user chose from among a set of radiating possibilities as readers of a novel cannot. The shadow of the excluded possibility becomes part of the narrative itself. (275/276)

To summarize, I think that Deleuze's *immanent conception of images* allows for a continuation (not a break) between analogue and digital cinema; between old and new images. The distinction he makes between the *virtual and actual* can offer useful strategies for conceiving new images where borders are constantly crossed, where the power of the false forces us to think differently about the real/unreal and true/false opposition and where energetics and multiple forces turn narratives into events.

**Deleuze's predictions**

As for the esthetics and characteristics of new images I want to raise the suggestions about new images that Deleuze makes at the end of *The Time-Image*. He distinguishes four general characteristics of what Deleuze calls the *silicon-image*, and what maybe could become a *Cinema 3*:

1) The new images have no longer any outside (out-of-field), nor are they part of a larger whole; they are the object of a perpetual reorganization, in which a new image can arise from any point whatever of the preceding image. The organization of space loses its privileges directions in favour of an *omni-directional space*. We recognize here Gibsons remark about the loss of a unitary space that also changes the status of narrative.

2) The screen is no longer a window, or a painting, but constitutes a *table of information*, an opaque surface on which are inscribed ‘data’. Information replaces nature, the overloaded brain-city replaces the eye of nature. The reference to the *brain* (connected in multiple ways to the surrounding images) is another important aspect that Deleuze has to offer to more traditional film theory - Cf. From Eye to Brain; brain has to be seen as a ‘rhizome’).

3) *Sound* achieves autonomy, which increasingly lends it the status of image, the two images sound and visual, enter into complex relations with neither subordination nor commensurability. (Cf. the phenomenon of the imaginary sound-track).

4) All these aspects lead to what Deleuze calls new *spiritual automatisms*. With every new type of image, new psychological automata come into existence. For the electronic image Deleuze argues that actors are no longer psychologically motivated persons, but more like ‘puppets’, like mechanical automata that express pure speech acts.

Here we can again come back to animation and cartoon characters. It is often said that in modern (Bresson, Godard) and postmodern (Besson, Tarantino) cinema, characters act like cartoons. Considering characters as new spiritual automatons, that express speech acts, this becomes understandable (and no -longer- a negative quality).

Before concluding with an idea or two about *The Fifth Element*, the last point that I want to make is related to the second part of the title: ‘overcoming information’. Deleuze stresses the fact that it is esthetics and the creative force that will decide if cinema will overcome information (in the sense of ‘order-words’ or ‘precepts’). It's an internal 'battle' that first of all depends on esthetic force (will to art) that does not depend on technology (even though it uses it). As puts it:

It is necessary to go beyond all the pieces of spoken information; to extract from them a pure speech-act, creative story-telling which is as it were the obverse side of the dominant myths, of current words and their supporters; . . . It is also necessary to go beyond all the visual layers; to set up a pure informed person capable of emerging from the debris, of surviving the end of the world, hence capable of receiving into the body the pure act of speech. [11]

**The Fifth Element**

In Besson's latest film we recognize all the characteristics that Deleuze mentioned about the new image.
In Besson's latest film we recognize all the characteristics that Deleuze mentioned about the new image:
- omni-directorial space
- over-loaded brain-city/information-brain
- importance of sound track
- the spiritual automata/cartoon characters/animated figures that create speech-acts > cf. Susan Hayward referes to Besson as a bard/bardic function (The Fifth Element is to me a spiritual film); Besson collaborated with cartonists Moebius and Jean-Claude Moziores for the design of this film.

The Fifth Element expresses such a creative act that can overcome information. Besson's 'cartoon characters', his 'bardic function', his 'animated omni-directional brain city' are typical silicon-images that can be evaluated with some of the tools that Deleuze has offered in his cinema books. It also is an example how 'from mouse to mouse' we can overcome pure information.

Endnotes

7. Eisenstein on Disney, op.cit., p. 48. (back)
8. Ibid. p. 96. This passage is also quoted by Broadfoot and Rex in "The Illusion of Illusion," op.cit., p. 274. (back)
11. Ibid., p. 270. (back)