

## 2. THE SLOW PULSE OF THE ERA: CARL TH. DREYER'S FILM STYLE

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### INTRODUCTION

The very last shot of Carl Th. Dreyer's very last film, *Gertrud* (1964), devotes forty-five seconds to the contemplation of a panelled door behind which the eponymous heroine has retreated with a wave to her erstwhile lover. The camera creeps backwards to establish Dreyer's valedictory tableau on which it lingers, immobile, for almost thirty seconds: the door and a small wooden stool beside it. The composition is of such inert, grey geometry that, in its closing moments, this film resembles nothing so much as a Vilhelm Hammershøi painting, investing empty domestic space with the presences that have passed through its doors and hallways. If, in this shot, the cinematic image fleetingly achieves the condition of painting, it is the culmination of a directorial career predicated on the productive tension between movement and stillness, sound and silence, rhythm and slowness.

At the end of *Gertrud*, where the image itself slows into calm equilibrium, we witness the end point of an entropic career. As Dreyer's film style slowed, so, too, did his rate of production. The intervals between his last four major films – the productions that write Dreyer into slow cinema's prehistory – are measured in decades, not years: *Vampyr* (1932), *Vredens Dag* (*Day of Wrath*, 1943), *Ordet* (*The Word*, 1955), *Gertrud* (1964).<sup>1</sup> Studios were reluctant to engage a director who made such difficult films so inefficiently or, rather, made such slow films so slowly. The fallow periods between feature films, however, obliged Dreyer to undertake other kinds of work. In addition to journalism,

he took on commissions to make public information films sponsored by the Danish Government Film Committee (Ministeriernes Filmudvalg).<sup>2</sup> As a result, this period in Dreyer's career furnishes us not only with written accounts of the motivations and strategies underlying the style of his later films but also with a handful of short films in which he was able to experiment with key elements of his style.

This chapter centres on Dreyer's writings and short-film output of the 1940s in an attempt to pry his better-known works away from the ossified premises upon which they tend to be 'offhandedly' appropriated as a 'convenient point of reference' for slow cinema (Flanagan, 2012: 6). In what follows, a selective overview of extant critical approaches to Dreyer's style sketches out how posterity has canonised his *oeuvre* as one of singular slowness, and how these readings chime with more recent attempts to map slow cinema as a concept. The chapter then engages in more detail with Dreyer's own defence of what he prefers to call the 'rhythm' of his films. The chapter concludes with a reading of one of Dreyer's most popular films in its day, the public information short, *De naaede Færger* (*They Caught the Ferry*, 1948). This commission required Dreyer to put his grasp of cinematic rhythm to work in the service of depicting terrifying speed, compressed into the space of just eleven minutes. The shortness of Dreyer's short film about speeding invites a more nuanced perspective on the slowness of his slow cinema.

#### DREYER'S SLOWNESS

Solely on the basis of his reputation for the long take, Carl Th. Dreyer is assured a place in what is still a 'makeshift canon' of slow cinema (Flanagan, 2012: 6). At a modest forty-five seconds, the final shot of *Gertrud* is a mere half of the average shot length (ASL) of that film, and, indeed, shorter than the one-minute ASL of its predecessor, *Ordet* (Bordwell, 1981: 64). Bordwell argues that in *Ordet*, Dreyer's long take has a metafilmic function: 'to foreground the shot itself as a component of cinematic perception' (151). Though ASL can be rather a blunt tool (Flanagan, 2012: 10), it can be useful in quantitatively corroborating an instinctive impression that a given Dreyer film is 'slower' than the historically or culturally specific norms of editing against which it is measured. Beyond the long take, however, a number of recurring themes in older Dreyer scholarship are echoed by recent critical discussions on slow cinema. In what follows, selected classic and newer work on Dreyer is brought into conversation with commentary on slow cinema, organised around three of the broad traits which Flanagan (2012: 4, 100) sees as predicated on slow cinema's 'undramaticness': dedramatised narrative form; duration; and everydayness.

Slow cinema's innovations in narrative form are not confined to the length of takes and the speed of editing. For Flanagan (2012: 6, 99 ff.), narrative

in slow cinema is 'undramatic' or even absent. Tiago de Luca discusses the historical reception and politics of the 'dedramatization' of narrative, concluding that, in contemporary slow cinemas, 'the sequence shot tends to undermine dramatic momentum through a sustained focus on meticulously composed images evacuated of narrative information, which enhances, and aestheticizes, the materiality of the cinematic event' (de Luca, 2014: 21). In resisting conventions of narrative chronology, such films also disrupt causality, ultimately unsettling the very notion of the 'event'. A comparable disruption of the relations between narrative form and event in Dreyer's case is central to David Bordwell's seminal 1981 work, *The Films of Carl-Theodor Dreyer*. From *Vredens Dag* onwards, Bordwell identifies a shift from the temporal and spatial 'discontinuity' of *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc* (1928) and *Vampyr* towards a 'very slow continuity' (Bordwell, 1981: 143, emphasis in original) that extends the duration of events and the intervals between them (140–3). A decade later, in *Ordet*, the cumulative effect of *mise en scène*, actor movements, and the long take would etiolate the distinction between narrative and non-narrative elements (150–64). Movement thus becomes as important as event; this chimes with Dreyer's defence of the rhythms of his films, as we shall discover. Bordwell sees in *Gertrud* the intensification and culmination of this elevation of form over dramatic content: '[n]arrative events – dialogue, gesture, character confrontations – become swallowed up in cinematic structures, like pennies tossed into a canyon' (176).

That canyon is time, be it the classical unity of *Ordet* or *Gertrud*'s quiet endurance of lived time. An interest in duration is another point of convergence of Dreyer and slow cinema, where duration is one means to 'fill the void' left by an etiolation of drama (Flanagan, 2012: 100). Dreyer does explore duration through contemplative, static, long takes, as in *Gertrud*'s final shot. But a more distinctively Dreyerian strategy is to articulate duration by effacing space: panning slowly over a group of faces or around a room, for example, or substituting slow, gliding pans for the more conventional shot–reverse shot. One prominent reading of the complexity of space–time and duration in Dreyer comes from Gilles Deleuze. Dreyer's presence in Deleuze's work spans both *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*; Deleuze's discussion of Dreyer seeds the time–image in the first volume, and vice versa. Of the oft-remarked lack of depth and perspective in Dreyer's compositions, Deleuze comments that his medium and full shots function analogously to close-ups by subsuming space in time:

By suppressing 'atmospheric' perspective Dreyer produces the triumph of a properly temporal or even spiritual perspective. Flattening the third dimension, he puts two-dimensional space into immediate relation with the affect, with a fourth and fifth dimension, Time and Spirit. (Deleuze, 1986: 107)

Dreyer thus anticipates the post-war regime of the time–image. A recurring and rich temporal trope in this respect is the moment of death as durational. The moment of death is torturously extended through cross-cutting in *Joan of Arc*; a slow-dawning revelation as in *Mikael* (1924); a reversible transition between stillness and movement as in *Ordet*; inevitable, imminent but indefinitely suspended for Anne at the end of *Vredens Dag*; or anticipated by Gertrud, quietly thinking of her headstone, behind her closed door.

While Deleuze’s primary fascination is time, his insistence on ‘Spirit’ echoes a persistent strand of Dreyer criticism: the metaphysical dimension of his films. If contemporary slow films by directors, such as Tsai Ming-liang, Apichatpong Weerasethakul or Lisandro Alonso,<sup>3</sup> fill the narrative void with everyday practices such as eating, sleeping, washing, or even masturbating, such images would be anathema to critics and fans swooning over the spiritual endeavours of Dreyer’s Joan of Arc or Johannes Borgen. Critics’ emphasis on the transcendent has often played down Dreyer’s attentiveness to the fleshliness of his filmic bodies, though Deleuze is not guilty here: his concept of the ‘affection–image’ is grounded in Dreyer’s treatment of faces in *Jeanne d’Arc* (Deleuze, 1986: 106–8). An influential voice regarding Dreyer’s ‘transcendental style’ is Paul Schrader who sees *Ordet* as Dreyer’s most thoroughgoing example of the transcendental film-making more consistently practised by Bresson and Ozu (Schrader, 1988: 10, 132). Transcendental style shows a tendency towards stasis, reducing film narrative to repeatable ritual devoid of human ‘culture or personality’ (11). For Schrader, however, Dreyer always fails to achieve stasis, ultimately asserting the social and material reality of the body and the cultural context (134–6). For example, when Inger is raised from the dead at the end of *Ordet*, the viewer expects the transcendent but, instead, is presented with the immanent (137). Or, as de Luca writes, Dreyer ‘foreground[s] the flesh as the vehicle for a spiritual dimension’ (2014: 46). As we shall see later, bodies are crucial in the construction of Dreyer’s filmic rhythm: walking and talking are quotidian acts, regarded by critics in Dreyer’s day as banal and tedious.

Another dimension of everydayness in Dreyer’s films is set design. His holistic approach to psychological realism is well documented: sets were furnished with authentic fittings sourced from the appropriate locus. He would remove the non-essential, leaving the actors to inhabit a space invested with the essence of an authentic environment. Mark Sandberg has studied Dreyer’s occasional use of the found set, seeing this as the logical culmination of a consistent approach to set design which is more about ‘mise-en-milieu [*sic*]’ than *mise en scène*:

The best way to characterise Dreyer’s use of the film set is to call it an ongoing ontological experiment, the goal of which was to explore the question of performative attachment: under what conditions might an

actor be said to truly inhabit a space? What qualities of location, prop, and set design lead to that result? (Sandberg, 2006: 24)

Such attention to set design seems paradoxical in the light of Dreyer's flattening of three-dimensional space. The film set is for inhabitation by the actors, however, not apprehension by the audience. This strategy results in two affinities between Dreyer's filmic milieux and the everydayness with which slow cinema fills its dramatic voids. First, while Dreyer's long takes may not have the primary goal of lingering in a quasi-documentary fashion on realistic environmental details, what they capture is the actor subsisting in authentically lived, quotidian space. Second, the careful sourcing of authentic artefacts for Dreyer's sets implies a charged relationship between actors and the objects around them. Occasionally, artefacts transcend their status as props through tactile appropriation by actors. For example, the candlesticks, carried back and forth to the windowsill by Inger and Johannes in *Ordet*, are everyday objects essential to the creation of an empty moment – albeit one laden with religious symbolism – where nothing happens except slow transportation of candles across a room. Carney (1989: 235–8) connects the cinematography here to Inger's maternal, corporeal grace as she moves the candlesticks, makes coffee, provides solace. Granted, this is not the sense of banal everydayness produced in slow cinema by, say, excessive focus on bodily functions, or close examination of household paraphernalia. Nevertheless, Dreyer's commitment to authenticity in his *mise en milieu* invests his work with the 'materialist impetus' which de Luca (2014: 12) sees as fundamental to slow cinema's renegotiation of realism.

There are dangers inherent in identifying affinities between Dreyer and contemporary slow cinema. One is the attribution of direct influence where none may exist, though this concern is pre-empted by Carlos Reygadas's flagrant claim of filiation in the form of his reappropriation of *Ordet*'s miracle in *Stellet Licht* (*Silent Light*, 2007). Another danger is the post hoc assimilation of the strangeness of the older films judged by modern standards of the radical. Conversely, we can lose sight of the innovativeness of new works by trying to pin down their canonical inspirations. Bordwell makes the important point that Dreyer's late films seem less radical in their slowness to post-1960s audiences. *Vredens Dag*, for example, though 'readily watchable' today, was widely regarded in the 1940s as 'intolerable' in its slowness (Bordwell, 1981: 140); *Ordet*'s long takes were 'extraordinary stylistic devices' even in the 1950s (151). If the trajectory of Dreyer's artistic development is narrated here by Bordwell as entropic, his inscription into the historiography of the art film is teleological: Dreyer's late films are constructed as ahead of their time, 'presag[ing] the tempo of the 1960s "art film"' (140). Conversely, in 1943, *Vredens Dag* was slated as a relic of the cinematographic past, prompting Dreyer to pen a defence of his style, to which we now turn.

## DREYER'S RHYTHM

Contemporary Danish critics concurred that *Vredens Dag* was an unsuccessful gamble. Dreyer had not made a feature since *Vampyr* in 1932, and this new film did not, as anticipated, reinvigorate Danish cinema. One reviewer described the film as lifeless, monotonous and exhausting, the actors smothered by the tendency to dedramatise even the violent events (Kragh-Jacobsen, 1943). For another, Dreyer's genius patently belonged to an earlier era; the film's clumsy, unrealistic dialogue and slow rhythms would lead future generations to date the film to the transition period between silent and sound film (Gtz, 1943). Unwittingly, Gtz's account of the film's rhythmic anachronisms dissects how Dreyer's style foreshadows that of today's slow cinema generation: 'But the film mostly consists of long pauses, panning over details, background noise and the ticking of clocks. Close-ups of corn and tree-tops, doors opening and closing, and everyone constantly wishing each other goodnight' (Gtz, 1943).

Within a fortnight of the premiere, Dreyer had prepared a response to the critique that his film was not of its time. He delivered a speech at the Copenhagen Students' Union on 1 December and the text was printed in the newspaper, *Politiken*, the next day with the title 'Lidt om Filmstil' ('A Little on Film Style'). This substantial piece was later published in the anthology of Dreyer's writings on film, *Om Filmen*, and it constitutes one of the most comprehensive accounts of Dreyer's cinematic strategies in his own words.<sup>4</sup> The essay justifies, to borrow slow cinema terminology, the film's undramaticness and everydayness in terms of psychological realism: 'And isn't it true that the great dramas play out quietly? People hide their feelings and avoid showing on their faces the storms raging inside them' (Dreyer, 1959: 65).

A crucial passage in 'A Little on Film Style' explicitly tackles the issue of slowness, responding to criticism that the 'rhythm' of *Vredens Dag* was 'too heavy, too slow'. Fast rhythm can work well if justified by the action, concedes Dreyer. But rhythm for rhythm's sake often conceals an emptiness, a throwback to the silent era, when actors and images 'flew' across the screen (64). He thus conceives of rhythm as obtaining both within and between shots but expands the notion to bodies on screen. Dreyer explains that the popular (as opposed to critical) success of Swedish films of the 1920s was partly due to their 'natural, living rhythm', with human bodies moving as in real life. He insists on an interdependence (*samspil*) between story, atmosphere and rhythm in a film, and observes that this interplay affects the viewer's state of mind (*sindsstemning*) and thus his/her ability to absorb the film (Dreyer, 1959: 64). He discusses how soft, rhythmic, horizontally flowing camera movements are apprehended (*opfanget*) by the eye while vertical forms break this spell, creating drama (63). Applying this principle of complex rhythmic interplay to *Vredens Dag*, he writes:

It is the plot and the milieu in *Vredens Dag* that determines its broad, peaceful rhythm, but this serves two other goals as well: on the one hand, it expresses the slow pulse of the era – and on the other it emphasises and supports that monumentality which the playwright achieved in his text, and which I have tried to transfer to the film. (Dreyer, 1959: 65)

This passage is the site of a little curiosum of Dreyer scholarship. Justifying his ponderous rhythm, Dreyer uses the suggestive metaphor ‘at udtrykke epokens langsomme pulsslag’, which translates literally as ‘to express the slow pulse of the era’. In the published English translation, the phrase is rendered thus: ‘to underline the slow pulse of the ear’ (Dreyer, 1973: 134). This is no mistranslation; the Danish word ‘*epoke*’ (epoch or era) can hardly be mistaken for ‘*øre*’ (ear). This is a printer’s productive solecism, the typographical equivalent of a Freudian slip. The misplacement of the ‘r’ transforms Dreyer’s expressed concern with capturing the seventeenth-century workaday rhythms into an ambition to mimic the rhythm of blood pumping through the human body. At first glance, though, the misprint ‘the slow pulse of the ear’ seems credible because it sustains the notion of corporeality in the wake of the discussion of bodily movement in Swedish films. It chimes, too, with his calibration of filmic rhythm with plot and with the viewing eye, and the co-creation of rhythm among these elements.

‘The slow pulse of the ear’ also highlights another aspect of Dreyer’s theory of rhythm: how sound affects rhythm in the ‘talkies’. In *Vredens Dag* he was inspired by recent unspecified American and French ‘psychological’ films which developed a new filmic rhythm appropriate to the sound film, rediscovering the importance of facial expression and gesture (66). Such films have ‘a calmness (ro) in the rhythm, which enables the viewer to rest (*hvile*) in the images and listen to the words’ (Dreyer, 1959: 63).

‘A Little on Film Style’, then, consistently resorts to the notion of ‘rhythm’ as the end to which all aspects of style are the means. But rhythm is itself the means to another end: conjuring a historical environment. Authentic rhythm need not be slow, only justified.

#### DREYER'S SHORTS

The twelve years between *Vredens Dag* and *Ordet* must not be understood as a hiatus in Dreyer’s ‘real’ career. In fact, his work on commissioned informational shorts was arguably a condition of possibility of both these feature films. Dreyer’s first short film project, *Mødrehjælpen* (*Good Mothers*, 1943) was conceived by his admirers in the Danish Government Film Committee as an informal test of Dreyer’s ability to stick to a budget and schedule. The accounts from *Mødrehjælpen* were made available to Palladium Film by the head of the

committee to persuade the company to produce what would become *Vredens Dag* (Kimergård, 1992: 16, 49).

Neither can Dreyer's shorts and features be disentangled stylistically. Granted, it is disingenuous to describe his shorts as masterpieces; several have a gentle air of tedium about them ('en let pust af kedsomhed over sig'), as Lars Bo Kimergård puts it (1992: 49). Nevertheless, there are moments in Dreyer's short films where the kernel of a later iconic image, camera movement or editing technique seems to crystallise, re-emerging in one of his late features. This chimes with the committee's policy: directors were given artistic control and free hands to interpret their brief, ensuring that the resulting films were of high quality. This was particularly important in the case of films about Danish culture for overseas distribution, and crucial for any project allocated to Dreyer whose fame would ensure interest at film festivals abroad (Kimergård, 1992: 49). So we see, for example, anticipated in *Good Mothers* the motif of shadows of swaying leaves used in *Vredens Dag*; or *Ordet's* cinematography informed by the slow arc-and-pan camera movement, and lighting used to illuminate sculptures in *Thorvaldsen* (1949) (Bordwell, 1981: 156). Counter-intuitively, the long take is not impossible in the short film: the thirteen-minute *Den danske Landsbykirke* (*The Danish Village Church*, 1947) contains two shots of around thirty seconds each.

#### DREYER'S SPEED

By any measure, *De naaede Færgen* was the most successful and popular of Dreyer's shorts and, indeed, ranks among the most enduringly successful of the short film productions overseen by Danish state agencies in the post-war period. Commissioned by the Government Film Committee for a road safety campaign, the film was an adaptation of a 1925 novella by Johannes V. Jensen (1873–1950), a Dane awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1944. Jensen was a chronicler of modernity, a motorbiking enthusiast who wrote equally compellingly of the pleasures of technology and of humankind's earliest history. Jensen's tachomania was referred to in his Nobel citation: 'The faster the pace, the greater his enchantment' (Hallström, 1944). The adaptation of Jensen's text hardly seems the ideal brief for the master of slow cinema. And yet Dreyer fulfilled the remit to widespread approval: during the short film's theatrical run, along with *The Bandit of Sherwood Forest* (dir. Harry Levin and George Sherman, 1946), it was seen by 270,000 cinemagoers in Denmark, and schools and clubs continued to hire 16 mm copies with alacrity for more than a decade.<sup>5</sup> A still also featured on a commemorative stamp in 1989.

*De naaede Færgen* depicts the motorcycle ride of a young couple, Sophus and Elvira, across a Danish island. We meet them as they arrive on a ferry; for unspecified reasons, they must catch the next sailing from the far side

of the island. The time available to cover the ground is unfeasibly short, as revealed in an opening conversation with a ferryman: forty-five minutes to cover 70 kilometres (44 miles). An agonising ninety seconds pass between this exchange and the moment when their motorbike leaves the ferry: a series of cross cuts between the agitated couple, the approaching harbour entrance, and the gangway slowly being lowered construct a standing start that intensifies the impact of the frenzied ride that follows.

For seven-and-a-half minutes, the film alternates between shots of the bikers' perspective on the road or the vehicles they pass, often at a canted angle; mid shots and close-ups on the bikers responding to their escapades and to the speedometer; long shots of the bike passing across the landscape; and an aerial perspective on the bike's front and back wheels, showing the changing road surfaces as they progress across the terrain.<sup>6</sup> The shot list specifies 117 shots altogether in eleven minutes, more than the 114 racked up in *Ordet*'s two hours (Bordwell, 1981: 146). In the terms of 'A Little on Film Style', images and bodies are flying across the screen. In Deleuzian terms, the scenario is almost a literal manifestation of the spatio-temporal relations we would expect from classical cinema or the movement-image regime, in which 'perception is organised in obstacles and distances to be crossed, while action invents the means to cross and surmount them' (Deleuze, 1989: 40). Cumulatively, however, this middle section is much more concerned with constructing a sensory experience of space-time than it is with cause-effect relations or spatio-temporal continuity. It is a 'purely optical and sound situation' (Deleuze, 1989: 3): the bikers observe and inhabit the road and landscape, are windswept, sway subject to



Figure 2.1 Close-ups of the bike's speedometer match the engine's pulse in *De naaede Færgen* (*They Caught the Ferry*, 1948).

G force. This is a film almost entirely devoid of dialogue: the only exchanges are between Sophus and the sceptical ferryman and, later, a petrol station attendant. Thus, the auditory environment is dominated by the engine noise, its pitch changing with variations in speed. The shot list specifies four times (shots 23, 31, 44 and 84) that the ‘rhythm’ of the engine’s ‘explosions’ must match the speedometer. The journey’s space–time is parcelled out in the milliseconds of the engine’s thrum. Shots, bodies, camerawork, engine noise, all work together in a purposeful interplay that leaves the contemporary ‘rhythm for rhythm’s sake’ that Dreyer so disdained in the dust.

Dreyer’s research materials for *De naaede Færge* included a 1944 newsletter published by the Danish motorcycle manufacturer Nimbus whose motorbike (along with the company’s test driver and his wife) appear in the film. The newsletter reprints a 1917 essay by Johannes V. Jensen on the pleasures and perils of motorbiking in which he compellingly recounts the novelty of experiencing space at speed:

Yes, we see in a different way, to a different tempo, flashes of things close-by, the trees lining the road, the ditches, vehicles, impressions which immediately imprint themselves in the memory just as clearly as everything else we see, perhaps even sharper. What is new is how the more distant views and horizon are visible; the foreground rushes past, but the background, the land itself, begins to live in a peculiar way, moves in rhythmic lengths, one horizon opens out onto another, the relief of the landscape unfolds, not in fixed planes, but in movement [. . .] we experience the land more as a whole, how it is sculpted. (Jensen, 1944: 10)

Jensen goes on to say that contours unnoticed by the walker are visible when compressed into the shorter time taken by the motorbike to cover the same ground. Thus, Jensen makes something else apparent in Dreyer’s film: neither contemplation of the material environment nor apprehension of duration are predicated on slowness. The pulse of this era – the 1940s – is not the slow ticking of seventeenth-century clocks which bored the reviewers of *Vredens Dag*. Modernity has its own pulse – the engine’s hum, the undulations of the landscape seen at twentieth-century speed – and the pulse of the ear is the fast-beating heart of the exhilarated (or terrified) rider. Dreyer adjusts his filmic rhythms to the rhythm of the combustion engine and its effect on vision: shot 24, for example, specifies that the roadside trees are filmed as the motorcyclists see them, as ‘flickering lines’.

As the title suggests, the couple catches a ferry in the end – but it is Charon’s barge across the River Styx. As in *Ordet*, the film performs an act of ontological gymnastics at its conclusion: a mythological or religious force erupts through the veil of reality, here in the form of a demonic driver who forces the couple

off the road. The final double exposure layers a departing ferry over a misty Charon punting downstream with two coffins, to the sound of bells tolling.

#### CONCLUSION

With this abrupt deceleration into an achronic afterlife, there remains a temporal paradox. If Dreyer's vindication of *Vredens Dag's* slowness rests on the desire to enact 'the slow pulse of the era', this can also justify the rhythmic calibration with modernity's velocity in *De naaede Færgen*. It is less obviously helpful, however, in respect of the increasingly radical slowness of *Ordet* and *Gertrud*, both of which evoke twentieth-century milieux with the historical exactitude to which Dreyer was devoted. The knowingly technophile tempo of *De naaede Færgen* reveals Dreyer's defiance of the rhythms of modernity in *Ordet* and *Gertrud* to be deliberate. In his valedictory long take on Gertrud's closed door, Dreyer obliges us to take the time we need to grasp the impulse that unites him with today's directors of 'slow': to render palpable, in stillness, the human pulse of time.

#### NOTES

1. This list does not include Dreyer's Swedish feature, *Två Människor* (*Two People*, 1945), 'repudiated' by Dreyer and usually quietly excised from his *oeuvre* (Carney, 1989: 4n1).
2. For a more detailed account of Dreyer's state-commissioned film-making, see Thomson (forthcoming) and Kimergård, 1992. All Dreyer's shorts can be viewed at <http://english.carlthdreyer.dk/Films/Kortfilm.aspx>
3. See, respectively, chapters by Lim, Davis and de Luca in this volume.
4. An English translation is printed in Skoller's anthology (Dreyer, 1973). All English translations in this chapter are my own, however.
5. My calculations based on annual reports in the archive of the distribution agency, Statens Filmcentral (held by the Danish Film Institute), indicate that *De naaede Færgen* was hired 3,077 times between 1950 and 1963, each hire accounting for an unknown number of screenings in schools, clubs etc. to audiences of unrecorded size. This places the film consistently in the top ten most hired films annually in the same period.
6. The shot list is available at <http://english.carlthdreyer.dk/Films/De-naaede-faergen.aspx>

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