BROODTHAERS, BENTHAM, AND PYGMALION

FIGURES OF WAX (1974)

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STILLNESS

Many if not all of the films by Marcel Broodthaers in one way or another deal with still images: paintings, photographs, postcards, magazine illustrations, maps, inscriptions, magic lantern slides, et cetera. In so doing, his films relate closely to the art forms, imagery, and materials he was working with as a visual artist. But his filmic explorations of still images also resonate with the ubiquitous images of stasis we find in contemporaneous experimental films as well as in the modernist art house cinema of the 1960s and 1970s. Like the film experiments by Andy Warhol, Yoko Ono, Michael Snow, and Hollis Frampton or the feature films by Robert Bresson, Michelangelo Antonioni, and Alain Resnais among many others, Broodthaers's cinema seems to be marked by a resistance to speed, ignoring movement and dynamics—phenomena that often had been presented as essential characteristics of the cinematic medium.[1]

Furthermore, despite his somewhat idiosyncratic use of the film medium, Broodthaers's interest in cinematic stasis also invokes various thematic issues of contemporaneous avant-garde and modernist cinema, such as a fascination with the motif of the statue coming to life (or its opposite, the petrification of a living being). Focusing on his 1974 film *Figures of Wax*, this chapter discusses Broodthaers's take on the film medium's capacities in dealing with the interaction between stillness and motion, the dead and the living, and processes of animation and mortification. In so doing, this chapter also attempts to throw a new light on Broodthaers's reliance on Surrealism—a staple in Broodthaers criticism and scholarship—through an analysis of his cinematic exploration of the tropes of the wax figure and the mannequin doll.

Stasis definitely marks *Figures of Wax*, a film made in London in 1974.[2] Shot in 16mm in color with a soundtrack featuring piano music and a voice-over commentary, the film (Broodthaers's longest) has a somewhat "professional" look that differs clearly from several of the more deskilled films he made earlier.[3] The film features the wax statue of British utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham

(1748–1832), put on display in a cabinet in a corridor of University College London.[4] To be precise, the wooden showcase does not contain a wax statue in the strict sense but holds the actual stuffed and preserved body of Bentham to which a wax head showing his features was added. With some amazement, Broodthaers observed that "the skeleton serves as the *ossature* (Ha! Ha!), to construct a wax figure."[5] In addition, the cabinet contains Bentham's mummified head, which was cooked in an oven according to Bentham's own instructions, based on an interpretation of Maori practices. When the result was disappointing, the "statue" was completed with a wax head by French anatomical sculptor Jacques Talrich, who based his portrait on various paintings and sculptures of the philosopher.[6] Broodthaers's first interest in Bentham and the idea for the film were triggered by his fascination with his mummy rather than with his philosophical theories. However, by the time he requested permission of the UCL to make the film, he was already familiar enough with Bentham's ideas, suggesting an approach that would be completely in line with "Jeremy Bentham's eccentric genius."[7] Furthermore, turned into an exhibit in a display case, Bentham must have attracted the attention of the director of the *Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles*, who had expressed his interest in exhibition infrastructure such as packing crates, vitrines, labels, and signage in many of his works of the early 1970s.

***Figures of Wax*. 16mm. 1974. Courtesy of the Walker Art Center's Ruben/Bentson Moving Image Collection. © Estate of Marcel Broodthaers, c/o SABAM Belgium 2024**

Bentham's taxidermized corpse particularly features in the middle and main section of the film. A series of medium shots, close-ups, and extreme close-ups show us details of the body and attire of the philosopher. Only at the end of the film does Broodthaers provide us with a master shot, offering a view of the quite banal and generic university corridor in which the cabinet is situated. On an adjacent wall, we can see the 1829 Bentham portrait painted by Henry William Pickersgill. In the very last shot of the film, Broodthaers's camera scans the details of this painted portrait, by means of a vertical panning shot starting at the philosopher's face, moving downward and ending at the painting's label attached to the lower part of the gilded frame, marking the end of the film. Broodthaers's exploration of the pictorial surface of the portrait is reminiscent of some of his earlier films that focus on paintings, such as *La Clef de l'horloge: Poème cinématographique en l'honneur de Kurt Schwitters* (1957–58), *Analayse d'une peinture* (1973), and *Voyage on the North Sea* (1973–74), fragmenting the original image by means of a close-up, scanning the texture of the paint, and drawing our attention to material and institutional components such as the frame and the label of the painting.

WAX FIGURES

In *Figures of Wax*, the Pickersgill painting's flatness, emphasized by the close position of the camera and the reflection of light on the texture of the paint, is also juxtaposed to the "real" and bodily presence of the painter's sitter. *Figures of Wax* unmistakably plays on the uncanny associations of Bentham's preserved body, which are already announced in the old-fashioned Gothic font of the opening credits. The wax figure is, of course, a staple in Gothic fiction—its origins closely connected to the terror of the French revolution, which also marked the life and works of Madame Tussaud, who was imprisoned for three months and awaited execution.[8] She allegedly made death masks of famous victims of the revolution before she traveled with her collection to Britain and eventually founded her famous museum in Baker Street, London, in 1835, shortly after Bentham's death. One of the main attractions of her museum was a Chamber of Horrors, combining victims of the revolution and newly created figures of murderers and other criminals whose wax faces were often "taken from life," in the sense that they were cast from death masks taken by Tussaud herself. Broodthaers's film on Bentham was probably inspired by his fascination of such wax museums. In 1961, he referred explicitly to Madame Tussaud in his poetic travel report to London published in *Les Beaux-Arts*, linking her museum to the era of the French revolution and Napoleon.[9] First and foremost, however, his fascination with such wax figure cabinets tallies perfectly with his general interest in nineteenth-century strategies of visual display such as magic lanterns, world exhibitions, zoos, winter gardens, and museums. Throughout

the nineteenth century, houses of wax, also known in French as *cabinets des figures* developed into a popular form of visual entertainment. The 1880s and 1890s saw a real boom of these museums after the opening of the Musée Grévin in Paris.[10]

Highly popular until far into the twentieth century, wax figure cabinets also provided the theme of an entire subgenre of horror films, starting with Maurice Tourneur's *Figures de Cire* (1914) and Paul Leni's *Wachsfigurenkabinett* (1924) and an unstoppable series of Hollywood adaptations, including *Mystery of the Wax Museum* (Michael Curtiz, 1933) and the 3D spectacle *House of Wax* (André De Toth, 1953), each of them emphasizing the uncanny and morbid associations of the wax figures.[11] The uncanny effect of wax figures is not only the result of their inherent connections to death, it is also related to the fragility of wax—the deterioration or destruction of the wax figures is a recurrent motif in these films that often dwell on the imagery of melting wax figures. In 1971, British artist Peter Dockley made a short film entitled *Cast* that consists entirely of human wax figures slowly melting.

Furthermore, the uncanny effect of wax statues is inherently linked to the hyperrealist characteristics ascribed to these statues, an element that certainly fascinated many Surrealist writers and artists. In Belgian Surrealist circles of the late 1920s, the journal *Variétés*, for instance, included some photographs of the Musée Spitzner, an anatomic museum created in the middle of the nineteenth-century that presented wax casts of human bodies as well as monstrosities.[12] In the twentieth century it developed into a cabinet of medical curiosities at fairgrounds, such as the annual Foire du midi (Fair of the Midi, close to the South station) in Brussels. In *Variétés*, the photographs of the Spitzner cabinet were juxtaposed to paintings by Antoine Wiertz depicting acts of suicide and bodies opening tombs and coffins, emphasizing their morbid associations. In the 1930s and 1940s, Paul Delvaux, whom Broodthaers photographed in his studio while touching a skeleton, made several works referring to the Musée Spitzner, and we can only wonder if the young Broodthaers might have seen it.[13]

STATUES, SURREALISM, AND CINEMA

Like for Broodthaers, the Surrealist fascination with wax figures is part of a larger interest in humanoid objects such as puppets, dolls, ventriloquist dummies, classical statues, and mannequins that Broodthaers expressed in various media such as the (posthumously published) book *Statues de Bruxelles* (which he made in collaboration with photographer Julien Coulommier) as well as the two-minute film *Monsieur Teste* (1974/75), which features a suited mechanical doll (or ventriloquist dummy) named after the protagonist of Paul Valéry's 1894 novel about a man who experiences nothing special, does virtually nothing,

and is not very talkative.[14] The film, initially titled *Mouvement*, hypostasizes the confrontation between the lifeless puppet and the dynamic medium of film, alternating static shots in which the figure turns its head from left to right with panning shots of the immobilized head. When a succeeding long shot reveals the entire figure sitting in a chair in front of a curtain and reading the French weekly magazine *L'Express*, the movement of the camera from side to side echoes the motion of the figure's head as he peruses the journal.

Broodthaers's uncanny figures of the wax statue and the dummy are reminiscent of the Surrealist fascination for the mannequin—an object that plays an important role in another section of *Figures of Wax* and that will be discussed in a following paragraph. A type of utilitarian sculpture, the mannequin is a conventional artists' prop, a dressmakers' dummy, and a familiar figure of fashion display. It became a Surrealist icon through its emphatic presence at the 1938 *Exposition internationale du Surréalisme* but, at that time, it was already associated with Giorgio de Chirico's paintings and Eugène Atget's photographs, two touchstones of an earlier Surrealist sensibility. Due to their functional resemblance to living bodies, mannequins possess an uncanniness that is, in the words of Susan Felleman, "overdetermined, deriving from their displacement from dressmaker's shop, window display, or studio prop into Surrealist tableaux, often erotic, strange, and magical."[15]

Troubling the boundary between the animate and inanimate, the mannequin also tallies with the Surrealist's fascination for Pygmalion, the mythic Cypriot sculptor who was able to bestow life upon his statue of a perfect female, turning cold ivory into warm flesh.[16] The Pygmalion motif (the dream of the statue coming to life) as well as its opposite such as fantasies in which living beings are turned into stone as in the myths of Medusa, Niobe, Aglauros, Echo, and Atlas, particularly fascinated filmmakers as the film medium itself is based on the animation of the still image. Not coincidentally, film pioneers such as Georges Méliès (often applauded by the Surrealists) cherished the motif of the statue coming to life, as if making explicit the differences between the static art of sculpture and the new dynamic art of film.[17] With *Pygmalion et Galathée* (1898), Méliès also authored one of the first film adaptations of the Pygmalion myth, and one of his films contains a wax mannequin. In *Le Diable géant ou le Miracle de la Madonne* (1901), for instance, a wax Madonna statue comes to life to banish a hyperactive devil.

The Pygmalionist effects of cinema were particularly taken up by Surrealist and Post-Surrealist filmmakers, interested in exploring the boundary between the animate and the inanimate themed with echoes of ancient mythology and classical sculpture: *L'Âge d'or* (Luis Buñuel, 1930), *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* (Maya Deren, 1945), *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (Maya Deren, 1946), *The Potted Psalm* (Sidney Peterson and James Broughton, 1946), *Dreams That Money Can Buy* (Hans Richter, 1947), *Four in the Afternoon* (James Broughton, 1951), and *The Pleasure Garden* (James Broughton, 1953) all contain

key scenes involving statues coming to life or scenes in which the hermetic immobility of statues is emphasized by their confrontation with living and moving or dancing bodies. In particular, living sculptures pervade the oeuvre and writings of Jean Cocteau, who repeatedly referred to the idea that Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky had already proposed in the 1880s: an art that "will express itself by statues that are moving."[18] The films of his so-called Orphic trilogy—*Le Sang d'un poète* (1932), *Orphée* (1950), and *Le Testament d'Orphée* (1959)—connect living statues as well as the petrification of living beings with death, the underworld, and the hereafter. Statues are even closely related to Cocteau's persona. In *Le Testament d'Orphée*, he is turned into a moving statue with the eyes of a Roman sculpture while *Le Sang d'un poète* opens with a prelude in which Cocteau himself appears as something of a sculptural hybrid. It comes as no surprise then that Cocteau was also attracted to wax figures—in *Le Musée Grévin* (Jacques Demy & Jean Masson, 1958), he staged a remarkable encounter with his own wax image.

Finally, the Pygmalionist dream of the statue coming to life also defines various forms of "performance" and "body art" that marks the European neo-avant-gardes of the 1960s and 1970s. Gilbert & George, for instance, presented themselves as "living sculptures" in various group shows in 1969 and 1970 that also included works by Broodthaers.[19] Last but not least, Broodthaers himself was famously declared a certified "scultura vivente" by Piero Manzoni on the occasion of the Italian artist's solo exhibition in Brussels in February 1962.[20]

INTERVIEW WITH A CORPSE

Cocteau's confrontation with his wax effigy brings us back to Broodthaers's encounter with a wax figure. In 1964, in the first year of his career of a visual artist, Broodthaers created *En souvenir de Cocteau*, a tribute to the French poet, artist, and filmmaker who had died the previous year, consisting of a collage containing various forms and objects, including a small torso evoking a fragment of a white classical statue. In *Le Sang d'un poète*, Cocteau's voice-over inquires, "Is it not crazy to wake up statues so suddenly from the sleep of centuries?" One could ask this question when watching Broodthaers's *Figures of Wax* as well.

In the film, Bentham's mummified body is fragmented by means of a series of close-ups. This filmic fragmentation, however, does not really mobilize Bentham's body. The editing rhythm is rather slow and steady. Broodthaers does not try to animate Bentham by means of camera movements, montage, or light effects in the way some mid-century art documentaries on sculpture such as *Visual Variations on Noguchi* (Marie Menken, 1945), *Thorvaldsen* (Carl Theodor Dreyer, 1949), and *L'Enfer de Rodin* (Henri Alekan, 1957) attempted to set in motion sculptures by Noguchi, Thorvaldsen, or Rodin

respectively.[21] On the contrary, Broodthaers rather emphasizes the stillness of the philosopher's body, confronting it with his own bodily presence, sitting in front of the philosopher, asking him questions, smoking, and reading a newspaper. However, the interaction between the artist and the philosopher is minimal. The setup is somewhat reminiscent of the scenes showing static characters in the vicinity of statues in modernist arthouse cinema of the 1960s.[22] Films such as *Viaggio in Italia* (Roberto Rossellini, 1954), *Le Mépris* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1963), *L'Année dernière à Marienbad* (Alain Resnais, 1961), and *Gertrud* (Carl Theodor Dreyer, 1964) present their characters in static poses evoking a sculptural presence while statues are explored by a highly mobile camera, their juxtaposition or approximation invariably resulting in an enigmatic atmosphere.

Broodthaers plays on a similar mood of mystery, stressing Bentham's immobility as well as his hermetic muteness. Without the use of direct sound but with the help of subtitles, we see Broodthaers talking to the lifeless body of Bentham, making futile and absurd attempts to interview the deceased philosopher. While the voice-over commentary instructs us on Bentham and his philosophy, we are looking at a silent film whose protagonist is not able to talk. Broodthaers asks the philosopher:

> If you have a statement to make
> please do so
> If you have a secret
> tell me
> or a special message
> give an indication.
> If you wish to protest.
> I promise to keep it
> … Or …
> you prefer to dream?
> a new statement
> a secret
> a special message
> a protest
> or an artistic idea …
> a dream.

While an initial version of the screenplay contained a full dialogue in which Bentham marveled at the apparatus of cinema and desires to see a film, Bentham, in the actual film, does not answer any of Broodthaers's questions and remains silent—a fact that is emphasized by a panning shot starting at Broodthaers's mouth with his moving lips to the mute, dumb face of Bentham.[23] In addition, the silence and noncommunication of the philosopher is emphasized by

Broodthaers using his mouth to smoke a cigarette in front of the indifferent Bentham. Despite the attempts at interaction and despite his representation through the dynamic medium of film, Bentham remains still, mute, aloof as a mysterious statue.

The setup evokes the conventions of a television interview but it is also completely in line with the imaginary interviews that Broodthaers created in his capacities of both writer and artist: his 1967 imaginary interview with René Magritte, his 1970 audio-interview with a cat, and his encounter with the just-deceased poet Marcel Lecomte, whose profile is contained in a dozen of canopic-like preserve jars next to a coffin in *Le Salon noir* (1966), Broodthaers's installation at Galerie Saint Laurent in 1966.[24] The interview with Bentham isn't thus Broodthaers's first encounter with the Dead, enforcing the necromantic associations that are inherently connected with mummies and wax figures.[25]

Consisting of his skeleton padded out with hay and dressed in his clothes with a wax head fitted with some of his own hair, Bentham combines the wax figure, the Surrealist mannequin, the uncanny mummy, and the statue—because that is what he actually is. A utilitarian philosopher, Bentham conceived the usefulness of people after their death. In his pamphlet *Auto-Icon; or Further Uses of the Dead to the Living*, Bentham suggested that all persons could become their own statue or "Auto-Icon," a monument to themselves.[26] Bentham's body thus establishes its own statue, his "Auto-Icon." He became his own image—a fact that must have appealed to Broodthaers as Bentham became an imprint or a cast of himself, like a mussel and a mold (*le moule* and *la moule* in French). Bentham's auto-icon might be an icon or symbol but is first and foremost an index—it is interesting to note here that both Julius von Schlosser and André Bazin saw the wax figure and the death mask (often made in wax), with their indexical relation to the deceased, as among the origins of photography and film.[27]

BRANDSCAPE MANNEQUINS

Last but not least, *Figures of Wax* (the plural in the title is significant) connects Bentham's immobile body, which only features in the film's middle section and its final shots, to other bodies, including that of the artist himself, situated in the streets of London. These scenes connect the mummified philosopher from the Enlightenment, enclosed in a time capsule set aside in a university corridor, to the everyday spaces of the contemporary city, though the voice-over warns us that "although this film was made between the two elections of 1974, any identification with reality is entirely incidental and is not the intention of the author." Both the Bentham scenes and the street sequences are connected through the continuous soundtrack with a voice-over commentary as well as piano music (played by Broodthaers himself) consisting of scales and variations on extracts

Figures of Wax. 16mm. 1974. Courtesy of the Walker Art Center's Ruben/Bentson Moving Image Collection. © Estate of Marcel Broodthaers, c/o SABAM Belgium 2024

from Beethoven's *Mondscheinsonate* (1800) and Chopin's *Marche funèbre* (1827), which connects to the morbid image of the philosopher's body.[28] A significant part of the film consists of footage of the London city center, reminiscent of 1970s color street photography by artists such as William Eggleston, Stephen Shore, and particularly Joel Meyerowitz, who often visualized pedestrians isolated in the bright light of the afternoon sun.

Broodthaers tellingly focuses on mannequin dolls, a Surrealist staple evoking a fetish, both in the Freudian and Marxist sense of the term, linking desire to consumerism. Like Bentham's body enclosed in his cabinet, the mannequins are locked in the window displays of shops, their frozen bodies juxtaposed to those of passing pedestrians in the middle of the metropolitan bustle. By juxtaposing Bentham's body to these mannequins, *Figures of Wax* takes up the argument that Broodthaers already developed in his 1961 travel report of London, in which he links the wax figures at Madame Tussaud's to the luxury shops in Bond Street:

> Bond Street: an ideal place for meditating on glorious artistic alienations. […] Bond Street is an artery lined with luxury boutiques. Before it crumbles into ruin under the pressure of peripheral poverty and the power of time—let's wait a bit longer—it should be put in Madame Tussaud's. Minks scurry along the pavements in autumn and winter, and silk umbrellas in every season.[29]

Given this perspective, the film title does not only refer to Bentham but also to the mannequins, which are not only still and lifeless but are also petrified images of commodified women. Their presence is telling in a film in which the voice-over tells us that Bentham advocated for the right to vote of every adult, including women. Broodthaers even deploys the Pygmalionist powers of cinema, intercutting close-ups of the dolls with close-ups of faces of "real" women in static poses.

Furthermore, Broodthaers presents the mannequins and the shop windows as strategies of visual display. They are objects of our gaze, but they also organize, structure, and focus it. Broodthaers plays on this by also including close-ups of the eyes of the mannequins as well as an over-the-shoulder-shot of a mannequin: we are looking at the street from within the shop window, as if we and the mannequin are able to return the gaze of a man who is looking inside.

Both types of beings, mannequins on the one hand and shoppers on the other, occasionally interact not only through the film's editing that evokes the eyeline matches of classical cinema but also by visual echoes. The stripes of a scarf of a passing woman recurs for instance in those of one of the pieces of clothing worn by a mannequin.

By drawing our attention to mechanisms of visual display, Broodthaers emphasizes the interdependency of mannequins and shop windows. Like mannequin dolls, shop windows are instruments of commodity fetishism, cherished

by early modernists such as Eugène Atget, whose photographs of mannequins in display windows feature in various Surrealist journals, such as *La Révolution Surréaliste* and *Variétés*. Stéphane Mallarmé, one of Broodthaers's key points of reference, expressed his amazement at shop windows and the new visual culture of merchandising in an 1892 essay entitled "Étalages."[30] Not much later, Marcel Duchamp's ready-mades, another key reference for Broodthaers, pointed at the similarities between the display of commodities in shop windows and the isolation of the artwork in the modern museum. Since the late nineteenth century, shop windows became an inherent part of the new environment of the modern, industrial metropolis. Its broad avenues, lined with the new facilities of consumption such as shop windows and department stores, not only facilitated the optimal mobility of persons and commodities, they also changed the city into a spatial and visual system of control and surveillance.

A realm subjected to an all-encompassing gaze or an omnipresent eye is a theme that Broodthaers addressed in his sculptural installation *La Tour visuelle* (1966), consisting of a stack of magazine cutout eyes encased in glass jars. For Broodthaers, there is a close connection between the conception of Jeremy Bentham's famous Panopticon, drawings of which are shown briefly in the film, and the development of modern capitalism and its reliance on visual display—*Figures of Wax* explicitly connects the optical devices of the panopticon and the shop window. Made in 1974, the film coincides with the rediscovery of Bentham's panopticon by authors such as psychoanalyst Jacques-Alain Miller and philosopher Michel Foucault, who both understood the panopticon not as a building type but rather as a mechanism of power.[31] An eminent practitioner of the so-called institutional critique of museums highly interested in the institutionalized and disciplinary conventions of art and its display, Broodthaers must have been intrigued by Bentham's panopticon, an optical device that is also an instrument of control and social conditioning, invented at the start of industrial capitalism. As the voice-over commentary states, Bentham was a major source of inspiration for John Stuart Mill and David Ricardo, who laid the foundation of classical liberalism.

Figures of Wax situates Bentham, enclosed in his cabinet and separated from the everyday like an Egyptian mummy in his sarcophagus, in a realm marked by consumer capitalism, where, according to Karl Marx's famous phrasing, "all that is solid melts into air." Broodthaers dwells on the reflections of moving traffic in mirroring surfaces—a staple shot of numerous city symphonies such as Walther Ruttmann's *Berlin: Die Sinfonie der Großstadt* (1927). In particular, the film focuses on the eerie reflections in the shop windows and on a landscape marked by a surface culture consisting of empty signs. *Figures of Wax*, for instance, contains footage of a man carrying a sign and a woman carrying a stack of newspapers; there are inscriptions everywhere, in line with Broodthaers's fascination for texts, words, letters, inscriptions, and writing attempts in most of his films. "Take Left," a sign marked on the street surface

appears at the beginning of the film. Not unlike Hollis Frampton's evocation of New York in *Zorns Lemma* (1970), inscriptions appear on pavements, façades, buses, and windows, most notably a window of a discount shop entirely covered by inscriptions—in several shots, Broodthaers focuses on texts written on glass panes, a motif that recurs in *Crime à Cologne* (1971) and *M.T.L. (D.T.H.)* (1970). In his city symphony of postindustrial London, urban space is transformed into a *brandscape*, a landscape of empty signs, exemplified by the inserts of the US dollar, British pound, and Deutschmark signs, emphasizing the modern metropolis as the site of the circulation of money—as Georg Simmel defined the modern metropolis in his influential 1903 essay "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben."[32] For Simmel, who also wrote *Philosophie des Geldes* in 1900, the hyperstimulation of the senses associated with modern city life was inherently connected with the reorganization of urban space in the service of capitalism, which stimulated the increasingly faster circulation of people, ideas, goods, and commodities. Shot not only on location on the pavement of the shops in Oxford Street but also near the roundabout at Moorgate, in the heart of London's banking district, *Figures of Wax* explicitly links the footage of the city of money and commodity fetishism to the phantasmagoria of the wax figure by the newspaper that Broodthaers is holding while attempting to interview Bentham. It is a copy of *The Guardian* of February 9, 1974, with a headline stating "World Money Disorder Sets Gold and Silver Soaring," evoking a world affected by rampant inflation, rising oil prices, and social unrest after the dissolution of the Breton Woods agreements in 1971. It is the condition of late capitalism determined by a financial regime of freely floating fiat currencies that Broodthaers perfectly addressed in works featuring exchange rates, such as *Poème-Change-Exchange-Wechsel* (1973) consisting of a series of tables of signatures. Highly interested in the decorative fate of reified art objects, Broodthaers, an avid reader of György Lukács and student of Lucien Goldmann, merges consumer capitalism of the 1970s with the uncanny sphere of mummies and wax figures.[33] Enclosed in his cabinet, the embalmed philosopher seems to enjoy his spectral presence in the streets of London filled with consumers and mannequin dolls. Given this perspective, films such as *Figures of Wax* and *Monsieur Teste* seem to resonate less with the utopian dreams of the industrialized modernity than with, as Eric de Bruyn has noted, "fantasies of an automated, post-labor future ushered in by the digital networks of neoliberal capitalism."[34] Rather than a Pygmalion who brings wax figures and mannequins to life, Broodthaers emphasizes the sedation of the shopping pedestrians in the London streets.

NOTES

1. On slowness and stasis in experimental and modernist cinema, see Justin Remes, *Motion(less) Pictures: The Cinema of Stasis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).
2. The most detailed discussions of *Figures of Wax* can be found in Cathleen Ann Chaffee, "Figures of Wax: Marcel Broodthaers in Conversation with Jeremy Bentham" (master's thesis, Courtauld Institute, University of London, 2001); and Shana G. Lindsay, "Mortui Docent Vivos: Jeremy Bentham and Marcel Broodthaers in *Figures of Wax*," *Oxford Art Journal* 36, no. 1 (March 2013): 93–107. See also "Figures of Wax," in *Marcel Broodthaers: Cinéma* (Barcelona: Fundacio Antoni Tapies, 1997), 268–75.
3. The film's credits further mention: Camera: Clive Meyer and John Hardy; Editing: Noel Crain; Commentary: Charlotte Hardman.
4. Bentham's preserved body in a cabinet can still be found today at University College London, although it has been relocated a few times since 1975. Today, the location of the cabinet is not the same as the one shown in the film. See "The Auto-Icon: Bentham's Mortal Remains Have Been at UCL since 1850," https://www.ucl.ac.uk/culture/auto-icon/auto-icon.
5. Marcel Broodthaers in a letter to Jost Herbig (20 May 1973), included in *Marcel Broodthaers: Cinéma*, 274.
6. Chaffee, *Figures of Wax*, 13.
7. Chaffee, *Figures of Wax*, 3.
8. On Madame Tussaud, see Pamela Pilbeam, *Madame Tussaud and the History of Waxworks* (London: Continuum, 2006); and Kate Berridge, *Madame Tussaud: A Life in Wax* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006).
9. Marcel Broodthaers, "Un poète en voyage … à Londres," *Journal des Beaux Arts* 942 (23 June 1961): 11. English translation in Gloria Moure (ed.), *Marcel Broodthaers: Collected Writings* (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 2013), 56.
10. On wax figure cabinets, see Roberta Panzanelli (ed.), *Ephemeral Bodies: Wax Sculpture and the Human Figure* (Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2008) and the theme issue "Theorizing Wax: On the Meaning of a Disappearing Medium" of *Oxford Journal* 36, no. 1 (March 2013).
11. Vito Adriaensens, "Anatomy of an Ovidian Cinema: Mysteries of the Wax Museum," in Steven Jacobs, Susan Felleman, Vito Adriaensens, and Lisa Colpaert, *Screening Statues: Sculpture and Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 84–100.
12. See *Variétés* 1, no. 4 (August 1928). On the Musée Spitzner, see Pierre Spitzner, *Catalogue du musée anatomique anthropologique et ethnographique du Dr P. Spitzner* (Paris: Dr P. Spitzner, 1896); and Christiane Py et Cécile Vidart, "Les musées d'anatomie sur les champs de foire," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* (1985): 3–10.
13. See Marc Rombaut, *Paul Delvaux* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990), 28–29; and David Scott, *Paul Delvaux: Surrealizing the Nude* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), 60–64. Broodthaers photographed Delvaux in 1966. Broodthaers also wrote on Wiertz, see Marcel Broodthaers, "Wiertz Museum" (1974) in *Broodthaers: Collected Writings*, 443.
14. Paul Valéry, *Mr. Teste* (Paris: Gallimard, 1926).
15. Susan Felleman, "The Mystery . . . The Blood . . . The Age of Gold: Sculpture in Surrealist and Surreal Cinema," in Jacobs et al., *Screening Statues*, 46–64.
16. Victor Stoichita, *The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). See also Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2006).

17. Steven Jacobs and Vito Adriaensens, "The Sculptor's Dream: Living Statues in Early Cinema," in Jacobs et al., *Screening Statues*, 29–45; Lynda Nead, *The Haunted Gallery: Painting, Photography, Film c. 1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).
18. Jean Cocteau, "Good Luck to Cinémonde" (1953) and "The Myth of Woman" (1953), in André Bernard and Claude Gauteur (eds.), *Jean Cocteau: The Art of Cinema* (London: Marion Byars, 1992), 34 and 123.
19. Both Broodthaers and Gilbert & George participated in an event at Düsseldorf's Kunsthalle in February 1970 and in the Sulima gallery in Berlin in the autumn of 1970.
20. Isabelle Graw, "The Poet's Seduction: Six Theses on Marcel Broodthaers's Contemporary Relevance," *Texte zur Kunst 103* (September 2016): 48–73.
21. Steven Jacobs, "Carving Cameras on Thorvaldsen and Rodin: Mid-Twentieth-Century Documentaries on Sculpture," in Jacobs et al., *Screening Statues*, 65–83.
22. Suzanne Liandrat-Guiges, *Cinéma et sculpture: Un Aspet de la modernité des années soixante* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002); Steven Jacobs and Lisa Colpaert, "From Pompeii to Marienbad: Classical Sculptures in Postwar European Modernist Cinema," in Jacobs et al., *Screening Statues*, 118–36.
23. "Figures of Wax," in *Marcel Broodthaers: Cinéma* (Barcelona: Fundacio Antoni Tapies, 1997), 271.
24. Marcel Broodthaers, "Interview imaginaire de René Magritte," *Journal des Arts Plastiques* 30 (January 1967), included in *Broodthaers: Collected Writings*, 164–66; Marcel Broodthaers, "Interview with a Cat" (1970) in *Broodthaers: Collected Writings*, 288–89; *Marcel Broodthaers - Le salon noir 1966* (Venice: Palazzo Grassi, 2014).
25. Chaffee stipulates that Bhikhu Parekh's *Bentham's Political Thought* (1973), of which Broodthaers owned a copy, contains a dialogue between Bentham and an imaginary interviewer. See Chaffee, *Figures of Wax*, 10.
26. Jeremy Bentham, "Auto-Icon; or Further Uses of the Dead to the Living. A Fragment," posthumously published in 1842. See also C. Haffenden, "Every Man His Own Statue: Bentham's Body as DIY Monument," in *Every Man His Own Monument: Self-Monumentalizing in Romantic Britain* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2018), 40–91. See also Alessandra Violi, "Glass, Mixed Media, Stone: The Bodily Stuffs of Suspended Animation," in Alessandra Violi, Barbara Grespi, Andrea Pinotti, and Pietro Conte (eds.), *Bodies of Stone in the Media, Visual Culture, and the Arts* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 261–76.
27. See Julius von Schlosser, "History of Portraiture in Wax," in Roberta Panzanelli (ed.), *Ephemeral Bodies: Wax Sculpture and the Human Figure* (Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2008); and André Bazin, "Ontologie de l'image photographique" (1945), in *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* (Paris: Cerf, 1976), 11–19.
28. Chaffee, *Figures of Wax*, 9.
29. *Broodthaers: Collected Writings*, 56.
30. Christophe Wall-Romana, *Cinepoetry: Imaginary Cinemas in French Poetry* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).
31. Jacques-Alain Miller, "Jeremy Bentham's Panoptic Device" (1973), *October* 41 (Summer, 1987): 3–29; Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975).
32. Georg Simmel, "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben" (1903), in *Georg Simmel: Gesamtausgabe*. edited by Otthein Rammstedt (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995), vol. 7, 1, 116–31. See also Georg Simmel, *Philosophie des Geldes* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1900).
33. In 1969–70, Broodthaers attended Lucien Goldmann's seminar at the University of Brussels. See also Chaffee, *Figures of Wax*, 16.
34. Eric de Bruyn, "Marcel Broodthaers," *Artforum* 55, no. 9 (May 2017).