



The Cinema Space

There are two exhibitions which occupy a place in the imaginary of the film fan: the first version of *Ciné-Cité* at La Villette and *The Century of Cinema* at the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona. Although they differed in presentation and concept—the decor as fetish in the case of the former; the memory of the cinema in the latter—they both responded to the same type of relationship with the cinema: the cinema as the creator of a social mythology. To a certain extent, they marked the end of an era, which we could term the golden age of cinema. And in this regard, they were an exercise in classicism.

As the twentieth century progressed, the places on film ceased to be the fictitious territory of papier-mâché. The street, the town, the city asserted themselves: real spaces, moulded by the film-maker's hand, which have become the territories of fiction. It could be said, as Jordi Balló asserts, that “the cinema has become a category of space”. Did the apotheosis of documentary cinema—which had a reputation as a minor genre and is now fast expanding—have a great deal to do with this? The answer is, quite the contrary. The renewed prestige of the documentary as the new link between the cinema and space is the result of a requirement of recent culture. Fiction must be made to emanate from reality, otherwise fiction gains too much control of reality, to such an extent that it renders it unintelligible.

Just like Ballard's novels, even the cinema which fantasises about the future has ended up choosing to build itself on real spaces. At the end of the day, it is our world which confirms the dystopian character of the future which awaits us and it is we, ourselves—as Bradbury predicted—who are the Martians, although we doubt this when we look at ourselves in the distorting mirrors of tomorrow. *Batman* was still a set-bound film, but *The Truman Show* and *Edward Scissorhands* were not. The everyday space is the real territory which the film-maker explores and re-imagines. The result is a kind of common ground—the city of the film-makers—on which the most diverse experiences unfold; where directors, scriptwriters and architects meet up and enter into a long-distance dialogue, resulting from different ways of seeing the same reality. The cinema's shift towards the category of space converts it into a place bringing together diverse experiences which, throughout the 12 spaces of the exhibition, find a common thread. It was time which used to be the *a priori* category which determined the cinema, but the same can now be said of space. For this reason, the cinema has ceased to be the engine for architects' ideas and has become a form of architecture in its own right, if we understand architecture as the moulding and construction of a place.

Is this a reason why the cinema should pay the price for its loss of symbolic value? The fetishism of cinema changes. The place competes with the face, because the face—unlike the decor—is also an artist. It is alive and moving.