

The Media Landscape of *Shiori*

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Jessie Yingqi Gao | 2023.07.03

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Thesis Supervisor: Thomas Charles Dyckhoff

Module Coordinator: Tim Waterman

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00_Prologue

6 min read

01_Solitary Travel

9 min read

02_The View and the Frame

10 min read

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Please watch the music video [Shiori](#) before you read the essay, with your headphones.

This essay is to be read on a *mobile phone device*. It is advisable to have 2 screens simultaneously when reading: one mobile to view the music video, and another to read the essay.

00

Prologue

“Technology is a mode of revealing” (Heidegger, 1977, 13). Throughout history, humans invented tools because of our need to solve problems. Using these tools has also limited how we think and behave, and build new cultures and relationships between humans and our environment. The most recent artificial tool that is shaping the world would be digital technologies, with the mobile phone as a normalised tool inserted in every aspect of our lives. This has modified our behaviours and perceptions greatly, and thus given rise to the interest of studying and making sense of what is it exactly doing.

In this broader framework, this essay explores how digital media experienced in mobile devices creates new relationships between humans and landscapes by looking at our experience watching music videos on mobile phones in the urban landscape, the changes our activities bring to the landscape, and how this constitutes the creative representation of landscape in the music video *Shiori* (Mafumafu Channel, 2022). The essay draws from theories in media geography, anthropology, landscape, and film studies; each section includes a different thread of ideas from these theories, and closely analysing the music video in relation to their concepts. Each of the Chapters (01_Solitary Travel; 02_The View and the Frame; 03_Time and Memory) explores a different effect of technology on how we experience space and time, where theories are presented in black text on white background, and the video analysis according to the theory with white text on black background. The essay should read as a validation of the pre-existing symbiotic relationship between media and our perception of landscape, while posing a hypothesis of the simultaneous fragmenting and embodying effect the mobile digital technology brings.

Landscape Narrative in Media

Space and Place

The discussion we have here is situated in the theories of landscape, narratives, and media. For the basis of a landscape study, the wider concepts of place and space should first be outlined. According to Cresswell (2015, 12), the place is a “location”, the “locale” and “sense of place” (13-14). This means that place is the sum of the physical presence of an area, its materiality, and the human attachments to the area. In contrast, both Augé and Cresswell suggest that space is created by the “motion of a moving body” (2008, 65). Wilken and Goggin add that it is also an “interweaving of communication and action” (2012, 3). The idea of space is, therefore, more abstract and temporary, in the motion and dynamics of people. For this essay, the place is taken in its social sense, meaning that it is the physical or digital space consisting of certain cultures, while space will be defined as a place with human experience.

Landscape

Similarly, landscape as an idea is also related to an area, but more to the view and perception of it. The official definition of it by the European Landscape Convention is “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” (Howard et al., 2013, xxi). Historically, the concept of landscape has been defined as a “view” of land with “the viewer” “outside of it” (Cresswell, 2015, 17), compared to space and place where the human inhabits. Howard et al expand on the perception part, with the idea that landscape is a “way of seeing”, the “relationship between humans and their surroundings” (xxi), while Lefebvre explores the linguistic origin of the term and elaborates on how people give “form or shape” and “relations” (2006, 15) to the land, and the land, in turn, can “redefine” (14) our behaviours. Thus, the landscape is also social and interactive, so it can be a space and a place at the same time, while involving human perception. This essay will use the comprehensive definition to define landscape as a human perception of their surrounding environment through their senses.

Media and Technology

This perception and experience are also constantly organised through media and technology. The MediaSpace is a term proposed by Couldry and McCarthy, defined as “spaces created by media and the effects”, “shape and are shaped by experience of social space” (2004, 2). When inhabiting this media space, the spectators are constructed by social relations, while the medium itself also constructs the spectators that form these social relations (Rose, 2001; Berger, 1972). The medium holds narratives, which are acts of storytelling that can be studied by what the story is (content) and how it is told (expression). “Through action and the contingencies of lived experience” (Potteiger and Purinton, 1998, 3) embedded in the narrative, individuals can gain knowledge of themselves and the world. Thus it constantly shapes our sense of time, and “ceaselessly transforms places into spaces and spaces into places” (Augé, 2008, 65). Furthermore, Potteiger and Purinton suggest that narrative “inhere in the materials and process of the landscape” (1998, 5), meaning that both landscape and narrative are inseparable concepts, and constantly become a part of each other, similar to how time and space are artificial ideas that are inherently intertwined. The technology through which media is accessed determines the form, meaning and effect of media (Berger, 1972). Therefore, the media technology will be analysed for its effect on and influence on our landscape experience.

For this section, we have established the terms for discussion, with the chain of thought that places and spaces are social and dynamic, while the landscape is a space with a specific focus on the perception or sensory experience. Media incorporates narratives that shape and are shaped by the perception of landscape, while technology determines the possibilities of media. While many of the definitions of landscape and human are depending on culturally contextualized conceptions, this essay will not dive deeper into elaborating on this topic, but rather focuses on the “international, transhistorical, transcultural” (Potteiger and Purinton, 1998, 6) meanings of landscape in media, or the “diasporic mediascapes” (Karim, 2003, 5) across culture.

Shiori

The essay will analyse the music video, *Shiori*. The music video is a genre that incorporates both vision and sound, while it is a rich medium that consists of text, images, and other ways of communicating an idea. A song is usually 3-4 minutes long (Big Time Musicians, 2022), thus the music video at the same length as the song is an ideal length to view in fragmented times one has on the move or waiting, while still being able to tell a story compared to the much shorter contents on other social media (Owsinski, 2017). [YouTube](#) is the largest video-sharing platform in the world (Ruby, 2023; Ceci, 2023), where statistically 89.5% of access is made through mobile devices (Ceci, 2021). Therefore, as a music video posted on YouTube, *Shiori* is suitable for the discussion of media content experienced through a mobile phone device.

Shiori (See Appendix) is a Japanese song composed and sung by Mafumafu (2) for a movie, and its accompanying music video is illustrated and put together by a team of Japanese animation artists, producers, editors, filmmakers, 3D artists, and designers ([4'19"](#), [4'22"](#), [4'24"](#)) (Mafumafu Channel, 2022). The artist of the song originated from a community where people share creative media made possible by new technology¹ (Utatemita, 2021; Gao, 2021). His music and personal experience are deeply rooted in the lifestyle transformed by the modern city, tools, and urban developments (Mafumafu, 2023), thus inherently carrying contemplations of media and our experience of life. The song and the video in *Shiori* is a narrative of a protagonist experiencing 2 distinct times and landscapes: a naturally ruined landscape and an urban cityscape. Its contents, lyrics, sound, and imagery reflect the concepts discussed previously, which makes it the optimum vehicle for analysis. However, this music video will be analysed from an anthropological perspective, concerning the effect and possible implications of the video on the author, rather than the composer or video maker, because the author’s own interpretation of the video and its effect can be different from the intended. It is also not a comprehensive view of all possible readings of the video but aims to provide a specific interpretation of it concerning the media and landscape theories gathered in the thesis. Therefore, this thesis is my attempt to make sense of how media in contemporary technology interfere with and morph our relationship with the landscape.

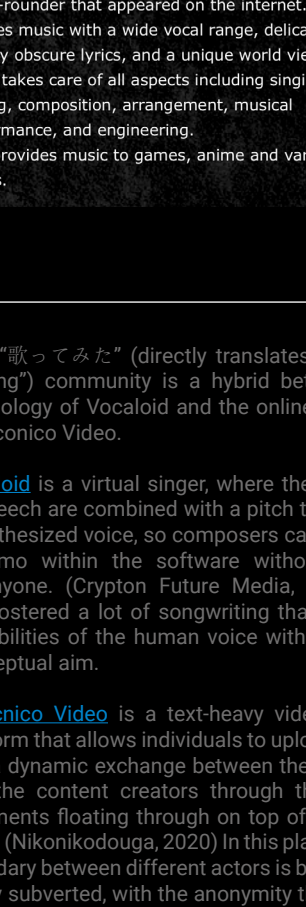
千
子
氷

作詞・作曲 まふまふ
アコースティックギター 三矢 輝 晃

4'19"

uni-mafumafu.jp/profile/

PROFILE



まふまふ / mafumafu

An all-rounder that appeared on the internet. Creates music with a wide vocal range, delicate and slightly obscure lyrics, and a unique world view. Often takes care of all aspects including singing, lyrics writing, composition, arrangement, musical performance, and engineering. Also provides music to games, anime and various artists.

¹The “歌ってみた” (directly translates to “Tried to Sing”) community is a hybrid between the technology of Vocaloid and the online platform of Nico Nico Video.

[Vocaloid](#) is a virtual singer, where the syllables of speech are combined with a pitch to produce a synthesized voice, so composers can produce a demo within the software without talking to anyone. (Crypton Future Media, n.d.) This has fostered a lot of songwriting that exceeds the abilities of the human voice with a diverse conceptual aim.

[Niconico Video](#) is a text-heavy video-sharing platform that allows individuals to upload videos and a dynamic exchange between the audience and the content creators through the use of comments floating through on top of the video itself. (Nikonikodouga, 2020) In this platform, the boundary between different actors is blurred and easily subverted, with the anonymity that allows for a very different type of communication and a more open discussion about, often quite dark compared to normal standards, philosophical ideas. (Gao, 2021)

Therefore, situating in between, this community has people composing songs and others making covers of these by singing, playing instruments, drawing, dancing, etc (Utatemita, 2021) in a great variety.

01

Solitary Travel

The overcrowding of information in both time and space today voids the landscape of its cultural functions and meanings. Therefore, individuals increasingly want to escape to a private space, making their experience solitary (Bull, 2004; Augé, 2008). This is made possible and encouraged with the assistance of mobile technology of the phone with headphones. The presence and activity of individuals in their own private space in the public remove them from the physical landscape, thus further stripping the landscape of its cultural meanings. The reciprocation between individualism and the emptying of landscapes is revealed similarly in the music video *Shiori*, which is also a part of the mobile media technology assisting this cycle of change.

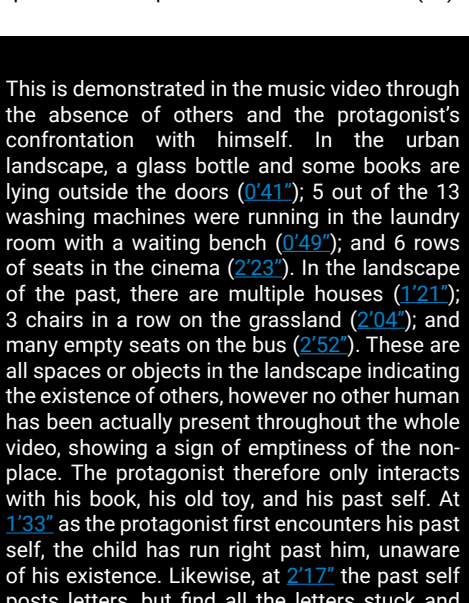
The urban landscape contains excess images and signs. The "immense accumulation of spectacles" (Debord, 1994, 12) creates an information overabundance both spatially and temporally (Augé, 2008). This phenomenon exists in the streetscape full of signs and lights, and on transport, as movement compresses distance, and the view of the landscape outside can only be captured in partial glimpses and snapshots (Augé, 2008). These spectacles are not only numerous in quantity, but also vary with a large range of diversity, which obtains "linguistic liquidity" (Coultery and McCarthy, 2004, 9), where the meaning associated with them becomes more malleable. Bull extends the saturation to the aural world, stating that the sensory overload of the city includes the ever-expanding noise (2004). The information overwhelms individuals and becomes imperceptible, which turns the urban landscape into an "empty, uniform, solitary... [pointless]" (Wilken and Goggin, 2012, 12) site, which is "homogeneous in its diversity" (Augé, 2008, 26). Therefore, the city becomes a "non-place" according to Augé (2008, 63), stripped of its relation, history, and identity.

In *Shiori*, the urban landscape is constructed with layers of buildings at various heights, and signs that look like natural extensions of the buildings. There are over 40 signs visible in the initial city scene at 0'25" which are all formed by a rectangular frame of line or shape, some text, with the colour scheme of pink and blue. The signs are written with very particular details. Some signs are with lines squiggled in connected, longer shapes mimicking the form of English words (on the left), while others mimic kanji, with each character as a yellow. They are also in different colours: red, pink, black and blue, which are primary colours in the RGB or CMYK light palette, being in stark contrast with the surroundings. This variety of linguistic forms and colours emphasises the diversity in the city. The density of information is further illustrated through the number of flyers overflowing from the letterbox at the door, in various sizes and colours at 1'55".



1'55"

However, with so many details, none of the signs are readable. The signs are deliberately written in forms very close to words or characters but not any actual legible ones, demonstrating the "absence of meaning" in the city suggested by Bull (2004, 278). These signs are further blurred with different methods throughout the 7 times that the larger city landscape shows up throughout the video. The scenes use windows, rain and water between the viewer and the landscape to obstruct the view of the city at 0'25", 0'41" and 1'49", separating it from the spectator and the protagonist. Although 0'40" is the only time when the signs have visible words, the scene flashes by in 1 second, making it impossible to catch the 13 signs with legible writings. At 1'11" and 3'37", the city shows up when the protagonist is in transit between different landscapes, so the signs flash by very quickly, transforming into glimpses of colour blocks. The protagonist can finally see the city at a fixed point at 3'58", but the viewing point is high up with the railings in the middle, thus shifting the focus from the city to the sky. Through abstract writing, visual barriers, limitation of time, motion, and camera placement, the urban landscape in *Shiori* has been stripped of its meaning and transformed into a "non-place" (Augé, 2008, 63).

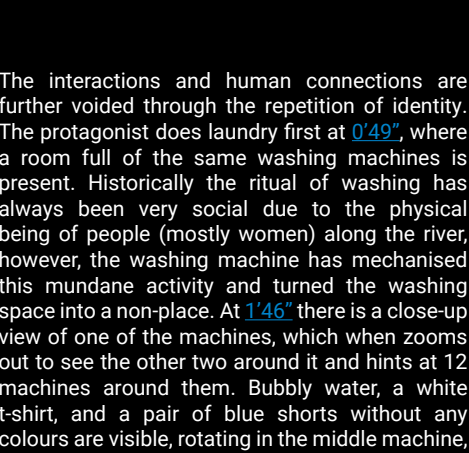


Similar to this overwhelming information, the mass of humans in the contemporary city generates solitary experiences due to the concentration of population and flow. People are "assigned to a circumscribed and specific position" (Augé, 2008, 63), where spaces are used in a prescribed and codified way. Therefore, individual and connections morph into solitude and similitude in non-places, where there is a shared "temporary identity" with "relative anonymity" (81), and each person is confronted with "an image of [self]" which strangely "echoes millions of others" (83). The identity of one person is therefore repeated for every other person, and they only coexist in the non-place, "perceived as equivalent and unconnected" (89).

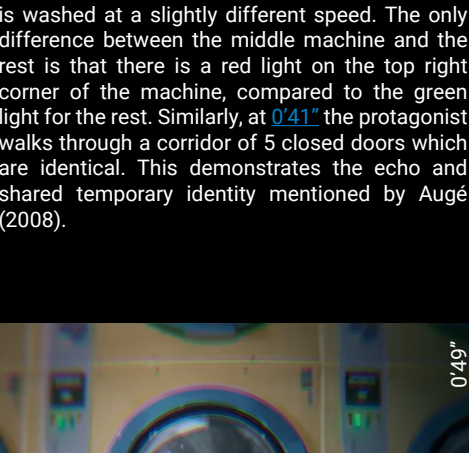
This is demonstrated in the music video through the absence of others and the protagonist's confrontation with himself. In the urban landscape, a glass bottle and some books are lying outside the doors (0'41"); 5 out of the 13 washing machines were running in the laundry room with a waiting bench (0'49"); and 6 rows of seats in the cinema (2'23"). In the landscape of the past, there are multiple houses (1'21"); 3 chairs in a row on the grassland (2'04"); and many empty seats on the bus (2'52"). These are all spaces or objects in the landscape indicating the existence of others, however no other human has been actually present throughout the whole video, showing a sign of emptiness of the non-place. The protagonist therefore only interacts with his book, his old toy, and his past self. At 1'33" as the protagonist first encounters his past self, the child has run right past him, unaware of his existence. Likewise, at 2'17" the past self posts letters, but find all the letters stuck and has filled up the post box. This reinforces the inability to communicate at different times.



0'40"



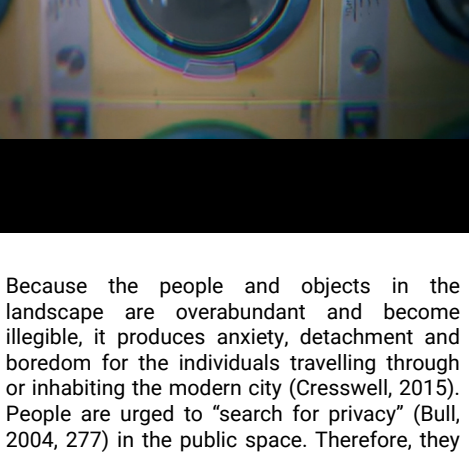
2'23"



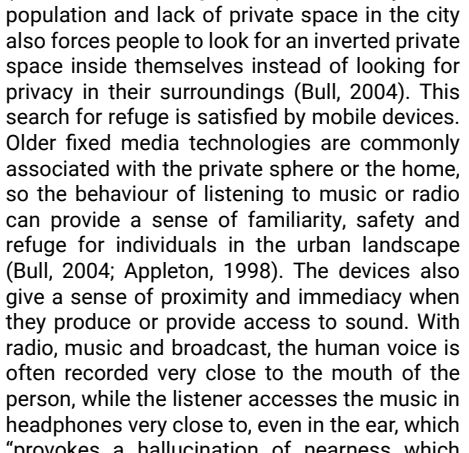
0'49"



2'04"

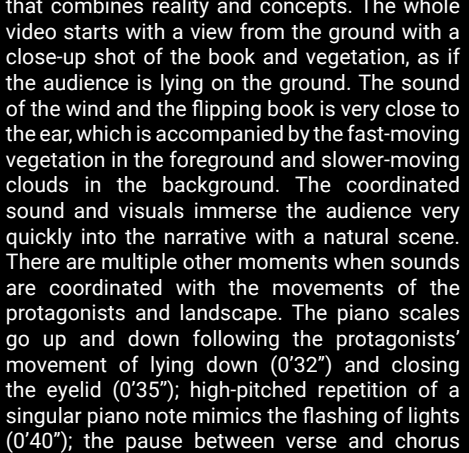


2'52"

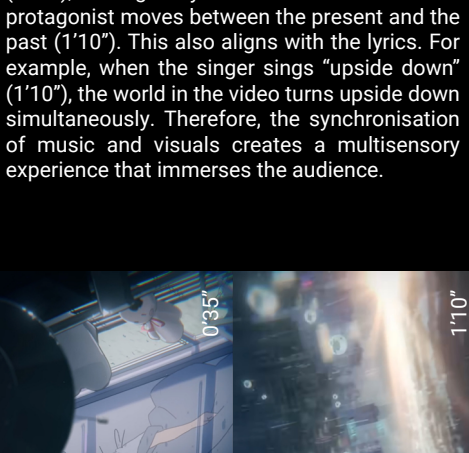


1'33"

The interactions and human connections are further voided through the repetition of identity. The protagonist does laundry first at 0'49", where a room full of the same washing machines is present. Historically the ritual of washing machines has always been very social due to the physical being of people (mostly women) along the river, however, the washing machine has mechanised this mundane activity and turned the washing space into a non-place. At 1'46" there is a close-up view of one of the machines, which when zooms out to see the other two around it and hints at 12 machines around them. Bubbly water, a white t-shirt, and a pair of blue shorts without any colours are visible, rotating in the middle machine, which are items very neutral and could belong to anyone. The other two machines are replicas of the middle machine, where the same content is washed at a slightly different speed. The only difference between the middle machine and the rest is that there is a red light on the top right corner of the machine, compared to the green light for the rest. Similarly, at 0'41" the protagonist walks through a corridor of 5 closed doors which are identical. This demonstrates the echo and shared temporary identity mentioned by Augé (2008).



0'49"



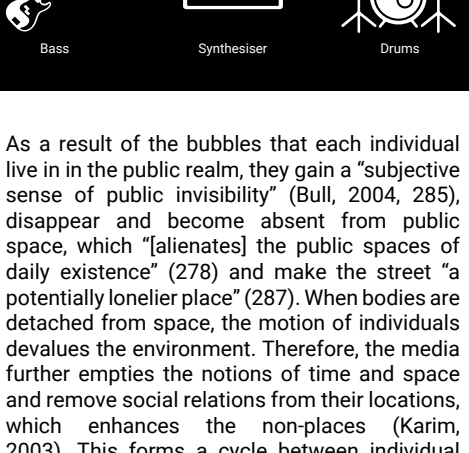
0'41"



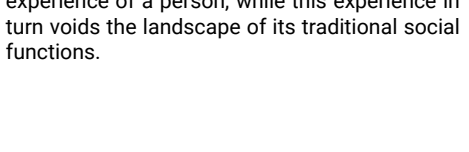
1'46"

Because the people and objects in the landscape are overabundant and become illegible, it produces anxiety, detachment and boredom for the individuals travelling through or inhabiting the modern city (Cresswell, 2015). People are urged to "search for privacy" (Bull, 2004, 277) in the public space. Therefore, they perform a reactionary retreat and cocooning, separating themselves from the environment (Cresswell, 2015; Augé, 2008). The density of the population and lack of private space in the city also forces people to look for an inverted private space inside themselves instead of looking for privacy in their surroundings (Bull, 2004). This search for refuge is satisfied by mobile devices. Older fixed media technologies are commonly associated with the private sphere or the home, so the behaviour of listening to music or radio can provide a sense of familiarity, safety and refuge for individuals in the urban landscape (Bull, 2004; Appleton, 1998). The devices also give a sense of proximity and immediacy when they produce or provide access to sound. With radio, music and broadcast, the human voice is often recorded very close to the mouth of the person, while the listener accesses the music in headphones very close to, even in the ear, which "provokes a hallucination of nearness which abolishes a sense of distance, strangeness, imperceptibility" (Bull, 2004, 280). This intimacy also enhances the immersive quality of sound, where a person feels surrounded and enveloped. Therefore, the "very personalized noise or soundscape" (272) allows individuals to control their "environment, mood, thoughts and space" (282) and "actively re-create and reconfigure the spaces of experience", giving an "illusion of omnipotence" (283). So, people eventually become "immersed in [their] own mobile media sound bubbles" (290).

Shiori uses the layering and interrelating of images and sounds to generate an immersive narrative for the audience. The environmental sound of waves and seaside is used both at the beginning of the song (0'02") and as a bridge (2'44") for a melodic motif. Adding a layer of environmental sound under the instrumental, the music effectively constructs a different place that combines reality and concepts. The whole video starts with a view from the ground with a close-up shot of the book and vegetation, as if the audience is lying on the ground. The sound of the wind and the flipping book is very close to the ear, which is accompanied by the fast-moving vegetation in the foreground and slower-moving clouds in the background. The coordinated sound and visuals immerse the audience very quickly into the narrative with a natural scene. There are multiple other moments when sounds are coordinated with the movements of the protagonists and landscape. The piano scales go up and down following the protagonists' movement of lying down (0'32") and closing the eyelid (0'35"); high-pitched repetition of a singular piano note mimics the flashing of lights (0'40"); the pause between verse and chorus aligned with the moment that the protagonist starts being brought out of his mundane life (1'09"); the glittery sound effect when the protagonist moves between the present and the past (1'10"). This also aligns with the lyrics. For example, when the singer sings "upside down" (1'10"), the world in the video turns upside down simultaneously. Therefore, the synchronisation of music and visuals creates a multisensory experience that immerses the audience.



1'10"



0'02"

2'44"

The sound is also recorded and played spatially. For the melodic motif (0'02", 2'44"), there are two guitar accompaniments: an acoustic one playing notes of a lower cord is located to the left, another electric one playing higher notes on the right side, while the main melody with a synth sound is in front of the listener. When the bass and drums join in at 0'14", it can be heard that the bass is located on the left behind the acoustic guitar, while the drums are behind the electric guitar, and the piano is mostly at the back of the listener. The vocal is placed right next to the ear for the verses (0'28", 2'02"), almost like whispering, while he moves away from the listener more as his singing volume increases for the chorus (1'10", 2'16"). The piano (0'29", 1'01", etc.) and glittery sound effects (1'11", 1'26", etc.) move around the listener occasionally throughout the piece. Therefore, the listener is surrounded by the different sounds that have a spatial relationship to the ear, while this fixed position varies to increase interest, which makes it a perfect example for building a personal "mobile media sound bubble" (Bull, 2004, 290).

As a result of the bubbles that each individual live in the public realm, they gain a "subjective sense of public invisibility" (Bull, 2004, 285), disappear and become absent from public space, which "[alienates] the public spaces of daily existence" (278) and make the street "a detached lonelier place" (287). When bodies are detached from public space, the motion of individuals devalues the environment. Therefore, the media further empties the notions of time and space and remove social relations from their locations, which enhances the non-places (Karim, 2003). This forms a cycle between individual behaviours and the construction of public space, so the urban landscape produces the solitary experience of a person, while this experience in turn voids the landscape of its traditional social functions.

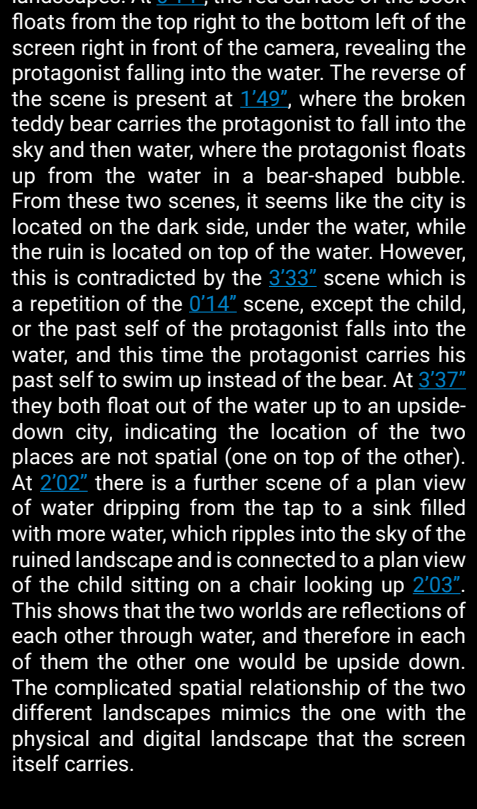
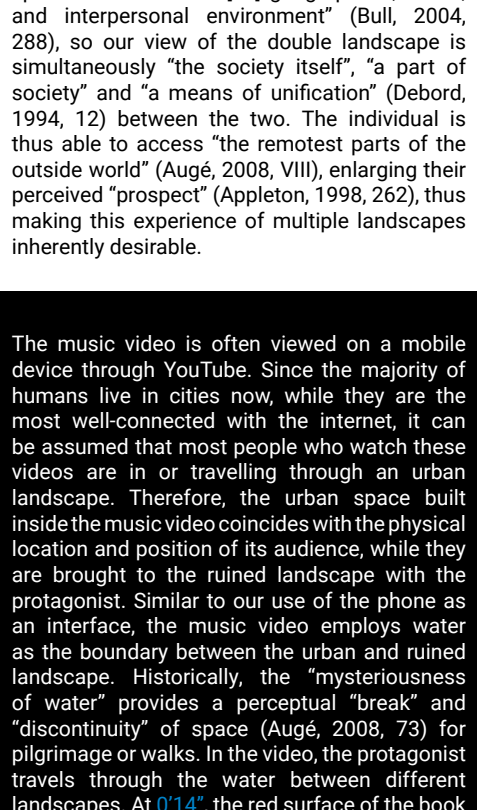
02

The View and the Frame

Through the framed view, new multiple forms of landscape experience have been developing in the urban landscape. The mobile screens enable connections between the digital and physical space, allowing a more tactile and fragmented vision of both landscapes, thus constructing an experience containing a multiplicity of places.

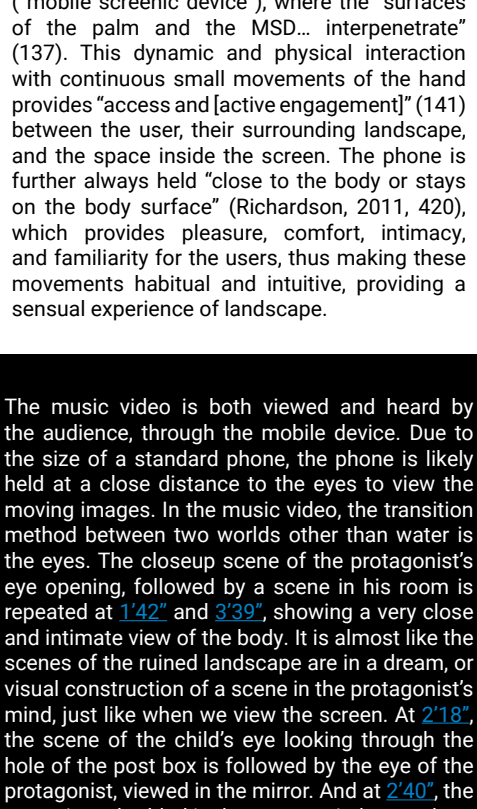
A framed view is quintessential to the concept of landscape, especially in contemporary society. According to Gillian Rose, the "visual is central to the cultural construction of social life in contemporary Western societies" (2001, 6), while the view is associated with access to knowledge. This is particularly because vision is our most prominent and used sense and thus acts as a very important interface between the self and the surroundings. At the same time, Lefebvre concludes from various definitions that landscape is the "natural environment as it was framed" from the formlessness of "pure continuity" (2006, 15). "Frames of window and screen are" both rectangular "membranes between 'inside' and 'outside'" and provide a view of "a portion of the world in space and time" (Richardson and Wilken, 2012, 186). And therefore, the landscape is "a particular gaze that requires a frame", which turns "nature" into "culture", and "land into landscape" (Lefebvre, 2006, 15). The frame is a boundary that brings form to the view and gives it meaning.

For the music video *Shiori*, there are two different "tonal montages" (Eisenstein, 1949, 75) constructed through colours and framing. The urban landscape (0:25) is dark, with a slight tint of grey-blue. It has a relatively dull colour tone, while the city is covered with rain and fog to create a relatively gloomy mood where things are static. The signs are in neon colours, mostly pink, but also red and yellow, forming a contrast with the dark background while giving a dystopian feeling to the city. The shots of the city are also mostly framed to show only a small portion of the space. In contrast, the ruined landscape of the past (1:20) is very bright and sunny, with a vibrant colour palette containing the typical blue sky with white clouds, green grassland, red and yellow buildings, buses, and flowers, with toys in multiple colours. There is a much more diverse range of shots, showing close-ups of a book or the child's eye, all the way to a zoomed-out view of the sky island from afar. The basic construction of these two different landscapes creates a stark contrast between the nonchalant and monotonous urban space, and the mystifying and curious ruin of the past.



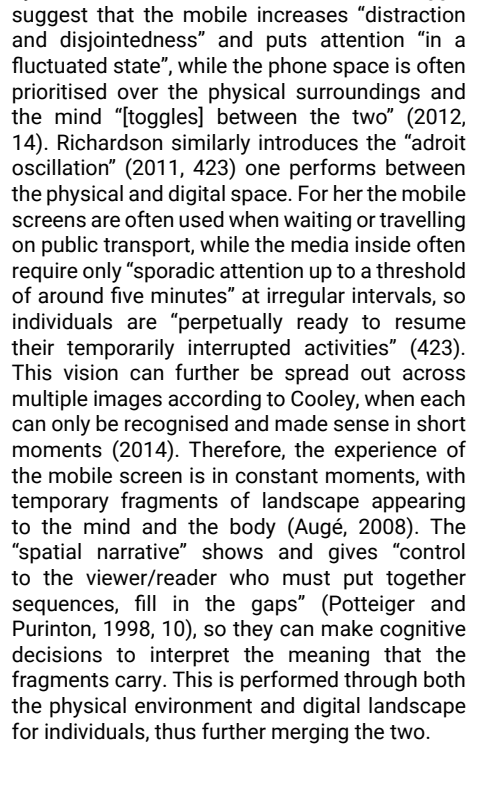
The mobile screen allows access to places different from one's geographical location, acting as the boundary between the physical location and digital space. The televisual space is "between a screen and its surroundings (including the viewer) and/or the space that appears on the screen" (Cooley, 2004, 137). This screen not only acts as a marker and determinant of place, but also forms a temporary connection that interweaves the physical and the digital until they become indistinguishable from one another (Couldry and McCarthy, 2004; Richardson, 2011; Rose, 2001). Therefore, the mobile screen "[transcends] geometrical space" "in relation to [its] geographical, social, and interpersonal environment" (Bull, 2004, 288), so our view of the double landscape is simultaneously "the society itself", "a part of society" and "a means of unification" (Debord, 1994, 12) between the two. The individual is thus able to access "the remotest parts of the outside world" (Augé, 2008, VIII), enlarging their perceived "prospect" (Appleton, 1998, 262), thus making this experience of multiple landscapes inherently desirable.

The music video is often viewed on a mobile device through YouTube. Since the majority of humans live in cities now, while they are the most well-connected with the internet, it can be assumed that most people who watch these videos are in or travelling through an urban landscape. Therefore, the urban space built inside the music video coincides with the physical location and position of its audience, while they are brought to the ruined landscape with the protagonist. Similar to our use of the phone as an interface, the music video employs water as the boundary between the urban and ruined landscape. Historically, the "mysteriousness of water" provides a perceptual "break" and "discontinuity" of space (Augé, 2008, 73) for pilgrimage or walks. In the video, the protagonist travels through the water between different landscapes. At 0:14, the red surface of the book floats from the top right to the bottom left of the screen right in front of the camera, revealing the protagonist falling into the water. The reverse of the scene is present at 1:49, where the broken teddy bear carries the protagonist to fall into the sky and then water, where the protagonist floats up from the water in a bear-shaped bubble. From these two scenes, it seems like the city is located on the dark side, under the water, while the ruin is located on top of the water. However, this is contradicted by the 3:33 scene which is a repetition of the 0:14 scene, except the child, or the past self of the protagonist falls into the water, and this time the protagonist carries his past self to swim up instead of the bear. At 3:37 they both float out of the water up to an upside-down city, indicating the location of the two places are not spatial (one on top of the other). At 2:02 there is a further scene of a plan view of water dripping from the tap to the sink filled with more water, which ripples to the sky of the ruined landscape and is connected to a plan view of the child sitting on a chair looking up 2:03. This shows that the two worlds are reflections of each other through water, and therefore in each of them the other one would be upside down. The complicated spatial relationship of the two different landscapes mimics the one with the physical and digital landscape that the screen itself carries.



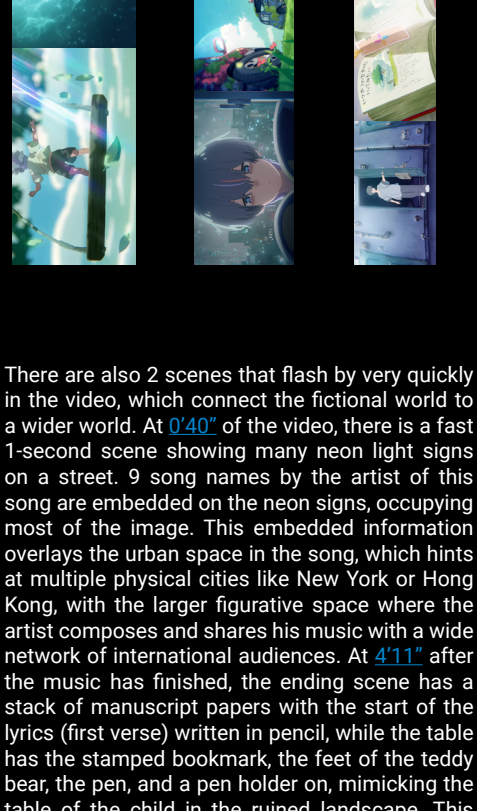
The medium of the mobile screen creates a multisensory experience, which transcends the spectacle and engages an active experience of the landscape. Debord mentions the limitation of vision, stating that even when we can hear the sound as we see, the spectacle is still not perceptible directly, and has a certain degree of inaccessibility, independent from human activities (1994). This distancing of the viewer and the landscape has been countered by the mobile screen. Windows or fixed screens create a "frontal" relationship between the body and the screen, where the body is visually attached to the screen in a certain position and physically immobile, removed from other activities "physically or cognitively" (Richardson and Wilken, 2012, 188). On the contrary, the mobile screen antagonises this static experience, being "frequently on the move, on-the-street" (Richardson, 2011, 422). The mobile phone simultaneously contains sound, visuals, and textures, which brings a tactile vision that is more visceral, involving an active and responsive experience of individuals in their surroundings (Cooley, 2004). Cooley further claims that the screen provides a practice of looking with opacity and tangibility, where the objects framed by the screen "converge or fuse with the screen" (143) instead of being on the other side like seeing through a window. This difference allows us to focus on the content presented by the screen rather than being distant from it. She also proposes the idea of "fit", which is an active engagement between the hand and the MSD ("mobile screen device"), where the "surfaces of the palm and the MSD... interpenetrate" (137). This dynamic and physical interaction with continuous small movements of the hand provides "access and [active engagement]" (141) between the user, their surrounding landscape, and the space inside the screen. The phone is further always held "close to the body or stays on the body surface" (Richardson, 2011, 420), which provides pleasure, comfort, intimacy, and familiarity for the users, thus making these movements habitual and intuitive, providing a sensual experience of landscape.

The music video is both viewed and heard by the audience, through the mobile device. Due to the size of a standard phone, the phone is likely held at a close distance to the eyes to view the moving images. In the music video, the transition method between two worlds other than water is the eye opening, followed by a scene in his room is repeated at 1:42 and 3:39, showing a very close and intimate view of the body. It is almost like the scenes of the ruined landscape are in a dream, or visual construction of a scene in the protagonist's mind, just like when we view the screen. At 2:18, the scene of the child's eye looking through the hole of the post box is followed by the eye of the protagonist, viewed in the mirror. And at 2:40, the scene is embedded in the protagonist's eye where we can see the bear with the bookmark on its lap, and his/her eyelid blinking then see the bear in its full form back in time on grasses. The scene right before and right after the transition is of the protagonist in the past and future self, with the same pose of trying to reach out to the bear. The future self has the shadow of rain projected on him, while the past self is in motion, with his hair and clothes being blown by the wind. These overlays connect the body of the protagonist in the future and the past, while the audiences feel like they are seeing through the eyes of the protagonist and his past self, therefore merging their physical senses, and participating in the video.



While the experience of landscape through the mobile screen is active, it is also a form of "diffused, or distracted, engagement" (Cooley, 2004, 149), which is put together by our consciousness. Wilken and Goggin suggest that the mobile increases "distraction and disjointedness" and puts attention "in a fluctuated state", while the phone space is often prioritised over the physical surroundings and the mind "toggles between the two" (2012, 14). Richardson similarly introduces the "adroit oscillation" (2011, 423) one performs between the physical and digital space. For her the mobile screens are often used when waiting or travelling on public transport, while the media inside often require only "sporadic attention up to a threshold of around five minutes" at irregular intervals, so individuals are "perpetually ready to resume their temporarily interrupted activities" (423). This vision can further be spread out across multiple images according to Cooley, when each can only be recognised and made sense in short moments (2014). Therefore, the experience of the mobile screen is in constant moments, with temporary fragments of landscape appearing to the mind and the body (Augé, 2008). The "spatial narrative" shows and gives "control to the viewer/reader who must put together sequences, fill in the gaps" (Potteiger and Purinton, 1998, 10), so they can make cognitive decisions to interpret the meaning that the fragments carry. This is performed through both the physical environment and digital landscape for individuals, thus further merging the two.

The music video is 4 minutes 26 seconds, just under the 5-minute average attention threshold of people on a phone. In the music video, every single scene is shorter than 5 seconds, while the story oscillates between the ruined landscape and the urban landscape mainly for 7 times, while the beginning, middle transition, and end have flashes of the scene quickly placed in between one another. At 0:15 the protagonist falls into the water, but a 3-second scene (0:19-0:21) of his past self running toward the shore in the ruined landscape is inserted in between. Later just before the teddy bear brings him into the ruined landscape there are 2 flashes of his past self and the teddy bear sitting on top of the remains of a car at 0:53 and 0:58. Similarly, after the protagonist wakes up in the city at 3:39 and runs up the stairs, a scene of the book in quite a new condition with the ruined world inside, with the writing "someday I want to try going to this world" is inserted for 1 second at 3:46-3:48 and his past self writing in the book at 3:43 and 3:49-3:51. The flashing of worlds gives us a conceptual connection, which can be interpreted as the future self picking up his past dream of curiosity and interest in the world, so it turns into a sunny place in the end. The merging of the two worlds can be seen as an "overtone montage" (Eisenstein, 1949, 78) that synthesises the other montages while overlaying a comprehensive tone throughout the video, showing the overarching theme of reconciliation with oneself.



There are also 2 scenes that flash by very quickly in the video, which connect the fictional world to a wider world. At 0:40 of the video, there is a fast 1-second scene showing many neon light signs on a street. 9 song names by the artist of this song are embedded in the neon signs, occupying most of the image. This embedded information overlays the urban space in the song, which hints at multiple physical cities like New York or Hong Kong, with the larger figurative space where the artist composes and shares his music with a wide network of international audiences. At 4:11 after the music has finished, the ending scene has a stack of manuscript papers with the start of the lyrics (first verse) written in pencil, while the table has the stamped bookmark, the feet of the teddy bear, the pen, and a pen holder on, mimicking the table of the child in the ruined landscape. This further overlay the past self who was writing the letters on this table with the singer, who also wrote the piece of music and its lyrics. The trace of the artist is embedded through very obscure fragments of the piece, so only audiences who have knowledge about these specific pieces can make the connection, where the protagonist, the artist, and the audience become one.



Therefore, through the exploration of the framed view, the mobile screen overlays multiple layers of digital and physical landscapes for individuals to experience. The tactile quality of the mobile phone brings a closer experience of space, while the fragmented experience allows a polyphony of places where multiple landscapes can co-exist and interact in the same location. These landscapes inform the human behaviours in space, and are constructed by their activities and rituals, while being in constant dialogue with each other.

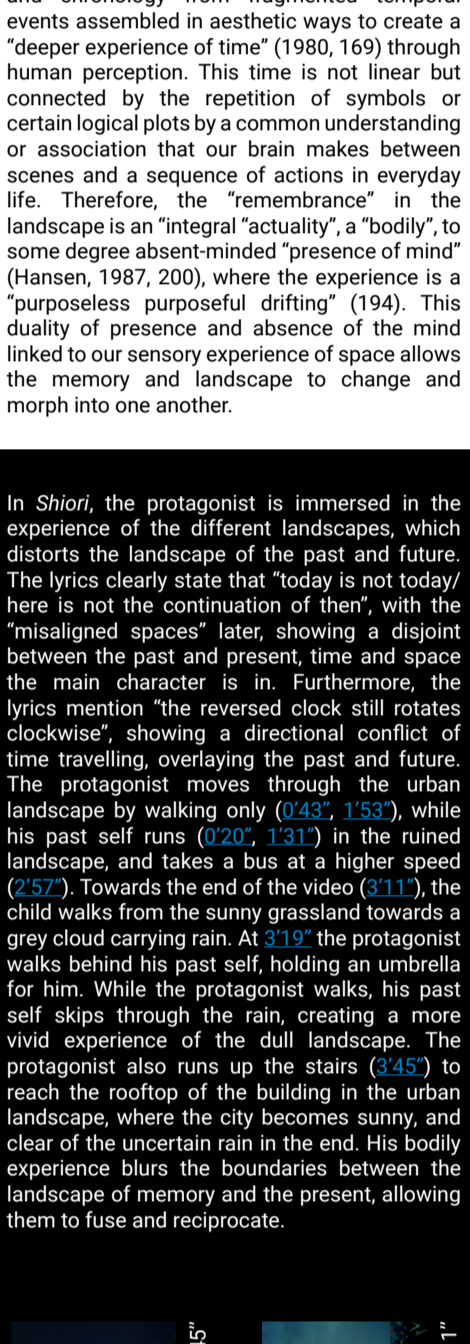
03

Time and Memory

Landscape carries multiple meanings through time, and thus embeds into and shapes human memory. This is through particular objects or scenes with trans-cultural and quite permanent associations, as well as bodily and sensory experiences. This relationship between memory and landscape has been shifted by mobile technology, where the associations and experiences have been freed from their physical place and become more abstract, being more permanent and temporal at the same time.

The landscape has many symbolic meanings which connect different times, with elements triggering and embedding our memory. "Landscape is the work of the mind", "built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock" (Schama, 1995, 7). Koshar similarly explains the mnemonic qualities of landscapes and objects in them in the concept of "memory landscapes" (2000,9). Therefore, memory and landscape are intertwining and indivisible concepts. Landscape "[turns] time into space or [expresses] time through space" (Stewart and Strathern, 2003, 4), and makes memory concrete. Therefore, the landscape is a physical manifestation of time in itself. Multiple scholars mention the landscape's ability to transcend time, connect the past to the present, and inform a future (Stewart and Strathern, 2003; Schama, 1995; Augé, 2008; Nardi and Drozdowski, 2013; Domanska, 2005; Lefebvre, 2006). Elements in the landscape such as "trees, rocks, ground, weather" "can serve as emblems in a narrative" (Potteiger and Purinton, 1998, 6) and be associated with certain "experiences, events" (10) or concepts. These symbolic elements (Lefebvre, 2006; Sather-Wagstaff, 2017) of landscape contain "myths and memories" that can have long "enduring values" (Stewart and Strathern, 2003, 10) and across different cultures. They can provide "moments of recognition", when they "suddenly [expose their] connections to an ancient and peculiar vision of the forest, the mountain, or the river" (16). Some of these ancient memories of the landscape are common because they were "crucial for survival, both practical and ritual" (Thompson, 2000, 128). For example, water is associated with dreams, imagination, anonymity, life, consciousness and secrets; while forests are settled, active, resourceful and lively (Schama, 1995). The "irresistible cycle of vegetation" in the land also transforms death into "the process of rebirth" which implies "immortality" (Schama, 1995, 6). When these symbols, including sound, light, and meanings, are rhythmically repeated to construct the landscape (Karim, 2003, 9).

Landscapes and other symbols in the music video link at different times. Weather is used as one of the main elements (Potteiger and Purinton, 1998) that differentiates and joins the two distinct landscapes in the music video. In the lyrics, rain "[conceals] tomorrow", and hinders the ability of the protagonist to see "the important things". In the visuals accordingly, it is used as a device to hide and obstruct views (01) in the urban landscape, while the ruined landscape is always sunny (02). The sunny weather of the past shows a sense of nostalgia and our urge to beautify the memories with clear legibility, compared to the present covered with rain, revealing the uncertainty and confusion towards the future. The book (0'14", 2'12") and the teddy bear (0'54", 2'41") are anchors that exist in both landscapes in the music video, which are new in the ruined landscape, and worn down in the urban landscape. The child in the land and the teenager in the city look like the same person, thus one can infer that the ruined landscape exist before urban landscape in time. The element of water embodies transformation and dreams as explained in 02 [The View and the Frame](#) (0'25"), and the tree is used as a symbol for rebirth and immortality as Schama explained (1995). The ruined landscape is partly from the book called "Future World" in the video, which is a Buddhist idea, usually referring to the world after death for reincarnation. This landscape (3'25") is marked by a floating island with a big tree containing a clock's surface, denoting this natural cyclical time. Therefore, symbols of landscape including the weather, water, and trees provide characters for the different worlds.



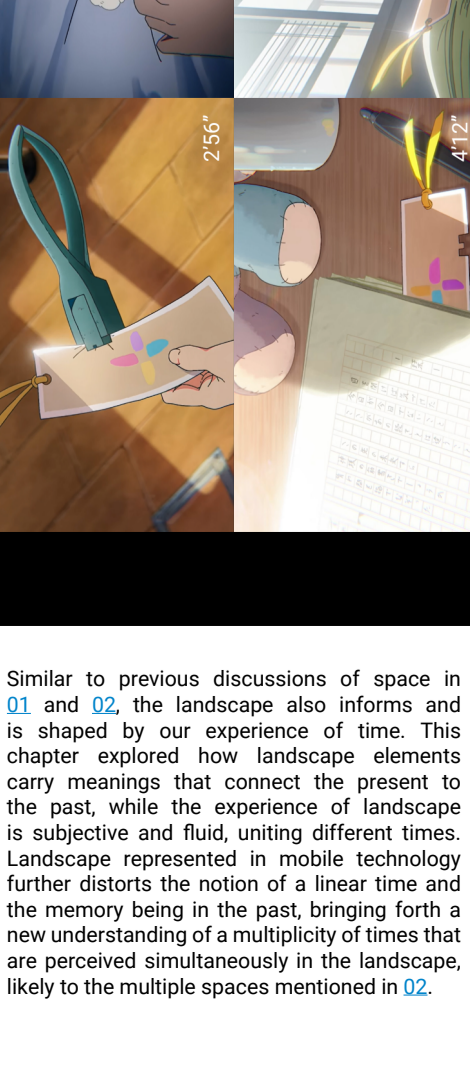
Memory is sensorial and experiential at the same time, thus our non-linear visual, auditory, and tactile experience of the land is a process of individual and collective memory. It is an ongoing process which is "fluids" and open to a diverse number of readings" (Nardi and Drozdowski, 2013, 431). The memory landscape associate land with narratives through the acts of remembering, which can be rituals and experience in the landscape or a certain view or feeling (Potteiger and Purinton, 1998.). These experiences are a sensorial exposition of memory with visual, auditory, and haptic semiotic markers (Koshar, 2000; Nardi and Drozdowski, 2013). This is defined as a polysensory experience by Sather-Wagstaff (2017) which constructs dynamic memories and histories from interacting with landscapes. Furthermore, this experience of the memory landscape is not a continuous one, but one that's similar to Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative time. The experience contains an illusion of sequence and chronology from fragmented temporal events assembled in aesthetic ways to create a "deeper experience of time" (1980, 169) through human perception. This time is not linear but connected by the repetition of symbols or certain logical plots by a common understanding or association that our brain makes between scenes and a sequence of actions in everyday life. Therefore, the "remembrance" in the landscape is an "integral-actuality", a "bodily", to some degree, 2000) "presence of mind" (Hansen, 1987, 200), where the experience is a "purposeless purposeful drifting" (194). This duality of presence and absence of the mind linked to our sensory experience of space allows the memory and landscape to change and morph into one another.

In *Shiori*, the protagonist is immersed in the experience of the different landscapes, which distorts the landscape of the past and future. The lyrics clearly state that "today is not today/ here is not the continuation of then", with the "misaligned spaces" later, showing a disjoint between the past and present, time and space the main character is in. Furthermore, the lyrics mention "the reversed clock still rotates clockwise", showing a directional conflict of time travelling, overlaying the past and future. The protagonist moves through the urban landscape by walking (0'43", 1'53"), while his past self runs (0'20", 1'31") in the ruined landscape, and takes a bus at a higher speed (2'57"). Towards the end of the video (3'11"), the child walks from the sunny grassland towards a grey cloud carrying rain. At 3'19" the protagonist walks behind his past self, holding an umbrella for him. While the protagonist walks, his past self skips through the rain, creating a more vivid experience of the dull landscape. The protagonist also runs up the stairs (3'45") to reach the rooftop of the building in the urban landscape, where the city becomes sunny, and clear of the uncertain rain in the end. His bodily experience blurs the boundaries between the landscape of memory and the present, allowing them to fuse and reciprocate.



Media change our experience of landscape and alter nostalgia and sense of home by bringing a mobile experience of landscape that embeds memories. Historically, different media such as "texts, stories, affects and multi-voicalities" have been "interwoven in holistic understandings and manifestations of situated (or emplaced) memory" (Nardi and Drozdowski, 2013, 434), and therefore are inseparable from the memory landscape. Therefore, mobile technology with digital media also erases "limits and boundaries of time/place, memory/imagination", which redefines memory and "[adds] to the dense entanglements of past, present and future" (Nardi and Drozdowski, 2013, 435). Through the ability to take, store, and view photographs and films, the mobile phone enables both apparent spontaneity and truthfulness to record temporal visions in time, while creating a bottom-up collective memory where individuals select, capture, and edit their lives as much as possible (Rose, 2001; Thompson, 2000). Meanwhile, the mobile phone is connected to the digital cyberspace, which transforms the physical space into a temporal one, with the capacity similar to "the whole electro-magnetic field" (Armitage and Roberts, 2002, 159). Although this space is also exclusive in its occupancy, it has a much larger area than the physical and allows for a mass amount of information. The mass storage deadened the need for memory for survival in ancient times, but has simultaneously created a more spontaneous, infinite and permanent type of memory (Thompson, 2000). Furthermore, the movement with access to cyberspace and familiar landscapes through mobile phones brings "a sense of 'home' when they are not 'at home'" (Stewart and Strathern, 2005, 5), thus transcending the presence and the physical landscape by the "stretching of social relations across time and space" (Couldry and McCarthy, 2004, 3). This creates a form of supraterritoriality that exists not dependent on physical locations but rather the "resonance of cultural practices" (Karim, 2003, 10). At the same time, this landscape is a "simultaneous experience of a perpetual present and an encounter with the self" (Augé, 2008, 84). Thus the mobile landscape in digital devices carries a "dialectical sense of belonging and alienation, self and system" (Couldry and McCarthy, 2004, 3), which transcends physical space and time.

The real and imaginative times are merged, thus creating a new way of memory. There is a paradox between the ruined landscape being both the memory of the protagonist, and the "Future World" of the book. At 3'44" a page of this book is revealed, with illustrations of the grassland with stone monuments, blue sky, the floating island with one huge tree, and a pinwheel. The floating island dominated by one ancient tree has a reference to the representation of the island of Laputa in Gulliver's Travels (Swift, 1726) by Hayao Miyazaki's Castle in the Sky (1986). In the original story Laputa is a centre of research for science and arts without practical use, while the kingdom they rule below, Balnibarbi, is a rocky landscape turfed with grasses. It is a ruined place, and the island throws rocks down to control this space under. (Swift, 1726) The illustration of the book and the ruined landscape in the video (3'25") is a portrayal of this fictional space, while elements of childhood (toys, sweets, stationaries) are intermingled with it. The book act enables the overlay of past and future memory onto the urban space in the narrative of *Shiori*, and is a symbol for the mobile devices in how the audience experiences this music video. Our immersive experience of this narrative as a fictional landscape through the mobile device similarly distorts our memory of physical landscapes (01, 02), while the linear time becomes irrelevant.



Additionally, the relationship between different times is constantly changing. The book with a bookmark (3'44") is also used as a symbol for connecting the different times (02). The song name, 栞(Shi/ro/ri), is literally the bookmark, while signifying a guide or an instruction document. The term is initially from the ritually of folding branches as a wayfinding technique in landscape, and therefore the character has two "dry" on the top and a "wood" on the bottom (Nihonkanjinōryōkukenteikyōkai, n.d.). The bookmark is used as a ticket for the child on the bus to the island in the video (2'56"), enabling him to break out of his ordinary world and head to the island in the fictional world of the book. Furthermore, the bookmark appears in both the urban and ruined landscape in the video inside the book. However, when it shows up twice in the urban landscape (0'57", 3'41") which is supposed to be later in time than the ruined landscape, the bookmark is not stamped. Therefore, it doesn't carry the trace of the child's trip in the past. *Shiori* can be also written as tide in Kanji (Rutsuseisakuinkai, n.d.) as well, thus connecting the marking of landscape for a return in the future with the perpetual motion of water that erases that trace. This self-destructive sign is related to how the trace of this virtual journey in the past stays in the ruined landscape but never carries through to a later time. The merging of real and imaginative time with a lack of constant traces confuses the audiences, and produces a dream-like zone where the past and future are interchangeable.

Similar to previous discussions of space in 01 and 02, the landscape also informs and is shaped by our experience of time. This chapter explored how landscape elements carry meanings that connect the present to the past, while the experience of landscape is subjective and fluid, uniting different times. Landscape represented in mobile technology further distorts the notion of a linear time and the memory being in the past, bringing forth a new understanding of a multiplicity of times that are perceived simultaneously in the landscape, likely to the multiple spaces mentioned in 02.

04

Epilogue

This essay explored how the human experience of time and space has been modified by the new mobile technology through academic theories and the analysis of the music video *Shiori*. In the landscape, space is emptied of its original social functions, while a multiplicity of place and time are overlaid to create a new experience for the people.

In conclusion, the analysis of *Shiori* demonstrates how the human experience of landscape has been isolated and multiplied simultaneously, through the interrelation and symbiosis between the time-space of the landscape and human activities, interactions, and interpretations. Technology is situated in between the two and also forms smaller cycles with landscape and human perception, where it influences and is shaped by both of them. Therefore, to study any technology, its effect on and by land and people should always be carefully examined. And in turn, to research any landscapes, the subjectivity and apparatus for interaction are quintessential to comprehending their totality. Thus the understanding of space, time, people, and technology, is always interdisciplinary with a complex interwoven network of knowledge.



05

Bibliography

List of Figures

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Image from Mafumafu's official website

(Mafumafu, 2023)

01_Solitary Travel. p.18

Diagram by author describing the sound in

Shiori surrounding the audience.

All other images are screenshots from the music

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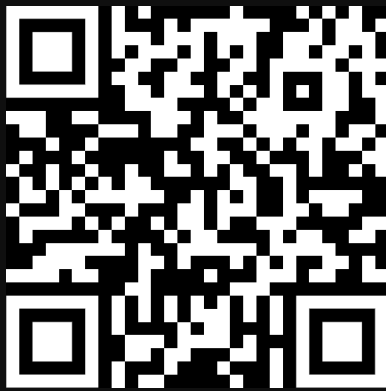
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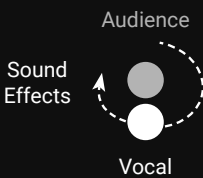
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06

Appendix



Acoustic Guitar



Electric Guitar



Bass



Synthesiser



Drums

歌詞

栞 / まふまふ

目を開けば気づけた
今日が今日でないこと
ここがあの続きとは違うこと

この先の未来すら
神様の筋書きでしょうか
晴れ間を指でなぞった

ああ ずれた空間が 在りがちな
雨の匂いを呼び込んで
ねぇ きっと答えだって
こんな両手じゃ溢れてしまうのに

逆さまの時計は右回りのまま
今日を残した栞もない夢
何回どうしたって
目を擦れば笑えないボクたちは
明日を遮るような霧雨に濡れて
大事なものを見間違っていくんだ
すれ違う君の 傘を探して未来世

忘れかけた言葉を
手繰り寄せる毎日は
数の合わないパズルみたいだ

今もボクの心は
君を探しているから
それは君の心を
見つけられずにいるってこと

なんだって
どうやって繋いだらいい?
涙はどうやって拭いたらいい?
君の指先じゃなくちゃ
何ひとつ埋まらないのにな

世界が君を爪弾きにしていく
もう一度読み返す
君がどこか遠くへ行かないように

夢じゃないならどうか覚めないでください
こんな世界と泣かないで お願い
目に焼き付いている
君があの日失くした青い空へ
明日を遮るような霧雨に濡れて
大事なものを見間違っていくんだ
すれ違う君の 傘を探して未来世

駆けだして 駆けだして
振り返りはしないよ
君に伝えたいことがあるんだ

Lyrics

Shiori/Mafumafu

Translation by Author

Opened my eyes and found out
Today is not today
Here is not the continuation of then

Even the future ahead
Has been scripted by God?
Tracing the gap clouds with my fingers

The misaligned spaces tend to exist
Inviting the smell of rain
Even the answers would
Fall out of hands like this

The reversed clock still rotates clockwise
The dream doesn't leave any marks for the remains of today
No matter what or how many times it takes
We can't laugh if we rub our eyes
Getting wet from the drizzles that seem to conceal tomorrow
Starting to mistaken the important things
Crossing over, searching for your umbrella in the future world

Collecting and accumulating
The forgotten words everyday
Like a puzzle with missing pieces

Now my heart is still
Looking for you
Which means your heart
Is still not yet to be found

Whatever and
How to connect?
How to wipe the tears?
It has to be your fingertips
Not even satisfied anything.

The world flicks you
One more time, read again
So that you don't go somewhere far away

If it's not a dream please don't wake me up
Don't cry for this kind of world, please
Burnt into my eyes
The blue sky you lost that day
Getting wet from the drizzles that seem to conceal tomorrow
Starting to mistaken the important things
Crossing over, searching for your umbrella in the future world

Start running away, start running away
Don't look back
I have something to tell you