LOOK THROUGH WATER AS WE LOOK THROUGH AIR
(Cremona)

A small city full of emptiness, shadow absences in the sun. I follow my nose from church to church, damp frescoes to chipped saints: smoke and wax, electric candles and patterned reliquaries below heavy ceilings. Beyond brick walls, private gardens and tall trees, in the squares dust and benches for us to share. I am lost in sunlight and market debris, in soundscapes and sound worlds, home-made films, pigeon talk and cathedral bells, eurodisco and late night chat.

Clear dark sky sends cool air into my hotel room. Space and time and the visual, Bill Viola’s slow-moving figures and the sounds of distance, of silence, the close-miked today; the sounds of steps and voices, cat purrs and paintbrushes, the echoes of a tunnel in time, characters who cannot see each other. Everyone knows someone else we almost know: zoom to rain on the windscreen, pan out to watch the clouds go by.

The market scaffolds itself into being, disappears by afternoon, so what remains can be swept up. Everyday perception is disrupted: five faces in a dark room, digital glitches and delay disrupt our point-of-view. I am above it all, immersed in it all, a visitor frozen in a hotel window, four floors up with no-one in the dark to pray for me.

Is it art or a documentary, a provocation or the avant-garde? What do we gain from drilling down in isolation? I like the shelves of found objects – glass and china, stone debris – in the museum of archaeology. Kingsley climbed the tower past the pendulum, swinging straight as the world turns. Traffic noise fades, frescos change colour, there are no questions from the audience. We are all immersed in sound and sunshine, concentrating on the view outside and the audio-visual equipment's hum.

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