

There is nothing to see here...

To “tune in” to *Figment*, a durational webcam project installed at the public cemetery where Andy Warhol is buried (www.warhol.org/figment), the viewer calibrates their expectations. The 24-hour live video feed lends itself to the activity of slow looking or, perhaps more accurately stated, serves as an occasion for relaxed attention. As a piece of online visual culture, it fittingly appeals to Andy’s own rhetoric of “making nothing happen” and indeed, *there is nothing to see here*.¹

Inattentively watching one afternoon, I heard the sounds of car doors and footsteps. Something was about to happen and *that something was happening* was utterly unfamiliar. Moments later, two women came into view, walking towards Andy’s grave. . . . [Section of action removed.] I was watching one of the women closely. Intently. Then a moment of self-consciousness or self-awareness suddenly came over her. Without breaking step, she looked up quickly, flashed a smile into the camera, then walked out of view. I blinked and smiled wide. It was only a small performance but, in context, was incredible. In the words of Virginia Woolf, “the moment was stabilized, stamped like a coin indelibly among a million that slipped by imperceptibly.”² A barely visible gesture, *an apparitional act*, sent from there to here.

The conditions of *Figment* are right for creating a heightened rhythmic silence. The stationary surveillance camera arbitrarily cycles through the same three zooms. Its gaze is indiscriminate—not

activated by motion nor curious enough to follow a subject. Day and night, the camera keeps rolling, staring adrift, never adequately framing any particular headstone. The viewing experience is like watching a field recording. The camera bounces when the wind blows. The microphone captures the ambient sounds of the setting. You can hear the distant road noise, the vernacular chatter of birds, and leaves falling on the ground. As a slightly amplified version of the ordinary, *Figment* works oddly and surprisingly well. Each moment arrives anew, subtly and quietly transforming on screen.

or HERE

1. Warhol once said, “I make nothing happen. Wherever I go. I can tell when one of them [the office] is glad to see me walk in the door, because something’s happening and they can’t wait for me to make nothing happen.” Andy Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol: From A to B and Back Again* (New York: Harcourt, 1975), 50.
2. Virginia Woolf, “Street Haunting: A London Adventure (1930)” (n.p.: Symonds Press, 2013), 6.