

Time has operated unusually for many of us over the past few years; slowly attenuated, strangely accelerated, or slipping backwards and forward in our memory. The regimented tick of seconds and minutes of Greenwich meantime seems incommensurate with our inner durations. In Jeena Shin's twin series of paintings, this feeling for alternate temporalities reflects a *holding pattern* of a kind. From 2020 to 2022 Shin has been living closely with her paintings, while periodically our exterior lives dissolve and we find ourselves doing and undoing. Shin's forms hold us carefully in time as each figure in a painting holds the trace of the figure before and the potential next step in the sequence. In another sense, Shin is also held to her template's unfurling; the time before, the time now, the time after, exist simultaneously in her painting system.

Time-delay is everywhere in nature. When the travel time of a signal is long, a system's past effects the present temporal flow; this is understood as *time-delay* in Physics. Such delay exists in the cosmos but also in the neurological function of our brains, in daily traffic flow, in economic activities, in population dynamics, biota and abiota, soundwaves and technical systems.<sup>1</sup> The hyphen in time-delay points to a space between signal and effect, where complex relations emerge. In 1964 New York-based astrophysicist Irwin Shapiro predicted time-delay or the 'Shapiro effect'. He showed how a radar signal traveling from the Earth to Venus and back would be delayed by about 200 microseconds due to the presence of the Sun. In this cosmological time interval there are an infinite number of variations, or infinite dimensional state space.

The space of Shin's painted canvas also contains countless variations on a form that originates from one historical source in her present painting system. The DNA of the paintings in this exhibition is a folded rectangle of A4 paper, or the 'fold model' that first appeared as a double-page spread in *Pavement* magazine in 2004. The paintings from this template developed into the exhibition *Two Fold* at Show gallery in Wellington in the same year. For almost two decades the fold model has dwelled inside Shin's paintings; an endless spring of formal constellations over a passage of time.

The paintings each contain the anticipatory action of one template form guiding the placement of the next in a generative process. They are moving images, appearing to hesitate then press on; their animacy tied to an autopoiesis of a kind, capable of reproducing and maintaining temporal impetus.<sup>2</sup> Shin watches curiously at how the figure-ground relations in each image are revealed during the painting process. That is to say, she doesn't predetermine the composition of a painting before she starts. The forms elide and slide into each other, unexpectedly splintering and creating irregular 'left-overs' that all have an equal right to manifest in the system.

In the first series Time-delay I-IV there is a clear definition between one form and the next and the figure is clearly visible against the ground. Each form is a shadow memory of the one placed ahead. In the second series Time-delay 1-4 the interval of the layering is altered producing translucent echoes. The largest painting Time-delay is a time-lapse image at half intervals of the initial template-unit. Small shifts in placement become more dramatic over time. Time is displaced, held, let go.

The 'fold model' is only one starting point, a container for our own perceptions of time-delay, the self-feedback systems that gradually give rise to life's chaotic motion. We might measure our chronoception in unfolding moments, in the unstable hyphen, in the duration or interval between successive events.<sup>3</sup> This time now is stitched into a continuum where the future circles into the past.

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<sup>1</sup> Töpfer, J.D., Sigurdsson, H., Pickup, L. *et al.* Time-delay Polaritonics. *Commun Phys* **3**, 2 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s42005-019-0271-0>

<sup>2</sup> Maturana Humberto R. and Francisco J. Varela. *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living*. *Boston Studies in the Philosophy and History of Science*. 1980. [First published in Chile under the title *De Maquinas y Seres Vivos* in 1972]

<sup>3</sup> The study of time perception or chronoception is a field within psychology, cognitive linguistics and neuroscience that refers to the subjective experience, or sense of time, which is measured by our own perception of the duration of the unfolding of events.