Although casual references to cinematic qualities in Joyce's work are commonplace and although extended discussions of Joyce and the cinema have appeared, significant affinities between "Circe" and film have remained largely unnoted. I will discuss those affinities and along the way will describe a moving picture show that Bloom once saw.

Even in his teens Joyce demonstrated an interest in projections upon screens. Among his earliest efforts at fiction that we know of are the "Silhouettes" he composed at Belvedere College. In the one recalled by Stanislaus, the narrator stands in a dark street before "a lowered window blind illuminated from within" (JJII 50). He watches the action projected on this blind (the artist who will follow Homer is already playing with sight and sightlessness) as a burly male figure staggers and then strikes the figure of a woman.

In the "Ithaca" episode of Ulysses, Stephen and Bloom stand in the dark looking at a different window, at a "visible, splendid sign" cast by a "paraffin oil lamp...projected on a screen of roller blind supplied by Frank O'Hara, window blind, curtain pole and revolving shutter manufacturer" (U-G 1547.1173-76). A lamp, a screen, and a revolving shutter, of course, put us well on the way to cinema.

As has long been recognized, we find references to cinema throughout the Wake—including the inevitable real/reel pun in my title (FW 64.25-26)—and more than once we encounter what Andrew Sarris would call "the primal screen." In the cinematic dumbshow of Book III, for example, "the man on the street can foresee the coming event" of the Earwickers in their bedroom, "casting such shadows to Persia's blind" that their intimacy is "photoflashing...far too wide" (FW 583.14-16).
There is no historical impediment to Leopold Bloom’s viewing a film in *Ulysses*. Although Ireland’s first movie theater, Joyce’s Cinematograph Volta, did not open until shortly before Christmas, 1909, films were shown from time to time after April 1896 in such Dublin locations as the Erin Variety Theater and the Rotunda (Werner 135, n. 6). Among the films that Bloom could have seen on or around Bloomsday was the most famous production of 1903, Edwin S. Porter’s *The Great Train Robbery*; more to his tastes, however, would have been another work by Porter of the same year, *Gay Shoe Clerk*, a film remembered for its close-up of a woman’s ankle and foot (Fell 36).

In “Nausicea,” we are told of one and possibly two or even three moving pictures that Bloom actually has seen. Soon after Gerty MacDowell limps away, Bloom muses as follows:

A dream of wellfilled hose. Where was that? Ah, yes. Mutoscope pictures in Capel street: for men only. Peeping Tom. Willie’s hat and what the girls did with it. Do they snapshot those girls or is it all a fake? (*U-G* 793.793–96)

Was there a movie titled “`A Dream of Wellfilled Hose,’” or is Bloom remembering something like *Gay Shoe Clerk*? (“Love’s young dream” for Bloom, we recall, was to be a shoefitter and “lace up... the dressy kid footwear satinlined, so incredibly impossibly small of Clyde Road ladies” [*U-G* 1149.2815–17].) Or is Bloom recalling a more direct experience, like the stylish woman he gazed at in “Lotus Eaters”? A tram deprived him of his glimpse of “silk flash rich stockings white” and left him with “flicker, flicker: the laceflare of her hat in the sun: flicker flick” (*U-G* 149.130, 139–40).

“Flickers” or “flicks” are names for moving pictures, of course, reflecting the uneven shutter speed of early projection apparatus. When he visited the Capel Street parlor sometime after the Mutoscopes were introduced in 1895, though the machines required no shutter, Bloom would have seen flicker aplenty, for the illusion of movement was produced by the “flickerbook principle.” “The peephole machine,” we read in Gerald Mast’s *Short History of the Movies*, used large photographs mounted on individual cards. The viewer flipped a series of cards with a hand crank.... The hand crank added to the viewer’s pleasure by allowing the motion to go either forward or back, to go slower, faster, or stop altogether. (25–26)
Given Bloom's masturbation in "Nausicaa," one sees the appropriateness here. Hand crank indeed! And in Bloomian—or Wak­ean—Latin, "mutoscope" gives us "dumbshow," the silent language we have just seen eloquently demonstrated between Gerty and Bloom. In "Circe," Stephen declares his quest for a "universal language" of gesture (U-G 933.105-06); as Eisenstein recognized when he quoted Stephen's remark for the epigraph to his 1932 essay "A Course in Treatment" (84), that quest was realized in the cinema as never before.

Impatient, Bloom could have cranked the Mutoscope faster; or to extend the experience, he could have turned more slowly, a procedure that would have increased the flicker produced by the dark intervals between the photographic images. Had Bloom viewed a film on a screen in some rented hall, he might also have seen the pace and even the direction of time altered, for Cecil Hepworth recalled how as an itinerant showman he amused audiences by turning his hand-cranked projector faster, slower, and in reverse, and by stopping films entirely to freeze actors in particularly awkward positions (37).

Even without playful showmen, early projection machinery was likely to produce tricks of its own; the English "scenics" he projected with his primitive apparatus, Hepworth said, were often so unsteady that "thus the Scriptures were fulfilled, and the mountains skipped about like young rams" (38). It is worth noting that the novelty of the medium, the whimsy of the showman, and mechanical problems in filming and projecting all conspired to make early cinema inherently self-reflexive to its audience.

One looked at the Mutoscope peepshow through a little eyepiece, but the reference to "Peeping Tom" in "Nausicaa" may refer not only to Bloom's voyeurism on the beach and in the Capel Street parlor but also to a Mutoscope production, for there was a 1901 film Peeping Tom made by George W. Smith. I do not know what this Peeping Tom saw, but Smith, who has been described as a "pioneer in the matter of sex," was also the creator of the 1899 The Kiss in the Tunnel and the 1900 Things Seen Through a Telescope (Shipman 23). The things seen through Smith's telescope include "a couple embracing and a woman undressing," reminding us, perhaps, that the twelve naked plaster sisters who make up the nine new muses of the New Bloomusalem include in their uncertain number "Astronomy for the People" (U-G 1063.1710).
Less conjectural than "Peeping Tom" and "a dream of wellfilled hose" is "Willie's hat and what the girls did with it." As George C. Pratt notes in his invaluable Spellbound in Darkness, the Willie's Hat that Bloom recalls was an 1897 release of the American Mutoscope-Biograph Company (18). Apparently considering the film too spicy for their regular catalogue, AM&B carried it only on their special "Club List." The film must have been in demand, for five years later, the company applied for a U.S. copyright in the only way possible at the time, by registering a so-called paper print, a series of still photographs of the entire film.

The entry on Willie's Hat in the catalogue of the paper print collection in the Library of Congress describes what Bloom saw:

In a drawing room, four young women are frolicking about. There is a silk hat on the table and one of the young women picks it up and holds it above her head, while the remaining three girls attempt to reach the hat by kicking high over their heads. One of them apparently overextends herself for she falls over, landing flat on her back as the film ends. (Niver 367)

The film plays off nicely against Gerty's reflections on Cissy Caffrey's running: "It would have served her right if she had tripped over something accidentally on purpose... and got a fine tumble. Tableau! That would have been a very charming exposé for a gentleman to witness" (U-G 773.484–88). The action of Willie's Hat, moreover, provides added appropriateness to Gerty's identification with women in "pictures cut out of papers of those skirtdancers and highkickers" (U-G 787.703–04), and to her "wondrous revealment half offered like those skirtdancers behaving so immodest before gentlemen looking" (U-G 789.731–33).

When Bloom recalls Willie's Hat, our text has him asking himself, "Do they snapshot those girls or is it all a fake?" (U-G 793.795–96) Earlier, Joyce wrote, "Do they snapshot those girls or is it imagination of some fellow?" (U-G 792.9). This is essentially the question readers ask themselves as they try to understand "Circe." What "really happens" and what is "the imagination of some fellow"?

The answer, of course, is that everything in "Circe" must be granted equal authenticity. So, too, cinema claims the same reality for everything it shows. As René Clair says, it "tends to present an action exactly as it would have been had it really taken place and had been photographed" (quoted in Barsacq 7). The effect is quite
that of the archetypal sequence of the wall being demolished in the Lumière First Program as it was run forward and backward. First we see workmen tug and strike at the wall until it comes down; then the wall rises up and reconstructs itself out of rubble. The law of gravity is demonstrated in the first sequence and repealed in the second, yet the ontological authority of each occurrence is unimpeachable.

As has long been recognized, the pantomime is a prime source for Ulysses and Finnegans Wake (on the very first page of Ulysses, Buck's "whistle of call" to transubstantiate lather into Christine body may echo a cue for a panto transformation). Especially in the theatrical "Circe"—with all of its costume changes and sound effects, and its sets and characters that appear and disappear and metamorphose—the pantomime is near at hand (Herr 158-61). Like many other popular arts, however, pantomime went directly into the cinema; and cinema—child of the Phantasmagoria and the Magick Lantern (and the Daedaleum, later patented as the Zoetrope [Fell 9])—is even more suggestive than is pantomime of the technic of "Circe," Hallucination, and the art of "Circe," Magic.

For all its ingenuity, the stage machinery of traps and flaps and pulleys cannot begin to duplicate the instantaneous appearances, disappearances, and transformations of cinema. Nor, Edward La Valley points out, can the panto stage engage us in the way the screen does by confirming our sense of a realistic spatial and temporal continuity in the very act of producing the impossible (147-48). From the day of Méliès to the present, we almost reflexively speak of film "magic," whether in the somber existentialism of Bergman or the witty fantasy of Fellini or the dreary effects cranked out for Steven Spielberg by Industrial Light and Magic.

Vachel Lindsay's pioneering 1915 The Art of the Moving Picture conveys what movies must have looked like to first-generation filmgoers like Joyce. In terms that repeatedly evoke "Circe," Lindsay discusses the "Hallowe'en witch-power" of cinema. He argues that our natural "yearning for personality in furniture" is wonderfully gratified in cinema (61). We recall the buttons that bip and the gas jets that speak in "Circe," and we recall as well the description of Shem as the man "writing the mystery of himsel [sic] in furniture" (FW 184.9-10).

"It is a quality...of all photoplays," Lindsay says, "that human beings tend to become dolls and mechanisms, and dolls and mechanisms tend to become human" (53). Note how quickly, he
continues, "the borderline between All Saints' Day and Hallowe'en can be crossed. Note how easily memories are called up and appear in the midst of the room. In any [photo]play whatever, you will find these apparitions and recollections" (65).

In "Circe," the Art designated by Joyce in the Linati schema as Visione animata fino allo scoppió—which Ellmann translates "Vision animated to the bursting point" (Appendix)—jumps and jerks and flickers through its astonishing transformations and wonders with time in a fashion analogous to the cinema. It is as magical as film first seemed to the audiences who turned cranks to see women undress or who gathered in cafés and store fronts to look at Fred Ott sneeze.

According to the well-known story, Méliès discovered the trick of stop-action substitution after his camera jammed while he was filming an omnibus on the street. Only in the darkroom did he discover what he had done by restarting the stalled mechanism: the omnibus turned before his eyes into a hearse, exactly the sort of transformation that is one of the striking features of "Circe" (and, incidentally, a Viconian transformation that Joyce would have relished).

Though the anecdote is probably apocryphal, it does explain the principle behind much of the trick photography that made Méliès's magic possible. Combining sex, horror, and sentimentality, elements of popular art Joyce was by no means above, Méliès used his discovery to produce marvels that repeatedly suggest Joyce's transformations (the films should be seen, of course, but they are lovingly described in John Frazer's Artificially Arranged Scenes). In The Wrestling Sextette, female Turkish wrestlers become men; in The Brahmin and the Butterfly, a fakir turns a cocoon into a flying butterfly-woman who turns into an Oriental princess who thereupon turns him into a caterpillar when he prostrates himself to kiss her foot; in The Famous Box Trick, one boy turns into two boys who fight each other (shades of Shem and Shawn); in One-Man Band, Méliès becomes six of himself, playing six different instruments; in the Temptation of St. Anthony, a man whom Joyce (and Luis Buñuel) would have understood contemplates a skull only to see Jesus materialize and then metamorphose into a half-clad woman. (Terry Ramsaye, the so-called first film-historian, aptly dubbed cinema "the Prayer Wheel of Wish." [lxx].)

Old Virag unscrews his head in "Circe" and tucks it under his arm, a commonplace miracle in films by Méliès and other film
pioneers (Ferdinand Zecca's Slippery Jim eludes capture by such stratagems as unscrewing his feet). And in film and "Circe" alike—to repeat—such wonders are perceived as "real" even while recognized as impossible.

In the tableaux of "Circe"—which Joyce called a "costume episode" (Letters I 148)—characters play elaborate roles, yet somewhere underneath, presumably, stands reality. A speech addressed to Bloom by the prostitute Zoe used to perplex me. "I hate a rotter that's insincere. Give a bleeding whore a chance" (U-G 1083.1977-78). One of Joyce's notes for "Ithaca" suggests what sort of sincerity Zoe may be asking for. "Fuck," the note reads, "only time people really sincere" (Herring 429).

Although Bella Cohen's is a place designed for such carnal sincerity, the closest we get to it is when Bloom and Shakespeare play Peeping Tom, looking through the keyhole at Molly and Blazes. "Show! Hide! Show!" (U-G 1237.3815), Bloom cries (giving the flicker effect, incidentally). "Circe" promises the truth in its foray into the red light district, a place where reality can be seen unveiled and without disguise—"the raw, naked truth," as film posters put such matters.

We discover disguises we had never dreamed of in "Circe," however. The camera, invisible, indifferent, paring its fingernails, was to reflect reality with a purity only a machine could boast, yet from the start, the movie camera projected dreams and illusion; like the whores of Nighttown, the cinema promises the real thing but turns tricks.

However radically costumes and roles change from film to film, we almost always see actors on the screen as themselves. The titles promise Max Linder Aviator, Boxer, Virtuoso, Toreador, King of the Circus—but whatever the role, Max is always Max. And so, too, whether Moses, Michelangelo, Gordon of Khartoum, or endorser of Ronald Reagan, Charlton Heston remains Charlton Heston. Similarly, Bloom appears in "Circe" in a myriad of costumes and roles, yet we have no trouble recognizing him even when he is sex-changed or transformed into a drooling Mongolian idiot. As in the cinema, the theater of "Circe" presents a place where individuality triumphs over all other roles.

Throughout the history of the cinema—but especially in its early days, as Panofsky points out—we confront instantly recognizable stereotypes (253-54). Playing Scotsman, Bloom must wear kilts;
playing schoolboy, he must wear Eton jacket. When Charles Laughton was proposed for the role of Bloom in a proposed film of *Ulysses*, Joyce suggested George Arliss instead (JII 654). In at least one respect Arliss might have been perfect. Because he played not only Disraeli and Rothchild (two of Bloom’s roles in “Circe”) but a host of other historical figures including Richelieu, Wellington, and Alexander Hamilton, publicity releases proclaimed Arliss “the man of a thousand faces”; “a thousand faces,” Hollywood quipped, “all the same.” Thus with Bloom (not to mention HCE): the hero with a thousand faces, all the same.

The magic of “Circe” is reminiscent not merely of the trick photography that has been a stock in trade of film from Méliès’s time to the present. Consider Maxim Gorki’s description of the documentary films in the First Program of the Lumière Brothers which he saw at the Nizhni-Novgorod Fair in 1896. “Last night I was in the Kingdom of Shadows,” Gorki begins.

Carriages coming from somewhere in the perspective of the picture are moving straight at you...; somewhere from afar people appear and loom larger as they come closer to you; in the foreground children are playing with a dog, bicyclists tear along, and pedestrians cross the street... All this moves, teems with life and, upon approaching the edge of the screen, vanishes somewhere beyond it. (407)

“You feel,” Gorki continues, “as though Merlin’s vicious trick is being enacted,” compressing buildings and dwarfing people.

Suddenly something clicks, everything vanishes, and a train appears on the screen. It speeds straight at you—watch out! It seems as though it will plunge into the darkness in which you sit...

But this, too, is but a train of shadows. (408)

In his description, which seems almost a Circean hallucination, Gorki catches the marvel that even so-called *actualité* presented to early filmgoers. They experienced a reality so palpable that they flinched as the train seemed to plunge toward them from the screen, a reality so persuasive that in 1904 one viewer, Nora Joyce, cried aloud after an escaping villain on the bioscope screen, “O, policeman, catch him” (Letters II 75). Yet at the same time, audiences gazed at a silent world of shadows where figures are mysteriously compressed or expanded and in which “suddenly something clicks” and images appear out of nowhere.
In "Circe," too, we see figures dramatically compressed and enlarged. And Joyce uses cuts abruptly to move not only from place to place but forward and back in a time continuum which is, as is necessarily the case in cinema, that "one continuous present tense" in which Shem writes (FW 185.36–186.1). "And time," Bloom muses, "well that's the time the movement takes" (U-G 805.988–89).

Even Joyceans who teach Ulysses year after year often cannot quite recall how terribly difficult the work is to first-time readers; harder still is it to imagine what movies must have first looked like to members of Joyce's generation. René Clair reminds us that "for a new eye, one image replacing another in a flash...[produces] the impression of a magical substitution or a lightning-like metamorphosis" (quoted in Frazer 60–61). Something of that speed must have hit Joyce when he wrote from Trieste to Stanislaus in 1909 of his flight from depression in "the sixty-miles-an-hour pathos of some cinematograph" (Letters II 217).

At the climax of "Circe," Joyce returned to the projection that had interested him as early as "Silhouettes." "Against the dark wall a figure appears slowly, a fairy boy of eleven." Eleven, Joyce's number of renewal and the number on the ad for Kino's which is always in motion, bobbing on the ever-moving river that is, Bloom muses, not only the Liffey but life itself (U-G 323.90–95). The fairy boy materializes slowly, a fade-in rather than the typical jump-cut, because we are leaving kinesis for the silence and arrest of timeless (albeit temporary) epiphany. Like some image from an early hand-tinted film, the figure has a "delicate, mauve face"; like an actor in a movie the figure "gazes, unseeing" out at the viewer (U-G 1335.4956–1337.4964); like a character in a silent film, the figure mimes his role, reading "inaudibly" (how often is that the stage direction in Joyce's epiphanies?). And like all images in cinema, the figure is present and substantial, yet he is at the same time a phantom of the past, strangely transparent and insubstantial.

Earlier in "Circe," J. J. O'Molloy projects on a courtroom wall a lantern picture of Bloom's extensive mortgaged property at Agendath Netaim. The Gabler Ulysses restores "image" for "mirage" in the description of O'Molloy's slide of "blurred cattle cropping in silver haze" (U-G 1005.985–6). A crude realism would prefer the "mirage" of the Random House edition in order to dismiss both Rudy and the Promised Land, would find both of them mere illusion in contrast to the time-bound reality of the drunken Stephen lying on the solid
on the solid pavement of a Dublin gutter. But in “Circe,” as in film, all images—even “fake” ones—command belief.

In this moment in “Circe,” as in its dreamlike transformations and transitions, in the Magic that is its Art, we see instructive analogies between Joyce’s art and cinema. The figures and objects shrinking and swelling in the gray space on the screen at the Nizhni-Novrogod Fair—the world of Gorki’s Kingdom of Shadows—and Joyce’s Nighttown border on each other as projections of a modern way of seeing.

NOTES

1. The best overall treatment of Joyce and Cinema is Spiegel 71–82, et passim. Palmer is especially persuasive on Eisensteinian montage and Ulysses. Bazargan’s stimulating note on cinema and “Aeolus” is much in keeping with my own thinking. See also: Murray 126–141, et passim; Cohen 147–56, 172–79, 187–204, et passim; Barrow; and Pearce 38–47 (Pearce’s excellent discussion of “Circe,” 41–43, focuses on the cinematic usurpation of the narrator by the medium).

2. I understand that original Mutoscope machines are still in operation at Disneyland, presumably offering different titles than those C. W. Ceram reported on the Hamburg Reeperbahn in the early sixties, titles such as When Women Become Hyenas, The Mouse at the Tea Party, and the Joycean-sounding Yes, Yes, Love is Blind (92). As Andrew Eskind notes, “the glory of the International Mutoscope production must rest with its ‘Girlies,’ dance and strip-tease subjects.” On 218 and 220, Ceram offers stills from Robert W. Paul’s 1896 Kinetoscope Undressing Extraordinary (identified elsewhere as Exhibition), in which a gentleman ogles the classical statue of a naked woman; the man’s sight line appears to be somewhat higher than Bloom’s at the National Library.

3. Niver describes a 1905 American Mutoscope and Bioscope Peeping Tom in the Dressing Room (247); given peep-show devices like the Mutoscope and given the nature of cinema, there must have been number of works featuring Peeping Toms.

4. Pratt asks whether the Buck Mulligan in Josef von Sternberg’s 1927 Underworld may be a tribute to Joyce (456).

5. Twenty-five words into his workbook entry “Circe” for the Wake, Joyce wrote, “cinema fakes, drown, state of sea, tank: steeplejack, steeple on floor, camera above: jumps 10 feet, 1 foot camera in 6 foot pit” (Connolly 119).

6. An early 19th-century letter believed to be by Charles Dibden, the younger, one of the “arrangers” who worked with Grimaldi at Covent Gardens, is a rarity for its details on well-guarded secrets of panto “trickworks”; the letter speaks of “the whistle...for change” as the cue for a transformation (Meyer 147–48).

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