



Film od Bild

URWERK[®]

BAUMGARTNER & FREI GENEVE



*schon ein 49 Eipunkt der wenn es über
selben ein Stück was der Frau Henry
gewann, er allein fühlte sich von
beide ist ~~schon ein Stück~~ ~~schon ein Stück~~
~~schon ein Stück~~. ~~Natürlich~~ ~~schon ein Stück~~
ihm diesen billige ~~schon ein Stück~~ aber er
präparierte sich daran.*



Felix Baumgartner

Martin Frei

EPISODE 3 - TRUE STORIES

Time is a concept that connects us all. Watches make it possible for us to coordinate our plans and actions, they make time a collective experience. Nevertheless, time is built up by a multitude of individual moments; perhaps time would reveal itself as a kind of kaleidoscope opening another dimension were we able to picture it. That's one of the reasons why I have always been fascinated about how to portray the passing of time.

Ever since we started we have explored the idea that a mechanical watch doesn't have to be retro; for us a watch is something contemporary. Fifteen years ago we were pioneers in this field, and during this period several brands have accompanied us; contemporary horology finally arrived in the watch world. This is great, since it creates positive competition and increases the interest in avant garde watchmaking.

In between creating new watches, there is time for reflection and other projects, which is important for me since I am also a documentary filmmaker. And sometimes I have to travel to take in new thoughts and things. From time to time I do need to escape the counting of seconds.

The photos in Episode 3 were taken in some of my favourite places in Zürich, my hometown. Places where we meet for inspiration, hang out, places where we discuss and exchange ideas when Felix, Cyrano, Dominique and I gather. By sharing some of these individual moments we hope to give you an idea about where URWERK is coming from, and how our watches are born.

- Martin Frei, artist, chief designer, and co-founder of URWERK.



INSPIRATION

Anders Modig: We started this project in order to understand more about your source of inspiration. Are you getting any wiser? From where do you get your inspiration?

Martin Frei: The world in general is your source of interest as an artist. The output can vary; it depends on what you want to say.

Anders Modig: What do you want to say with your watch designs?

Martin Frei: What is time? What's a machine? We don't have enough time even though we permanently gain time due to acceleration ... Not only time measuring, but also the perception of time very much depends on culture, and it varies in different social structures of societies.

A Greek teacher once told me that in ancient Greece the present moment was a much larger place to rest. The past only went as far as your grandparents and then it transformed into mythology. The future was very dubious and hard to predict. Today the present moment has shrunk to a place as fine as the blade of a towering wave, behind us is the past and in front of us the future.

Due to time we experience change. Time can be the concept that connects us all, it makes it possible to meet at a point at the right time, do things in coordination, but there are a lot of individual moments in time. The most personal machine, your watch, is with you to count these moments.

I love chaotic places that are packed with unexpected stuff.

Why?

They invite you to put objects together, and when you combine two objects you often get a third object that is something that is a lot more than the sum of two, I guess you could call it junkyard alchemy. Places like this contain energy and they can spark poetic explosions.

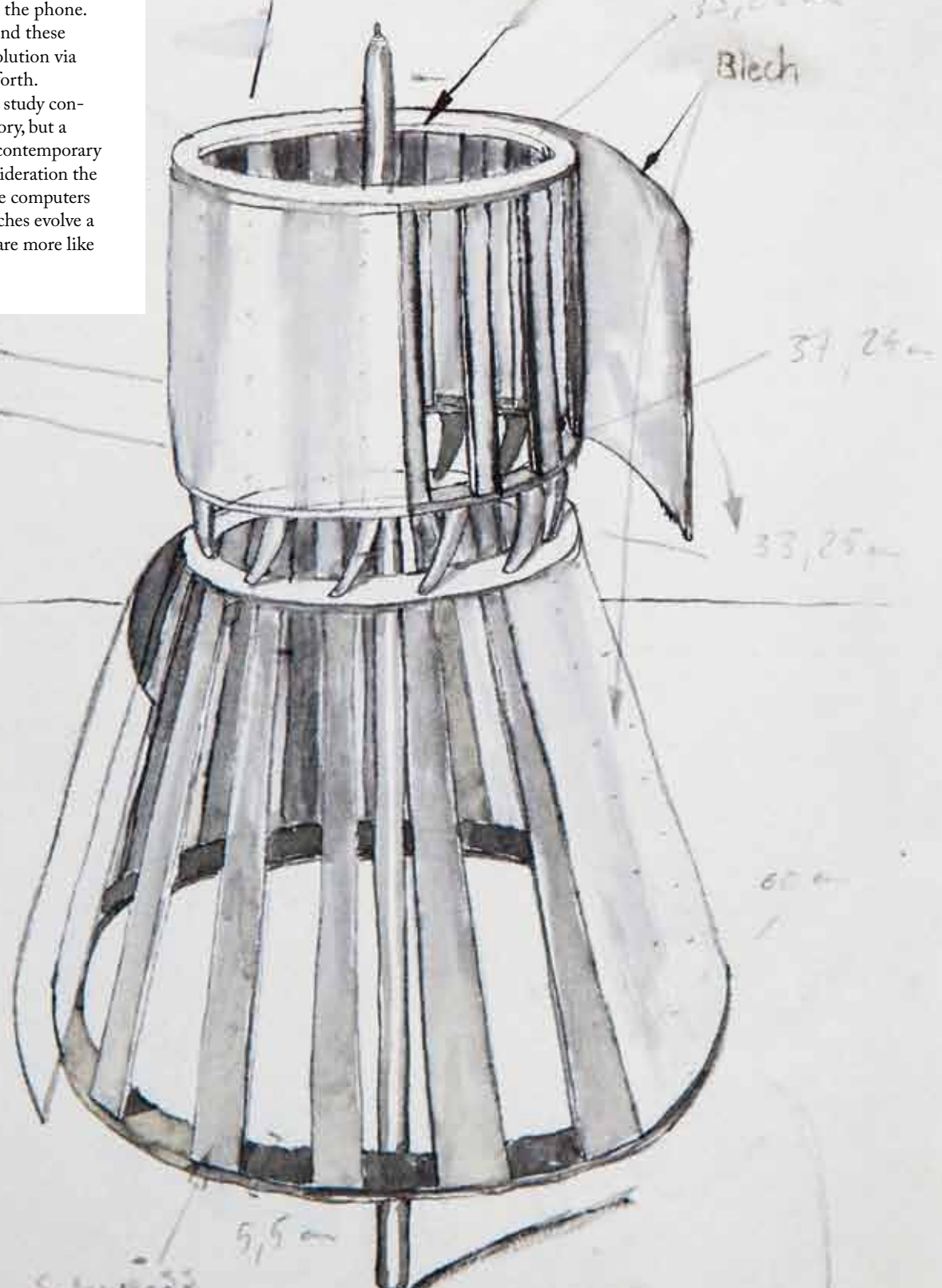
Eisenringe

SUM OF IDEAS

URWERK's watches often start with a phone call. Martin or Felix feels the need to share an idea about how you could portray a concept of time, and picks up the phone. Martin makes some sketches, and these visuals go through stages of evolution via frequent emails sent back and forth.

"I don't mind tradition and I study concepts and ideas from watch history, but a contemporary watch asks for a contemporary presentation, and take into consideration the existence of today's products like computers for instance. In the end our watches evolve a lot after the first sketches, they are more like the essence, the sum of ideas."

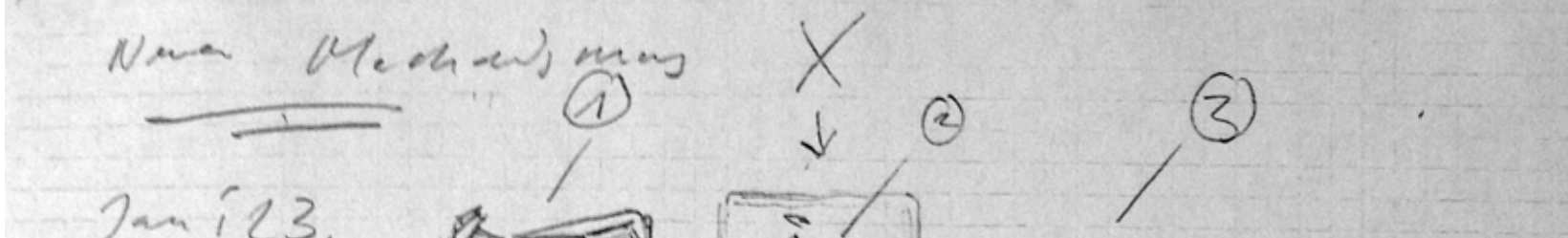
beine Stäbe
als Spanner
Eisengerüst



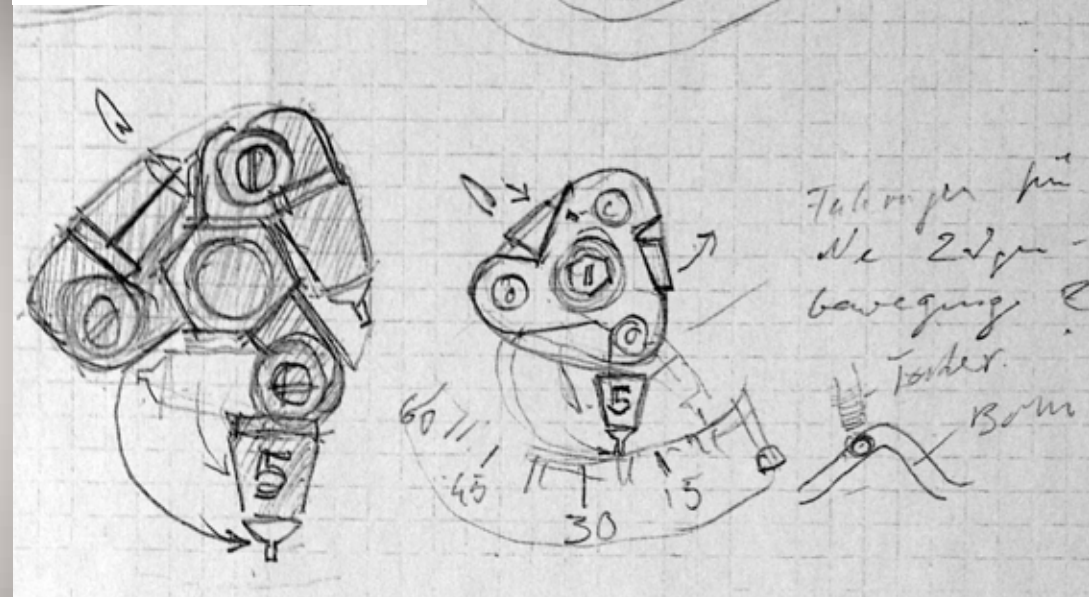


das die über dem gleichen liegen zwischen
„Witterblätter“ ent steht ein Zeichen ab.
die an sich das auch verändern der
geom etrisch, kontaktlos Bild, da beide





SKETCHES
I always carry my sketchbook.
You never know what the day
might bring.



With our references to science fiction and strange objects from the 20s, 50s and 70s, we appeal to a younger clientele. A clientele that has seen the same movies, has used and uses the same computers.

7-YEAR TRIAL

"In the beginning URWERK was refused – it was like a seven year trial before we started making any money – but since we had nothing to lose, we just kept making what we think are the coolest watches in the world. The breakthrough came in 2003, and today we have 15 employees and a stable volume of 150 watches per year. The U-Research Division – Felix, Cyrano, Dominique and I – only work with innovation. We have no ambition about volume. For us it is all about creation. Our challenge is not turnover, it is quality and uniqueness."



**ALIEN
STAR
WARS
DUNE
BLADE
RUNNER
SOLARIS
2001:
A SPACE
ODYSSEY**

“To sink down in a cinema seat is just the best. Call it escapism if you want. But you could also say that film is another reality. I see Harrison Ford in Blade Runner while he is climbing a skyscraper at night. It is constantly raining, and a floating screen shows an advertisement with Japanese singing. Deckard is hunting down an android, but it is the android Roy Batty that saves Deckard’s life, by pulling him onto the deck of the building. There, while being dragged by the android’s superhuman hand, I see them both wearing a UR-210 on their wrists.”



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ZODIAC

From childhood on I was confronted with crazy questions about speeding up protons, magnetic fields, gravitational fields and other magical stuff. But my father an engineer in basic research was always able to explain these things in a simple but suspensfull way.



MEETING

If it can be done in a small watch, we meet to discuss it. We live in different cities in Switzerland, so we don't see each other every day. We drive from different parts of the country and when we join up in the same room there are always fantastic discussions and our projects take giant leaps ahead. You have to meet for an idea to develop – but who ever said it must be in a boring meeting room?

Time is a fourth dimension that the physicists are struggling to describe. We can't understand it, we can't grasp it, but we live in it, it is our reality. So, I find it quite striking that so many people are walking around with watches, a machine on your wrist that is busy working such a philosophical job.



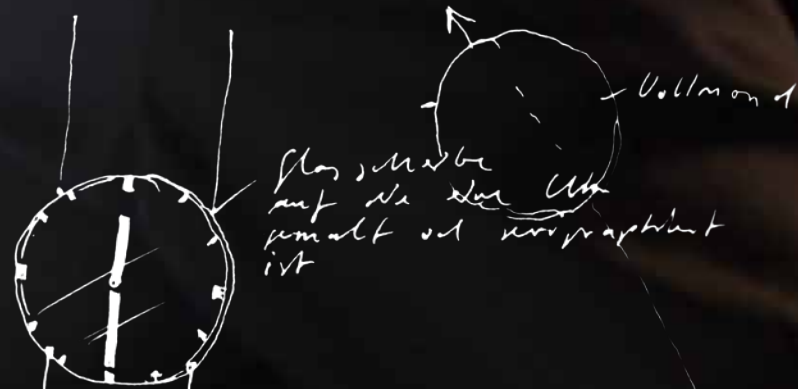


SCI-FI COUTURE

“Normally a watch is a round object, flat and layered like a lasagna. We are so used to them that they’ve got pictogram status. And then we came along with URWERK, making watches in our own way. In the beginning people were confused since our watches don’t have regular hands or round dials. But with a second glance you have learned how to read our watches and they are super easy. And we have inspired others to do something completely new by giving design and concept their necessary status.”

What about precision and accuracy?

“It is a given that a watch should be precise - a car needs wheels in order to drive!”



Vollmond
Glas, Maibe
auf die star Uhr
gemalt od. vergraben
ist

in der Raum
gehört

Horizont

Die Betrachtung des
Mondes erleben ist
wie die Schritte in
den Mond in Komplex
Welt.





VOLT 220 ~ 10 AMP

“I am not originally from this industry. And I am not trained as an industrial designer; I studied fine arts and was working as an artist and filmmaker when we founded URWERK. I still make films and work as an artist, and this background allows me to have a free vision of what a watch could be and look like. Even if an idea seems not possible, we make it possible.”



OPPOSITES ATTRACT

“In a technical museum I saw this machine with a huge set of wheels; the first few were spinning extremely fast, then the force was transformed step by step to slower and slower wheels and eventually, at the end of the line, the force pushed steadily onto a block of massive stone, a marble cube. At some point that marble cube will break apart. The thousand-year indication used on the UR-1001 Zeit Device is an analogue interpretation of this.

What do you mean?

“The thousand-year indication featured in this pocket watch is for me an indication on the opposite side of the spectrum compared to the second hand. A second hand symbolises the constant passing of time; it has the same role as the sand in an hourglass. But through wheels and cogs we have transformed this into some-thing slower and slower, in the end so slow that you begin to question what time actually is.”



“Science is another religion with conservative priests and books. But if a theory of something is proven to be true it actually changes the whole belief system.”

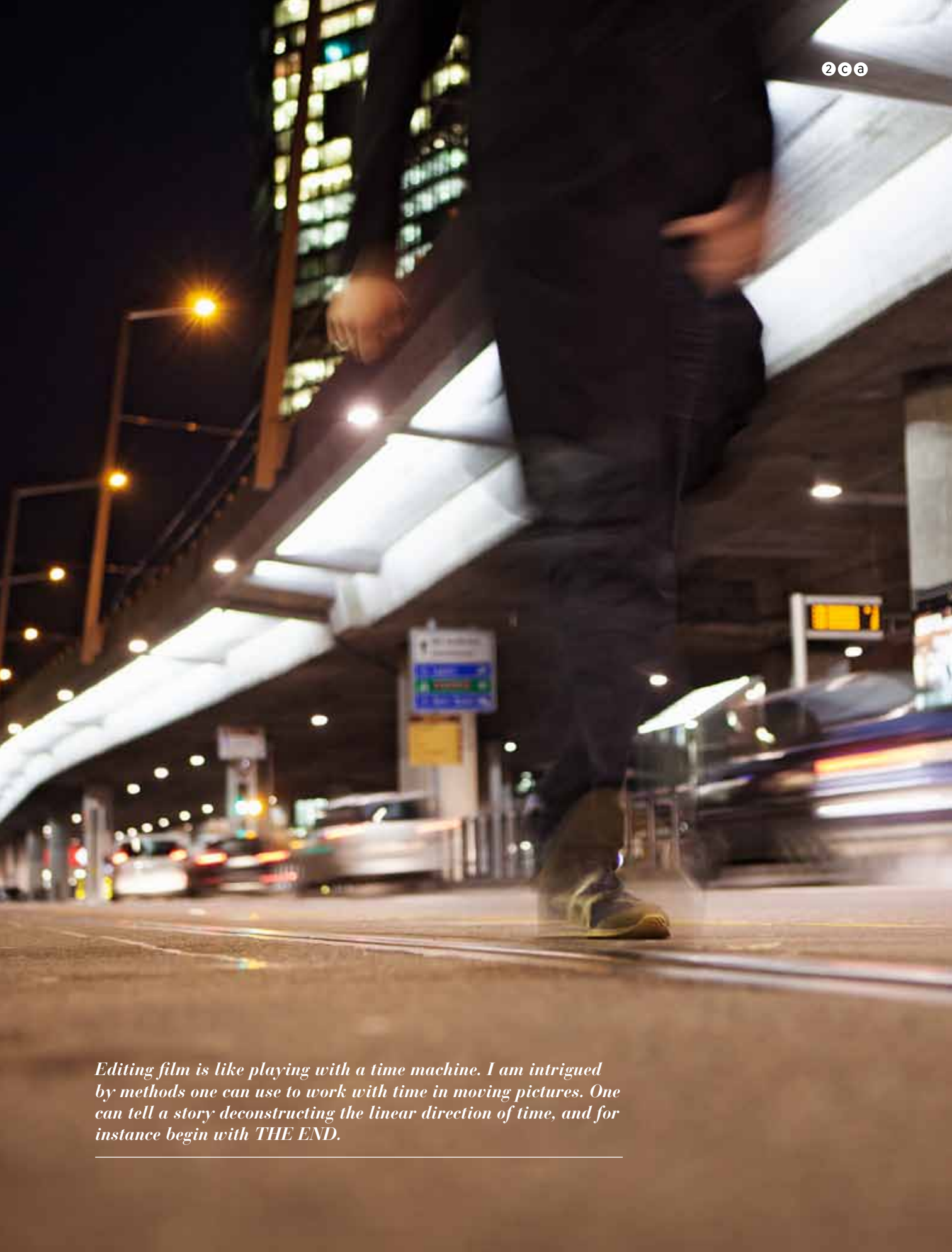






NO RESTRICTIONS

When we innovate we enjoy the freedom of tolerating no restrictions or taboos.
We can go further and push the limits to really try out what is possible.



200

Editing film is like playing with a time machine. I am intrigued by methods one can use to work with time in moving pictures. One can tell a story deconstructing the linear direction of time, and for instance begin with THE END.



*Objekt
bet
7
Omnivox
Finshen*

Finshen

Olhomy

Barn of

EPISODE 3

