§ TIME-IMAGES OF CAR CRASHES AND TRAFFIC JAMS

The car crash is a moment in time as represented by paintings of car wrecks; the car crash is also a sequence of moments that has led to the final wreckage. This sequencing can be seen in Andy Warhol’s *Green Burning Car* (1963). *The Green Burning Car* (1963) is a series of slides that presents an upturned burning car in a front yard with a large tree and house. However, Warhol plays with our perception of the car crash by repeating and treating the same image. The car burns in different places on the slide, and is accompanied by the same two figures, one walking away from the burning car, the other pinned to a tree. One gains the perception that there is action and sequence embedded in these images by the layout; but the truth is that Warhol has represented stasis and the immobility of a crash through one burning car. In Deleuzian terms, *Green Burning*
Car is an example of a lapsed time-image, wherein movement and time are conjoined in an imagistic framework:

There is thus no longer association through metaphor or metonymy, but relinkage on the literal image; there is no longer linkage of associated images, but only relinkages of independent images. Instead of one after the other, there is one image plus another; and each shot is deframed in relation to the framing of the following shot.” (Deleuze 1989, 205)

In Dena Schuckit’s Zagged (2010), the time-image is a collage of an inverted, crippled, traffic jam and a rupture point, where an explosion of colour and form represents the suture of a car crash. The painting comes out of the frame and impresses the reality of the car crash on the viewer. This dynamic framing is a time-image in that the picture is a representation of various shots taken from the perspective of someone watching a car crash. Firstly, the traffic moves along in a traffic jam, a car crash takes place — there is an explosion involved with the crash — and pieces of wreckage and flesh fly out of the scene. All of the other cars in the traffic jam are now implicated in the crash, and crash themselves through inversion. This image is not a metaphor or metonymy for everyday life, but a
lapsed time-image that shows how the pieces of a car crash fit together and relate to one another. According to immanent materialism, one does not interpret the picture and imbue it with alternative meanings; rather, one allows the interrelated material flows to be brought forth and into life through immanence. This process and methodology stems in part from the artistic movements of Surrealism, Dada, the Situationists, and constructivism. One can transform everyday objects and create new realities according to the principles of incongruity and surprise. The creative unconscious is employed in terms of creating “ready-made” artefacts that disrupt normative assumptions with respect to function and form. Hence, a car crash could be known as a “Broken Mechanical Flower,” due to the patterns of glass, plastic and metal, a traffic jam is an instance of “car sickness.” Science fiction movies often blow up cars and include traffic jams as special effects, and this is particularly effective strategy for disrupting the sense of normality that one might associate with the image(s). The lapsed time-image is therefore a flexible and inverting schema for understanding the ways in which car crashes and traffic jams represent reality, and impinge upon everyday life and the unconscious.