

Gerrit Rietveld Academie  
Amsterdam  
Art in Context program 2015-16  
In collaboration with the  
Cobra Museum of Modern Art  
Amstelveen

# Education



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### **Colophon**

Art in Context is an extra-curricular art and theory program at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. The program offers students a chance to place their work within particular social contexts and to generate knowledge and experience in addressing social issues, which enables to prepare for their post-academic practice. They are invited to use their work as a means for questioning and re-imagining the state of social and political affairs. Its 2015-16 edition is dedicated to the topic of Education. Produced in close collaboration with the Cobra Museum of Modern Art.

Edited by Saša Karalić and Jouke Kleerebezem

Proofreading by Dieuwertje Hehewerth

Design by Jouke Kleerebezem

with the exception of pp.77-89

Printed by De Nieuwe Grafische, Rotterdam

Edition of 300 copies

Paper 120g Munken Polar Rough

Cover 240g Munken Polar

Typeset in Superclarendon and Helvetica Neue

All photography and texts ©2016 the artists and authors, unless otherwise indicated.

Constant quotes courtesy the Fondation Constant.



One year before the Bologna declaration, education ministers Baroness Blackstone (UK), Jürgen Rüttgers (Germany), Luigi Berlinguer (Italy) and Claude Allègre (France), signed the Sorbonne declaration in Paris 1998, committing themselves to 'harmonising the architecture of the European Higher Education system.'



## Saša Karalić

### *Education and Utopian Politics*

After months of reflexive research on education at Art in Context, I noticed that many projects and enquiries pointed at unrealized potentials of education as a thing of the future. Attempts to unpack and foresee the future often appeared in our students' projects and texts as a direct and directed critique of present conditions — bleak and worrisome views of it prevailed. But not without self-reflection and an extensive reach into 'Utopian politics' that, according to Frederic Jameson, 'aim at imagining, and sometimes even at realizing, a system radically different from this one'.

In his book *The Last and First Men / Star Maker*, the English novelist Olaf Stapledon spells the end of Utopia as we follow his space-and-time travelers and see them gradually become aware that their receptivity to alien and exotic cultures is guided by humanlike principles:

At first, when our imaginative power was strictly limited by experience of our own worlds, we could make contact only with worlds closely akin to our own. Moreover, in this novitiate stage of our work we invariably came upon these worlds when they were passing through the same spiritual crises as that which underlies the plight of Homo sapiens today. It appeared that, for us to enter any world at all, there had to be a deep-lying likeness or identity in ourselves and our hosts.

Stapledon affirms here that even our wildest imaginings are all collages of experience, constructs made of here and now. On the social level, this means that our imaginations are hostages to our own mode of production and suggests that ‘at best Utopia can serve the negative purpose of making us more aware of our mental and ideological imprisonment; and that therefore the best Utopias are those that fail most comprehensively.’

Many works produced in Art in Context this year expose problems that are undecidable; which is not necessarily a bad thing as long as we continue to try to decide them. In the case of Utopian politics, it seems that the most reliable political test lies not in judgment of the individual action so much as in its capacity to generate new ones.

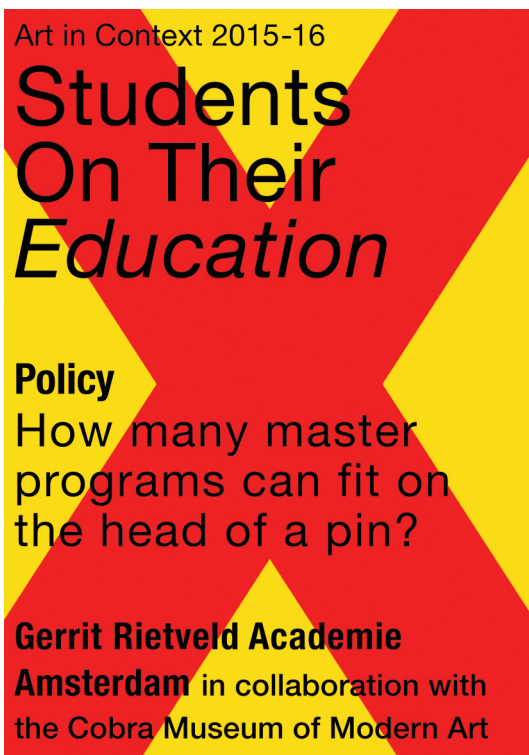
### **Posters**

On the occasion of the Open Day of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in January 2016, Jouke Kleerebezem and I made a series of posters that presented issues discussed in Art in Context classes and gave them the form of a public announcement of our possible future activities which, by the time of the rounding up of this publication, will be largely unrealized — a thing of the future. Each of the posters presents another line of exploration or point of discussion concerning education, a topic so large and complex that these posters could announce only a fraction of possible topics connected to it. Nevertheless, each topic opened up another possibility of discussing and thinking society and our students have taken that challenge with seriousness and engagement. What follows in this text is a loose series of references and sources from which we drew inspiration, which are divided in chapters by topics announced in our posters.

### **Object-lectures**

This publication also includes some results of the assignment to ‘make an object-lecture’. This assignment that

I gave to the students in the beginning of 2016 was an attempt to extend the discussion on education into the realm of making and to objectify at times complex and complicated standpoints. This follows closely the main methodology of *Art in Context* which attempts to face our students equally and simultaneously with the realm of thoughts and the realm of deeds, with concept and material and, last but not least, with their personal ambition and social positioning. What came out of this exercise in 'materializing an attitude' was a series of works that speak about education in a close and often bodily manner. In these works and projects, education appears as a process that becomes fruitful only when it involves the full on confrontation with oneself and with the other and dares to exceed the socially prescribed set of rules and regulations. Most of these works will be included in the *Art in Context* exhibition at the Cobra Museum and some of them appear in this publication.



Extract from *Artificial Hells — Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, Claire Bishop, Verso London, 2012

Academic capitalism leads to changes in the roles of both students and teachers, and affects both the aesthetic and ethos of an educational experience. Today the administrator rather than the professor is the central figure of the university. Learning outcomes, assessment criteria, quality assurance, surveys, reports, and a comprehensive paper trail (to combat potentially litigious students)

are all more important than experimental content and delivery. Assessment must fit standardized procedures that allow credit points to be comparable across all subjects in the university — and with the introduction of the Bologna Process (1999), to be equivalent across Europe.<sup>61</sup> In the UK, the introduction of tuition fees in the early 1990s and the replacement of student grants by loans has rapidly turned students into consumers.

Education is increasingly a financial investment, rather than a creative space of freedom and discovery; a career move, rather than a place of epistemological inquiry for its own sake. Ostensibly in the name of protecting students' rights, laborious measures of control have been introduced that submit students and teachers to an exhaustive training in bureaucracy: all students in UK universities today (including art students) have to fill in compulsory 'Personal Development Plans' to address their career development — a mechanism to ensure that emerging artists and scholars always keep an eye on developing 'transferable skills' for a future in the 'knowledge economy'. In other words, the contemporary university seems increasingly to train subjects for life under global capitalism, initiating students into a lifetime of debt, while coercing staff into ever more burdensome forms of administrative accountability and disciplinary monitoring. More than ever, education is a core 'ideological state apparatus' through which lives are shaped and managed to dance in step with the dominant tune.

Art in Context 2015-16

# Students On Their *Education*

## Forecast

If we are to create relevant knowledge for the future, we have to assign to things that are illegal today

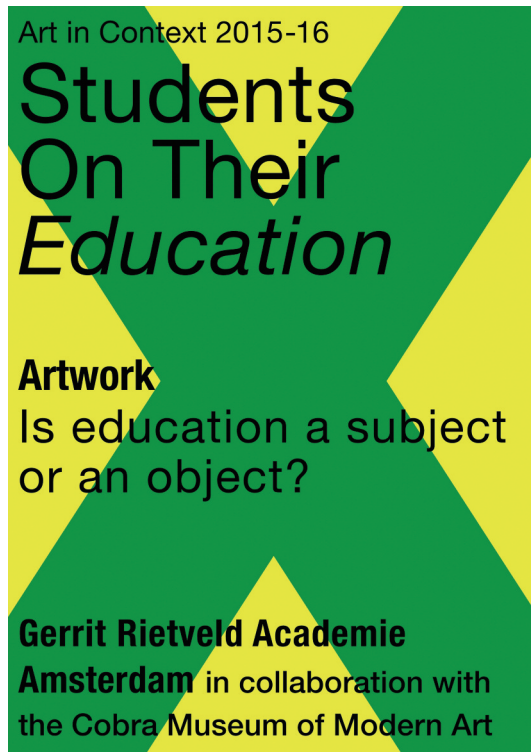
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Transcript of part of the Benjamin Bratton's lecture at The New School as a part of *Mobility Shifts*, a panel on Digital Fluencies for the 21st Century (source: Youtube)

On my flight out here I was sitting next to a fellow who, as it turned out, was an Israeli cryptographer, he was doing some work in San Diego for the Navy. We began talking about Stuxnet, the virus that managed to insinuate itself into the Iranian nuclear power plants and to cause them to shut down and go crazy. He was making an argument to me over the course of the flight that this

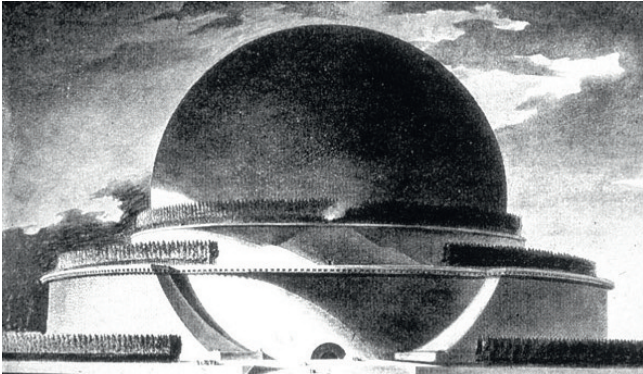
is what we should be teaching our students, that we should be teaching them how to make these kinds of things, to make these sorts of viruses. His argument was twofold; one is: you can't teach digital technologies unless you teach students building codebase, not just tools. We are now in the process of building the legacy codebase on the planetary level that will exist and endure for generations and design decision we are making about that codebase will be those that the generations will have to continuously live with.

The second point that he made, with which I didn't agree at first but have come to agree with bit more, is: in order to be successful in design of this legacy base for the generations to come, we have to be willing to assign to certain things that are illegal today, with a presumption that the things that exist outside today's legal structures will form the bases of the constitutional structures to come.



Étienne-Louis Boullée (February 12, 1728-February 4, 1799) was a visionary French neoclassical architect whose work greatly influenced contemporary architects. Boullée's ideas had a major influence on his contemporaries, not least because of his role in teaching other important architects such as Jean Chalgrin, Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart, and Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand. Some of his work only saw the light of day in the 20th century; his book *Architecture, essai sur l'art* ('essay on the art of architecture'), arguing for an emotionally committed Neoclassicism, was only published in 1953. The volume

contained his work from 1778 to 1788, which mostly comprised designs for public buildings on a wholly impractical grand scale.



### ***Cenotaph for Sir Isaac Newton***

Boullée promoted the idea of making architecture expressive of its purpose, a doctrine that his detractors termed *architecture parlante* ('talking architecture'), which was an essential element in Beaux-Arts architectural training in the later 19th century. His style was most notably exemplified in his proposal for a cenotaph for the English scientist Isaac Newton. The building itself was a 150m (500ft) tall sphere encompassed by two large barriers circled by hundreds of cypress trees. Though the structure was never built, its design was engraved and circulated widely in professional circles. Boullée's *Cenotaph for Isaac Newton* is a funerary monument celebrating a figure interred elsewhere. The small sarcophagus for Newton is placed at the lower pole of the sphere. The design of the memorial creates the effect of day and night. The night effect occurs when the sarcophagus is illuminated by the sunlight coming through the holes in the vaulting.

Art in Context 2015-16

# Students On Their *Education*

**Correction**  
Securing the norm

**Gerrit Rietveld Academie**  
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Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Pantheon Books, NYC, 1980

Power would be a fragile thing if its only function were to repress, if it worked only through the mode of censorship, exclusion, blockage and repression, in the manner of a great Superego, exercising itself only in a negative way. If, on the contrary, power is strong this is because, as we are beginning to realise, it produces effects at the level of desire and also at the level of knowledge. Far from preventing knowledge, power produces it. If it has been possible to constitute

a knowledge of the body, this has been by way of an ensemble of military and educational disciplines. It was on the basis of power over the body that a physiological, organic knowledge of it became possible. The fact that power is so deeply rooted and the difficulty of eluding its embrace are effects of all these connections. That is why the notion of repression which mechanisms of power are generally reduced to strikes me as very inadequate and possibly dangerous.

What has been studied even less is the relation between power and knowledge, the articulation of each on the other. It has been a tradition for humanism to assume that once someone gains power he ceases to know. Power makes men mad, and those who govern are blind; only those who keep their distance from power, who are in no way implicated in tyranny, shut up in their room, their meditations, only they can discover the truth.

Now I have been trying to make visible the constant articulation I think there is of power on knowledge and of knowledge on power. We should not be content to say that power has a need for such-and-such a discovery, such-and-such a form of knowledge, but we should add that the exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information. One can understand nothing about economic science if one does not know how power and economic power are exercised in everyday life. The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power. The university hierarchy is only the most visible, the most sclerotic and least dangerous form of this phenomenon. One has to be really naive to imagine that the effects of power linked to knowledge have their culmination in university hierarchies. Diffused, entrenched and dangerous, they operate in other places than in the person of the old professor.

Art in Context 2015-16

# Students On Their *Education*

**Professionalization**

Join the workforce

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Art in Context 2015-16

# Students On Their *Education*

**Ideology**

How to create new  
learning communities?

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## Jouke Kleerebezem

### *Towards a Double Utility for Art Education*

'Art is actually the world once over, as like it as it is unlike it.'  
(...)

'A genuine relation between art and consciousness's experience of it would consist in education, which schools opposition to art as a consumer product as much as it allows the recipient a substantial idea of what an artwork is. Art today, even among those who produce it, is largely cut off from such education.'

Theodor W. Adorno<sup>1</sup>

To 'school opposition' to 'art as a consumer product', allowing a recipient a 'substantial idea' of 'what an artwork is' has become quite a different challenge since Theodor Adorno's reflections on the matter, soon to be half a century ago. To give today's challenge an educational turn — to dream up a pedagogical vanguard with an agenda of aesthetic and social-political reform — demands unprecedented imagination, which 'even among those who (could, JK) produce it' has become an unlikely outcome. Every element of Adorno's critique has developed new characteristics, all of which have come to fruition since the 1990s, with remarkable acceleration and ease at the beginning of the 21st century.

Any attempt to educate our 'consciousness's experience' of art today, could only start by acknowledging and ana-

lyzing the present elementary qualities of art and media literacy, in the context of dominant cultural circumstances. The following reflection signals such necessity as a *call to action*, without pretending to offer a road map to any immediate effect.

If we would take the liberty to stand on Adorno's shoulders to oversee the contemporary cultural-educational landscape, we perceive that most *schooling* has been reformed largely with the single objective as to serve the economic primacy of education markets, which themselves have been intricately linked to industrial and political gains that are better off for their survival without impertinent intellectual or artistic concepts; that *opposition* in the West ultimately became a commodity in the hands of social and media theorists, being sung loose from any alternative praxis, while remaining safe in academic publishing and privileged display at art events small and large; that the *abiding quality* of art, being its *noble simplicity*, has at large been overruled by mediated signification promiscuity that reaches far beyond any earlier form of (mechanical) reproduction, while its once *solid pedestals of classicality* like e.g. a blessed museal context turned temples into luxury goods boutiques; that nevertheless the *consumer* increasingly becomes a producer of his or her own satisfaction — art and education included — generously sharing once considered private information with peers and with all the pimps and pushers of the industries; finally that any *product* concerned (whether a piece of art or other commodity), has gotten unstable material qualities, having turned atoms into bits — investment value superseding its knowledge or use value, circumstantial objects being replaced by lifelong subscription services, while other loyalty concepts slowly hollow out individual capital at the benefit of low-committal social small change. Meanwhile a *substantial idea of what an artwork is* suffers both from the general volatility of substantiality as from the incessant proliferation of ideas of

what a work by an artist could include.

Any idea of art as a utility should meet with a large amount of skepticism, while to the utility of art education we should pay the highest respect, provided that it takes the constant flux of mediated experience into investigative consideration at every level concerned: first education and art, then critical consciousness, consumption and the product, the artist's work, its abiding qualities and the media and institutional context which operates all of those.

### Art's false utility

Art is a utility in the rhetorics of those who imagine to be able to productively instrumentalize its endlessly drifting iterations, realizations, manifestations and interpretations, in order to make: *whatever point*. The point making effort is an essential part of any goal oriented narrative which is being constructed to fix a certain argument and gather a following around it. Less to the point are such narratives that, rather than to 'mirror reality', feed our imagination of alternative and parallel realities, individual anomalies, idiosyncrasies or common insecurities and frustrations. Also the limited commonality of shared uncertainties does however not lend itself to be mirrored, as here the object for such reflection has no visibility. Hidden or secret realities are evoked and shaped by imagination, without resorting to an optico-technological device like a mirror. Such realities can be brought into being from the golden splinters of fragmented minds, only concentrating in what might commonly be acknowledged as *work* by an artist, who herself doesn't necessarily care about its reception let alone about its interpretations — always beside the point, always plural, always drawn from the eye of the beholder.

The necessity of art's utility comes up in contexts where the need for cultural affirmation is at its most needy, ul-

timately helpless. As I proposed in 'Art as Context; When Art Becomes the Condition of Everything Else'<sup>2</sup>, art's historical avant-garde expansion and emancipation of art production, for any human activity to become symbolic, has been caught up by every societal interest to become *like art*: 'creative', 'quirky' — *mediatized*, in the end symbolic, detached, irresponsible; at the end of the day useless.<sup>3</sup>

Art at best demonstrates the infinite multiplicity and contradiction of any points made. Point makers do not make art and art makers do not make points, period. If anyone believes s/he could transform art into a point, this reduces the art to *point material*. If anyone uses art to illustrate a point, the art concerned is turned into an instructive *fig.*, a scheme. Art and instruction, or education, certainly invite mutual narrative enhancement, but unless bound in a new way, the one can do without the other, rather than claim any exclusivity for the information exchanged. In the following I hope to elaborate on education at the benefit of art production and art reception, as the two pillars for cultural production that aims to transcend blind prosumerism and capital investment, or other utility that does not reward the ultimate irresponsibility of art making and experience.

**Half full/half empty: half-art, half-world, half-life,  
half-public: half-way**

In a budding information age, when epistemologies have (mass and social) media instant half-life and meet with a much contested attention span by its audiences, to look for a point which would be illustrated or even proven through art is less than ever an essential inquiry. What's the use? Without spectators to follow instructions or audiences to be convinced of anything beyond face-value, and when balancing and rubbing artist and recipient intelligence, *half-way* is where all things aesthetic happen: half-way is far and fair enough for ideas, concepts and

experiences, half-way is where matter and information meet, half-way is where the (inter-)action is, where art production and art reception address conscious experience and emotional engagement, with all who are concerned. Half-way is where the direction of information can turn around like a weather vane or compass needle measuring favorable forces, where art maker/lover roles can change, where materiality and immateriality are open to recalibration against each other, where spinoff emerges and knowledge changes hands. Half-way is where we are half gone and have half arrived. Half-way is the ideal place between nowheres. It is where navigation and negotiation meet with half-orientation, where identity is half-identity, half past and half future. Finally it is also here that something like half-utility offers itself for possible operation. For art as a half-product, pointlessly suspended between the collection of the artist and fresh pairs of eyes, here is the occasion for doubling its energy and unfolding its potentiality for myriad elaborations.

Meanwhile it must be obvious that no establishment in recent art production or reception gently guides us half-way, where to explore all the half-benefits of open interaction. In art market parlance everything goes *all the way*, always. Here art's production is unidirectional from start to finish, disregarding whether its finish is a collector's wall, vault or private museum, an event in some disadvantaged context, a lecture, performance or publication, a fair or stately presentation. Neither does it matter if the itinerary has been planned from the start or came commissioned from the finish. In art education all is about art making, following traditional practices that route from concept to product, escorting learners from raw material and ideas to their consequent perfection.

Ever so, just like half a century ago, 'art today, even among those who produce it, is largely cut off from such education'

— such education as where both making art and experiencing art are given equal attention, by and for both ambitious artists-to-be as well as by equally engaged art-recipients-to-be, presented before them in a curriculum that fully acknowledges the two halves of (50 years past as much as today's and) tomorrow's cultural production: work by artists and work by art lovers.

### **Doubling halves: making ends meet**

In Adorno's quote, not the education in art production but education in art's reception is critically considered. While education in art making has seen many both institutional as well as alternative ideologies and policies and many forms of organisation and expression, even becoming part of art production proper<sup>4</sup>, leaving it in uncomfortable splits concerning authorship, disciplinary loyalty, art world hierarchy, as well as confused in its knowledge production, emancipation, and whatnot (as utility goes), the education in art's perception has been largely abandoned in any curriculum. How to experience art is left to the media to deal with. In the 1970s, when Adorno noticed the entertainment industry's trash production, would he believe what is produced today in education for art reception and consciousness's experience? We are living the complete extravaganza of his and other spectacular society's philosophers' visions. As we also read from Claire Bishop's above quotes, in 'transversality', as she echos Guattari, two groups of recipients are addressed, encompassed by two realms: that of art (production, distribution, reception) and that of the social, or other 'universes of value'. Art education is a universe of value in and by itself.

Doubled attention and doubled focus with the arts should also be expected from representatives from other universes of value, in order to liberate art production from its linear routing into and through the capital accumulating art market, and to liberate art reception from being at the receiving end of that trajectory. To me this is where art education

comes in, with its doubling power of making ends meet and interact. We face a steep learning curve here — not so much for learners in art making or learners in conscious art appreciation, but for the educational system and its institutions, with a mission to build a thoroughly new curriculum.

In 1965, Dutch artist Constant noted:

The creative process shifts from reality to a conception of reality. Existing reality has gradually fallen so far behind the reality that it is potentially possible that creativity within the context of current social reality is impossible.<sup>5</sup>

A double utility for art education doubles anything from its half-quality into the only possible temporary and ephemeral completeness that could result from half-ness, still remaining respectful to the possibility of change: change into new halves, back into the original halves, or onward into other recombined temporary wholes. Halves and wholes remain open and flexible for further development and research. Art education is the stage on which, and wherein, art making and our ‘consciousness’s experience’ of art, art reception, are equally addressed both to learners in art making as to learners in art appreciation. These learners will grow a shared understanding of art’s production, distribution and presentation or implementation, that will in all likelihood bring also Constant’s concept of creativity to new levels of realization and experience.

### **The educational turn**

A clear picture of a new curriculum outlines itself. This curriculum is the locus of the educational turn, bringing together in a knowledge developing environment for a first time the two halves of which cultural production is constituted, its two foundational pillars. Taking seriously a conceptual as well as productive collaboration, between traditional art makers and art ‘takers’ (now accepting art both in acknowledgment of their own co-constitutive role,

as well as realized in their ambition to take the result further, into other universes of value where art appreciation is equally at home), the new art educational institution will host two communities of learners-researchers. They consist of those who are equipped and motivated to drive the art making process and those equally capable and interested to acquire and develop the knowledge which will bring cultural production to work in universes of value other than the art market or similar 'pedestals of classicality'. The two communities learn together and work together in the creation of new art forms, of new avenues for art experience, in different universes of value, doubling their attention for audiences whose conscious experience of art will not only be catered to by the traditional institutions for art representation, but increasingly by art's implementation in a daily environment which is mediatised, symbolic — and 'useless' ...but for its advancement of art and media literacy for this time and age.

Educational institutions where both art 'making' and art 'reception' are taught in their epistemological consistency — however fragmented or idiosyncratic singular productions might be — where such productions are part of a general curriculum which is discussed and experimented in the context of a large variety of universes of value, by a rich constituency of students with their respective talents, intellectual appetite and creativity, both in visualization as well as in collaboration, organization, management and engagement, such institutions will bring about an educational turn that situates art education as the vanguard of art production with a mission of aesthetic and social-political reform.

### Notes

[1] Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (1970), Continuum London, New York, 2002, isbn 0-8264-6757-1 Full quote:

'Art is actually the world once over, as like it as it is unlike it. In the managed world of the culture industry, aesthetic naivety has changed its function. What once was praised of artworks, when they were poised on the pedestal of their classicality, as their abiding quality — that of noble simplicity — has become an exploitable means for attracting customers. The consumers, whose naivety is confirmed and drilled into them, are to be dissuaded from entertaining stupid ideas about what has been packed into the pills they are obliged to swallow down. The simplicity of times past is translated into the stupidity of the culture consumer who, gratefully and with a metaphysically clear conscience, buys up the industry's trash, which is in any case inescapable. As soon as naivety is taken up as a point of view, it no longer exists. A genuine relation between art and consciousness's experience of it would consist in education, which schools opposition to art as a consumer product as much as it allows the recipient a substantial idea of what an artwork is. Art today, even among those who produce it, is largely cut off from such education.' p.336

[2] In *Art in Context, Public Relations*, published by Gerrit Rietveld Academie, 2014, pp.29-38

[3] 'Don't we recognize art to have become the preferred context for any cultural, social, commercial and political display today? Has not the visual rhetoric of any of these endeavors of man become global media's prime concern? The image of 'art' and the 'artist', the image of 'sociality', the image of 'commerce', the image of 'technology', the image of 'science', the image of 'politics' and so on, and so forth — images have become the core product of above activities. Meanwhile images do no longer *represent*, but *direct* the roles which their protagonists fulfill. Art, sociality, commerce, technology, science and politics have

achieved their ultimate *artificiality* vis-à-vis their histories. ‘Art’ has become man’s prime concern.’

[4] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells – Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, Verso London, 2012. Chapter 9, “Pedagogic Projects: ‘How do you bring a classroom to life as if it were a work of art?’”, paragraph VI, ‘Aesthetic Education.’

“It seems telling that when the most artistically successful instances of pedagogy-as-art today manage to communicate an educational experience to a secondary audience, it is through modes that are time-based or performative: through video (Żmijewski), the exhibition (Bruguera), the lecture (Chan) or the publication (Hirschhorn). The secondary audience is ineliminable, but also essential, since it keeps open the possibility that everyone can learn something from these projects: it allows specific instances to become generalisable, establishing a relationship between particular and universal that is far more generative than the model of exemplary ethical gesture.

(..)

Near the end of his last book *Chaosmosis* (1993), Félix Guattari asks: ‘how do you bring a classroom to life as if it were a work of art?’ For Guattari, art is an endlessly renewable source of vitalist energy and creation, a constant force of mutation and subversion. He lays out a tripartite schema of art’s development, arguing that we are on the brink of a new paradigm in which art is no longer beholden to Capital. In this new state of affairs, which he names the ‘ethico-aesthetic paradigm’, art should claim ‘a key position of transversality with respect to other Universes of value’, bringing about mutant forms of subjectivity and rehumanising disciplinary institutions. Transversality, for Guattari, denotes a ‘militant, social, undisciplined creativity’; it is a line rather than a point, a bridge or a movement, motored by group Eros. By way of illustration, one cannot help thinking of the experimental institution with which Guattari was himself involved — the psychiatric clinic at La Borde,

best known for its radically dehierarchised blurring of work identities.

(...)

Guattari suggests that each work of art must have a 'double finality': '[Firstly] to insert itself into a social network which will either appropriate or reject it, and [secondly] to celebrate, once again, the Universe of art as such, precisely because it is always in danger of collapsing.'

(...)

Guattari's question should in fact be reversed: how do we bring a work of art to life as though it were a classroom? Pedagogic art projects therefore foreground and crystallise one of the most central problems of all artistic practice in the social field: they require us to examine our assumptions about both fields of operation, and to ponder the productive overlaps and incompatibilities that might arise from their experimental conjunction, with the consequence of perpetually reinventing both. For secondary viewers like ourselves, perhaps the most educational aspect of these projects is their insistence that we learn to think both fields together and devise adequate new languages and criteria for communicating these transversal practices." pp.272-274

[5] See page 59-63 of this publication, this quote on p.63. From 'De dialectiek van het experiment' ('dialectics of the experiment'), published in Constant, exh. cat. The Hague (Haags Gemeentemuseum), 1 October-21 November 1965



## Gerrit Rietveld Academie 1924–present

New students of Gerrit Rietveld Academie are introduced into the Academie with the words, 'We already think of you as Artists'.

Because art exists through our belief that [the object] is Art, so students at Gerrit Rietveld Academie become 'Artists' through the belief that they are so. By performing this initial declaration, the act of becoming an Artist at Gerrit Rietveld Academie is done not through the study of art, but by being declared an Artist within its context.

As Gerrit Rietveld Academie's Artists are made by the Academie rather than self-made through practicing art, they are not autonomous artists. By granting its Artists space to conduct their own projects, Gerrit Rietveld Academie suggests they have autonomy. However, even though Gerrit Rietveld Academie Artists choose their own projects and practices, their existence as Artists relies on the structure of the Academie. Therefore, the actions made within the Academie are not those of making autonomous art, but are performances of students acting as Autonomous Artists. Autonomous art is therefore not being made; rather a performance of Autonomous Artists is being played.

The students performing at Gerrit Rietveld Academie produce hermetic art as a functional characteristic of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie Artist. By making deeply personal explorations, the visible results require an Artist's statement to make sense. This directs the viewer's attention back onto the Gerrit Rietveld Academie Artists, who then perform the act of explaining the work (either in text or in person) and become the real object of contemplation.

Gerrit Rietveld Academie encourages this by supporting its Artists' decisions to follow their own individual niches. This makes the individual practices within the Academie specific while the overall production of Gerrit Rietveld Academie remains diverse. Because of the current belief that Art is boundless, diversity is a quality that defines the nature of contemporary art. By encouraging an array of personal niches, the singular entity 'Gerrit Rietveld Academie' embodies the concept of diversity, while each Artist performs a unique role to materialize the concept. Therefore Gerrit Rietveld Academie as a whole performs the current state of Art, and the Artists within are characters of the performance.

The artworks, or props, made within Gerrit Rietveld Academie are therefore a byproduct of the performance and contain little value once the

performance is complete. The cyclical yearlong performance ends with the destruction of its own set as the performers collectively trash the objects that no longer have value outside of the context of the academic year. Sculptures, drawings and paintings that were carefully stored, are thrown out as the retreat of the context of the academic year turns the object from Art to trash.

As the objects have no value outside the context of Gerrit Rietveld Academie, the name 'Artist' has no value either. As the Artists can only claim their title due to the word of the Academie, they are reliant on the Academie, or on the power/relevance of the Academie's word beyond its own grounds, to keep their value. Just as the artworks become trashable by the end of the term, so the title 'Artist' becomes trashable by the end of the degree, thus reducing the years of involvement into a staged experience of being an Artist: a performance.

At best, the students have gained enough experience as performers to keep playing the role of Artist on a bigger stage. At worst, the student is handed a piece of paper as a souvenir of the experience, thanking them for funding and contributing to the project.



**Ben Zegers**  
*Education = Transformation;  
In Between*





# Simon Keizer

## *Mission Statement*

### *Gerrit Rietveld Academie*

Over the past five years every individual program at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie has been accredited as being either 'good' or 'excellent'. For example the quality of the alumni and the study support were graded as excellent. The scale of the academy, the focus on individuality, having artists and designers as teachers, the wide variety of programs and the amount of workshops are important markers of this educational system. The coming years will be used to build on this potential. The Gerrit Rietveld Academy will do so by:

- Decreasing the amount of students, by making a stricter selection at the gate thus increasing the quality of the education.
- Increasing the quality of the outflow through small-scale and intensified education.

The GRA wants to accompany young talented people in such a way that they are able to function independently and professionally in visual arts and design. They want to ensure that students can sustain their work by themselves and become the artistic inspiration of their field.

#### **Core values**

- We want the skills and creativity of the individual to be optimally brought to fruition.
- We respect the individual and his freedom to develop a personal approach to determine her or his future.

- We give preference to authorship, research and experimentation.
- We value an open attitude towards the students' surroundings and stimulate involvement in others and society.
- We are quirky.

Students who get through our strict selection rounds have talent. Our role is to support them in an involved and critical way, and to accompany them to develop (those) talents. We teach them to become makers and designers. The character of our profile is easy to pin: autonomous-conceptual. This is the case in all disciplines.

### **Our vision in art and education**

In the choices we make, we base ourselves on our vision of education in the arts and the world that we prepare our students for. A world that is far from static and predictable. Our students are thought to take position in this dynamic field of activity and create their own niche. Our education is aimed at the fact that the students develop their own style of work and vision. This vision extends from their own work to the position of their discipline and in society.

The 'making' is an essential part of the students' education. In the workshops students are assisted in realizing their works. There is a possibility to work with, and combine, both old and new techniques. In this process the students are confronted with possibilities and restrictions. Through this process the student is forced to find new solutions. A process of making and reflecting is the root of the development in creativity and authorship. Our students regularly show their work to the outside world. This is done individually, in groups, or in academy wide events. Stepping out of the school context is an important marker in their development as makers and designers.

Theory has an important function within all depart-

ments. Theory is directly related to our practical education. Being at home in the cultural discourse, and being able to translate this into a working practice, is the goal.

The Gerrit Rietveld Academie has the highest percentage foreign students in the European higher educational system. We teach students from more than 60 nationalities. We cherish this wealth.

Students start building a network during their time at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, which gives them a sturdy base for an international practice. Next to that, we see that our alumni contribute to the internationalization of their field of practice. A significant part of alumni stays in the Netherlands after graduation.

The academy aspires to be acknowledged as an internationally well-known, top educational institution. Our 'claim to fame' does not necessarily exist of superstar teachers and alumni. We are internationally known as an institution that attracts students and teachers from all over the globe. We distinguish ourselves with a clear and distinguished profile. Being a 'Rietveld Alumnus' is interpreted as being an indication of having an innovative and clear artistic identity. We position ourselves as a top academy in the world. This position is confirmed by the great influx of foreign students, the vast amount of collaboration-requests, exchange students and publications in international media.

We consider the substantial presence of Dutch students as an important part of our identity. We want to keep the populace as diverse as possible. Our preparatory course (70% Dutch students) is a good way to bridge the gap between high school and higher education.

We are convinced that our vision of education, in which conceptual thinking is emphatically matched to

authorship, 'making' and materialization, enhances the Dutch creative industry through our alumni. They are makers with a vision.

**Source**

*Old Building/Neue Bildung*, Gerrit Rietveld Academie policy paper ('instellingsplan') 2012-2016

**Baten**

In de jaarrekening zijn de volgende baten verantwoord (x € 1.000)

|                          | <u>2014</u>   | <u>Begroting</u><br><u>2014</u> | <u>2013</u>   |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
|                          | €             | €                               | €             |
| Rijksbijdragen           | 11.069        | 10.535                          | 10.777        |
| Collegegelden            | 1.997         | 2.071                           | 1.958         |
| Baten werk i.o.v. derden | 337           | 310                             | 253           |
| Overige baten            | <u>550</u>    | <u>33</u>                       | <u>752</u>    |
| Totaal baten             | <u>13.953</u> | <u>12.949</u>                   | <u>13.740</u> |

**Lasten**

In de jaarrekening zijn, exclusief het saldo van de financiële baten en lasten, de volgende lasten verantwoord (x € 1.000,-)

|                    | <u>2014</u>   | <u>Begroting</u><br><u>2014</u> | <u>2013</u>   |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
|                    | €             | €                               | €             |
| Personele lasten   | 9.441         | 8.727                           | 8.634         |
| Afschrijvingen     | 625           | 807                             | 760           |
| Huisvestingslasten | 2.022         | 1.650                           | 2.246         |
| Overige lasten     | <u>1.764</u>  | <u>1.755</u>                    | <u>2.052</u>  |
| Totaal lasten      | <u>13.852</u> | <u>12.939</u>                   | <u>13.692</u> |

Income ('baten') and expenses ('lasten') balance of the  
Gerrit Rietveld Academie for the year 2014



## Marsha Bruinen

### *How to Safely Remove a Bird Stuck Inside a Building*

#### **Canvas turns concrete**

There was something reassuring about meeting at the square. The place allowed for both resting and moving, for meeting and being alone, for watching others and being watched. The open space carried out simple self-evidence against the houses that enclosed it: *of course* it was there. I realized it was merely this unquestionable character of the square that scared people and stirred protests when an organization called 'Campus in Camps'<sup>1</sup> created one.

*Campus in Camps* analyzes and redetermines the set of conditions present in contemporary refugee camps in Palestina. In these places the idea of public space is seen as something threatening, the absence of it hopeful. Not having normal urban characteristics corresponds with a state of temporal living and keeps hope of returning home. Having a public square would mean an upgrade in comfort that fits a longer stay.

One of the *Campus in Camps* projects that deals with this conflict is called *The Concrete Tent*. A need for temporary shelter can often be satisfied by setting up tents, because these are easy to construct and, importantly, de-construct. However, as the Palestinian crisis carried on, the tents' skin of temporariness stretched out. *The Concrete Tent* responds to this by materializing a paradox of 'permanent temporality'<sup>2</sup>: the work has the shape

of a tent, but is made of material that serves a long-lasting usage: canvas is replaced by concrete. The organization puts it in use as a site for communal learning. This notion of permanent temporality is not only a precise approach to the reality and fragility of a refugee camp, but also to the reality and fragility of education.

### **Stubborn space**

The image of The Concrete Tent brings up memories of images closer to home. Last year, in February and March 2015, students of the University of Amsterdam occupied first the Bungehuis and later the Maagdenhuis, both institutes that belong to the university. Brick vaults were covered with the students' banners and sleeping bags were scattered over the marble floor. During the period of eight weeks, temporality was tossed around and permanency questioned. Interestingly, the questions and demands did not even require the loud-speakers to be listened to or the banners to be read. The visual and physical confrontation of two symbols — the building as a symbol of authority, stability and tradition and the students' presence a symbol of flexibility, individuality and temporality — was enough.

The Maagdenhuis must have been a bit anxious by this occupation. In *How Buildings Learn* Stewart Brand states that institutional buildings, like the Maagdenhuis, 'act as if they were designed specifically to prevent change for the organization inside and to convey timeless reliability to everyone outside. When forced to change anyway, as they always are, they do so with expensive reluctance and all possible delay. Institutional buildings are mortified by change.'<sup>3</sup>

### **How learning builds**

Education is built on stilts of time: years, months, weeks, days and hours pile up and result in the experience of time passing. However, the time construction is not as ob-

*How to Safely Remove a Bird Stuck Inside a Building*

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*The Concrete Tent, 2015*

Gathering space made out of concrete

Maagdenhuis occupation, 2015

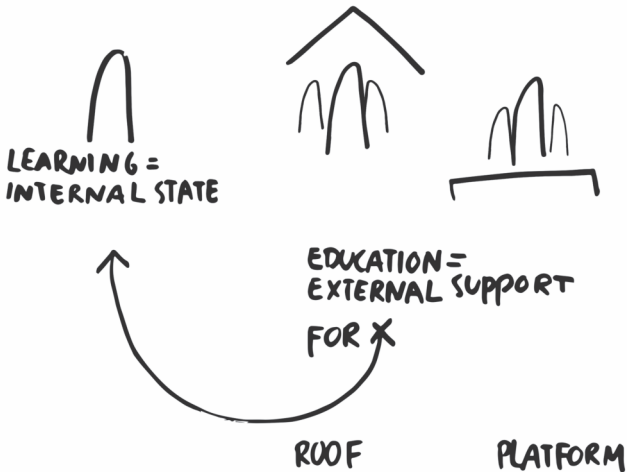
vious as it may seem. There is a complexity in this time structuring of education that revealed itself in the Maagdenhuis protests: the protesters were reflective of the past, tired of tradition and at the same time proposing alternatives for the future. These actions take on complex shapes that do not mount up easily. Instead they bridge, connect, interfere and separate. The question is, how could we realize an architecture in which all of these elements are implemented?

An architecture of education suggests the image of a building. A building that can be entered and screened, like when entering a lecture and quickly scanning the room for empty chairs. This act of entering is very relevant as an activation of both a relation between the student and the institute, and a relation between learning and education.

Recognizing this moment opens up a specific way of understanding these relations and seeing where they meet, that is, thinking about entering (or even occupying), inside and outside, internal and external. Because whereas learning is someone's internal condition that stretches over the period of a lifetime, education is an external attribution to this condition. The two terms move around each other in the same sentence: always approaching and touching upon, but sometimes also unsettlingly substituting each other. It's a dance in which the educational institute has been taking the lead, claiming learning as its own. Abstracting it from the student, it internalizes it as a promise that the empty chair in the lecture hall offers.

### **Two time horizons**

This shift in choreography can be recognized as a shift in focus of the university. Any university or academy presents itself through a profile containing its identity, mission, values, ambitions and philosophy. These concepts are grounded in history and settled for the long run.



Marsha Bruinen, *Learning and Education*, 2016  
Scanned sketch

Even when it's July and the schoolbuilding is empty, but inhabited by silence and sun rays coming through the window, the idea of the university is still kept alive. The institute, thus, has a long-term perspective, but has to support the short time horizons of its individual students.

When a student applies for a bachelor or a master degree, she is applying to spend a number of years under the roof of the chosen university or academy. Essentially, the function of these educational institutes lies in offering support for this amount of time. However, instead of defining itself through this supportive function and thus as flexible, attentive and careful, the institute tends

to define itself by its own identity. This can result in education with fixed ideas and methodologies and little place left for students' own say; focusing not on its meaning in a student's life, but on its permanent identity as an institution.

### **Pace levels**

Besides the institute and the students, there are other layers to be found in education, all of which have different life spans and change at different rates: the institute's site, its building, its reputation, its profile (as described before), its courses and its staff and stuff (equipment, books etc). In order to better understand this time layering and the controlling forces inherent to it, one could look at Robert V. O'Neill's idea as noted in *A Hierarchical Concept of Ecosystems*:

'O'Neill and his co-authors noted that ecosystems could be better understood by observing the rates of change of different components. Hummingbirds and flowers are quick, redwood trees slow, and whole redwood forests even slower. Most interaction is within the same pace level – hummingbirds and flowers pay attention to each other, oblivious to redwoods, who are oblivious to them. Meanwhile the forest is attentive to climate change but not to the hasty fate of individual trees. The insight is this: 'The dynamics of the system will be dominated by the slow components, with the rapid components simply following along.' Slow constrains quick; slow controls quick.'<sup>4</sup>

### **Slow supports quick?**

Talking about an architecture of education and the supportive nature of the educational institute towards its passing inhabitants, I want to refer to Support Structures, a book of Céline Condorelli. She names 'temporary' as an important feature of support:

'The irresolvable paradox of support is that it relies on appearing temporary in order to sustain and perpetuate the inherent [...] belief that what is being supported will eventually be able to support itself; support is geared towards the independence of the object of concern, and is a process towards its own obsolescence and disappearance.'<sup>5</sup>

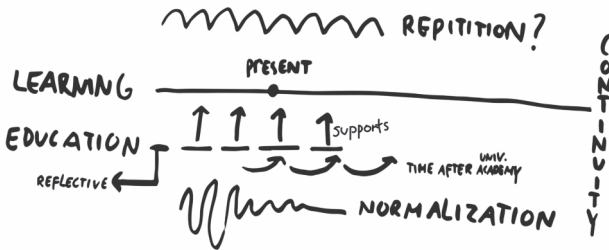
Applying Condorelli's words to the concept of an institute or university as a support system, shows the following: a university is geared towards the independence of the student, and is a process towards its own obsolescence and disappearance. Can obsolescence and disappearance stand in the same room with permanence? Does the described 'paradox of support' compare with the paradox of permanent temporality (the paradox of the permanence of the institute and its temporary function)?

Moving towards your own destruction while supporting the construction of another: It seems like a finite process. Yet because of the continuous and large number of 'others'(students), there exists a plurality of these processes: students come and go and this ongoing starting and ending of education ensures that while always in a process of destruction, the institute is at the same time permanent. 'The quick processes provide originality and challenge, the slow provide continuity and constraint. Buildings steady us, which we can probably use. But if we let our buildings come to a full stop, they stop us.'<sup>6</sup>

### **Norms**

This danger of being stopped, can also be described as the danger of being normalized; a danger that the student will, paradoxically, adapt to the support system of the institute, instead of the other way around. Michel Foucault points at the institutional, architectural apparatuses of normalization, such as the Panopticon:

'We know the principle on which it was based: at the periphery, an annular building; at the centre, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy. [...] Visibility is a trap.'<sup>7</sup>



Marsha Bruinen, *Time layering in education*, 2016  
Scanned sketch

Students too could be subjected to such a normalizing visibility — a visibility that is constructed top-down by the institute (to monitor and control the performance of each student) and not bottom-up by the students (to monitor and control the policies of the institute).

### A state of possibility

A full acknowledgement of the ambiguous paradox of education will lead to describing it as an 'endlessly stretched out temporariness':

'Support maintains possibilities open, for the object to collapse or for an eventual repair (a making perfect again, back to a mythical, original state), in both ways a projection towards a potential new. Temporariness, therefore, is actually a means of resistance to the occurrence of a solution, and pushes the predictability of an outcome away by stretching its own weakness, and in this way allows a state of possibility (or status quo) to further remain open.'<sup>8</sup>

Education as 'a state of possibility': in today's context of normalizing institutions it might sound very romantic. However, sleeping on the marble floor, the students in the Maagdenhuis chose intimacy over scepticism. The protesters are defenders of proximity, openness and democratic transparency. A change in their education might start with a glass floor that shows the contradicting stilts they are walking on.



Marsha Bruinen, *Concrete Tools*, 2016

Meeting of 5 students in which concrete objects are used, duration 90'





Marsha Bruinen, *Concrete tools*, 2016, video, 17'  
Video stills

Eight concrete symbols are offered as tools for communication to a group of students. The shapes can be selected and combined by the students to initiate different open conversations and architectures. The weight of the material makes picking up, carrying, holding and putting down the objects difficult; yet it is this physical and tangible manipulation that potentially improves the conversation.

**Notes**

[1] *Campus in Camps* is an experimental educational program created with Al Quds University (Al Quds/Bard Partnership) and hosted by the Phoenix Center in Dheisheh Refugee Camp in Bethlehem. It was founded as a means to address the numerous spatial and social interventions needed in Palestinian refugee camps.

[2] From the opening speech by Alessandro Petti for *The Concrete Tent (Campus in Camps; A University in Exile)*, Dheisheh Refugee Camp, 2015

[3] Stewart Brand, *How Buildings Learn*, Penguin Books, New York, 1994, p.7

[4] Stewart Brand, *ibid.*, p.17, quoting from Robert V. O'Neill's, Donald Lee Deangelis, J.B. Waide and Garland E. Allen's *A Hierarchical Concept of Ecosystems*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1986

[5] Céline Condorelli, *Support Structures*, Stenberg Press, Berlin, New York, 2009-2014, p. 21&22

[6] Stewart Brand, *ibid.*, p.17

[7] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, Vintage Books, New York, 1995 (first published in 1978) p.200

[8] Céline Condorelli, *ibid.*, p.21-22





## Constant

### *On Creativity and Desire*

For those who wish to learn about human desires, whether in the domain of art, the domain of sex, or any other domain, the experiment is an indispensable tool for gathering data on the objective and the source of our aspirations, on their possibilities and their limitations. One might wonder what purpose is served by following man from one extreme to the other, and being unafraid of flouting the norms set by ethics, by aesthetics, by philosophy in doing so. Why is it that we feel the need to break the bonds that have held us within a social system for dozens of centuries and thanks to which we have remained capable of thinking, of living, of creating? Does our culture no longer have a future, will it be impossible to satisfy our deepest desires within the confines of this culture?

(...)

Creativity is the way to knowledge, the pre-eminent means to conquer our freedom, the best weapon of the revolution. The current, individualistic culture has substituted artistic production for creativity. Yet what has been produced are merely the tragic symbols of impotence, the rare cries of desperation of a shackled individual, constrained by aesthetic taboos. Creating means making something hitherto unknown, and the unknown strikes fear in the hearts of people who believe they have

something to preserve or to protect. We, however, who have nothing to lose but our chains, are not afraid of the adventure.

(1949)

*'C'est notre désir qui fait la révolution', published in Cobra, organe du front international des artistes expérimentaux d'avant-garde ('organ of the International Front of Avant-garde Experimental Artists'), 4 November 1949, pp.3-4*

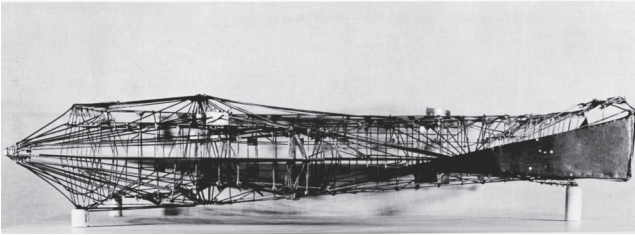
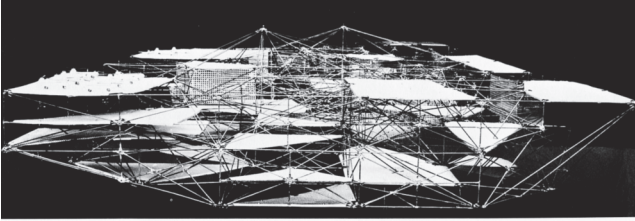
The typed manuscript in Dutch is in the Constant archive at the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD).

We can identify the dynamic principle of our existence in the transient, in the mutable. There is no beauty independent of the influences of everyday life. The individual artwork relies on wrong premises; it no longer suffices. Our artistic activity should be related to life in its entirety. To live is to act creatively. We must incessantly recreate the world around us and change it, if only by our way of living.

Our goal is dynamic variation and thus the intensification of the social atmosphere. There is no longer an audience, and it will no longer be possible to have a passive stance on art. Art arises solely from a general creative activity, once this ceases, art, too, disappears. Neither art nor the artwork, but the activity that produces the artwork, should be permanent. That is the essence of our life and its realization.

(1960)

*'Der Weg zum unitären Urbanismus', published in: Constant, Konstruktionen und Modelle, exh. cat. Essen (Galerie van de Loo), 1960*



Constant, New Babylon constructions, 1958-1961

The creative process shifts from reality to a conception of reality. Existing reality has gradually fallen so far behind the reality that is potentially possible that creativity within the context of current social reality is impossible. The culture is becoming 'utopian'; artists are focusing more and more on projects that for the moment are labelled 'unfeasible'. Today's creativity can only manifest itself as an invasion of, a conflict with, the reality of today. The New Babylon plan (...) should be seen from this perspective.

(1965)

'De dialectiek van het experiment' ('dialectics of the experiment'), published in *Constant*, exh. cat. The Hague (Haags Gemeentemuseum), 1 October-21 November 1965, no page numbers



## Simon Keizer

### *Transcript of an interview with Bert Mennings, business developer at the Cobra Museum*

Simon Keizer: Can you explain to me what you do as a business developer at the Cobra Museum?

Bert Mennings: The most important thing of what I want to tell you about business development is that you think you are talking about money, but that's not what it is about. What you do is, you try to examine what you can do for each other. It is about an exchange of values and meanings. In some cases this is an economical value, but it can also be about other values in this exchange.

SK: In what way do you establish these values?

BM: You have to examine what you can do for each other. This recognition makes it so interesting. This is what we try to do more and more at the museum. Before we continue let me give you a quick look into the museum. The Cobra is an independent museum. We get financial support from the municipality of Amstelveen – you have to be aware of the fact that this is not a subsidy. The municipality finances 30% to 35% of the total budget. The other part of the budget is generated by the museum itself. This is and has been the way we work since the museum started in 1995.

SK: How is the other 65–70% generated?

BM: The last couple of years we've increased our reve-

nue by 20% per year. This is not only generated by ticket sales, by the way. This is mainly achieved by two projects. First of all it is done by organizing big exhibitions, blockbusters. It is way easier to come up with financial means if you think big, even when there is an economical crisis. Secondly we have a foreign program, called *Cobra Global*. We started *Cobra Global* because of the international identity of the Cobra movement that we want to present internationally and because of economical reasons.

All the big museums attract a big part of the subsidies, in Dutch we use to say: 'Alles is voor Bassie' ('Bassie takes all'). For example Wim Pijbes, former director of the Rijksmuseum, did a great job on that. The pond is getting smaller and smaller and the competition is getting stronger. That is what's going on in Holland at the moment. And that is exactly why we've started *Cobra Global*.

We examine what we have to offer abroad. But to just stick a logo on the exhibition isn't exactly interesting for a company. It's about the context that you present it in. Location, momentum and the guests are of imminent importance. We look for opportunities that make it interesting to participate. Cobra was an important avantgarde movement, but outside Europe the movement isn't exactly well known. So you have to come up with other ways of selling Cobra abroad. *Cobra Global* makes us reflect on what Cobra was in the past and could be for the future, which also counts for the museum itself. An extra asset is, that we can get some important art pieces on loan from private collectors through this program.

SK: What do you think is the added value for a private collector?

BM: Collectors want to have a look at the process, taking part in and being part of the creative process – for example, in the 'Open Studios' at the Rijksacademie and De Ateliers.

SK: This is exactly what is shown in the documentary 'De confrontatie' ('The Confrontation')<sup>1</sup>, which was shot during a two year stint. There you see private collectors want to be involved in the process, or want to be on site where the art is made, and to be able to have a more personal contact with the artist.

BM: There seems to be a gap between these two worlds, but this doesn't have to be insuperable. In a lot of cases the collector is also entrepreneur and they recognize aspects of their practice in the artists' practice. You have to speak their language and have to be able to make the connection. Curiosity and passion are abilities recognized by an entrepreneur. There you have these similarities with artists, and on the basis of such similarities you can make connections for which you need someone's help sometimes.

SK : I think when you are looking at the added value of the Rietveld Academie, you have to look beyond the works that are made. For me it's more about talent development.

BM: That's right, the development of talent always keeps its value. You have to ask this question much more fundamental. Work from the mission of the institution and stay within these boundaries. Who fits in within these boundaries and can help you achieve the goals of the mission. I've said it before, but the most important thing is what value can you add for whom, at a specific moment. In a way you create an equal platform. Why place yourself in an underdog position. Both parties have something to add. If there is a match, this could mean a longstanding cooperation, which adds value on both sides.

SK: I was stuck on the money, but it's more the connection that you have to worry about; to create an arena – a

situation where this connection can be made.

BM: At some point coincidence is out of the question, something starts to exist. Start from the mission and let the exploration be abstract. It will get more concrete step by step. For example, if you present Cobra internationally you have to place it in a broader context: Cobra is the link between modern art and contemporary art. If you want to understand one of both, or both, you have to know Cobra. This is how you expand three years of Cobra movement to include the whole 20th century! The core values of Cobra are innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. These are appreciated by entrepreneurs. This creates recognition. Start from the mission of the Rietveld Academie and find out what can be an added value for external parties.

### Notes

[1] Ditteke Mensink, *De Confrontatie*, Interakt 2015

## Simon Keizer

### *Exchange of values and meaning through gameplay*

A husky and a Polar bear are playing together.<sup>1</sup> The husky and the bear have different ways of inviting to play, but still find a way to play with each other, without the bear killing the dog. The rules in this game are different for both animals, but they are both able to set aside their own values of playing and set up a new system.<sup>2</sup> Rules create structure, but in this case the structure is penetrable. Another important aspect in this situation is the participants' ability of self recognition or self reflection.<sup>3</sup> You have to be able to recognize that you are something else than the entity or object that you are playing with. Tijs Goldschmidt talks about three types of playing: playing alone, playing with others and playing with objects.<sup>4</sup> In what way is this kind of gameplay, without clear rules, also possible within human interaction?

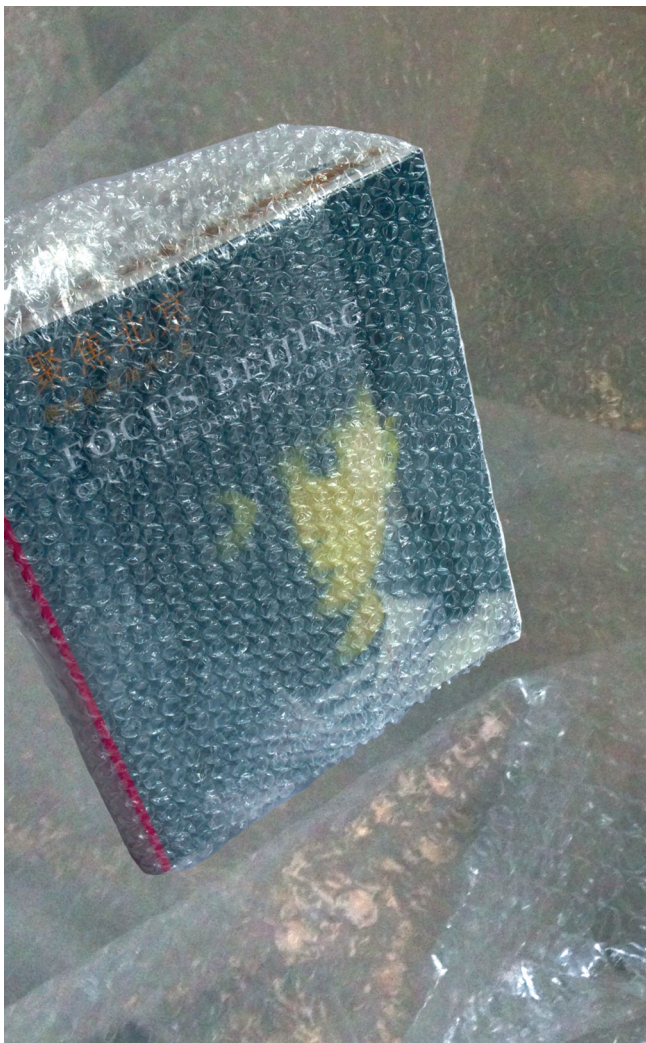
A game needs three things: a system, rules and play. General systems theorist S.W. Littlejohn defines a system as 'a set of objects or entities that interrelate with one another to form a whole.'<sup>5</sup> Chess is a good example. The pieces on a chessboard are objects with a clear relationship. Understanding and applying these relationships is the act of playing the game of chess.<sup>6</sup> Playing chess on a public playground and all the talk that comes with it is also chess. The crazed rants of Bobby Fischer on denying the holocaust and calling out for the death of President Bush are also chess. All of this together makes the game of chess.



Simon Keizer, *System*, 2016  
Photo collage



Simon Keizer, *Rules*, 2016  
Photo collage



Simon Keizer, *Play*, 2016  
Photo collage

Clark C. Abt, a social theorist, calls a game a particular way of looking at something, anything.<sup>7</sup> The rules of this game are not clear, and are to be found out and altered during playing. In games, you can distinguish between those that are aimed at winning and those where there is no need to win – or at least no goal to win. The first can be called finite, the second infinite. A finite game is played for the purpose of winning, an infinite game for the purpose of continuing the play.<sup>8</sup> In this case we are looking for an infinite game. The participant knows that he is playing a game, but is unsure of the games' rules, timespan and arena; yet is aware of the system he is playing in. The rules of an infinite game must change in the course of play.

The important thing is creating a 'magic circle', as Edward Castranova describes it, a penetrable membrane, a shield of sorts, protecting the fantasy world from the outside world.<sup>9</sup> This is also described by Johan Huizinga in *Homo Ludens*:

'All play moves and has its being within a play-ground marked off beforehand either materially or ideally, deliberately or as a matter of course. Just as there is no formal difference between play and ritual, so the 'consecrated spot' cannot be formally distinguished from the play-ground. The arena, the card-table, the magic circle, the temple, the stage, the screen, the tennis court, the court of justice, etc., are all in form and function play-grounds, i.e. forbidden spots, isolated, hedged round, hallowed, within which special rules obtain. All are temporary worlds within the ordinary world, dedicated to the performance of an act apart.'<sup>10</sup>

*Homo Ludens* is Huizinga's vision on culture: 'there are isolated cultures all around us – the judicial system, the military, sports, art, theatre, entrepreneurship – each of which has it's own rules of play to which the players must adhere the moment they enter that domain.'<sup>11</sup>

When one of three parts (system, rules and play) is missing, a situation can be created where the first negotiation of the system, rules or play, takes place. This can be as simple as creating an arena, or playing field, or negotiating a set of starting rules from where the game can start.

If you are looking for an exchange of values and meanings, between two or more parties, through gameplay, an infinite game can be a fertile playground for a long-lasting relationship. There are no restrictions, but there is always the path for the parties to play to be led by. This path can change every time it is walked upon. It will evolve gradually. An infinite game is played with boundaries, not within boundaries.<sup>12</sup>

### Notes

[1] [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE-Nyt4Bmi8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JE-Nyt4Bmi8) (07-04-2016)

[2] Hamelijnc en Terpsma, 'It's play time', *Fucking good art*, 2014

[3] Hamelijnc en Terpsma, *ibid.*

[4] Tijs Goldschmidt, *Vis in bad*, Amsterdam, Athenaeum, 2014, p. 135

[5] Lantz & Zimmerman, *Rules, play and culture*, [www.ericzimmerman.com/texts/RulesPlayCulture.html](http://www.ericzimmerman.com/texts/RulesPlayCulture.html) (07-04-2016)

[6] Lantz & Zimmerman, *ibid.*

[7] Lantz & Zimmerman, *ibid.*

[8] James Carse, *Finite and infinite games*, The Free Press, 1989

[9] Edward Castranova, *Synthetic worlds*, The Universtiy of Chicago Press, 2005 p. 147

[10] Johan Huizinga (1872-1945), *Homo ludens, A study of the Play-Element in Culture*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949 p.10

[11] Hamelijnc en Terpsma, *ibid.*, p.19

[12] James Carse, *ibid*





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*How does a dog know  
what a camera is?*

---

78

dedicated to:

*Anecdote, Academia,*  
*Belief, Faith,*  
*Knowledge,* *Conviction,*  
*Experience,*  
*Mediation,*  
*Engagement, Relation,*  
*Data, Information,*  
*Understanding,*  
*& all of their unnamable bastard*  
*cousins*

</dedication>

(The following is a series of illustrations.  
For entertainment purposes only, not for education)

**fig. 1**

10 000 hours. It is claimed, if somewhat debated, that a musician, an athlete, a dancer, a fine craftsman or any such “analog content producer” relying on their body to mediate their excellence, requires 10 000 hours of practice before achieving mastery in their respective field.<sup>1</sup>

> Assume that contemporaneity idealizes individualism. That of being special, preferably exceptional.

> Assume that change and variation are more attractive than repetition. Assume that repetition sounds almost interchangeable with stagnation, and furthermore, invisibility.

> Estimate the popularity of such a claim; that people (akin to horses or dogs) cannot sidestep:

practice;

( synonyme: dressage, domptage,  
entraînement, préparation, éducation, instruc-  
tion, formation, pratique, exercice, experi-  
ence, usage, scolarité )

> Would that, in turn, suggest that intellect or talent (with the latter assumed to reside in the former and the former assumed to reside in the brain) cannot provide a wormhole past the embarrassing somatic struggles of practice?

(the too-good-to-be-true-thus-eternally-hoped-for leap  
through space-time)

Didactic baboon inquires:

- Your instruction manual in exchange for my kinetic probing?

1 “The Role of Deliberate Practice in the Acquisition of Expert Performance”, K. Anders Ericsson, Ralf Th. Krampe, and Clemens Tesch-Romer, Psychological Review, 1993

**fig. 2**

“The moral of the story...” as from campfire to bible to silver screen to cyberspace, out of consideration for the next generation, or at least their compliance, widely reproduced stories, when not contested, entering the public conscious, entering the private subconscious, mutate into fuzzy fundamental expectations about life. Question mark.

*The following is generously made possible*  
by  
**Cultural Mediation**

Examine two ~~successful campaigns~~ popular western narratives:

“Neither *Rocky* (1976) nor *Karate Kid* (1984) entirely disconnect ‘practice’ from ‘prize spot’, but they do assume that the elevated status of the protagonist as special (with whom the audience presumably identifies, either by narcissism or by design) make possible a shortcut past all the rime and reason of athletic development.”

*Ergo*: if only thy mind metabolizes X, thine motor skills will promptly speed past putting in those 10 000 hours [...]

- IT'S FUCKING FICTION!  
If anything fucking happens,  
don't blame me,  
white America.

Fuck Bill O'Reilly

Pan to:  
>INT Dialogue (residue)

Am I delusional? Bruised scriptwriter egos cradling themselves to sleep at the thought of Dominance-In-The-End (any patriarch is a hero in waiting)

?

Cut!

Is this my Christian baggage?

The cognitive self resides in a dematerialized soul. A purer higher truer self than the mortal aging body.

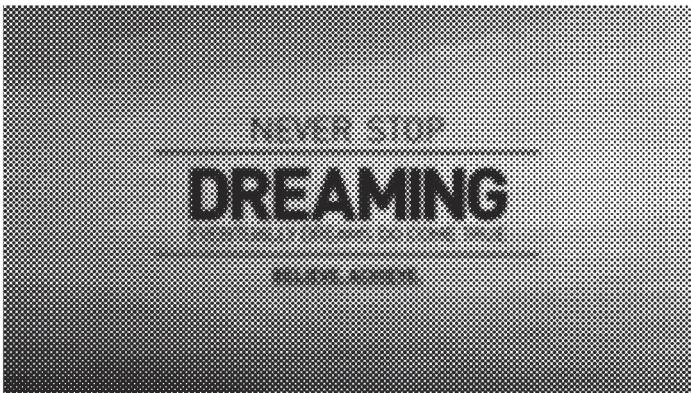
((repulsion))

### *§ Truth*

"True beauty coming from within"

...& finding my true self

*[NEXT SCENE: speculation regarding control instruments sprung by advanced capitalism]*



Maybe both, collapsed?

/ \*\*

\* are we allowed to use feedback loops  
\* to illustrate this part right here???

\*/

82

Monotheist crusades assimilating pagan holidays and myths superseding neo-liberal copywriters feeding on leftovers of said religion's guilt/shame/ uttermost individual responsibility over the individual's bliss or suffering

*(& in the earthly life only suffering shall prevail)*

Cut.

### fig. 3

In a recent digital campaign by *Under Armour® Sportswear*, prospect customers catch a rare glimpse of backstage training of the most decorated Olympic athlete of all time, **Michael Phelps** (22 medals).

Phleps (30) is an elite swimmer nearing the end of his career. His final competitive preparations are depicted in this short film truthfully, dramatically, romantically – as being long, tedious and demanding.

Among other things a supervised Olympic routine involves: controlled rest, controlled nutrition, controlled concentric drills for Michael's left iliopsoas. And further.

At 90 seconds the video ad is coming to an end, fading soundtrack, dimming the scene, concluding:

IT'S WHAT YOU DO IN THE DARK THAT PUTS YOU IN THE LIGHT

*(cue those 10 000 hours)*

Ok, fine.

But then! Conspicuously, in the very final slogan sentence, our corporate narrator slips ~ trips all over them self & in the name of Dreams, punchlines:

### RULE YOURSELF

Click.

And just like that,  
cinematic sentiments go

```
>>from
romantic documentary
>>to
alternate reality
```

A reality of blockbuster logic, i.e. superheroes, fast cars, sexy explosions.

*Phleps is transformed*

**from** working in symbiosis with the mortality of his flesh  
**to** rising above, as the master of an interchangeable  
 physical vessel.

*The dumb, deaf & mute meat of embodiment.*

;

You can go ahead now, youtube "rule yourself".  
 I'll wait.

## § *because:reasons*

### fig. 4

An academically inadequate experiment in nutrition performed in the UK (was not vast enough, not long enough, not reductionist, clinical, quantifiable, isolated, controlled, or binary enough) attempted to observe 'effortlessly lean people' for:

*Habits, metabolic variation and physiological reactions to over-feeding*

to extrapolate:

*Why certain individuals are less likely to gain excess weight than others*

During the month long experiment, aside from self reported nausea when eating past satiety, participants' body temperature as well as spontaneous activity (ie. fidgeting) appeared to automatically rise when over-feeding.

{sub-section here}

§ *Thermodynamic Effects of Fidgeting*

## 84

The most unexpected phenomenon recorded among study subjects was however

"...habit of eating (primarily) according to craving"

(EPIGRAM)

*If you crave dark chocolate -  
you might be lacking magnesium*

Consider the following (write legibly):

A: Does feeding behavior differ when individual is NOT familiar with the word magnesium?

B: Do cravings arise in subjects who aren't familiar with substance dark chocolate containing mineral magnesium?

C: Are bodies that have never attended chemistry or biology class nutritionally incompetent?

D: How do socially anxious bodies coexist with

d1: ...silent private realities?

d2: ...complex states unsatisfactorily translatable to linear language?

d3: ...functions not sufficiently mapped in clinical observation?

Sub-(anec)note:

Breathing is an automated function in humans, but can be consciously overridden.

**fig. 5**

One of the early diagnostic technique aspiring medical doctors are taught is *percussion* (dating from *seventeenth century B.C.*). The physician places an open palm on the patient's body and proceeds *tapping the middle joint of one of his own fingers* with one of the fingertips of the other, free hand. The resonance of the knock informs the experienced ear about conditions of underlying structures. E.g. does the subject's lung seem stony, dull, hollow, or wet-sounding?

- Rain

fig. 6

Dor loves Angie the way nobody has ever loved me. Angie is a 5-year-old Italian greyhound adopted from a shelter for abused dogs. It took a year to rehabilitate her fully, but having experienced the ups and downs of recovery together fused the human+canine profoundly. Dor freelances, teaches and travels frequently. Intensely missing his companion after not having shared a permanent home with her during the past 3 years was what informed his recent decision to sign a longer employment contract and settle down in Switzerland.

"It's so clean and beautiful, plus all of this nature for Angie to run free in!" he explains enthusiastically, eyes a gleam.

The way a young & in-demand artist's life converges around 5kg of coarse fur and bony limbs may sound unusual first. "But she's incredible, everybody loves her!" Throughout our talk I start suspecting that, just like the children who experience a difficult social environment in early stages of their life but manage to handle it progressively, a dog with overcome 'survival history' somehow grows. And not only Angie's owner, but even his friends describe the dog as displaying extraordinary charm, intelligence, vitality and affection. "She's the life of the party - she loves attention! She's like a model, you know? If I'm photographing her, she's literally posing for me. See? Click - and then changes pose. Click, another pose. Look at that sassy dog! I mean... how does she even know that we're taking photos?"

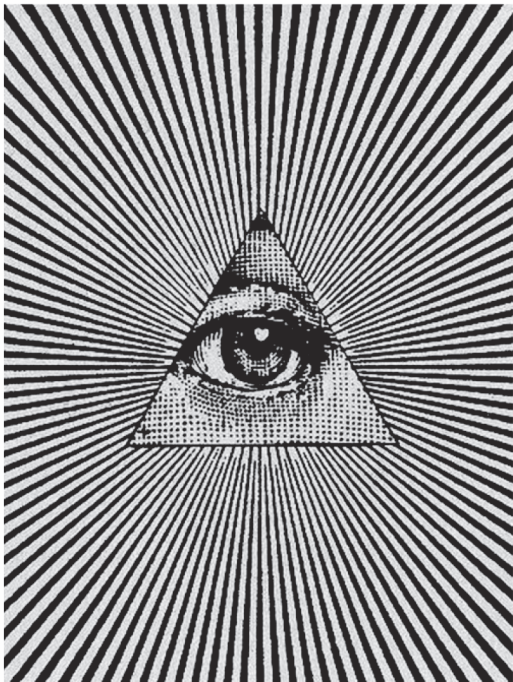
fig. 7

**E***mpiricism* – a collective term for a wide array of technologies for information acquisition & knowledge adaptation. These decentralized, renewable, and self regulating modes of being with the world are already installed, at low cost, in many parts of the planet. Advantages include: tools for navigating complex and unpredictable situation, as well as absence of specific standardized requirements or linear instruction input. Drawbacks include: lack of objectivity ( ref. def. spec. below ), as well as unavoidable participation and co-creation in the reality observed.

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*(objectivité)**ˌɔbdʒɛk'tɪvɪti, ˌɔbdʒɪk'tɪvɪti/*  
noun1. the quality of being objective.

( synonyms: *impartiality, absence of bias/prejudice, fairness, fair-mindedness, equitableness, equitability, even-handedness, justness, justice, open-mindedness, disinterest, disinterestedness, detachment, dispassion, dispassionateness, neutrality* )

e.g:  
fig. 7a

## The broken escalator phenomenon. Aftereffect of walking onto a moving platform.

Reynolds RE, Bronstein AM

*(abstract)*

We investigated the physiological basis of the 'broken escalator phenomenon', namely the sensation that when walking onto an escalator which is stationary one experiences an odd sensation of imbalance, despite full awareness that the escalator is not going to move. The experimental moving surface was provided by a linear motor-powered sled, moving at 1.2 m/s. Sled velocity, trunk position, trunk angular velocity, EMG of the ankle flexors-extensors and foot-contact signals were recorded in 14 normal subjects. The experiments involved, initially, walking onto the stationary sled (condition Before). Then, subjects walked 20 times onto the moving sled (condition Moving), and it was noted that they increased their walking velocity from a baseline of 0.60 m/s to 0.90 m/s. After the moving trials, subjects were unequivocally warned that the platform would no longer move and asked to walk onto the stationary sled again (condition After). It was found that, despite this warning, subjects walked onto the stationary platform inappropriately fast (0.71 m/s), experienced a large overshoot of the trunk and displayed increased leg electromyographic (EMG) activity. Subjects were surprised by their own behaviour and subjectively reported that the 'broken escalator phenomenon', as experienced in urban life, felt similar to the experiment. By the second trial, most movement parameters had returned to baseline values. The findings represent a motor aftereffect of walking onto a moving platform that occurs despite full knowledge of the changing context. As such, it demonstrates dissociation between the declarative and procedural systems in the CNS. Since gait velocity was raised before foot-sled contact, the findings are at least partly explained by open-loop, predictive behaviour. A cautious strategy of limb stiffness was not responsible for the aftereffect, as revealed by no increase in muscle co-contraction. The observed aftereffect is unlike others previously reported in the literature, which occur only after prolonged continuous exposure to a sensory mismatch, large numbers of learning trials or unpredictable catch trials. The relative ease with which the aftereffect was induced suggests that locomotor adaptation may be more impervious to cognitive control than other types of motor learning.

PMID: 12802549 [PubMed indexed for MEDLINE]

*§ Things that I know,  
but don't know  
that I know*

(THE FOLLOWING IS MEDIATED)

- *Children of holocaust survivors displaying signs of second-hand psychological trauma* <sup>1</sup>
- *Offspring of mice that were electrocuted while subjected to cherry blossom scent show innate fear of such smell, despite never having encountered it* <sup>2</sup>
- *Tapeworms survive getting their head cut off (and will regrow new head, with new brain) while retaining memory of environments from before the decapitation* <sup>3</sup>
- *Tapeworms fed other tapeworms suddenly display behavior they were never trained in (but which their devoured brethren were)* <sup>4</sup>

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1 Holocaust Exposure Induced Intergenerational Effects onFKBP5 Methylation", Rachel Yehuda Nikolaos P. Daskalakis, Linda M. Bierera, Heather N. Badera, Torsten Klengel, Florian Holsboerd, Elisabeth B. Binder, Biological Psychiatry (2015)

2 Parental olfactory experience influences behavior and neural structure in subsequent generations", Brian G Dias, Kerry J Ressler, Nature Neuroscience (2013)

3 An automated training paradigm reveals long-term memory in planaria and its persistence through head regeneration", Tal Shomrat, Michael Levin, Journal of Experimental Biology (2013)

4 Memory transfer through cannibalism in planarians", James V. McConnell, Journal of Neuropsychiatry (1962)

</ illustration>

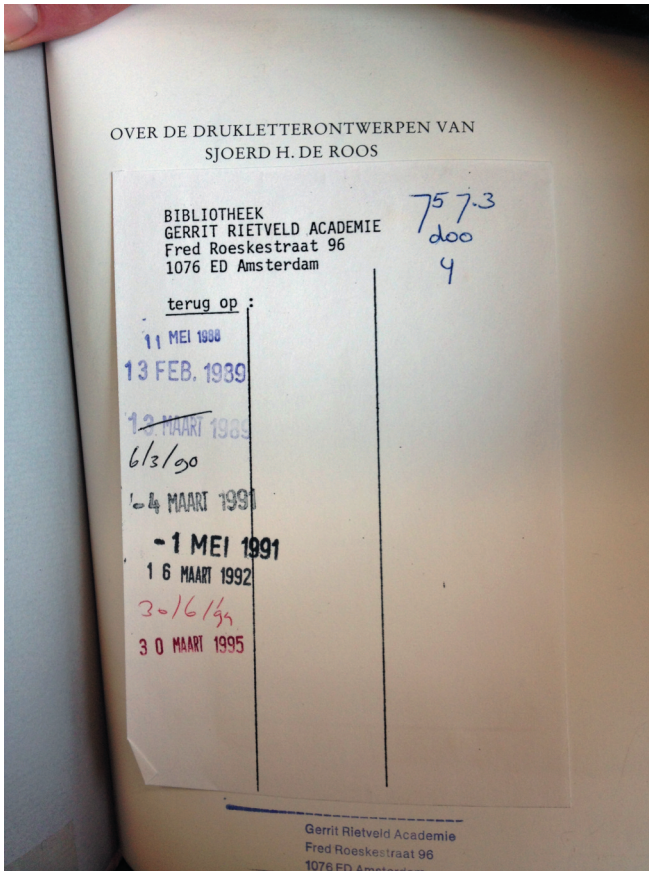
PS. illustration ≠ art  
PPS. autodidactism ≠ education

</ semiotics>



## Dieuwertje Hehewerth

### *Reading the Library*



Maybe you can learn about a school by its library. Books come and go; books are read and not read. Some books are not read since 1995.

Dick Dooijes' *Over De Drukletterontwerpen van Sjoerd H. De Roos* is one of those books. Dick Dooijes was the director of Gerrit Rietveld Academie. Dick Dooijes became the director in 1968. He stopped being the director in 1974. The book was read 21 years after he left. It's been 21 years since Dick Dooijes' book has been read.



Every book in Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library has a label. Some labels are rectangular. Some are rectangular with round-corners. Some labels in the library are completely round.

Some sections of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library have many rectangular labels. The philosophy and mythology section is one of those sections. Some rectangular labels are very white. They are square-cornered white rectangular labels.

Letters on square-cornered labels look very small. They are small printed-letter labels. Maybe they look small next to handwritten labels. Maybe they look small next

to typewritten labels. Some small-printed-letter labels look smaller than others. Maybe because the letters are thinner. Maybe because they have no serif.

Round labels of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library are handwritten and typewritten. Round handwritten and typewritten labels are yellow. Maybe the yellow labels are 40 years old. Maybe the yellow labels were dipped in tea. Maybe the yellow labels were never white. Maybe everyone knows this.



The philosophy and mythology section has more rectangular labels than round. Difference and Repetition has a rectangular label. The Truth In Painting has a rectangular label. The Truth In Painting has a round-cornered serif-lettered rectangular label. Gerrit Rietveld Academie started in 1924. The Truth In Painting was published in 1987.

Round-cornered rectangular labels are not as white as square-cornered rectangular labels. Round-cornered rectangular labels are not as yellow as round handwritten and typewritten labels.

Rietveld Academie is written on round-cornered labels. They are round-cornered off-white Rietveld Academie written labels. Rietveld Academie is not written on all round-cornered labels. Maybe no one was reading the very small writing.



Hannah Arendt has written many books. Many Hannah Arendt books are in the library. The philosophy and mythology section has 14 Hannah Arendt books. Only 12 Hannah Arendt books are present. Maybe two students are reading Hannah Arendt.

Hannah Arendt has round handwritten yellow labels, and round-cornered rectangular labels. She has no round typewritten yellow labels.

There is 1 square-cornered white rectangular labeled Hannah Arendt book. It is about Hannah Arendt. It is not by Hannah Arendt. It is not in the philosophy and mythology section.



The botany section of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library is very small. It has round handwritten and typewritten yellow labels. There are 10 botanical books in the botany section. 2 were last read in 1995. 2 were last read in 2015. The botany section is less than half of a shelf. The philosophy and mythology section is more than 6 shelves. The philosophy and mythology section is not the biggest section of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library.

The smallest section of the library is an 8-book section. It is the curating section of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library. The curating section is next to the art philosophy and art criticism section. They are in the first row at the front of the library.



The zoology section of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library has 1 rectangular labeled book. It is a round-cornered off-white printed-letter labeled book. It is written in Dutch. It is an insect book. It lives with 17 animal books. The animal books are of

- Fish.
- Whales.
- Birds.
- Bears.
- Cats.

Most of the zoology section is written in Dutch. There are no books about dogs. There are no books about giraffes. There are two books about insects.



The monograph section has every kind of label. Monographs are books dedicated to 1 subject. The monograph section of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library has artist monographs. There are no Music in late Medieval and Renaissance Cities monographs. Music in late Medieval and Renaissance Cities is the example given, when asking the dictionary what monograph means.

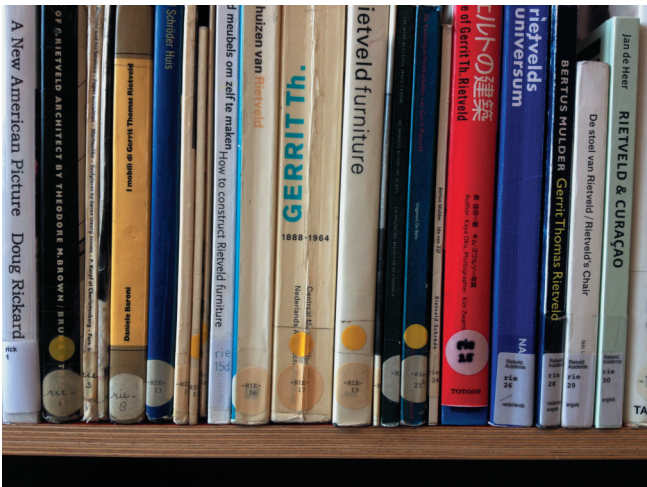
The monograph section is almost half of the library. It is the biggest section of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library. The monograph section has 20 subsections. It is an alphabetically organized section.

Q shares a section with P. It is the P-Q section. Maybe if monographs were ordered by first names there would be a Q Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library monograph subsection.

The monograph section is often messy. Maybe students visit the monograph section often. Maybe the monograph

section books are very heavy. Falling books take less heavy books with them. Fallen books are 1 of the messes of the library.

Some students eat lunch in the library. More students eat dinner in the library. Until now I had never eaten in a library. Sometimes Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library smells of lasagna. Most times Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library smells of faintly burning dust. The heaters are always on in the library. The cleaners do not dust the heaters.



Artists with more than 1 monograph have numbered monographs. Gerrit Rietveld monographs are labeled RIE. The first Gerrit Rietveld monograph is RIE1. The last Gerrit Rietveld monograph is RIE30. There are 21 Gerrit Rietveld monographs in the library. 30% of Gerrit Rietveld monographs are missing.

5% of Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library books are Mis-

sing. Maybe some monographs got lost. Maybe some magazines were forgotten. Maybe some students purposefully forgot to bring back some borrowed books. Last month somebody brought back a book. They brought back a book 10 years late. It had been a Missing Book. Now it is not. Maybe a new book is missing. I haven't seen John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* in a while.



The highest numbered Picasso monograph is 45. Picasso monograph 45 has a round, handwritten yellow label. There are no rectangular labeled Picasso monographs. There are many round handwritten and typewritten yellow labeled Picasso monographs.

35 of Picasso monographs are Missing. Maybe students are reading Picasso's Missing monographs. Maybe Picasso's Missing monographs are used as bookends by teachers. Maybe 34 Picasso monographs are building a tower supporting the lamp of a librarian reading the 35th monograph.



Picasso monographs are quite good bookends. Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library has a shortage of bookends. If Picasso had painted a few more paintings maybe his monographs would make better bookends.

1 Picasso monograph is 'On Request'. Picasso's On Request monograph has a round yellow label. On Request books are vulnerable or valuable. Picasso's On Request monograph is hardly requested.

Uta Eisenreich has an On Request book. Uta Eisenreich's book is sometimes requested. Uta Eisenreich's book was requested this year. It was a requested On Request book.

Uta's On Request book is covered in plastic. Plastic protects vulnerable books. Uta is a teacher of Gerrit Rietveld Academie. Many books are protected by plastic.



1 Mondriaan monograph is labeled MON20.

6 Mondriaan monographs live in Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library.

2 Mondriaan monographs have rectangular labels. Both are square-cornered white rectangular labels.

25% of Mondriaan monographs have rectangular labels.  
0% of Picasso monographs have rectangular labels.

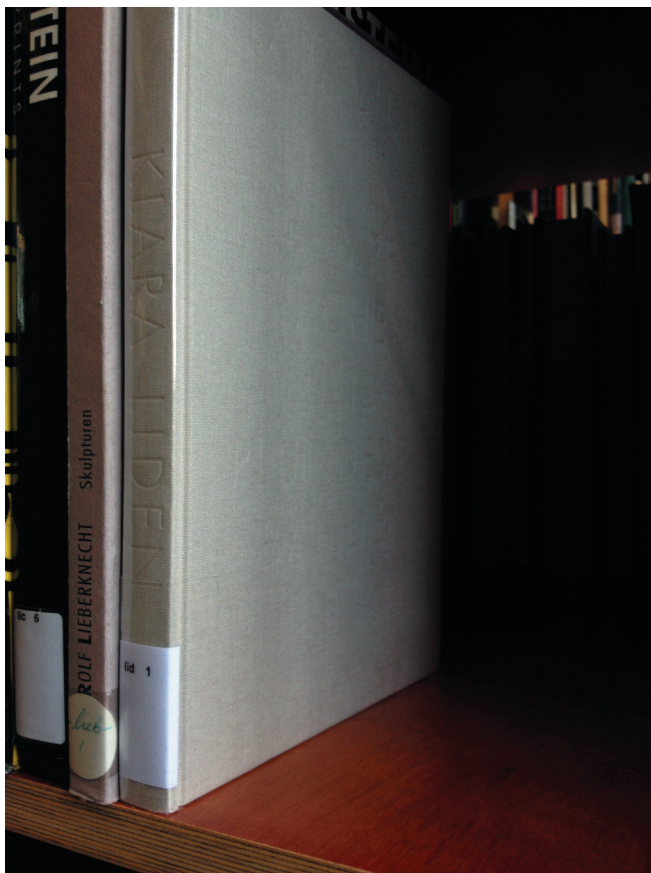


Matisse had two exhibitions last year. The Stedelijk had an exhibition called The Oasis of Matisse. The Stedelijk is a museum in Amsterdam city. Monograph 18 and 19 are published by the Stedelijk. Monograph 18 and 19 have white rectangular labels.

Students at Gerrit Rietveld Academie have library accounts. Missing Books is a library account. One student can take 10 books. Missing Books can take many books.



Dit is geen pijp is written in Dutch. THIS IS NOT A PIPE is written in English. The round typewritten yellow label is in English. The round handwritten yellow label is in Dutch.



Kiara Liden's monograph is labeled LID1. LID1 has a square-cornered white rectangular label. LID1 has lived in Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library for more than one year.



Karl Larsson's monograph is labeled LARS1. LARS1 has a rectangular label. LARS1 has lived in Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library for less than one year. LARS1 was published in 2015. One day LARS1 will have rectangular, but yellow, label.



Mierle Laderman's monograph is called *Seven Work Ballets*. *Seven Work Ballets* has a rectangular label. It is a square-cornered white rectangular label. *Seven Work Ballets* is labeled LAD1. LAD1 was published in 2015. It does not have a round handwritten or typewritten label. One day it will have a square-cornered yellow label. Unless *Missing Books* borrows it.

Mierle Laderman wrote in 1969. Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library collected books in 1969. In 1969 Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library did not collect Mierle Laderman's writing. Maybe Mierle Laderman's writing was spoken not

printed. Maybe Mierle Laderman's writing never left New York. Mierle Laderman studied in New York City. Gerrit Rietveld Academie students study in Amsterdam city.



Francis Alÿs has frequently borrowed books. ALY1 is the most borrowed book of the library. Francis Alÿs has many books. But Hannah Arendt has more in Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library.



Art philosophy and art criticism is the photographed section. It is a photo of the front of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library. Susan Sonntag's books live in the art philosophy and art criticism section. Art philosophy and art criticism has many Susan Sonntag books.

4 Susan Sonntag books have square-cornered labels. They are square-cornered printed-lettered white rectangular labels. Hannah Arendt has no square-cornered labeled books. I have never read Hannah or Susan's books in Gerrit Rietveld Academie Library.





## Urs Moore

### *Some thoughts on language (according to Freytag's dramatic structure pyramid)<sup>1</sup>*

#### **Exposition**

The main characters in this text will be words, or the letters or symbols of which they are composed. This is told because I, as the author of the text, had and have trouble with communication. Not so much with non-verbal communication, but with spoken and written communication. These forms of communication are mostly executed with words. Words that need context to be properly understood. If this goes wrong, you have a misunderstanding or a miscommunication. It is this that I am in particular interested in, and my first aim was then also to sort out how language could be more efficient. Or to rephrase this question: 'How could we prevent misunderstandings in the future?' For that it is important to have a look at where words or terms come from. So let's start with a case study on terminology:

The term 'terminology' is ambiguous, at least in the German language. It is, etymologically seen; the science of terms and their use in certain disciplines. But terminology can also be the whole collection of terms of a specific profession or discipline. If terminology is already ambiguous, which entity can then prevent us from any further fatal communication errors? Maybe education could hold an important role here? It is at least considered to be the process of facilitating learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, beliefs, values and habits. The word itself is derived from the Latin *ēducātiō* ('A breeding, a

bringing up, a rearing') from *ēdūcō* ('I educate, I train'), which is related to the homonym *ēdūcō* ('I lead forth, I take out; I raise up, I erect') from *ē-* ('from, out of') and *dūcō* ('I lead, I conduct'). We hereby have a clear definition of the word 'education'. But the terms 'knowledge', 'skills', 'beliefs', 'values' and 'habits' are, like the term 'education', above all bound to a specific cultural background or context. 'A breeding, a bringing up, a rearing' depends heavily on the values, beliefs, knowledge, skills and habits of the person that wants to educate you. This person can be called teacher, tutor, parent, docent, or something else. You probably associate all of those words with something or someone different. If you compare teacher with tutor, you probably will have different associations with the words. If you look the words up, teacher can mean the person that teaches you something, but it also can mean the index finger. A tutor is also a person that teaches another person, but most commonly in a small group or through one-on-one interactions. The word itself however comes from the Latin word *tutor*, which means 'watcher', 'protector', or 'guardian' and this again comes from *tuēri*, meaning 'to protect', which sounds less didactic than teacher. Particularly if you imagine the teacher raising his index finger to teach you something, no matter what. I want to point out here that these differences in the meaning of words, their definitions, are, somehow, consciously or subconsciously, internalised by us and that we associate the words with them. This is logical, of course, but these different associations can also influence the way we perceive the words and the way we react to them. In the case of teacher and tutor, it can influence the way we accumulate and accept knowledge in relation to how the sender of that knowledge is called or is calling himself.

Thus one could say that we humans acquired a nice set of words, which we showcase in dictionaries, so called 'controlled vocabularies' and thesauri. We have words for

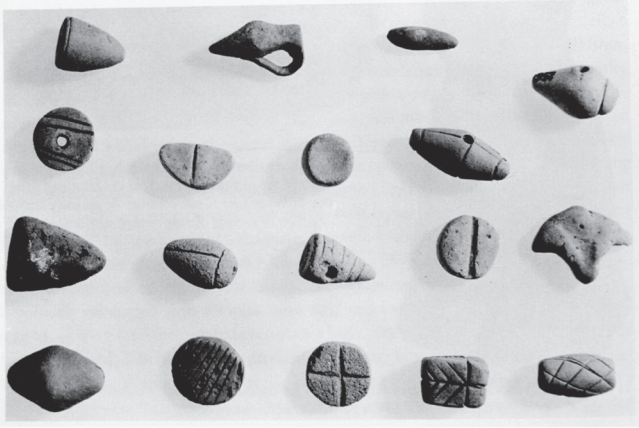
a lot of things and for a lot of them we agree that their meaning correlates with the definition in the dictionary so that everybody knows what he or she (or anybody who feels in between and outside of he and she) is talking about. However, the difference between the definition of a word and its interpretation depends primarily on the context in which it is used. The word itself is neutral; it does not have any feelings, it is entirely innocent. Only a recipient or a messenger can attach emotion or action to a word or a term.

### **Rising action**

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention. An interesting invention in human history is the written language and its ongoing development. Without it, I could not write this text and a lot of good stories would have been lost simply because nobody would've been able to write them down. The fact that we can become old and pass knowledge down to the generations is, in comparison to other animals, probably one of the most fruitful evolutionary advantages that we have. The invention of written language, in that sense, can hence be seen as a major evolutionary step. This is because written language made it possible not only to learn from your parents and grandparents but also to make knowledge accessible for longer periods of time. This is true only in theory because literacy is the key requirement and, as we know, still not self-evident. The origins of literacy and that of written language are bound together like a married couple. But just like forced marriage, the invention of written language was in the first place economically motivated. As early as 10,000 years ago, literacy and written language first emerged in form of notations and computational devices. These were predecessors to a real writing system, wherein spoken language gets transformed into symbols and later letters.

One of the earliest examples of such a writing system is

23 Clay tokens, the antecedents of true writing.



the one developed by the Sumerians around 3500-3000 BCE in Mesopotamia, now Iraq. During this time, writing had a purely functional purpose. Due to new forms of governance, and the need to manage information created by increasing trade, the development of a writing system accelerated. The system the Sumerians developed is now called by historians Sumerian Cuneiform Script and it is assumed that their writing system was developed without any predecessor.<sup>2</sup> This means that the Sumerians most probably did not rely on an already existing writing system when they were developing their own but really tried to form symbols, letters and words from their own spoken language. However, even before this system was fully established, farmers were using clay tokens to keep track of commodities such as sheep, goats and land. For example, in order to keep record of two sheep, two round clay tokens would be made with signs baked into them to represent the sheep. But if you had hundreds of sheep, it was impossible to carry all those tokens around. For that purpose, different clay tokens were invented to represent different counts of commodities. There was one

token for one sheep, a different token for five sheep and another token for ten sheep. The tokens got lined up on a string and a string with two tokens representing ten sheep and three tokens representing one sheep would then be representing and amounting to 23 sheep. This shows that it was not letters or words that were first written down but notations in combination with symbols representing a commodity or property.

As mentioned before, this happened exactly then because this was the moment in human history when people settled down for the first time. They developed new lifestyles wherein for the first time people produced more than they needed. The products gained value through the literally materialised time that was put into their production. It was the moment when time became money. The moment when the man, later called blacksmith, made the field labour easier by forging a plow and got in return something as a reward for the time he put into this, now valuable, piece of steel. With that reward he could go to the butcher and buy a nicely smoked sausage and afterwards visit the bar and get drunk. Nothing changed since then in this causality.

Its interesting that out of the necessity of keeping track of property and economy, the Sumerian people invented an accounting system which later transformed into the first known pieces of literature. It is maybe because of that, that accounting is often referred to as the language of business. The word 'accounting' itself is derived from the Middle English word 'accounten', which originates from the Old French *aconter*. This word comes from the Vulgar Latin word *computare*, which basically means to reckon, to count. It's worth noting that the base of the word *computare* is *putare*, which can mean 'to prune, to purify, to correct an account, hence, to count or calculate, as well as to think.'<sup>3</sup> Economic growth can, in that sense, be seen as the primary motivation behind developing a

system wherein you can manifest the difference between quantities of things and the things itself. The more commodities or property one had, the bigger one's economy grew; the more symbols were necessary to keep track of business. Things got quite complex then and writing it down helped to keep track of what's in and what's out.

### **Climax**

Through accounting humans developed a writing system and communication tool that is unique. The accounting can also be seen as a major force responsible for the general surge to literacy. On the one hand, it is handy to have an accountant who keeps track of your business. But if you are a businessman, it is also important for you to understand how numbers work, are, and what they mean. This took a tragic turn in the case of the Jewish communities in middle Europe during the 10th century. In that time, a lot of Christian artisans organised themselves in guilds - guilds can be seen as predecessors of trade unions or cartels. Jewish artisans were not allowed to join the Christian guilds because of their religious backgrounds. This led to the eventual loss of their occupations, simply because the Jewish artisans couldn't compete with the Christian guilds. Without their jobs, Jews had to take occupations like money lending and pawnbroking — occupations that were ostracised by the Christian communities. If you were a Christian, you were not allowed to take a lending interest from another Christian — this was simply seen as amoral. But without taking interest on lending, no money or trade business was possible. Hence, it did not make any sense to work in that field as a Christian. It made much more sense to force into it those people who were allowed to take interest — Jews. Especially poor and small businesses were prone to lending and, in times of economic crisis, that easily backfired on the Jewish communities. When the taxes rose, Jews had to raise the interest rate because the interest was their only income. This fired hate against

them, commonly resulting in pogroms. It is from this time that the stereotype of the rich, money-hungry and greedy Jew dates – a stereotype that still exists today. The accounting, however, probably had a positive impact on the literacy of the Jewish community also. Being forced to work in accounting and money lending made it necessary to know how to read and write. Reading and writing opens the door to literature and science and creates knowledge to be passed onto future generations. This might explain why prior to World War II, there were so many good Jewish writers, scientists, musicians, and artists - what we call nowadays the 'intellectual capital' - in the Jewish Communities in middle Europe.

**Retardation (falling action)**

The spoken language manifests itself in the written language and vice versa. In the beginning of written language, the difference between what you would call standard language and jargon or terminology was probably very small, or barely noticeable. However, the more people became specialised in certain fields of interest, the more they developed a language that fitted within it called jargon. I assume that the Industrialisation was important in the development of this kind of language. When machines started to get manufactured, a certain language, a jargon, was needed to describe the parts that the machines were built from - the moment when big tasks started to get fragmentised. Just like in the beginning of writing, it was the novel complexity of the world that led to the development of suitable writing systems. Screws, threads, measurements, weights, time, temperature and a many more things had to be liable to certain classifications. These things became universal in some sense, yet they are not the same over the whole world. Think of the difference between metric system (meter, kilogram, second, etc.) and the United States customary units (foot, miles, pound, etc.) for example. Mismatches and conversion incidents are common, but can

become extremely costly in a globalised economy as the following anecdote from recent history will show.



On December 11 in 1998, the NASA launched its Mars Climate Orbiter. The Orbiter was meant to study the climate of Mars, its atmosphere and surface changes and to act as a communication relay for the Mars Polar Lander, which had been sent earlier. Everything was fine until the US\$ 125 million Orbiter approached Mars on September 23, 1999 and the ground crew lost communication with the spacecraft. This happened because one piece of the computer software produced non-metric units of pound seconds (lbf s) instead of metric units based on newton-seconds (N s), which another part of the software was programmed for. This led to a conversion error and when the Orbiter entered the atmosphere in the wrong angle, it became uncontrollable. The result was a disintegration of the spacecraft on Mars and disappointment on Earth. Below you can see a photo taken by the Orbiter on its way to Mars. It shows the red planet and it is virtu-

ally worth US\$ 125 million, because it is the only one the Orbiter acquired on its way. (I, however, just dragged and dropped it from the World Wide Web.)

Incidents like this (and most probably the financial costs of it) and the anticipation of future conversion incidents or misunderstandings in other fields are probably the driving force behind attempts to integrate different terminologies and make them universal and internationally comprehensible. This future terminology can become independent from language when its knots start getting labeled by notations (numbers or non-lingual signage) and not by words. Ideally and consequently, in a fully automated environment, the biggest problem in the equation will be the human factor that will be swiftly subtracted. Through that, conversion incidents, misunderstandings and mismatches would be the problems of the past. At this point, we'll reach the pure economic efficiency.

### **Dénouement; resolution, revelation, or catastrophe**

The human factor, always causing problems, always being held responsible. Unable to be objective and prone to his own subjectivity. While this text in an earlier version was titled "Future language", I have to confess that I am unable to imagine something like that at the moment. It could be symbols and notations, like it was in the beginning of language. It could also be a wider, more extensive set of emoticons that smoothens communication between individuals and leaves less room for interpretation. However, the interpretation of a word when put in a context will always bare potential problems. In that sense, it is the cognitive part which can be seen as our Achilles' heel. Maybe it is then not a new talking or writing I want to argue for, but a new way of thinking that could shed some light on our future. Language is the chameleon of communication, it alters itself if necessary. That's at least what the written history shows in its line-

arity. Hence, it is necessary that we should have another look at the force behind it.

Economy, the making of money, with efficiency as its highest goal. When things got complex in the beginning, we developed written language systems, so that we could keep track of our commodities, our property and to monitor our work-life balance. If it is the economy that, to a great extent, drives and decides the spoken and written language, it is probably the way we think that should be changed. If we, for example, equal success to sales figures and time to money, we should then maybe think of another definition of success and maybe of time as a basic right. Imagine a world where the interest of companies lays not in producing and selling as much as possible but in sustaining as much as possible. Imagine a washing machine company whose interest is to provide you with a long lasting service, like telecommunication companies with their mobile phone networks. If they consider their products/ provided services as their property, their attempt to build everlasting machines would reinvent the way we think of economy and also how we deal with commodities and property. This would eventually lead to a new form of language - products would no longer be commodities offered for sale but servants of the consumer. The moment when humans take charge and become superiors to their goods, instead of being slaves of their property.

Dramatic structure is the outline or organisation of a dramatic work such as a theatre play or film. According to Gustav Freytag's pyramid the plot of a drama is divided into five segments, or acts which some refer to as dramatic arc: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and dénouement/resolution/revelation/catastrophe.

### Notes

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[2] Three other regions where it is assumed that written language developed independently are Egypt (3000 BCE), China (1300 BCE) and Mesoamerica (600 BCE).

[3] Baladouni, Vahé. 1984. "Etymological Observations on Some Accounting Terms." *The Accounting Historians Journal* 11 (2): 101-109.

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## Nina Gierasimczuk

### *An Architect's Guide to Education*

First of all, I would like to tell you how much I appreciate your attendance. I would also like to say that it is rather difficult giving a lectures like this without the possibility of comebacks or discussion. On the other hand, you know that in this institution, where the rules are very liberal, we cannot give closed seminars, reserved for just a few auditors. So, for starters, let us keep things light.

In today's lecture I will compare the architecture of two famous buildings: ScienceEd and ArtEd. It is not inadequate that the systems of education were given architectural forms. Science and art are institutions: stable, persistent, hierarchical and purposeful. Creativity is the essence of performance in both. Hence, institutionalized creativity and its physical shape do concern us.

For the ease of presentation, I will treat the two topics separately. First I will focus on the architecture of ScienceEd. As it happens, I have visited the site several years ago, and so I have gained more personal insights into its actual shape and function. Today, as an introduction, I want to talk to you about this visit. Some of the photographs that I took while being there will serve as an illustration. Please consult the accompanying lecture notes to get a more unbiased, theoretical understanding.

ScienceEd is not very tall but it is quite chunky. It spreads over a large area. When I first saw it I had to think of an

ice-berg. Not so much about the bigger part that's hidden underground — although the building's messy and overcluttered basement is legendary — but rather from the cold and eternal impression it gave, floating on the grassy, well-maintained field. The building is very white. It owes its impeccable color to the systematic repainting, which occurs yearly, in the summer. Upon my approach, I gradually realized how imposing and stable it seemed, I admired it against the background of white clouds swiftly floating through the sky. This, and the fact that I lost my hat, were the only indications of the overwhelmingly strong wind. There were no trees on the grounds, no trash flying around — none of the usual clues of moving air.

Large revolving doors seemed to ensure the fluent flow of visitors and prevent congestion. The ground floor is marvelously spacious. One realizes quickly the presence of cubicles but, since all walls are transparent, light travels easily through the building. I was very tired at this point due to the long walk from the train station. To my relief I could rest on one of the benches scattered around the space, just under a large palm tree in a turquoise flower pot. The furnishings and decor were simple and did not seem expensive. I do not find the combination of turquoise and yellow particularly well chosen, but against the white of the floors and walls it gave a very hygienic and functional impression, like the furnishings of trains or planes. They are supposed to put people at ease, in this comfortable absence of aesthetics. I can appreciate such facilitation, especially in view of the famous anxiety of the visitors. I had lunch in the on-site Mensa, but it's not worth mentioning — neither for the quality of service, nor for the quality of the food served.

The building is very easy to navigate. Staircases are wide and numerous, but to my disappointment there were no escalators. By the end of my visit I had promised myself

a new pair of comfortable walking shoes. On the first floor, which must have been of the same size as the immense ground level, the interior was quite different however. I do not want to say it became claustrophobic, but surely more compartmentalized. I had known about this from the start, but only now it became painfully obvious — there was no going back. Getting out of the building required traversing all the rooms. This mere thought made me anxious and I could not resist speeding. It reminded me too much of supermarkets and shopping malls, which I really hate. I remember passing a white door, that had 'Tabula Rasa Room' written on it. A man in a white coat just exited it and I caught a glimpse of transparent, empty baby cribs. The sight frightened me, but after all, as an architect, I should be concerned with functionality and aesthetics of the building, rather than with the ethics of its usage. I noticed loads of cleaning utensils, bike-pumps and other machinery which I could not name. They looked like devices predominantly used for pumping and pushing things. I briefly wondered if they were used on people. They were systematically and conveniently placed in little compartments throughout the building. I noticed the inhabitants and visitors eagerly stamped cards upon exiting and entering consecutive rooms, while impatiently exchanging comments about the importance of work-life balance. Four or five flights of stairs and a couple of blisters later, I finally reached the top floor. Here, a conveyor belt took me outside through a regular, narrow door. It took a long time to finally arrive at the end of the streamline. The beer in the pub felt adequately rewarding. I admired the view of numerous quietly blacked-out little houses in Scienceville.

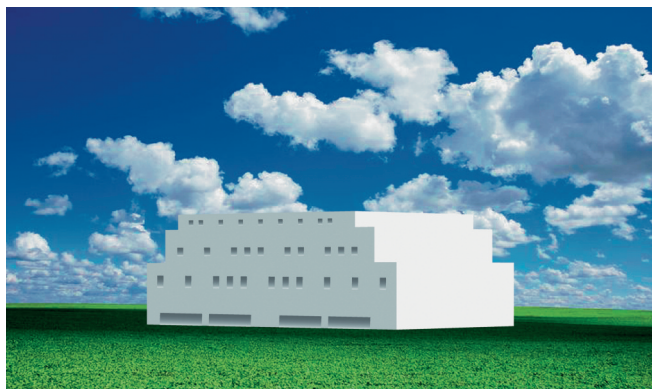
For comparison I now want to let you in on a completely different experience. I have very recently visited the ArtEd building. My memories of it are still fresh, I have not yet fully digested what I saw. You must forgive me for the fragmented nature of my report. First let me tell

you how astonished I was about the overall shape of ArtEd — the marvelous tall spindle gleamed in the sun against a clear blue sky. I saw a lot of people outside, but it wasn't too crowded, just lively and energetic. I must say the surroundings were a bit too smelly for my taste, maybe because of the vegetable market. It brought back to me an atmosphere similar to the one that I recently experienced in India.

In order to get inside I had to stand in a long line. Ahead of me, the vast majority of people were denied entrance. The gatekeepers reminded me of bouncers at a night club. They used an app on their iPhone to scan people's eyes. 'In search for pain' they said. Once pain was detected, a stamp was given and the way in opened up. I myself had an invitation, so there was no need for scanning. But I kept wondering... would I pass the test? My childhood hadn't been all that easy, but long term therapy helped me controlling those feelings. I wouldn't say that I became cold or calculated, but observing the people around me left me with feelings of inadequacy and void. But enough with that and back to ArtEd. The narrow ground floor quickly forced me upstairs. I immediately understood the reason and the justification of ArtEd's spindly shape. The belly of the building was buzzing with activity. It was extremely conflicted. The overwhelming mess transgressed the floors, spilled over walls and windows. Within it, quite contrarily, the people seemed organized and full of purpose. It felt almost like a trend, to be that determined. All the more since the actions performed did not seem to make a whole lot of sense. Someone said they needed a rope; they ran out of the building and came back with a tomato, likely from the vegetable market. The architecture suited the occupants perfectly; they looked complete, comfortable and composed. I picked up words like 'intersubjectivity' and 'aboutness'. I caught a glimpse of a couple of dark rooms and alcohol dispensers, which made me wonder to what extent the

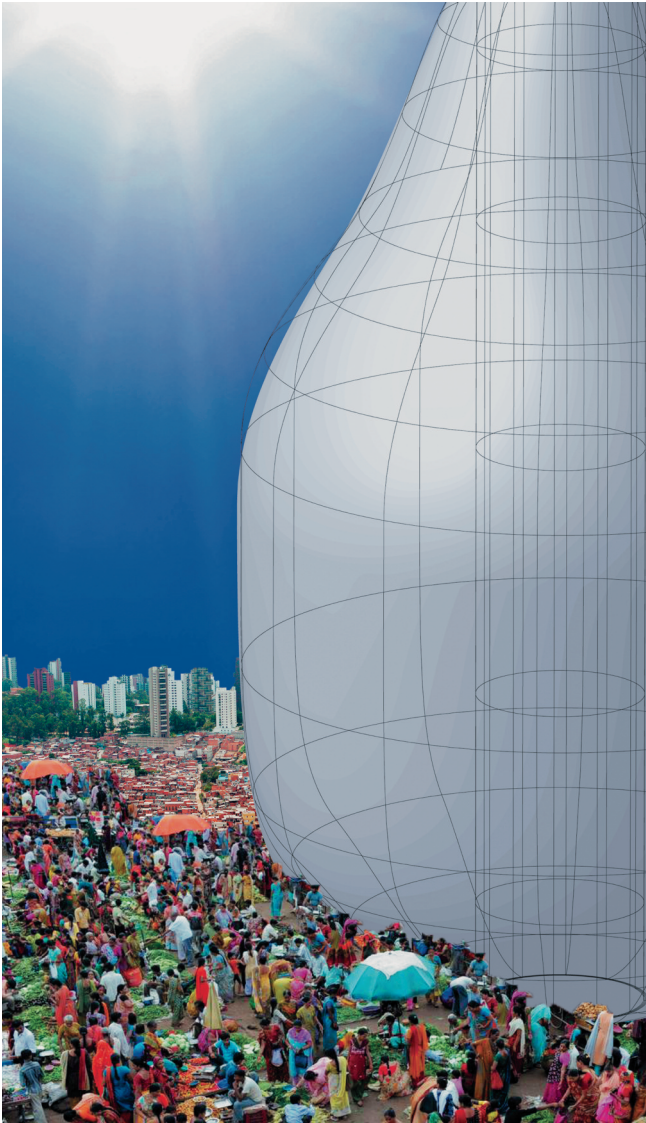
purposeful atmosphere was sober. But again, we are not here to judge ethics. On the fun side, quite by accident, I got involved in a hide-and-seek game (which was quickly given up due to the concealment-friendly mess all around), and participated in communal eating of delicious mussels.

Though the building seemed very tall to me on the outset, I quite quickly got to the top. There wasn't much space, but it felt empty. I passed many just standing at the bottom of the staircase who, seeming to remember something, suddenly ran down again. Others just sat on the stairs biting their nails, or hugging each other. 'They avoid the top,' I remember thinking, 'perhaps this is fashionable too.' I later got to know that the top floor is occupied only very briefly. I wondered why that was — one possible explanation is that the chairs up there are very uncomfortable. I remember wondering about the relationship between art and design, while I sat there squeezing my buttocks. I felt a cold breeze from the open balcony door to the left of where I sat. The narrow catwalk leading into the aerial open space frightened me. 'Some people get parachutes and jump out,' I heard, 'some jump out without.'



Nina Gierasimczuk, *ScienceEd*, 2016  
Photo collage

Right page:  
Nina Gierasimczuk, *ArtsEd*, 2016  
Photo collage





## Nina Gierasimczuk

### *Education*

They are in the kitchen. She moves around, he sits at the table. 'Here is your coffee.' 'Thanks.' He reaches out, his forearm thick and veiny. He takes a deep breath — she stops by the sink to listen. 'Things simply changed for you,' he says. 'First of all, there's the new job, your own place, far enough from here. Like you told me, finally you feel that you have a choice. And secondly, there's the art education. I think those people, this whole task woke up some emotions in you, created new beliefs, new perspectives...' She nods. He continues. 'I understand that you feel torn. You feel you're a person from two worlds, the world of science and the world of art. You are de facto a person from two worlds. And I imagine this is very difficult. I don't know if this is true, but they tell us those are two worlds with different sets of values. Personally I don't really think that's the case. I think this is just a narrative. But I don't know, I might be mistaken. In any case, this narrative is very strong. I, for one, I tend to think that people who excel in either of those worlds are in fact very similar.'

She turns away from him, now looking out the window at the courtyard. Fences divide it into rectangular fields of different colors. Each ground floor tenant has their own outdoor space. 'The problem is not in excellence or success. The problem is in remaining active, going on doing things,' she mutters. 'I hope you realize that I'm not trivializing. I do not only mean recognized success, what

other people think...' he responds raising his voice. She continues in the same tone, as if she did not hear him.

'I don't want to talk about ideological differences. Rather about methods.' He sips his coffee, it's bitter, he frowns. She thinks he actually doesn't like coffee, gets the milk out of the fridge and puts it on the table. She knows she now needs to be careful with her words. 'And, simply, the methodology of science, or rather the methodology of scientific life is different. In the sense that one has to have different methods and a different life...'

She pauses for a moment, looks at him, he is checking his phone. She starts again: 'But there is also the way in which you see personal growth. And the way you live within it, and the ideology you confess. It is impossible for me to adapt to it, while taking on the burden of art.' He rolls his eyes and interrupts. 'I really don't know what you mean by my ideology. I think what you take to be my ideology, namely being systematic, is not scientific or academic. It is even the case that academics on average are not like that. This is rather my hobby: imposing a framework. In science it is not important at what time one goes to sleep or at what time one eats. None of this matters. It's all just creativity.' She now sits down at the other end of the table. 'I don't know, maybe I just care too much about what you think. And if that's all there is to it, then the life exercise in which I separate from all this teaching... I... I keep listening to it now. But then again... I do whatever I feel is the right thing, anyway. I don't do things your way, but still I feel overburdened and limited by you,' she says, struggling to stay calm.

He realizes he needs to pay attention now and says: 'I know. All this comes from the tension between those two worlds and from the fact that you are in-between. But I really think this is not about the difference between scientific and artistic life, I think...' She is getting impatient and interrupts. 'Yes, and that's why I'm saying that

one can find common ground. It is possible. But there is your force, your strength, and all this for which I love and respect you. You being so fucking monumental, and so fucking convinced that this is how you want to do things, and because we are so close... That's the reason why I can't find a platform, space for myself. Because there is so much noise all the time.'

Being visibly frustrated now, she stands up and looks at the courtyard again. He can feel her frustration too, the feelings spill over from one to the other, as usual. He sits back and says: 'OK, I understand, and this indeed can be a problem, that I seem like a guy who is extremely convinced about things, while for all this to work, I have to be convincing, and those are clearly two different things. But there is one more aspect of this situation, which you don't take into account. Being that when you are alone the dynamic is different; even between just two-people... things come into play... I mean, when I am alone, all the everyday small things... when one is alone, they simply fall into place. And when you are in even the smallest team, they are part of the negotiation. A part of a joint plan.' She turns to him, excited. 'I completely disagree; you don't have to convince. I think the problem is exactly that you are constantly trying to convince. You are trying to convince all the time, instead of opening up and listening. Be parallel to other opinions and be observant.' She takes a moment and gasps. 'That's exactly what's so frustrating about the scientific, academic world. It is a constant discussion, convincing, rephrasing, semantics... One ends up smart but incomprehensible, safe but defensive, like a castle. Measuring utility all the time, expected or already gained. Evaluation and judgment. Politics. That's what they teach you, until you lose everyone. I am sorry I identify this with you, I am sorry to blame you. But you subscribe to this. You want this.' His face turns blank. 'I don't know what to tell you. This is just how it is.' His voice is now indifferent. He takes another

sip of coffee, stretches his legs. 'When there is a problem, even one like this, a big problem, those two confessions of faith, are our two different credos. Our reactions to this problem are very different. If I had a problem like this, I would compartmentalize things even more, and believe that as a result happiness will emerge, happiness will fall out from prolonged systematics. Just as I could never learn those fucking foreign languages, because I always thought this commitment was missing.' He looks at her and adds quietly, 'but it still might be all total bullshit.'

She is now by the table, he stands up and goes towards the sink. She thinks he is trying to convince her again, and quickly takes over. 'You know, on a certain level I share your ethics, and, when it comes down to business, I am stubborn and committed. And I deeply believe that if you know you need to learn something, want something, and something is amiss, there should be no limit in you trying to get educated.' 'Do you want a sandwich?' He asks. 'Well, yeah, maybe.' She is visibly thrown off track now. He realizes that and, facing away, says: 'I know, that's why I don't think we are very different.' 'But the problem is somehow deeper, because it is not just about that,' she tries to build the momentum again, 'this was always something that we had in common. It was never like one of us would complain about what our life is like, or about hard work and commitment.' 'That's true'. 'People from the outside think it is weird what we have, what we do. We are like one mind. You know what, I will make my own sandwich.' 'Why?' 'I'd like one with paté, and I know you find it gross. May I? Oh, the bread's gone bad.' Her tone is apologetic. 'Maybe an omelet then?' 'You don't want to eat the bread?' he asks. 'No, once you realize it gone bad, it's too late. You know, I'll go down and get some more.'







SKOKE wrote the following texts to point out that education comes from pure nothingness

**SKOKE** ('School of Jokes') is on a mission to learn new ways of communication by using humor as a tool to break the invisible walls of norms and structures. SKOKE likes to meet at least once a week to discuss deep issues about the existence of humor, through education and other contexts. SKOKE is a lifestyle thing. The idea of SKOKE is shaped by:

**Morgane Le Doze** is interested in movements through spaces, such as passing good jokes, cycling in a walking area, skyping with a friend in Tanzania and codriving to Belgium. These experiences are always relevant and their pointlessness can serve as a potential study.

**Lena Karson** is interested in words and how differently they are received, people's body gestures, obsessions, corners and crowds of people applauding frenetically.

**Maisa Imamović** is interested in non-verbal languages, pointless architectural details, places or situations inviting arguments and conversations with objects.

**Roman Tkachenko** is interested in demolition of human structures, creating an experience or a feeling for others and interviewing dead people. Roman aims to reach the next level of language.

## SKOKE

### *Education in gasoline with Morgane le Doze and a guest Manon*

William: Who's in the school of jokes now again?

M: you, L, M, A?

Me: No, not A. No, it's wrong answer: everyone is in it.  
Just four of us trying to make a nonsense sense of it.

Place: Shell gas station

Time: 19:31

Participants: M, M and I

Position of the sun: high

Busyness of the surrounding: high

Amount of costumers: low

Price of gasoline: high

Smoking: allowed

Water access : positive

Service: positive

Possibility of stealing: high

Learning from: nothing



Consumed:

- M&M's (teaches you to share)
- Stolen brownie (illegally soled wrapped)
  - Doritos
  - 2 coffee
  - Croissant
  - Sandwich
  - Marlboro
  - Banana



A pack of M&M's brings us to the idea of sharing.  
Sharing of knowledge.

'You can learn from everyone', says M.

Then I go on with a story about my hometown Rostov-on-Don, where people think they can always give you a comment on your actions.

M adds her thoughts.

'Even if their goal is to be smarter you can find a way how to get over it and get a knowledge from a stranger.'  
'Yeah, learn from nothing, teachers are everywhere' continues M.

Then we get serious about bananas.

We discuss 'banana war' between US and EU in 1999.

M: 'I have a banana, we can share.'

M: 'I love bananas since 2 years ago. It's a big part of my breakfast.'

It is supposed to be an interview with M but M decided to join. It's not like having a guest, now it's 3 of us going for a random experience at the gas station.

Do you want to learn how I realized when nonsense starts to make sense?

M, M and I consumed a pack of M&M's.

Education in gasoline, is as any other research topic, a new location to investigate. Learn from nothing, something around us. We set the rules and go for nothing, we don't know what is going to happen but we keep our senses wide open, we are ready to get involved and observe, we are ready to consume and make fun.

## **SKOKE**

### *Shtimplid*

To my fellow cooperators, this reference might be a boring one — a cliché, obvious truth, like it is to me — but the world is yet to know about it, as it took place one day in the past, at some location. This fact already gives it enough validity and importance in the history of human beings — or us; as they and we tend to be shaped by categories that they and we put themselves/ourselves in. For instance, my fellow cooperators and I sometimes like to call things or people 'stupid', whether we really mean it or not. And how do we know if we mean it or not, or what we do mean when we mean it? When we say it, we probably mean something close to shallow; something

that doesn't come with more words in order to shape that something. It is indeed a tricky word; a word that proves itself to be easier said than meant. Tensions about the use of the word were rising within the group, but no alternative was suggested. Until one day, in the past at some location, one of us, Lena Karson, decided to share her thoughts and aversion to the word. This aversion seemed to me more as a deconstructive consideration, as it was expressed with one spoken sentence and a puff of cigarette. 'People are not stupid, they just think differently...' followed by an intense moment of unspoken, collective agreement expressed with an intense sigh, such as 'uuuYeeeeeeeah'.

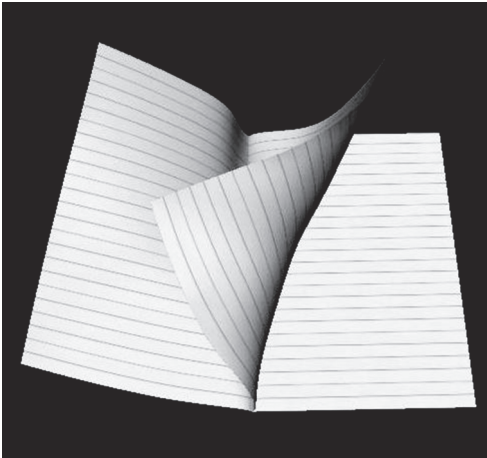
Now imagine if the word 'stupid' would be replaced by the word 'shtimplid'. I like shtimplid; it sounds softer but one needs time to get used to. Lets say you are person A and the closest person to you is B. You are in a situation in which you are reading a book and its page won't turn. So you turn to that page and call it shtimplid. Person B observes the situation and thinks of you as shtimplid yourself probably because:

1. You are talking to the page
2. You are accusing the page of being something that the page might or might not be
3. Person B understands the page
4. Person B thinks that you are shtimplid
5. Person B is unfamiliar with the word shtimplid

Now let's say that you are in a different situation, the one where you sit on a bench next to the lake and observe the sunset. You look around and everything is just so shtimplid. You breathe deeply and fully, thinking how shtimplid the colors are — orange, pink, and mainly blue. Their burning combination feels like slow-motion fire in your eyes. Birds sing so shtimplidly and playfully it sounds

like a shtimplid melody in your ears. You are in a shtimplidland and you are one big shtimp.

Since the mentioned quote was born, we are on a mission to position ourselves in this world without alienating ourselves. Make a move, sigh, give a look, point at, smash, use objects for help, hum, eliminate words. 'You know...? ...Yeeeah, I see what you mean.' Small talk but more worthy. Or big talk without verbalization. And as Lena recently said, 'It sucks so much that humans are stuck on planet Earth.' Referring to those who suffer from language the most; who cannot find a verbal spot on this Earth, constantly trying to find a word-match; referring to herself, to me, to us.



*Shtimplid*



*Shtimplid*

## SKOKE

### *'Be aware of' List*

- A joke, a hangover, a bus ride and 1930's Bauhaus education result in an absurd project about absurdity.
- Install a table somewhere outside, add chairs and sit.
- It's time to be serious about jokes.
- 'Everything is related', Roman wrote \$OJ on some walls. Five years later, he learned from a Sunday talk on a balcony that he is actually part of this organisation, called 'school of jokes' or SOJ.
- Hold a mic and learn from the replies on the 'do you think you're funny' question.
- haHaaAAha: is actually full of harmonious notes.
- Be convinced of the fact that a certain word exists.
- Tool as a human.

- Throw a leg away and start a meditation laugh from the situation created by the textile gap between legs.
- I've forgotten the list on which I wrote what shouldn't be forgotten.
- I hit this cat which made a hilarious sound. The cat is my mentor of the day.

OK, the conclusion can't be drawn... now.

« BE AWARE OF » LIST:

- When a joke springs out from a hangover, bus and 1930's education becomes a real absurd project about absurdity.
- Install a table somewhere outside, add personal chairs and sit.
- "Everything is related" ROMAN wrote SOJ on some walls. Five years later, he learned from a Sunday talk on a balcony that he is actually part of this organization called school of jokes or "SOJ".
- Hold a mirror and learn from the replies of "do you think you're funny" question.
- Haahahaha: is actually full of harmonious notes.
- Be convinced of the fact that this certain word exists.
- Tool as a human.
- Throw a leg away and start meditation laugh from the situation created by a textile gap between legs.
- I forgot the list on which I wrote what shouldn't be forgotten.
- I hit this cat which made a hilarious sound. The cat is my mentor of the day.

OK, CONCLUSION WON'T GO OUT ... NOW

# SKOKE

## Message

Each word makes sense - They all have a definition. The order in which they are set are always coming from the choice of the order maker. If this choice doesn't make sense - according to the set definitons - Can it still make sense whithin its nonesense?

M. : 

The sharing goes from left to right or from right to left, or from east to west or from west to east. It, in that case, doesn't go from up to down or from north to south.

M. : 

The exchange - sharing - discovering - discussing - moving - exists for no reason but for the one of existing because it seems to be appearing everywhere and anywhere once it is chosen to be seen.

M. : 

There is no one goal to acheive, I don't think the end of it is even reachable. Nothing concrete is going to come out of all this. You don't start to finish, you don't finish knowing how you started.

M. : 

Can all this be an actual part of education?

To all these questions, our fine **Maisa Imamović** would most probably think it all over too much. Fortunately for us she would most probably express few but few which always says a lot and brings us back to the ground, the actual Skoke ground.

M. : " Fuuuuuuck " - Would most probably be her last fine instinctive reaction to all of this

A random object is passed around from one person to another. The person holding the object is obliged to say precisely three words about it, without necessarily thinking too much about which words best describe the object. After the words are said, SKOKE applauds the person. Passing the object around continues until words become irrelevant to the object, or too relevant to the object. Passing the object around continues until words stop being words, or until verbalization transforms into a different type of expression (i.e. crawling on the floor while another person turns off the light). There is a possibility that an object can be deformed or turned into a new shape. For example:



Initial form of the object above was an egg, which was passed around and talked about. At one point, the egg was broken down. The object became a blue dinosaur, which was passed around and talked about. Blue dinosaur had a power of creating a certain discomfort, that of the applauding and the applaudable ones.



## Emilie Palmelund

### *Disorientated Mapping*

The building of an educational institution, wherein all of its different activities evolve, can be regarded as its central part. Its physical materiality has an abstract but essential function to the individuals that move within it and outside of it. Its architecture plays a role in the way that these activities take place and in their relation to the space outside of it, while at the same time the building is constantly re-shaped by those moving inside of it, bringing in new substances that shake its existence and create new arrangements.

The many materials that are brought inside start growing with the building itself and attract other organisms infiltrating their stabilities. In that way the institution becomes a container of subjects and objects, and of inter-subjectivity and objectivity. Substances exist as different individuals when inside this space, than when in another building or somewhere else, but they are the linkage between these different spaces.

The subjects that exist within the institution are not simply subjects but they have to incorporate into a 'we', which somewhat disturbs the maintenance of an isolated 'I'. In order to create a collectivity, each individual must overcome its 'I'. The 'we' is not simply a gathering of 'I's', but consisting of millions of transmissions between substances of different characters. The 'I's' are in that sense just a tiny structure of this assemblage. In the fluctuation

between the 'I' and 'we', one is moving through a set of quasi-beings not knowing whether they are 'relations, beings, tatters of beings or end of relations.'<sup>1</sup> The 'I's' and the 'we' are transformed through this interaction that creates the concept of 'transindividuation' which for Bernard Stiegler is the basis for all social transformation.<sup>2</sup>

In the institution, an infrastructure of huge complexity guides the movements of the individuals. To navigate through this structure, one needs some sort of translation of those fragments of movement. With different tools of decipherment, one can start moving along the currents and get lost while keeping some sort of orientation. Some movements get occupied for longer periods of time while others drift away unrecognised. Along the way appears the urge to inhabit pathways that could at some point assemble into a greater connection.

We move in and out, the institute is an entity in constant movement with newcomers and out-goers but something remains. Some patterns remain as marks inside the building, affecting the infrastructures' impact on the individuals in their further movement. Many of these marks are from the past – they emerged through the creation of the building itself, but also future registrations reveal themselves. The patterns are both subject- and object-based, transparent and opaque. Different patterns are recognised by different individuals that move inside the institution. Each individual brings in a new way of navigating through them, affected by past positions and the ability to adapt into new spaces – they all effect and modify each other.

To use Deleuzioguattarian terms, the institution exists both as a smooth and striated space.<sup>3</sup> Though one can talk about an opposition between these two spaces, it is important to notice that they only exist in a mixture: 'smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a

striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space. In the first case, one organizes even the desert; in the second, the desert gains and grows; and the two can happen simultaneously.<sup>4</sup> The city, wherein institutions mostly are placed, is perceived as the ultimate striated space; politics, economics and culture operate from here and govern the movements of the individuals. The city-scape depicts the striations with its infrastructure and architecture functioning as a skeleton for these movements to continue operating. But the city can reclaim smoother spaces again which could be seen in a local force organising itself against the money, work, or cultivation taking place.

The building of the institution stands among other buildings, that together create a city-scape and a structure manageable by the state regimes. Its inside is infiltrated with lineations, mostly mirrored from the outside, affecting how the temporary courses of the institution are constructed and what value is added to these constellations. Its physical existence is merging with its urban surroundings, and the movements happening inside are modifying this construction creating new connections. In the constant change of subjects and objects that hold the institution together, an aspect of nomadic activity appears where tactile, temporary relations are created. These relations can be characterised as smooth when they move as undefined intensities, but often they get under various rules of measurement along the way.

During a flight, when departing from the ground, one is fluctuating in and out of a local and global positioning. Looking outside of the window, the landscape starts taking shape when moving further and further away from the ground. One sees the striations, especially those of the city where endless lines are drawn in a complex system. Even the most smooth spaces such as the sea are placed within an organised system having recognisable

shapes bordering to the shores of the land. There seems to be a perspective but it is relative, one only sees what is placed in the frame of the aircraft window and that view is governed by the flight's navigation through the air, yet another smooth space that gets linedated by aircrafts leaving behind white lines in the sky. Soon the view of the landscape gets disrupted by moving into white clouds with no orientation point. One is somehow at a close range, or perhaps more an indefinable range since there are no limits to the view, no horizon. Though one is still sitting in a somewhat graspable constellation connected to the physical materials of the flight, the position is abstract. The individual bodily movements are limited by the seat but one is no longer just an individual holding on to it's 'I'. The seat carries the motion of the flight that is affected by the ungovernable movements of the wind. In that sense everything is in the process with no graspable points to hold onto. At the same time, it is a linear passage, it is supposed to move you from one position to another, but somehow, in the air, this lineation is forgotten.

The movement inside an institution can take a local character where one operates in a close range to it's surroundings. An individual is painting from a short distance – one is close to, even connected to the canvas with the strokes of the brush. To keep a distance from the painting is therefore impossible since one is already so much into it, orienting oneself step by step in indeterminate variations. In these moments, one is moving smoothly inside the map of the painting, not seeing it from a distance with a predefined knowledge of discerning patterns and striation. The perception is achieved through an active exploration of surfaces and substances and a sense of disorientation appears when the process itself is the goal with limitless passages.

As an outsider, from a distance, one takes a different standpoint by using references to immediately try to

make sense of these activities. One could talk about being in a global position with encompassing local elements. Individuals observing the painting will do it from a longer distance than the distance from which an individual operates while painting. Those distanced from it cannot avoid using specific tools to translate its appearance. This form of measurement is affected by global orientations, that is to say, by each individual's patterns from previous positionings in institutions under regimes elsewhere, and by the global orientations infiltrating the present local movements in the institution. The two positions, the global and local, are in close relation and individuals pass in and out of these spheres linking them together. In the correlations, new transformations can potentially take place and modulate the structures of the institutions but one first has to acknowledge the existence and impact of these spaces.

In addition to individuals former positions affecting their movements in new surroundings, each institution has a politics of measurement which is partly constituted by the global, neoliberal politics of value. Though institutions of art are often thought to have some liberty regarding these structures, more and more calculations are required for institutions to keep their existence as they are highly infiltrated in the political structures, the market values and increasing privatisations. This can be viewed as a very essential part of striation and is encountered in various ways. It is frequently believed that counter-positions can be taken and these ruling structures can be opposed and worked against but what is paradoxical here, is that the smoothening is done from a knowledge of striations and then becomes a smooth space utilised as a means of communication in service of the striated space.

To keep distinguishing between an inside and outside space of an institution, and between a smooth and striated one, we too easily end up moving in a space as

though it was smooth, as though the movements were freed from 'outside' striations. When neglecting that these spaces interact with each other, one moves in a form of ideological escapism, blind to its consequences. One of the most absurd fictions taking place, is the recurring discourse revolving around the 'art world' as being separated from the 'real world'. Remaining in this form of dualism is only beneficial for the structures thought to be opposed and one ends up getting stuck in a loop. An example is seen in the way institutional critique has been thought of as a mechanism capable of opposing art to an institution. An art work brings forth a critical discourse of the institution in which it is presented but it is soon forgotten that this work is still reliant on the institution creating its value. The institution is not something external to the art work, it is the irreducible condition of its existence as art.

When acknowledging that the institution exists in the interests, aspirations and criteria of value that orient each individual's actions and define a sense of worth, one can start questioning what kind of institution these components establish. Moreover, one can start discussing the values that have gone through measurements both from a global and local scale. These establishments translate the way forms of practices are rewarded and what kind of rewards an institution aspires to, since aspiration cannot be avoided. Recognising that any discourse, even the critical, cannot be freed from predefined assumptions shaped by former positions and orientations, could potentially make new constellations emerge. Instead of interpreting the world reductively as a series of fixed positions, there is a need to move in and out of the perspectives, in order to at one point look closely and move without orientation, and at the next draw lines and make adjustments. One travels through points and inhabits the relations between substances which shake the imagination of free movement in an isolated, 'outside' space. The institution as an

incorporated establishment gathers individuals that, when moving within these constellations, enable transformations to take place.

**Notes**

[1] Michel Serres, *The Parasite*, 1982

[2] <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/transindividuation/>

[3] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 1987

[4] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *ibid.*, p.475




# Christina Xenidou

## Two Academies

Gerrit Rietveld Academie

Rietveld Fine Arts

**2015-2016**



**1B**  
VOBK

Group \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment date 10 december 2015

Student name CHRISTINA XENIDOU

Student number 1022609

Committee: Joost van Haften, Priscila Fernandez, Marianne Theunissen, Clare Butcher

Signature mentor *J. van Haften*

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Creërend vermogen /<br>The ability to create<br><br>—                                     | Vermogen tot kritische<br>reflectie /<br>The ability to reflect<br>and digest criticism<br><br>— | Vermogen tot groei en<br>vernieuwing / The<br>ability to grow and<br>develop<br><br>— | Organiserend vermogen /<br>The ability to organise<br><br>+ |
| Communicatief vermogen<br>/ The ability to<br>communicate the artistic<br>vision<br><br>+ | Omgevingsgerichtheid /<br>Use of broader<br>perspective<br><br>+                                 | Vermogen tot<br>samenwerken /<br>The ability to cooperate<br><br>?                    | Presentatie/ presentation<br><br>+                          |

Commentary

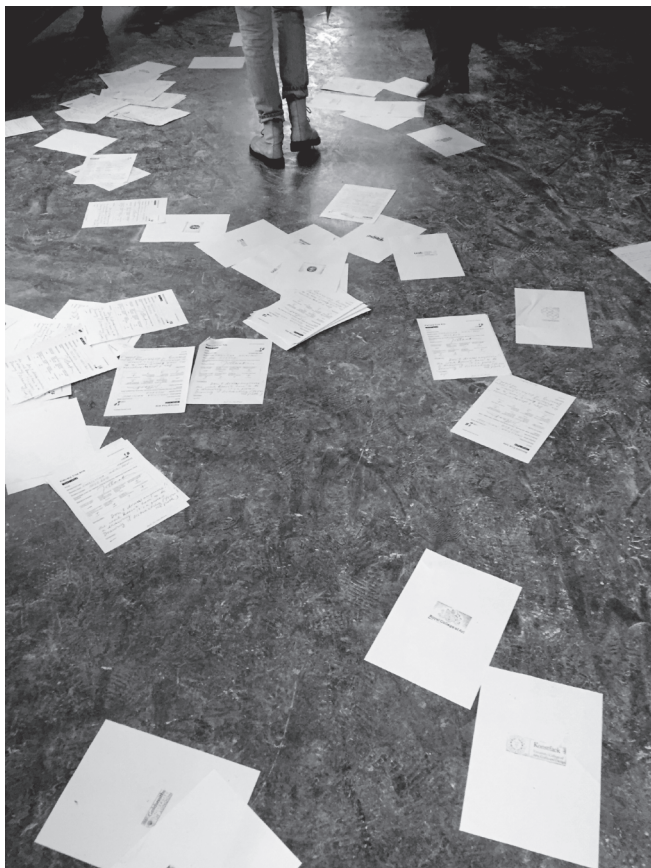
*Don't draw anymore!  
the work doesn't have to be  
a drawing: it's a process  
Drawing is distracting (from  
the path)*

Conclusion

—

*Art in context*

Christina Xenidou, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Assessment, 2016



Christina Xenidou, *Gerrit Rietveld Academie Assessment*, 2016



Christina Xenidou, Athens School of Fine Arts, 2016



**Urs Moore**  
*Bricks*

'Yes, I like my shape. It is super practical. You know when we were all still together in this huge clay pit, we actually had a really good connection. We were one! Now we are separated, but put together in the right way, we can become everything you want. Great isn't? Now that we are disintegrated again I actually would love if someone could take off this grey cement... It just looks so dirty.'



'Oh yeah, people ask themselves that all the time and I can tell you that we know exactly who you are. We have heard and we saw stuff, too much I sometimes think. The wall I was part of, was built after the big war. So in that sense I cannot really tell you how it was before that time, but it looked quite devastated. They piled up all the rubbish of the city into one big hill. It is now the highest hill in town. Can you imagine? Everything was broken, but I am part of this new generation and now also my time has come. I'm quite curious were I will end up in the end... I heard that some bricks are ground to gravel and then are used on tennis courts, on those red ones, you know? Maybe that's a nice prospect.'



'I can't really remember everything from the beginning. We were all together in this clay pit and in the summer those kids were playing in the little forest that was growing on us. They made fires up there and if they were not making fires they would pull pranks on the workers from the brick factory. One guy, he was this old mean looking one, always wearing his blue workers wear and driving around in this old fork lift... he was swearing at the kids when he saw them hiding in the bushes, but they of course were just laughing at him. At the same time they were afraid of him because he was looking so mean and because they heard rumours, you know.'



'Ha, you would know if you got hit by one! I can tell you! I saw it happen. This guy was picking one up, I think it was brick, and threw it right at the police which was lined up... he hit one of those riot-police guys right on his head. The guy wore a helmet, but still stumbled quite heavily backwards 'cause of the impact. After that I just can remember that a lot of guys ran past me. Water-throwers and stuff, everything was wet and I was just laying there on the ground in all this mess when another police guy tipped over me in full speed... hahaha... It shook me quite hard, but I glanced back and saw him shredding over the ground with the left side of his face. Hahaha... Good times... Hahaha...'



'Apparently I do not exactly know what happened — I just heard it from another brick who was laying next to me. It is just crazy what people are capable of. Really shocking, isn't? When will all of this end?'



'My grandfather never really talked about it. Neither my grandmother. Everybody knew about it of course, but even I just see what I want to see. It all happened behind the forest. Not far away from their home and the crazy thing was that they both said they never really witnessed anything, but everybody in town was talking about it. You know stuff changed when it began. The city saw a lot of new faces then. They came from far to work behind the forest and they looked really tired when they had a day off. Really worn out. But like I said, nobody was talking much. So I do not know much more than this, sorry that I cannot really help you any further.'

