



ROLAND

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ICA'S VISUAL ART PROGRAMME
ISSUE 4 / NOVEMBER 2009—JANUARY 2010

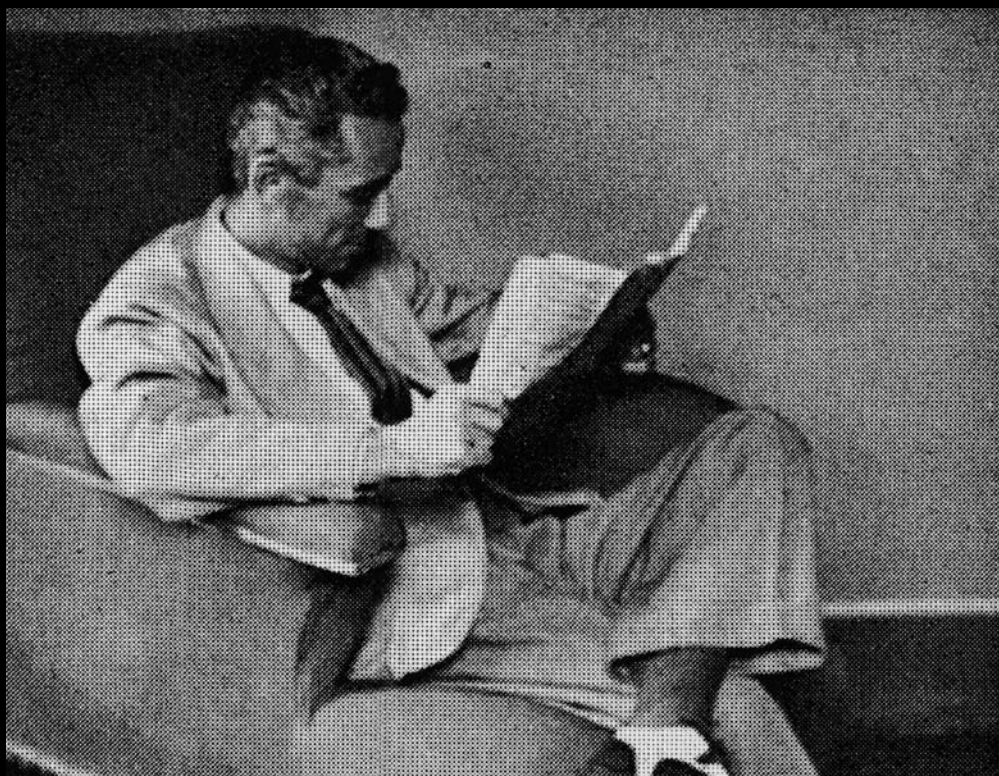
FEATURING A GUIDE TO

**For the blind man in the dark room looking for
the black cat that isn't there**

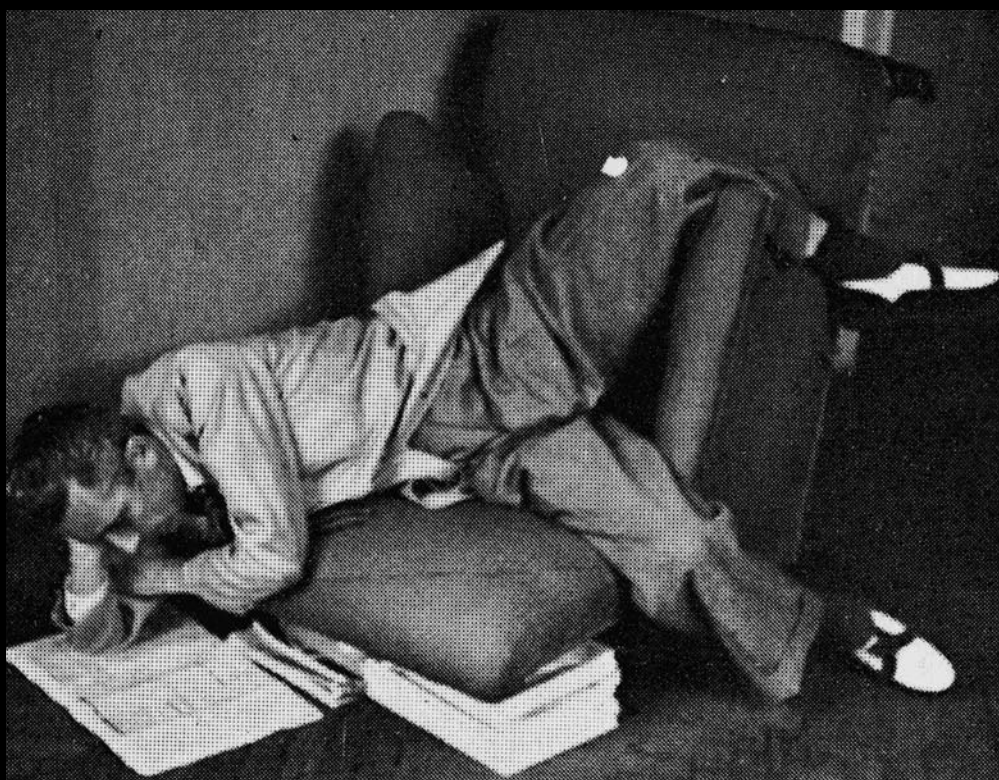
GALLERY GUIDE	4
EXHIBITION EVENTS & RESOURCES	18
OTHER EVENTS	21
PUBLICATIONS & EDITIONS	22
BACKGROUND MATERIAL	26

Exhibiting artists: anonymous, Dave Hullfish Bailey, Marcel Broodthaers, Sarah Crowner, Mariana Castillo Deball, Eric Duyckaerts, Ayşe Erkmen, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Peter Fischli & David Weiss, Rachel Harrison, Benoît Maire and Falke Pisano, Giorgio Morandi, Matt Mullican, Bruno Munari, Nashashibi/Skaer, Jimmy Raskin, Frances Stark, Rosemarie Trockel, Patrick van Caeckenbergh and David William; curated by Anthony Huberman

Plus texts and other contributions by: Georges Bataille, Samuel Beckett, Simon Critchley, Gustave Flaubert, Anthony Huberman and Will Holder, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jacques Rancière and Susan Sontag



The ICA is pleased to present the fourth issue of ROLAND, which accompanies our December-January exhibition: *For the blind man in the dark room looking for the black cat that isn't there*. The first half of the magazine contains a guide to the exhibition and its associated events, while the second half features background material relating to the project, including texts and images by a range of authors, artists and theorists. If you receive your ROLAND by post then your copy will also include a special insert on *Calling Out Of Context*, a nine-day festival of experimental music and sound that is being held in the ICA's theatre and galleries in November.



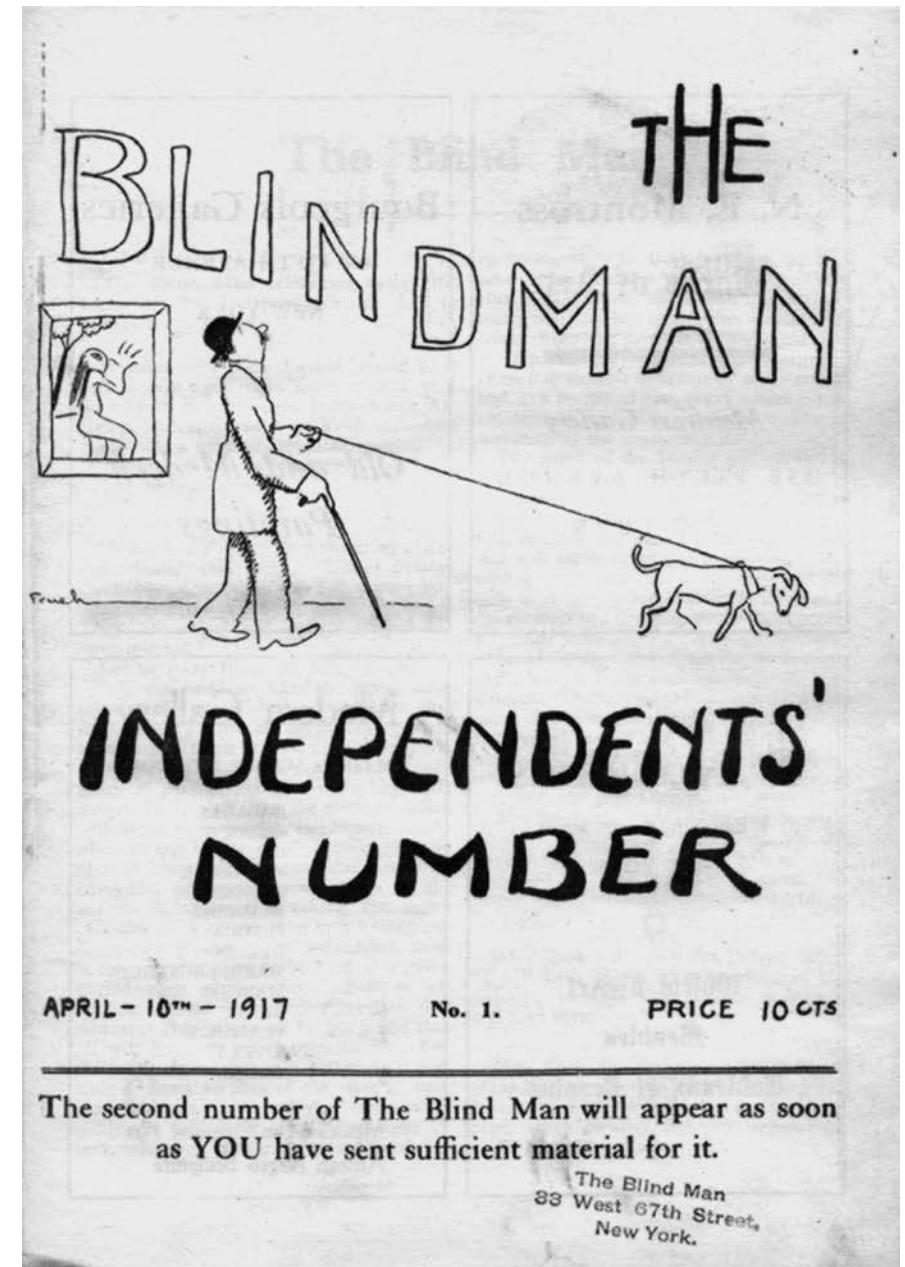
For
the
blind
man
in
the
dark
room
looking
for
the
black
cat
that
isn't
there

3 December
2009—31
January 2010

We begin in Ancient Greece, with Socrates announcing, “I know that I know nothing”. Clearly, confusion has always been at the heart of wisdom. Centuries later comes a statement that many have attributed to Charles Darwin: “A mathematician is like a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn’t there”. As a scientist committed to cataloguing, explaining and drawing a clear picture of nature, Darwin mocked the mathematician’s inability to describe the physical world in anything but abstract and speculative terms.

But artists also understand the world in speculative terms. With their help, we can learn to enjoy the experience of not-knowing and the playfulness of being in the dark. *For the blind man in the dark room looking for the black cat that isn’t there* begins with the premise that art is not a code that needs cracking. Celebrating the experience of not-knowing and unlearning, the artists in this exhibition understand the world in speculative terms, eager to keep art separate from explanation. Embracing a spirit of curiosity, this show is dedicated to the playfulness of being in the dark.

For the blind man in the dark room looking for the black cat that isn’t there is organised by Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, and was originated by the latter’s chief curator, Anthony Huberman.



Sarah Crowner,
The Blind Man, No. 1, 2008

Lower Gallery



Matt Mullican, installation view,
Contemporary Art Museum St Louis, 2009

MATT

MULLICAN — For over three decades, Matt Mullican has created a complex body of work which deals with systems of knowledge, meaning, language, and signification. His consistent concern has been the relationship between perception and reality, between the ability to see something and the ability to represent it. Mullican's oeuvre, which takes the form of drawing, collage, video, sculpture, performance, and installation, confronts the nature of understanding, rationality and cognition. His immense project, conceived for the ICA, presents the artist's highly subjective theory of everything, realised over the entire length of one of the walls in the ICA's lower gallery.

Matt Mullican was born in 1951, in Santa Monica, California, and currently lives and works in Berlin. Recent projects include solo exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2005) and Ludwig Museum, Cologne (2005). Mullican will perform a lecture at the ICA on 12 January (see page 18). In 2011, Mullican will be the subject of a solo exhibition at Haus der Kunst, Munich.

GIORGIO

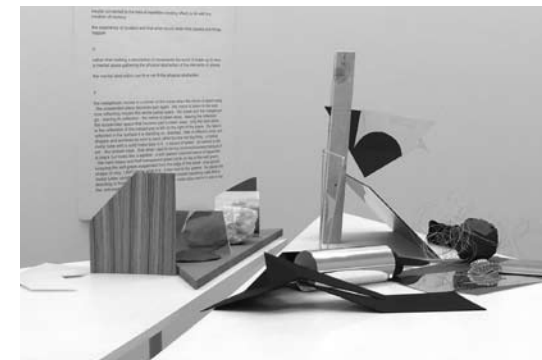
MORANDI — The classical still-life has been a distinct genre in painting since the seventeenth century, and by the 1930s it had been rendered with Chardin's masterful precision, Cézanne's bleeding colours, Picasso's cubist distortions, Magritte's language games, and Dalí's surreal juxtapositions. Nevertheless, from 1910 to 1964, a period of modern machines, wars, and technology, Giorgio Morandi painted still-life after still-life, each one almost identical to the next. To paint a bottle sitting next to a jar, his art suggests, is always a speculative process. From the opposite side of the Atlantic, Morandi remained committed to breaking apart what Jasper Johns called the "things the mind already knows". Often composed of no more than a few bottles, glasses, jars, pitchers, and vases set upon a table-top—a classical still-life arrangement—Morandi's paintings brought together a complex visual field of volume, vacuum, surface, light, shadow, and colour. Most of all, his brush painted what was not there: the negative space around the objects and the slow passage of time. Morandi's still-lives are exhibited in the ICA's upper and lower galleries.

Giorgio Morandi was born in 1890 in Bologna, where he died in 1964. He was awarded first prize for painting at the 1948 Venice Biennale, and the grand prize in the 1957 São Paulo Biennale. The Metropolitan Museum in New York and the Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna organised a retrospective of his work in 2008.

BRUNO

MUNARI — Bruno Munari was an artist, graphic designer, industrial designer, poet, and illustrator, among other endeavours. Incorporating basic shapes (the circle, the square), basic materials (paper, wood), and basic objects (chairs, tables), he remained curious about the most common things in life. In the series of twelve grainy black-and-white photographs shown at the ICA, he presents a man's attempts to sit in an armchair while reading his newspaper. The piece resonates with the spirit of unwavering curiosity and relentless energy to investigate (shared by many of the artists in *For the blind man...*) while also illustrating the sometimes comic effect of such steadfast pursuits.

Bruno Munari was born in Milan in 1907. He first showcased his *Useless Machines*—a series of Dadaist, ever-moving geometrical solids suspended in the air—in 1932. In 1948, Munari co-founded the MAC Movement (*Movimento per l'Arte Concreta*) with the hope "to develop abstract painting and sculpture, with no links whatsoever to the outside world". During this time, Munari continued creating his *Convex-Concave* sculptures and experimented with colour, space, movement, form, and background in his *Negative-Positive* works. After a career of over seventy productive years, Munari died in Milan in 1998.



Benoît Maire and Falke Pisano,
Organon, 2008

BENOÎT MAIRE AND FALKE

PISANO — Benoît Maire and Falke Pisano are both highly influenced by the use of language, and often work in the format of lectures and other kinds of performances. At the ICA they are showing *Organon* (2008), their first large-scale jointly-created installation. The physical appearance of the sculpture will change several times during the exhibition, as it is 'performed' by a person assigned by the artists to rearrange its tables and other objects. The text portion of the sculpture hovers between plain description, description of an act, and abstract theorisation. The piece can be regarded as the result of an ongoing conversation and an attempt to dissolve the distinction between performance, text, and sculpture by using and activating a set of abstract objects. It is a formal piece of work, operating in a formal language, but it is a language without rules.

Falke Pisano was born in 1978 in Amsterdam, where she lives and works. She has had solo exhibitions at Halle für Kunst e.V, Lunebürg, Germany (2008) and Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, Austria (2009), among others. Benoît Maire was born in Paris in 1978. He has had solo exhibitions at Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2008) and Grazer Kunstverein (2009).



Peter Fischli & David Weiss,
still from *The Right Way*, 1983

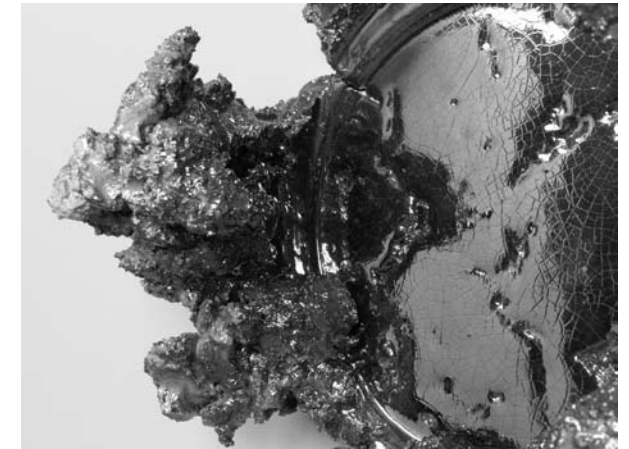
FISCHLI

&

WEISS — In the video piece *The Right Way* (1983), on display in the lower gallery, Peter Fischli and David Weiss pursue their urge to understand the world by asking large metaphysical and ethical questions about the human condition. In their hour-long promenade through the Swiss countryside, the artists search for peace and solace while negotiating the codes of altruism, ethics, and survival. Dressed as a rat and a bear, however, their earnest revelations become child's play, and are only marginally helpful. Made in a similar spirit, and on display in the upper galleries, a series of drawings by Fischli and Weiss entitled *Order and Cleanliness* (2003-09)—newly

revised and translated on the occasion of this exhibition—turn large existential categories into a game of rubber-band balls, and summarise complex philosophical ideas in a school-teacher's Venn diagram. Also on display in the upper galleries is *Sleeping Puppets* (2008-09), a playful realisation of the well-known rat and bear characters.

Peter Fischli was born in 1952 in Zürich. David Weiss was born in 1946, also in Zurich, where they both now live and work. The pair began to collaborate in 1979. Their work includes photographs, videos, slide projections, films, books, sculptures, and mixed-media installations that rely on keen observation and uncanny wit. In 2007 their work was the subject of a major retrospective exhibition that originated at Tate Modern, London.



Rosemarie Trockel,
Dessert 3, 2007

RACHEL

HARRISON — Rachel Harrison is primarily known as a sculptor. Her work draws upon a wide range of influences, most notably art history and pop culture. Well-known cultural figures such as Tiger Woods, Fats Domino, and Johnny Depp have all given their names to her works, alongside Claude Levi-Strauss, Amerigo Vespucci, and Alexander the Great. Harrison's methodology is as disparate as her subject matter; her sculptures are frequently composed of found objects and hand-made forms. The artistic process is for her a means of investigating subjects that are deemed incongruent or inequitable, and a vehicle for raising important questions about cultural and social values. At the ICA, Harrison is represented by an anthropomorphic sculpture.

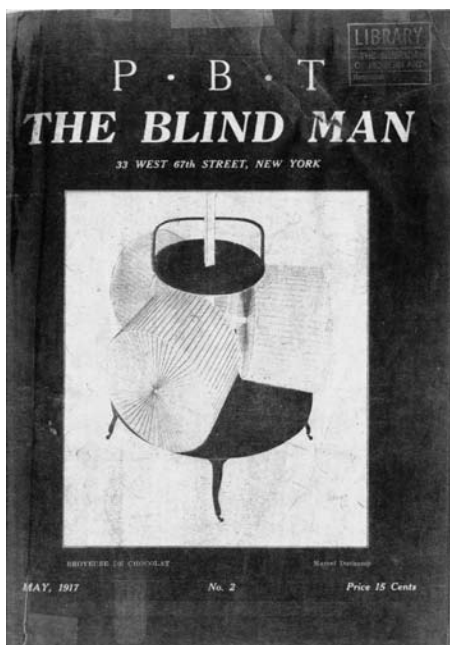
Rachel Harrison was born in 1966 in New York City, where she currently lives and works. Recent solo projects include exhibitions at Le Consortium, Dijon (2008); Portikus, Frankfurt (2009); and The Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York (2009). The latter exhibition will be shown at Whitechapel Art Gallery in 2010.

ROSEMARIE

TROCKEL — With a multi-faceted body of work, Rosemarie Trockel breaks apart a traditional understanding of 'the feminine'. Her sculptures, drawings, assemblages, and films often feature simple domestic objects and spaces that are imbued with a sense of tragedy, anxious introspection, or claustrophobia. While *Dessert 3* (2007)—the wall sculpture on display as part of this exhibition—seems to be a mirror, its decorative border is a mangled blob and its shiny surface provides only a blurred reflection. Part ornament and part detritus, this ceramic sculpture places vanity alongside the grotesque, and while it seduces, it offers only a blank stare.

Born in 1952 in Schwerte, Germany, Rosemarie Trockel studied painting at the Werkkunstschule in Cologne. Since her debut show at Galerie Philomene Magers in Bonn in 1983, she has exhibited widely in Europe and North America and was included in the Venice Biennale (1996 and 1999), the Istanbul Biennial (1995 and 1999), and Documenta X (with Carsten Höller, 1997).

Concourse

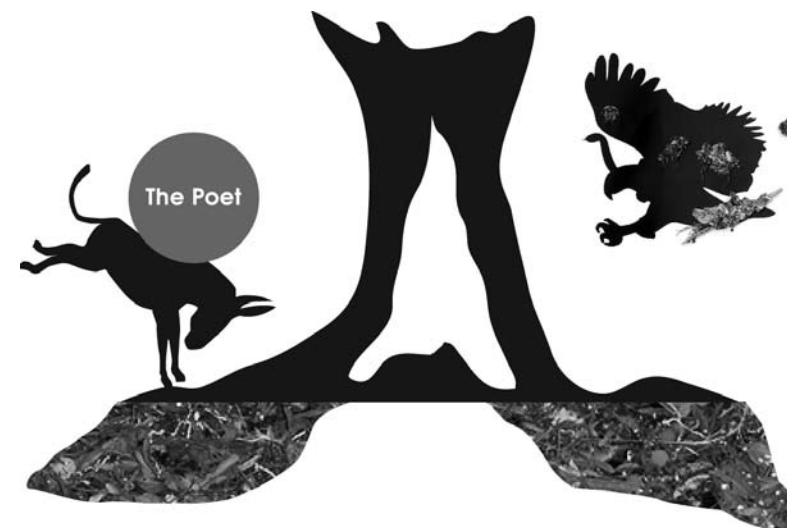


Sarah Crowner,
The Blind Man, No. 2, 2008

SARAH

CROWNER — In 1917, Marcel Duchamp famously submitted a urinal to the Armory Show as a ‘readymade’ sculpture, signing it “R. Mutt”. After the jury rejected it, Duchamp chose not to protest, but instead to co-publish (along with artist Beatrice Wood and writer Henri-Pierre Roche) two issues of a small satirical magazine called *The Blind Man*—a pointed critique of the short-sightedness of the critical establishment and of the viewing public’s attitude towards modern art. The second issue included a contribution—left anonymous, signed only by the editor—titled ‘The Richard Mutt Case’. Almost a century later, on the occasion of the 2008 Whitney Biennial, Sarah Crowner, along with co-conspiring publishing collective Dexter Sinister, re-released both issues of *The Blind Man*, launching them into circulation again. At the ICA they are on sale in the bookshop, for the original prices printed on the magazines’ front covers: ten and fifteen cents (seven and ten pence, respectively).

Sarah Crowner was born in 1974 in Philadelphia. She lives and works in New York. Her work has been exhibited at venues throughout the US and Europe, including Printed Matter, New York (2001); White Columns, New York (2005 and 2006); Orchard Gallery for North Drive Press, New York (2006); and DAAD Galerie, Berlin (2008).



Jimmy Raskin,
Confrontation at The Hollow Tree-Border (Inseparability vs. Simultaneity), 2009

FRANCES

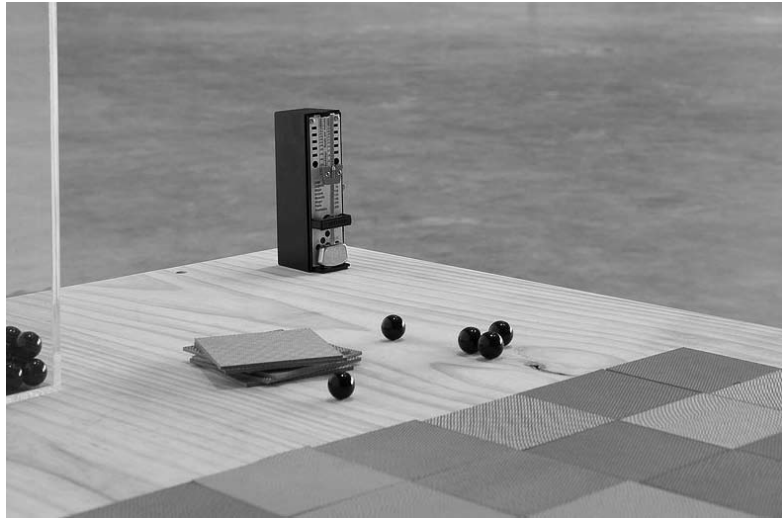
STARK — Frances Stark’s work is what the artist calls a torment of follies, and it evokes timidity, self-deprecation, playful anxiousness, interminable apprenticeship, and the eerie and risky suspicion that somehow, maybe, it might all be a fraud. These are fragile and incomplete thought-experiments that consider the human condition, take on an air of speculation, conjecture, emotion, humour, and tragicomic incompleteness, and remain aware that all learning includes unlearning. At the ICA, Frances Stark presents a work that—in her customary manner—explores language, hesitation and her own artistic doubts.

Frances Stark was born in 1967 in Newport Beach, California. She currently lives and works in Los Angeles. Solo exhibitions include Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2007) and in 2008 an exhibition of her work travelled to Portikus, Frankfurt, Secession, Vienna, and Culturgest, Lisbon. She is currently the subject of an exhibition at the newly-opened Nottingham Contemporary.

JIMMY

RASKIN — The history of ideas can perhaps be described as a story of poets and philosophers. While the former place faith in pure expression and intuition, the latter prefer critical thought, foresight, and logic. Jimmy Raskin operates at the juncture between both, and is interested in moments when the two figures are at odds, such as the prologue to Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-85). The battle between the philosopher and the poet mimics the artist’s own struggle with the question of how art can be a form of critical thought—without extinguishing the often unruly and vulnerable poetic act. At the ICA, Jimmy Raskin exhibits a number of collages that continue his longstanding analysis of the ideas presented in Nietzsche’s prologue.

Jimmy Raskin was born in Los Angeles in 1970, where he currently lives and works. He has presented solo and group exhibitions at institutions including P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York (2001); KW, Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2001); Real Art Ways, Hartford (2005-06); and Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris (2006).



David William,
Towards an Intuitive Understanding of the Fourth Dimension (continued), 2009
Installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St Louis

DAVID

WILLIAM — David William's contribution to the exhibition is a game designed to encourage young children to explore the idea of the fourth dimension. The version made for the ICA is one stage in the development of the game, which is inspired by Lewis Carroll's nonsensical ideas, Robert Smithson's solid-state laughter, Merleau-Ponty's notion of babbling and Lewis Padgett's vision of Jabberwocky as a language from the future. Players of all ages are invited to intuit the rules and structure of the game, and David William are also encouraging participants to help determine the next stage of the prototype, through workshops with young children that are being held in the Fox Reading Room (see page 18).

David William is the composite name for David Reinfurt and Will Holder. David Reinfurt was born in 1971 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and currently lives in New York. He jointly edits and designs the publication *Dot Dot Dot*, and co-runs Dexter Sinister, a 'just-in-time workshop and occasional bookstore' in New York City. Will Holder was born in 1969 in Hatfield, and lives and works in London. A writer, editor, performer and book designer, Holder's activities include the journal *F.R.DAVID*. He co-curated the *Talk Show* season at the ICA earlier in 2009.



Mariana Castillo Deball,
Klein bottle piñata, 2009

Café

MARIANA CASTILLO

DEBALL — A regular apparition in Mariana Castillo Deball's Mexican hometown, a piñata is often used for special occasions and celebrations. We enjoy it only when we don't know what it contains: once a group of blindfolded players break it open to reveal and release the assorted candies inside, the piñata ceases to be an object of interest, as if curiosity had indeed killed the cat. At the ICA Deball is exhibiting a piñata in the form of a Klein bottle: for a game that twists back on itself, the artist chooses a shape that does the same. A topological form possible only in a hypothetical two-dimensional space, a Klein bottle is an object whose outside is indistinguishable from its inside, both of which form one uninterrupted surface. The piñata will be struck down 31 January (see page 18).

Mariana Castillo Deball was born in 1975 in Mexico City, and now lives and works in Amsterdam and Berlin. She has held solo exhibitions at the Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, the Netherlands (2003); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2004); Museum of Contemporary Art Carriillo Gil, México City (2006); and de Appel, Amsterdam (2007).

Stairwell

MARCEL

BROODTHAERS — Among the many projects of Belgian artist and poet Marcel Broodthaers was a museum of his own invention, the *Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles* (Museum of Modern Art, Department of Eagles). In it he would discuss, display, categorise, and store artworks, forming a prescient critique of the institutionalisation of art. In *Interview with a Cat*, which he recorded in his museum in 1970 and which is broadcast at the ICA, he tries to understand a work of art by asking a cat: *est-ce que c'est un bon tableau, celui-là?* (is that one a good painting)?

Marcel Broodthaers was born in 1924 in Brussels and died in 1976 in Cologne. Originally a Surrealist poet, Broodthaers organised exhibitions, publications, and films through his fictitious museum, and was among the first artists to question the role of the institution, display, and text in an art object's reception. His exhibitions at the ICA included *Décor: A Conquest* (1975) and *Marcel Broodthaers: Complete Prints and Multiples* (1992).

Upper Galleries



Anonymous,
Portrait of the Ferrante Imperato Museum, 1599

ANONYMOUS — The Renaissance-era ancestor of the museum, the *Wunderkammer* (curiosity cabinet), was born out of the impulse to own exotic and alien objects. Collectors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would travel to far-off lands in search of the extraordinary and the miraculous. They would return with prized curiosities—animals, plants, tools, but also paintings and artefacts—and display them in dedicated rooms, filling every spare centimeter. Guests would visit and wonder. At its heart, the *Wunderkammer*'s popularity lay in the fact that its visitors could inhabit a place they didn't understand. The sixteenth-century engraving of a *Wunderkammer*, displayed as part of this exhibition, reminds us that not-knowing has been a central part of the museum experience since its beginning.

NASHASHIBI

/

SKAER — *Our Magnolia* (2009) is a 16mm film by the collaborative duo Nashashibi/Skaer. The film begins with a close-up shot of Paul Nash's painting *Flight of the Magnolia* (1944). Apparently, Nash created the painting in response to the threat of an English sky dotted with enemy parachutes during the Second World War. The film is a grainy visual journey that incorporates shots of seemingly disparate images, including a whale's skeleton washed up on a beach in Scotland, a close-up of a photograph of Margaret Thatcher's face, and footage of a woman crying in the Baghdad Museum as it is looted during the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Amalgamating footage from different sources and time periods, the artists make an oblique exploration of the relationships between art, war, and film.

Nashashibi/Skaer is a collaboration between the artists Rosalind Nashashibi and Lucy Skaer that began in 2005. Nashashibi was born in 1973 in Croydon and now lives and works in London. Skaer was born in 1975 in Cambridge and has recently moved to New York. Solo exhibitions by Nashashibi/Skaer include Spike Island, Bristol (2007); Tate Britain, London (2008); and CAC Bretagne (2008).



Hans-Peter Feldmann,
One pound of strawberries, 2004

HANS-PETER

FELDMANN — John Cage warned that "it's useless to pretend to know mushrooms", and bumping up against such inherent incompleteness is part of what knowledge is about. Hans-Peter Feldmann, as much an obsessive collector as he is an artist, tries to come to terms with our relationship to images and information. He has long had an ambivalent relationship with art—he quit for ten years and remains sceptical of its economics. Moreover, to dislodge art's supposed sovereignty in the realm of the visual, he prefers the trivial, the common, the stupid, and the illegitimate. His thirty-four photographs of strawberries, shown at the ICA, are the photographic equivalent of 'a pound', playfully juxtaposing a rigid system of measurement and categorisation with the blunt reality that there are no two identical strawberries. As a critic astutely noted, "photography, whatever its source, is about never getting the whole picture".

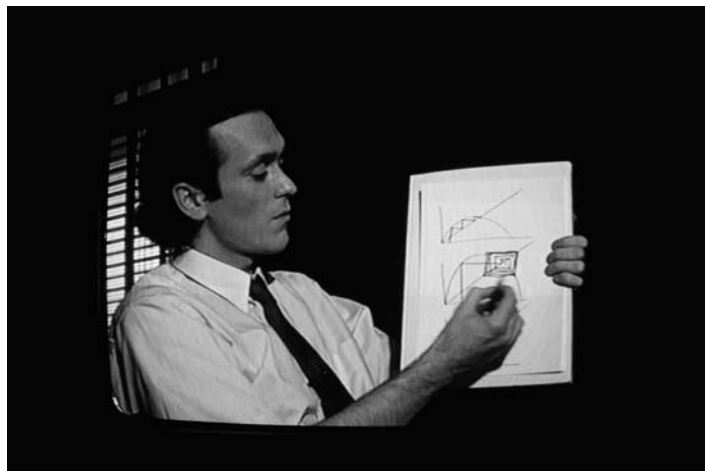
Hans-Peter Feldmann was born in 1941 in Düsseldorf, Germany, where he currently lives and works. He has presented solo exhibitions at the Fundación Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona, Spain (2001); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2003); Sprengel Museum, Hanover (2007); and Arnolfini, Bristol (2007).

DAVE

HULLFISH

BAILEY — Dave Hullfish Bailey is interested in the often entropic process of disorganising and re-organising information. Beginning with in-depth research, his projects echo the makeshift solutions, and self-organisation, associated with radical communities of the 1960s. Often staged like laboratories, his sprawling installations are flimsy, provisional, and subject to change. At the ICA, Bailey presents a new work connected to his research into regions of the Colorado River delta which have been left dry by irrigation. The structure (a mobile shade canopy) proposes an itinerant infrastructure for field research. Its form is based on a text that Google Maps displays when its satellite cannot zoom in any closer: the pixelated screen image has been enlarged to correspond to the land itself on a 1:1 scale.

Dave Hullfish Bailey was born in 1963 in Denver, Colorado, and he currently lives and works in Los Angeles. He has presented exhibitions, installations, and performances at venues worldwide, including Secession, Vienna (2006) and CASCO, Utrecht (2007). He recently completed a residency at Raven Row, London, which culminated in autumn 2009 in a two-person exhibition alongside Nils Norman.



Eric Duyckaerts, *Magister*, 1989

AYŞE

ERKMEN — Ayşe Ermen is best known for creating ephemeral scenarios and subtle architectural interventions. She frequently uses the exhibition site as a springboard for making cultural and historical associations. In her videos, too, Erkmen draws from a wide range of references and sources. In the video *Coffee* (2006), Erkmen explores the Turkish art of reading coffee cups. The noted reader Fatih Özgüven carefully observes Erkmen's empty coffee cup and recites a confident and detailed account of her future, including the trips she will take, the people who will threaten her, and the objects that will keep her house safe. Although his is an impossible knowledge, he steers clear of mysticism, explicitly rejecting what he calls "that Chinese bullshit" and sticking to the physical reality of what he sees in the empty cup and saucer.

Ayşe Erkmen was born in 1949 in Istanbul, Turkey. She lives and works in Berlin. She has held solo exhibitions at Secession, Vienna (2002); Sculpture Center, Long Island City, New York (2005); Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2005); the Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin (2008); and Kunstsammlung Nordrhein Westfalen, Düsseldorf (2008).

ERIC

DUYCKAERTS — Eric Duyckaerts is a well-trained student of logic. In his performative lectures he puts on a professorial air and uses coloured markers to offer explanations of complex problems in logic, maths, and philosophy. In the videos shown at the ICA the artist explains a series of ideas in arguments that hold together logically yet still seem impossibly absurd. His is an art of telling true fictions; his proofs remain at the limits of the plausible. A presentation on the phenomenology of perception, for instance, concludes that the world is always perceived with a slight sideways bias, since right-handed people encounter it differently than left-handed people. Duyckaerts' didactic monologues are short face-offs between reason and fancy, intellect and humour, and art and play. Both sides always win.

Eric Duyckaerts was born in 1953 in Liège, Belgium, and he lives and works in Nice, France. He has performed and exhibited at institutions including Drawing Center, New York (2007); Tate Modern, London (2008); and Barbican Art Gallery, London (2008). Duyckaerts also presented work in the Belgian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2007).



Patrick van Caeckenbergh, *Chapeau!*, 1989

PATRICK VAN

CAECKENBERGH — In the photocollage shown at the ICA, entitled *Chapeau!* (1989), Patrick van Caeckenbergh tells the story of a journeyman who, instead of wandering the world to gather new information and cure the ignorance of mankind, is plagued with knowing too much. To help himself categorise and organise the vast knowledge he has of the world, he wears a very tall hat. Inside the hat are dozens of small drawers, each containing a small relic of a recollection. Van Caeckenbergh also presents a more recent work, a photocollage which is comprised of dozens of found images collected by the artist.

Patrick Van Caeckenbergh was born in 1960 in Aalst, Belgium. He lives and works in Sint-Kornelis-Horebeke, Belgium. He has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, the Netherlands (2001); Musée des Beaux-arts de Nîmes, France (2005); and La Maison Rouge, Paris (2007).

Texts by Anthony Huberman

EXHIBITION EVENTS & RESOURCES

ROGER BUERTEL AND RUTH NOACK
 MONDAY 7 DECEMBER 7PM

Nash Room / £4 (£3 concessions, free to ICA members)

Roger Buergel and Ruth Noack, who are best known as the curators of *documenta 12*, reflect upon the idea that art can be a tool for rendering visible the excluded, repressed, or unthinkable, often baffling in the process. Buergel and Noack use the exhibition they curated at the Generali Foundation, Vienna, in 2000, *Things We Don't Understand*, as a reference for their conversation.

PIÑATA BASHING CEREMONY
 SUNDAY 31 JANUARY 4 PM

ICA Café / free

As part of *For the blind man...*, Mariana Castillo Deball hangs a large piñata in the shape of a Klein bottle—a topological form whose outside is indistinguishable from its inside—in the ICA cafe. Join us on the last day of the exhibition to take a swing at the piñata and find out what's inside! To mark the occasion, the ICA bar will create a special Mexican-themed cocktail.

MATT MULLICAN
 TUESDAY 12 JANUARY 7PM

ICA Theatre / £4 (£3 concessions, free to ICA members)

For over three decades, Matt Mullican has created a complex body of work which deals with systems of knowledge, meaning, language, and signification. Mullican's oeuvre, which takes the form of drawing, collage, video, sculpture, performance and installation, confronts the nature of subjective understanding, rationality and cognition. For this event, Mullican will perform a lecture using drawings, slides and footage of previous performances. Mullican will also create a special limited edition print for the ICA. Please see www.ica.org.uk/editions for more information.

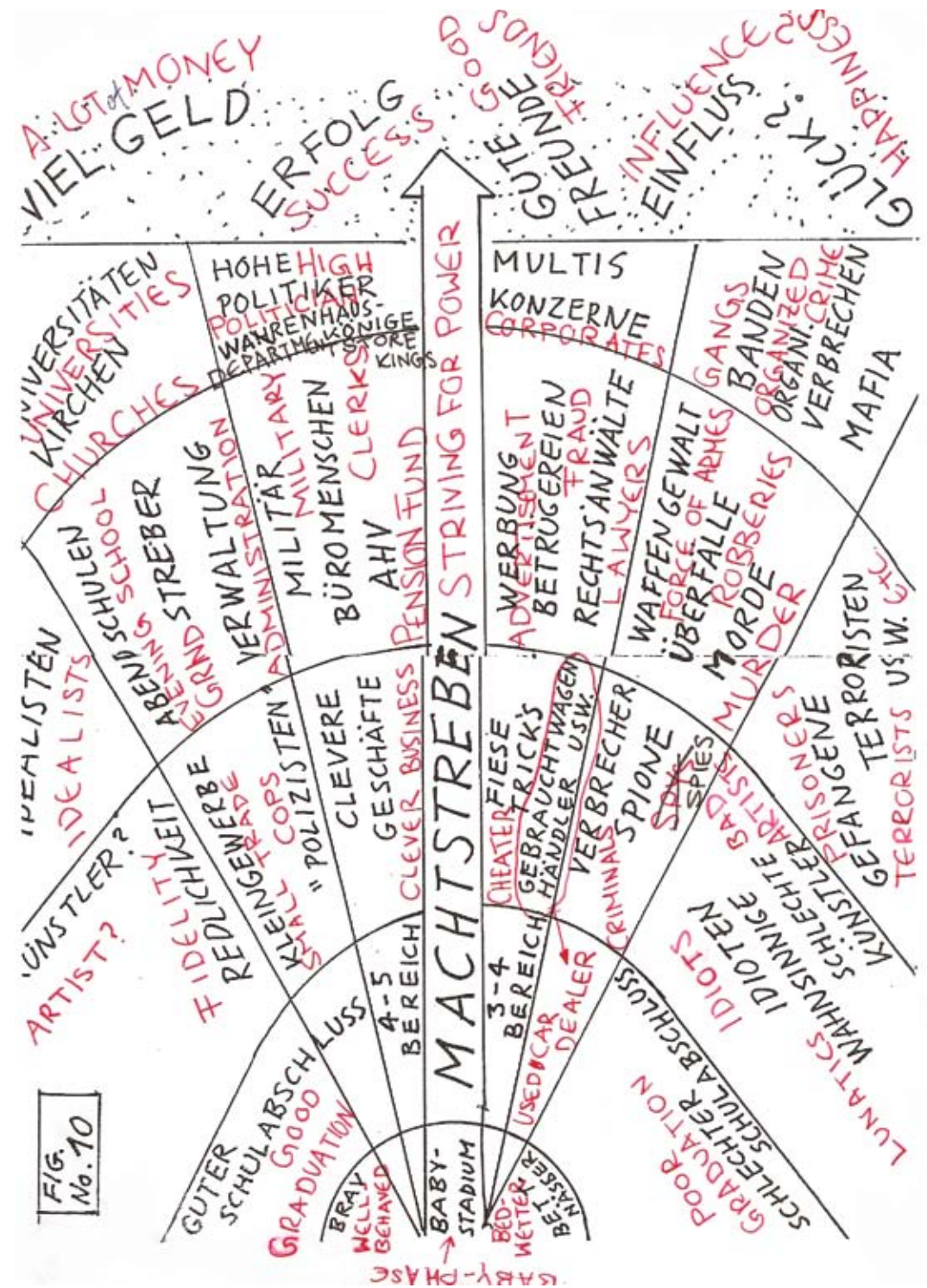
THE FOX READING ROOM

The Fox Reading Room—situated at the end of the ICA's concourse—is our new resource space, providing artist-selected publications and related material to accompany our visual arts programme. It also provides learning resources for teachers and educators, linking our exhibitions to the national curriculum. For the duration of the current exhibition the Fox Reading Room is presenting a number of publications selected by participating artists, and will host a series of events relating to *For the blind man...*, including a workshop for children organised and run by David William (the collaborative duo who are among the exhibitors—see page 12). Please go to ica.org.uk/learning for further details of events.

EMILY PETHICK
 THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 7PM

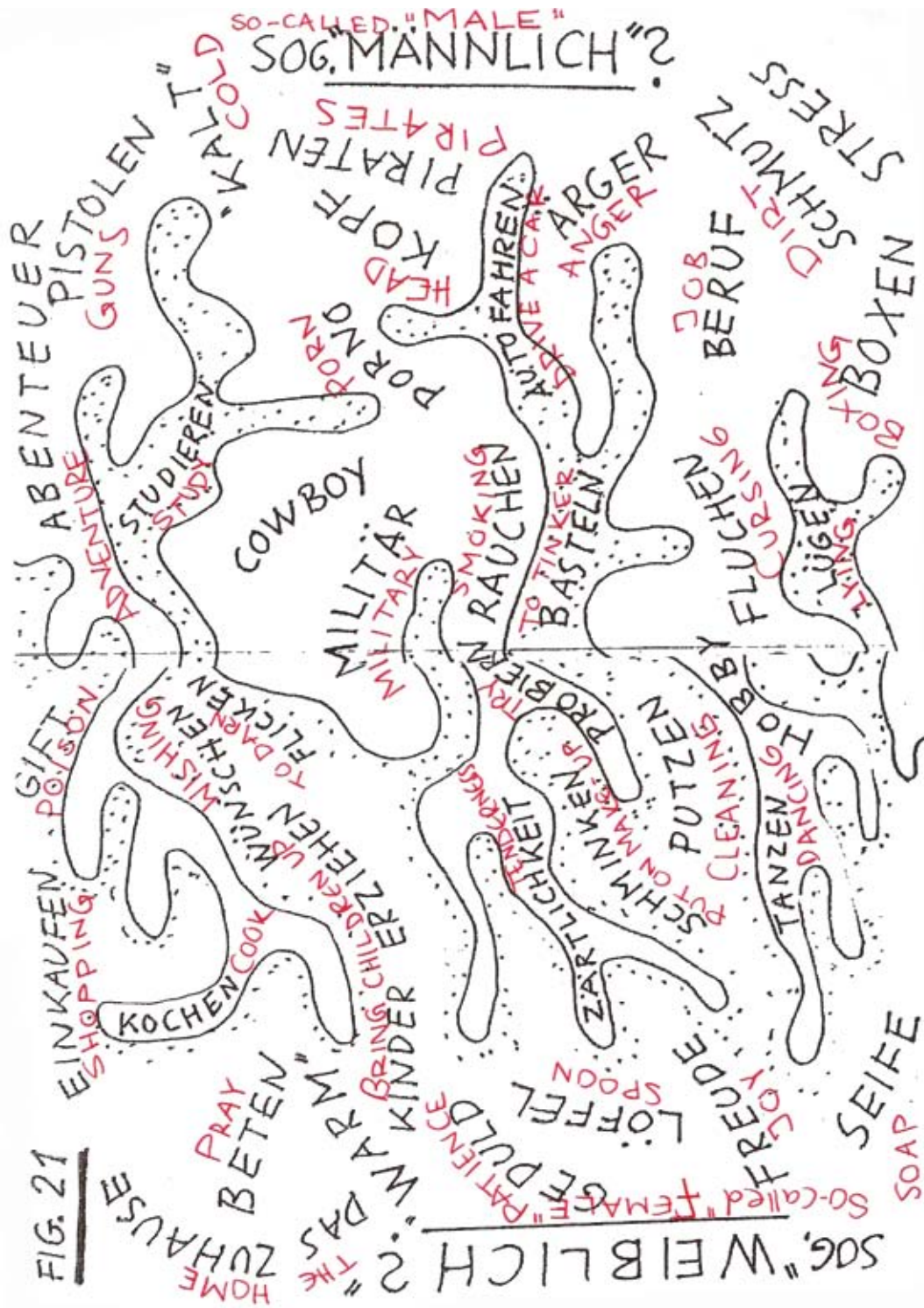
Meet in Lower Gallery / free

A gallery talk on *For the blind man...* by Emily Pethick, director of The Showroom, London. This talk will be signed in British Sign Language by Richard Law.



Peter Fischli & David Weiss,
 From *Order and Cleanliness*, 2003-09

OTHER EVENTS



Peter Fischli & David Weiss,
From *Order and Cleanliness*, 2003-09



Luke Fischbeck of Lucky Dragons

CALLING OUT OF CONTEXT
14—22 NOVEMBER 2009

Institute of Contemporary Arts

Calling Out Of Context is a festival of experimental music and sound. For nine days the ICA main gallery becomes a performance space; the upper gallery a working recording studio; and the theatre hosts gigs, workshops and discussions.

The festival features more than 40 performers and groups, revealing the vitality and relevance of the sonic avant-garde. The programme includes performances by The Red Krayola, Gravetemple, Aaron Dilloway, Seb Rochford, Ei Arakawa and Sergei Tcherepnin, Rhys Chatham, 9!, James Beckett, AGF, Mira Calix and Lucky Dragons, as well as new sound works by Jan St Werner and Robin Watkins, and recording sessions from About, Mica Levi, and Alexander Tucker. The festival concludes with a weekend symposium dedicated to the British avant-garde musician and activist Cornelius Cardew, with contributions from John Tilbury and Ultra-red.

ARTISTS' FILM CLUB: LUCILE DESAMORY
THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 7PM

Lower Gallery / free / booking required

Artist Lucile Desamory (born Brussels, 1977, lives in Berlin) employs collage techniques, using large-scale paper cut-outs and films to create rich vignettes. Reminiscent of early cinema, her work is positioned between corporeal surrealism and *fin de siècle* mysticism. Her cut-up and animated film graphics share a significant relationship to the language of music videos. Desamory has performed with bands such as Rude Pravo, and with musician Kevin Blechdom. This month's Artists' Film Club—presented as part of the *Calling Out Of Context* season—focuses on her film practice, and exhibits Desamory's characteristic collision of music, image and text. The evening includes her film *Countdown to Nothing* (2004), made with Blechdom, and other recent film work.

PUBLICATIONS

The following is a selection of the exhibition-related publications that are available in the ICA Bookshop.

ICA Members receive 10% off all books, ICA branded gifts and ICA films and DVDs.

www.ica.org.uk/bookshop

THE UNFINISHED SYSTEM OF NONKNOWLEDGE

By Georges Bataille
 Edited by Stuart Kendall
 University of Minnesota Press,
 2001
 £15.50

A deft reconstruction of what Georges Bataille envisioned as a continuation of his work *La Somme Athéologique*, this volume brings together the writings of one of the foremost French thinkers of the twentieth century on the central topic of his oeuvre. Gathering Bataille's most intimate writings, these essays, aphorisms, notes, and lectures—on nonknowledge, sovereignty, and sacrifice—clarify and extend Bataille's radical theology, his philosophy of history and his ecstatic method of meditation.

THAT PERSON'S WORKBOOK

By Matt Mullican
 Ridinghouse, 2007
 £48.00

That Person's Workbook has developed out of Mullican's hypnosis performances (1977–present) and, more recently,

photography, drawing and object making that he has created during a trance state. Mullican has described the person that emerges during these performances as “a sensual, impulsive, almost hedonistic individual with a highly developed sense of humour and theatre, lying somewhere between schizophrenia and autism.”

DESIGN AS ART

By Bruno Munari
 Penguin Books, 2008
 £9.99

Munari insisted that design be beautiful, functional and accessible, and this enlightening and highly entertaining book sets out his ideas about visual, graphic and industrial design and the role it plays in the objects we use everyday. Lamps, road signs, typography, posters, children's books, advertising, cars and chairs – these are just some of the subjects to which he turns his illuminating gaze.

THE EMANCIPATED SPECTATOR

By Jacques Rancière
 Verso, 2009
 £12.99

The role of the viewer in art and film theory revolves around a theatrical concept of the spectacle. The masses subjected to the society of spectacle have traditionally been seen as aesthetically and politically passive. In response, both artists and thinkers have sought to

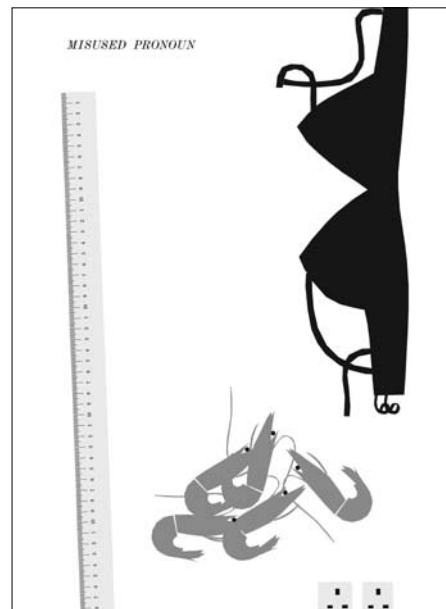
transform the spectator into an active agent and the spectacle into a performance. In this follow-up to the acclaimed *Future of the Image*, Rancière takes a radically different approach to this attempted emancipation.

AGAINST INTERPRETATION & OTHER ESSAYS

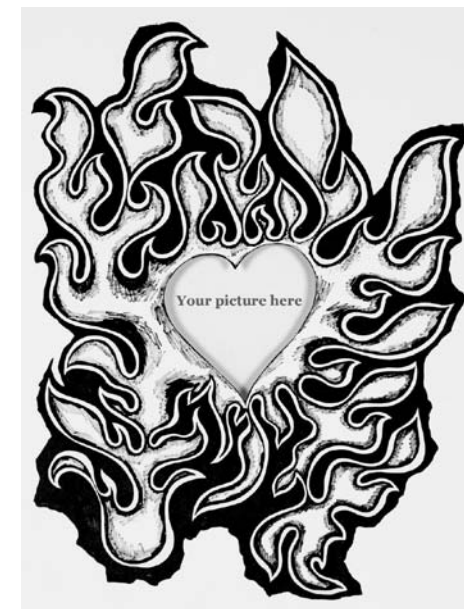
By Susan Sontag
 Penguin Books, 2009
 £12.00

Against Interpretation was Susan Sontag's first collection of essays and made her name as one of the most incisive thinkers of our time. Sontag was among the first critics to write about the intersection between 'high' and 'low' art forms. Originally published in 1966, this collection has never gone out of print and has been a major influence on generations of readers, and the field of cultural criticism, ever since.

ICA PRINT PORTFOLIO 2009



Matthew Brannon
Misused pronoun, 2009



Aleksandra Mir
Heart on Fire, 2009

We are delighted to announce the ICA 2009 Print Portfolio—four new limited edition prints, available to buy individually or as a group, by artists who have featured in the ICA's exhibition programme. The prints are by Matthew Brannon, Marc Camille Chaimowicz, Aleksandra Mir and Falke Pisano, and offer a great opportunity to collect affordable works by some of the most exciting artists working today.

The ICA regularly publishes limited edition prints by artists in our exhibitions,

and all proceeds contribute to our future programme. Please note that ICA members receive up to 20% off limited editions prints. For more information about the ICA Print Portfolio 2009, or other limited editions prints, contact Vicky Steer (020 7766 1425 or vicky.steer@ica.org.uk) or visit the ICA website (www.ica.org.uk/editions).

Pendragon Fine Art Frames are the ICA's official framing partner—frame your limited edition with them and receive a 15% discount (contact Vicky Steer for details). The ICA's print programme is also kindly supported by K2 Screen.

MATTHEW BRANNON
Misused pronoun, 2009
 Silkscreen print, 61 x 46cm, signed edition of 150
 £200 (£180 for ICA Members) including VAT

MARC CAMILLE CHAIMOWICZ
Les Voyageurs, 2009
 Silkscreen print with collaged giclee element, 51 x 35cm, signed edition of 100
 £160 (£144 for ICA Members) including VAT

ALEKSANDRA MIR
Heart on Fire, 2009
 Lithograph on archival mount board with cut-out shape, 52 x 40 cm, edition of 100 with signed certificate
 £50 (£45 for ICA Members) including VAT

FALKE PISANO
Figure 1 (Context, Past, Present, Future), 2009
 Silkscreen print, 40 x 40cm, signed edition of 50
 £90 (£80 for ICA Members) including VAT



The second half of the magazine includes a collage of texts, essays and illustrations. It includes an excerpt from a new essay by Anthony Huberman, edited and designed by Will Holder, as well as contributions from exhibiting artists Benoît Maire, Matt Mullican and Patrick van Caekenbergh. It also features an extract from Bruno Munari's book for children, *Search for a Stone* (1972), a text by Jacques Rancière, sections from Gustave Flaubert's *Dictionnaire des Idées* (1881), as well as excerpts from essays by Susan Sontag, George Bataille and Simon Critchley, among others.

WAITING FOR GODOT

SAMUEL BECKETT

LUCKY: Given the existence as uttered forth in the public works of Puncher and Wattmann of a personal God quaquaquaqu with white beard quaquaquaqu outside time without extension who from the heights of divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia loves us dearly with some exceptions for reasons unknown but time will tell and suffers like the divine Miranda with those who for reasons unknown but time will tell are plunged in torment plunged in fire whose fire flames if that continues and who can doubt it will fire the firmament that is to say blast hell to heaven so blue still and calm so calm with a calm which even though intermittent is better than nothing but not so fast and considering what is more that as a result of the labours left unfinished crowned by the Acacacademy of Anthropopometry of Essy-in-Possy of Testew and Cunard it is established beyond all doubt all other doubt than that which clings to the labours of men that as a result of the labours unfinished of Testew and Cunard it is established as hereinafter but not so fast for reasons unknown that as a result of the public works of Puncher and Wattmann it is established beyond all doubt that in view of the labours of Fartov and Belcher left unfinished for reasons unknown of Testew and Cunard left unfinished it is established what many deny that man in Possy of Testew and Cunard that man in Essy that man in short that man in brief in spite of the strides

CHANGING THE SITUATION

SIMON CRITCHLEY

But is that an end to the matter? Hopefully not. I want to claim that humour is not just comic relief, a transient corporeal effect induced by the raising and extinguishing of tension, of as little social consequence as masturbation, although slightly more acceptable to perform in public. I rather want to claim that what goes on in humour is a form of liberation or elevation that expresses something essential to the humanity of the human being. The shape of the thought I am after is expressed by Eddie Waters, the philosopher-comedian from Trevor Griffiths' brilliant 1976 drama *Comedians*:

A real comedian—that's a daring man. He dares to see what his listeners shy away from, fear to express. And what he sees is a sort of truth about people, about their situation, about what hurts or terrifies them, about what's hard, above all, about what they want. A joke releases the tension, says the unsayable, any joke pretty well. But a true joke, a comedian's joke, has to do more than release tension, it has to liberate the will and the desire, it has to change the situation.¹

The claim here is that any joke releases tension, but a true joke, a comedian's joke, suddenly and explosively lets us see the familiar defamiliarised, the ordinary made extraordinary and the real rendered surreal, and we laugh in a physiological squeal of transient delight, of

26



The Cheshire Cat

pleasurable pain. In my view, the best humour brings about a change of situation, a transient but significant shift in the way we view reality.

This idea of a change of situation can be caught in Mary Douglas' claim that: "A joke is a play upon form that affords an opportunity for realising that an accepted pattern has no necessity".² Thus, jokes are a play upon form, where we play with the accepted practices of a given society. The incongruities of humour both speak out of a massive congruence between joke structure and social structure, and speak against those structures by showing that they have no necessity. The anti-rite of the joke shows the sheer contingency or arbitrariness of the social rites in which we engage. By producing a

27

1. Trevor Griffiths, *Comedians*, Faber, London, 1976, p. 20
2. Mary Douglas, *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology*, Routledge, London, 1975, p. 96

of alimention and defecation wastes and pines wastes and pines and concurrently simultaneously what is more for reasons unknown in spite of the strides of physical culture the practice of sports such as tennis football running cycling swimming flying floating riding gliding conating camogie skating tennis of all kinds dying flying sports of all sorts autumn summer winter winter tennis of all kinds hockey of all sorts penicillin and succedanea in a word I resume flying gliding golf over nine and eighteen holes tennis of all sorts in a word for reasons unknown in Feckham Peckham Fulham Clapham namely concurrently simultaneously what is more for reasons unknown but time will tell fades away I resume Fulham Clapham in a word the dead loss per head since the death of Bishop Berkeley being to the tune of one inch four ounce per head approximately by and large more or less to the nearest decimal good measure round figures stark naked in the stockinged feet in Connemara in a word for reasons unknown no matter what matter the facts are there and considering what is more much more grave that in the light of the labours lost of Steinweg and Peterman it appears what is more much more grave that in the light the light the light of the labours lost of Steinweg and Peterman that in the plains in the mountains by the seas by the rivers running water running fire the air is the same and then the earth namely the air and then the earth in the great cold the great dark the air and the earth abode of stones in the great cold alas alas in the year of their Lord six hundred and something the air the earth the sea the earth abode of stones in the great deeps the great cold on sea on land and in the air I resume for reasons unknown in spite of the

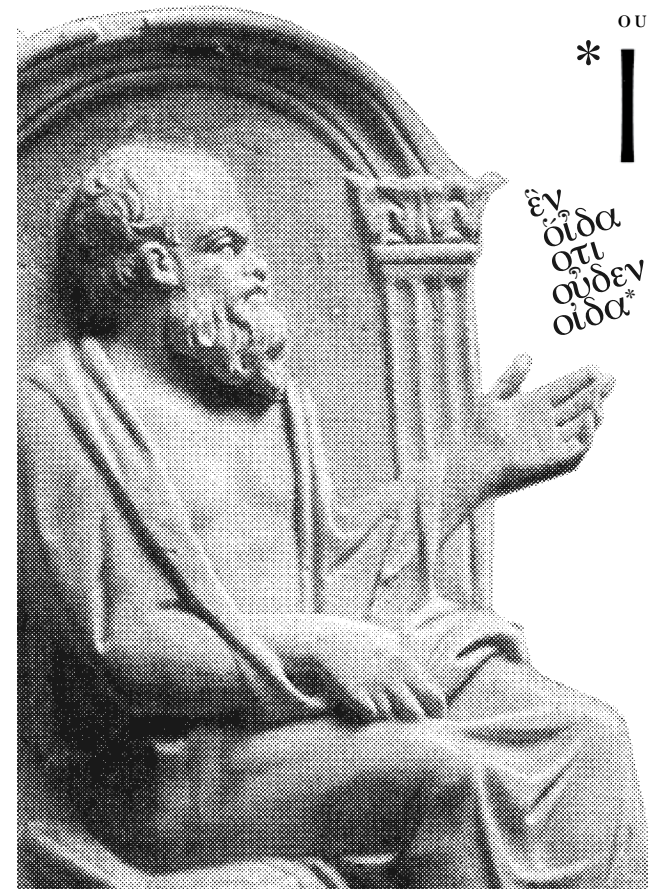
tennis the facts are there but time will tell I resume alas alas on on in short in fine on on abode of stones who can doubt it I resume but not so fast I resume the skull fading fading fading and concurrently simultaneously what is more for reasons unknown in spite of the tennis on on the beard the flames the tears the stones so blue so calm alas alas on on the skull the skull the skull the skull in Connemara in spite of the tennis the labours abandoned left unfinished graver still abode of stones in a word I resume alas alas abandoned unfinished the skull the skull in Connemara in spite of the tennis the skull alas the stones Cunard [mêlée, final vociferations] tennis ... the stones ... so calm ... Cunard ... unfinished ...

consciousness of contingency, humour can change the situation in which we find ourselves, and can even have a critical function with respect to society. Hence the great role that humour has played in social movements that have set out to criticise the established order, such as radical feminist humour: “How many men does it take to tile a bathroom?” “I don’t know.” “It depends how thinly you slice them.” As the old radical left street has it, *es wird ein Lachen sein, das Euch beerdigt*, it will be a laugh that buries you, where the “you” refers to those in power.

By laughing at power, we expose its contingency, we realise that what appeared to be fixed and oppressive is in fact the emperor’s new clothes, and just the sort of thing that should be mocked and ridiculed. To a resident alien of New York City, living in a country that at times seems to be governed exclusively by delusive fantasy, nothing is more important today than laughing at power, even if we are powerless.

Excerpt from Samuel Beckett, ‘Waiting for Godot,’ in Paul Auster, ed., *Samuel Beckett: Dramatic Works*, Grove Press, New York, 2006, p.44–47, first published 1953.

Excerpt from Simon Critchley, ‘Did you hear the joke about the philosopher who wrote a book about humour?’ in *When Humour Becomes Painful*, Heike Munder and Felicity Lunn, eds., migros museum für gegenwartskunst & JRP Ringier, Zürich, 2005, p. 47–48.



OUR STORY begins in Ancient Greece, with Socrates announcing

* I KNOW THAT I KNOW NOTHING

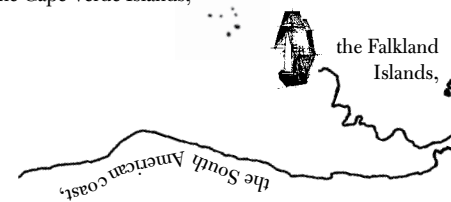
ἔν οἶδα ὅτι οὐδέν οἶδα*

confusion has always been at the heart of wisdom.

Centuries later comes a statement many have attributed to Charles Darwin:

A mathematician is like a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn't there.

IN 1831, Charles Darwin set sail and traveled to the Cape Verde Islands,

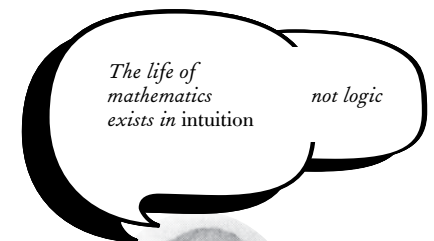


the Galápagos Islands,

The notes he took in his journal led to our general understanding that life-forms develop in the context of how they adapt to various environments in their efforts to survive, and *not* in isolation.



While mathematicians were in their dark rooms looking for abstract black cats that weren't there, Darwin wrote a theory of evolution that explained life on earth.



puncturing science's long-standing obsession with *facts* and *truth*.

...Working alongside Einstein at Princeton,
Gödel inherited a discipline which began to realize
that the human mind is not a logic engine,

BUT!

an analogy engine,

a learning engine,

a guessing engine,

an esthetics-driven engine

a self-correcting engine.¹

In his speculative mathematics,
Gödel arrived at
a *proof*

revealing that

all axiomatic theories (*top-down 'explanations'*)
are necessarily incomplete and that *truth*
will always have a hole in it.

In other words,

all mathematics—even simple arithmetic—always
relies on at least one assumption that cannot be
proven within its own system.²

To re-state this theorem
(outside the language of numbers)
would be to claim that

it is fundamental to the nature of any explanation
that it always contains an element that remains
unexplained and not understood.

Re-stated:

all explanations also don't explain.

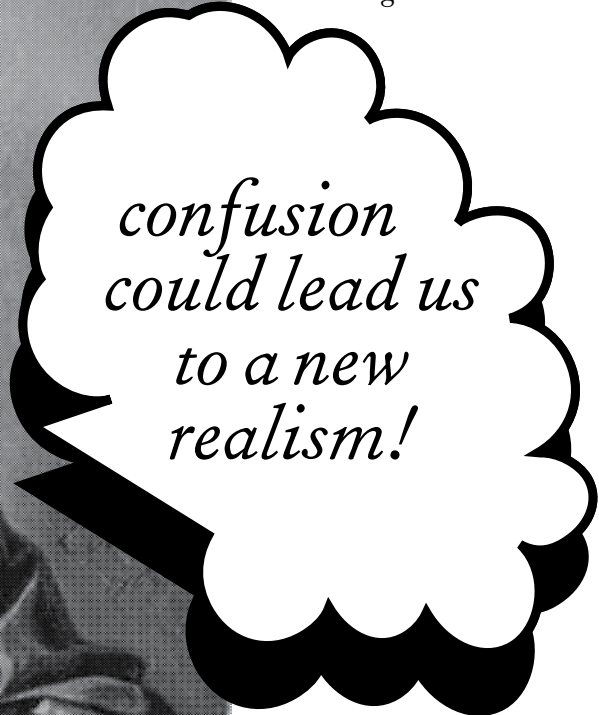


The encyclopedic
ambitions of **the Enlightenment**
(the historical period
leading up to Darwin)
began losing ground,
and **Modernity** set off
with what John Keats'
Negative Capability
(the ability to tolerate, and
even enjoy, the experience
of confusion or doubt.)

All of a sudden it struck me
what quality went to form a
man of achievement: I mean
negative capability, when a
man is capable of being in
uncertainties, mysteries,
doubts, without any irritable
reaching after fact and rea-
son. The sense of beauty
obliterates all consideration.³



As a result, Diderot didn't
seek to abolish it,
but imagined that



*confusion
could lead us
to a new
realism!*

and identified positive
and productive forms
of confusion:

In his *Lettres en le Blind* (1749),
Diderot embraced the confusion of the blind man,

for if understanding the world required breaking down
(*démêler* and *décomposer*) any subject

to its original, elemental components and then
putting them back together again

in an orderly fashion (composer) without skipping
any steps.⁴

then the blind man—with his superior powers
of abstraction and speculation—
can do it best.

I COULD
NOT LIVE
WITHOUT
CONFUSION

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

ARTISTS DON'T SOLVE PROBLEMS, THEY INVENT NEW ONES.

BRUCE NAUMAN

...Which reminds me of a story:

Urs Fischer had been invited by a Swiss art museum to suggest a work of his that it could purchase for its permanent collection. The invitation was not to include a work of Fischer in a specific exhibition, but to buy it and commit to preserving it as part of the museum's collection. The artist considered the request and then told the museum that he would like to offer a new piece for them to acquire, rather than recommend an existing work. He told them he had conceived a new piece for the occasion: a cat.*

* In order to own a work by Urs Fischer, the museum would need to commit to caring for, feeding, maintaining and protecting a living cat. Security guards might have to race down museum hallways, motion-sensors might trigger night alarms, and a litter box might tip over and spill on a Giacometti sculpture. With this simple gesture, the artist exposes and short-circuits not only the realities inherent in the institutionalization of art, but the nature of art itself. Perhaps he also did it because he was curious to see how the museum would handle it. After much internal deliberation, the museum rejected his proposal, citing technical and administrative reasons.

... THAT ISN'T THERE.

In a museum of his own invention, the *Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles*, Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers sought an explanation of a painting by interviewing his cat.



Est-ce que c'est un bon tableau, celui-là...? Est-ce qu'il correspond à ce que vous attendez... toute récente qui va du Conceptual Art à cette nouvelle version d'une certaine figuration, pourrait-on dire?

— Is this one a good painting...? Does it correspond with what you expected... of this recent transformation from Conceptual Art to this, one could say, new version of a certain kind of figuration?

IF THERE'S A DISCREPANCY BETWEEN CERTAINTY AND TRUTH,

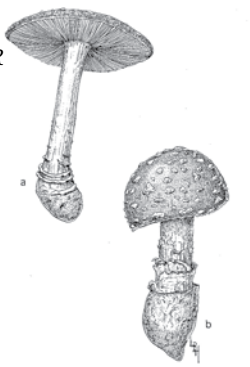
LOOKING FOR THE BLACK CAT...

Inside the museum of his making, asking a cat for its opinion on the merits of a painting is an entirely plausible exercise.



*Meeeeaaaaaoooooww.
Mmmmmmmhhhh.
MeeAAAAAow.*

THE CERTAINTY OF THE DISCREPANCY SABOTAGES ITS TRUTH.



The biggest hindrance to understanding a work of art is wanting to understand.

ART ISN'T HERE TO EXPLAIN THINGS

JOSEPH BEUYS

FOR THE BLIND MAN...

READ: Good job we're here.
SAY: Let's do it again sometime.

The impulse to make a new language is a strong one.

Matt Mullican tells us, kids do this all the time.¹⁷



The potential of nonknowledge is often closely connected to the curiosity of children. Not only do children invent new languages all the time, but those languages form the basis for a pedagogical method used in kindergartens around the world. Soon after the Second World War, Italian schoolteacher Loris Malaguzzi started a child-care program near the Northern Italian city of Reggio Emilia.

IN THE DARK ROOM...

What is now known as the "Reggio Emilia Method" sees children as little researchers who strive to understand the world, making their own theories to explain it. A teacher's responsibility is to guide their natural curiosity rather than replace it with a knowledge that is foreign to them. Each child has a particular theory in a particular language, making a school into a place of a hundred theories in a hundred languages. While traditional pedagogy tends to favor one of them and discourage the ninety-nine others, the Reggio method recognizes the value of keeping them all, allowing the child to insert a beautifully-impossible cacophony into the fabric of knowledge.



The relevance of the speculative ways children learn reaches far beyond the kindergarten classrooms in Northern Italy. Emphasizing curiosity over knowledge has long been at the core of the politics of pedagogy.

Sint – Kornelis – Horebeke

23-03-2000

Dearly beloved,

It's five o'clock in the morning. Grey sky and silent seeping. I hear the pleasant 'tswit, tswit', the incessant nervous twittering and warbling of the swallows gathering to leave for the south. Myself, born a domestic animal, as you know, put on my dressing gown and slippers and already start dreaming aloud of the blissful hibernation that beckons.

I am overcome by some kind of 'simmering anxiety', an extreme yearning for those rare moments when every last atom of reality, every random thought, sinks into a deep sleep. This enables my body to communicate without any particular purpose: to discover the luxury of solitary invention—cherishing just a few ideas—stripped of all importance—remnants of age-old dreams. I tighten up my thoughts, think, reflect a lot, I feel the solid support of my bed.

A flow of images whirling infinitely, vexingly around, fleeting and in haste, held in the wispy existence of a soap bubble, bursting on a tiny bit of reality.

I laugh quietly. Despite my intense efforts I can only follow my words with great difficulty. I limit myself to remembering them. Sleep draws out my thoughts even more.

I am afraid of the boundless beauty that is possible in this pure and ordinary place.

I have never been so happy, gripped by the pleasant coincidence of a single moment and its idea. What is happiness other than briefly reflecting on such moments?


Sleep well my darling,
Marcel

This text is a letter written by Patrick van Caekenbergh. It's a work of fiction, but refers to a new phase in the life and work of the artist, in which he moved from the city to the countryside. The fact of living in a small village, close to nature and experiencing the passing of seasons changed Van Caekenbergh's life and led to a period in his work which he named 'Stil Geluk' (Silent Happiness).

For the blind man..., written by Anthony Huberman and designed by Will Holder

LOOKING FOR THE BLACK CAT...

and the American educator and pragmatist John Dewey, in the 1890s and the early twentieth century, insisted on an anti-authoritarian and democratic education system based on active student involvement and experiences.




His writings also influenced the Brazilian Paulo Freire, whose ideas were conceived in the wake of a military coup that overthrew the socialist government in Brazil in 1964. During his exile in Chile, and in the face of a military dictatorship in his home country, Freire wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968), an influential treatise on political freedom and self-empowerment through education. Building on Dewey's case for anti-authoritarian teaching and for a student's active involvement in his or her own education, Freire believed it was the experience of political unrest that made people want to learn, as they found themselves bound by the urgency of playing an active role in (re)making their world.

81

... THAT ISN'T THERE.

Fighting an even larger battle, Austrian philosopher Ivan Illich sought to expose the dangers of modern industrialization and its effects on education, medicine, energy, transportation, and economic development. Unlike Freire, Illich believed in capitalism, and rather than pronouncing its failure, warned of its perversions. Unchecked industrial monopolies, he wrote, destroy our tools for conviviality. Schools, in his view, represented a normalized monopoly, thereby sustaining the institutionalization of society, and need to be eliminated in favor of learning networks and informal one-on-one arrangements. As the title of his 1970 book indicates, he called for deschooling society.




82

FOR THE BLIND MAN...


This line of thought culminated in 1987 with French philosopher Jacques Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: The Last School in Subaltern Consciousness*. In it, he argued how the traditional teacher-student relationship does nothing but reinforce inequality, stultifying the learner. A non-empowered student is the one who ignores that he does not know what he does not know and ignores how to know it. The master is not only he who exactly knows what remains unknown to the ignorance, [but] he also knows how to make it knowable at what time and what place, according to what protocol.¹⁸

A student is held captive by his or her reliance on explanations. But the 19 child who is explained so will decrease his intelligence to the work of guessing. On understanding, that is to say, on understanding that he doesn't understand, unless he is explained so.



83

IN THE DARK ROOM...




Rancière insists on the equality of all intelligences and considers the central goal of education to be the revelation of an intelligence to itself—and not the gift of a pre-ordained "knowledge". In his book, he discusses the emancipatory potential in teachers remaining ignorant of what they teach, and to act instead as enforcers and verifiers of the student's own will-to-learn. It is the experience of learning—the doing—that matters, not the knowing of teaching. Moreover, the student of the ignorant master learns what his master does not know since [...] he does not learn his master's knowledge.²⁰

84

FOR THE BLIND MAN...

Following Freire, Illich, and Rancière, it is clear that breaking and re-shuffling ideas is an intensely political project. Accompanying every revolution and emancipatory movement is a process of exposing and breaking the habits of learning, and is a challenge to its power structures, conditions, and infrastructures. At least in part, a political protest declares the urgency of unlearning.


In his foreword to the well-titled exhibition *Things We Don't Understand*, curated by Roger M. Buergel and Ruth Noack, Generali Foundation President Dietrich Kramer notes that



... and shuffle the pieces.²¹

88

IN THE DARK ROOM...




A work of art establishes a state of potentiality, challenging us to change or readjust the way we understand the world. Faced with an object or image we don't understand, we seek an explanation within our existing epistemological map. When none emerges, we then turn to the map itself—our own consciousness—and begin to examine our own assumptions and to question the preconceived notions upon which they are built.

89

LOOKING FOR THE BLACK CAT...

Slowly, we consider unlearning part of our knowledge and reshuffle some of its pieces. Slightly redrawn, our map might then provide a clearer place for the art object and allow us to appreciate and understand it better. As an agent that can demand and effect this shift in perception, awareness, and consciousness, art can be a powerful political force.

In their essay for *Things We Don't Understand*, Buergel and Noack note that an




90

... THAT ISN'T THERE.

In the headlining quotation of the brochure that accompanied Buergel and Noack's exhibition *Things We Don't Understand*—essentially a much larger version of their *Things We Don't Understand*—Buergel writes:

A POLITICAL EXHIBITION, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, SHOULD INVITE VISITORS THE FEELING THAT VIA THE EXHIBITION, THEY ARE TAKING PART IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITY OF MAKING THE WORLD THEY INHABIT. THIS MEANS TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WORLD WE LIVE IN—KNOWING THEY HAVE THE FREEDOM TO HELP SHAPE IT AND TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THAT FREEDOM BY ACTUALLY DOING SO.²⁴



91

FOR THE BLIND MAN...

The final responsibility, he reminds us, lies with the viewer. If we stay curious about the things we don't understand, we can become active participants in enacting political change and remaking the world.

92

EYE AND MIND

MAURICE
MERLEAU-PONTY

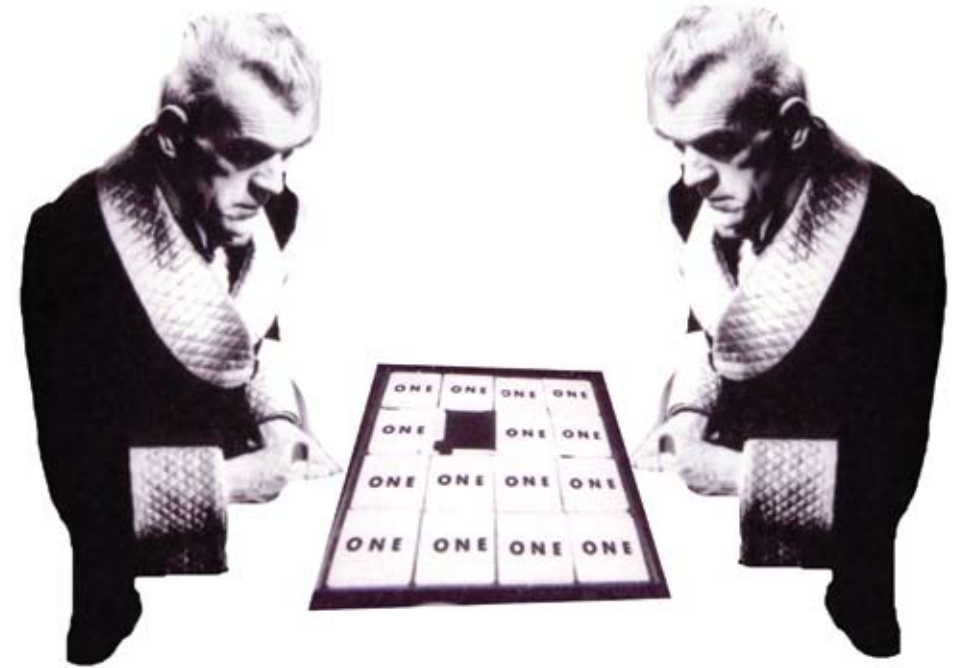
A Cartesian can believe that the existing world is not visible, that the only light is that of the mind, and that all vision takes place in God. A painter cannot grant that our openness to the world is illusory or indirect, that what we see is not the world itself, or that the mind has to do only with its thoughts or with another mind. He accepts with all its difficulties the myth of the windows of the soul; it must be that what has no place is subjected to a body—even more, that what has no place be initiated *by* the body to all the others and to nature.

We must take literally what vision teaches us: namely, that through it we come in contact with the sun and the stars, that we are everywhere all at once, and that even our power to imagine ourselves elsewhere—“I am in Petersburg in my bed, in Paris, my eyes see the sun”—or to intend [*viser*] real beings wherever they are, borrows from vision and employs means we owe to it. Vision alone makes us learn that beings that are different, ‘exterior,’ foreign to one another, are yet absolutely *together*, are ‘simultaneity’; this is a mystery psychologists handle the way a child handles explosives. Robert Delaunay says succinctly, “The railroad track is the image of succession which comes closest to the parallel: the parity of the rails.”¹ The rails converge and do not converge; they converge *in order* to remain equidistant down below. The world is in accordance with my perspective *in order to* be independent of me, is for me *in order to* be without me, and to be the world. The “visual quale” gives me, and alone gives me, the presence of what is not me,

THE IGNORANT
SCHOOLMASTER

JACQUES RANCIÈRE

The revelation that came to Joseph Jacotot amounts to this: the logic of the explicative system had to be overturned. Explication is not necessary to remedy an incapacity to understand. On the contrary, that very incapacity provides the structuring fiction of the explicative conception of the world. It is the explicator who needs the incapable and not the other way around; it is he who constitutes the incapable as such. To explain something to someone is first of all to show him he cannot understand it by himself. Before being the act of the pedagogue, explication is the myth of pedagogy, the parable of a world divided into knowing minds and ignorant ones, ripe minds and immature ones, the capable and the incapable, the intelligent and the stupid. The explicator’s special trick consists of this double inaugural gesture. On the one hand, he decrees the absolute beginning: it is only now that the act of learning will begin. On the other, having thrown a veil of ignorance over everything that is to be learned, he appoints himself to the task of lifting it. Until he came along, the child has been groping blindly, figuring out riddles. Now he will learn. He heard words and repeated them. But now it is time to read, and he will not understand words if he doesn’t understand syllables, and he won’t understand syllables if he doesn’t understand letters that neither the book nor his parents can make him understand—only the master’s word. The pedagogical



Benoît Maire,
The history of the geometry n°2, 2007



Benoît Maire,
The history of the geometry n°1, 2007

myth, we said, divides the world into two. More precisely, it divides intelligence into two. It says that there is an inferior intelligence and a superior one. The former registers perceptions by chance, retains them, interprets and repeats them empirically, within the closed circle of habit and need. This is the intelligence of the young child and the common man. The superior intelligence knows things by reason, proceeds by method, from the simple to the complex, from the part to the whole. It is this intelligence that allows the master to transmit his knowledge by adapting it to the intellectual capacities of the student and allows him to verify that the student has satisfactorily understood what he learned. Such is the principle of explication. From this point on, for Jacotot, such will be the principle of *enforced stultification*.

To understand this we must rid ourselves of received images. The stultifier is not an aged obtuse master who crams his students' skulls full of poorly digested knowledge, or a malignant character mouthing half-truths in order to shore up his power and the social order. On the contrary, he is all the more efficacious because he is knowledgeable, enlightened, and of good faith. The more he knows, the more evident to him is the distance between his knowledge and the ignorance of the ignorant ones. The more he is enlightened, the more evident he finds the difference between groping blindly and searching methodically, the more he will insist on substituting the spirit for the letter, the clarity of explications for the authority of the book. Above all, he will say, the student must understand, and for that we must explain even better. Such is the concern of the enlightened pedagogue: does the little one understand? He doesn't understand.

of what is simply and fully. It does so because, like texture, it is the concretion of a universal visibility, of a unique space which separates and reunites, which sustains every cohesion (and even that of past and future, since there would be no such cohesion if they were not essentially relevant to the same space). Every visual something, as individual as it is, functions also as a dimension, because it gives itself as the result of a dehiscence of Being. What this ultimately means is that the proper essence [*le propre*] of the visible is to have a layer [*doublure*] of invisibility in the strict sense, which it makes present as a certain absence. "In their time, our bygone antipodes, the impressionists, were perfectly right in making their abode with the castaways and the undergrowth of daily life. As for us, our heart throbs to bring us closer to the depths. . . . These oddities will become . . . realities . . . because instead of being held to the diversely intense restoration of the visible, they will annex to it the proper share [*la part*] of the invisible, occultly apperceived."² There is that which reaches the eye directly [*de face*], the frontal properties of the visible; but there is also that which reaches it from below – the profound postural latency where the body raises itself to see – and that which reaches vision from above like the phenomena of flight, of swimming, of movement, where it participates no longer in the heaviness of origins but in free accomplishments. Through it, then, the painter touches the two extremities. In the immemorial depth of the visible, something moved, caught fire, and engulfed his body; everything he paints is in answer to this incitement, and his hand is "nothing but the instrument of a distant will."³ Vision encounters, as at a crossroads, all the aspects of Being. "[A] certain fire pretends to

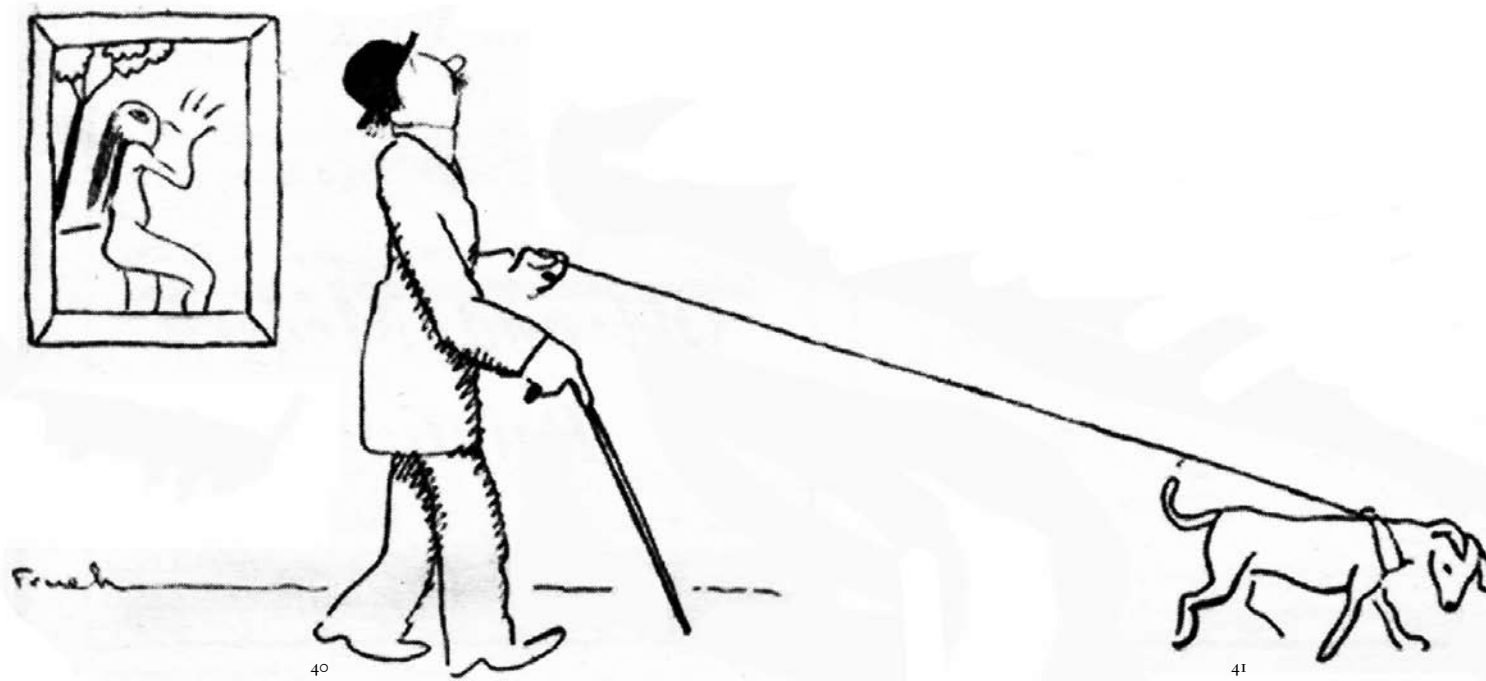
be alive; it awakens. Working its way along the hand as conductor, it reaches the support and engulfs it; then a leaping spark closes the circle it was to trace, coming back to the eye, and beyond.”⁴

There is no break at all in this circuit; it is impossible to say that nature ends here and that man or expression starts here. It is, therefore, mute Being which itself comes to show forth its own meaning. Herein lies the reason why the dilemma between figurative and nonfigurative art is badly posed; it is true and uncontradictory that no grape was ever what it is in the most figurative painting and that no painting, no matter how abstract, can get away from Being, that even Caravaggio’s grape is the grape itself. This precession of what is upon what one sees and makes seen, of what one sees and makes seen upon what is—this is vision itself.⁵ And to give the ontological formula of painting we hardly need to force the painter’s own words, Klee’s words written at the age of thirty-seven and ultimately inscribed on his tomb: “I cannot be caught in immanence.”⁶

I will find new ways to explain it to him, ways more rigorous in principle, more attractive in form—and I will verify that he has understood.

A noble concern. Unfortunately, it is just this little word, this slogan of the enlightened—understand—that causes all the trouble. It is this word that brings a halt to the movement of reason, that destroys its confidence in itself, that distracts it by breaking the world of intelligence into two, by installing the division between the groping animal and the learned little man, between common sense and science. From the moment this slogan of duality is pronounced, all the perfecting of the ways of *making understood*, that great preoccupation of men that methods and progressives, is progress toward stultification. The child who recites under the threat of the rod

obeys the rod and that’s all: he will apply his intelligence to something else. But the child who is *explained* to will devote his intelligence to the work of grieving: to understanding, that is to say, to understanding that he doesn’t understand unless he is explained to. He is no longer submitting to the rod, but rather to a hierarchical world of intelligence. For the rest, like the other child, he doesn’t have to worry: if the solution to the problem is too difficult to pursue, he will have enough intelligence to open his eyes wide. The master is vigilant and patient. He will see that the child isn’t following him; he will put him back on track by explaining things again. And thus the child acquires a new intelligence, that of the master’s explications. Later he can be an explicator in turn. He possesses the equipment. But he will perfect it: he will be a man of progress.



Excerpt from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind,' *The Primacy of Perception and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History and Politics*, translated by Carleton Gallery, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1964, p. 186–88.

1. Robert Delaunay, *Du cubisme à l'art abstrait*, Paris, 1957, p. 110, 115.
2. Paul Klee, *Conférence d'Iena*, 1924, cited in Will Grohmann, *Paul Klee*, Paris, 1954, p. 365.
3. Paul Klee, *Wege des Naturstudiums*, 1923, cited in Gualtieri di San Lazzaro, *Klee*, New York, 1957.
4. Paul Klee, cited by Grohmann, op.cit., p. 99.
5. André Berne-Joffroy, *Le dossier Caravage*, Paris, 1959, and Michel Butor, 'La Corbeille de l'Ambrosienne', *Nouvelle Revue Française*, 1959, p. 969-89.
6. Paul Klee, *Journal...*, translated by Pierre Klossowski, Paris, 1959 ["Je suis insaisissable dans l'immanence."]

Excerpt from Jacques Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation*, translated by Kristin Ross, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1991, p. 5-7, first published as *Le Maître ignorant: Cinq leçons sur l'émancipation intellectuelle*, 1987.



p. 42-45 Matt Mullican,
Learning from that Person's Work, 2005

From the Grill - Melts

Topped with Cheddar, Swiss or American Cheese and Grilled Peas or Sundae with Grilled Peas or Fries or Onion Rings (Grilled Cheese Chili Add \$5.00)

Grilled Cheese	5.75
Grilled Cheese & Ham (or Bacon)	9.95
Tuna Salad Melt (white fl. bread)	9.95
Poult's Salad Melt (Turkey or Chicken)	9.95

Salami Tomato Cheese Melt	9.95
Pastrami Melt	10.35
Sliced Turkey Melt	10.35
Turkey Patty Melt	9.50
Patty Melt	8.75

Hamburger patty, topped with Melted Cheese & Grilled Onions

Chicken Breast Melt	10.95
Pork Rind Pork Melt	10.75

Veggie Melt 9.95
tomato, onion, avocado, shredded lettuce topped with Melted Cheese

REUBENS

Topped with Swiss cheese & Sauerkraut

The Reuben (half)	7.95	10.75
Grilled Beef, Sauerkraut, Swiss Cheese or Turkey on Swiss Reuben - by request	8.50	11.25
Knockwurst Reuben	7.95	

Salads

Tossed By Post

Your Choice of Dressing:
 Prussian, Bleu Cheese, Ranch, Italian, Thousand Island, Crumbled Bleu Cheese, Caesar, Cajun, Curry, Honey Mustard, Olive Oil and a variety of Vinegars (Diet Dressings Available)
 Bagel chips or Crackers

Dinner Salad	3.50
Hearts of lettuce and Tomato	4.95
Special Dinner Salad	5.35
Greens, Cucumbers, Tomato, scallions, Egg	
Mexican Dinner Salad	5.50
Crispy tortilla topped with beans, lettuce, tomato, corn, peas, parmesan cheese	
California salad	7.95
lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, bell peppers, Garbanzo, kidney beans, corn, peas!	

★ Caesar Salad (Anchovies?) 7.95

Tuna Caesar Salad	8.65
Chicken Breast Caesar	9.95
Mexican Chicken Caesar	9.95
Romaine lettuce, parmesan, chicken, tomatoes, corn, beans	
LOX Caesar Salad	10.35
Tossed w/ Caesar Dressing, Fresh Parmesan cheese	

BLUE OF NOON

GEORGES BATAILLE

I got out of the car and thus beheld the starry sky overhead. Twenty years later, the boy who used to stick himself with pens was standing under the sky in a foreign street where he had never been, waiting for some unknown, impossible event. There were stars: an infinity of stars. It was absurd—absurd enough to make you scream; but it was a hostile absurdity. I was eager for daybreak and sunrise. I reckoned that when the stars disappeared I would surely be out in the streets. In general I was less afraid of the starry sky than of the dawn. I would have to wait, wait for two hours.... I remembered: it was about two in the afternoon, beneath a brilliant Paris sun, and I was standing on the Pont du Carrousel, when I saw a butcher's van drive past. The headless necks of flayed lambs protruded from canvas coverings; the butchers' blue-and-white striped smocks were spotlessly clean; the van was slowly moving forward in open sunlight. When I was a boy, I loved the sun; I used to shut my eyes and let it shine redly through my lids. The sun was fantastic—it evoked dreams of explosion. Was there anything more sunlike than red blood running over cobblestones, as though light could shatter and kill? Now, in this thick darkness, I'd made myself drunk with light; and so, once again, Lazare in my eyes was merely a bird of ill omen; a dirty, trivial bird. My eyes were no longer lost among the stars that were shining above me actually, but in the blue of the noon sky. I shut them so as to lose

AGAINST
INTERPRETATION

SUSAN SONTAG

Today is such a time, when the project of interpretation is largely reactionary, stifling. Like the fumes of the automobile and of heavy industry which befoul the urban atmosphere, the effusion of interpretations of art today poisons our sensibilities. In a culture whose already classical dilemma is the hypertrophy of the intellect at the expense of energy and sensual capability, interpretation is the revenge of the intellect upon art.

Even more. It is the revenge of the intellect upon the world. To interpret is to impoverish, to deplete the world—in order to set up a shadow world of 'meanings'. It is to turn the world into this world. ("This world"! As if there were any other.)

The world, our world, is depleted, impoverished enough. Away with all duplicates of it, until we again experience more immediately what we have.

In most modern instances, interpretation amounts to the philistine refusal to leave the work of art alone. Real art has the capacity to make us nervous. By reducing the work of art to its content and then interpreting that, one tames the work of art. Interpretation makes art manageable, comfortable.

This philistinism of interpretation is more rife in literature than in any other art. For decades now, literary critics have understood it to be their task to translate the

elements of the poem or play or novel or story into something else. Sometimes a writer will be so uneasy before the naked power of his art that he will install within the work itself—albeit with a little shyness, a touch of the good taste of irony—the clear and explicit interpretation of it. Thomas Mann is an example of such an over-cooperative author. In the case of more stubborn authors, the critic is only too happy to perform the job.

The work of Kafka, for example, has been subjected to a mass ravishment by no less than three armies of interpreters. Those who read Kafka as a social allegory see case studies of the frustrations and insanity of modern bureaucracy and its ultimate issuance in the totalitarian state. Those who read Kafka as a psychoanalytic allegory see desperate revelations of Kafka's fear of his father, his castration anxieties, his sense of his own impotence, his thralldom to his dreams. Those who read Kafka as a religious allegory explain that K. in *The Castle* is trying to gain access to heaven, that Joseph K. in *The Trial* is being judged by the inexorable and mysterious justice of God. . . . Another oeuvre that has attracted interpreters like leeches is that of Samuel Beckett. Beckett's delicate dramas of the withdrawn consciousness—pared down to essentials, cut off, often represented as physically immobilised—are read as a statement about modern man's alienation from meaning or from God, or as an allegory of psychopathology.

Proust, Joyce, Faulkner, Rilke, Lawrence, Gide ... one could go on citing author after author; the list is endless of those around whom thick encrustations of interpretation have taken hold. But it should be noted that

myself in that bright blueness. From it, fat black insects spouted forth in buzzing swarms: just as, next day, there would emerge at the blazing high point of the day, at first as an imperceptible speck, the plane that was bringing Dorothea.... I opened my eyes. The stars were still covering my head, but I was maddened with sunlight. I felt like laughing: next day, that plane, too small and distant to attenuate the sky's blaze even minimally, would appear to me in the likeness of a noisy bug; it would be harbouring Dirty's preposterous fantasies inside its glassed-in cage; and as I stood there on the ground, it would, to my tiny human mind—at a moment when pain would be rending deeper than habit within her—assume the aspect of an impossible, adorable "outhouse fly."—So I had laughed, and it was no longer merely the gloomy boy with his cruel pen who was walking through the night hugging the walls: I had laughed the same laugh as a child, convinced that one day, since such a lucky insolence was sustaining me, it was I who was bound to turn the world upside down—turn the world, quite ineluctably, upside down.

Excerpt from Georges Bataille, *Blue of Noon*, translated by Harry Mathews, Marion Boyars Publishers, London, 1986, p. 107–108, first published as *Le Bleu du Ciel*, 1935.

interpretation is not simply the compliment that mediocrity pays to genius. It is, indeed, the modern way of understanding something, and is applied to works of every quality. Thus, in the notes that Elia Kazan published on his production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, it becomes clear that, in order to direct the play, Kazan had to discover that Stanley Kowalski, represented the sensual and vengeful barbarism that was engulfing our culture, while Blanche Du Bois was Western civilisation, poetry, delicate apparel, dim lighting, refined feelings and all, though a little the worse for wear to be sure. Tennessee Williams' forceful psychological melodrama now became intelligible: it was about something, about the decline of Western civilisation. Apparently, were it to go on being a play about a handsome brute named Stanley Kowalski and a faded mangy belle named Blanche Du Bois, it would not be manageable.

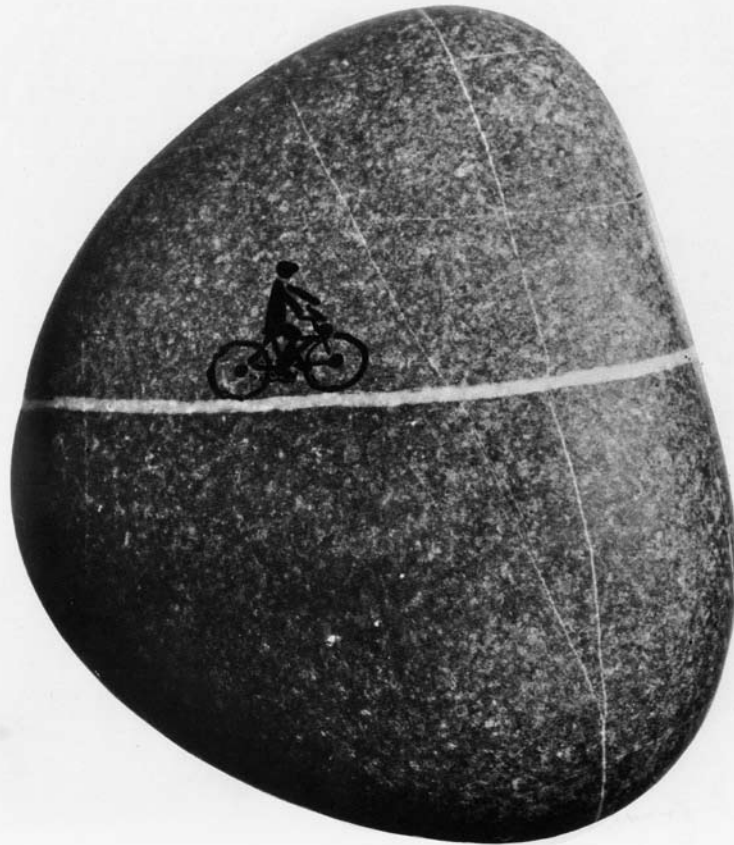


In these stones the vicious blinding sleet beats down on the man with his umbrella who tramps endlessly up hill and down in the endless rain.

p. 49–50 Bruno Munari, *Search for a Stone*, Adam & Charles Black, London, 1972 (n.p.)

Excerpt from Susan Sontag, 'Against Interpretation,' *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1967, p. 7–9

And on a lonely road a man cycles on his
solitary way searching . . .



THE DICTIONARY OF ACCEPTED IDEAS

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

A

ACADEMY, FRENCH.

Run it down, but try to belong to it if you can.

AIR.

Beware of drafts of air. The depths of the air are invariably unlike the surface. If the former are warm, the latter is cold, and vice versa.

ANIMALS.

"If only dumb animals could speak! So often more intelligent than men."

ART.

Shortest path to the poorhouse. What use is it since machinery can make things better and quicker?

ARTISTS.

All charlatans. Praise their disinterestedness (*old-fashioned*). Express surprise that they dress like everyone else (*old-fashioned*). They earn huge sums and squander them. Often asked to dine out. Woman artist necessarily a whore. What artists do cannot be called work.

AUTHORS.

One should "know a few," never mind their names.

B

BEARD.

Sign of strength. Grown too thick, will cause baldness. Helps protect neckcloth.

BIRDS.

Aspire to become one, saying with a sigh: "Oh, for a pair of wings! Wings! —it shows a poetic" soul.

BLACK AS.

Follow invariably with "your hat" or "pitch." As for 'jet black,' what is jet?

BREATH.

To have a strong breath is a sign of distinction. Fend off remarks about killing flies. Refer it to the stomach.

BUTCHERS.

Appalling in times of revolution.

C

CAMEL.

Has two humps and the dromedary one; or the camel has one and the dromedary two—it *is* confusing.

CATS.

Are treacherous. Call them "the tiger in the house." Cut off their tails to prevent vertigo.

CRITIC.

Always "eminent." Supposed to know everything, read everything, see everything. When you dislike him, call him a Zoilus, a eunuch.

D

DARWIN.

The fellow who says we're sprung from monkeys.

DOUBT.

Worse than outright negation.

DREAMS (VAGUE).

Any great ideas one does not understand.

E

EARTH.

Refer to its four corners since it is round.

ENJOY.

Obscene word.

F

FACE.

The mirror of the soul. Hence some people's souls must be rather ugly.

F

FAT.

Fat people do not need to learn to swim. Are the despair of executioners owing to the difficulty they present; e.g. la Du Barry.

FEAR.

Gives wings.

FIRE.

Purifies everything. On hearing the cry of "Fire!" begin by losing your head. A spectacle worth seeing.

FLIES.

Puer abige muscas.

G

GENIUS.

No point admiring—it's a neurosis.

GOD.

Voltaire himself admitted it: "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him."

H

HABIT.

Second nature. School habits are bad habits. Given the right habits one could play the violin like Paganini.

HARD.

Always add "as iron." There is also "hard as rock," but that is much less forceful.

I

INSTRUMENT.

If used to commit a crime, always "blunt" – unless it happens to be sharp...

J

JUSTICE.

Never worry about it.

L

LANGUAGES (MODERN).

Our country's ills are due to our ignorance of them.

LEARNED (THE).

Make fun of. All it takes to be learned is a good memory and hard work.

LEARNING.

Despise it as the sign of a narrow mind. Let on that you have a fair share. The common people do not need it to earn their daily bread.

LIGHT.

Always say: "*Fiat lux*" as you light a candle.

LITERATURE.

Idle pastime.

LUCKY.

Speaking of a lucky man: "He was born tagged." You will not know what you are talking about and neither will your listener.

M

MONKEY. "Offspring of a monk." Follower of St. Onan.

N

NATURE.

How beautiful is Nature! Repeat every time you are in the country.

NERVOUS.

Is said every time a disease baffles comprehension—it gives satisfaction to the listener.

NOVELS.

Corrupt the masses. Are less immoral in serial than in volume form. Only historical novels should be allowed, because they teach history. Some novels are written with the point of a scalpel. Others revolve on the point of a needle.

O

ORDER (LAW AND).

How many crimes are committed in thy name! (See LIBERTY).

P

PAIN, GRIEF.

Always has favourable by-products. When genuine, its expression is always subdued.

PARIS.

The great whore. Heaven for women, hell for horses.

PIG.

Its insides being 'identical with those of a man' should be used to teach anatomy.

PRACTICE.

Superior to theory.

R

RHYME.

Never in accord with Reason.

RIDING (HORSEBACK).

Excellent exercise for reducing. E.g. all cavalry officers are thin. Excellent exercise for gaining weight. E.g. all cavalry officers are pot-bellied. "When he gets on a horse he's a regular centaur."

S

SCIENCE.

"A little science takes your religion from you; a great deal brings you back to it."

SEA.

Bottomless. Symbol of infinity. Induces deep thoughts. At the shore one should always have a good glass. While contemplating the sea, always exclaim: "Water, water everywhere."

SLEEP.

Thickens the blood.

STARK.

Whatever is antique is stark, and whatever is stark is antique. Bear this firmly in mind when buying antiques.

T

TASTE.

"What is simple is always in good taste." Always say this to a woman who apologizes for the inadequacy of her dress.

THINK (TO).

Painful. Things that compel us to think are generally neglected.

TIME (OUR).

Thunder against. Lament the fact that it is not poetical. Call it a time of transition, of decadence.

W

WINTER.

Always "unusual." (See SUMMER.) Is more healthful than the other seasons.

WRITTEN.

"Well written": a hall-porter's encomium, applied to the newspaper serial he finds entertaining.

Y

YOUTH.

"What a wonderful thing it is!" Always quote the Italian lines, even if you don't know what they mean; "O Primavera! Gioventù dell'anno! O Gioventù! Primavera della vita!"

Translator's notes

1. Disease of the grape. In point of fact, when phylloxera nearly killed off the French vines in 1896, they were restored by grafting American plants.
2. Famous painting by Géricault (1819) based on a contemporary story of a shipwreck.
3. Well-known hero of novels and plays by Henri Monnier (1805-1877). Joseph Prudhomme is a kind of French Podsnap, full of philistine feeling and absurd sentiments.

Excerpts from Gustave Flaubert, *The Dictionary of Accepted Ideas*, translated by Jacques Barzan, New Directions, New York, 1968, p. 13-92.

Published on the occasion of
*For the blind man in the dark room
looking for the black cat that isn't
there*

Institute of Contemporary Arts
3 December 2009—
31 January 2010

Organised by Contemporary
Art Museum St. Louis and
curated by Anthony Huberman,
chief curator, CAM.

Editorial Director: Mark Sladen
Editor: Charlotte Bonham-Carter
Copy Editor: Brian Sholis
Designers: Sarah Boris assisted
by Frederic Tacer
Printer: Principal Colour
Publisher: ICA, London

Exhibition supported by Jeanne
and Rex Sinquefeld, The
Andy Warhol Foundation for
the Visual Arts, The Flemish
Ministry of Culture, Fundación/
Colección Jumex and Mondriaan
Foundation, Amsterdam.

ICA Previews supported by:
Chang Beer, Thailand's award-
winning beer.

Other venues on exhibition tour:
Contemporary Art Museum
St. Louis (11 September 2009—
3 January 2010); Museum of
Contemporary Art, Detroit
(5 February—4 April 2010);
de Appel arts centre, Amsterdam
(February—April 2010);
Culturgest, Lisbon (May—
August 2010).

The ICA would like to thank
all of the artists and their
representatives for their help in
the preparation of this project.
We would also like to thank the
other lenders: British Library and
Peter and Christina Galliaert. In
addition, we would like to thank
the following: Jennifer Burris,
Luis Croquer, Ann Demeester,

Laura Fried, Cornelia Grassi,
Helen Leworthy, Cole Root and
Miguel Sequeira Wandschneider.

The design of ROLAND has been
adapted from an editorial system
originally created by Will Stuart,
and its name is taken from the
artist and ICA founder Roland
Penrose.

All rights reserved. No part of this
publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system or
transmitted, in any form or by any
means mechanical, photocopying
or otherwise, without prior
permission in writing from the
publisher.

All images by exhibiting artists are
courtesy the artists, and as listed
hereafter. Sarah Crowner p. 5,
10, 40 and 41: nicelle beauchene
gallery, New York. Mariana
Castillo Deball p. 13: Adamski,
Berlin. Eric Duyckaerts p.16:
galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris
& Miami. Hans-Peter Feldmann
p. 15: Simon Lee Gallery, London.
Peter Fischli & David Weiss p.
8, 19 and 20: Matthew Marks
Gallery, New York and Galerie
Eva Presenhuber, Zurich. Rachel
Harrison p. 9: Greene Naftali
Gallery, New York. Benoît Maire
p. 37-38: Hollybush Gardens,
London. Benoît Maire and Falke
Pisano p. 7: Croy Nielsen, Berlin
and Hollybush Gardens, London.
Matt Mullican p. 6 and 42-45:
Ringier Collection, Switzerland
and MAI 36 GALERIE, Berlin.
Bruno Munari p. 2, 24, 49, 50 and
55: Corraini Edizioni. Nashashibi/
Skaer p. 14: doggerfisher,
Edinburgh, photograph by Matt
Barnes. Jimmy Raskin p. 11:
Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York.
Rosemarie Trockel p.9: Donald
Young Gallery, Chicago, licensed
by DACS 2009, London. Patrick
van Caeckenbergh p.1 and 17:

Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp.

All other images are courtesy the
artists and photographers and as
listed hereafter. Cheshire Cat
p. 27: Macmillan & Co., copyright
The British Library. Lucky
Dragons p. 21: photograph by
Steve Schroeder.

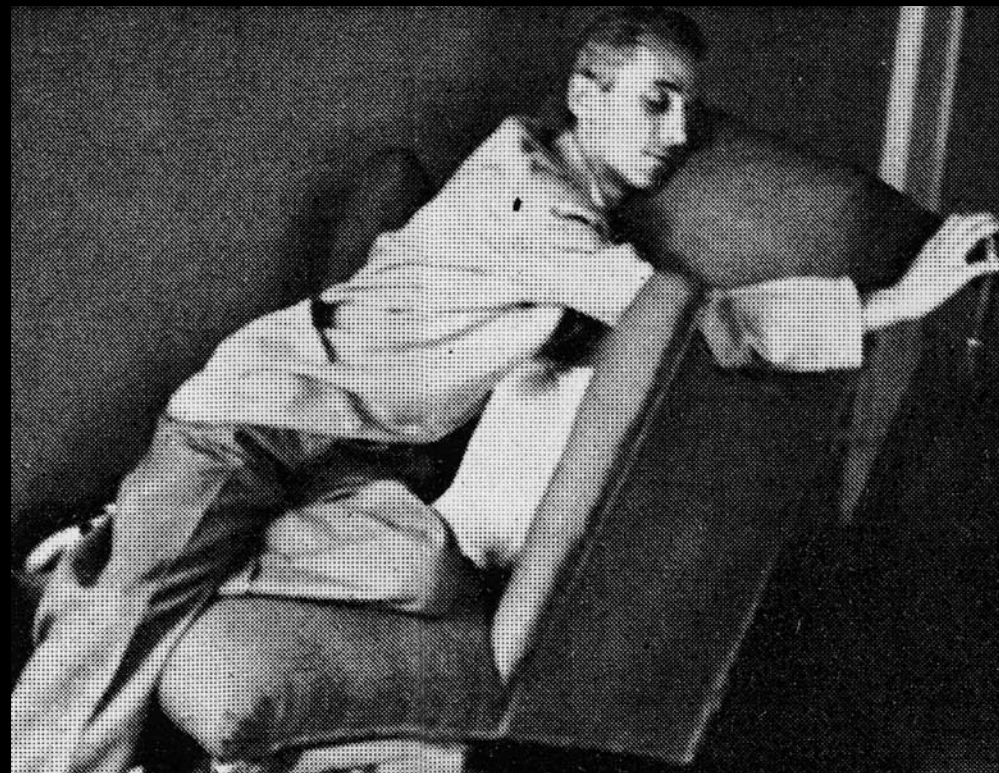
All texts copyright the authors.

Institute of Contemporary Arts
The Mall
London SW1Y 5AH
United Kingdom
+44 20 7930 3647
www.ica.org.uk

Artistic Director: Ekow Eshun
Director of Exhibitions:
Mark Sladen
Director of Learning:
Emma-Jayne Taylor
Head of Press: Natasha Plowright
Gallery Manager: Trevor Hall
Assistant Curators: Richard
Birkett, Charlotte Bonham-Carter
Curatorial Organiser:
Capucine Perrot
Press Officer: Jennifer Byrne
Gallery Assistant: Kenji Takahashi
Editions Manager: Vicky Steer
Interns: Jennifer Burris & Helen
Leworthy

ICA Patrons: Charles Asprey,
Ayling & Conroy, Nasser Azam,
Kathy Burnham, Dimitris
Daskalopoulos, Fred Dorfman,
Denise Esfandi, Jules and
Barbara Farber, Gerry Fox, Sam
Hainsworth, David Kotler, Patrick
Long, Michelle McKeown, Martha
Mehta, Monica O'Neill, Maureen
Paley, Yana Peel, Eddy Pirard,
Nicola Plant, Stina Richardson,
John Scott, Amir Shariat, Manuela
Wirth, Anita Zabłudowicz

Cover: Patrick van Caeckenbergh, *Chapeau!*, 1989
p. 2, 24 and 55: Bruno Munari, *Looking for
comfort in an uncomfortable chair*, 1968
Back Cover: from Joseph Jacotot, *Mélanges
posthumes de philosophie panécstique*, 1841.



“ Seek the truth and you will not find it, knock at its door and it will not open to you, but that search will serve you in learning to do. . . . Stop drinking at that fountain, but don't for all that, stop trying to drink. . . . Come and we will make our poetry”

Joseph Jacotot