



PEOCORE

THE ISSUE OF

NARCISSISM

NARCISSISM

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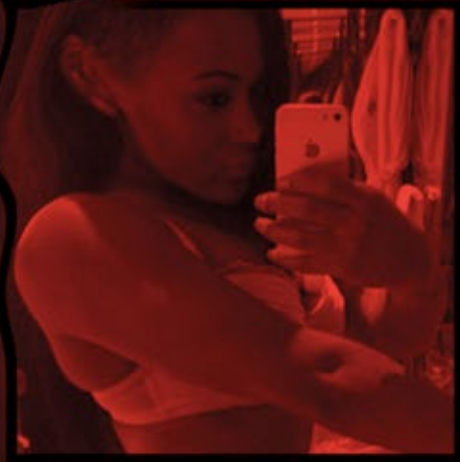
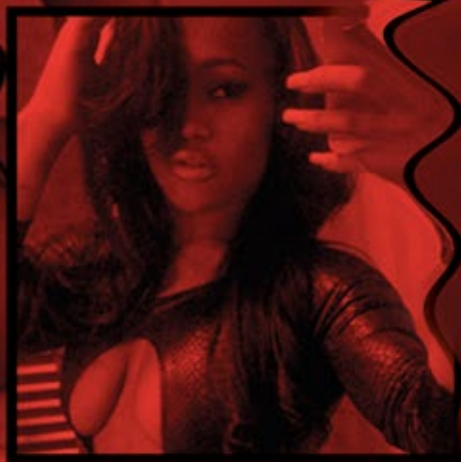
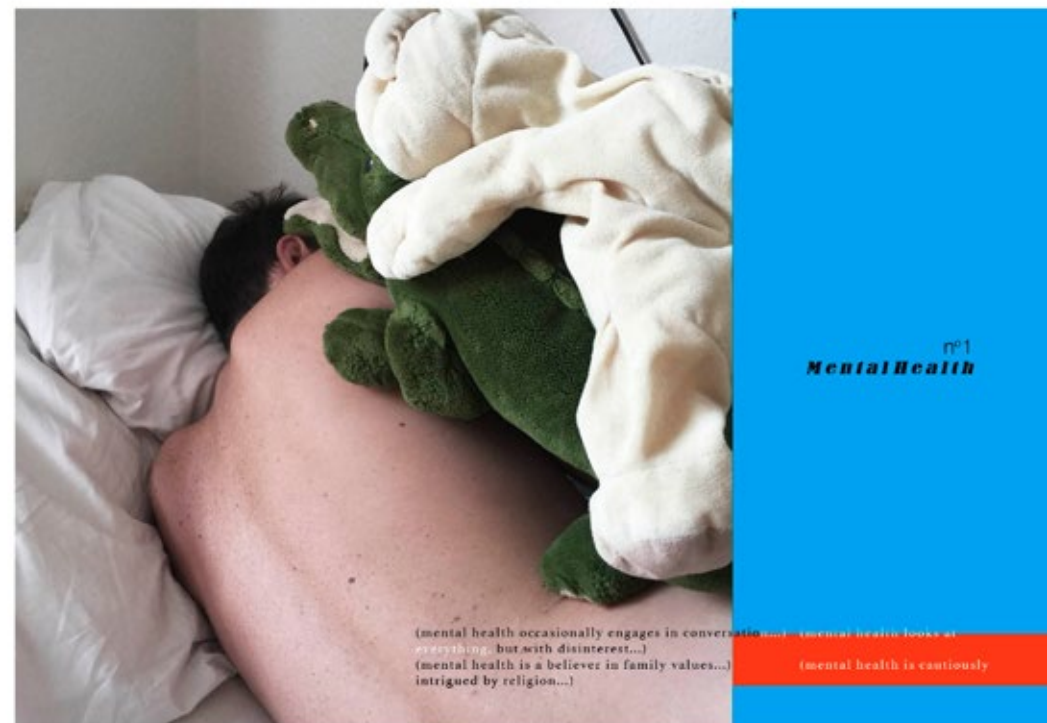


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(mental health occasionally engages in conversation...)
 (mental health looks at everything, but with disinterest...)
 (mental health is a believer in family values...)
 (mental health is cautiously intrigued by religion...)

(mental health still bears a scar ...)
 from a house of bondage
 has dealt with this before)
 (Mental Health ...)
 you
 Mental Health has fathered you and has
 COMING SOON

mental health is coming
 (MENTAL HEALTH
 is
 everything to
 itself no mother
 Mental Health / Geneva)



NARCISSUS IS PRETTY.
NARCISSUS IS NASTY.
NARCISSUS
DOESN'T LOVE YOU.

ECOCORE exploits Narcissus as the symbol of the modern subject. Our imagination of the subject is made intricate by new perspectives on identity, the virtual, transcendence and how our aesthetic embodiment relates to capitalism. What are we as subjects and why is this question so often explored as a discourse of the body? ? What is our 'nature', and how do we get to it? How do we commune with the external as if it weren't hostile? How do we cultivate an environment we want to participate in? Our psychic/social ecology meets with the environmental in haemorrhage of inner to outer.

Narcissism is pathologised as a personality disorder/a phenomenon/a force that affects our precarious relation to the other. Our tech-driven, screen-gazing society enables a solipsistic narcissism, to the extent that we can identify it as typical of our cultural mood, our pixelated age. Narcissism is easily read as a destructive impulse towards extinguishing otherness, but is also identified as a traumatised and debilitated loving in which the only happy love can be the contained self-love by which all libidinal investment belongs to the ego.

Your mouth is the only part of yourself that you can kiss in the mirror.

It's a catastrophic failure of object relations. It's an organised defence and appeal for unconditional love, and a desire to preserve the capacity for love. The instinct is to hold close the love object. Unwilling to be undone by the other, narcissists prefer to stay safely auto-attuned.

Know yourself.

From the aesthetic to the anaesthetic; Narcissus, and his love of self/ie, animates elaborate constructions of identity that have both real dynamic social value, and the potential to numb the organism and dull the senses. This sets up an issue of recognition, why study a reflection if not to investigate the self as foreign. In our daily skim of digital images we subscribe to the idea that aesthetics are self-constitutive, but this is a crisis of perception. Like Narcissus seduced by his beauty, exploring his reflection as a virtual rendition of himself and dying of love by the spring. We might recognise in his self infatuation the fullness of the virtual self acting as a reminder of what he fails to be.

A healthy self love that is the secret to all existence.

Instead of a body Narcissus leaves behind a stew of daffodils. Undoing his intense visibility he gestures to nature to restore his possibility for growth and bloom. The misunderstanding is in seeing the self as the origin of the reflection,

seeing the self as source, a displacement of the water source. The water mirror allows for us a fluidity of identity, a thirst for discovery, and returns beauty and its metaphors to the ecological. The virtual loop of narcissism holds hostage a capacity to be (re)generative, an inability to grasp the otherness of the world and its potential exuberance. Self-obsession as defence mechanism inhibits our generosity with the other, and our care for the planet. ECOCORE asks for beauty as a philosophy, not an imperative. That we cultivate a particular form of being in the world, as the world, of the world relinquishing the emphasis on misplaced concreteness of category (self and other, nature and culture). Our selves as bodies are just a kind of relating, let's think more expansively of ecology as part of our embodiment and show nature (as us) some love.

Let us not take this planet for granted.



zanotta



注意性能已根據一個獨特的銷售地位 (USP) 即電梯問題的原則訂立。它可能是由一個實際的 USP 略有不同。請把九 C 為準則：簡潔、清晰的、令人信服的、可信的、概念性的、具體的、定制的、一致的、對錯。
 Note Performance has been drawn from the principles of an Unique Sales Pitch (USP) i.e. Elevator Pitch. It might be slightly different from an actual USP. Please take the nine C's as criterion: Concise, Clear, Compelling, Credible, Conceptual, Concrete, Customized, Consistent, Conversational.

by Anna Uddenberg in collaboration with Vela Arbutina for Manifesta 11 - What People do for (no) Money

USP: wlan__
 Ceiling
 Car wall
 Handrail
 Floor
 Mirror stainless steel frame, top plate LED light
 Mirror stainless steel frame
 Stainless steel round tube
 Standard PVC (Optional marble)

視覺體驗的G優雅的風格
 Elegant Style of Visual Experience





TCF / HQ TEA
TCFTEA.COM

beach 61

berlin / summer 2016







clothes
for
humans

UNITED COLORS
OF BENETTON.

KIDS

Patrizio Di Massimo &
Benedetta Bruziches

Six is for Saturn (Black), 2016



Hand painted ceramic, galvanized brass frame,
16 x 14 x 2,5 cm approx. Courtesy of the artist and T293
Gallery, Rome. Photo Credit: Gaetano Alfano

Phillip Zach

VSTT
(Virtual Shit Transplantation Therapy)

Wandering though this endless nothingness, watching derivatives of your imagined self on screens like magic mirrors – a screened existence. Scrolled-up time out of mind. You're sliced up in time: your head is already somewhere in the future while your hindquarters are still busy excreting the current moment, leaving digital bread-crumbs behind (virtual shit). When I was not mad, I would turn poetic instead. Am I not myself, at this instant, in the process of filling this void, of fabricating a significant nothingness? The whole problem is at the limits of nothingness – how to materialize nothingness? (An artist speaking.) The smallest possible size for anything in the universe is the Planck Length, which is 1.6×10^{-35} m across. Pretty hard to imagine... This is equivalent to around a millionth of a billionth of a billionth of a billionth of a cm across (thirty four zeroes and a one after a decimal point). This is the scale at which quantum foam is believed to exist: the laws of quantum physics cause minute wormholes to open and close constantly, giving space a rapidly-changing, foam-like structure. So chop off your limbs, pull out your spine and dive in – head first.

There is a Buddhist saying: you will move on but you will never arrive. It might be translated wrongly, but it's a suitable description of the visual rollercoaster you're on.

Swallowed up by that space of hyper-linked imagery nothing is stable, that is, of course nothing ever was stable, but change seems to be on amphetamines these days. No wait, that was the early 2000s. Now it's more like GT kombucha on mentos, an ever-expanding outpour of content

production, with various possible meanings and connections, ready to be watched disintegrating each other, a mutual exhibitionism dissolving into each others contradictions. Paradox: it has gotten very easy to get stuck in a wormhole connecting contradictory positions, bridging the unthinkable gaps, which seemingly get larger as we speak. But that's okay, that's what defines our current moment. It's the psychodrama of personal expression. Remember: you don't have a spine, you don't need one, no need for limbs either, just a mouth hole, guts and an outlet... so keep on slithering, mouth open. I said: move o-hon, like I will move on writing this text, winding down in a curve. Also: organically. Like GT Kombucha, which is short for George Thomas, who was 16 when he suggested to his parents to go into the kombucha business, technically cashing in on SCOBY poop. Smells like "something from nothing". But even more so, think about the life of this "symbiotic colony of bacteria and yeast" in its bottle. A Truman Show small world, a complex inter-connected network, busy eating sugary tea and excreting "cultural artifacts", an inevitable-happens-to-be-edible output. Ready for consumption: The Last Supper. Apparently Leonardo Da Vinci wrote his diary backwards, so the pages had to be held up to a mirror. Most artists are bad writers. I haven't been typing anything for at least 2 hours. The time we live in.

"See You"
(September 7, 2016, Cupertino, CA)



In the age of Elon Musk, environmentalism is dominated by what might be called futurist ideology. It became clear upon SpaceX and Musk's proposal to colonize Mars that the tech entrepreneur's aim is Salvation of a biblical order. The entirely uncritical reception of this aim has shown that people, like Musk, take humanity to be something that need persist eternally; this is the postulate of the futurist environmentalist.

I understand this pervasive strain of environmentalism to rest upon a presupposition that is not only theoretically tenuous, but also politically dangerous. I also understand futurist environmentalism to be a largely capitalist phenomenon (i.e. one proliferating by dint of a predominate mode of political expression under capitalism — “commodity activism” and “lifestyle politics”— and one that advocates the unabated operations of a free market system as much as, in confusion with, and/or in addition to ‘humanity’). First, I will detail my primary assertions, which might serve to complicate our stake in the eternal future of our species and demonstrate futurist environmentalism to be a theoretically tenuous proposition. Then I will touch briefly on the ethical/political imperatives of eschewing the tech entrepreneur's seductive promise of posterity.

relations. A comparison made between a future, to which I will bear an affective relation does not ‘stand on all fours’ with a future to which I will not bear an affective relation.

Undetectable Apocalypse — a thought experiment

A thought experiment we might call the “undetectable apocalypse” helps to both illustrate this point and suss out its implications re: futurist environmentalism:

I
OUR RELATION TO THE FUTURE

I bear an *affective* relation to the future to the extent that I am able to imagine it.

If I foresee getting robbed, paid, propositioned, etc. then I am bound to feel something (pain, pleasure, anxiety, an ineffable human emotion, etc.) in anticipation of that event and the effects that event might have on me. When I am considering the future and its effects on me, I am able to weigh one course of potential events with alternative courses of potential events in order to discern how to attempt to engineer the best of all imaginable ‘end-states’.

Commensurable vs Incommensurable Comparison

The point to focus on here is that every end-state I'm imagining is a *qualitative* state. Because I bear the same type of relation (i.e. an affective relation) to all of these imagined futures, the comparison between them is commensurable. *Getting robbed will make me feel impotent and challenge a deeply-ingrained sense of masculinity. Avoiding getting robbed will make me feel “streetwise” and socially adept and help to reinforce a sense of myself as largely in control of my own destiny. The latter sounds like a more appealing feeling. I choose to pursue the latter end-state.*

There cannot, however, be a commensurable comparison between conscious experience and unconscious (non-)experience, in so far as non-consciousness implies an absence of experience, and experience is the ground from which a qualitative vantage point emerges. In short, when “I” am not conscious, “I” do not bear any affective

Suspending all disbelief, imagine yourselves in the world as it exists today (i.e. there is an extant material world, in which life exists, in which consciousness resides). Now imagine that within a split second, by the snap of a divine finger, everything vanishes permanently. Everything exists in one moment, nothing exists in the next. No one saw it coming. No one living or material thing felt any degree of pain in their passage to Nothingness. No one and nothing remains to mourn The End.

The question to ask here is, would this end-state be bad? Is “this” something that we can even call *bad*?

I think that the impulse is to say yes. The impulse is to say that this is a sad thought. But we have to consider the (non-) constitution of “this” in the above equation. When we feel sad about “this”, the “this” that makes us feel sad must involve us envisioning ourselves as bearing witness to the absence of experience. It involves us imagining ourselves embodying the unembodiable, and so imagining the unimaginable. When I then go to compare an imagined end-state in which “I” do not exist and an alternative imagined end-state in which I still exist, I am left with an unworkable situation—an internal contradiction in the logic of exchange.

This thought experiment demonstrates the *unknowability* of the postulates of futurist environmentalism: Namely, (1) there is a transcendent purpose of humanity (i.e. a purpose for humanity outside of humanity itself) and (2) the transcendent purpose of humanity is eternal existence, or eternal existence is necessary in the realization of the transcendent purpose for humanity.

The undetectable apocalypse reveals futurist environmentalism to be a hubristic, purely speculative conjecture. But if all we've demonstrated is that there is no way to be certain of the essential value of Elon Musk's martian colonialism, then what is the point of complicating his futurist environmentalist vision of "salvation"?

In hope of delineating an alternative to Musk's cult of vitality, I would first suggest that his fidelity to an eternal humanity is at odds with what I take to be a much more compelling ethical stance which might be called compassionate nihilism. This alternative ethical stance derives from the following speculation:

I did not ask to be born, yet one day I find myself alive.

Rather than some transcendent purpose to guide us in our pursuit of a better world, I think that ethics derives from a collective sense that we should try to make life less insufferable for those who already find themselves living, because no one chose to experience consciousness with all its attendant desires, pains and preoccupations. Though this has complicated and often convoluted implications in its generality, its primary and most pertinent implication is that the life and suffering of those who are already living takes precedence over the speculative lives of an imagined future people. The suffering of the people already living, importantly, takes precedence over Musk's megalomaniacal fantasy of an eternal destiny.

Seeing Through the Artifices of the Billionaire Class

Environmental peril is not a distant prophesy. The Environmental Justice Foundation projects that there will be 150 million climate refugees by 2050, (compare this statistic to Musk's billion dollar ambition of putting one million people on Mars by the same year). Having observed the tectonic instability resulting from a much smaller number of refugees attempting residence

in Europe in recent years, it should be clear that Musk's "humanitarian" efforts derive from a deluded imagination of the global political condition, in which interplanetary colonization is a reasonably equitable and important cause.

When he invokes the "unequivocal" value of humanity's eternal existence — the false idol of futurist environmentalism — he is able to discursively sidestep a host of important questions, like: What type of base triage determines who gets saved for extraterrestrial procreation when there's (by a generous estimate) only room for .001 percent of the world's population in Musk's interplanetary exit strategy? Why is the maintenance of the .001 percent's bloodline a better use of money than efforts to facilitate stable terrestrial exit strategies for the populations of at-risk, poor, low-lying nations needing to flee to higher geographies? Why is the maintaining the bloodlines of the .001 percent more important than developing infrastructures in high-lying nations to preemptively stabilize the process of expatriate absorption for hundreds of millions of climate refugees?

The end-goal of the terrestrial exit-strategy and reception infrastructure wouldn't be to make humanity last forever; it would be to attend to and ease the inevitable physical and mental traumas in the lives of climate refugees. It would be to compassionately acknowledge the inevitability of ecological cataclysm and vow to make it as painless as possible.



xo

DeSe Escobar

photographs by Seth Fluker

åyr



Alessandro is in Canary Wharf.

The members of art collective åyr were photographed in London on February 29th 2016 while working on their projects for the British Pavilion at Venice Architecture Biennale and the Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art.

åyr will open their first solo exhibition in the US at Queer Thoughts Gallery on January 18th 2017.



Fabrizio is at the Architectural Association in Bedford Square.



Luis is at a design studio on Ridgley Road in Dalston.



Octave is in a caf near 6yr's old studio in Penarth Street.

serpas brandon castro



i had an epiphany ayer
that i didn't finish the word in 3
parts
you would show my reflection
to the wind
three years later, i'm still constipated

mom was there from the onset,
abuelita, a farther word.
word is, mi tio, vis tio
was more money than person
there in the absolute:
pennies in an exact change, type a
neighboring landowner with
an eye for
wilted hand, disenfranchised
shoulder.

femme tio displaced from youth:
the western epic
deaf to the 43. sucked into a whole,
a whole person, I mean, vacationer
in tijuana from flo ri da.
brown people who
like skid marks
speak to loosened tracts
make easy pickings, morality intact
replay this track
niñas sin sangre

not writing as in
mirror of a mirror of a
myself in public, I see myself clearly
men scanning the contours of this
3D-
print punan
excising the sharper corners
so they can imagine themselves
as envelopes enclosing a frame
and its discontents: do you need
money hun

ten unpeeped dms,
one million clenched fists lost in
translation over your cock
they've only looked at my hands
long enough to photoshop them
under heads
of state, your head as state of
western man's fragility
invested their inheritance in the
unabashed pimp fund
like potholes before infrastructure,
douching as betrayal, a discount sub
tricks before healthcare housing
employment
you cause a disturbance in the pants
of the citizenry, please
exit the waiting room or be escorted
out of it

mismatched and unnamed lay
my second hand pantyline
documented by the fan fiction
of hidden bouts of sex work
plumping my lineage
the truth is my family
feels indebted to ronald reagan's
80s era amnesty package
undocumented immigrants clipping
coupons paying taxes
same amnesty under which
the tenants of the drug war
lay sieged,
swallowing other parts
de nuestra familia whole
like instagram models who round
up battalions

to wage war on their brain stems
with iPhone screens, in corners of
clubs deliverance amongst the blood
of loved ones i'll never subtweet
estos gringos aman nuestra coca
marijuana y maricones

to the western men who
process the world as disneyland
buffet
landed human head hunters
or: our cocks vs deposed travestis
legislators of discontent put poster
child drug addled
fems who need a second chance
at participating in the economy in
orbit on your blue balls
could you do all the sexual parts
before the actual beheading?

i stare men down in the street
or say i do when i stare
back and forth over my
bench, you see something untrace-
able, footsteps in the
sand not too blown away
feeling like a clown jesus
i'm really here for your entertainment
and salvation
why else would i
drop my book, fear
death, or clutch at makeup
bag for dear life
do you need help with your transla-
tion project,
as your ts tutor you pushed me out
of my teaching job to make clear
your genus

it seems like your cancun vacay pics
didn't show that 50% of your trip was
spent shit talking gender noncon-
forming fems to your global little

brother
while finding a newly waxed ass to
eat on the beach.
are you voting for hillary
clinton? i hear she's expanding
your tour package tenfold.
skydive into my pussy, i
really need the money, can't find
other work
weird
santa maria madre de dios
reuga por nos otros los
pecadores

intentalo tu you try it
look straight on in the mirror
the way it turns me
straight on
turn 3/4 slightly, live there
two years, fill out a tax form,
beware the office building
a dick in a skirt is never business
casual
at an angle with i'm ok with myself
at one angle
the boys who drew a knife on my
wilt,
too suitable for altar boy in the
utmost
i wasn't trying to move in papi
just look at me
the stretch in my face
raw from your eyes
digestibility decided
too caloric to be mother





you've made yourself the safest
option
by brutalizing the world,
a tourist in the sense of: being
everywhere
and nowhere

my tears fogging the screen or my
pillow, i can't hear my family
over the squeegee
when you cast your ejaculate to the
wind it
lands somewhere and
messes up lives

if you're a western dude know that
every time you've procured sex in
your
third world best from
willing participants you were
tasting the fruits of your terror-based
citizenship
hexed from the onset
to age like banana peels, it
marks the absence of your labor
marked down further
the faces of servile 'lovers'
never looking but to your
face to know when to
take your whole wallet
buenas noches

i hope you die trying to communicate
through your imperial infertility
that the only time you saw humanity
was on
the rostro of discarded ladyboy
number three
you fought, loved and imported me
onto your frame
lily white and ghostly
you're all the scared boys who ghost-
ed me

tattoos over your voids,
scratches from scaling Polynesia,
only bandaids
are empty enough to swallow you
whole

here at the beginning of time i am
very sorry
for my estradiol adolescence
my pre pubescent tit mass
can't help but acknowledge
that men loving my body might
love the body of a composite teen
resurrected for their viewing
pleasure
with little financial security, security
in their minds
me always giving head to make
boys stay

my myers brigs personality is
delusionaltrannyfp
my bruja can't be bought at the
botanica, Mexicans hunting
afro latinos as transparent as
Univision castings
is it really so transparent, the
boner beneath your respectability
politic
two piece suit
i saw the mayor of a midwestern city
rife in discriminatory housing policy
casting black brown and gnc folks
out of house and home
getting pegged with a smile on his
face wide enough to knock out your
teeth too

human subsidies

my two piece suit doesn't
fit right at the shoulders, too tight
ripe in frequent flier miles
can you fly higher than me
tricking in my columbia dorm,
opening my melrose place trunk
show now
with your archive split in half, out
come your thailand vacay negatives
central america africa southeast asia
best spots to eat unprotected girl
bussy, easy to group together with
a map of
top 10 western coups of all time

you had lots of fun
not much of the place left
called every other girl hun
you'll never see her again but you
know
the melanin takes ahold of her and
she disappears
until she's framed by the window of
your greenpoint studio
running a finger along her neck
you're missing a spine
i hope you see my face
choking on that quail bone
at the brunch you sold a soul at
sunday
and cheered with bottomless
mimosas

the future is only as bright
as what you can wipe away with
my rectal blood and your white tears
I hope it works well

i admit
i've been writing to white men
this whole piece, every one i've dated

original sin being translatable as
global core points
pitfalls of the fetish
empty boxes on their fetlife accounts
i lose

never been looser than first impact
bust open my encondomienda
tailored home life
wrapped in a blanket from my white
bae
safety in not being seen
picked and stripped on a border
town night
conversation with the immortal
you could make a great suit of my
big body
I'm all edges and puffed shoulder`
white cis women distressing their
hair to look hurt

dear diary
you're so pretty
pretty and new
only a flower
can amount to anything
preoccupation
interlocutor
what do the morons mean
cum
i'll see myself in you as
i pass this world





FW



FW





A garden, a hill, a scar, a field.

Plants that belong or not; wild, endangered, common, unruly, native, invasive.

The idea of weeds is really about displacement, about not belonging. Plants that are simply where we don't want them to be.

Over a period of three years in the pristine fields of grass of the sculpture park at Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, I have developed a kind of scar in the landscape by blending plant mythologies and the facts and fictions of conservationists with my own eco-polemics and anxieties.

I have planted seeds and seedlings collected in the wild. Some are considered native and typical of the endangered chalk hills surrounding the Oslo Fjord; others are common plants considered invasive weeds; still others I have randomly let self-seed and grow down this slope facing the sea, without judging if they have the right to stay or leave this patch of land I hesitate to call a garden. What is biodiversity if one judges what and where something ought to exist?

The modern division of 'native' and 'alien' species first appeared in writings of the mid-19th century. The term alien was used to determine species 'introduced by human agency' rather than to create a hierarchy between plants, or to decide whether certain plants did or did not 'have the right' to grow somewhere. The term was intended to determine which plants would thrive in certain conditions, and thus be a useful guide for plant care. As the vernacular has become more and more hostile towards alien species, the language of plants has become a racist language of brown snails and black-listed plants. It is by no means an accident that eugenics or 'race biology'

emerged from Linnaeus' system of plant classification. Plants species have, like humans, always been migrating, either by themselves, or by our help. How can we say what is and is not natural?

By avoiding most common means of gardening, the area is slowly developing into a new mixed ecology. Field Work I is an area that was simply left to grow without being maintained. The main intervention within this (cultured) landscape was made for Field Work II. Here, a large area of grass and soil was dug out and replaced with an alkaline soil – chalky, sandy and nutrient poor – of the type that was most likely there long before the land was farmed and developed into what it is today. While Field Work I will be mowed over at the end of the exhibition and no trace will remain, Field Work II will be left to gradually evolve. A hundred years from now it will be very different; its time is that of the earth, a duration of transformation that challenges the imagination.

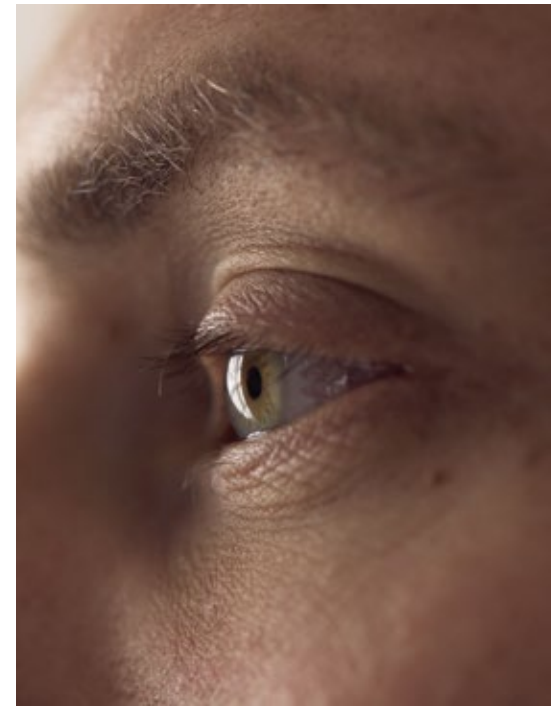
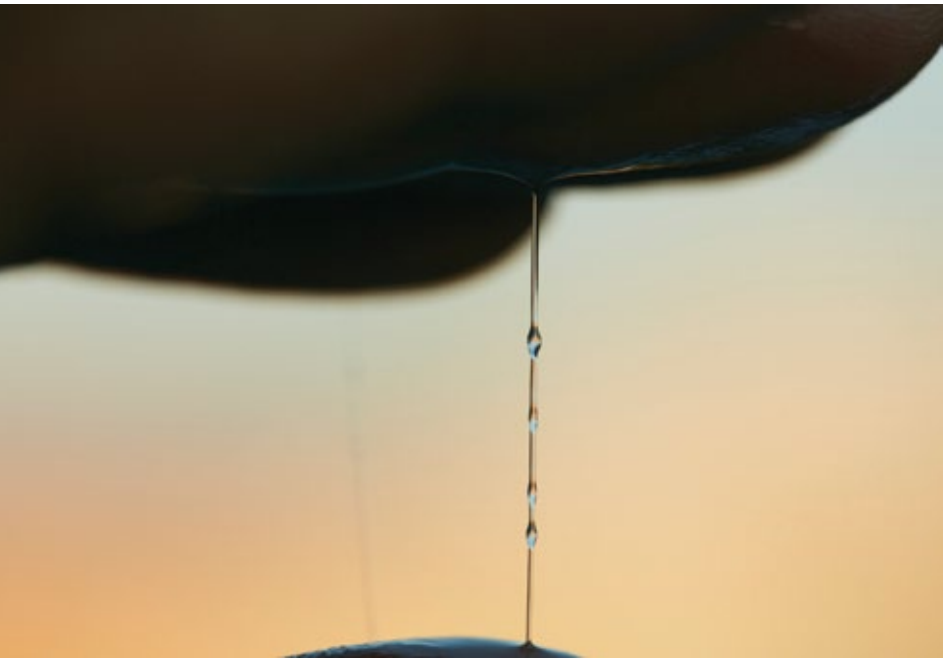
Inside the museum an installation of photographs echoes the field.

Pinnate leaves, stems, seeds, flowers withered and in full bloom, moss, lichen, rocks, minerals, human skin, fungi, mold, and bodily fluids. Various living and dead materials have been photographed in a seemingly arbitrary manner against a non-descript background. Perhaps a visual trace of interspecies breeding, perhaps documentation of human-plant mutations, perhaps a future becoming-world?











Rapier House, 40 Lambs Conduit Street, London WC1N 3LJ, +44 (0)20 7242 5422, 6a.co.uk

6a architects

When in 2010 the iPhone brought out the (world's 3rd) front-facing camera, digital narcissism took on an entirely new significance. If in the previous flip phone versions (e.g. Sony Ericsson Z1010[4] and Motorola A835), the resolution of the imagery and the relation body/display inhibited the now accomplished downright empathy between the user and his/her projected image, the full-format touch screen of the iPhone 4 allowed for the first veritable (digital) doubling of the self to manifest itself undisturbed of all the customary technical hindrances—the dial pad disappeared, the camera lens discretely within the black backdrop of the shiny glass screen. With the iPhone 4, the experiencing one's image could now be relatable to that of looking into a mirror, albeit with an obvious and yet significant shift. There where the mirror implies a physical relation between the subject and its reflection, the phone's camera elaborates an image entirely of its own. One which not only can travel independently of its object of reference (just like the shadow of Peter Pan), but which can even alter the reality from which it had been sourced. Whereas the former is a reflection, the latter is a projection—a difference which is ever so apparent with the contemporary smartphone given that, depending on the state of the display, it is able to do both. As obvious as this may sound, the distancing between being and image inherent to digital imagery is a direct result of the translation which takes place from physical phenomena to RGB image data—the same which would occur in portraiture through paint, for instance, with all the major differences that the process implies. It doesn't surprise

that in his treatise *De Pictura*, the humanist author Leon Battista Alberti would claim a painter to be the first to have experienced such distancing, long before the advent of the digital. What is interesting, is that to illustrate this concept, Alberti makes reference to the Greek myth of Narcissus whom, in falling in love with a reflection of himself and metamorphosing into a flower, was credited by the ancient poets to be “the inventor of painting”. After all, Alberti asks, what is painting but the act of “embracing by means of art” the surface of the pool?

Alberti's significance in realm of the digital is an argument much discussed by architectural theorist Mario Carpo in his 2010 paperback ‘*The Alphabet and The Algorithm*’. Herein, Carpo narrates the humanist's repeated endeavours into the possibility of ‘faithfully’ translating worldly phenomena via textual, graphic, sculptural or even architectural means and the numerous techniques invented the accomplishment of this pursuit. Working within and beyond the age of printing, the instrumentality of Alberti's machines ranged from the plotting of ‘digitised’ maps (*Description Urbis Rome*), to the scanning of human bodies via three-dimensional polar coordinates (*De Statua*), to the ‘rasterization’ of painted scenes by means of gridded (or why not, pixelated) frames, to the abstraction of entire buildings into orthogonal, measurable drawing sets. As Carpo suggests, at the heart of this endeavour lies a near obsessive longing to allow for perfect reproductions, or even copies of determined artifacts/scenes to be produced at ennui and without anything being lost amidst the process of translation and successive transmission.

Particularly with painting though, which Alberti deemed to be the ‘flower of all the arts’, this longing cannot be understood but in relation to a broader debate around the the ethics and implications of imitation and mimesis in Renaissance Italy. Significantly, it was medieval Neo

Platonists and Aristotelians which were opposed to one another and in both cases, the interpretation of myth of Narcissus (that ‘youth who knelt daily beside a lake to contemplate his own beauty’ to eventually drown in admiration of it) was somewhat central to their respective arguments. In essence, the Neoplatonists thought of Narcissus as someone “lost in a world of copies” and in “hopeless fascination with ... the material world of objects and appearances”. Narcissus was for these thinkers the “falling prey to the illusion that appearance (the umbra, the shadow) is reality” to the point that he would sacrifice his own ‘true’ life for that reflected in the water mirror. Likewise, mimesis in painting (as that which Albertian perspective sought to obtain), was condemned by the Neoplatonists not only for its incapability of reproducing objects ‘as they truly are’, but even further for misleading vision into believing that “a surface is a three-dimensional volume”. Likening the act of mimesis to Adam’s fall from grace, the Neoplatonists viewed this “simulative obsession” as corrupting man into manipulating his own image to match what he desired it to be—steps leading further and further away from the Platonic ideal. Aristotelians, on the other hand, conceived of mimesis not as an ethically problematic, ‘passive and imitative’ act but rather as an active and creative one. Mimesis, was seen by Aristotle to be intrinsically related to man’s inborn pleasure to learn through imitation, while also being the locus from which poetry originates. Concurrently, man’s delight in seeing pictures would stem from that same pleasure of learning (‘gathering the meaning of things’) which characterises childhood as much as from the pleasure derived from “execution or colouring or some similar cause”. As Aristotle himself admits, “if one has not seen the thing before, one’s pleasure will not be in the picture as an imitation” of the thing, but from the capacity of the picture to emplot (by means of art) it in meaningful, and sensuous terms.

Although one should be wary of aligning Alberti with any of the two parties entangled as he was between medieval piety and so-called humanism, he too saw the artists’

ability of adding beauty to their subjects as something that, far from indecorous, contributed “to the most honorable delights of the soul and to the dignified beauty of things”. As such, painting occupied for Alberti a position of privilege having all other arts subsumed to it, either in their subject matter or in their representational techniques. “The architect, if I am not mistaken, takes from the painter architraves, bases, capitals, columns, façades and other similar things” writes Alberti. “All the smiths, sculptors, shops and guilds are governed by the rules and art of the painter”. It is near impossible, he further argues, to find “any superior art which is not concerned with painting” given that whatever beauty is found in the world, it can be said to be born of that particular art form.

You can conceive of almost nothing so precious which is not made far richer and much more beautiful by association with painting. Ivory, gems and similar expensive things become more precious when worked by the hand of the painter. Gold worked by the art of painting outweighs an equal amount of unworked gold. If figures were made by the hand of Phidias or Praxiteles from lead itself--the lowest of metals--they would be valued more highly than silver. The painter, Zeuxis, began to give away his things because, as he said, they could not be bought. [6] He did not think it possible to come to a just price which would be satisfactory to the painter, for in painting animals he set himself up almost as a god.
– Leon Battista Alberti, De Pictura

The quasi-godly powers Alberti bestowed on painters was thus not only rooted in their ability to ‘make the absent become present’ or ‘the dead appear alive’ through their mimetic practice— and indeed here one should recall how the entire of the first book of De Pictura is dedicated to the mathematical construction of perspective according to the so-called *perspectiva naturalis*. Alberti further praises the ability of painters to ‘outweigh’ the actual value of the reality they depicted presenting it in an adorned or even idealised state. Hubert Damisch explains this sentiment in reference to Pliny’s Natural History which, he argues, was one of Alberti’s key sources in the

construction of the De Pictura. Yet where Pliny deprecated the ornamental and enhancing qualities of painting as symptoms of an art which had been “overshadowed by false luxuries and by decoration”, Alberti saw this transformative power as something praiseworthy and even non renounceable to the new figure of ‘liberal’ artist his book was catered to. Where Pliny argued that the aspiration of painting was to mirror nature such that ‘scarcely any difference’ could be detected between the two (the ‘original and the copy’, the being and the image), Alberti thought of this act of mirroring as a site for the creative potential of the artist to be unleashed. It doesn’t surprise that in his treatise, the humanist goes as far as to recommend artists to use mirrors proper so as to train the eye to “correct the appearances of things taken from nature” while alternately containing them within a geometrically defined frame.

This ambiguous relation between reflection and projection, simulation and aspiration, entrusted by Alberti to the act of mirroring is what ultimately leads the author to describe the metamorphosis of Narcissus as the foundational myth of ‘modern’ painting (and one could argue of the modern subject all together). Narcissus, in embracing the surface of the pool, not only is able to disjoin being and image through an illusion of optics—a process which, as digital subjects equipped with portable high res cameras, we ourselves practice on an almost a daily basis. Further, as Damisch explains, ‘having finally recognised the image for what it is, his own, far from freeing himself from its influence, he sets his desire free and awaits the final metamorphosis’. In fact, although we are accustomed to think of this last and fatal act of relinquishment (Narcissus’ transformation into a flower) as the somewhat tragic moment in which the subject fails to ‘reunite with himself in his own objectified image’, Alberti celebrates

Narcissus’ metamorphosis as a moment of inauguration.

Since Alberti’s interpretation of the myth, the mirror remained a persistent topos in painting through which artists of different times would themselves reflect upon the qualities of their subject matter as much as on the artifices implied within the act of painting itself. Here, one may think of Brunelleschi’s famous experiment in front of the baptistry of Florence’s cathedral (which predated by a few years Alberti’s De pictura) and its legitimization of perspective as a quasi-natural representation-form; of Claude’s glass, and its instrumentality in augmenting the painterly qualities of natural settings; or more significantly, of the emblematic role of the mirror in Velázquez’ Las Meninas which, in articulating the incessant triangulation between the painter, the painted subject and the spectator-gaze, places the whole concept of mimesis in an epistemological crisis. Having being painted at the dawn of modern science, and thus at a moment in time in which ‘nature emerged as cognizable and controllable via other kinds of cogencies’, Las Meninas sanctioned the end of representation conceived as ‘objective penetration into the reality of the external world’. If today’s digital technologies of self-representation, with their ever growing image resolution and mimetic accuracy, would seem to challenge this condition, the myth of Narcissus as formulated by Alberti allows us to question it once more. Indeed, though there liquid crystals on the surface of the pool, and though the privilege of Narcissus has been dispersed amongst the crowds, the narcotic nature of the floreal metamorphosis which ‘afflicts’ the modern, humanist, and one should say ‘western’ subject has all but been reversed. Flowers by the pond, and under constant threat of our own immanent extinction, catching light beneath the ozone has never been so vital.





12 rue cambon, paris

paco rabanne

Isa Genzken
Gabriele
Beveridge
Marco Pio
Mucci



Self-Portraits-ish



Isa Genzken, **Untitled**, 2016, photograph mounted on foam core, acrylic paint and plastic foil, 106 x 80 cm



Isa Genzken, **Untitled**, 2012, photographs, photographic prints, paper, wrapping paper, mirror foil, acrylic paint, stickers, tape, perspex and plastic foil, 202 x 140.5 x 9 cm



Isa Genzken, **Untitled**, 2016, photographs, card stock, spray paint, acrylic paint, metallic tape, paper tape, plastic tape and plastic foil, 135 x 75 cm

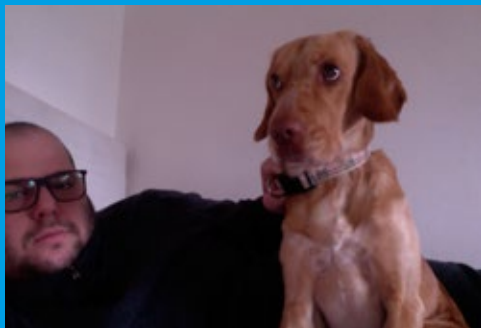


Isa Genzken, **Untitled**, 2016, photograph, paper, spray paint, acrylic paint, sticker and plastic foil, 29.5 x 21 cm



Gabriele Beveridge, **Untitled**, 2016. Found poster, hand-blown glass, artist frame. Courtesy of Chewday's, London

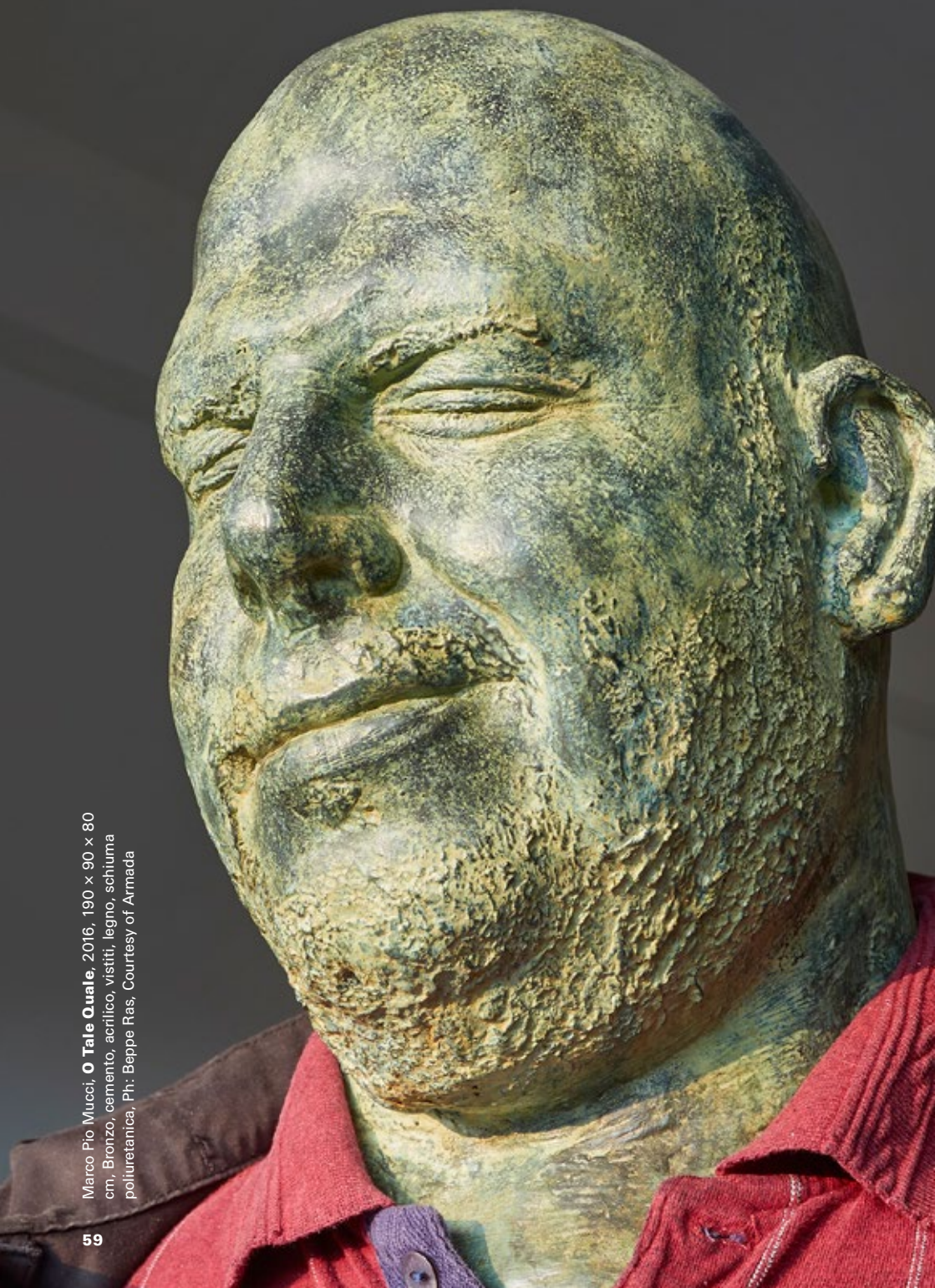


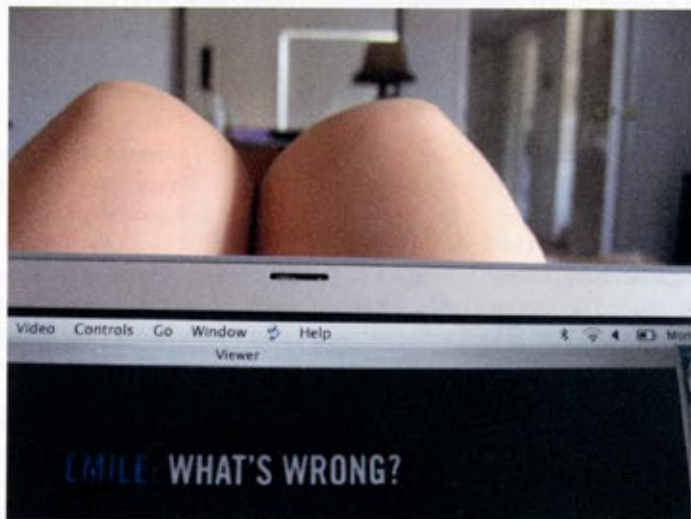


Buongiorno Ale, ti mando le foto definitive per la pubblicazione, ho scartato un'immagine della prima mail. Ho aggiunto anche dei self portrait che si sono generati su una macchina e uno scoter dopo l'impatto di un incidente stradale da cui sono uscito miracolosamente vivo

xM

Marco Pio Mucci, **O Tale Quale**, 2016, 190 x 90 x 80 cm, Bronzo, cemento, acrilico, visiti, legno, schiuma poliuretantica, Ph: Beppe Ras, Courtesy of Armada





Frances Stark, still from *Structures That Fit My Opening and Other Parts Considered to the Whole*, 2006

FRANCES STARK

Ecbo Park & South Pasadena, Los Angeles, California, USA

We see Frances Stark's Los Angeles home, as if accidentally, around the edges of her work. In a piece from 2006 titled *Structures That Fit My Opening*, which combines image and text and uses PowerPoint as its means of presentation, several photographs reveal details of the home's interior, which the text alludes to as its "private parts." There is an unmade bed; a dressing table strewn with books, creams, mail, and perfume bottles; a child's bedroom; muffin trays in the kitchen; piles of mail, bills, and more bills. Most provocative is an image of the artist's bedroom, seen from her own perspective, as she sits in bed with her laptop on her knees. In this fragmentary portrait of the artist in bed, her naked knees emerge like mountains behind the raised screen of the computer—her primary means of working when the bed is appropriated as work space.

The PowerPoint essay takes the rhetorical form of an apology that describes, in a self-deprecating tone, the conflicting roles and multiple demands that come with being a "woman, artist, teacher, mother, ex-wife." Within this context of shifting responsibilities, the home is seen as the fragmentary crucible of the creative process. When you can't make it to the studio, work from the kitchen table; when the kitchen table has disappeared under piles of mail and children's drawings, work from bed. As Stark draws the peripheral directly into the center of her work, the messily intertwined details of existence become its main theme—not just the thoughts, but the stuff that surrounds them. The "How? Where? When? Why?" as Georges Perec put it. It may be banal, but it is only as banal as life itself.

"I have complaints about my couch which bisects my living room diagonally," Stark wrote in a small book of five collected essays. Each of the essays is titled *The Architect & The Housewife*, as is the book itself. Her complaints, it turns out, are not about the couch itself: "The problem rather lies in the fact that directly behind the couch, meaning directly behind the head of anyone sitting on my couch, is my desk." Confusions arise due to the unrelated purposes that these pieces of furniture must satisfy—resting versus writing, leisure versus work, socializing versus solitude—all of which, Stark tells us, "is predicated on the fact that not only is my living room my living room but my living room also serves as my studio."¹

The conflict apparent in Stark's live/work situation was not unconnected to the fact that the work she was making at the time was similarly multivalent, comprising both writing and drawings that were themselves made up of writing. In the in-between spaces of

of the moment," as she puts it, is something she aims for herself.⁶ "In a world so drowning in imagery of the fake, I want to make a claim for the banal, for the immediate," she says. In the moments of the present captured by Vallotton or Vuillard, life is framed by the clutter of the domestic interior, as are human relations of an intimate nature.

The texts in *The Architect & The Housewife* (accompanied, incidentally, by Stark's hand-drawn reproductions of Vallotton's paintings *Private Conversation*, 1898, and *Woman Searching through a Cupboard*, 1900–01) sketch out a binary opposition that sees the man-as-architect "constantly carrying out plans—giving instructions, making constructions," whereas the woman-as-housewife (here, Stark herself) is "working alone in a domestic environment [...] serving as both hostess and docent of my tiny quarters."⁷ Stark relates her theme to the kind of work produced in the wake of CalArts's "post-studio" courses by "artist Jorge Pardo et al."⁸ This post-studio production presupposed an uncircumscribed art-making practice more along the lines of that of an architect in terms of scale and scope. By contrast, the small, portable scale of studio-made objects (or those made at home) demanded intimacy and physical proximity. The "architect"-type artist's project "has to do with elaborate extensions, disruptions, and transformations into and of material reality," she writes, whereas the opposite is true for the "housewife"-type artist, for whom the house is not "a site of accumulating production but a site of a series of simultaneous productions which bear no evidence of productivity—save for the fact that the home isn't falling apart."⁹

Feminist literary critic Naomi Schor, writing about 1900s Paris, described in similar terms the difference between the "feminine or feminist" and "masculine or masculinist" approaches to everyday life: "According to the one, the everyday is made up of the countless repetitive gestures and small practices that fall under the heading of what the existentialists called the contingent. According to the other, the everyday is made up of the chance encounters of the streets; its hero is not the housewife but the *flâneur*."¹⁰

The contingency Schor describes aligns closely with Stark's own working methods, which take place in the interior. This division of sites of production and, by the same token, architecture and domestic space into gendered realms brings up an awkward binary division than has long affected the analysis of both. In his essay "Untitled: The Housing of Gender," architectural theorist Mark Wigley investigates this division, winding back time five hundred years to discover the sociohistorical foundations that determine the relation of women to the interior of the family house in architectural terms. He looks at the writings of Leon Battista Alberti from the fifteenth century, in particular *Della famiglia*, a moral treatise on marriage, education, and household management, which describes explicitly the architectural strategies designed to ensure that "men have the freedom to travel" while "the woman [...] remains locked up at home."¹¹ For the sake of



Woman Searching through a Cupboard,
1900–01
Oil on canvas, 78 × 45.5 cm
Private Collection, Basel, Switzerland

Frances Stark, Drawings after Félix Vallotton, 1999

Could I – dare I – render or portray the details in which I'm ensnared,



These details that create projections,

Alter corners of rooms, purves, doorknobs, hand-drives?



Left and right: Frances Stark, stills from *Structures That Fit My Opening and Other Parts Considered to the Whole*, 2006

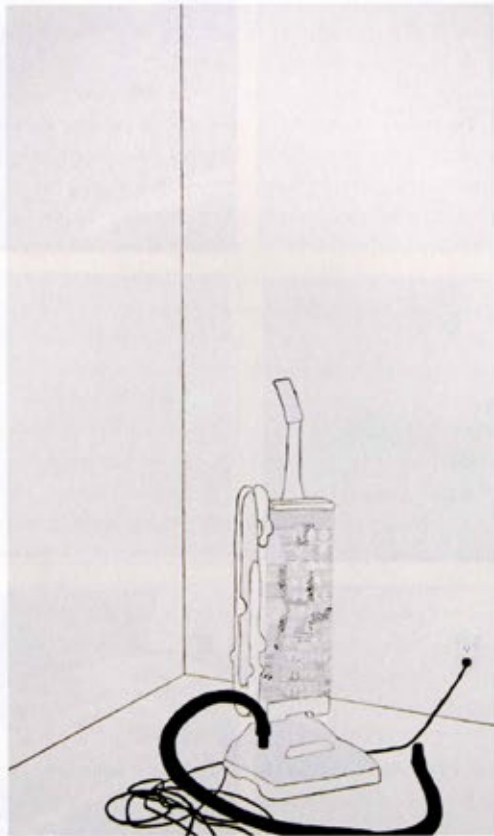
I've taken three pills for migraines



I don't want the headache to consume me because

I have the next two hours to myself before picking up my son.





Frances Stark, *Hoover in a Corner*, 2006

propriety, Alberti writes, the wife must stay indoors away from the “public eye,” while the man should avoid spending too much idle time inside among the interior’s “little feminine trifles certainly lacking a masculine and glorious spirit.”¹² While the wife may have a dressing room, the husband has a study, within which to withdraw from the outside world and the domestic realm: “[The husbands] should close themselves up at home,” recommends Alberti, “and keep away everything that is elegant, pleasurable, and admired, so as to confine themselves to knowledge and literature.”¹³

This advice to fifteenth-century men about the strategic inhabitation of their home’s interior seems to strangely prefigure Virginia Woolf’s advice to women writers, written in 1929, that “a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction” (a line Stark herself quotes in *The Architect & The Housewife*).¹⁴ Writing—or reading, for that matter—depends on a secluded interior within the interiority of the home. “When it comes to producing culture it might not only be a question of where she will do it,” writes Stark, “but also a question of where you will consume it.”¹⁵ For Stark, the question of space is entirely tied up in both production and reception. In the end, the opposition she proposes between the exteriority of the architect and the interiority of the housewife is more concerned with the effects that space may have on *work* than with space per se. Eventually, by the end of the book in fact, Stark had moved into a separate studio space in Los Angeles’s Chinatown, but the dilemma she describes turned out not to be exclusively prescribed by the home: “Having a studio did not make me feel less like a housewife, nor did it make me feel more like an architect.”¹⁶

The home studio (or studio home, as Stark shows us) is a site that entangles not only the hardware of the domestic and the creative (the couch versus the desk) but also the various overlapping roles, with all their accompanying practical chores that get in the way of just being an “artist.” Stark’s explicit description of these different aspects of her life lays bare the framework of biography behind her works’ production: the environment, time schedules, and other external elements as “woman, artist, teacher, mother, ex-wife.” For Stark, the home interior (or the studio, for that matter) is never a retreat or illusion, but rather an arena charged with the countless social forces that interact with daily life. It is not insignificant that in many later self-portraits of the “artist-at-work,” Stark pictures herself in her studio reclining on her sofa. Even here, the couch/desk dilemma and elusive nature of work remains.

In Stark’s view, the home is not only the place of domestic chores and working, however; it is also the place for bodies and sex, as the imagery in *Structures That Fit My Opening* and the text in *The Architect & The Housewife* imply. A home is usually



Frances Stark, still from *Structures That Fit My Opening and Other Parts Considered to the Whole*, 2006

designed for a family, which starts with a couple: “[Something that] is usually made up of two people who at some time in their compromising and complementary relationship have rolled around naked together.”¹⁷

In his text, Wigley describes the privatized sexuality of the architecture of the home constructed in Alberti’s time, in which all evidence of bodily activity was consciously hidden away in the house’s secret inner chambers. The result, writes Wigley, is “the production of sexuality as that-which-is-private.”¹⁸ Husband and wife each has his or her own bedroom, connected only by a private inner door, creating a “veiled” space for sexuality.¹⁹ Today the house’s inner chambers are no longer designed to imprison women as they once were, and husband and wife now share bedroom and bed more often than not. Nevertheless, an individual’s home remains to a great degree the site of a private sexuality. A recent work by Stark challenges this privacy, however, going further than the glimpses of naked knees revealed in *Structures That Fit My Opening* and doing away entirely with the home as the setting of sexuality and allowing it to roam free, mobile, and unconstrained by architecture. Titled *My Best Thing* (2011), it is a digital animation in eleven episodes that relates Stark’s online sexual encounters with virtual lovers. The protagonists, initially Stark and her Italian Internet lover Marcello, are pictured as crudely animated figures, naked except for strategically placed fig leaves, isolated on a green-screen void. Their relationship unfolds in this undefined space in dialogue form, through computerized voices and typed words.

The animation techniques Stark uses come from a website that provides ready-made adaptable characters, voices, and music to “instantly turn your words into a 3D animated movie” as the website promises.²⁰ Like her earlier adoption of PowerPoint as an artistic medium, her use of this tool shows Stark’s desire to work with what is most apparent, most available, and all around her—“to make a claim for the banal and the immediate,” as she says when we speak. She uses everyday means to portray the everyday—this time not a cluttered dressing table, couch, or desk, but that other omnipresent reality, the Internet portal and computer screen. The Internet has had a profound effect on the interior and the boundaries between inside and outside, private and public, whereby even “that-which-is-private” may now be shared with any number of (anonymous) viewers (or perhaps, rather, participants) anywhere in the world. Through online video chatting, Stark tells me, “other people’s geographical and geopolitical consequences can seep into your living room. You see the situation of these people, living in their parents’ house, their poverty.” I am not the only one peeking around the edges of the computer screen image for peripheral clues to everyday life.

In *My Best Thing*, the erotic weaves through other aspects of daily life: eating, reading, thinking, and working. Between sex talk and long pauses, the characters discuss work,

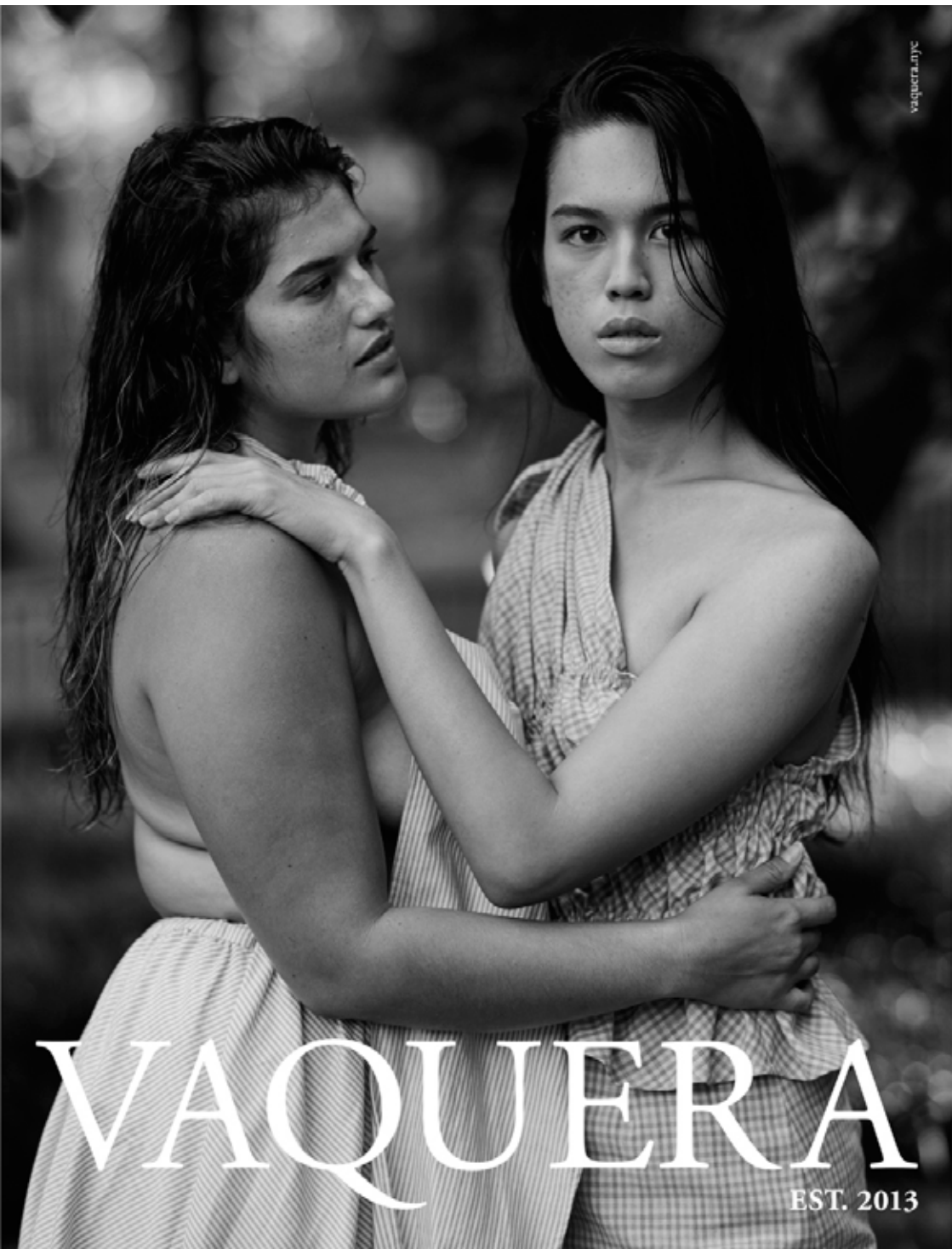
films, politics, and philosophy. "I think my intellect and my sexuality are completely inseparable," said Stark in an interview. "There's no separation for me between what is personal and what is art."²¹ We learn from the video that Stark is most often in her studio when she is involved in virtual coupling. Chatting online becomes a form of procrastination, avoiding the task at hand while as for art itself, it is "maybe the opposite of working in the sense that it's a form of resistance to productivity, as is masturbation, wasted seed," as Stark's character in *My Best Thing* says to her second nameless Italian Internet lover.

In Stark's centripetal worldview, cats, kids, friends, peers, favorite authors, favorite artists, filmmakers, or virtual lovers appear in words or images, but all remain anchored to the artist herself as the central core, swept up along with the mass of accumulated details as work is wrested from daily life. All is autobiography. The representations of the home or studio that we see around the edges act as an extended kind of self-portraiture; the self as mirrored in its context. The studio-like-home and the home-like-studio are the functional, consequential upholstery of the hard-to-reach, never singular, central "I."

1. Frances Stark, *The Architect & The Housewife* (London: Book Works, 1999), 7–8.
2. Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 270.
3. Perec, *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*, 24.
4. Stilinovic, "The Praise of Laziness," 29.
5. *Ibid.*, 4.
6. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes are from a conversation with the artist, Los Angeles, November 23, 2012.
7. Stark, *The Architect & The Housewife*, 10.
8. *Ibid.*, 28.
9. *Ibid.*, 12.
10. Naomi Schor, "Cartes Postales: Representing Paris 1900," *Critical Inquiry* 18, no. 2 (1992): 188.
11. Quoted in Mark Wigley, "Untitled: The Housing of Gender," in *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), 334.
12. *Ibid.*, 335.
13. *Ibid.*, 349.
14. Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (San Diego: Harcourt, Inc., 1989), 4.
15. Stark, *The Architect & The Housewife*, 13.
16. *Ibid.*, 24.
17. *Ibid.*, 15–16.
18. Wigley, "Untitled," 346.
19. *Ibid.*, 364.
20. Xtranormal, <http://www.xtranormal.com>.
21. "All of This or Nothing: Frances Stark," Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, November 2010, http://hammer.ucla.edu/watchlisten/watchlisten/show_id/502595.



Frances Stark, *Subtraction*, 2007



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EST. 2013

ethnic peace

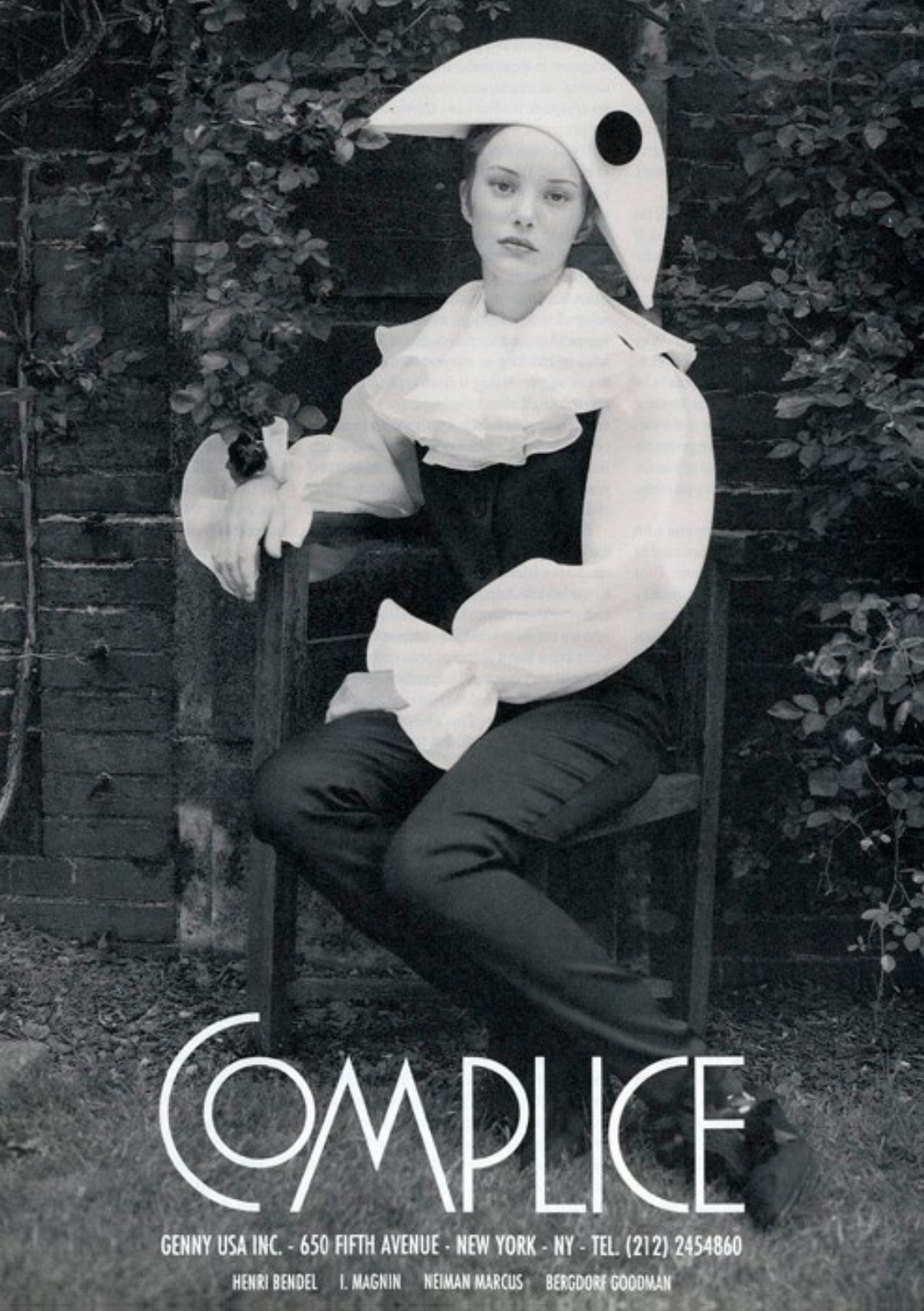
Song For A Revolutionary Love

animal faith

mock Mars

refuge biologist





Boris Groys

SELF-DESIGN, OR PRODUCTIVE NARCISSISM

The field of design has radically expanded. As a practice, design is no longer limited to the world of material objects, but rather extends from carefully crafted individual looks and online identities, to the surrounding galaxies of personal devices, new materials, interfaces, networks, systems, infrastructures, data, chemicals, organisms, and genetic codes. Our new publication, entitled Superhumanity, aims to probe the idea that we are and always have been continuously reshaped by the artifacts we shape, to which we ask: who designed the lives we live today? What are the forms of life we inhabit, and what new forms are currently being designed? Where are the sites, and what are the techniques, to design others?

During the next several months over fifty writers, scientists, artists, architects, designers, philosophers, historians, archeologists and anthropologists will bring new insight to these and related questions. Contributions will be published several times per week, both on the e-flux website and dispatched as emails. We are very pleased to begin today with a text by Boris Groys.

—Beatriz Colomina, Nikolaus Hirsch, Anton Vidokle, Mark Wigley and Nick Axel, e-flux Architecture at the 3rd Istanbul Design Biennial

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HENRI BENDEL | I. MAGNIN | NEIMAN MARCUS | BERGDORF GOODMAN

Our culture is commonly described as being narcissistic. And narcissism is understood as a total concentration on oneself, as a lack of interest in society. However, it is difficult to say that the mythological Narcissus is interested exclusively in himself. Obviously he is not interested in satisfying his desires, which he ascetically rejects. But neither is he interested in an “inner,” “subjective” vision accessible exclusively to his own contemplation, isolating him from others. Rather, he is enchanted by the reflection of his body in the lake presenting itself as an “objective,” profane image—produced by Nature and potentially accessible to everyone. It would be wrong to say that Narcissus is uninterested in others, in society. Rather, he completely identifies his own perspective with an “objective” social perspective. And so he assumes that others will be also fascinated by his own worldly image. As a member of Greek culture, he knows that he shares the aesthetic taste of other Greeks.

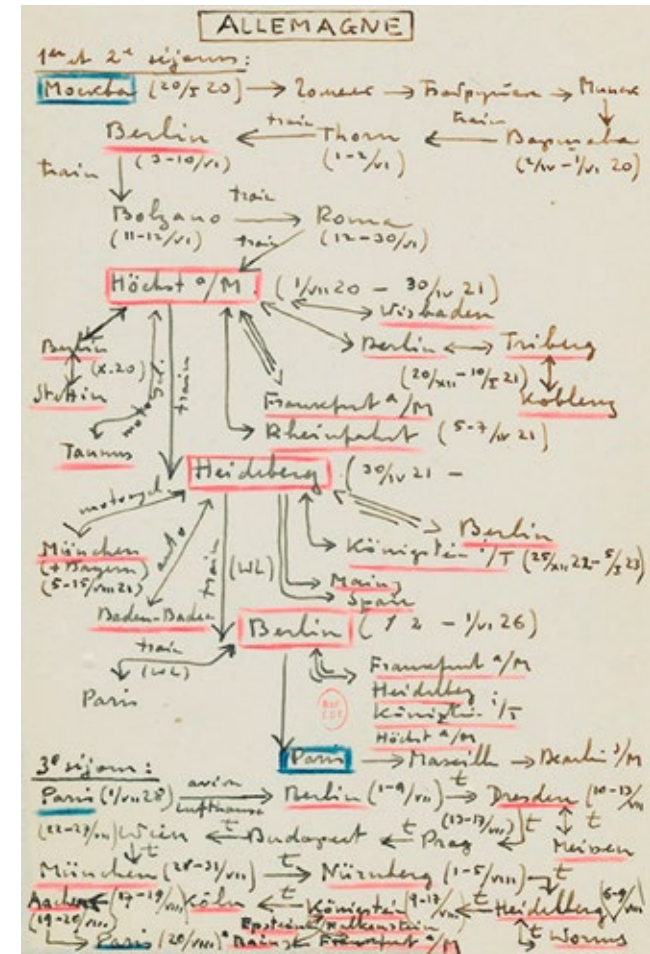
The contemporary Narcissus, however, cannot be so certain of their own taste. Today we are unable to like ourselves if we are not liked by the society in which we live. And in our society we have to become active if we want to be the objects of others’ admiration. Contemporary subjects cannot only rely on the looks they were born with: they must practice self-design, and produce their own image with the goal of becoming liked by society. Even those whose activities are limited to taking selfies must still actively distribute them to get the “likes” they want. But self-design does not stop here. We also produce aesthetically relevant things and/or surround ourselves with things we believe to be impressive and seductive. And we act publicly—even sacrificing oneself in the name of a public good—in order to be admired by others.

Alexandre Kojève believed that the desire to be desired is specifically human—that it is precisely what makes us human, what distinguishes us from animals. The animal, “natural” desire always negates the object of desire: if I am hungry, I eat bread, and thus destroy the bread. If I am thirsty I destroy water by drinking it. But there is also the anthropogenic desire—not

for particular things but for being desired: “Thus, in the relationship between man and woman, for example, Desire is human only if one desires not the body but the desire of the other.”¹ It is this anthropogenic desire that initiates and moves history: “human history is the history of desired Desires.”² Kojève describes history as being moved by heroes pushed to sacrifice themselves in the name of humankind by this specifically human desire: the desire for recognition, for becoming an object of society’s admiration and love. The desire for desire produces self-consciousness and even the “self” as such, but it is also what turns the subject into an object—ultimately, a dead object. Kojève writes: “Without this fight to the death for pure prestige, there would never have been human beings on Earth.”³ The subject of the desire for desire is not “natural” because it is ready to sacrifice all natural needs and even “natural” existence for an abstract Idea of recognition. By renouncing everything natural this subject becomes historical, insofar as it is constituted by the desire for historical recognition. Thus, this subject becomes dependent on the historical conditions of recognition: on the existence of mankind. None are as interested in the survival and well-being of society as the contemporary Narcissus.

This interest is characteristically modern, secular, atheistic. As long as God was considered to be alive, the design of the soul was more important than the design of the body. The subject wanted their soul to be loved or at least recognized by God. The desire for admiration by others, by society, was regarded as a sin because it substituted “worldly” recognition for the only true spiritual recognition—external values for inner values. Thus, the relationship of the subject to society was ethical: one did something good for society to please God—not society itself. The death of God signified the disappearance of the divine viewer of the soul, the viewer for whom the soul had been designed for centuries. In the secular age, God was substituted by society, and thus, instead of an ethical relationship, our relationship to society became erotic. Suddenly, the only possible manifestation

A diagram from Kojève’s archive registers his travels in Europe. The exhibition “After History: Alexandre Kojève as a Photographer” at BAK (Basis voor actuele Kunst), Utrecht, curated by Boris Groys, included nearly 400 photographs taken by the philosopher between the 1950s and 1960s while traveling in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), China, India, Iran, Japan, Nepal, Russia, and throughout Western Europe, as well as over 1,700 postcards that he collected during his lifetime. Copyright: Bibliothèque nationale de France. Photo: Nina Kousnetzoff



Postcard bought by Alexandre Kojève during his visit to Basilica of San Miniato al Monte, Florence, Italy. Courtesy Bibliothèque nationale de France. © Nina Kousnetzoff.



of human subjectivity became its design: the look of the clothes in which humans appear, the everyday things with which they surround themselves, the spaces they inhabit, and so forth. Where religion once was, design emerged.

As a result, design has transformed society itself into an exhibition space in which individuals appear as both artists and self-produced works of art. Modern design thus avoids Kant's famous distinction between disinterested aesthetic contemplation and the use of things guided by interests. For a long time after Kant, disinterested contemplation was considered superior to a practical attitude, as a higher, if not the highest, manifestation of the human spirit. But already by the end of the nineteenth century, the *vita contemplativa* was thoroughly discredited and the *vita activa* was elevated to the true task of humankind. At least since Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle*, design has been accused of seducing people into weakening their activity, vitality, and energy—of making them passive consumers who lack will, who are manipulated by omnipresent advertising to become victims of capital. The apparent cure for this trance was a shocklike encounter with the “real” capable of rescuing people from their contemplative passivity and moving them to action, to the only thing that promises an experience of truth as living intensity. The only debate that remained was over the question of whether such an encounter with the real was still possible, or whether the real has definitively disappeared behind its designed surface.

However, the subject of self-design clearly has a vital interest in the image on offer to the outside world. This subject is therefore not passive, but active and productive. Where it was once both a privilege and a burden for the chosen few, in our time self-design has become the mass cultural practice par excellence. The internet is a place for self-presentation—from Facebook to YouTube to Instagram—but likewise in the “real,” or let's say “analog” world, one is expected to be responsible for the image they present to the gaze of others.

The subject of self-design is therefore not only interested in their own existence, but also in that of mankind, their only possible spectator. Like a lover's interest in the existence of a partner to find love and be loved by, the subject of self-design is interested in the existence of society to find and receive recognition and admiration. This interest is intense because mankind is, as we know, vulnerable and mortal. The desire of the other's desire is permanently haunted by the possibility of mankind's final disappearance—the physical death of human spectators after the metaphysical death of God.

This anxiety concerning mankind's ultimate fate was powerfully expressed by Jean-Francois Lyotard in his 1987 essay “Can Thought Go On Without a Body?” Lyotard begins his essay with the reference to the scientific prediction that the Sun will explode in 4.5 billion years and writes further,

*That in my view is the sole serious question to face humanity today. In comparison everything else seems insignificant. Wars, conflicts, political tensions, shift in opinion, philosophical debates, even passions – everything is dead already if this infinite reserve from which you draw now your energy... dies out with the Sun.*⁴

The death of mankind seems distant, but it already poisons us and makes our efforts senseless. Scientists have proven that there are weak waves produced by the Big Bang that still come to us. So one can assume that there are informational waves from the Sun's explosion in 4.5 billion years that already reach us and tremble our souls. Humankind can only substitute God as the ultimate spectator of our self-design if we were to become immortal. Thus the real challenge is to create new hardware that could substitute the human body, to find a new medium on which to write human software, i.e. thought. According to Lyotard, the possibility of such rewriting is given by the fact that “technology wasn't invented by us humans.”⁵ The development of technology is a cosmic process in which humans are only episodically involved. By shifting the focus from software (attitudes, opinions, ideologies) to hardware (organism,

machine, their combinations, cosmic processes and events), Lyotard opened the way to thinking the post- or transhuman.

However, from its beginning, the practice of self-design prefigured the problematic of the post- and transhuman condition. Self-design means rewriting inner, psychological, political attitudes or economic interests on external media: self-design creates a second, artificial body that potentially substitutes and survives that of the human. Indeed, when somebody dies, the things they chose and used remain available. If the person was famous, a museum may keep these things as a substitute for the absent body. Thus, the use of things is a form of self-design: things are not only tools for practical life but also manifestations of their user's soul. In fact, as heirs to palaces and churches, art museums were originally design museums.

Of course, one does not only use things, but also produces them. These things—artworks, books, films, photos etc.—circulate and are dispersed globally. This dispersal is even more obvious with the internet, where not only famous people but all people are able to rewrite their personality. Yet if one looks for a particular name on the internet, its thousands of results do not build any unity. Thus, one feels that these secondary, self-designed, artificial bodies are already in a state of slow-motion explosion, reminding one of the final scene from Antonioni's *Zabriski Point*. The eternal struggle between Apollo and Dionysus as described by Nietzsche leads here to a strange result: the self-designed body is dismembered, dispersed, and decentered, but still maintains a virtual unity.[Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872).] This virtual unity, however, is not accessible to the human gaze. Only surveillance and search programs like Google can analyze the internet in its entirety and thus identify the secondary bodies of living and dead persons. Here, a machine is recognized by a machine, and an algorithm by another algorithm. Maybe the internet prefigures the condition Lyotard envisioned: mankind's persistence in a state of explosion.

× *Superhumanity*, a project by e-flux Architecture at the 3rd Istanbul Design Biennial, is produced in cooperation with the Istanbul Design Biennial, the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea, the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Zealand, and the Ernst Schering Foundation.

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anthony symonds

Look 10 Sports Casual Ensemble

Black Nylon/polyamide Cire Jersey two piece suit. Black Cire nylon 'Mounted' Jean jacket with cut out yolk and hood. Double self Nylon/Polyamide Cire jersey knot front skirt and integral sports brief on elastic waist.

Shell pieces individually mounted on black, self coloured cotton drill and lap stitched together 1cm deep in black, self coloured topstitch thread leaving all open edge layers raw. All raw, open edges stay stitched 1cm deep in black self coloured topstitch thread to finish. Fitted jean style body with cased boning from armhole to hem held in 1cm self coloured cotton bias binding opstitched through to right side in black, self coloured topstitch thread. Front and back yolk cut out leaving bodice and sleeve self supported on inner boning. Sleeve shell mounted on black, self coloured cotton fleece. Sleeve head cut to right angle point with underarm sewn to shell between pitch points and bound back in 1cm black self coloured cotton bias binding to finish. Deep sleeve cuff in cotton Lycra single rib on fold finishing at elbow and eased onto sleeve opening to finish. Center front seam of shell cut away nett and left raw to accept black, self coloured 6 gauge nylon outerwear zip topstitched through 1cm deep in black, self coloured topstitch thread to finish. Zip extends through open décolletage to meet double self black cire nylon hood. Hood opening bagged out and topstitched 1cm deep in black, self coloured topstitch thread. Neck edge of hood bound back in 1cm self coloured cotton bias binding and topstitched through to right side in black, self coloured topstitch thread to finish.

Josip Novsel for
August 2016
Jegemsel

Ecocore
Topic: Narcissism
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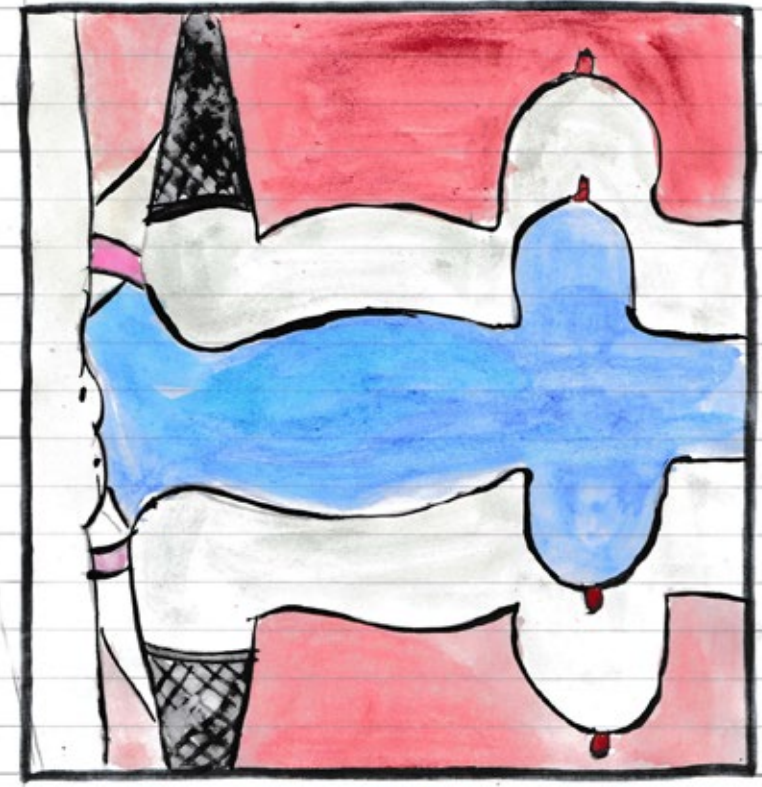
While every start evokes a new feeling. There is a nice feeling in my throat. The taste is sweet and reminds me on very good food. Anyhow it is already very narcissistic of me to think that this taste is special, like it's my taste. I love the taste and i love me...



NARCISS



Josip Novsel for Ecocore



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JOSIP NOVOSEL
A

love is
life only!

NARCISSSSM
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Josip Novasel
August 2016

for



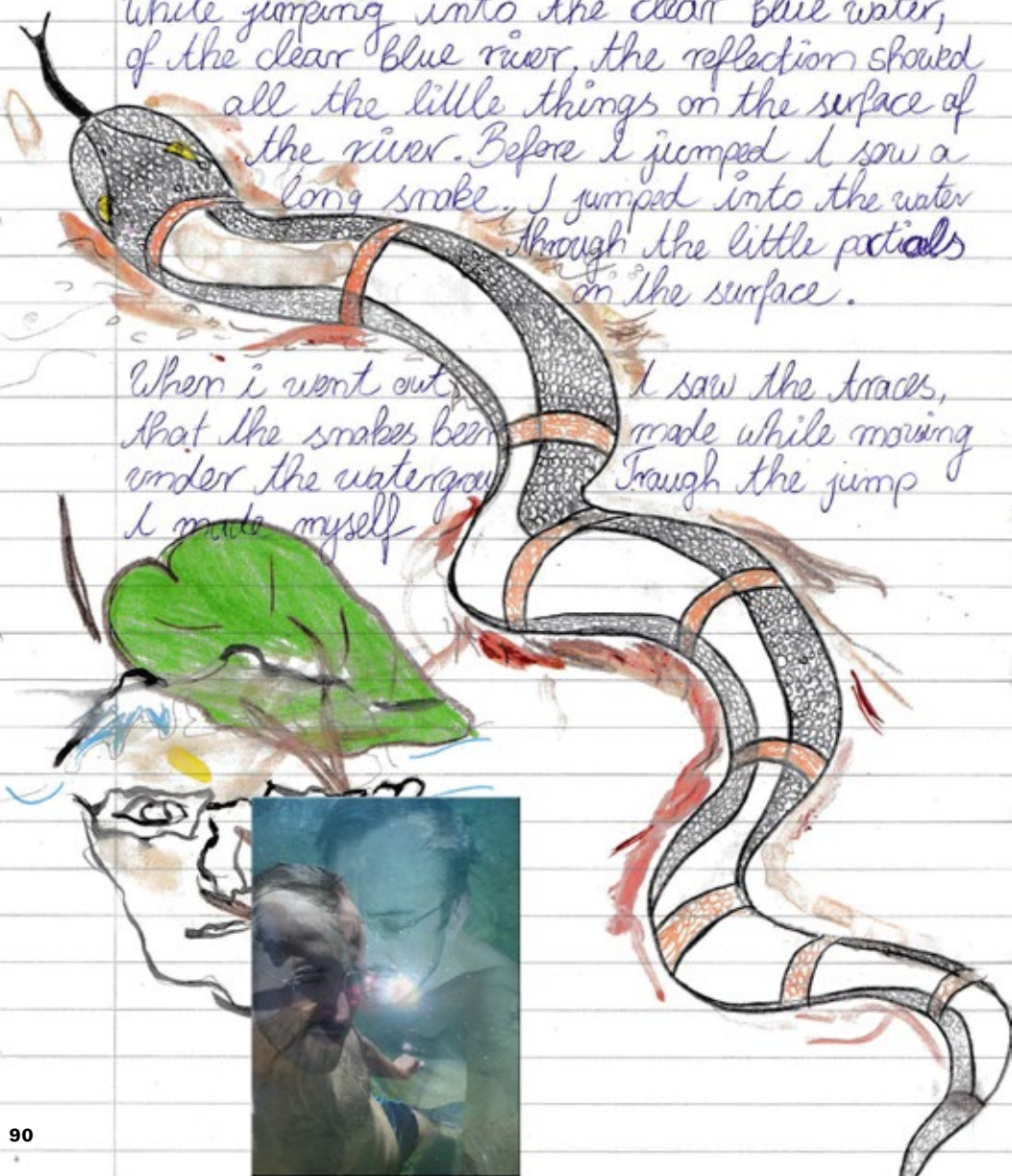
Topic

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While jumping into the clear blue water, of the clear blue river, the reflection showed all the little things on the surface of the river. Before I jumped I saw a long snake. I jumped into the water through the little patches on the surface.

When I went out, that the snakes been under the water you I made myself

I saw the traces, made while moving through the jump



Josip Novasel
August 2016

for



Ecocore

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All of me was naked. Just my shorts and the surface of the water that finished pouring over me. The dust of the water was attached on me. The dust of the snake that shook up. By the snake. He naked. This is nature. I become nature with myself. Scared of that I moved to another place. But first I smoke a cigarette, to mark my spot.



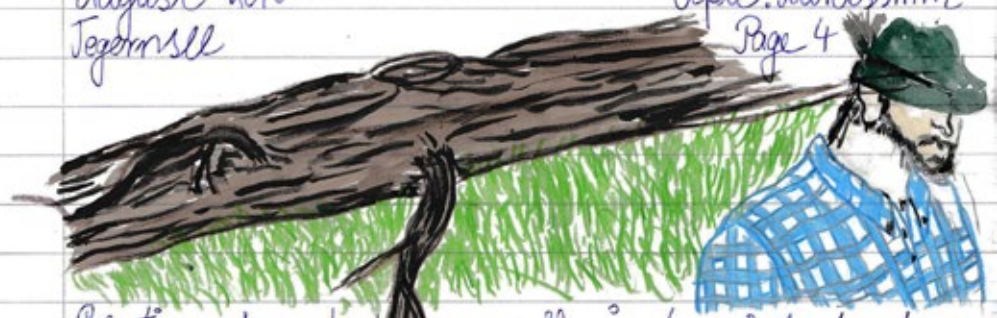
SIDENOTE:

I would like to stay where I am but I feel a danger in my back. My person is my narcissism. Tracked down in nature. How far would I go?? To fight nature? With no shorts? Smoking? Fight the snake? Hunt a fish?

Josip Abrasel
August 2016
Jegermsee

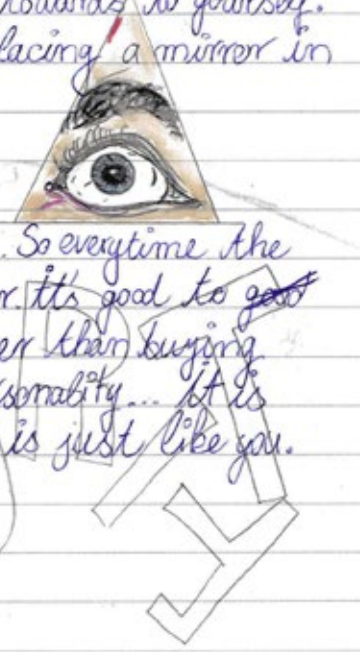
for

Ecocore
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Painting towards to yourself is to paint to nature
If you love yourself you love nature. Your own perception
can be a general perception. So nothing forward if
your narcissism does not point towards to yourself.
It's easy like painting placing a mirror in
the right direction.

Causing the you in a good
environment.. Protection is good. So everytime the
perception of yourself is in danger it's good to ~~good~~
have a protection made. Rather than buying
items that underline your personality... It's
easier to find someone that is just like you.



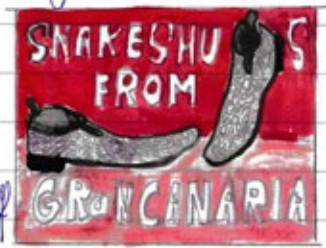
Josip Abrasel
August 2016
Jegermsee

for

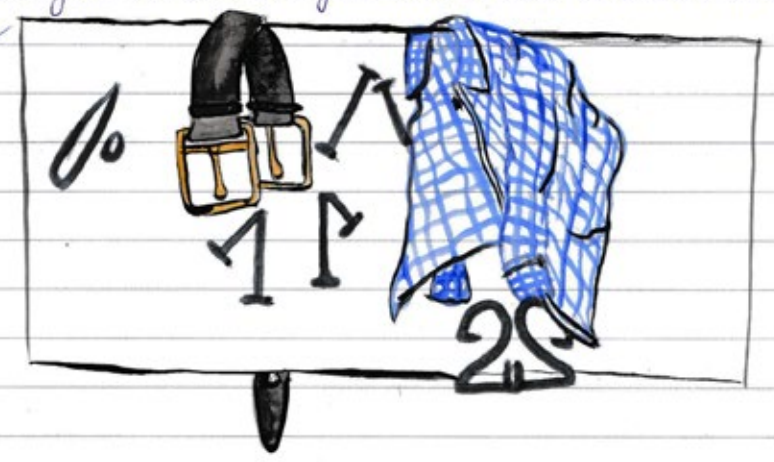
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Being equal means Narcissism wins over nature.
nature causes alot of conflicts and takes alot
of strength of selfperception. So searching
for another me in another person
is a legitimate way to feel protect.
You can cross the inner self and
still know who you are..

Protecting yourself with yourself



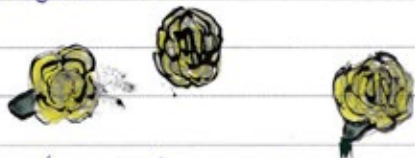
However narcissism is a very comfortable state of mind
If you dont find another lookalike a uniform
can get you closer to eachother. Traditional
clothes can bond and give enough space for imagination
It's a you in another you but in it core it's something
else



Josip Hassel
August 2016
Jegermsee

for

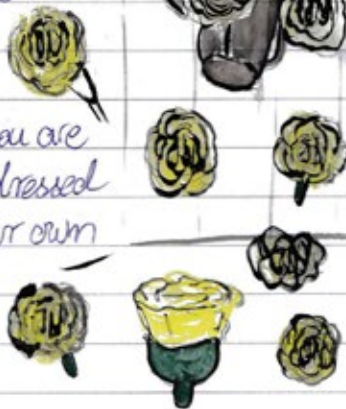
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If you're wearing pants as someone else it's not about perception it's about perspective. So the ass is the ass of another. Your bodyparts are dressed the same as someone else. Your bulge is in the same zone as another bulge. However it's a good excuse to suck eachothers dicks.

Mirroring through clothes.

Cause how can you say what you are if there is someone exactly dressed like you. It's like sucking your own dick.



Josip Hassel
August 2016
Jegermsee

for

EcoCore
Topic: Narcissism
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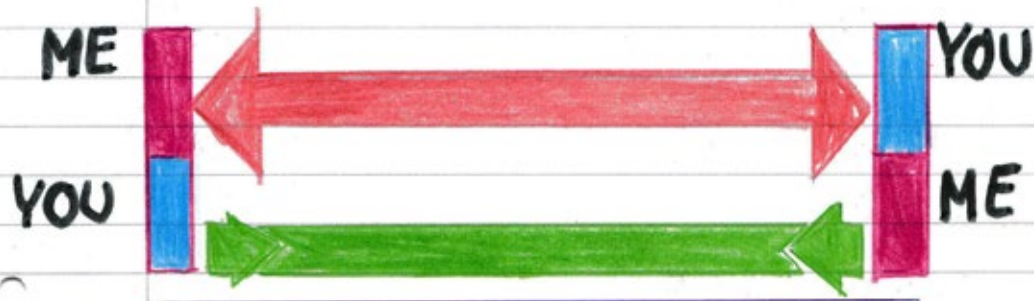
Traditional clothes allow you to disappear. Suddenly you're no target of any political sexual, identical relation. You are what you [and everything about that] is a well kept secret in your dederhosen.



Josip Abrasel
August 2016
Jegemsel

for

Ecocone
Josip Abrasmmmm
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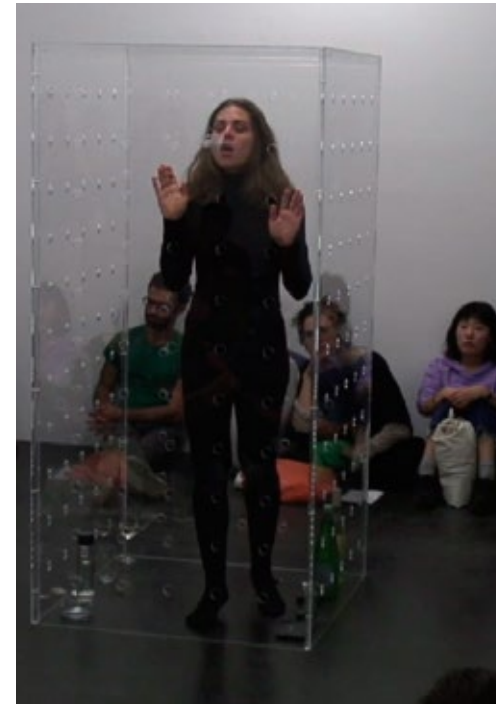
Imagine it like this:

There are two straight guys.
Those guys love to compete with
each other who is fucking his girlfriend
better. So clear the vision both of
them imagine the other while
fucking the girlfriends. They imagine
how good ^{to} one is banging or how hard
his dick might get. In their physical
presence they fuck their girlfriend but
on another level they fuck with
each other, imagining and admiring
the strength and attractiveness of
the others, realising the others
are themselves. So when the orgasm
hits they on the other.. Proud on
themselves.

W
W

Marie Karlberg

performing
1 HOUR OF LIMITED MOVEMENTS



Künstlerhaus, Graz, Austria
12.10.2016 18:00



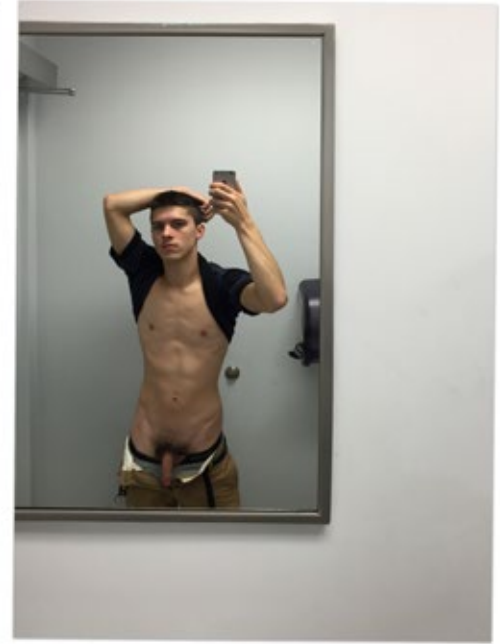
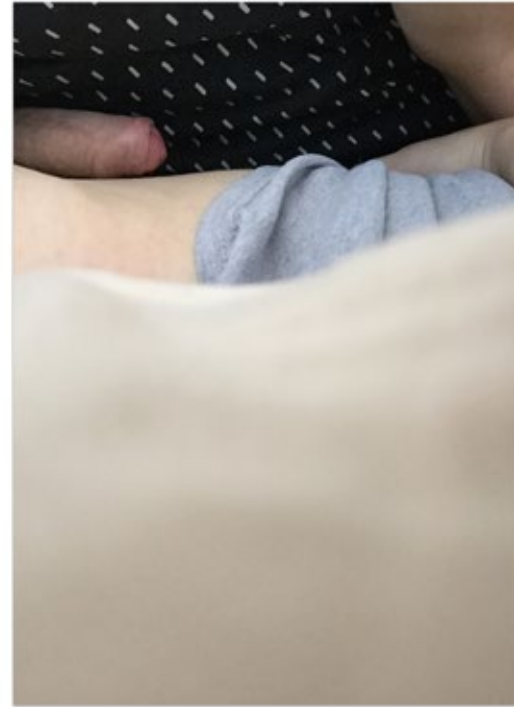


l'absolu
narciso rodriguez
for her



the new
fragrance

Paul Levack



9. *The two psychological tendencies that underlie modern leftism we call “feelings of inferiority” and “oversocialization”. Feelings of inferiority are characteristic of modern leftism as a whole, while oversocialization is characteristic only of a certain segment of modern leftism; but this segment is highly influential.*



20. Notice the masochistic tendency of leftist tactics. Leftists protest by lying down in front of vehicles, they intentionally provoke police or racists to abuse them, etc. These tactics may often be effective, but many leftists use them not as a means to an end but because they PREFER masochistic tactics. Self-hatred is a leftist trait.



16. Words like "self-confidence", "self-reliance", "initiative", "enterprise", "optimism", etc., play little role in the liberal and leftist vocabulary. The leftist is anti-individualistic, pro-collectivist. He wants society to solve every one's problems for them, satisfy everyone's

219. Leftism is a totalitarian force. Wherever leftism is in a position of power it tends to invade every private corner and force every thought into a leftist mold. In part this is because of the quasi-religious character of leftism: everything contrary to leftist beliefs represents Sin.

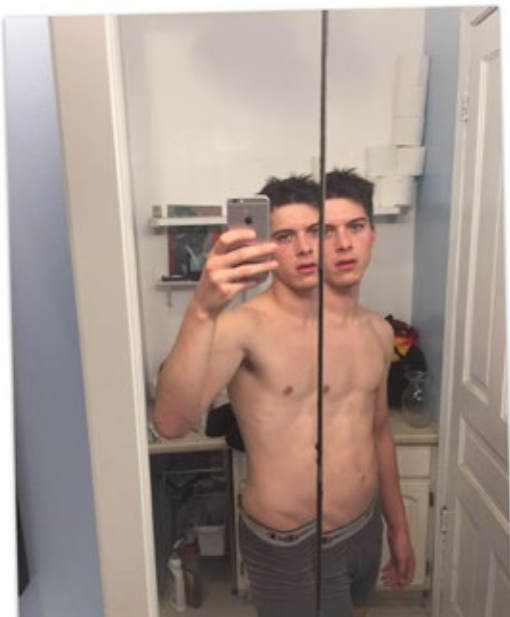




203. Imagine an alcoholic sitting with a barrel of wine in front of him. Suppose he starts saying to himself, "Wine isn't bad for you if used in moderation. Why, they say small amounts of wine are even good for you!"

It won't do me any harm if I take just one little drink...."

Well you know what is going to happen. Never forget that the human race with technology is just like an alcoholic with a barrel of wine.







What is the point of social climbing? It is to become an object. What does that mean? That means that you have orientated yourself to an external perception, which is about exteriors. How is this achieved? It is achieved by determining the end point/goal and to take the steps/climb to get to this point.

The structure in which the steps occur is within a social structure. It is literally a structure. Imagine it as a physical thing. It is not a landscape with its ceaseless horizon but rather like a building. You are at this building, at the bottom, and you want to get to the top but there are various ways to do this. You can walk, you can take the elevator, or you can get hoisted up without entering.

Inside this building there are distractions in the form of rooms. The rooms can be people, events, and moments of luck or burdens. They can benefit or hinder depending on the pull and sway these rooms have on you. They can accelerate or desist your ascension but do not get too stuck in one room because that is not why you are here. You are here to climb. To get to the top. Remain focused and always remember why you are here.

What you are born into determines how arduous the climb will be and although you may think being hoisted up with only the winch of nepotistic birthright would be best, it is not because when this happens you miss all those rooms. The more rooms you enter the more the building becomes yours. You can re-enter those spaces and

those inside will remember you. Sometimes you might meet someone in a room who can help you skip a few floors. Sometimes when you are almost to the top you forgot something or need something and then you remember your pal from 3B who can help. But remember, you are here for a reason. The top is what you seek.

Stair after stair, floor after floor, you are getting there. Sure you may have had to burn some bridges/lock some doors to get there but you are close, so very close. You are tired, your body and mind have been dedicated to this one thing and as you get closer to the top you feel lighter, happier, more complete. You get to the final door. Your heart is racing not from the excursion of the ascent but in anticipation of what is behind that final door.

You open it.

It is empty.

You are outside.

You look at your hands because you have to remind yourself that you are still in your own body. You look out and you see only the sky and that ceaseless horizon.

You sit down. You are at the top and you are weary.

You realize that you cannot leave. You cannot leave this building because it was all that you know.

You go back down.

You enter a room.

You get a key and you wait for someone to knock on the door.







reLIFE

Scientific and technological innovations throughout the previous decades have extended human life-span. This tendency continues. The general improvement of the human condition in developed nations was to be expected. However, exceeding the corporeal limitation has become a new and surprising reality. It seems that both the extropian and the transhumanist dream of immortality moves closer to within reach.

Health as a delusion is a phenomena of our time. As a concept toward bodily optimization it gains a new dimension that accompanies trans-corporeal developments. Dietary innovation in the form of supplements, antioxidants, vitamins, enzymes, amino acids and/or botanical broth packed and wrapped in the device of tablets, capsules, and powders are a marker of this mindset. A fast-food-like consumption of those products—which in the best case scenario guarantee maximized health benefits within the smallest effort—is witnessed as productive. The consumption of mass vitamin with mineralesque pill implicates all participatory bodies as the metabolizing subjects of a billion dollar industry.

Here we have it so that the pill and a pill in all its tinyhood has engendered the symbol of discord between the "I" and the "We". The "I" which desires a good, long, hopefully infinite life is the perpetrator of this attitude. While the "We" then is a holistic idea that understands each entity as part of a chain, or of a bigger system that is connected to an environmental ecology with resources which lack even if politely ask for responsible and sustainable patterns of behavior.

Perhaps the trend underpinning any of this can be re-structured as world renewing thought. Taken with a glass of water.

(not to be generalized)

HERB-4



3. Where can I find scientifically sound information about vitamin/mineral supplements?

Your doctor is a good place to start. In addition, pharmacists and registered dietitians are helpful.

The NIH Office of Dietary Supplements has a series of [Vitamin and Mineral Fact Sheets](#) that provide scientifically-based overviews of a number of vitamins and minerals. They can provide a good basis for a discussion with your doctor about whether or not you should take a vitamin/mineral supplement.

[MedlinePlus](#) is another good source of information.

The [Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) has a variety of articles and consumer advisories to help consumers inform themselves about dietary supplements, including warnings and safety information, labeling, evaluation information, and FDA's role in regulating dietary supplements.

For those interested in looking directly at scientific studies, the [PubMed Dietary Supplement Subset](#) is a good database to search.

九七良白入-4



4. What should I do if I suspect I may be having a side-effect from a dietary supplement?

First, stop taking the supplement. Next tell your doctor or health care professional. The [MedWatch Reporting Program](#) also gives you information about how to report a problem to the Food and Drug Administration.

In summary, check with your doctor or a registered dietitian about which, if any, vitamin or mineral supplements might be right for you. And remember that while there are circumstances when it may be appropriate to take vitamin/mineral supplements, they are not a replacement for a healthful diet.

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NARCISSISTS ARE IMITATORS PAR EXCELLENCE. AND THEY DO NOT COPY
THE SMALL, BORING PARTS OF SELVES.

THE NARCISSIST IS, according to the internet, empty. Normal, healthy people are full of self, a kind of substance like a soul or personhood that, if you have it, emanates warmly from inside of you toward the outside of you. No one knows what it is, but everyone agrees that narcissists do not have it. Disturbingly, however, they are often better than anyone else at seeming to have it. Because what they have inside is empty space, they have had to make a study of the selves of others in order to invent something that looks and sounds like one. Narcissists are imitators par excellence. And they do not copy the small, boring parts of selves. They take what they think are the biggest, most impressive parts of other selves, and devise a hologram of self that seems superpowered. Let's call it "selfiness," this simulacrum of a superpowered self. Sometimes they seem crazy or are really dull, but often, perhaps because they have had to try harder than most to make it, the selfiness they've come up with is qualitatively better, when you first encounter it, than the ordinary, naturally occurring selves of normal, healthy people. Narcissists are the most popular kids at school. They are rock stars. They are movie stars. They are not really rock stars or movie stars, but they seem like they are. They may tell you that you are the only one who really sees them for who they really are, which is probably a trick. If one of your parents is a narcissist, he or she will tell you that you are a rock star, too, which is definitely a trick.

Kristin Dombek is one of n+1's most beloved authors. A Senior Writer, she is also the author of the magazine's advice column, The Help Desk, and the 2015 recipient of the n+1 Writers' Fellowship.

Dombek's first book, *The Selfishness of Others: An Essay on the Fear of Narcissism*, is just out from FSG.

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Because for the narcissist, this appreciation of you is entirely contingent on the idea that you will help him to maintain his selfiness. If you do not, or if you are near him when someone or something does not, then God help you. When that picture shatters, his hurt and his rage will be unmatched in its heat or, more often, its coldness. He will unfriend you, stop following you, stop returning your emails, stop talking to you completely. He will cheat on you without seeming to think it's a big deal, or break up with you, when he has said he'd be with you forever. He will fire you casually and without notice. Whatever hurts most, he will do it. Whatever you need the most, he will withhold it. He cannot feel other people's feelings, but he is uncannily good at figuring out how to demolish yours. When this happens, your pain will be the pain of finding out that you have held the most wrong belief that you've ever been stupid enough to hold: the belief that because this asshole loved you, the world could be better than usual, better than it is for everyone else.

It isn't that the narcissist is just not a good person; she's like a caricature of what we mean by "not a good person." She's not just bad; she's a living, breathing lesson in what badness is. Take Immanuel Kant's elegant formulation of how to do the right thing: act in ways that could be generalized to universal principles. You'll choose the right thing to do, every time, if you ask yourself: If everyone acted in this way, would the world be a better place? Reason will always guide you to the right answer, and to its corollary, which is that we should treat others never as means but always as ends in themselves. The narcissist,

in contrast, always chooses to act in exactly such a way that if everyone were to follow suit, the world would go straight to hell.

It might take you a while to realize that the narcissist is not merely selfish, but doesn't actually have a self. When you do, it will seem spooky, how good she has been at performing something you thought was care. Now you see that she is like a puppet, a clown, an animate corpse, anything that looks human but isn't. For the narcissist, life is only a stage, writes Alexander Lowen, the author of *Narcissism: Denial of the True Self*, quoted on the Wikipedia page about narcissism, and "when the curtain falls upon an act, it is finished and forgotten. The emptiness of such a life is beyond imagination." You might empathize: how horrible to live this way, having to imitate self-ness all the time. You can think of it that way, compassionately—intimacy issues, attachment styles, some childhood trauma beyond their control—or you can decide that your compassion is another sign you've been tricked: that because the narcissist has a priori no empathy, yours is just applause to her, and she is not just fake, but evil.

If you work for a narcissist, or are the child of one, or are in love with one, what should you do? Some mental health professionals think that you can love a narcissist, in a way, but that you just have to treat him or her like a six-year-old and expect nothing from that person. Some do think that narcissists can change. Deciding between these two theories can haunt you forever. And on the internet, the change theory is a minority opinion; just about everyone advises that if a narcissist begins to entangle you, you should run. As one blogger put it: "What does one do when encountering a narcissist for the first time? The simple answer: grab your running shoes and start your first 5K right there in the middle of the cocktail party!"

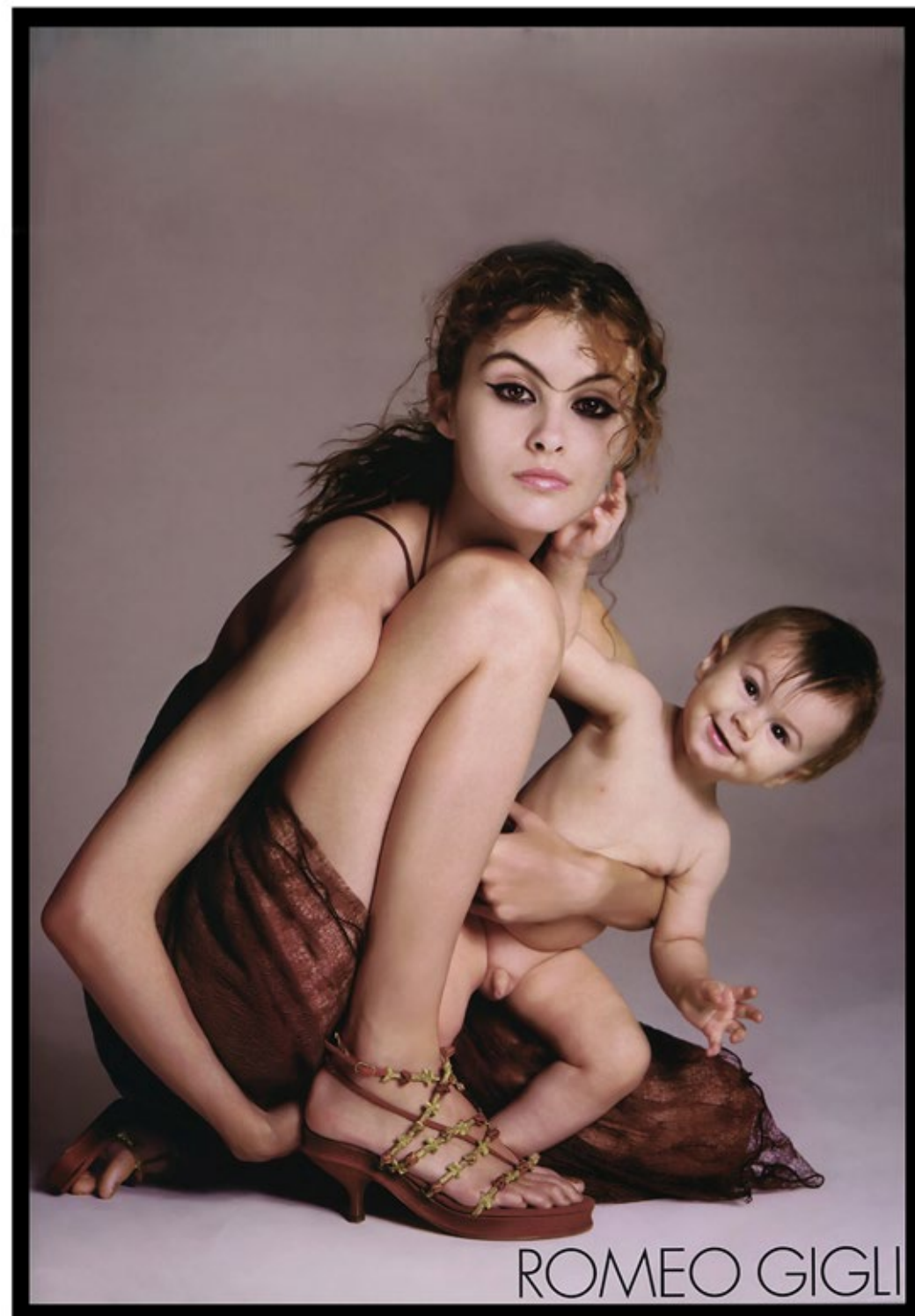
SOMETHING THAT MIGHT BOTHER YOU, if you know someone who you think may have the new selfishness, and pause to consider the narcissism story's logical claims, is this: If he is empty inside, this narcissist, who or what is it, inside of him, that is imitating having a self? If he is nothing but a performance, who or what

is doing the performing? Is he animating his selfiness with another, also fake, part of his selfiness? But what, then, is animating that part? If the descriptions of narcissism sometimes don't exactly make sense, in this way, how can they describe so creepily well most ex-boyfriends and so many bosses? Why is having a boyfriend or a boss so much like having your own personal villain, anyway? If the uncannily accurate descriptions of your personal villain imply that he or she is outside the empire of normal mental health, flickering eerily at the edge of pathology, why do these descriptions also (in moments you quietly bury deep inside you) remind you, sometimes, of an entirely different person—that is, you? And why does the nightmare with which the internet is obsessed, of encountering people who look and sound real but are fake, remind you so much of the feeling of reading the internet itself?

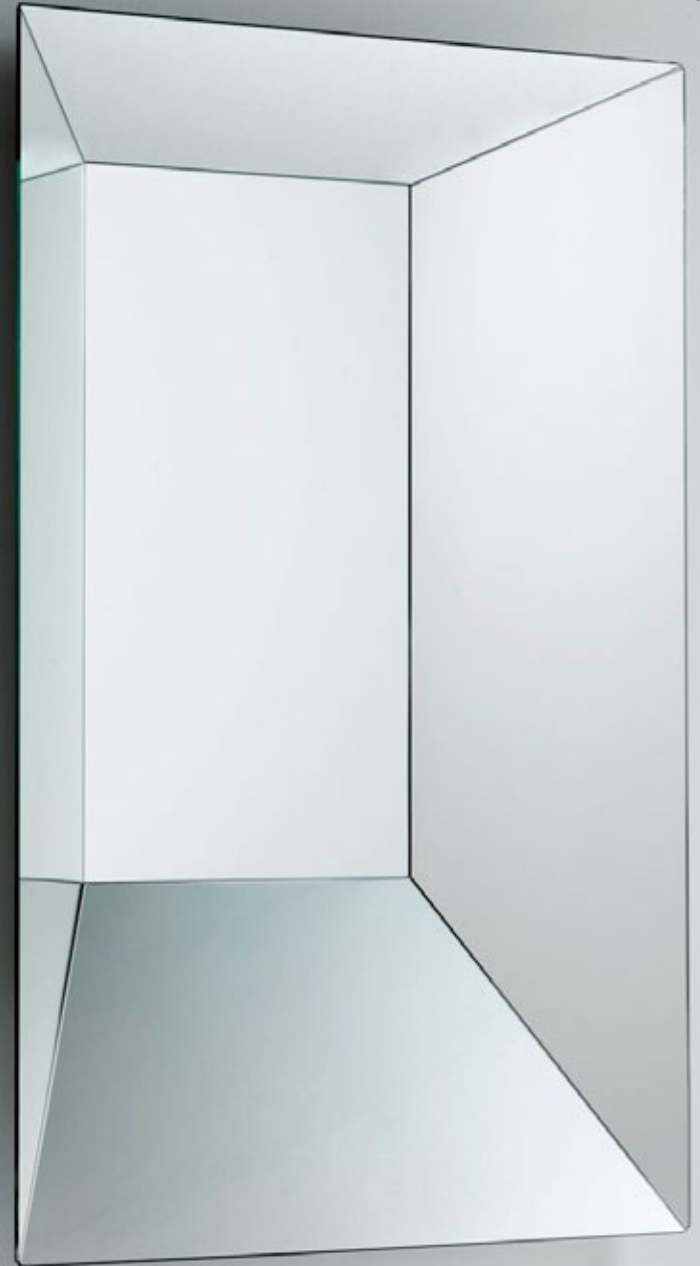
There isn't time for these questions, according to the narcissism script; there isn't time to do anything but put on your running shoes and embark upon your first 5K. It will likely not be your last. In this day and age, you will have to run that distance again and again. Because there are hundreds of blogs and articles and features and books claiming that there is an epidemic of narcissism that started in the United States but is spreading fast, that even Europeans are becoming more selfish and that in China, where the disorder is compounded by the "Little Emperor" syndrome caused by the one-child policy, the millennials might be even more self-obsessed than ours—that we live in a time so rampant with narcissisms, so flush with false selves masquerading as real selves so selfish that they feed on other selves, a time so full of contagious emptiness, that ours is a moment in history that is, more than any other, absolutely exceptional.

If more and more people are now more evil and fake, using the rest of us only as means to fill their contagious emptiness, Kant's elegant formulation no longer works; it assumes that because reason is our guide, others will, for the most part, act in the ways they wish everyone else to act. But that is not the worst of it; the recommended

treatment for an individual narcissist—give up, run—doesn't scale, either. If narcissists are increasing in number, and everyone were to run a 5K from everyone else all the time, there would be serious logistical issues. But setting these aside, the strategy enacts the very coldness described by the diagnosis, as if the only way to escape the emptiness contagion is to act like a narcissist yourself, and turn away from anyone flat and fake as an image on your computer screen—that is, from the twenty-first century itself. If we were all to do this, we would have an epidemic indeed. The script confirms itself, and the diagnosis and treatment confound the evidence, until it gets harder and harder to know whether people are really more selfish than ever before in the first place. In this way, it matters whether or not it's actually real, the epidemic, but it matters even more whether or not we believe it's real.









Michele
D'Aurizio

HEY,

YOU!

NOTES FOR AN OUT OF REACH ARTISTIC COMMUNITY

One morning, we wake up to find that approximately fifty young people have been murdered in a club. Most of the victims were gay and the attack is recognized as a homophobic hate crime. Another morning, we wake up to find that the majority population of one of the founding countries of a historic supranational coalition has voted in favor of abandoning that organism. The primary aim of the schism is to regain national sovereignty that the coalition presumably exhausted, by imposing a communitarian modus operandi and limiting the autonomy of the State. On yet another morning, we wake up to find that roughly eighty people, of all ages, most of them compatriots, had been murdered on the beachfront of a seaside town. The victims had gathered to watch a fireworks display organized on the occasion of a national holiday. On many other mornings, we wake up to learn of individuals who had died by drowning or from deprivation while attempting to cross a sea, headed toward lands far from their countries of origin in which they had been oppressed or were oppressible minorities.

We learn about these events over a handful of weeks. And, as we prepare to celebrate the umpteenth collective ritual, to reinforce structures that systematize our being together, we perceive these events as attacks on the very idea of community. There's someone out there, an "other," who wants to keep us atomized, a mere aggregate of individualities, a plurality of solitudes. In order to succeed, he'll undermine the value of what unites us, of that identity that we express every day, lovingly and proudly, but that the other codes as a difference and reads with a discriminatory syntax. Do we recognize ourselves in a group of individuals held together by a sociocultural, political, or religious territory, and do we operate in communion with its members? If the answer is yes, then we're in danger. Or better, we're a possible target of the hatred, the anger, the jealousy of others; whatever the origins of this hatred—racial, religious, xenophobic, ideological, etc.—, the more our community is based on a shared identity, the more uncontrollable this rivalry becomes.

Hate works in a disorderly fashion; it is a force that organizes itself precisely by organizing chaos. It feeds on the countless idiosyncrasies, differences, oxymorons that emerge in the pluralism of society. It begins with the omnivore faulting the vegan and ends with the white man shooting the black man. In order for us to be released from its clutches, our community needs to support the chaos fostered by its diffusion. That is, we need to transform the "state of matter" of our community, which doesn't mean disassembling it or forcing it to operate underground, but dematerializing it into a vaporous mix, nebulizing it, dispersing it like a light gas. What we're talking about, after all, are strategies that could protect us from hate attacks and camouflage us in the jungle of society, whereas a counterattack produces nothing but hate—a more directed hate, to be sure, but one that, precisely because equipped with a program, is dangerously radicalized.

Jean-Paul Sartre glimpsed the possibility of emancipating a "practico-inert"¹ society—namely, one trapped in the routine of daily life—by forming a "fused group," a collectivity that emerges programmatically

in order to escape passivity. But Sartre's "fused group" is still a collectivity that sees itself as a social subject, tends toward organization and institutionalization, and ends up (re)subjecting the individual to a systemic power. Our aim, instead, is the constitution of an "evaporated group," that is, a community without identity, elusive, unplaceable, un-exploitable, and consequently incorruptible and unassailable. An evaporated group is a community that is like white noise: indistinguishable from background noise, it lends itself to cacophony. It's a community that immunizes itself, not by developing more antibodies, but by doing away with its body altogether—it's a voice, indistinct. Its action is perceptible only as an interference.

But how do we enable the evolution of our community into an evaporated group? How do we nebulize it? What creative strategies do we choose to work with while evading hate attacks?

WE, THE POSEURS

What can keep us united is fiction. Which is the opposite of nature. That is: if we all play a role, if we all assume a pose, the self pulverizes and the social constructs that had initially appeared as its foundation emerge only to mark its confines. We are all that-which-we-are-not. We are all the products of an artifice. And this *status* binds us in the collective negation of the myth of identity.

Fiction allows us to achieve a pluralism that is dynamic and not hegemonic, because the roles are dynamic (variable) and the poses are dynamic (fluid). Is it not a neoliberal idea that we live in a world filled with countless forms of identity that we can't experience in their singularity, but that collectively constitute a harmonious whole? Yet, that's the description of a hegemony, not of a plural community.² A *poseur* is a member of the community who continuously impedes the emergence of hegemonic factors since, being nothing more than the ghost of an identity, he mocks any process of the radicalization of consensus. The *poseur* doesn't produce consensus; the *poseur* produces fashion.

(N.B.: "Fashion was a sort of Internet before the Internet. It was both a system and an image; and it moved very quickly. It was a high-speed connection between the street and the office tower, between New York, Paris and Hong Kong. But it wasn't efficient communication; it was full of crossed signals, misinterpretations, failed transmissions, ridiculous avant-gardisms [...] Today, the Internet and fashion are exactly the same, so, for example, "anti-fashion" is only possible as anti-network, suicide pure and simple."³)

Not being fashionable is tantamount to not being. At the same time, nobody is safe from fashion. Wear a no logo hoodie and you immediately become normcore. Wear a branded hoodie and you immediately become a carnival mask conceived by the designer. Acting "against" (a program, an institution, or any apparatus of power) is neutralized in the embrace of "countercurrents" (or better, "counter trends"). Because, even rebellion, after all, is a process of "stylistic" affirmation. Is it hypocritical to attitudinize by wearing something from a collection like Raf Simons' *Riot, Riot, Riot!*?⁴ Such an accusation does nothing other than betray an (obsolete) faith in the instinctive, historically irrepressible nature of revolt. Sure, you can read Henri Lefebvre, who finds that "inasmuch as adolescents are unable to challenge either the dominant system's imperious architecture or its deployment of signs, it is only by way of revolt that they have any prospect of recovering the world of differences—the natural, the sensory/sensual, sexuality and pleasure."⁵ And yet fashion has co-opted even the most intimate essence of rebellion. That is, it's understood that the urgency of revolt always subtends a desire for innovation. But, we know, innovation nurtures inequality, because it produces class structures. If we search for the legacy of the Parisian *banlieue* uprisings, we can't help but see it in the clothing of *Vetements*—that is, again, in fashion. In those *mises*, the rancor of the suburban youth (the hoodie that says "May the bridges I burn light the way"⁶) finds its counter-melody in the lament of the part-time worker (the "in-security"⁷ t-shirt). But which of the two can afford to make use of those items—other than as a *follower*?

When Raf Simons, like any other fashion designer, co-opts a youth trend for his own creations, he doesn't rob the youth of their authenticity, since everything that exists beyond their skin is a matter of style. Recognizing that every expression of identity is a mere stylistic discharge is the *poseur's* function—our function. It entails, first of all, that the self stop thinking of itself as unique, and that, on the contrary, it bask in its own infinitesimal personifications. Kudos to the Telfar hoodies, which purport nothing more than to "honestly" observe certain roles: *model*, *security*, but also and above all *customer*.⁸ We ought to perceive the framing of one of these personifications as a pose in suspension, not as a violation or a loss, but rather as a physiological process of sedimentation, of posing. Our motto has to be "Fake it, make it."

Paola Colaiacomo writes: *Style lives in the moment that it is perceived as such, and in that moment the form of a city, or of a human being, can truly shine with a precious and provocative elegance. But once the gaze switches off, the form disappears into the imperceptibility of fact, and only history remains. Monumentality. It matters little that, depending on the force of the gaze, the ignition may have lasted for a second or a millennium.*⁹

The gaze plays a fundamental role in the recognition of fiction. It's the gaze that frames, that suspends. It's the gaze (you) that validates the *poseur* (us). Dick Hebdige has identified the primary flaw of youth subculture in the unconditional openness with which it surrenders to media manipulation:

As the subculture begins to strike its own eminently marketable pose, as its vocabulary (both visual and verbal) becomes more and more familiar, so the referential context to which it can most conveniently be assigned is made increasingly apparent.¹⁰

"Otherness is reduced to sameness," Roland Barthes would say.¹¹ And it is precisely by labeling the subcultural output as exotic that, according to Hebdige, we neutralize and integrate subculture within dominant mythology. But if a truth exists, it's that there is no end to fiction. The *trompe l'œil* has no

(back)ground. If style is living cinema, then the flaw of subculture is not so much that it has lent itself to post-mediatic treatment, but that it has not recognized a potential post-post-mediatic mechanism. The *poseur* watches himself being watched. That's why he doesn't distance the other, doesn't stigmatize him, doesn't swallow him. Rather, he needs the other, dialectically.

There is no device better than art for generating artifice and framing it—for producing and distributing fiction. Art can therefore assist us in creating an evaporated group like an artistic community composed of phantom identities. In order for the expressions of this community to never appear “authentic,” but to be always and in any case perceived as displays of style, we can adopt one or more of the following creative strategies:

- using at least two mediums in the same work; that is, making sure that the work can never be catalogued in virtue of its medium (is it a drawing or a sculpture? Is it a drawing embedded in a sculpture or is it a sculpture framing a drawing?);
- systematically layering the creation of the work (dressing in disguise for a self-portrait), or otherwise layering the work itself so that the spectator's gaze can't avoid possessing a part of it, but never the whole (making a painting, framing it in a frame that has the image of a frame printed on it, framing the whole thing in a painted frame);
- making the work potentially camouflage in any context (in the collector's home, for example, a piece of furnishing; in the museum, an installation element) and perhaps suggesting a functionality that immediately declares the work's status as a consumer good (the work is a dress; the work is a coat-hanger).
- making sure that there is no privileged point of view for observing the work, and most of all for producing its documentation; in other words, undermining its iconic potential (the work is a mirror—how can I look at it without my presence interfering in the view? The work is a protean sculpture—is

there a privileged viewpoint from which to experience it?).

In a nutshell, we have to be *camp*.

WE, THE CLUBBERS

Spilling sweat on the same dance floor is one of the most effective means of strengthening a community of individuals. It's not strictly a matter of musical genre (still less of DJs), nor of the kind of club, nor of the identity of the habitués. It's a matter of adhering to a shared but ineffable and diffuse emotion, in a circumscribed space-time. On the dance floor, “common feeling” is defined by generality and contingency. The clubber is an indistinct individual (nocturnal, shady), an individual freed from his self, who nonetheless asserts the singularity of his own being there—of a “whatever” being there, which matters “such as it is.”¹² Having crossed the threshold of the dance floor, the individual is both alone and together with the others who populate that space; in a certain sense, he becomes a “minus.”

Let's read a clubber's testimony:

*I dance. I dance to Jacopo's music and when that's not enough I make my own, turning to that aural imaginary that I've accumulated over years and years of clubbing. I layer rhythmic patterns, extend melodic themes, create cathartic moments. A flicker of strobe lights shows me the room and the individuals in the room. It's like seeing a view of Michelangelo Pistoletto's Minus Objects, paintings, sculptures, micro-architectures that elbow each other in the artist's studio, held together only by the fact of having nothing in common—an atomized community, like us here, dancing on top of each other, sweating together, heavily, like in a CrossFit session. I think of myself as a “minus,” a singularity removed from the singularity of the person dancing next to me, and removed from the singularity of the gathering of people constituted in this club.*¹³

He continues:

I wonder whether we've become a community simply by being in the same place at the same time, everyone in their own way, and whether this “anarchic” element makes us a “critical” mass—an involuntary, temporary one, sure, but still “critical.” Critical even just by virtue of the subversive potential of a social aggregate

*that comes together after sunset and is ready to fall apart before sunrise—without a trace.*¹⁴

The parallel with Michelangelo Pistoletto's *Oggetti in meno* (*Minus Objects*, 1965-66) can help us delineate some creative strategies of contingency and generality. Even if we refrain from thinking of our creations as “constructions or fabrications of new ideas,” as “objects that represent [us],” but rather figure them as “liberations,” as “objects [...] that contain a perceptive experience that is definitively externalized,”¹⁵ then we'll have creations that aren't manifestations of identity. “Just as the generic singularities of the *Minus Objects* appear removed with respect to each other,” Gabriele Guercio writes, “so the anarchic whole that they form appears removed both from the presumably unchanging identity of the artist, and from an apparatus of codes and expectations that presumably commands the production and reception of art works.”¹⁶

In the first instance, we have to distance ourselves from creating uniformity and recognizability, and to undermine any hint of absorbing our practice into a consensual discourse regarding an avant-garde, a movement, a clan. Instead, we have to go back to making art that is not subjected to forces of bureaucratization and management—to forces of systematization. We have to cultivate a “tradition of derailment,”¹⁷ to achieve autonomy, independence from the art industry. Our creations can be born genuinely, like the act of dancing on a dance floor—like sweating out an experience that, because it is at once fleeting and immense, can be neither crystallized nor reproduced (simply put, who's there is there, and who isn't, isn't).

Let's turn now to a conversation among a few young DJs:

Lotic: Pissing people off is important in the club because it's a rejection of the way music becomes popular.

[...]

M.E.S.H.: Forcing a little bit of ugliness on people, that's important for sure. [...] They're often looking for smoothness in other scenes, which we don't really pay that much attention to. Start and stop is a part of what we do. With house and techno you don't stop. A techno DJ

could spend two and a half hours from 118 BPM to 131 BPM, and if he pushes it too fast at a certain point, everyone's going to notice that. But with us, this track is 140, and the next one I really want to play is 92. Conceptually it's perfect, or harmonically, so you have to figure out a creative way to get back down there, whether it's through effects or just being really ugly and stopping the track and playing the next one.

[...]

*Lotic: My style is a complete rejection of smoothness. It's changing a little bit now, but I was always trying to be rude and disruptive.*¹⁸

The dance floor is always enveloped in semi-darkness, and this basic characteristic suffices to make it a space of experimentation. Here, the dynamics of acceptance that organize social behavior are muddled so that the deformed, the irregular, the hybrid can emerge freely. The creativity stimulated by the clubbing experience thus always bears a certain “neurotonic” disharmony, a monstrous attractiveness, an ugliness of today destined to be the beauty of tomorrow.

In the art industry, the equivalent of the club is the project space, or artist-run space, or independent space. Like the club community, the project space community is generic and contingent: the “common feeling” is founded on a shared space-time—above all, a place, which is a focal point for the circulation of individuals, but also a time, which is an era, and thus a necessarily limited time. The artist who exhibits in the project space is always a “minus” with respect to the space's community, he is alone and somehow together with the other artists. For this reason, the project space is not a platform that aims toward the uniformity and recognizability of artistic practice. It's a platform of experimentation, of “derailment,” and as such it displays the attractive monstrosity that will go on to define the aesthetic codes of future artistic production.

Indeed, whenever the project space achieves consensus, this pertains always and only to its exhibition offer, but never its enunciated proposal—the art as disquieting newness and not as methodological evolution. In fact, the more the proposal is avant-garde and ambitious, the more

it translates into rough and informal art. After all, the celebration of a set of necessarily paradoxical processes—albeit with the awareness that it is in the resolution of conflict that real cultural growth takes place—is incommensurate with the very nature of consensus.

Nato Thompson writes:

*Alternative spaces are in fact spaces free from the coercive logic of capital and coercion. They are spaces of becoming that can radically alter those in them. These spaces understand that the production of space must consider the powers that act in those spaces. A museum suffers from its coercive history and function. Not always, but sometimes. Alternatives can be limber and adept. They don't have to do art shows because it isn't about art. It is about being in the world. [...] Their possibilities are fecund and buoyant. They are aware of political economy and resistant. They are Machiavellian, strategic and open.*¹⁹ An artistic community that aims to constitute an evaporated group should never tire of opening and closing project spaces.

WE, THE POWERBOTTOMS

We can collectively live in a condition of militant passivity (does the essence of the contemporary era not reside in paradox? Or better: is contemporaneity not the era of “paradessence?”²⁰). There’s no need to subject oneself to a bondage session, because it’s not a question of finding pleasure in pain. Instead, we ought to recognize that, if you’re a martyr of any system, that system provides all the means for your sanctification. Passivity is therefore distinguishable from apathy and qualifiable as the aware, or “politically active,” approach to submission. Because it’s precisely by virtue of this awareness that passivity undercuts the exercise of dominance. In the homosexual relationship, the powerbottom acts exactly in this way: because he’s emancipated from the social projection that attaches a derogatory meaning (of passivity, precisely) to his submissive condition, the powerbottom takes control of his role and “conducts” the relationship, thus foiling the projection—instead respected—associated with the role of the dominant (active) other.

Careful: the powerbottom is not the so-called passive-aggressive. And that’s because he doesn’t experience his condition as an exacerbation of being the victim of an imaginary social injustice. The powerbottom doesn’t hold grudges against his top, nor does he take revenge on him, nor, still less, expect an inversion of roles. His action is always assertive. For this reason, he is neither *top* nor *bottom*—simply, the powerbottom has sex subjugating both himself and his partner to the experience of the sexual relation.

The theoretical literature on homosexual sexuality has repeatedly reiterated its suicidal nature. “Nothing has made gay men as visible as AIDS,” writes Leo Bersani. All the same, “the heightened visibility conferred on gay men by AIDS is the visibility of imminent death, of a promised invisibility.”²¹ But is it not just as true that AIDS helped the gay community to coalesce and to show itself openly to heterosexual society? “Look at us: we’re still alive. We won’t be made to feel guilty, we’re having sex—lots of it—again.”²² And not only: has AIDS not imbued the matter of homosexuality with decidedly tragic or “epic” overtones? “Look at us: we’re not only here, everywhere at your side, but also everywhere in history, in neglected works and figures but also in the subtexts of the masterpieces of western civilization.”²³ The gay men who didn’t get AIDS certainly aren’t heroes, but mere survivors. And we certainly can’t define as “bravery” the fact that the fury of promiscuous sexual relation, in the face of the epidemic, and with respect to (heterosexual) monogamy, constituted precisely a question of identity. The “bravery” lies in having continued to have sex, but as an irrepressible need to experience a communion with the other. This perseverance has been enough to give to homosexual sex in the time of AIDS the value of a “myth.”

The creative strategy of the powerbottom is mythopoeisis, the generation of myths based on real events. Mythopoeisis emerges as the testimony of a lived experience; in the act of narrative exposition, that experience assumes a semblance of exemplarity, of emblematicity; generating

a “type,” the testimony becomes a parable, a myth. We have to support, if not indeed activate, processes of mythopoeisis of our experiences; not in order to crystallize them and bequeath them to posterity, but to externalize them from our “selves,” to “free ourselves of them.” If experience is myth, then it’s no longer lived experience; but if it’s no longer the past of an individual, then it’s also not the history of a collectivity.

Corrado Levi warns us (or rather, warns the “sparkling gay friend who wants to become a writer”):

*[...] you'll have to be wary of the grand design; the heteros, those rascals, have caught on to it; the grand design implies a faith or a lack of faith in the world that isn't given to us; we are neither the masters nor the vanquished.*²⁴

We can write our autobiography, but that would be a “grand design” which would imply a cynical or utterly deferent reading of the art industry. On the other hand, we can certainly write a *Künstlerroman*, that is, a narrative of our maturation within that system. Diluted in the novel, filtered by storytelling, always threatened by form and thus necessarily tending toward fiction, our experience pertains to a model of: a) the experience of the artist as a normalized career path—so that the first solo show becomes “the” first solo show, the first international exhibition becomes “the” first international exhibition; b) human experience as the exploration of a generational imaginary—“the” club, “the” fashion brand, “the” public personality, etc.

The collectivity narrated in the *Künstlerroman* is thus an evaporated group: the story’s protagonists are stand-ins, understudies of the various members of the community. The reality therefore doesn’t reside in the novel’s content (questioning the veracity of the events described would be superfluous), but in the very act of writing. That content becomes a disembodied voice: a booby trap, a red herring, the bread and butter of classifiers, reporters, commentators and self-proclaimed enemies.

How many times is “vulnerability” evoked in any issue of *Dazed & Confused*? Vulnerable are the young pop stars and young transgender activists, the young supermodels and the young second-generation immigrant music producers, the young outsider actors and the young avant-garde designers. It’s as though all of youth culture were a macroscopic archery range, whose targets were so many St. Sebastians—all there, ready for the arrows. The youth’s distinct self-identification as enlarged bull’s-eyes can be read as an impromptu commandeering of that very condition of being a target, a condition that has historically commercialized their lifestyle. So, on the level of stylistic evolution, for example, openly inhabiting contemporaneity means minimizing the affirmation of innovation, which by now is immediately viral; it means rendering inadequate the classic techniques of cool hunting, of following “street” fashion, thus redirecting that dynamic of co-opting the innovations of youth subculture along a biunivocal, or opposing, or altogether zig-zagging axis between underground and mainstream.

Declaring oneself vulnerable means nonetheless affirming an absolute diversity, which is above all a non-conformity to models of the dominant mythology. Isidore Isou wrote that “those whom we call young, regardless of their age, are individuals who still haven’t adapted to their own function, who stir and fight to achieve the desired position of agency.”²⁵ The youth indeed are born neither apathetic nor nihilistic, still less unruly, but are rather figures in (desperate) search of their social roles. When they can’t identify it, they end up either: a) embracing defeat and diluting their existence in the migration from one pseudo-role to another—that is, becoming *hipsters*, or b) problematizing the fact that one’s role does not exist and will never exist, that is, turning into the living ghost of the individual-agent—becoming *emo*. The emo is someone who symbolizes a tear in the social fabric; who imposes his non-role as a fault line in the system. The emo is an interference. He makes himself audible (visible),

but doesn't harmonize (doesn't participate favorably). He's not mobile and that makes him an easy target. But his immobility is like the slow erosion of the woodworm; it's a hieratic immobility that winks at History; it's good ol' alienation.

But let's take a step back and return to the hipster. Mark Greif writes:

*The hipster is that person, overlapping with declassifying or disaffiliating groupings—the starving artist, the starving graduate student, the neo-bohemian, the vegan or bicyclist or skate punk, the would-be-blue-collar or post-racial individual—in fact aligns himself both with the rebel subculture and with the dominant class, and opens up a poisonous conduit between the two.*²⁶

The hipster believes himself to be autonomous because, in the first instance, he believes himself to be “special.” He cultivates an individual mythology and tends to assemble in groups or subgroups so that his difference can be recognized as such. The hipster never risks being “so” different that no other member of the group can quite place him, nor of being “only just” different enough and thus passing unobserved. At the same time, he'll never be discouraged by the continuous advent of “new” differences and, albeit with difficulty, will harmonize his own with those of the time. In a certain sense, the hipster's difference will always be defined as a model, a standard. “In the style of an audio equalizer,” we read in *K-HOLE #4: YOUTH*, regarding the hipster:

Mass Indie culture mixes weirdness with normalness until it levels out. This is the dogma of: old jean jacket over an evening dress, expensive leisure activity in an industrial space, one party animal per party. In this scenario, mastering difference is a way of neutralizing threats and accruing status within a peer group.²⁷

The hipster's autonomy is in fact an expression of sociopathy.

The hipster finds in “creativity” the ability to master difference and in the “creative industry” a system that favors the definition of standards of difference. Since art is a form of “creativity,” the question is

legitimate: how can we produce creations that aren't reduced to mastering difference, but rather embrace it programmatically? In other words, what is the creative strategy of the anti-hipster? Let's say that we can create not to validate our uniqueness, to ourselves and to others, but to invalidate the exercise of difference. This stance points us toward a hypothetical art-making that may gradually lead us to the possibility of not creating at all. “Whenever possible, I don't create,” Emilio Prini affirms.²⁸ “RE MY SHOW AT ANTIQUARIA ROMANA I CONFIRM REJECTION OF ABSTRACT WORK IN ART IMPOSSIBLE TO PARTICIPATE AND GIVE MY ART WORKS,” Francesco Matarrese telegrams to his gallerist.²⁹ Even if we limit ourselves to the history of Italian art, we can find countless expressions of a desire to be emancipated from artistic creation, to retreat from the art industry, to “make completely and betray systematically.”³⁰ Comprehensively, they allow us to delineate a solid “tradition of derailment” as well as “of autonomy”—a tradition of *emo* art. We need to perpetuate this tradition. But also necessarily to update production and distribution strategies to contemporaneity, that is, to a context in which the pervasiveness of the system is such that “what comes after art” (to follow the aim of Matarrese's research, for example) is, for us, always and only creativity. Which means that the unconditional “rejection” of creative production can be equal only to that “pure and simple suicide” that is both anti-fashion and anti-network.

Mario Tronti writes:

*Working in the face of the working class, and against it, like an enemy, is no longer just the starting point of antagonism but also of its organization. If the alienation of the worker has any meaning, it's that of being a great revolutionary event. The organization of alienation. The aim, again, is refusal, but at a higher level: an active and collective refusal, mass political refusal, organized and planned.*³¹

Italian working-classism has embraced an anti-labor outlook founded on dynamics of distancing lived life from wage labor, on the rejection of work and the project of its extinction. But what does our immobility

mean for us, potential emos, visible individuals who do not participate in the creative industry? In other words, how do we organize our alienation? One answer might be to create, but only as long as our creations highlight the devolutions and dead ends that the creative industry goes up against. Which means, for example, embracing the aesthetic poverty of low profile, low-resolution, semi-professional productions that emerge thanks to the spread of the means of creative production. Let's listen to an emerging artist:

In the age of digital technologies all you need is a laptop and a room; you play around for a minute with one of the pieces of professional software that everyone has access to by now; and, voilà, you have a site, a blog, the coolest social platform in the world. Everyone's a self-styled professional. One the one hand, these new tools cut the costs of production, but on the other hand they create wide-spread professional insecurity, [because] ever since the aesthetics of high definition have become available to everyone, the “high” languages have irrevocably been fused with “low” ones. So that, today, a certain image quality is not indissoluble from a kind of mediocrity.³²

Making aesthetically poor art makes us dysfunctional creatives, creatives who “systematically betray” the industry of creativity—“ghosts of creatives.” Just like emos, poseurs, clubbers and powerbottoms are all ghosts of active individuals. Or better, they are poltergeists, immaterial entities “of disturbance.” We too can turn into poltergeists and transform our collective action into an interference. Because in the end, it's not about sabotaging a system, any system, much less that of art; it's about dematerializing in its environs—founding a dispersed community, finally out of reach.

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- 4 Raf Simons, Autumn/Winter collection 2001.
- 5 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991), 50.
- 6 Vetements, Autumn/Winter collection 2016.
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- 8 Telfar, *CUSTOMER Club* collection.
- 9 Paola Colaiacomo, *L'eleganza faziosa: Pasolini e l'abito maschile* (Venice: Marsilio Editore, 2007), 15.
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- 11 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, 3rd Edition, trans. Annette Lavers (London: Vintage, 2009), 231.
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- 16 Gabriele Guercio, “L'opera d'arte e il divenire generico del creativo: Cinque momenti ‘italiani’?,” in *Il confine evanescente. Arte italiana 1960-2010*, ed. Gabriele Guercio and Anna Mattiolo (Milan: Electa, 2010), 349.
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- 29 Francesco Matarrese, *Telegramma di Rifiuto (Telegram of rejection)* (1978), Artist's collection.
- 30 Andrea Viliani, “Per un archivio corale dell'arte italiana dell'Autonomia,” in *L'archivio corale: lo spazio di via Lazzaro Palazzi, l'esperienza dell'autogestione e AVANBLOB*, ed. Vincenzo de Bellis (Milan: Mousse Publishing/La Triennale di Milano, 2015), 108.
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photographed by Stefan Schwartzman
art direction and styling by Alessandro Bava

MR. BAVA







White cotton T-shirt with "Gucci Fake" print and tiger and flower patches on the back, **Gucci by Alessandro Michele** - Silk and lurex stretch chiffon batwing dress, **Archive Thomas Tait AW14**













White cotton T-shirt with "Gucci Fake" print and tiger and flower patches on the back, Green and black tartan wool hat, **Gucci by Alessandro Michele** - Polymide and acetate pleated neckerchief, **Archive Thomas Tait SS16**



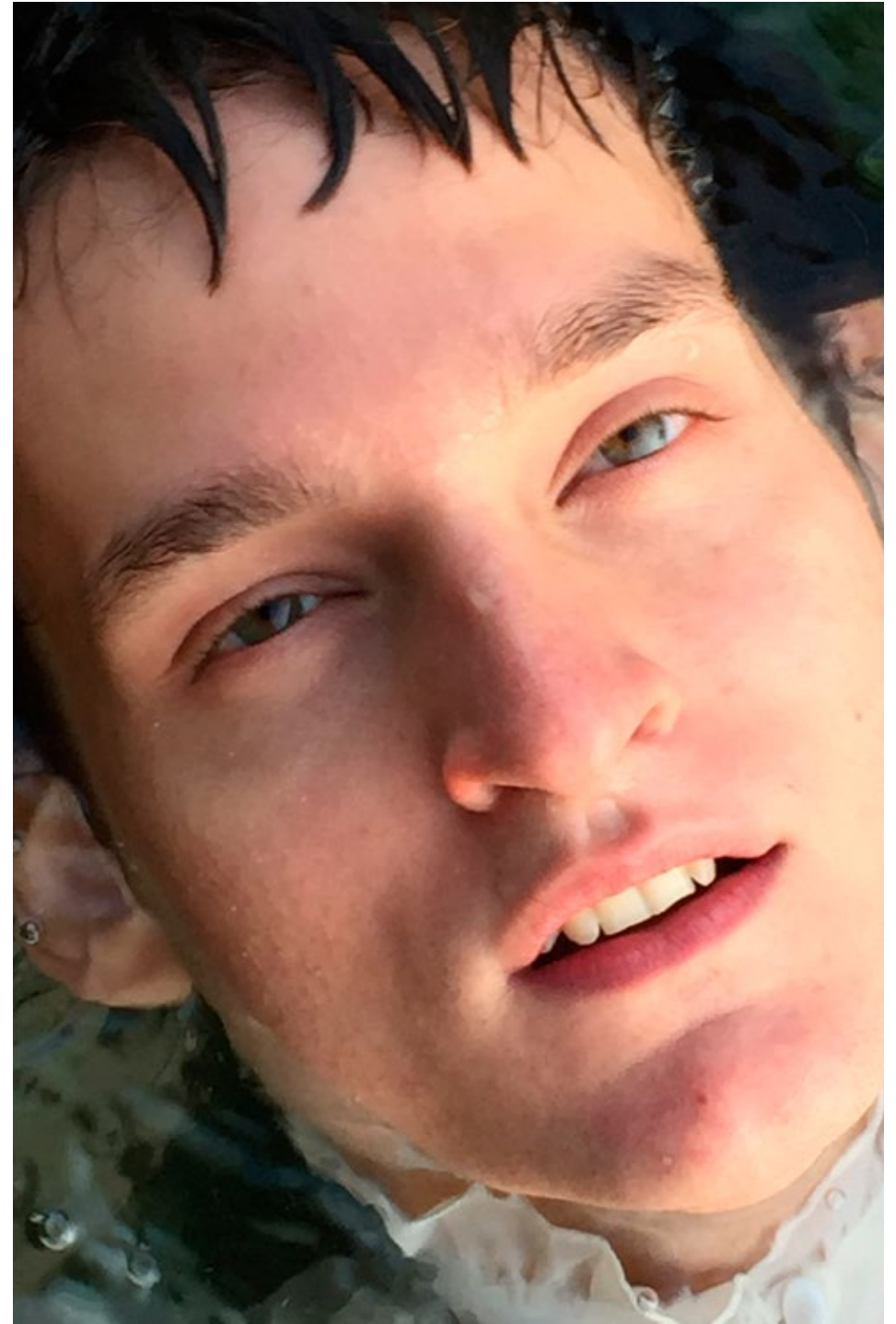


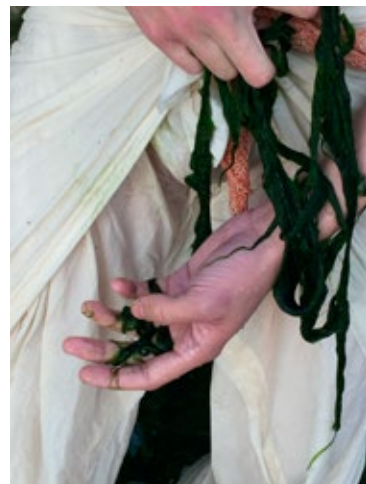
Lukas Hoffman

NARCISSUS

Camera: Nils Amadeus Lange Narcissus: Lukas Hofmann / Saliva

Wearing: Limmat, Cladophora, Saliva









nothing human makes it out of the near future...

and that's ok with us. embrace hyper-fluid capitalist deterritorialization on a planetary scale. embrace accelerating machine desire. embrace AI decentralized autonomous organisations as hypercapitalist overlords. embrace the fusion

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Jacob Dreyer

THIS LAND SO FULL OF BEAUTY

For Ruan Yisan, Shanghai's Ruskin

THE CHINESE LANDSCAPE

The ways that Chinese have understood their landscape is very different from the ways that we have in Europe. For example, in traditional Chinese landscape painting, there are human figures and indications of human residences, who are contextualized as only one of numerous elements in the overall scene; they have neither more nor less prominence than the natural elements such as trees, rivers and hills. There's a strong inclination for Chinese intellectuals from mythical poets such as Li Bai to contemporary activist architects such as Ou Ning or Yu Kongjian to see an Edenic unity between man and nature in an ecologically pure Chinese past, one whose geographic and temporal location is never quite clear. The reality is that the areas of China with high concentrations of population, particularly the Yangtze river delta, has been being reshaped by human interventions for thousands of years; the undulating mountains are as manmade as our cities. Yvonne Hsieh writes of the chessboard of pre-liberation Beijing that it itself was China's Gesamtkunstwerk; an absolute interior, one of logic and beauty (for those who find beauty in rigorous order). If we wish to observe the concrete form that the revolution took, we need look no farther than Beijing's own structure; walls which symbolized an enclosure and the enactment of spatial inequalities, replaced by transportation infrastructure, for explicitly ideological reasons, as Wang Jun's research shows. But every interior requires an exterior: every winner, a loser (or hundreds of them: Mao said of rural Hunan in the 20s that 3% of the population had human lives).

The other thing about landscape paintings, as opposed to portraits, is that they depict the lives of multiple individuals within a broader

ecosystem, rather than extracting an individual cogito from time and space into the abstracted borders of a portrait. We need not insist that Tang China was an ecologically sustainable utopia to feel that making contemporary China ecologically sustainable and politically egalitarian would be a good idea; indeed, Wang Hui's Rise of Modern Chinese.

Thought, Kojin Karatani's Origins of Modern Japanese Literature, and similar texts see a distinctly Asian modernity as being rooted not in the relations of man to man, but in the relations of humans with the broader landscape; needless to say, this relationship was also privileged within Mao Zedong thought.

Today, in observing Beijing, the city 1960s mayor Peng Zhen called "as pure as crystal," we see contemporary China's gesamtkunstwerk: absolutely modern, absolutely set against the modern. This is the capital city of anti-modernity, a terrain of peach orchards and stormclouds, of golden towers and brick-made shacks. Beijing is the terra nullus of the present; the government based in the world's most polluted major metropolis may be the last hope for activists trying to bring real power to bear against climate change.

The psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas could have been describing the architecture of any of China's new cities when he wrote that "these structures may seem more than simply buildings, rather material testimonies to our vision of the future... All monuments, whether functionally intended so or not, are tombs. They not only shadow the deaths of the workers, and outlive their creators; they seem in their mass to be forms of death amongst the living."

The homeland is a dream of eternal life; a conversation which, even if I can't finish, somebody else will continue; not a geography, but a way of seeing. That's Beijing.

Chinese literature and art began, on a basic level, in representing the world that subjects found themselves in –Heidegger called this *geworfenheit*, thrownness. When we discuss the Chinese past, it might be to demonstrate that there is an alternative form of universal thought than that offered by the capitalist system- it's art.

Arguably, Chinese culture as such originated in the description and research of China's landscape, a research intended to modify that landscape; whether it's the legend of Dayu, the mythical engineer who dammed the Yellow River, or the cascade of poetry and painting that has come since, the default position of Chinese art has been that of a subject responding to a landscape, identifying the ways that the landscape can generate new forms of consciousness, and of unity.

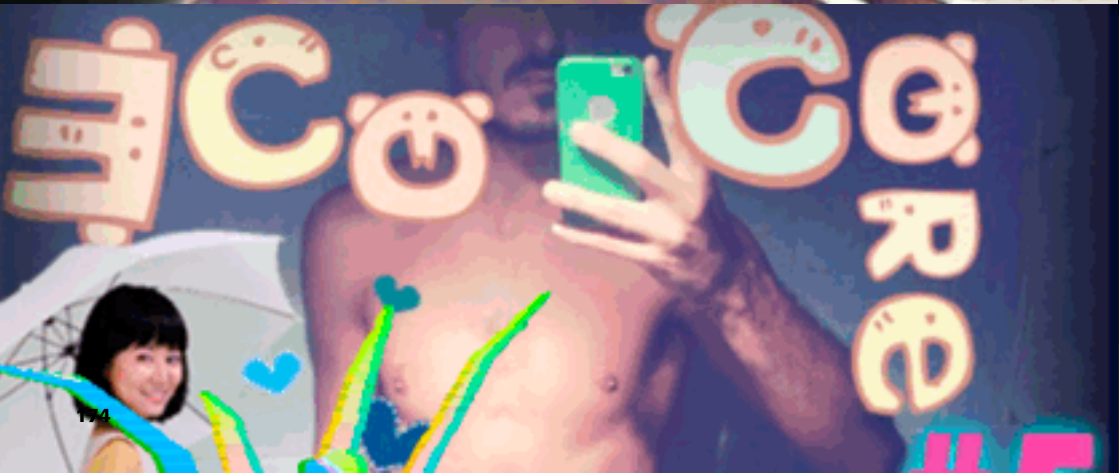
From the Jiangxi Soviet to the intellectuals who went down to the countryside, the political project called "New China" has always been, at its most material core, centered on China's geography. The politics of the 21st century will be climate politics. Can China's tradition of thought about the landscape be mobilized to be of use here? Do we respect China's heritage enough to actually live according to its precepts-of situating ourselves within an ecosystem, which we treat with respect and love?

CATHAY

The landscape, the world, is a mirror of our own selves; if a portrait of a human depicts their physiognomy, and in particular, their face, a portrait of a landscape is a portrait of the human aspiration to modify the reality which we encounter. China, a terrain for an altermodern, is not a place, but a thought; we could even call it a representation; this thought hasn't been fully realized or fleshed out, which might explain the sense of unreality we feel as our trains hurtle through the landscape. If today we see our cities and countryside as junkspace, that is because we have lost the ability to see the true potential that lies in the hearts of each of our comrades in this experiment we call New China; we aren't seeing humans, but nodes in an economic network. There's no possible greater betrayal of the Chinese revolution than that.

Today, it is the work of the artist to craft a life-world, a *Weltanschauung*, equal in power or superior to the life-world of capital, to re-enchant the radioactive, toxic terrain in which our hopes for authentic communication have been betrayed so many times. Beijing will be as pure as crystal- maybe it was all along.







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