

The title of the book—Benjamin in Kyoto—certainly links up with certain fragments of content from Walter Benjamin's work; his **philosophy** as it were. but then seen through the lens of the dramaturge, through which he triangulates his practices as a 'graphic designer', a 'stage director' and an author.

My project with the HEX-signatures [the system of 6 stamps being tested throughout this **portfolio**] therefore is partly inspired by annotation practices in the Arcades Project, which I have had the opportunity to consult in the Benjamin archives at Academie der Künste, in Berlin (2016).

The HEX-signatures claim is to offer a readability—in the midst of a work in progress—across elements that are combined in an assemblage; **looser** than what one would normally attribute to a **whole**. In other words, it aims at a **pre-holistic cogency** (relying on a set of selected **allies**; materials, tools, actions).

In sum, it proposes a trail of **idea-work** that is allied with **muscle memories**; working **with** them, rather than **against** them. The acts of printing, binding and stamping this volume therefore are considered as partaking of—and indeed propelling—the idea-work, of which the HEX-signatures offer a **readability**.

Indeed, how does the work of the **hands**—and **bodywork**—conspire in driving mental operations such as categorisation, co-ordination, joining, traversing, imagining and redeeming images. Things that we normally would consider as mental operations, in their transmitted, communicative, trans-personal aspect.

As practices, the HEX-signatures are traced back to **type-signatures** used by **typographers** to keep their fonts from being mixed up. But also the **print-signatures** used by **printers** to keep track of how the print is folder into smaller compartments that make up a book, or other printed matter.

The question being what might be the heir of these two rationales—one **categorising** [typography] the other **coordinating** [print]—in the age of desk-top publishing and digital print. To see whether it is possible to pursue **gain**, rather than loss, in the wake of technological development in our era.

My last point—pertaining the Walter Benjamin's tripartite practice—is **literary**. How, indeed, **fictional contents** may be allied to a **materialist approach to research**, which in this volume features the queries into **experimental archaeology**, and the role of artistic research into this area.

The **dramaturgical strategy** of the **ensemble**—in which a **production narrative** is wed to the work of a **house-critic**—is to bring the **tripartite practice**, described above, on a **journey**: the journey goes from Oslo/Norway to Kyoto/Japan and back. In this aspect the volume as a **beginning** and an **end**.

However, the process defining it **middle-out** cannot be contained in this way, but should be seen as an attempt to seek cogency in assemblages; specifically, how making allies with 3 practices, can bring cogency into one's present situation: an ontological translucency **between** the opaque and transparent.

The recipient of this volume—which is conceived as a 'research portfolio'—is **not** invited to read the volume from the beginning to the end; thinking that if only such a thorough read has been achieved, you are entitled to have an opinion of the ensemble. Instead, you are invited to **leaf**, **look** and **glean** [repeatedly].

You may conceive of this as an archive-style of reading; which is selective, mobile, distributed and repetitive [iterative]. What you are invited to take out from engaging with this material is an **assemblage** [rather than a seamless whole]. You can yank something out of place, and plug it in somewhere else.

If it still works, you have made your own contribution: or, rather, using the assemblage [**modus operandi**] as a strategy to meet an assemblage [**opus operandi**]. It is a weaker form of something I learned when studying Aby Warburg's pin-boards with photographs—his **Mnemosyne** series.

Or, if you will, compounds of **juxtaposed materials** that will reveal themselves to you—and in this sense become **readable**—on condition that you will **add something of your own**. Warburg's goal as to combine the aims purposes of **classification** and **navigation** (i.e., an ordering system) in his **book collection**.

The readability ensuing from this approach is **not** content to decode and interpret materials, but seeks to link up with a **design**; at a point where the ensemble, such as a collection, **cannot** be conceived nor solved as a whole, but **decisions** yet will be made on the basis of **connective** and **communicative** affordances.

In this aspect, the HEX-signatures—which you can scan by looking at the stamps on the flyers at the beginning and the end of the volume—are like the **keys** of a **musical score**. They do not indicate the music-line, but where you are in the registre or repertoire of the transmissions that make up idea-work.

Initially, the flyers were made up from **sets of 5**: **#01** attempt; **#02** try again; **#03** do something else; **#04** return [to the topic]; **#05** unlearn. Since the days of my journey to Kyoto—in the wake of the HEX-signatures—the flyers have developed from sets of 5, to include a 6th element: **#06** the *crossover* (featuring here).

The signatures are categories of 'signs' but are determined by **what they do**, rather than what they say/indicate. In Agamben's book **Signatura rerum** (2008) he uses Enzo Melandri's definition of signatures: i.e., a **sign within the sign**—or, within a semiotic ensemble—that has to be played in order to do its work.

Which is to make the ensemble **sing** even as it is not finished, or completed as a whole (i.e., in composition that, by need or deed, do not/cannot aim at wholeness). Agamben compares the signature, in this aspect, to the **musical instrument** itself, and uses the example of a lute: it is silent till played.

This performative pitch, aims at preparing the recipient of this volume for how she may allow herself to be **prompted** by the materials, and **parse** them according to her own wish/need; following from her ability and skill of **folding** and **traversing** materials of this kind. Please use this sheet as a **book-mark**.