

ESSAYS/FORSØK 6  
SPRING/VÅR 2021  
MASTER DESIGN

KUNSTHØGSKOLEN I OSLO

# INNHALDSFORTEGNELSE

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## Preface

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### Ontological Materialism

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Det er gått et år siden vi sist utga vår årlige samling med essays skrevet av studentene ved MA1: essays som er blitt til i kjølvannet av vårt kurs i teoriutvikling (MDE 545 Teori 2) på master programmet. Det er verd å nevne av følgende grunn: for ett år siden var vi ved begynnelsen av **C19 pandemien**, mens det nå se ut til at den kan gå mot slutten. Vi blir forespeilet vaksinerings i løpet av sommeren. I sum har vi laget to samlinger under den lange nedstengningen.

De to volumene er svært ulike. Når vi arbeidet med den forrige utgaven var nedstengningen ny, og følelsen av å være stengt inne i hjemmene våre rådde. For å organisere og samle bidragene i essaysamlingen, brukte vi *Dekameronen* av Boccaccio som inspirasjon. Men i det inneværende skoleåret 2020/21 har ting endret seg. Vi har vendt oss til å iscenesette våre hjem som offentlige scenerom for arbeidslivets og undervisningens teater/arenaer.

Slik at oppmerksomheten vår har beveget seg—med små steg—til et punkt der vi begynner å skyve på fagene, ved den varierte praktisk-teoretiske vektingen vi dyrker her; på let etter noen synergier som det ser ut som vi har oppdaget både på MA-programmet med studentene, og blant de ansatte ved design i 2020/21. Det har gitt en ny etymologisk betydning til det greske ordet *teoria*—reisen—og *teoros*: den reisende. I regelen en reise med en ankomst.

Arbeidet som MA-studentene har lagt inn mht. å dokumentere sin forskning—i et format vi kaller *forskningsportfolio*/FP—har i år stilt studentene overfor høye krav til selvstendighet. Bredden og variasjonen har dette året derfor vært større enn tidligere, mht. valg av digitalt/analogt format, rekkevidden/omfanget av arbeidet som er lagt i FP, og dens rolle som bakteppe for å utvikle en mer omfattende design-teoretisk refleksjon senhøstes 2021(MDE511 Teori 3).

One year has passed since we last published our yearly anthology of essays by the MA1 students: essays hatched from our course in theory development (MDE 545 Theory 2) on our MA programme. It is worth mentioning, on this account: we were then at the beginning of the **C19 pandemic**, while it appears that it is now going to a close. We are scheduled for vaccination during the summer. In sum, we have done two anthologies during the extended lockdown.

However, the two volumes promise to come out differently. When working on the previous edition the lockdown was new, and the sense of being incarcerated in our homesteads prevailed. The metaphor we used to organise our efforts to gather contributions in the anthology, was inspired by Boccaccio's *Decameron*. But during the present school year 2020/21, things have changed. We have become accustomed to staging our homesteads for the theatrics of a public Zoom-arena.

And our attention has moved—by small steps—to a point where we want to push our subjects, in the oecumene of specialisations at the design department, with the variety of practical-theoretical emphases that we cultivate here; in search of synergies that we seem to have discovered both in the MA- programme with the students, and amongst the staff in 2020/21. It has given a renewed meaning to the Greek etymology of theory: *teoria*—the journey—and *teoros*, the traveller.

In 2020/21 the work put in by the MA- students to document their research—in a format called *research portfolio* (RP)—has demanded considerable autonomy from the students. The variety has been greater this year than previously, in the choice of digital/ material formats, the extent/volume of the work put into the RP, and its scope/function as a backdrop for hatching fledgling reflections to develop into a more extant design-theoretic reflection in the late autumn (MDE 511 Theory 3).

Dette semesteret har FP fungert som et *mellomland* med en karakteristiske grensetrafikken på tvers av praksis og teori, der en interaksjon/utveksling inngås mellom **a**) referanser som blir oppdaget og dyrket i nærhet til studentenes praktiske fagområde—grafisk design & illustrasjon, interiørarkitektur & møbel-design, kles- og kostymedesign—og **b**) referanser som studentene utvikler og finner frem til i teorikurset. Av denne utvekslingen oppstår det en spleising mellom praksis/teori.

Referanser med *opphav* fra de praktiske klassene har dermed en mulighet til å flyte opp som teoretiske nøkkelinnsikter, mens ideer med teoretisk bakgrunn kan klekke nye praktiske repertoarer. Dette er en utveksling vi søker å dyrke med hver enkelt student—basert på hennes egen forskning, interesse området og spesialisering—som hennes bidrag til *allmenningen*; som et elvemøte/åmot i den kollektive intelligensen som bestemmer kvaliteten til MA-klassen som helhet.

Dette er grovt sett hva vi forstår med *kritikalitet*: der man når og krysser en kritisk terskel i arbeidet med FP, vil utvekslinger, av typen som skisseres over, oppstå og utløse små/store «skred» i den enkelte studentens forståelse: med essayene vi publiserer i denne samlingen som konkret resultat. Essayene vitner både om studentenes villighet til å skrive—som bestemt ikke var der for 6 måneder siden—fordi de først har arbeidet for å manifestere *forståelse* i //FP.

Men leseren må ikke la seg lure. Det du har foran deg er en *manifestasjon*. Og, som sådan, vil den nettopp manifestere en *underliggende prosess* (den er arbeidet med i FP). Over årene, har vi hatt mange studenter med smertefulle læringshistorier knyttet til lesning og skriving. Vår tilnærming består i å reparere skaden—knyttet til tidligere erfaringer—i *nye par*: v/nevnte grensekrysning. En førsehåndserfaring med at praksis kan flyte opp som teori, og teori kan klekke ny praksis.

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At present, the RP constitutes an *edgeland* with a characteristic border-traffic between practice and theory, where an interaction/ exchange is entered between **a**) references that are discovered and cultivated closely to the students' practical study area—in graphic design & illustration, interior architecture & furniture design, fashion & costume design—and **b**) references the students develop in the theory course. From this exchange a crossover is hatched between practice/theory.

References with a *provenance* from the practical classes thereby have a chance to surface as key theoretic insights, while ideas with a theoretical provenance can hatch new practical repertoires. It is this exchange we seek to cultivate with each student—based on her own research, interest- area and specialisation—emerging as her contribution to *thecommon*; as one tributary to the development of a collective intelligence determining the qualities of the MA class as a whole.

This is broadly what we understand by criticality: crossed a critical threshold in her work with of the RP, exchanges of the kind outlined above, will hatch and cause small/big “avalanches” in the student's understanding; with a tangible output in the essay they are publishing in the present anthology. The essays testify both to a willingness to write—which simply was not there 6 months back—because they have worked to manifest *understanding* in writing, drawing and photo.

But do not be fooled, what you have before you is a *manifestation*. And, as such, it manifests an *underlying process* (which is their work with the RP). Over the years, we have had many students with a painful history with reading and writing. Our approach to repair the damage—owing to previous learning experiences—and so *re-pair*: featuring the crossover indicated above. A first hand experience that practice can surface as innovative theory, and theory can hatch *newpractice*.



Denne re-par-eringen gir et nytt utsyn på hva teori-kurs kan gjøre, ikke i isolasjon, men i kompleks relasjon til den praktiske undervisningen som læringsmiljø, og slik forlenge læringsmiljøet med miljølæring. I det større bildet, er vår tilnærming basert på ideen om at ved å *arbeide* miljømessig vil vi også lære å *leve* miljøriktig. Å holde tritt med gjenbruk, avfalls-reduksjon og senke tempo, er viktig, men det er ikke tilstrekkelig. Vi må også lære å arbeide på nye måter.

Derfor er det utfordringen å forstå hva kunnskap *gjør*—miljømessig—som vi idag har fått på tallerkenen. Studentene gir sine bud. Nedstengingen under **C19** har vært et miljøeksperiment i stor skala: global i sin rekkevidde, men allikevel lokal ved sporene vi har etterlatt oss gjennom kurset, inneværende semester, gjennom det foreliggende utbyttet. Som vanlig er det studentene fra grafisk design og illustrasjon som utvikler boka: i år er det Araiz Mesanza og Kristine L. Øverland.

Under arbeidet med den langsiktige tilbakemeldingene som blir gitt studentene enkeltvis, oppstod en kategorisering av bidragene i bokens tre deler nærmest av seg selv. Den første delen samler essays med materialitet og ontologiske undersøkelser i fokus. Den andre delen omfatter essays med en kritisk tilnærming: kjønn/feminisme, trygghet og sikkerhets-kapitalisme. Mens den tredje delen rommer selv reflekterende essays med en epistemologisk vinkling.

Jeg vil gjerne takke MA studentene personlig for deres essay-bidrag til den ovennevnte tredelingen (A-C):

**A)** Del 1 om **ontologisk materialisme**—Lærke Bang Barfod, Harald Lunde Helgesen, Sindre Burås, Sverre Brand, Nina Havermans, Araiz Mesanza, Embla Sunde Myrva;

This re-pairing brings up a new outlook on what theory-classes can do, not in isolation but in an environmental relation to the complex of practical curricula that develop on a daily basis “in the house”. In a broader scope, our approach is based on the idea that by *working* environmentally, we will also learn to *live* environmentally. Keeping the regimes of recycling, waste-reduction and slowness in our ledgers is needed and good, but insufficient. We also have to work differently.

Hence it is the challenge of understanding what our knowledge *does*—environmentally—that we presently have on our plate. The students are making their bids. The **C19** lockdown has been a huge environmental experiment: global in scope, yet clearly defined on local terms in our trail through the curriculum this year, with its present outcomes. As usual, students from graphic design and illustration who develop the book: this year, Araiz Mesanza and Kristine Lie Øverland.

While working on the longer term feedback which is dispensed to the students individually, a categorisation of the essay into the book’s 3 parts practically self-organised. The first part is devoted to essays with a leaning to materiality and ontological queries. The second part the essays features essays with a critical approach to gender/feminism, security and safety capitalism. While the third part contains self-reflective essays with an epistemological bent.

I would like to thank the MA students personally for contributing with their essays to the above mentioned three parts (A-C):

**A)** Part 1 on **ontological materialism**—Lærke Bang Barfod, Harald Lunde Helgesen, Sindre Burås, Sverre Brand, Nina Havermans, Araiz Mesanza, Embla Sunde Myrva;

**B) Del 2 om kritiske horisonter**—Emil Holmberg Lewe, Ruth Emilie Rustad Martinsen, Julie Lundegaard Christophersen, Finn Robert Jensen, Camilla Martinsen, Sana Khan Niazi, Anna Marthea Øren;

**C) Del 3 om epistemiske refleksjoner**—Hallbjørn Kjellsson Hognestad, Margaret Abeshu, Kristine Lie Øverland, Nicolo Groenier, Pauline Ader, Hanne Søreide Haugen, Anna Noll, Jens Kristoffer Bøyese Vik.

Studentene er p.t. i sitt første år på MA studiet og har vist hva man, i mangel av et bedre uttrykk, kan kalle en *vilje til utdanning*. Noen av FP (forskningportfolio) er eksepsjonelle, andre under utvikling. Det som har vært kjennetegnet til denne klassen har vært etterspørselen etter *kritiske tilbakemeldinger!*

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#### TAKKSIGELSER

Jeg vil gjerne rette en varm takk til PhD stipendiater som har støttet kurset vårt ved å være partnere i våre *KUF samtaler* (KUF, Kunstnerisk utviklingsarbeid og forskning): et fast innslag i flere år; med sikte på å utvikle kunnskap gjennom samtaler i MDE Teori 2. Inneværende år vil jeg nevne 4 PhD stipendiater spesielt: Bjørn Blikstad om *ekseriment*, Ida Falck Øien om *narrativer* (begge ved design), Petrine Vinje om *format* (kunst & håndverk) og Kristin Norderval om *scenario* (opera). Eksperiment, narrative, format og scenario er kursmoduler vi bruker til å beramme samtale.

\*) *Bisosiasjon*—den simultane mentale assosiasjonen av en ide eller objekt med to felt som vanligvis ikke blir sett som relaterte. Med ordspillet som typisk eksempel.

**B) Part 2 on critical horizons**—Emil Holmberg Lewe, Ruth Emilie Rustad Martinsen, Julie Lundegaard Christophersen, Finn Robert Jensen, Camilla Martinsen, Sana Khan Niazi, Anna Marthea Øren;

**C) Part 3 on epistemic reflection**—Hallbjørn Kjellsson Hognestad, Margaret Abeshu, Kristine Lie Øverland, Nicolo Groenier, Pauline Ader, Hanne Søreide Haugen, Anna Noll, Jens Kristoffer Bøyese Vik.

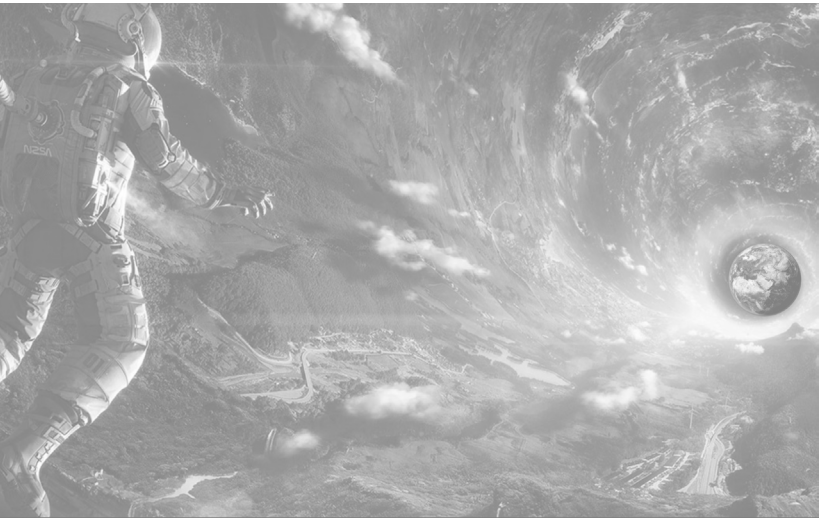
The students are in the first year of their MA and have had what, from lack of a better term, could be called a *will to education*. Some of the RPs (research portfolios) are exceptional, others in progress. What has been characteristic of this MA-class: the call for *critical feedback!*

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to direct a warm ‘thank you!’ to the PhD fellows who have supported the course by accepting to partner with our artistic research conversations, which has been a regular arena for developing knowledge through conversation in MDE 545 Theory 2. This year, I would like to mention 4 PhD fellows in particular: Bjørn Blikstad on *experiment*, Ida Falck Øien on *narrative* (both at design), Petrine Vinje on *format* (arts & crafts) and Kristin Norderval on *scenario* (opera). Experiment, narrative, format and *scenario* are course-modules we used to stage the sessions.

\*) *Bisociation*—the simultaneous mental association of an idea or object with two fields ordinarily not regarded as related (Merriam Webster). The pun being a case in point.



1

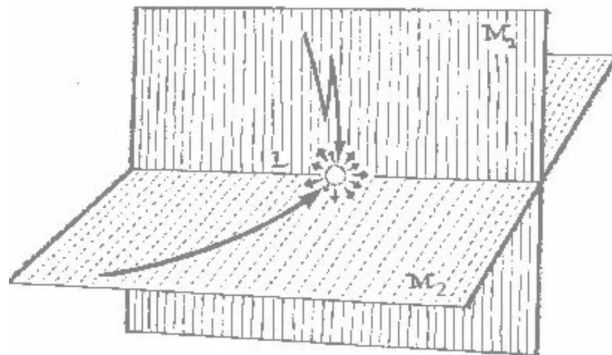


FIGURE 2

2



3

1 Nolan, Christopher. Director. (2014). *Interstellar* [movie]. Paramount Pictures.

2 Koestler, Arthur. (1964). *The act of creation*. Hutchinson.

3 Hermansrud, Vibeke. (2016). *City farmer Andreas plowing* [photo]. <http://loseter.no/portfolio-item/loseter/>

ONTOLOGISK  
MATERIALISME

ONTOLOGICAL  
MATERIALISM

## EXPLORING THROUGH TEXTURE

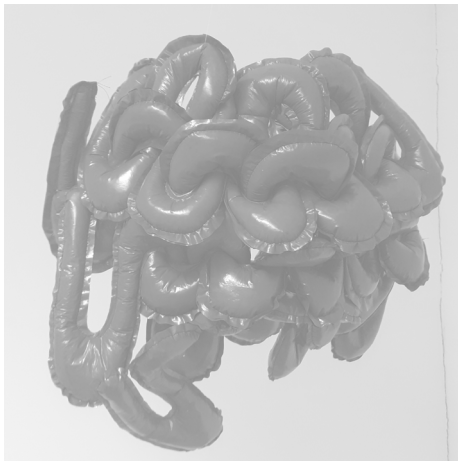


When I walk around in the world, it is the tactile I notice on my way, the surfaces on the wall on the way down the stairs, the snow crunching under my feet or the texture of my bike's handlebars. This tactile world is for me interwoven with past experiences, all the way back to childhood. What brings memories, recognisability and experiences in humans when they see or touch textures?

Starting from a definition of textures presented by Markov where textures appear on the surface of everything (Hilliard & Cliff, 2002), brings with it an understanding that is linked with memories and past experiences with similar textures. This is crucial for whether we feel safe, scared, or happy. When we touch or see a specific texture like foam rubber or chicken meat. The biological science aspect of senses cannot uncover this experience, and that is why I turn a phenomenological perspective to uncover the importance of texture experience in the costume design work-field. When you do not touch a texture but only see it, you still imagine how it feels, whether it is rough or smooth. Past experiences and memories are here embedded in textures (Gatto et al., 2000). This openness to the understanding of textures can help when working with design.

The understanding of the texture-experience is not always fully conscious. Only when it is turned upside-down, we can start to perceive it. Imagine, for example, if a toilet seat was not smooth and shiny but instead had a rough and prickly surface. The uncomfortable and dysfunctional and wildly impractical surface would bring a notice how important textures are for all of us, not purely for the practical but also for our experience of the whole world around us. Just like the ways Yayoi Kusama in her 1962 exhibition created a chair with an unusual texture. Hereby turning the dead object alive with repetitive shapes made from fabric and pillow filling that moved beyond two dimensions.

While working with my research portfolio and in the process of creating the costumes for the Antigone Opera, I have moved to three dimensions, so I can various effects due to light and shadows on a surface. How we understand the texture. The light also plays a big role, in relation to shadows that fall on the texture. Without light and shadow, there would be no seen textures.





I want to obtain a feeling that inanimate textiles can grow and somehow be alive. Just like a movement develops and influences its surroundings. In my process I worked with textile for costumes that moves and almost look like it is growing and changing.

The “heightened an emotional impact” on the observers (Preble., 2002) is for me; where the audience is aroused by curiosity and to touch and examine the textile in costumes.

In the costume-field, I can work more freely, both with my choice of materials, techniques, and shapes. In my process with double texture both for size and manipulation, I use one material to create a new texture, that original material will always have a texture and a surface, therefore the new texture I create will have two textures in one. The understanding and reading of a texture can be different in relationship. If a texture is made in three different sizes. But with the same technique and material, one will understand and read it in three different ways, perhaps the large texture is likely to be understood as rawer and the small one as finer.

Materials can also have a say in how you read a texture. Again, you can make the same texture with the same technique and size, but with 3 different materials, which means that you can, for example, understand one of them as soft and comfortable and the others as rough and uncomfortable even if it is the same texture, you see or touch. Materials are therefore an important factor when creating or manipulating textures. This manipulation is still bound to that the audience might have certain expectations to the material that they see.

Another way to understand and experience a texture manipulation and expectations is for me to use the tactile sense, namely by using the body’s largest organ, the skin. Here you get a slightly more realistic impression of the texture, is it wet, stinging, or hot. Where I think textures get interesting is in the creation of them. Here I can invent something new and invent techniques on which I can make the different surfaces and shapes that in a way challenge the consciousness, for example, when audience expects a material to feel in a certain way, just to be surprised that the dress they were looking at was made from plastic and garbage. Material knowledge and choice of materials for a tactile experiment is important, here I consider what I want to communicate through the material, if it’s silk and chiffon, people often think of something feminine, clean, and light but if I choose these materials in another context, I can confuse the

audience or change their understanding of the material.

I want to a feeling, a story a universe through the textures I create. Can I get the audience in a certain mood? To remember or make associations to something familiar, maybe it is something disgusting and clammy or something edible and safe. Understanding the embodied experience of texture and using recognisable objects to create an entire surface on, for example, a piece of clothing, can make one’s thoughts turn to a special mood or memory. It is both an easy and hard way to tell and communicate through texture. If the way we feel texture is so unconscious in us, how do we as designers learn to become conscious again, how can one rediscover and understand what texture can?

As children, we use our senses to get to know the world. The sense we use to feel things is not yet interwoven with memories. Its new and the experience is demanding understanding.

This rediscovering is one of my most important tools when I find inspiration and being creative. My urge to create always arises from inspiration from surfaces and textures I see and feel in my unending discovery of our world. It is especially important for me, both as a designer and as a person to maintain my curiosity and exploratory approach to my surroundings, I see it as my library of knowledge and inspiration.

I would like to dive further into my fascination with textures and ask myself why I am so preoccupied with designing based on creating my own textures and materials. When I create and experiment with textures, it is a way to show feelings and tell my version of how I see the world, nature, and life.

## BLANKETED DESIRES

This essay occurs somewhere in the middle of the MA studies. New ingredients have been added to the soup, new people with different perspectives, influences from teachers, books, guest appearances, experiences. The soup still didn't manifest itself as a sensory event in texture, color, smell and taste, due to extraordinary circumstances on a global scale, very much out of our control. And despite efforts to convince us students of design that also theory should be derived from tangible and material experience and knowledge, it has been a time separated from many of the physical pleasures of living fashion.

At this point, in the middle of working through the degree, some strong elements should have been accumulated and unpacked. That is, what a research portfolio would have contained. The lack of worldly experiences is reflected in what is actually to be found there: books, conversations, meetings on screens. From these some thoughts surface, the words, spoken or read, working as friction surfaces to tease out some keywords, themes and subjects from hiding. Using further dialogue and more friction and more words to unpack and explore the elements found.

The think tank-idea came early as one of these frictions, an imaginary place for ideas to crash, explode and fragment, safely contained, a laboratory to generate new thoughts. Inspired by Rem Koolhaas, OMA and their think tank for applying architectural thinking to any other field, AMO. A sheltered space situated inside a major player in the architecture industry, a symbiotic relationship, funded by the fruits of compromise in the building industry, feeding back purer concepts, free from the limitations of execution, often existing simply as ideas. Could the educational institution serve to host a think tank for design?

The stillness of a world in waiting for better times brings with it shyness and doubts, so the think tank idea was approached as one-on-one conversations within the MA1 fashion group. Also the self reflective privilege/curse of the design student has made this essay naturally revolve around myself and the subjects my own subconsciousness and consciousness have matched with the reference points arisen. This might make it sound like this course of events happened as a coincidence or



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Harald Lunde Helgesen

natural flow, but the fact is that this retrospective look inward was one of my planned undertakings for the MA studies.

Early in exploration came a conversation that covered topics of activism and design, design without activism, futures and pasts, privilege, guilt and other current, looming issues. In my game of Matching Pairs I dusted off my work in Ghana, a leap backwards to an experience of great personal significance, that was capped, covered and hidden out of sight by what became the BLM movement. The entire travelogue, in the form of all the mobile photos taken on, in total, three trips to Accra, Kumasi and Cape Three Points, printed as contact sheets to materialise and bring them back from digital, passive memory/amnesia. Rem Koolhaas asks in the closing text in the book "Countryside - A Report": "Is humankind's interest in knowing each other distributed equally? Is curiosity about the other a given? Or is curiosity a one sided aspirational claim?" Koolhaas works all over the world, notably in this context in Lagos, Nigeria, observing, planning and casting starchitect spells. A European man back in the middle of colonial heartlands - a designer revisiting with aims of different extractions. Or are we back with loose intentions of giving back, paying debts? I still feel ambiguity around my presence in the workshops and factories in Accra. Trade not aid, giving insight into how the precise, clean and efficient factories I know from Lithuania work, explaining how our Japanese customers do not tolerate a single stitch out of place.

Leafing through the 100+ pages of photos, holiday snaps, colourful street and market scenes, friends made, lovers left behind, work and inspiration. It feels tainted by the difference between us and them. The factories never managed to deliver the quality the Japanese required, the lovers ended up asking for help to leave for greener grass, and the resulting collection stuck with me as an unresolved, too complex for commercial fashion, out of place and touchy matter. Picking all this up again with a motive of staying with the trouble, as the current mantra keeps repeating, bringing it back to the surface, formulating something, a response, a new beginning, perhaps a closure.

Koolhaas' question keeps coming back to me: "Is curiosity a one-sided aspirational claim?" Is my interest in Ghana that of a tourist, frolicking in the exoticism with the added appeal of cheap prices. In my attempt to revisit and revive this chapter I reached out to the young strip-cloth weaver

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Harald Lunde Helgesen

Mawulolo Ayeyee I met in a weaving workshop in Accra under the large trees by Achimota Road. WhatsApp connects us again and enables design through sharing of available yarn colors and reference pictures. About 100NOK he charges for one yard of custom designed, hand woven fabric. A temptation to think business ideas, what could this sell for on the Norwegian market? But I'm not there, I have lost faith in the system. Or the system has lost its grip on me.

I regret pushing those Japanese QC standards. I regret my rigid position as designer in the exchange, insisting on my way when it clearly was not going to go. I look back and see great clothes, sturdy and quirky with little touches of personality from the hands that made them. These products came out of a culture where the retail shop is rare and the tailormade is default. A local fashion system where each street has its own designer-maker. In my current iteration of attempting a design collaboration across continents, I suggest a product kept in the personal space. Mawulolo and I are creating bedspreads for my place in the countryside. I think it partly proves that my curiosity is an aspirational claim. Having unique textiles in the guest rooms at the farm to impress visitors.

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Barth T. (December 2020) Unrealised communal soup cooking, as closing celebration after first semester course Theory in Design Practice at KhiO Master's in Design. With second failed attempt February 2021.  
Koolhaas, R. (2020). AMO/Rem Koolhaas (ed.) 2020: *Countryside: A Report*. Cologne: Taschen.  
Haraway, D. J. (2016). *Staying with the trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press.





## KRYSSFINER

Jeg elsker kryssfiner, de standardiserte platene som alltid ligger der tilgjengelige for meg. Tilsynelatende er de helt like, men med litt nøyere undersøkelser er alle litt forskjellige. Det er mulig jeg tar litt i og misbruker ordet romantikk når jeg snakker om mitt forhold til et bygningsmateriale, men et vennskap kan det sies å være, et vennskap som blomstret først og fremst gjennom tiden da jeg begynte å *jobbe* med kryssfiner.

Aristoteles skriver: “For å bli nære venner må man også få erfaring med hverandre, og den oppstår gjennom å bli kjent, noe som er svært vanskelig”.

Før vi ble venner hadde jeg ikke mye følelser for disse platene, og de få minnene jeg har av dette materialet er objekter jeg tilsynelatende trodde var laget av plank. Objektene var gulnet av olje, lakk eller lys og ble brukt i situasjoner der praktisk løsninger var prioritert.

På det tidspunktet var vi nok på et lavere vennskapsnivå, et sted Aristoteles kaller “nyttevennskap”, et vennskap som “tilhører markedets folk”. Slike vennskap er stort sett ivaretatt av hensyn til seg selv.

Treverk er et hygroskopisk materiale som ønsker å bevege seg, når det blir tørt trekker det seg sammen, mens det utvider seg når det blir fuktig. I en slik prosess, enten det blir tørrere eller fuktigere ønsker det også å vri på seg. Der ute, i naturen kjemper de levende organismene mot naturens krefter som vær og vind. Et grantré kan f.eks kompensere med å bygge seg en sterkere struktur i stammen på sørsiden hvis det blir utsatt for ytre påvirkninger som vind fra nordsiden. Når det da kappes til plank vil disse spenningene i stammen frigjøres og siden denne planken ikke lenger har noe som holder den på plass vil den vri og bøye seg. Dette er kvaliteter vi ofte ser på som “sjarmerende”, men som ofte skaper utfordringer når konstruksjoner skal reises.

I vår antroposentriske kultur har vi tatt oss til rette og fulgt bibelens ord: “Og Gud skapte mennesket i sitt bilde, [...]. Gud velsignet dem og Gud sa til dem: Vær fruktbare og bli mange og fyll jorden, og legg den under dere og råd over havets fisker og himmelens fugler og over alt levende som rører seg på jorden.” (1. Mosebok 1:27 - 28).

Lag på lag limer vi finér sammen. Det ene laget med finér legges 90-grader på det andre, med fenolhartslim mellom varmes de opp til 150 og et presses sammen med et trykk på 200 psi. Etter de har vært gjennom denne prosessen kappes de til standardiserte størrelser som passer perfekt inn i våre transportsystemer, varelagre, butikker og til slutt våre hjem.

Kryssfinerplater kommer to ulike størrelser (1500 mm x 3000 mm) og (1200 mm x 2400 mm) der den klart vanligste er sistnevnte. Dette passer perfekt inn i standard bygningskonstruksjoner med 600 mm avstand mellom stenderne og 2400 mm takhøyde. Vi kan derfor enkelt med en standard reisverkskonstruksjon og kryssfinerplater bygge et rom som kan oppleves som å trå inn i kjernen av stor trestamme.

Vi mennesker har en tendens til å søke våre røtter ved å inkludere natur i våre hjem. Duften av treverk fra furugulvet og ornamentene i åringene på kryssfinerplatene på veggene utløser komplimenter i omgangskretsen og samvittigheten om miljøvern stiger med tanken om å ha brukt naturlige materialer. Naturen vi tar til oss er i veldig stor grad tilpasset våre behov og blir brukt på våre premisser, kryssfinerplatene er satt sammen av tynne skiver av tre, manipulert med lim gjennom en industrialisert prosess for å bli sterkere og mer stabil enn planker nærmere en naturlig tilstand. Ved å tilpasse natur til våre egne ønsker for deretter å se en annen vei enn dit fabrikkene ligger skaper vi en illusjon av å leve i pakt med naturen.

Hva er natur og har vi som moderne mennesker et forhold til dette? En ironi jeg opplever når jeg løper på stien er at jeg føler meg 100% i naturen når jeg beveger meg mellom trær og skrenter, mens jeg faktisk beveger meg på en infrastruktur designet av generasjoner med mennesker i samarbeid med dyr i jakt på trygghet, mat, ro, osv.

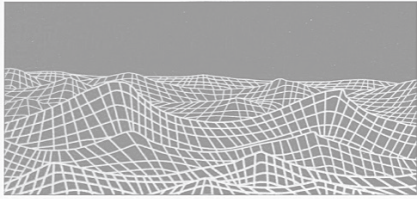
Som formgiver opplever jeg stadig en indre uro om hva som er greit og ikke, på den ene siden har jeg drivkraft til å skape noe, drive utviklingen av materialer og teknikk videre. På den andre siden føler jeg omsorg og får dårlig samvittighet for å ha kappet ned et flott grantré i noe som kan kalles personlig selvrealisering. Et slags primitivt behov som en av Guds utvalgte, herskerne over dyr og planter. Kun fordi vi kan kappe treet, betyr det at vi skal?

Industrialisering og har gitt oss flere muligheter som mennesker og vi overbeviser oss med at teknologiske fremskritt skal redde oss fra fremtidens utfordringer. Stort sett har teknologi blitt

brukt til effektivisering av produksjon som kan frigjøre tid for mennesker, men som Jevons paradoks påpeker øker i stedet forbruket og vi er kortere på veien til mot et holistisk samfunn. Arne Næss sier at: "bevaring av det naturlige og helhetlige biologiske livsmiljø med menneske som integrert del, er en forutsetning for utvikling av mennesket livskvalitet, og opprettholdelse av denne i fremtiden" som påpeker at løsningen på fremtidens utfordringen beror mer på mentalitetsendring enn teknologi.

Fremtidens formgivning bør i større grad følge prinsippene til stiene i marka som skånsomt snirkler seg forbi skrenter, mellom trær og rundt myrer i forsøk på å gjøre minst mulig skade på seg selv og omgivelsene. Jo flere som følger strømmen og tenker som stiene desto mer blir det rett. Selv om det i følge Aristoteles er vanskelig og tidkrevende å skaffe seg et nært vennskap, kan det for alles beste være at vi skal knytte det vennskapet til naturen. Bruker vi tid, lytter og skaper oss erfaring med våre omgivelser kan fort vekk hende at "alt henger sammen".

# MAKE WAVES.



**Korg Wavestation** is the first synthesizer that actually lets you control the essential building blocks of sound — waveforms.

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The Wavestation has 46 dramatic new digital effects and a stunning variety of Real Time Dynamic Controls to modify those effects using wheels, pedals and MIDI controllers.

Its open ended system architecture means you can always bring new sounds in from Korg's extensive library of ROM and RAM cards.

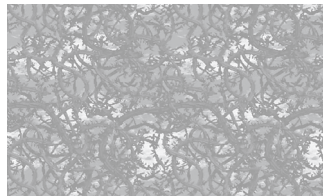
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## THE AMBIENT MUSIC OF DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

The year is 1994 and Japanese video game powerhouse Nintendo is surfing the wave of success courtesy of the mushroom eating Italian plumber, and his endless mission to save his muse princess Peach from her evil kidnaper, the koopa king, Bowser. A few years later the Super Nintendo console found its way in to our living room. I was probably around 6 years old. My two older brothers had borrowed the console from the neighbor with a couple of games. One of them was «Donkey Kong Country» I remember watching my brothers play with my eyes peeled to screen. I believe this was the first time I saw 3D graphics in a video game. I remember I found it mesmerising. Donkey Kong country was a side scroller action adventure and one of the very first games with an art style with the remembrance of 3D. You controlled two apes charging through different worlds on a mission to retrieve their stolen bananas from an evil crocodile king. The game was developed by the small studio Rare, based in the UK. They were one of the first game development studios in the UK investing in high end super computers, designed to render advanced 3D graphics. After a lot of experimentation they managed demonstrated a way to pre render objects without compromising memory. They achieved this by utilizing the advanced 3D application and hardware developed by the US company Silicon Graphics. Nintendo was so impressed with the demo that they chose to invest in Rare and prompted them to start working on a new project that would compete with their rivals over at Sega. Their idea was to take use of their barrel throwing gorilla Donkey Kong in his very own installment since his first appearance as a villain in the arcade series. Donkey Kong was one of the Japanese company's most important characters. That a western studio were given a license to develop a title for Nintendo was the first of its kind at the time. Rare got to do their own take on the series without to much evolvment from Nintendo. The franchise creator Shigeru Miyamoto only involvement with the project was adding "certain key pieces of input" the game went on to be a huge success for both Nintendo and Rare.

Many years later I revisited Donkey Kong and I discovered something I didn't notice on my play-throughs as a kid,



The music. The soundtrack was mostly scored by the British freelance composer David Wise. Wise was asked to submit 3 demo tracks in early development. The studio liked his submissions so much that they offered him a job at the studio. In an interview he revealed that he thought all his compositions would be replaced by Nintendos Koji Kondo, the composer for the Super Mario series. He said this because he understood the importance of the licensing to Nintendo. Wise was shown the graphics and given the opportunity to play the levels they would appear in. So he would get a sense of the music he would compose. Since the game featured advanced graphics at the time. Wise wanted to create some equally special with the audio. He wanted to push the limitations of the technology using the small amount of memory he had available. The music of Donkey Kong is very atmospheric accompanied by natural environment sounds, with melodic and percussive additions. I think it was my first encounters with some sort of ambient music even though I didn't know what it was at the time. I only remember I liked it. It made me come back, again and again. The music's purpose was too invoke the level's environment. From deep jungle, industrial factories, caverns, underwater reefs and frozen lakes. At the time he wanted to use his Korg Wavestation synthesizer for the production, but due to the memory limitations it was difficult to make it work. The Korg Wavestation was capable to produce lush complicated timbres rich in audio information because of its advanced pcm wave sequencing and vector synthesis. It was a particularly popular synth in new age music. Wise worked tirelessly trying to figure out how he could implement the sounds of the Wavestation whiteout compromising memory. The solution ended up being him composing a series of simple yet advanced scores where he figured out a way to sample the Wavestation and made it work within the limitations of the 32 kilobytes available. One of the stand out tracks is the underwater level «Aquatic Ambiance» Wise considers this one his favorites and the biggest technological accomplishments at the time in consideration of audio. It took him 5 weeks to compose it.

The song starts of with a high pitch string sound accompanied by two flute sequences dancing in between each other in the stereo specter then it drops down and the drums are introduced with an echoed kick drum and a tambourine hit on every other

8 beat. A very 90's sounding piano then comes in drenched in perfect amount of reverb and delay and an arpeggiated harp transitions the track in to the main chorus. Now another flute sound introduced playing a melancholic dreamy melody and so it repeats. The key here is the subtle transitions. Little changes in the chords with between makes this track a perfect endless loop. Way ahead of its time. The scores are distinct in the way that they are very simple yet rich in sound and atmosphere. Wise said he drew inspiration from other synthesizer based soundtracks at the time. As well as popular music as such rock and dance music. Wise continued to produce music for the donkey kong series. He has since his work on the series developed his musical style in years to come. Another honorable mention is the track «Stickerbush Symphony» featured on the sequel «Donkey Kong Country 2» which shares a lot of similarities with «Aquatic Ambiance» new age like sounds with a more uplifting theme reminiscent of trance.

Wise said in an 2014 interview "People just thought it was an odd job—making the bleeps and boops that went along with video games, In those days it wasn't really thought of as music. It certainly doesn't carry the kudos it carries today."

In recent years the soundtrack has gained even more popularity and a massive online following as more and more people discovered the game. It's even reached a cult like status. With the two mentioned tracks as the most popular. There is an online lore of a youtube video featuring parts of the soundtrack. Where people from all over the world share their nostalgia and memories of the game.

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# TECHNOFOSSILS, THE TECHNOSPHERE AND BIOMATERIALS

I used to dig up fossils in France on family vacations. With a screwdriver and a hammer I would chip away at rocks by the river, looking for and finding petrified creatures of another time. Today, actually almost anything that's not recycled, has the potential to fossilize. That means, to partially or entirely be preserved over time, due to burial in the earth, think for example landfill.

What do you see in front of you? Almost certainly there is a future technofossil among what you are seeing right now. We distinguish a technofossil as a fossil of man-made artifacts, human signs of life and of cultural evolution through tools and weapons, utilities, technology, and so on.

Where will this laptop end up? It's already starting to show signs of end of life. What about this office chair? These renovated, but old walls that I am looking at? The neighbourhood I am living in, with all its electric cars and indoor ice-hockey rink? My old phone with its broken screen? My scratched and painted water bottle? The headphones I am wearing until I need a pair with bluetooth? All these materials, will they sooner or later form new technofossils?

The system of our stuff, also referred to as the technosphere, is a parasitic system. Not only because of the waste, that is merely the evidence of it, but because to make our stuff, we consume resources that the rest of the planet actually needs and uses too.

We have converted part of the Earth into a machine to support human kind. As Zalasiewicz told Vartan, "We are part of the technosphere, a component, and we have to keep it going because it keeps us going."

Will the technosphere really last forever-forever? It will most certainly outlast me and with such an immense amount of years I have no way of relating to. Hundreds or thousands of years? How much space does our collective stuff actually take up? According to a conservative geological estimate from a team of international researchers led by the University of Leicester, all this stuff weighs 30 trillion tons. That's roughly 50kg for every square meter of the earth's surface. The group also calculated that the diversity of the

types of technofossils we have made already exceeds the number of species living on Earth now, and may even “exceed the total biological diversity through Earth’s history.”

The technosphere is immense, outlasting and outscaling us and impossible to grasp in its totality. Despite this, we see and experience local manifestations of the technosphere. It affects everyone and we start to understand that we have to act, but how do we even start to address something that is so complex, immense and hard to grasp as a whole?

The technosphere as a hyperobject. In *The Ecological Thought*, Morton introduced the concept of hyperobjects to describe objects that are so massively distributed in time and space, relative to humans, that we can’t perceive them except in parts or the effects of it, such as for example climate, or all the styrofoam in the world, and radioactive plutonium.

A hyperobject is “viscous”, it sticks to stay, “nonlocal”, its totality cannot be realized in a local manifestation and “interobjective”, a meshing and crisscrossing that we inhabit and which inhabits us. The hyperobject is a concept that makes it possible to describe the technosphere, even though it is as unfathomable as transcending spatiotemporal specificity. It allows us to contemplate it, in a holistic and ecological manner, while giving us a single word to describe it. Materials play a fundamental role in how we have fabricated the technosphere, how we fabricated the past and how we will fabricate the future. This partly comes from the undeniable fact that man-made materials generally last far beyond the intended use of the object created with the material.

For a future material reality I look at recent biomaterial developments, that novel as they are, shape the possibility of a material system that is entirely sustainable to begin with, from its very origin, through processing, use and post-use recycling and degradation. It has the potential to shape a system that is even regenerative by design.

With the term ‘biomaterial’ I refer to materials and composites made of exclusively regenerative and abundantly available biomass. Biomass sources can be directly found in nature, and today also as by-products or waste of existing processes in typically the agricultural sector, biofuel, pharmaceutical and food industry. A biomaterial system would not remove the technosphere, it would be a way to co-evolve with it, and to impede the exponential accumulation of technofossils. The biomaterial system

could even support our other spheres: the hydrosphere (water), atmosphere (air), lithosphere (earth), biosphere (organic life, like plants and animals), as opposed to ceaselessly letting the technosphere leech off them.

At the cost of our natural environment and especially the biosphere, we have thoroughly established the technosphere with a material system that is interconnected with our economy, politics, culture and lifestyle, meeting our immediate needs and wishes. Even a partial shift of our material system towards a sustainable alternative such as biomaterials demands a radical change in all these areas. Everything is interconnected, just as the interdependencies of the technosphere itself.

Hyperobjects help us to address and to talk about this, and interdisciplinary practises support us acting on it. Biomaterial practises as a relatively new field functioning in interdisciplinarity, could have a great impact, transcending the boundaries of disciplines as bioart, biodesign, material science, biochemistry and natural sciences. Biomaterial practises are typically not confined by pre-existing frameworks or disciplinary boundaries.

Materials play a fundamental role in everyone’s experience of the world around them, of how we relate to objects and spaces. We start to grasp the technosphere in parts, just as we grasp parts of its interconnected material systems - its waste - and technofossils. What if we could collectively grasp the impact of the technosphere through the concept of the hyperobject, and shift matters towards a synergy between technosphere and biomaterial system? The technosphere is here to stay, and we are a component of it. However, paralleling its existence with a biomaterial system would support regeneration of the ecosystems we currently draw resources from, and impede the exponential accumulation of technofossils, for us to co-evolve with the parasitic system we are part of in a manner that supports all life and species.

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## HOW TO MOVE IN AN EMPTY ROOM?

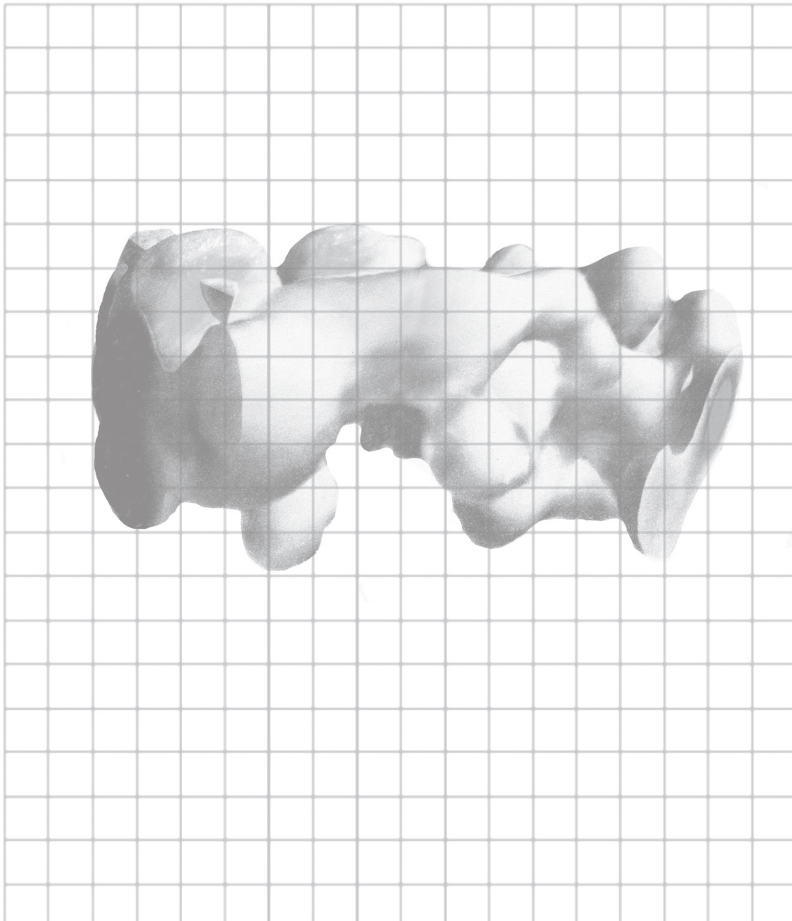
I can remember, I have always had the need to categorise and understand how things around me are configured and formed. I think it's inherent to humankind to relate everything we perceive to a familiar or known experience, by classifying, distinguishing and surrendering to the typology of our surroundings.

When I am walking in the forest I always find a small stick and keep it in the palm of my hand. I always do that, it gives me a sense of calm and connection. Maybe it's an unconscious attempt to camouflage myself in the surroundings. If I have a piece of the forest in my hand, then I will be part of it and not a stranger anymore. Sometimes I find one of these sticks that I had forgotten about in my pocket, and I always instantly wish I had kept all of them in a box, labeled with the place and the date I picked them up. But why would anyone like to have a box full of classified mini-sticks?

I think I was 8 when I decided I wanted to become an inventor when I grow up. I wanted to invent things, make experiments, discover stuff. But my dream ended quite abruptly when my mom told me I had to study a lot of math to become an inventor. Well, I am terrible at math. Numbers sometimes seem like a soup in my brain, and I don't know how its ingredients are mixed together, and whether I should eat it with a spoon or a fork.

But now I know that I don't have to completely understand to a detail how things are formed and work. I don't need to fully understand how exactly my bedside table lamp works, for example. We don't need to fully comprehend that electricity works by getting a bunch of conductor elements together and creating a flow of electron-stealing patterns through them. Most of us are happy knowing only that if we turn on the switch we will have light.

Each of us have our own interests and specialties. Each of us are good in different fields and bad in others, and because of that uniqueness we spend our days selecting where and with what we want to spend more time or no time at all. But do we apply to ourselves some kind of self made algorithm, only letting ourselves orbit around things that we think will fit our lives? Do we do this constantly on an unconscious level?





What happens, for example, when bigger and intangible matters, questions or concepts get in the way? Do we behave in the same way as I do with the bedside table lamp, or do we try to have a sense of control of where to place ourselves?

Some years ago I made a small comic book called Emptiness. Emptiness was a character with a box in place of his head. A box that appeared empty. The box headed character is defeated by a girl that had to confront him, after searching for him in an epic adventure. They get into a fight, she loses an arm and when she thinks she will get swallowed by the void and disappear forever, she manages to split his head in two with a sword and defeat him. An icosahedron is revealed inside the box head. She takes the icosahedron from the dead body of the emptiness and she places it on her own head, like a helmet, knowing that only then she will be whole.

With this comic I was probing myself on how I deal with abstract and intangible matters, how I digest and transfer them into my fields, and how I calm my craving of categorisation. But I have come to realise that I was answering the wrong questions. It wasn't about my reactions and my needs. It was about the power that these matters have to bring up more questions.

All of the atoms that make up your body, like all solid things in the universe, consist mostly of empty space, but empty space is not truly empty. Empty space is filled with a bubbling soup of quantum field fluctuations that come and go incredibly quickly.

So if emptiness is not really empty, then is wholeness really whole? Are my empty pockets more valid than full pockets? Is emptiness how I move in an empty room? Is emptiness an empty fridge with a musty lemon on the top shelf? Does emptiness have a transformative quality, a shape shifting property? Could I put it in a box? Does it spread like ink? Or does it move like a trapped wild animal? Is it the fear of confronting a blank page? Or is it the blank page itself? Is the emptiness a leap, or is it a leap into the void?

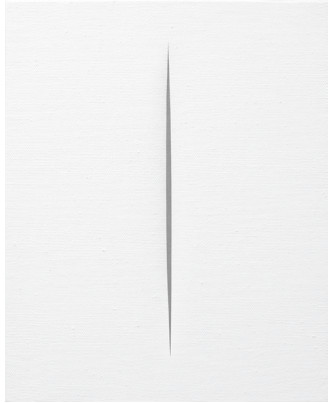
A true empty vacuum cost an enormous amount of energy to create, and if you were able to create it you would discover that it is actually very unstable, any source of perturbation will push that empty vacuum into something where the vacuum is actually full of quantum fluctuations.

What is emptiness then - one of those big intangible themes, or is it like the bedside table lamp? I guess in the end it's not

a matter of how to categorise it or where we place ourselves in relation to it. It's about the fact that without emptiness everything would be empty.

I used to think emptiness was just that, something that didn't need the chance of a second thought, empty is empty, and that was it. But a lot of the time things are not only what they seem to be. There is always a little bit more, like the tip of the ice cream cone filled with chocolate.

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## LIKE “A CRACK OF LIGHT(...)”

“Art dies but is saved by gesture”, Lucio Fontana wrote in 1948.

Feeling frustrated with the direction of his work, Fontana first began cutting into his canvases in the latter half of 1958. These cuts, or *tagli*, were carefully premeditated single-gestured incisions, often planned long ahead but executed in an instant. Composed in groups over unprimed canvases, the first *tagli* were made using a sharp blade. These tentative slits later involved into a single, more decisive slash across each canvas. Here, the cut revealed what was initially hidden: the strong, black gauze at the back of the canvas appearing within the cut, giving it the appearance of a dark room or a hidden void.

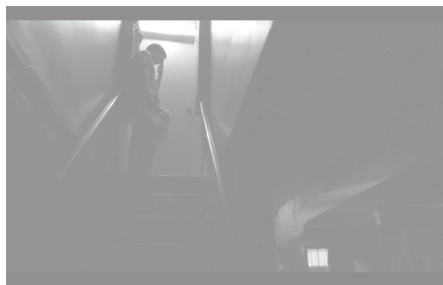
Although these cuts have often been viewed as violent, Fontana himself claimed: “I have constructed, not destroyed.”

This notion of cutting as a way to add more, carries my thoughts onwards: on towards the act of sampling. Here, listening requires its own rupturing, as the sharp blade cuts across its canvas of sound.

Listening becomes a form of extraction: it becomes its own vivisection. The sample is the connective tissue that stretches its space outwards, expanding the sonic body within the cut. Now extracted, the space becomes bigger on the inside than on the outside. It becomes a miniature (Bachelard, 1994, p.157).

“Constructed, not destroyed”, the sample soaks up the space within the song, stretching itself well beyond its original borders. Other times, the space shrinks, or slows down, allowing it to pick up weight, to accumulate silences within its new gap. The songs of the past folds into the present, and pushes against an invisible lack of a center.

*“Which is why the sample is a joy, isn’t it? The wind blows a memory of someone into a room through sound, and the architect captures that memory with their bare hands and puts it on wax. Is this, too, the low end? The feeling of something familiar that sits so deep in your chest that you have to hum it out?”* (Abdurraqib, 2019, p.53)



Sampling partially began as a clever way to bypass an initial lack of instruments and space. Like the masters of old working with marble, the new masters of sound cut into the fabric ahead, carving out new shapes from hidden voids. It was a bit like a resurrection in a way, as these new voices could carry on further, past their originally fixed ends. What is a ghost if not its own looped recording? Carried from the mouth of the MCs into the ears of the present, a dialogue seemed to open itself between young and old, living and dead, as the samples helped dig back up buried sounds rooted in past political movements and musical traditions.

There is this moment in the music video for, “Jazz (We’ve Got)”, (featured on *The Low End Theory*,) where Q-Tip gazes out over the miniature skyline of New York, eyes fixed resolutely into the camera. He tells us that: “I don’t really mind if it’s all in your head/’Cause the job of resurrectors is to wake up the dead.” (A Tribe Called Quest, 1991, 01:16) Just like Francis Bacon chose to depict people screaming in a medium unable to transmit sound, Q-tip here brought with him the voices of those no longer there, pouring out from the cut of the sample.

The *Low End Theory*, which is also the name of a theory of sound, was the first album produced by A Tribe Called Quest. It deals with lower pitches of sound, the sound that emits from double brass and low brass instruments. As recordings became more common within dance clubs, the low end found a new home within the speaker, particularly the subwoofer, whose booming voice seemed to portray the notes on the low end more clearly. Not just an ear or a limb, we are the whole body, and the body is always in conversation with the space that surrounds it. The subwoofer made the whole body, not just the ears, its entry point, as the vibrations settled within the chest like a deep hum. A sonic dissection: it tore open a gap, a *tagli*, opening the body, now tuned like a fork, to the whole experience of sound, “blowing with it a memory of someone into a room through sound”.

Francis Bacon too sought to tear open the experience of looking. He wanted us to see, not just with our eyes, but with our entire bodies. The painting was to function as a slash, as an entry point for the self to experience itself more clearly, like a surgical blade cutting into: “the veils” (Sylvester, 1987, p.82). Yet, despite its original point of entry, the entry, or the cut, stretches itself across the same body, the same canvas, the same space. The *tagli*

therefore, continues to be a part of the canvas despite the cut that preceded it. The body too, much like the low end, will always be engaged with whatever is happening, like a limb finding its way back to the body.

When Bacon approached the blank canvas, he did so with the whole history of painting pressed behind his eyes. When Q-Tip approached the mixing board, canvas of unaltered sounds stretched in front of him, it was with all the songs he had ever heard still ringing in his ears. The trick then, was to make the first incision into this blankness of space.

It is like that passage that Derrida once wrote. Inside this passage, a reader is trying to read the palm of a hand that is closed, or about to be closed. By dislodging the voice from its wall of sound, or the passage from its body of text, there is a disconnect, as this separation tears open a gap. But the gap remains open, wide enough for the audience to slip through. New sounds rush in as we go looking for, what is ultimately, a lack of a center.

“The whole”, Adorno observes, “is articulated by relations that extend forward and backward, by anticipation and recollection, contrast and proximity.” (Anderson, 2010, p.381) Moving towards a center is impossible, because quite frankly, the whole structure – its lines extending beyond and inside itself – becomes the center. Within that diametric tension, this lack of a presence tears itself open like a door. The cut, this opening of the gap, creates the same space which is neither here nor there, neither closed nor open, but that, nevertheless, gets carried over into ourselves as we fill the lack of a center – the void behind the canvas – with whatever parts of ourselves that dislodge themselves within it.

“We’re building something here (...) and all the pieces matter.” (Simon, 2002, 22:15) I think about this, as I am seated at the table, listening to the sounds of “Jazz (We’ve Got)”. The sounds bend backwards, back towards their original point of sampling. Like a crack of light, the beats are still there, looped underneath the sound of the present – ghostly figures calling out.

And, when I think about how these silences stretch across the canvas, deep hums within the body, I am reminded of a passage. Like a cut across the canvas, these gaps should not be seen as dark voids watching. Instead, we should think of them as inverted voids, like: “a crack of light showing under the door of a room (...)” (Carson, 2008).

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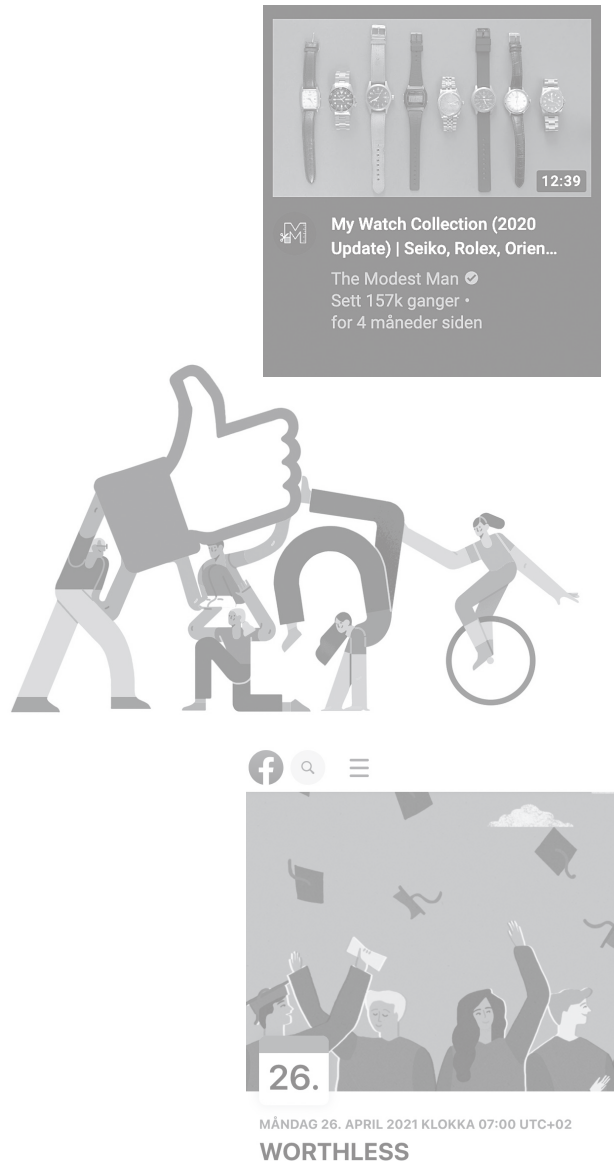
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KRITISKE  
HORIZONTER

CRITICAL  
HORIZONS

# WORTHLESS



51

Emil Holmberg Lewe

I går la eg ein plan for korleis ein skal velte dei største teknologi-gigantane. I dag vil eg skrive litt om denne frekke idéen.

Data blir samla inn for at ein blant anna skal kunne gjere spådommar. I byrjinga handla dette om heilt enkle, ofte feilslåtte spådommar. Då eg i 2012 gjorde eit google-søk på “boat-is” etter å ha følt meg utanfor i ein samtale om ein ny meme på artige.no, kunne ein ut frå dataen gjere ein spådom: eg har lyst på is. Interessant, tenkjer dei som finn ut at eg har lyst på is, og ser over på dei som produserar is. Grunnprinsippet som driv oss mot det Shoshana Zuboff kallar Surveillance Capitalism, er at ein kan tjene pengar på desse spådommane. (Zuboff, 2019, s. 8). Meir informasjon gir betre spådommar, og betre spådommar genererer meir pengar. Det ein før såg på som *waste-data* blei plutseleg enormt verdifullt, og ein sentral del av dei største selskapa sine inntektskilder.

I dag skjønner robotgjengen i Google sjølv sagt at det ikkje er isen eg har lyst på, men tilhørigheit - kanskje i form av nye Nike Courtvision Low's i kvit med raud swoosh. Data, som gjennom ulike fysiske og digitale tjenester blir samla inn i haugevis, gjer det mogleg for maskiner å sjå samanhengar. Det er desse maskinene, drive med kunstig intelligens, som tek seg av å lage spådommane. Algoritmegudane som ein også kallar dei, er dei same som skjønner at eg er ein bonsai-type, og ikkje ein kniv-type på YouTube. Og at akkurat denne klokkesamlinga appellerer til meg, sjølv om eg ikkje eig ei einaste klokke.

Om du kjenner kvart individ på jorda, og med høg presisjon kan seie noko om når og kvar nokon er mottakeleg for det du har å tilby, har du noko som er veldig verdifullt. Dette fann folka i Google ut då dei i 2001 måtte revurdere forretningsmodellen sin etter “dot com-bobla” sprakk. (Zuboff, 2019, s. 72) Deira jakt på total kjennskap til deg og meg har gitt selskapet ekstrem makt, og verkar nesten å vere urokkeleg i sin posisjon over alle andre. Ei gruppe har også stifta religionen Googlism, eller The Church of Google, som trekk ganske morosame trådar mellom Google sin AI og gud. Uansett gud eller maskin - om motivasjonen bak handlingane til tech-gigantane er økonomisk gevinst og breiare monopol, veit eg ikkje om resultatet vil følast bra. Eg



har mareritt om å ein dag våkne inne i ein Corporate Memphis illustrasjon. I denne verda finnast omtrent tre fargar, og det spe- last kontinuerlig ukulele-musikk. Slik ser eg litt for meg framtida vi er på veg inn i.

For å endre kursen trur eg ein må bryte opp leiken. Eventuelt starte ein ny leik som får den andre leiken til å verke kjedeleg. Difor har eg kome opp med det eg trur og håpar kan vere starten på den nye leiken: WORTHLESS - ein app som trackar deg, men som også betalar deg for det. Det einaste formålet med appen er å synleggjere verdien av data ein gir bort, for å skape ein kritisk refleksjon blant brukarane. Appen skal vise nøyaktig kor mykje dataen min verdt, og betale meg summen i samsvar med kva eg velger å dele. Dette betyr også at utviklar ikkje skal tjene noko på appen. Om ein må ta pengar, må det i tilfelle gjennom design komme tydeleg fram kva som blir kutta, kven det går til, og kvi- for. Her er prinsippet: la oss seie at eg gir WORTHLESS tilgang til mikrofonen på telefonen: denne handlinga gir meg x antall pen- gar i veka. Bilderull: y antall. Posisjon: z antall. Slik fortsetter lista, heilt til det ikkje er meir igjen å dele. Tala for kva eg tjener vil nok endre seg heile tida, og eg er ikkje sikker på korleis det heile skal gå for seg reint teknisk. Ein må då også sannsynlegvis ha svært mange brukarar, samt reiskapar til å tolke all dataen før den kan selgast. Desse tinga må eg komme tilbake til i framtida.

Då eg prøvde å finne ut om noko slikt i det heile tatt var mogleg, kom eg over appar som allereie er inne på det same. Tjenester som mobileXpression og Killi reklamerer med at brukarar skal tjene på dataen dei delar. Problemet med desse tjenestene er at dei ikkje eigentleg verkar å vere ute etter ei endring, men at dei heller berre prøvar å bli ein del av mar- kedet. “At Killi, we’re all about passive earnings. That means barely lifting a finger and earning Killi Points every week. With Killi Paycheck, the more data you share, the more you can earn. Weekly. Passive. Killi Points. Guaranteed. Sound aweso- me? SIGN UP TODAY”. (<https://killi.io>) Høyrast hivers ut, men endrar ingenting.

Poenget må vere at det skal kjennast ubehageleg å aktivt ta valget om å gi bort privat informasjon i bytte mot pengar. Når eg konfronterast med klare tal på kor mykje kvar del av meg er verdt, og får “fysisk” bevis i form av pengar eg kan kjøpe ekte ting for, blir det heile mykje meir nært. Plutseleg er det noko som angår meg. Som resultat av denne ekle kjensla vil eg også byrje å undre

meg over kvifor det er slik, og kven andre som tjener på dette. Eg swipar over til Instagram, og innser at dei same innstillingane er slått på der. Kva blir denne dataen brukt til, og korleis blir eg påverka av det? Neste gang eg spelar Pokémon Go, vil eg kanskje lure på kvifor gymmen ligg rett ved Starbucks, og om det også er mogleg å betale for mine fottrinn. Når eg kjem heim ser eg meg kanskje rundt på hybelen og lurar på kvar mitt personlege uttrykk kjem frå, medan eg vatnar bonsai-treet. Ser eg denne Ferrarien so ofte på YouTube fordi eg likar den so godt, eller omvendt?

Eg vil at WORTHLESS skal starte ei tankerekke som fører til ei meir kritisk haldning i møte med tjenestene til desse selska- pa, som forhåpentlegvis fører til handling. Greit, kanskje greier eg ikkje å velte teknologi-gigantane med denne idéen, men eg håper det kan vere eit lite steg bort frå ei verd som berre er bonsai-tre og klokker.

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## RUTHS DAGBOK

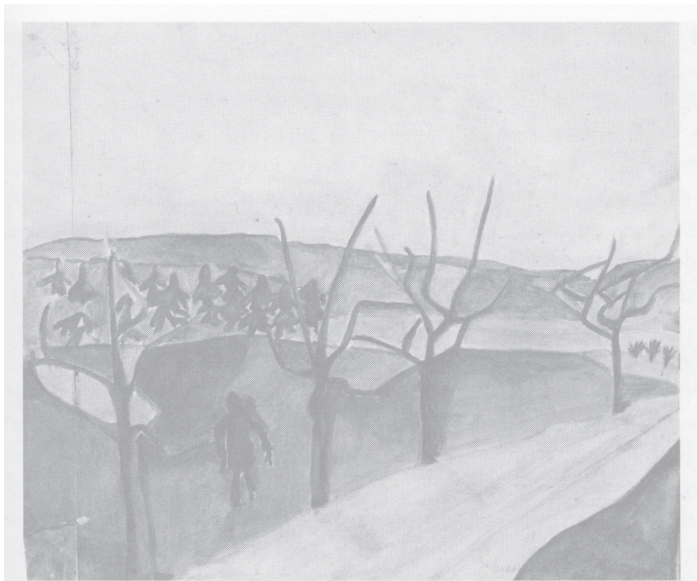
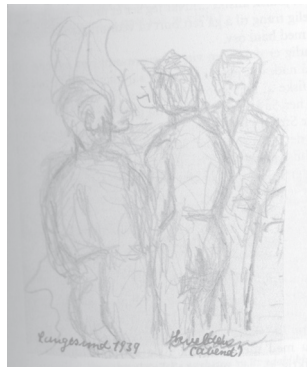
«Søsteren min ga meg en bok i dag og sa: «Skriv ned alt du ser og tenker i den. Det vil du få mye glede av.» Jeg kjenner meg forlegen og vet ikke hva jeg skal skrive. Hva jeg tenker? Det vet jeg ikke riktig. Hva jeg gjør? Det vet jeg heller ikke! Hva jeg er? Hvem jeg er?» (Maier i Vold, 2008, s. 87)

Jeg prøver å skrive et essay, men det er vanskelig med så mange tanker i hodet på én gang. Egentlig er jeg aldri helt sikker på hva jeg gjør, men jeg har alltid tenkt at det jeg gjør bør reflektere hvem jeg er. En dag i høst lå det en bok på arbeidsplassen min som jeg aldri hadde sett før: Ruth Maiers dagbok (2008), en samling av dagboknotatene til en av mine eldre navnesøstre.

Hun var en jødisk flyktning i Norge under andre verdenskrig. Til tross for at hun befant seg i en helt annen tid og i en ganske annen livssituasjon enn meg, har vi mange likheter: hun tok kurs i tegning ved Kunst og Håndverkskolen; det vi i dag kaller Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo. Jeg bor på Aleksander Kiellands Plass, 650 meter unna der hun bodde for 80 år siden, i pensjonatet for unge kvinner i Dalsbergstien 3 hvor det i dag ligger en snublestein til minne om henne. I 2020 fikk hun et sted i nærheten oppkalt etter seg (Ruth Maiers plass, 2021). Språket hennes er uttrykksfylt. Det fine med å få innblikk i noens dagbok er at opp-tegnelsene er usensurerte refleksjoner som en sjeldent ellers har tilgang til. Jeg gjenkjenner meg i henne. Noen ganger tenker jeg at jeg tenker altfor mye. Sånn var hun, også. Tror jeg.

«[...] Instinktivt så jeg meg selv i speilet med det samme. Og du store, så fremmed man er for seg selv!» (s. 202).

Som barn stirret jeg selv noen ganger i speilet lenge nok til jeg fikk en “ut av kroppen-opplevelse”; en følelse av å forlate egen kropp og se seg selv fra utsiden (Ehrsson, 2007). En beslektet følelse kan oppstå når jeg tar et skritt tilbake for å betrakte tegningene mine. Bekymringsrynken som alltid er tilstede blir nå enda mer fremtredende. Jeg legger hendene i kors, som om jeg fysisk kan forsvare meg mot mine egne tanker som jeg veldig godt vet at er uunngåelige:





«Dittl, at tegningen min står på skrivebordet ditt er rørende ... virkelig ... Hvordan kan du holde ut med så skrekkelige bilder på rommet ditt? Hvis jeg var deg, ville jeg gjort kort prosess og kassert samtlige. Jeg hadde også en gang slike grufulle trykk, nå ligger de på gulvet.» (s. 184)

Det minner meg på at Theo kom inn i klasserommet en dag og begynte å snakke om bedragersyndromet, det psykologiske fenomenet hvor en person uten grunn feilaktig opplever å være en inkompetent «bedrager» innenfor sitt fagfelt eller miljø. Det var nesten som om han så det på meg, tenkte jeg. Bedragersyndromet handler om feilattribusjon; at personen ikke er i stand til å attribuere suksess til egen evne. Heller blir suksessen tilskrevet til høy innsats, overarbeid eller flaks, mens nederlag tilskrives til manglende evne (Clance & Imes, 1978). Kanskje følte Ruth Maier også på det?

I alle fall har jeg selv en tendens til å overtenke det meste. Fra tid til annen utarbeider jeg for eksempel replikker som forsvar til hypotetiske, fremtidige diskusjoner. Mens jeg dusjer. Som oftest forblir diskusjonene hypotetiske. Noen ganger handler det tenkte scenarioet om at søstera mi kommenterer at jeg dusjer for lenge. Dermed må jeg forberede mitt motsvar. Jeg har faktisk bare dusjet i to minutter – tiden går bare saktere for deg fordi du venter-aktivt. For eksempel. Sannheten er at disse gjennomgangene av tenkte scenarioer sannsynligvis er grunnen til at jeg dusjer for lenge. Men de hjelper meg noen ganger å reflektere. Tror jeg.

Samtidig har jeg en innvending mot det siste, fordi refleksjonen kan sikkert bli enda bedre med ekte mennesker til stede. Det er lett å glemme de ressursene en har i umiddelbar nærhet; som også er de viktigste ressursene jeg har. Det vil si, medelever/venner. Selv blir jeg alltid veldig glad hvis noen i klassen spør meg om hjelp eller ønsker mitt perspektiv. Kanskje burde jeg bli enda flinkere til å bruke de rundt meg, for i mange situasjoner vil de være bedre på å lede meg inn på riktig spor enn jeg er i stand til selv.

«Jeg går på gaten. Ser et hus, et tre. Himmel. Tenker: Det skal jeg male, senere. Men det er dette senere, som får meg til å tvile. Hvorfor sier jeg senere? Hvis jeg var kunstner så skulle jeg male alt jeg ser, alt som griper meg. Men jeg er redd. Ja, jeg er redd. Hver akvarell jeg går i gang med, satser jeg min fremtid på.» (s. 405)

Ideene kan være flyktige. Noen dager har jeg en tendens til å overarbeide de; ideene er gjerne ferdigtenkte før jeg i det hele tatt har begynt, litt på samme måte som med de hypotetiske diskusjonene. Antall prosjekter jeg vil gjennomføre kan være så overveldende at inspirasjonen etter hvert transformeres om til apati og tiltaksløshet. Kanskje fordi jeg er en rastløs faen. Til tider er også det blanke papiret sadistisk hvitt.

«Og har jeg energien, kraften å sette alt inn på dette ene: å male? Se verden med en malers øyne. Det er vanskelig. Og man må være fylt til randen av sin kunst. Åh, jeg føler meg så liten, og jeg skjønner ikke hvordan jeg våger å drømme om slikt. Og likevel: Når jeg har farger og driver og maler og får det til. Med blått og med rødt! Og det smelter sammen. En stemning kommer til uttrykk. Da føler jeg meg lykkelig.» (s. 405)

Andre dager går det lekende lett. Ofte skjer det når jeg improviserer. Det vil si, når tanken blir tenkt ut gjennom det praktiske arbeidet, for eksempel en tegning. Kanskje til og med den tegningen jeg bruker kortest tid på. Da kan jeg overraske meg selv. Lenge hadde jeg et mål om at arbeidet skulle reflektere rasjonalitet. Kanskje bunner det i at jeg er oppvokst med en pappa som er mattelærer. Men jeg har også en hypotese (les: følelse) om at arbeidene mine som regel utvikler seg til en ambivalent grøt, hvor jeg har fulgt en oppskrift for hvordan å lage selve grøten men ved en feiltakelse ender opp med å krydre den med salt og kajennepepper i stedet for sukker og kanel (jeg er god på dårlige analogier). Det jeg prøver å si er at arbeidene som regel er preget av systematikk og rasjonalitet på den ene siden blandet sammen med spontanitet, det som ofte utgjør følelser og subjektive erfaringer på den andre siden. Men tegnestreken endrer seg fra dag til dag, og referansene og inspirasjonen jeg finner kan sprike i alle retninger. Jeg vet ikke om det er et godt eller et dårlig tegn. Jeg har kanskje ikke funnet helt min greie. Ennå. Men det går fint.

«Jeg har funnet min egen «stil». Den er påvirket av Edvard Munch. Nok en tegning: «Lengsel». En allé med nakne trær, en slette, et stort hus. Et menneske går over sletten. Fugler på himmelen. Det skal jeg male når jeg får farger» (s. 285)

Noen uker senere ble det avslørt at boka var en gave fra medelev Jennie. Tusen takk!

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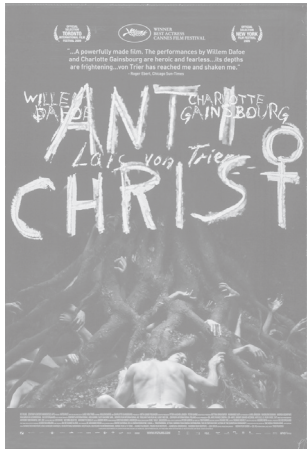
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## IS LARS VON TRIER A FEMINIST?



Both praised and criticised, Lars von Trier's *Depression Trilogy*—a film trilogy that includes *Antichrist* (2009), *Melancholia* (2011), and *Nymphomaniac* (2013)—provides an exploration of femininity and gender roles. Certainly, von Trier's construction of the female characters is problematic on many levels: the projection of the director onto the female subject, their hyper sexualization, or the victimisation as part of the director's process. But I feel, he could be misunderstood, and that he might be a feminist? He is often unappreciated for his art, because people have this idea of him being a misogynist. I believe he could be a feminist, because of his focus on strong women, and I do not think it is right to judge or censor someone's art, because of misunderstanding them.

I have been watching the films of Von Trier for a long time, and have seen most of his films and know a lot about him and his work. I believe the answer to my question is to be found in his depression trilogy *Antichrist*, *Melancholia* and *Nymphomaniac*, and having his older movies in mind.

I can understand why people look at Von Trier as a misogynist. Just looking at his trilogy; in *Antichrist* we have She who loses her child, and works through her depression with sex and violence toward her husband. In *Melancholia* we meet Justine who is depressed, living in a depressed world that comes to a sad end. And in *Nymphomaniac* we meet Joe, who has an addiction to sex, that makes her lose her husband and child, and we follow her fighting through her disease.

These three women are both depressed and sick, and have their battles and adversity. People argument, that von Trier is a misogynist, because he only tells stories about women, who are suffering and struggling. The mainstream audience are not that used to seeing these stories in films or other medias, from a woman's point of view. Women are "supposed to be" very innocent and not as sexual as men. To me this is extremely upsetting. Women should be able to be as sexual and powerful as men. Women should also have the right to tell stories with strong storylines even though they are struggling through them.

The director's provocation is seen throughout his films,

perhaps more clearly in his depression trilogy. Von Trier's combination of violence, sexual imagery, and trauma in the form of grief, depression, or anxiety—thus combining the three body genres; melodrama, horror, and pornography—further accentuate his provocation.

These distinctive features of von Trier's cinema are not problematic *per se*, the problem is that he explores them through the portrayal of female figures who are victimised so as to create a spectacle for the audience's entertainment.

These depictions of women and femininity, for many, serve as proof to the director's misogyny. Throughout his career, the filmmaker has provoked the audience through the female figure. Starting with Bess in *Breaking the Waves* (1996), Selma in *Dancer in the Dark* (2000), Grace in both *Dogville* (2003) and *Manderlay* (2005) to She in *Antichrist*, Justine and Claire in *Melancholia*, and Joe in *Nymphomaniac*. What these women have in common is that they are victims of a series of events that undermine their gender and eventually break them through humiliation, rejection, and even death.

In the depression trilogy, von Trier explores the traumas of three female protagonists that by the end of the films bring them to their destruction. Von Trier explores the experiences of the female protagonists of these films by looking at their mental states and their effects on the protagonists.

In his process of creation, Von Trier destroys women for the sake of art and its culmination in the film form. But, is this the only way the director knows how to engage his viewers, through the maltreatment of female characters? Von Trier has repeatedly emphasized that his female characters are self-portraits of himself: as problematic as that is, the female characters are nonetheless female-gendered and the provocations of the director in the films make any interpretation of their actions difficult to sustain.

If the depression trilogy was not a clear picture of how von Trier is being a misogynist, his latest film *The House that Jack Built* (2018), is just that. In what seems to be an autobiographical work, von Trier creates an intellectual psychopath named Jack, who terrorises and kills women. Jack proclaims himself as "an engineer." In the film, the house that Jack is building, is a house of murdered women that serve as a symbol for the director's oeuvre.

It is true that the director's depression films focus in its

entirety on female protagonists. *Antichrist*, *Melancholia*, and *Nymphomaniac* follow the female characters from beginning to end whereas the male characters are relegated to supporting roles. The story of these films revolves around the female protagonists and is told through their eyes. But not only that, these female protagonists are normally the only characters who show integrity and a humanism that their male counterparts lack. The female characters show human qualities that demands the spectator to engage emotionally with them in order to understand their emotional depth. She, Justine and Joe are oppressed throughout the films by being invalidated not only by other men but also other women. They are destined to fail for their feelings and desires lead to their debarment from society. For instance, by the end of *Nymphomaniac*, Joe becomes a social outcast for embracing her sexuality. Moreover, the female protagonists of the trilogy are judged for not conforming to their assigned gender roles, namely, those of mother and wife. The climax of the films comes in the form of rebellion against the society they live in, a retaliation or an act that has given rise to a heated debate on the intentions of the filmmaker.

As argued, this radical position makes films such as *Antichrist* or *Nymphomaniac* be at once both misogynist and feminist. Von Trier plays with his women throughout his films and victimizes and humiliates them for the sake of his work, but why cannot it be seen as empowerment of women? Isn't it empowering that these women are seen as strong and sexual? If it was men playing these roles, I think people would have seen his movies a different way. And people would probably still call him a misogynist, because then it would be men being violent and sexual towards women. I believe he is a feminist in some way, and that he is an artist who is very much misunderstood and not appreciated for his stories including strong women. No one else is telling these stories, and therefore he is an important artist that we need to appreciate and support.

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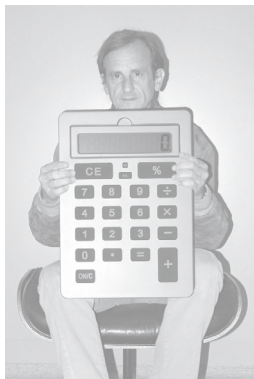
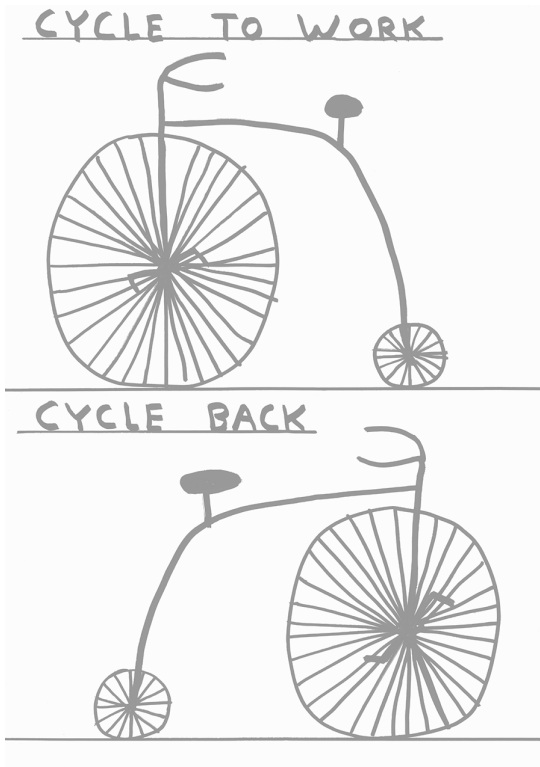
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## ET ESSAY, MIDT IMELLOM OG MEG



Til sommeren fyller jeg trettiåtte. Tretti. Åtte. Snart førti! Ifølge Folkehelseinstituttet var forventet levealder for norske kvinner 84,2 år i 2016. Om jeg overdriver litt, og det gjør jeg gjerne, betyr det at jeg allerede nærmer meg midten av livet. Hvorfor bruker man egentlig den frasen, «midt i livet», når ingen vet når slutten engang begynner? Jeg skal dø. Du også. Alle skal dø, sånn er det bare. Om jeg skulle dø i morgen, for eksempel, vil det si at midten av mitt liv var da jeg var nitten år, rundt regnet. Men, om nitten hadde vært slutten, ville ni og et halvt vært midten osv.

Hvordan ville livet vært om jeg hadde kunnet forutse at min siste time skulle komme i slutten av tenårene? Eller i morgen, på den antatte midten. Tenk å legge en reell livsstrategi ut ifra sitt unge, uskyldige sinn, være skamløs og fri. Bare leve ut det naive drivet man har, før man innser at verden ikke fungerer slik man trodde og håpet. Lurer på om alle mine urealistiske ambisjoner, mitt dagdrømmeri ville gått i oppfyllelse? MTV-vertinne? Kunstløperske? Mest sannsynlig ikke. Dressurrytter, det kunne jeg fått til, om jeg virkelig hadde gått inn for det, på NM-nivå. Eller kanskje ikke. Jeg var ganske god, men vant aldri. To 2. plasser har jeg. Ikke fra NM, men fra Marits Rideskole i Skjeberg. Marit, ridelæreren, var proff. Hun var en slags Gud i ridehallen – streng, men hun gav ris som hun gav ros, det var god lærdom. Røde var de, premiesløyfene, 2. plassene. Jeg fikk kaffekopp også, med firmalogo og en liksom-krystallpokal med et hesteemblem i liksom-gull. Så teit. Jeg var kry, men skuffet. Nå blir jeg nostalgisk – mimrer, trekker på smilebåndet, kjenner på glemte, barnslige følelser.

Nostalg, det er en greie for meg – å hele tiden se tilbake, inn i meg selv. Jeg burde sikkert se framover i stedet for å hele tiden dvele ved det som er forbi. Fra og med når er egentlig «forbi», «fortid» og «framtid»? Er det i det hele tatt mulig å leve her-og-nå, i «nuet» som alle snakker om, før man vet hva som er fram og tilbake? Dette «nuet» krever perfekt balanse, hele tiden, konstant, ellers kan jo «nuet» ha vært i sted. Eller komme senere, om man tenker lenger tilbake enn man tenker fram, eller lenger fram enn tilbake. «Nuet» blir en aktualitet med en gang man blir konfrontert med noe uventet, særlig om noe faller fra. Da blir tiden plutselig



mer gjeldende. Som nå, midt oppe i en verdensfelles pandemi.

*Covid19: Hello, my name is Corona, I'm a global pandemic.*

*Camy\_83: Is this the beginning of the end?*

*Covid19: Covid19 is typing a message ...*

Vi lever midt i internettet, det flyter over av innflytelse. Globen er på god vei til å bli totalt global. Litt sånn som plastelina – jeg mener, lek med plastelina ender alltid opp som en diger klump til slutt, der alle fargene er blitt blandet, og man får en slags brun. I det øyeblikket mister man liksom litt piffen, det er i hvert fall min erfaring. De gangene jeg får plastelinabrun, blir jeg nødt til å forme nye nyanser, slik at gnisten, skapergleden kommer tilbake. For å få til det må jeg stole på intuisjonen, ta valg og finne den tiden jeg tror jeg ikke har.

Tiden, den bare er. Den går. Fort. Enda forttere enn før. Tiden er inne. Alt til sin tid. Tidsfrist. Tidsklemma. Alle tiders. Tiden leger alle sår. Tiden går, Gjensidige består. Barn er konkrete bevis på tid. Idet jeg skriver denne teksten, har jeg nylig feiret min sønns 1-årsdag og samtidig passert 1- årsmarkeringen av min mors død og begravelse. Et slags eksistensielt sjokk som har gitt klisjéene ny mening. Fortid vs. framtid. Jeg står igjen, midt imellom, fullstendig bortkommen, overveldet. Tiden har liksom stoppet opp samtidig som den har begynt å gå, som når man tror toget kjører fra perrongen, men det er toget ved siden av som går. Du står bare helt stille.

Hver dag når jeg går ut av porten der jeg bor, ser jeg et begravellesbyrå. De har en oransje kiste til utstilling, matchende bærebyrå, og urne også. Det ser ut som en fargekoordinert høstkampanje, spesialtilbud. Hver dag når jeg hopper av bussen ved barnehagen, ser jeg et annet byrå. «Av jord er du kommet til tre kan du bli» står det i ruta. Man kan faktisk ikke det på norske gravlunder, å velge å bli til et tre. Den turen føles noen ganger som en fysisk reise fram-og-tilbake i min egen sinnstilstand. Midt i gråsonen, jeg bare glir mellom valørene. På en måte er det et trygt sted å være. Midt i. Udefinert. Midt imellom fantasi og virkelighet, fiksjon og fakta, løgn og påstand. Et skjæringspunkt, der man ikke helt greier å forklare det som treffer en. For meg er det også et fristed, ikke bare et sted hvor man kommer i skvis, eller ikke finner svar. Ved min mors grav står et rognebærtre.

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Camilla Martinsen

På engelsk kalles rogn for mountain ash. «Fjellaske». Det synes jeg er fint. I neo-druidsimen er faktisk rognebærtrærne kjent som portal-trær, en slags terskel mellom en verden og en annen, et skille mellom her og dit du er på vei.

«Dere er nå i en mellomfase», skriver Theo. Det stemmer, midt i masterprogrammet. Jeg er spent på om den eksistensielt spørrende postpandemi-jeg vil velge, gjøre og skape som tidligere. Er bildet jeg fant av George Michael fortsatt et symbol på min kreative Jesus, eller døden til mitt preskapende-jeg? En bekjent av meg sa en gang: «Anohni, fra Antony and the Johnsons, ser ut som Boy George, bare smeltet.» Jeg er misunnelig fordi det ikke er mine ord opprinnelig, men jeg låner dem nå. Et godt oppsummeringsbilde. Det er både en trøst og en drivkraft å være i gang, men ikke ferdig. Man blir liksom aldri helt ferdig. På en måte er jeg tilbake på 0, i balanse, kanskje jeg lever i «nuet» nå? Jeg babler og rabler, ser at tiden flyr. 21.19, det er leggetid. Og med det avslutter jeg med et dikt skrevet av A. A. Milne.

Halfway down the stairs

Is a stair

Where I sit.

There isn't any

Other stair

Quite like

It.

I'm not at the bottom,

I'm not at the top;

So this is the stair

Where

I always

Stop.

Halfway up the stairs

Isn't up

And isn't down.

It isn't in the nursery,

It isn't in the town.

And all sorts of funny thoughts

Run round my head:

"It isn't really

Anywhere!

It's somewhere else

Instead!"

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God natt!

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## GUARD AT THE DOOR



Breathe, I tell myself, breathe through it, as I defy the expectations of my existence by choosing my own path. An important piece of information that was left unsaid, where to draw the line of selflessness. The boundaries of making space for others over your own needs must be defined, or it runs the risk of overriding self-preservation. The self, being the least important aspect of your life, as the crux of your life, in my culture, is gauged by your service to those around you.

Non-duality refers to a mature state of consciousness, in which the dichotomy of I and the other is transcended, and awareness is described as centerless or 'without dichotomies'. This refers to spirituality. But the concept, though hidden, is present in social structures. Family, in most south Asian cultures like Pakistan (my home-country), is non-dual. Like a child that is unable to comprehend its existence separate from that of its mother. The 'Us' is used in singular form. The 'I' is non-existent without the 'us'. A collective, unified front dictates individual decisions, progress, and development. There is a binding network of obligation and expectations between members of a family, whether they live in the same household or not (Ballard, 1982).

The hierarchy of roles, often segregated between genders, is seen as a system that aids the functions of the 'unit' and its continuity. This hierarchy also applies to the usage of space in households and in interaction with the outside world. The head chair at the dining table is reserved for the dominant male figure of the patriarchal household. Closed bedroom doors refer to aggressive behaviour as opposed to the norm of open doors that welcome other members of the house into your personal space without warning. The living room is the private space of every member of the house while some guests are also allowed in this space, shedding light on the blurry lines of hospitality and privacy. The bedroom is an extension of this space and access to it by others depends on where on the hierarchy one stands. The least amount of privacy given to the house help who holds the least amount of power in the household.

Space in the context of culture shapes our perception of the world and of the self (Kantanakis & Voyer, 2014). Overlapping



spaces, large families and access, or lack thereof, to the outside world enforces physical aspects of the unity in space for the family bind. The mental space, however, is designed in a complex framework of priorities, gender roles, authority and scripture.

Boundaries imbedded in values or the psychological perception of space in my culture dictates the use of not only private but public spaces into a sensitive balance of the gender power dynamic. Access is restricted to certain segments of society even in 'open-for-all' spaces. A *Chai dhaba*, (چائے دہا، Tea Stand) is a space that is governed by the male (straight, masculine, sunni muslim). There are subcategories to this ownership based on certain demographics. Needless to say, all non-male subjects come much further down on the list. The physical public space is vast and accepting in its nature, like a blank canvas. It is the translation and enforcement of culture, norms and control that dictate its use. For females to use public spaces and claim authority/safety from the male gaze, layers need to be added. Fences, curtains, walls or men guarding the parameter. The need to add 'Women only'-compartments to public transport highlights the lack of a space for them on the rest of the bus. Even then the men get away with the occasional accidental groping or pinching, a further marginalization of the other sexes out of public spaces. The fear of this violation of privacy is enough to limit their circle of movement publicly. The male-gaze is a significant visual detriment. Traditionally, our common-sense knowledge makes every woman an exhibitionist and every man a voyeur (Husain, 2018).

Creating 'Family area' in roadside restaurants and 'women-only' seats on buses may seem like a provision of space in an otherwise male-dominant environment. But in fact, it defines space rather than giving space (Umer, 2017). It limits the movement and access of non-male genders to all other spaces and allows for infringement of basic rights for them in places that lack these defined spaces.

You might see a pattern here. Dominance is built with factors of not only physical strength, but a result of systematically focused behaviours and scriptures feeding a narrative. For example, Comedy theatre performances in Pakistan have continued to use women and other genders as the basis of all jokes, mere accessories, in a wider context of fulfillment of men's desires. The public space is defined to be a space of collective use and contribution (Gomes, 2017). Instead, here, it is a symbol of authority.

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Sana Khan Niazi

Ownership of this space is a statement equivalent of holding a throne. Only, in this case, the throne is shared by a whole gender, not a person.

There is a psychological arm-wrestling match between the parties to change the narrative and to try to balance it. Long standing literature, content, patriarchal social structure and preachers of religion hand over private and public authority of space to one group (men), inevitably impairing the other groups of society.

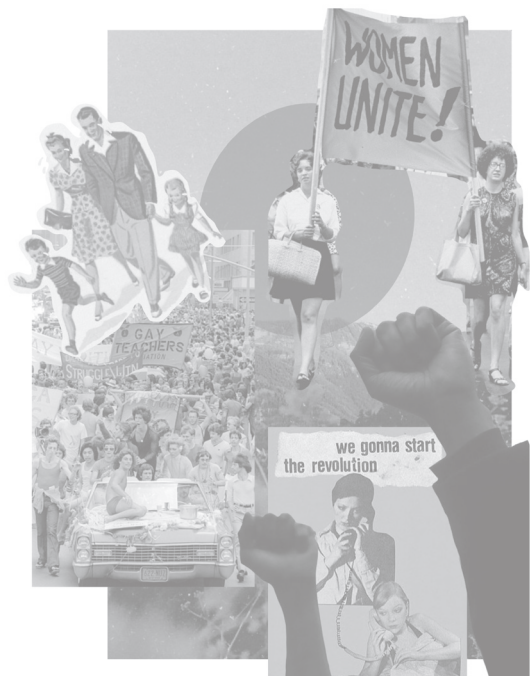
Those higher up in society have found ways around it. With influence and money, developments of certain public spaces restrict access to lower income groups in an effort to make the places 'safer'. Gentrification as a solution to these problems without tackling the root causes poses new challenges to the use of public space (Hasan, 2019). Expensive entrance fees, expensive food and other barriers are not only keeping the male-gaze out but all members of the lower social classes.

There have been efforts to create a shift in the public space access through several movements. Girls at Dhabas and Aurat March (Women March) being two of the significant ones. In both cases, it seemed that the power and ego of the opposite gender, the one holding the power in that space, was challenged. They pushed back with misconstrued examples from literature, religion, allegations of a Yahoodi Sazish (roughly translated as Western agenda), and all sorts of nonsense. The good news is the conversation has started. The question for us designers then is, how can we use spatial and urban design to make public spaces in complex cultures like that of Pakistan, more accessible and safer for all members of society without having to place a guard at the door?

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## FENGSLET AV PARNORMEN



Det var en gang en generasjon som ble oppdratt på et eventyr. Hvis vi var heldige, ville vi møte en prins eller prinsesse og leve lykkelig til evig tid. Hvis ikke, vil vi gå en ensom gange til graven, med kun et par katter til trøst. Dette eventyret kan også kalles for parnormen, altså normen om at normale, sunne og respektable mennesker skal tilbringe mesteparten av sitt voksne liv i et par. Dette forholdet skal være langt (helst livslangt), de to skal bo sammen, de burde ha sex og få barn. En norm som i min mening har godt feste i den norske befolkningen.

Det moderne mennesket har eksistert i minst 300 000 år. I over 90 prosent av denne perioden var vi jegere og sankere. Det er nok av bevis på at monogami er en nyere oppfinnelse enn hva vi tror, fra for rundt 12 000 år siden da mennesker flest sluttet å være jegere og sankere, og lærte seg og dyrke jord. Da ble eiendom viktig og i tusenvis av år var ekteskap et middel for å øke familiens arbeidsstyrke, samt inngå fredsavtaler og forretningsforbindelser. Det ble først vanlig å gifte seg for kjærlighet i Vesten for noen hundre år siden, og når vi ikke lenger giftet oss av praktiske årsaker oppsto det bekymring hos dem som forsvarte tradisjonelt ekteskap. Dermed fikk en ny idé fotfeste, nettopp at menn og kvinner måtte gifte seg basert på kjærlighet, fordi de var to deler av én enhet. Mann og kvinne var motsatte og utfylte hverandre. Jeg spør meg selv om denne tankegangen har blitt værende såpass lenge fordi den passet med samfunnet vi levde i på den tiden, og så har det blitt med oss videre.

Monogami slik vi kjenner det har tatt mange former. Det har vært påtvunget, nyttig, men også fint. Når vi utvikler oss, vil seksualiteten gjøre det samme – dette gjelder også forholdsformer. For første gang i historien forsøker vi å utvikle forhold som ikke er basert på tvang. Tvang overfor kvinner som er økonomisk avhengige og ikke har kraft over egen kropp, og tvang overfor menn i form av sosioøkonomiske strukturer. Vi prøver å finne en ny balanse, og det siste tiåret har mange brukt mer tid utenfor den heterofile samboerformen, og mye har endret seg. Kjernefamilien har mistet grepet om enkeltpersoner, og samlivsformer har endret seg. Det samme gjelder kirkens posisjon og lovbe-

stemmelser. Over tid har de kulturelle forventningene endret seg, og ideer om likhet, selvrealisering, individuelle rettigheter og frihet vokst. Til tross for disse endringene står parnormen fortsatt sterkt.

Norge ligger på verdenstoppen i antall aleneboere. Ca 974.000 lever alene. 39 prosent av alle norske husholdninger består av én person. I hovedstaden består 48 prosent av husholdningene av én person, ifølge SSB. Det er såpass mange av oss som bor alene, men også flere par som lever utenfor parnormen. Til tross for dette ser vi liten motstand mot normen. Jeg tror at mange ikke er klar over dette, og ikke minst hvordan de bidrar til å øke presset om å være i et forhold. Vi ser denne normen overalt — i sosiale medier, filmer, bøker, utdanning og politikk. Kanskje vi er så blindet av representasjoner av idealbilder og for opptatt av å prøve å komme dit, at vi glemmer å stille spørsmål ved det?

Å være en del av et par blir etter min erfaring sett på og feiret som en prestasjon. Det gir både status og «voksenpong». Da kjæresten min flyttet inn med meg sa faren min «endelig er dere ordentlige kjærester», som om de 5 årene vi hadde sammen før vi ble samboere ikke var gyldige. Parforhold blir feiret og anerkjent som det «riktige» valget, et steg nærmere det perfekte liv. Hvis du lever utenfor parnormen, kan du føle deg både skamfull og mindreverdig, og du kan oppleve kritikk fra omgivelsene dine. Små gester som et sukk, et medfølende smil, stillhet, eller spørsmål om når du skal få deg en partner, når du skal få barn, når du skal flytte inn med en partner eller annet mas om kjærlighetslivet ditt.

I en studie av stram versus løs kultur er Norge er blant landene med de strengeste sosiale normene, sammen med Pakistan, India, Malaysia og Sør-Korea. Studien definerer stramme kulturer som samfunn som har mange sterke normer og lav toleranse for avvikende oppførsel versus løs, som har svake sosiale normer og høy toleranse for avvikende oppførsel. Norge scorer veldig høyt på skalaen. Dette betyr at det er veldig klare forventninger til hvordan vi skal handle i forskjellige situasjoner.

Man skulle trodd at ettersom såpass mange nordmenn lever utenfor parnormen, at det også skulle bli sett på som normalt og godtatt som et godt liv, på samme måte som det å leve innenfor normens rammer. Kanskje den strenge kulturen vår bidrar til å opprettholde denne normen? Man kan tenke seg at samfunnet vårt utvikles fortere enn normene klarer å endre seg, og et sted i

skjærsilden der blir nordmenn forvirret. Vi henger fast i en gammel norm som får store deler av befolkningen får til å føle seg som det svarte fåret, fordi de ikke klarer å utfylle kriteriene som normen mener fører til det gode liv.

Jeg finner meg selv i dette eventyret ganske så ofte, det hviler i meg som et gnist av håp. Selv om jeg bruker mye tid på å skrive mitt eget eventyr, så lite påvirket av fortellingene rundt meg som mulig, kjenner jeg at det er der. Som når jeg ser dem, prinsen og prinsessen, og i et svakt øyeblikk kjenner klumpen og sjalusien i magen. Jeg kunne ønske jeg hadde det like magisk. Selv om jeg vet at jeg kan ha det slik jeg ønsker å ha det, ikke slik jeg har blitt lært at jeg burde ha det. Nå som jeg har lest mye om dette temaet har jeg også blitt mer bevisst på fortellingene om dette eventyret, og prøver enda hardere på å ikke la meg dras videre i deres historie. Hvis vi er heldige, blir det ikke lenger så viktig med hva slags forhold vi burde være i. Det viktigste blir å skape de forholdene vi vil være i, om det er med oss selv, andre eller flere.

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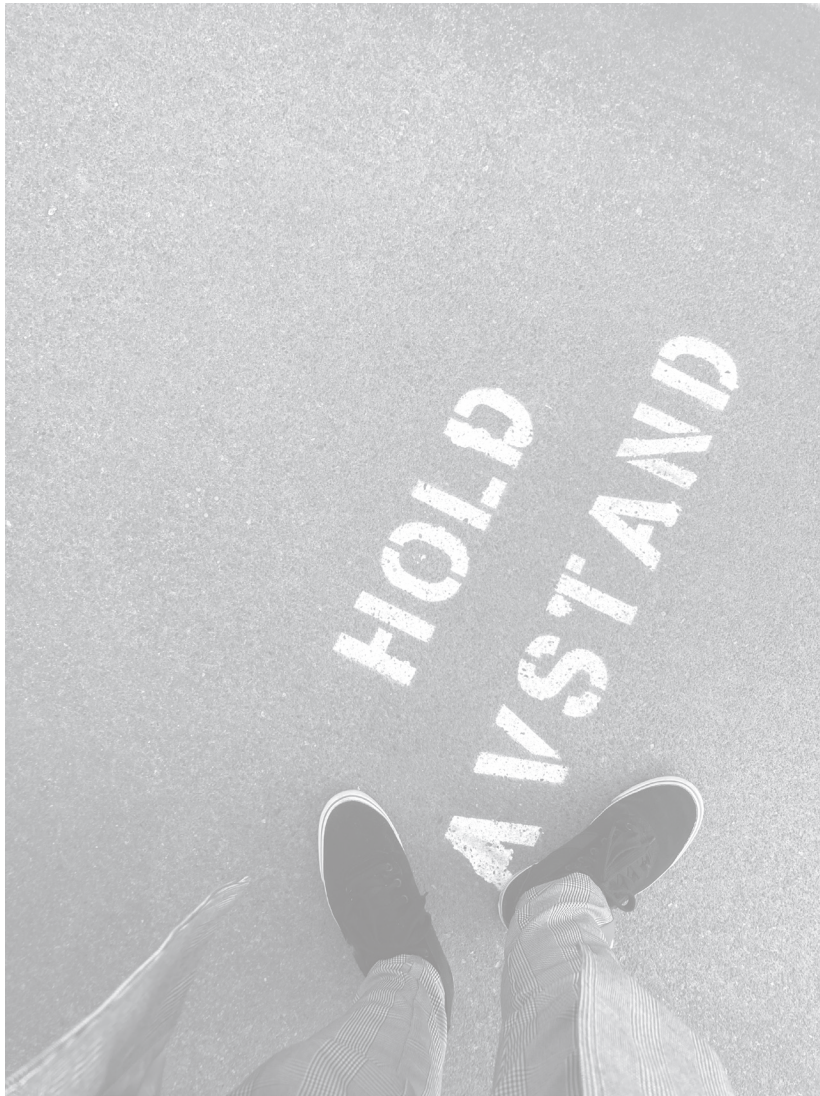
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## DANDELION & DANDY-LION

In our education we are trained in a way of thinking, our values and sensibilities are tested and we are suppose to take a stand. Over the years I have been facing my own prejudice more than once, and it has been a journey to personal growth. But you have to be willing to see yourself in the mirror and take consequences of that prejudice. Gender has been one of those topics where I have had to face this prejudice. For me, gender has been a source of alienation and social control. I was a feminine boy, and the first incident I recall was when I was three years old. That was the first time someone told my dad that I was gay. It was in my childhood home and it was my dad's cousin, she was the one that told me this when I first came out as gay, and I understood that my story wasn't my story at all, it was everybody else's. It ended with him kicking her out.

When I grew up, my best friend was my female cousin. We are born ten days apart and we were the exact opposite in every way. When we were about four years old, our grandparents bought us two plastic chairs to have at their house for when we were over. One pink and one baby blue, the problem was that when we were presented with the chairs, I wanted the pink one, and she wanted the blue one. And that story of how we wanted the chair intended for the other became that story we were told, when we later in life were told that our genders should be switched. Where she played fotball, I took dance. When she got in a fistfight, I was just scared. When she came in sweatpants and hoodie, I dressed up. We were Yin and yang, and even though she was 10 days younger than me, she always felt like an older sibling. She was my only protector, and also the one who took me on crazy adventures. Like when we stole my aunt's Mercedes at 17 while she was on holiday. Or when we practiced kissing each other. But despite this, we hid from one other for a long time. Masculine and feminine was never a topic when we were together. We both heard it enough and I know I'm not bursting any gender stereotypes when I say that we are both out as gay now. The funny thing is that we never asked each other about it, in some strange way we respected each others right to do it when time was ripe.

So what does this say about prejudice? When you start school,

you suddenly have a completely new hierarchy imposed on you. Up to the fourth grade everything was peachy, I was friend with the coolest boy in fifth. The one who always got kicked out from the classroom, and more than once were sendt to the Principal. I had a crush on him for that reason. He had an older brother who played drums in the garage, and we used to play outside with our Majorette toy cars, being those irritating younger boys. We always had fun, we usually stoped at his house after school, cause he was always home alone. We ate bread with Sjokade and listened to Nirvana on the boombox. I remember that I didn't really like any of the songs, or, except for smells like teen spirit. We both liked that one, and listened to it over and over. One day, at the floor of his room, he climbed on top of me and started wrestle me. I told him to stop and he did. Then he started again, he was a lot bigger than me, and I got scared. I got him off somehow and I just ran out of there. I have often wondered what happened that day, cause the next day everything changed. He stood with the older boys at the bus stop and they started calling me a pussy. From that day, the school became a place to survive, not to thrive. In the beginning it wasn't really too bad, I had other friends, but they became fewer.

Everything I did was gay. If I talked to another boy, I was flirting. If I was together with a girl I was a girl, it never stopped and there was usually nowhere to hide. The worst part was when it started to spill over to my friends, so much so, that they didn't really want to be seen with me. Everybody seemed to like me one-on-one, but in secret. The time I had to face that was with a girlfriend of mine. Our moms were friends so we had spent a lot of time together from we were quite young. We even went on holidays together. On this day we had been at my place after school and were on our way back to hers when she spotted some girls from her class, and asks me if I can hide in the bushes so they wouldn't see us together and stay there till they left. At first I actually thought it was fun, we were tricking them. The fun stopped when she left me in the bushes and went with them. I stayed a while in those bushes, cause I actually thought she would come back. When I walked myself home I could hear my heartbeat. When I got home I lied to my mom and went in my room, sat down on the bed and wondered how she could like me at all when she just left me there. I have a picture of us, we are about six years old, we were lying side by side in the sofa,

under a knitted, black and red blanket. She was kissing me on the nose, and for some reason I had a purple and yellow pants on my head, and we were laughing. Whenever I see that picture, it takes me back to the side of the road, behind some bushes.

At one point I just stopped giving my friends the option and distance became a way of surviving. I even alienated the ones who stood by me. One of them was himself picked for being feminine, and when we were together, they made up rumours about what we were doing. At that point I took a page out of the book and just stopped seeing him and I tried to keep away from everything that could be gay, feminine, queer and all in between. I even took up football, I cried before every practice but I had to complete the season.

When I started junior high, I really had to start looking over my shoulder. I was scared from when I walked out my front door til I closed it again in the afternoon. Always planning which bus, so you didn't have to stand at the stop for too long, always take the seat in front, the ones the old ladies use, just to be close to the driver. 9 hours everyday in terror, waiting to be punished for being me. I became two persons, the submissive one, the one who never seemed to have an opinion and always with my guard up. Then the second one, the angry son who screamed and shouted and barricaded himself on his room. This is the time when everybody got their mobile phones. You're not safe anywhere. They can get you when you least expect it. One night my second cousin called me from a party at the house obliquely from ours, he called to tell me how embarrassed he was being related to me. Despite that I hadn't really talked with him before, I listened while they laughed in the background. My heart were racing when I hung up, and I pulled the covers over my head. They started shouting for me to come over from the balcony, that just made the whole thing complete.

Friedrich Nietzsche says what we call universal values, what we have called truth, has always only ever been the personal expressions of those who promote them. And those values have been used to impose a way of thinking on us. When I read Michel Foucault «the history of sexuality» I started see the parallels to the sosial control I was put through growing up. Cut down as a poppy. When you start to see how society uses gender, sex and sexuality to suppress certain groups in society, and that the narrow mind of the hurd got a grip on me too. But it's here I'm starting to create



my own values. I know myself very well, but my inability to make connections have made me blind to who I am I relations to the world. And as Thomas Merton said your material comforts, your security, and your congenial relations with the establishment are much more important to you than your rather volatile idealism.

The education gives me the opportunity to speak, and when I know enough to think I'm right, but not enough to be sure, then I will speak.

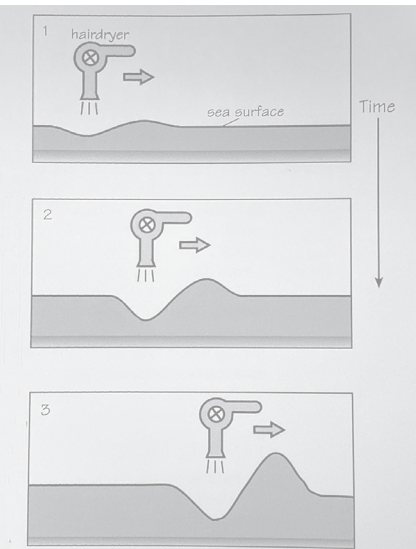


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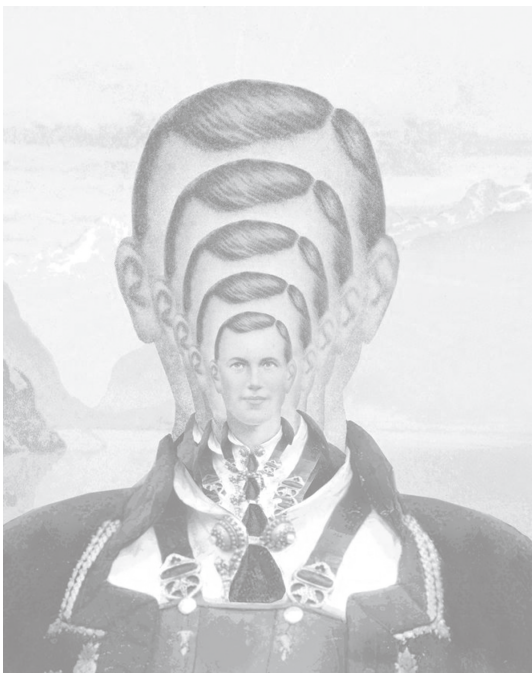
## OM STØRRE SAMMENHENGER OG IDENTIFISERING AV OPPDAGELSER



Jeg sitter stille og rolig på brettet mitt. Det ruller inn noen bølger uten den energien jeg kjenner etter, jeg lar dem passere. Der sitter jeg med benene på hver sin side av brettet ned i vannet og ser på at solen reflekteres i havet. Det er tidlig i mars måned, første eller andre helgen. Vannet har en temperatur på cirka 6 grader celsius, men jeg er ikke kald. Solen varmer noe, og vannet står stille i neoprenet som et isolerende lag. Det er fascinerende at man ved hjelp av sjøvann, neopren og kroppsvarme kan holde seg varm i et så fiendtlig, kjølig miljø som havet. Der sitter jeg og gynger opp og ned i bølgene som en sel på et isflak, for det er det jeg ser ut som. Våtdrakten er sort og tettsittende som skinnen på en blank, litt for tykk sel og surfebrettet er hvitt og minner om et isflak. Jeg håper ikke det er spekkhoggere i nærheten tenker jeg før jeg begynner å nynne på en melodi jeg ikke har noe minne om hvor kommer fra eller hva heter.

I løpet av dette semesteret har jeg hatt en trang til å komme ut av Oslo. Nedstengningen av hovedstaden, som følge av Sars covid-19 pandemien, har ført dette behovet frem i lyset. Kanskje det har noe med at jeg er folkeregistrert i Sars' gate? Nei, Sars' gate er oppkalt etter zoolog og teolog Michael Sars. Uansett, det er ingenting å gjøre i byen. Alle kafeer, restauranter, treningsentre, kinoer og andre kulturtilbud har vært, og er stengt eller avlyst. Så for å få en ytre stimulus utenom den lille kohorten man omgås med og skoleoppgaver, har det vært essensielt å komme seg fysisk ut av byen. Ut for å aktiviseres på en annen måte enn den man gjør i studiet ... eller? Hva kan en opplevelse av bølger på en strand langs norskekysten et sted ha i likhet med en designprosess? Og hvordan kan fysisk aktivitet bidra til å vokse et nytt lag på løken som dette designstudiet er? For før du skreller den som Peer, bør du ha opparbeidet deg mange lag. Dette er spørsmål som dukker opp i hodet mitt, mens jeg venter på den rette bølgen, den rette geniale ideen.

En vei i idesøken kan være gjennom eksperimentell research. En forskningsmetode gjennom for eksempel aktivitet. Slik jeg har forstått det, handler det om å identifisere de små oppdagelsene



som får en til å tenke og reflektere over ting. Som for eksempel å reflektere rundt hvordan kombinasjonen av kroppsvarme, vann og neopren kan holde temperaturen på et behagelig nivå. Å spørre seg hvordan kan føre en inn i et assosiasjon-spill som kan føre til hvorfor. Så hvordan dannes bølger? Vinden blåser ikke alltid horisontalt, men kan også blåse vertikalt.

Slik skaper den en «opp og ned»-bevegelse i havoverflaten. Denne fjæringen i havet i kombinasjon med vertikal vind vil gjøre toppene og bunnene i havet høyere og dypere. Etter hvert vil også horisontal vind ta få tak i disse dalene og fjellene og tilføre dem mer energi. De begynner å bevege seg vekk fra episenteret og jo større toppene er jo mer vind tar tak og slik vil bølgene vokse seg større og kunne reise langt. Og etter bølgen har reist mange hundre kilometer, har den ankommet sin destinasjon, en strand langs norskekysten, til meg. Kanskje fordi jeg skal reflektere rundt akkurat dette. Jeg vender om og lar energien ta tak i brettet.

I en designprosess går man igjennom forskjellige stadier. Du sitter i en idefase og fantaserer, venter på den rette ideen, energien og bølgen. Du prøver å planlegge, hvordan skal denne ideen utføres, hvilke manøvrer skal gjennomføres. Du tar fart og kaster deg ut i det, blir med bølgen, ideen, ut i en ny fase. En fase hvor du må følge på. I surfing gjelder det å plassere seg der det er mest energi i bølgen slik at du blir ført videre. I design gjelder det samme gjennom utprøvinger, skissering og research. Det er forskjellige manøvrer man utfører for å holde momentet oppe og progresjon i prosessen. Og når bølgen tar slutt og du nesten er inne ved land, padler du ut igjen.

Og så repeterer man det man har gjort. Men denne gangen går det kanskje ikke like bra. Du har ett litt skjevt utgangspunkt. Følgefeil. Du mister momentet, ramler, blir dratt under. Du får ikke puste, alt går rundt. I det du kommer til overflaten er det bare en ting å gjøre. Padle ut igjen, tilbake til start og skissere videre. Feilene fra forrige bølge blir med deg som erfaringer og basert på dette dannes et nytt lag. Hver bølge, hvert lag og hver designprosess er forskjellig. Tilpasningsdyktighet er et nøkkelord her. Å identifisere forskjeller og hinder, og deretter klare å manøvrere seg igjennom, gjenkjenne de forskjellige motstandspunktene lar deg bruke erfaringene som gjødsel slik at du kan vokse og gro.

Denne løken som skal vokse og gro nærer seg nettopp på opplevelser og erfaringer. Å se sammenhenger i større bilde og

se paralleller er med på å forme en og ens blick. Dette blikket og parallellkoblingene identifiserer opplevelser som en relevant forskning og lar deg være åpen for tilfeldigheter, nye assosiasjoner og til slutt ideer.

Hvorfor gjør man dette? Padler ut og inn, ramler og prøver på nytt. Svaret er enkelt. Fordi det er gøy, stimulerende og befriende. Det skal være artig å drive med design. Og man skal kunne komme i en slags transe eller tilstand hvor du finner et driv og er i ett med en ubeskrivelig energi som driver deg frem.

## UNTITLED

As we are almost rounding off the first year of MA, what comes in my mind as I am reflecting on this project and this year is two words: drive and motivation. As cliché it might sound, I am asking myself, why am I studying fashion and clothing design?

I might not get to the core of why in this essay, but at least get some fragments of my intentions. As the time passes, I am constantly working on mastering both the practical and the theoretical subject. I do not stop regularly and question everything I do life is a journey, and I am open for the possibilities of changes and I am trusting the process. But the fast pace of all information we are bombarded with, and somehow, we must digest it, understand it, and make our own interpretation out of it, has been giving me some concerns lately. Especially in the world of fashion, where everything is about the next season, next project, next topic, and continual desire for newness. We are challenging old systems, and are expecting higher accountability of today's designers, whether it is on sustainability, ethics, climate, innovation, activism, socio-political or socio-economical. With current crises in fashion industry some say fashion is dead, but hasn't fashion been dead many times before?

Growing up in Ethiopian household, I was not exposed to fashion in the traditional ways, through fashion magazines or fashion related media. It was mostly an intuitive interest I had in the do-it-yourself mentality and through life around me. Today, fashion and clothes really take me back to childhood memories, fantasies, daydreams, concerts with my dad, holidays, and birthday celebrations. I have always had the urge for self expression and awareness of what dressing up meant in the context of society. I watched closely how people around me dressed, or what hairstyle they chose and how they carried themselves in certain ways. Coming to Norway as a teenager experience the culture shock and discoveries of this new world woke me up from the naïve perception of life, both in a good and bad way. And from that moment I guess I was trying to adapt, assimilate while also trying to find my place in this new space. So, I did not focus on becoming a fashion designer, nor did I know that I could aspire to be a fashion designer as a childhood dream.





It took some courage to study fashion and clothing design at 27. My two main reasons were to gain skills in the craft and self-confidence. It is ironic considering that the fashion industry consists of free labor, insecurity, competitive, hierarchy and at some degree of just being a toxic environment. But fashion is also a powerful medium that gives you the tool to alternate new realities. Studying fashion is self-explorative subject that allows me to understand my self and the world through discovering different questions, inspirations, and topics. It is also a framework for critical thinking, challenging personal bias as well as taking discussions around social changes. For the last four years I have not only gained skills and confident, but also started my healing process through producing, expanding knowledge, keeping up the curiosity, and being good at failing. Diving deeper into a life-long ambition to come up with a unique expression as a designer, trying to create something I feel is missing in today's fashion and in many ways also in our culture.

During my MA at KHIO I have been exposed to different topics of discussions which I find both challenging and insightful. What strikes me the most is the pessimistic feeling we have towards fashion and its doomed future, it should not be trendy, it should not be commercial, it should not be superficial, it should be on high intellectual level, it should be original, it should be desirable, it should be wearable, it must be sustainable or why are we at all designing and producing? Should politics be detached from fashion? Jean Paul Gaultier says "if you have to be truly political, there's a few people maybe that you can dress" (The Independent, 2016, 15:01). Another topic that has been circulating is whether designers who use their personal trauma experiences in their practice is in a better position or in some ways taking advantage of today's current state of "awakening" from ignorance of the unbalanced world. Fashion is becoming increasingly political and a way to express solidarity, driven by the rise of social media. Is this putting more pressures on designer who is more objective and more into the aesthetic part of the fashion?

New challenges have arisen from the new era of diversity and awareness, which at some point also fuel my insecurity and makes me questions why I am doing this at all. I am not against conversations and critical thinking of the current fashion state, but are we having productive and honest discussions about our intentions and moving the conversations forward? As fashion

designers we are already overly critical of ourselves and our work, constantly seeking validation and acceptance both from the commercial industry and the art scene. The lack of positive reinforcement and respect in the discourse is in some way also suffocating the openness, creativity, and motivation.

For me writing this essay become somehow a release some of the frustrations and apology to myself for self-doubting. I believe as a designer we are storytellers; our clothing is an extension of the non-verbal stories we share. My works are personal because I am trying to have a deeper understanding to myself and connection with others. I think both as a creator and designer our work is always about to dare, even when we are afraid, to adapt, observing, reflecting of the time, challenging the norms, shaking things up, fail and having fun. As Nawal El Saadawi stated in an interview with Krishnan Guru Murthy "I am optimistic. I don't believe in pessimism at all because hope is power" (Channel 4 news, 2018, 41:14).

The Independent. (2016, 06 December) *Designer Jean Paul Gaultier 'definitely' willing to dress Melania Trump*. The Independent, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/melania-trump-jean-paul-gaultier-british-fashion-awards-donald-trump-a7458661.html>

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## WHO'S AFRAID OF RED, YELLOW AND SUBJECTIVE DESIGN?

In 1986, a Dutch man named Jan van Bladeren walked in to Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and slashed the painting “Who’s Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue III” by Barnett Newman with a blade. (99pi, 2019.) Taste is subjective. Is it so criminal if design is?

*“I believe that a designer must never stand between the message and the recipient.”* (Crouwel et. al., 2015.)

Should the designer be objective or subjective? Wim Crouwel makes his opening statement in a debate with Jan van Toorn at the Fodor Museum in 1972. A graphic designer anchored in the technical and the technological, known for his proto-digital typefaces and grid work, Crouwel argues that it is the designer’s responsibility to obtain a rational and neutral approach when tackling their task. We must strive for the objective stance! Beatrice Warde, in her 1930 essay “The Crystal Goblet”, visualizes the issue of bad and good typography through the choice between two goblets; one of “solid gold, wrought in the most exquisite patterns”, and one of “crystal-clear glass”, respectively. Her point is: behold the latter! It’s the goblet where you clearly see the beautiful content, the wine (or rather, the message), and appreciate it without distractions. (Now, I’m not comparing subjective design with ornamental decor, because subjective design can also be simple — but it has an element of interference, of personal bias, that may collude with its beholder).

If I were to design an exhibition catalogue for a fine artist and bleed my own subjectivity, bias and self-indulgence all over the pages of it, it would be terribly counter-productive. One would not recognize the artist in it, the reader would be confused, the message would be polluted. Better stick to the white cube! But is it really possible to be neutral when channeling your creativity? Is it not inherently human to be subjective; is it not an essential part of the human experience?



“What about an American painter who paints a tree, doesn’t he become a tree? Didn’t Cezanne become every apple he ever painted? Morandi, his bottles? DeKooning, his paint? Goya, the king of Spain? Didn’t Eames become his chair? Is it possible not to fill the forms or the things we make with our feelings and our mind?” (Lionni et al., 2004)

Leo Lionni writes in his essay “The Urge To Make Things” that the things we make are our gestures, a prolonging of our selves. (Lionni et al., 2004). Wim Crouwel’s debating opponent Jan Van Toorn (an experimental designer with a love for the personal connection), says that subjectivity is unavoidable in design, as the designers are the subjective link. We should not shy away from it, but embrace it. So when Beatrice Warde claims that the most important thing about printing is that it conveys thoughts and ideas from one mind to other minds, I want to say she underlines the notion that design is the bridge for human connection. Design has a social goal and hence it is subjective!

In an effort to communicate the content I am designing for, I first try to relate to it, and subsequently I see it and create from my point of view. This sometimes feels inevitable, as I only have my own experiences and knowledge to go from and relate it to — and I find this approach especially compelling in student work, where the elbow room is spacious and experimentation is encouraged. David Carson, experimental typographer of the 90’s, said “don’t mistake legibility for communication.” (Carson, 2003.) With an experimental subjective approach, I may risk legibility, but I have the potential to really relate my work to the audience and connect on a more meaningful level.

Van Toorn equates experimenting with breaking rules, noting that typographers can pick up a few tricks if they learn from fine art — where they have been breaking rules for centuries. Crouwel retorts that designers do not possess the freedom of the artist — and it’s a problem that too many designers seem to rather want to be visual artists. I will not attempt to take my first swim strokes in these deep waters that are “can graphic design be art?”, but I agree with Crouwel that purely subjective graphic design might as well be re-categorized as visual art. In the case of student design projects, I find this is especially relevant. Hear the echo of our professors; form follows function.

To quote Beatrice Ward one last time: “it is mischievous to call any printed piece a work of art, as it would imply that its designed purpose was to be an expression of beauty.” The fine artist is also keen on communicating something to its viewer, but they are not dependent on it as the designer is. A Covid-19 informational poster can not afford to be open to interpretation. Artists should not think, but feel — designers should not feel, but think.

I began this essay by claiming taste is subjective, but here you have me falling on my own sword. Taste might well not be subjective, it may be shaped by factors outside of the individual — e.g. trends; class; culture. In which case, truly objective design brings forth the question: what is objective? What does that mean? The word itself pretends to hold a universal truth independent from individuality, but where does that truth originate? Is it craftsmanship, technique, mastery of tools? Does it have the same hold across different cultures, socio-economic factors, time? Perhaps the question is not whether the designer should be subjective or objective, but rather what we define as objective. Who’s afraid of red, yellow and *objectively good* aesthetics? Me!

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## REFLECTIONS ON APHORISMS

Easter Holidays. I am sitting in front of my window reading *Aphorisms on Nature*, an essay originally written by Georg Christoph Tobler, wrongly attributed to J.W.von Goethe. One of the paragraphs mentions an aphorism on nature in relation to rest:

*“She changes for ever and ever, and rests not a moment. Quietude is inconceivable to her, and she has laid her curse upon rest.”*

Tobler refers to rest as nature’s curse. That triggers me in this Easter Holiday, where I am supposed to rest; recover from a hard working period. I can’t seem to find any.

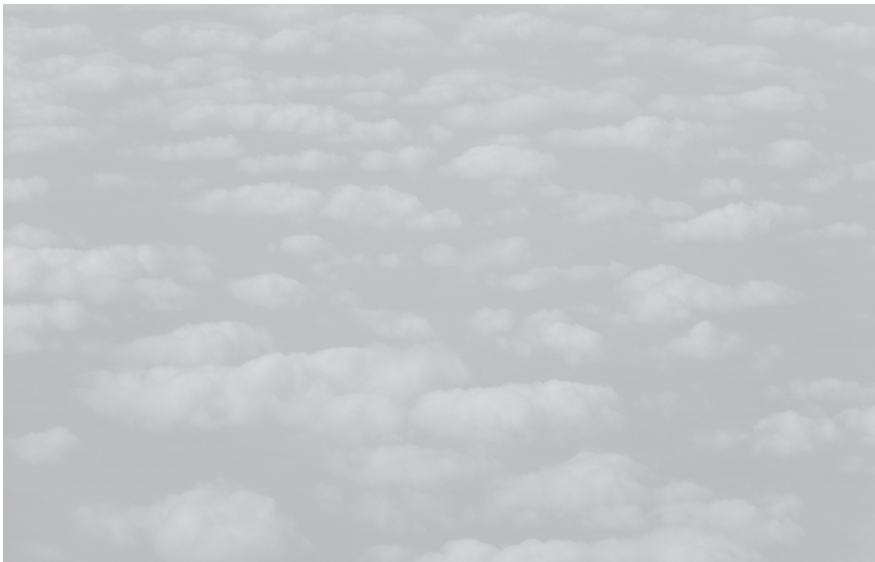
I have to think about Virginia Woolf’s essay *On Being ill*, on how illness forces mankind to a rest and how it states that this can be of value as well; give a different perspective on life; reach a different level of experiencing the world.

*“In health meaning has encroached upon sound. Our intelligence domineers over our senses. But in illness, with the police off duty, we creep beneath some obscure poem by Mallarmé or Donne, some phrase in Latin or Greek, and the words give out their scent, and ripple like leaves, and chequer us with light and shadow, and then, if at last we grasp the meaning, it is all the richer for having travelled slowly up with all the bloom upon its wings.”*

I look out of my window and watch the sky. I feel restless. I want to go outside but nothing is out there. There is! — No one is there though. What does that something out there mean when there is no one to share it with? Ugh, what a cheesy thought! Especially when subsequently I have to think about this quote of the book *Into The Wild*:

*‘HAPPINESS (IS) ONLY REAL WHEN SHARED.’*

Recently I decided to share my work on Instagram. I get reactions and ‘likes’ from people I used to see in person. They seem



to feel closer for a moment at the time their reactions pop up in my notification centre. I feel connected again. The feeling doesn't linger on for long though.

I come across a lot of references concerning the nature of being alone. It might have something to do with the state the world is in now; teased by a virus that forces us to practice distance.

*"We're born alone and we die alone. It's just a question of getting used to both of them. Being alone is fundamental to the whole construct. It is, so to speak, the corner stone. You can live with other people, but with generally means next to."*

I look at the sky again. I am thinking about this essay I need to write. I think it has to be about an interesting topic. Interesting; a trivial word. I find a lot of things interesting which others don't. Or more often I don't find things interesting that others do. That's a lie, to be honest. I especially find things of others interesting. Saying that I'm not just feels more interesting. A twist. Rebellious. A statement. A rebellious statement is always interesting. I think about a book that I have read recently that had these kind of twists. About characters that have solid statements about things. Not that these are always good, but it is nice to read about someone who just bluntly stands for something. Grounded somewhere. In this book the character just states that he doesn't like people for example. Or the old men who states that taking pictures of toilets sounds good:

*"But he photographed toilets in the last years he was alive. I don't know if that's good or not."*

*"I think it sounds good, Düsseldorf says."*

Now it is up to me to state something. I'd like to be this person who can undoubtedly make statements. — Or do I? Because to be frank I also like people that don't. But then again maybe I like people more when they do. Or maybe when they don't and then suddenly do. Out of nowhere. Like a hammer blow. That's interesting.

Again I look at the sky. Sheep clouds have made their appearance onto my windows canvas. Sheep clouds are my favorite kind of clouds. I like the way they are fragmented but are still together. Just like a textbook designed with enough white space.

They leave room to breathe; for thought; for interpretation. It gives me a feeling of ease to be able to pause between the lines. I feel that we are a lot similar, we humans, to sheep clouds. Fragmented but in someway together. I think about Aphorisms on Nature once again:

*"Each of her works has an essence of its own; each of her phenomena a special characterization: and yet their diversity is in unity."*

Yes, fragments — they attract me. They don't feel too rigid. I like that. They are floating but somehow grounded. They mean something on their own but are open for interpretation; can be changed when connected to other fragments.

I have to think about Walter Benjamin's work *The Arcades Project*, consisting only of fragmented texts. He states "Method of this project: literary montage. I needn't say anything. Merely show." An article in the Guardian describes its use: "It would work on the principle of montage, juxtaposing textual fragments from past and present in the expectation that they would strike sparks from and illuminate each other."

Can a story be told by use of only fragments? I think about how fragmentation relates to my work as visual practitioner. I make use of fragmentation in my work as well as in my writing. It enables me to propose a space in-between, where things can happen that can't be said, or seen at first hand. But this space can be felt, like a third color when two colors are set side to side. For me this space is even-so important as the fragments themselves. It allows the fragments to exist as individuals yet not be lonely.

I decide to look at the sky for one last time. The clouds have passed and the sun is sinking. I think rest is not a curse, but a between-space.



## A VEGAN-FUR-WEARING-FASHION-DESIGNER

I've been thinking about awareness lately. How easy a day, even a week, just passes by without you feeling that you accomplished anything. You feel that you lack control. Your days, your life has become a routine without consideration. According to Lexico powered by Oxford (2021) the definition of *awareness* is "knowledge or perception of a situation or fact". Be aware of how you react in certain situations. What choices you make and why. But that said, don't be governed by your impulses, emotions and what others expect you to do without reflecting on it. This is an essay based on thoughts about being or not being aware when it comes to clothes.

I was a vegan for about one year and a half, some years ago. This was a choice I made mainly because of the industry's abuse towards animals and mass production of meat. I read articles that were similar to what Peta (2021) describes on their webpage about hens that are crammed so closely together, that they are forced to urinate on one another and how their sensitive beaks are cut off so that they won't harm each other out of frustration created by the situation. These kinds of accusations against the food industry were the reason why I chose to switch my diet to vegan food.

After a while there were times when I decided to make exceptions from my vegan lifestyle. It was a really cold winter and I decided to wear my mink fur, since I didn't really have any other warm jackets to wear. The fur was a 70 years old piece of garment I'd inherited from my grandmother. I wore it a lot that winter. I was warm and I felt really good in it, but I would be lying if I said everything felt right. I was of course aware of its origin, like everyone else, and therefore constantly waiting for an attack from someone. A confrontation. Then, one day the confrontation came. I remember it very well, because it was a very unpleasant situation.

It happened in a bar. I was there with my boyfriend, his sister and her friend. It was "the friend" who made the attack. Let us call him "The Journalist", because that was his profession. My fur rested behind me on my chair. I noticed "The Journalist" glanced many times behind my back and I knew that it was a matter of time before he was going to say something. It came right after



I answered a question about what I was studying. I knew the moment I said “fashion designer” he was going to say something about the piece of garment behind me. And he did. I just wanted to sink through the floor and disappear. I couldn’t say anything right. Felt stupid. Embarrassed. How could I be a fashion designer and wear a garment made out of tortured animals?

When I think about the situation today, I’m thankful for it. Even though it was a very uncomfortable one, the situation forced me to reflect on the choice of why I’m wearing that fur. In the book “Sources of power: How people make decisions” Klein (1998, p. 35) is studying individuals and how they make decisions in stressful situations. He talks about intuition as “recognizing things without knowing how we do the recognizing”. Intuition is something we have to rely on in certain settings when we have to make instant decisions.

The decision to wear the mink coat didn’t require a quick resolve, but still I made one. I believe that the society we live in “trick” us to make more unconscious decisions than we really need.

I understand “The journalist”. His confusion about me. A vegan-fur-wearing-fashion-designer is not that easy to take seriously. It is a contradiction in itself. Today I still wear that mink fur.

The difference now is that I know why I do. I think about the other things we wear that are not that easy to judge by its looks. The things that are equally bad or sometimes even more devastating to the person who made it or the planet we live on. I don’t say it’s right to wear the fur, but at least I know I made a conscious choice.

But it’s not that easy to be aware about clothes today. You can be sure that a low priced garment almost always means it’s made without any concern about ethical issues.

*“How can a product that needs to be sown, grown, harvested, combed, spun, knitted, cut and stitched, finished, printed, labeled, packaged, and transported cost a couple of euros?” (Edelkoort, 2015)*

It says itself - not really possible. Still, a high price does not necessarily mean that the piece of garment is any better. When it comes to high end designer clothes, you are not only paying for the garment in your hands, you are paying for prestige, expensive

retail location and marketing budgets. You can’t be sure that the garment itself was made properly. This is a problem for the consumer, not everyone has the time or interest to get engaged. People want an easy choice, and it’s not that simple in this society built on efficiency and money.

Therefore it’s a lot more effortless to do what everyone else is doing. Buy things, throw things, buy new things. You don’t have the time to demand something from the industry - you need a new shirt. Even if you have an interest, like me, there are still other things to consider. Sure, I could spend a lot of time finding the perfect sustainable coat to replace my mink fur, but it would still mean that a perfectly good jacket would be made in vain and become just another thrown product.

I wear the mink fur because I think it’s better to use the stuff that we own rather than buy new stuff. We produce and throw away too many things in this world. As a designer student, who is supposed to someday be a part of that industry, I am concerned.

“How will things end? With things. [...] Where do all these things come from? From designers; but why? Why do designers keep making things? Why do we keep making designers make more things?” (Tonkinwise, 2004, p. 177)

I’m sure “The Journalist” would be amused at this point. Now you are a fashion designer who makes things but think it’s wrong to buy new things? He would have a good time now, I know it. And I would probably not have a good answer this time either.

To be aware. For me it doesn’t mean to have an answer or even doing the right thing all the time. It’s about taking the time to be more critical about the things around you and your decisions. I know I want to design clothes in the future and I hope that by being more aware I can do it as right as possible. I guess by this essay, I just wanted to share some thoughts about clothes, wearing clothes and buy clothes with a hope that we all can do this with a more critical approach. Put some demands on the production of things and ask yourself if you really need all the things you think you do, or if it’s the consumer society telling you that you do.

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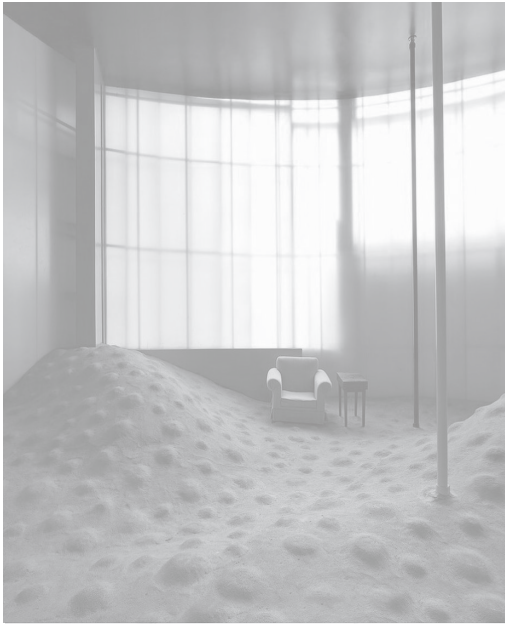


## BUILDING MEMORIES

I remember a couple of years ago I was encouraged to clean out some of my stuff in my childhood home. My bedroom was filled to the brim with stuff I had collected from a young age (diaries back to the age of six, old toll tickets, fabric from my grandma's old couch, rubbers, stickers, napkins, threads, popsicle sticks - the list is long), following the basement where my father through the years had extended my storage space with a whole wall. I recall a lot of thoughts and images travelling through my mind during the elimination of forgotten remembrance. Events and people that I had not been thinking of in years suddenly popped back into my head like it had happened yesterday.

I believe that collecting memories within our clothes might evolve our personal relationship and love for them. The process of building memories could be done in several ways, but through the last years I have been investigating the potential of creating memories through interaction with my garments. I try to think of their functions as something else than what they were supposed to do and represent. I wear my knitted vest as a one shouldered top, using one of the armholes as the neck, making the original neckline a folded drape over my shoulder. I use my scarf as a top and my worn-out tights as a bolero. The intimate and personal event in front of the mirror exploring, playing around and getting dressed creates memories. Later on when I go outside and people start asking how my tights became a bolero, the memory evolves and connects with a certain moment, a certain place, a day, weather and person. Lately, in my design practice, I have started exploring if I could encourage others to engage with their personal wardrobe.

A couple of months ago I came across Arakawa and Madeline Gins, conceptual artists and amateur architects. Mostly known for their belief in making people live forever by constructing an environment that challenges and stimulates the human senses by interaction and awareness of one's surroundings. The Reversible Destiny Lofts MITAKA in memory of Helen Keller, an apartment complex in Tokyo, is an example of their solution to the manifesto of "not dying".



On The Reversible Destiny Lofts website they explain the following: [...] By inhabiting a space that does not allow you to think of it as something that is self-evident, you can realise that you can do things that at one point you thought were impossible. That is the essence of the idea of “reversible destiny,” which the building embodies. (Reversible Destiny Lofts Mitaka, n.d)

The apartments are built as an open room with a kitchen in the middle, lowered in the floor. Around the kitchen the floor is modelled in bumps that are formed to fit the shape of either an adult’s or a child’s foot, making the foot “a part” of the floor. This is one of many aspects of the unusual homes. The essence of the architecture is to melt the human body together with its surroundings.

Human beings interact with their surroundings to so great an extent that it is plausible to think that there could be surroundings, ones constructed with great forethought, that could lead them to reconfigure their life circumstances for the far better (reversible destiny!). (Gins, 2013, p. 121)

I started wondering how I could use their manifest and conceptual thinking as an inspiration for my own practice. Could I somehow create clothes that became a part of a person? Or in other words, could I create clothes that people can modulate into their own bodies? This led me to transformable clothing, something I have had my eyes on for quite a while, but still have not been able to translate into something conducive.

Transformable clothing are garments that open up for the possibility to be changed by a consumer or a service provider. Modular clothing, however, are categorised as clothing with one or several detachable modules that might be removed or exchanged with others (Niinimäki & Hassi, 2011). This opens up the possibility to change a look as the wearer prefers, additionally, it could be easier adaptable to different occasions. Namely, modular clothing invites the wearer to actively, if wanted, interact with their garments like Lego bricks, figuratively speaking. Giving a consumer the possibility to alter the design of a garment could open up for an emotional attachment that may affect and delay its psychological obsolescence (Rahman & Gong, 2016).

Could the idea of building your outer shell, dependent on your mood, have the potential to strengthen the presence in everyday life? As you build, you have to consider the options and take conscious choices. As you do, you become more aware of what

you actually wear, what you feel, what you want to represent or communicate to the world that day. As John Harvey puts it: “[...] clothes provide a physical and symbolic barrier between ourselves and the world.” (2008, p.11), and it is for your own ease that you can use this as a tool to become more confident and present in your surroundings either it is to hide in the crowd or to shine in a job interview.

In the end of the day it is about having fun. It is about appreciating the garments you love and remembering the stories you have created together. By playing with clothes and exploring new ways of seeing and using them opens up for your personal relationship to grow. Kind of like a girl playing with her doll. Telling her story like she wants it to be, giving her a name and showing her off to her friend next door. Our clothes deserve affection. They are somewhat our friends. And maybe it is not possible to make people live forever, but at least it could be possible to make our clothing live “our forever” by giving them the devotion they deserve. You, who are reading, I encourage you to acknowledge what you have experienced together with your garments. What they have done for your confidence in a certain situation. The struggle of removing the stain from a meal you will never forget. Maybe the stain never even got away. By appreciating the small flaws and memories through time, endorsing them, you might suddenly find the garments way too valuable to throw away like just another product.



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## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

Since I arrived in Oslo for my semester abroad, I have realized that my master's degree is slowly coming to an end and my final master project is waiting for me, when I return to Germany. I have started to make connections between my gathered experiences. Now, I realize that all impressions, the experiences I have made, the people I have met and even the setbacks happened for a good reason.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I have tried to incorporate more routines in my daily life. Walking and running through nature is an incredible feeling for me. I have enjoyed the smell of the forest, the feel of the sand under my feet and the sound of the water. Every time I would love to collect and capture every moment and all the beautiful colours, materials and sounds. They often evoke special emotions in me and bring back memories, for example of my childhood when I wanted to experience all my surroundings by touching everything. In order to develop our brain we need to spend our early years with - seeing, touching, smelling, tasting and hearing what surrounds us that help us to make sense of the world. The multisensory connections that form our brains allow us to create meaning and memory.

Over the years of studying, I refined my sense of tactility, the use of colours and materials. Touching surfaces, physical experiences, multisensory practices and getting a feel for the quality of materials. How does the atmosphere change when the light, the smell and the temperature change? What effect does it have on the colours, our perception and emotions that arise?

Lately, I realized that in today's society we are often not aware of materials and their surfaces. The deeper I delve into the theme, the more exciting it becomes for me. I often strive to create concepts that interact with people, educate them and have a social impact. I think it all has to do with sensory design. The combination of using special materials, adding of modern technologies and offering human participation.

Humans are sensory beings living in a rich and multi-layered sensory world. We constantly act in response to the incoming stream of information we receive through our senses. Each action we take, in turn, generates more sensory information and so the

grapheme-color synesthesia

1 2 3 or 3 4  
 white true green aqua true blue strawberry pink  
 (depends on surrounding numbers)

5 6 7 8 9 or 9  
 true red tomato red golden-rod grape purple dark indigo dark forest (rare) green

(zero is clear, looks like glass to me.)  
 IDK how to draw that, haha.)



cycle continues.

Have you ever experienced that surprising moment of a déjà vu when the whiff of a familiar scent or the first few bars of a song on the radio evoke an unexpected emotion or recall a distant memory? I often have great memories related to food, whether it is my grandma's cooking, the delicious treats I have tasted while traveling or the delightful smell of a freshly baked bread that makes me reminisce. It is all because food is a complete multi-sensory experience that involves all five senses.

When I woke up this morning, I had that horrible fear of not knowing where I was. I think most of us have experienced it at one time or another. You carefully piece together the puzzle of objects around and you gradually remember where we are and move on. Of course, this all happens in a matter of seconds, all these emotions – confusion, fear, vulnerability, comfort and finally relief – wash over us in that tiny moment. This experience is similar to one that people living with dementia often have to go through several times a day.

I try to look behind the surface and I want to go deeper into the topic of sensory perception of people with disabilities or older people with dementia. As we live longer, chronic illness and impairments are becoming a greater part of our lives. As a designer I would like to pay more attention to people living with these challenges in order to develop a range of alternatives and creative strategies to improve peoples' well-being.

How do we as designers need to rethink spaces and architecture so that people with cognitive and physical impairments are valued and can remain a part of our society? What needs to be changed? What is inclusive design?

After my research, I understand that I need to change colour concepts, have to rethink the use of materials and shapes. Sensory design enhances health and well-being. More meaningful resource-oriented and supportive activities need to be incorporated into everyday life as well as cultural programmes such like exhibitions or sensory-based therapies.

I am also very fascinated by sensory phenomena, especially *synaesthesia*. For those who do not know it. Synaesthesia is a neurological condition in which information intended to stimulate one of your senses stimulates several of your senses. The amazing and interesting thing about this is that synesthetes can often “see” music as colours when they hear it and “taste” textures like

round or pointy when they eat foods. What new emotions might this awaken?

The senses are the most beautiful instruments with which we are all gifted. When all senses play together like an orchestra, that is phenomenal. Multisensory design becomes so relevant in the age of digital interactions. An amazing example of exploring multisensorial design was presented by Sony called Hidden Senses at the Milan Design Week, 2018. They had created some wonderful prototypes that people could interact with and explore their senses to find hidden meanings of how things worked. The Hidden Senses concept puts technology in a new light: not as something that stands out, but rather as an element that fits into spaces, as a responsive accompaniment to people's everyday lives. I am very excited to see how sensory design will evolve in the future and how immersion will be integrated into exhibitions and other activities.

## OM PROSESSER OG UTVIKLING

Måten vi lærer på er ulik og – slik jeg tenker det – er dette riktig. For vi kan jo undre oss – finnes det noen riktig måte å lære på; ulike som vi mennesker er kan det ikke finnes en unison metode. En oppgave som vi nå har tolkes, gjennomføres og føles derfor forskjellige for hver enkelt av studentene. En oppgave som omhandler research, kan følgelig føre studentene i en retning som er riktig for en selv – utbytte er uansett svært ulikt.

Om en oppgave som denne gjennomføres og forstås på riktig vis – både kan og burde resultatet resultere i et vakkert produkt, men følgelig burde og kan det vakreste være studentens mentale utvikling. Synapser og koblinger i hjernen omslutter hverandre som et garn rundt en fisk, studenten burde kunne hente informasjon om bilder, artikler, malerier og møbler som kan inspirere til nye produkter. Slik burde det være, men det er ikke alt burde som faktisk hender – for noen hjerner vil ikke utvikle seg på en slik vakker og rasjonell måte. Noen hjerner vil – rett og slett ikke – det som er best for seg selv. I mitt tilfelle virker det slik, selv om det foregår en mental utvikling her så vel. Det må innrømmes at jeg har beflittet meg på dette å skje, men mulig er min mentale utfoldelse noe som kommer – ikke noe som kan planlegges. Det ønsket om en opphøyet mentalkapasitet kommer når den, altså hjernen, vil det.

Slik har det ofte vært. Ingen medisin, ingen løpetur eller ingen konversasjon har fremskyndt denne prosessen; systemet og utviklingen til denne hjernen, min egen, har vært uforståelig for sågar psykiatere som for meg selv. Er dette min livslange *quest*, min søken, er det min apoteose – ikke fly med vinger som Ikaros, men med forståelse av eget sinn; så som Ikaros fly for nære solen og kollapse av egen forståelse. Om hjernen min nok en gang velger et sololøp, velger å være helt alternativ og at dette faktisk kan stemme, føyer det seg i rekken med uforståelige nykker og rariteter at det snarlig ikke vil overraske noen. Slik sett er dette å regne som det eneste riktige – jeg mener – om det å forstå seg selv har resultert i et absolutt kaos, kan det ikke forventes å fattes. Ikke engang av meg selv. Nåvel, hvordan det enn er kan det forbli. En utvikling er det uansett hvor lite forståelig den er.



Det er slik min hjerne fungerer, men helt overordnet, er det ikke slik alle hjerner fungerer? Nettopp på ulikt vis. Det er vel enkelte som ønsker sin hjerne å fungere på et annet vis – det er i så tilfelle fånytt. Uansett hvor mange medisiner, lærebøker om studieteknikk eller hvor mange selvhjelpsbøker en leser har ikke jeg forstått det slik at vi endres radikalt. Noe skjer åpenbart, og om vi ser på endringen i *hippocampus* hos taxisjåfører bevises da dette, men hjernen er ikke lik. Følgelig endres den på ulikt vis, altså hjernen, og selv om det kan sees en endring i hjernen hos taxisjåfører – betyr det vel ikke at alle kan bli taxisjåfører. Slik er det med oppgaven jeg nå skriver dette essayet til; denne oppgaven kan skape en *portofolio* for *research*, men det er ikke alle som blir gode *researchere* [sic] av den grunn. Ved omfattende *research* virker det til at den kumulative effekten i min hjerne – ikke helt – fungerer slik den burde, eller hvordan jeg ønsker. Hjernen med sin korttidshukommelse og arbeidsminne med påfølgende flyt mellom disse er skapt for å sile ut informasjon. Lagre hva som er viktig, men la relativt unødvendig informasjon ligge til bøkene. En frankofil husker følgelig nasjonaldagen til Frankrike langt bedre enn en som er særs opptatt av Nederland. Problemet mitt er min egen hjernes' ønske om en presang eller gave når den gjør noe riktig. Hvem som skal gi den det er vi (jeg og hjernen) uenige i og dette resulterer ofte i en sutret hjerne. Resultatet av dette er rot, kaos og et uforståelig ønske om å ta til barrikadene. Begå et gjensidig mytteri, der hjernen ikke vil samarbeide med kroppen og ikke kroppen med hjernen.

I denne oppgaven har dette vært tilfelle: hjernen vil jobbe med oppgaven, men kroppen lystre ikke og tilfeller kroppen – spesielt fingrene – higer etter å taste på tastaturet, men hjernen nekter. Den uroen som oppstår hos begge parter i et slikt mytteri er unektelig særdeles ubehagelig og bunner ut i et gjensidig ønske om kjølhaling. Men ut av dette kommer det noe, for det nytter å prøve – gi seg er ikke en mulighet. Det er slik et produkt, eller en tanke kan spre seg fra hjernen til kroppen og som i skating – kroppen til hjernen. Det er slik dette essayet og min *portofolio* har blitt til.

I et retroperspektiv kan det virke fånyttet og som en unyttig bruk av kalorier, men det er hva som må til og – mener jeg nå selv – produktet blir bra. For det blir ærlig og ærlighet er forståelig – mener nå jeg.

Dette essayet er ikke et resultat av å finslipe et jeg skrev i star-

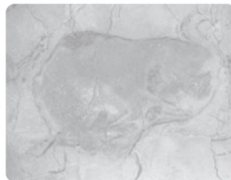
ten av semesteret, men snarere å se som et resultat av et totalt kaos av ulike essays og portfolioen likeså. Jeg er fornøyd med mitt liv, men jeg er ikke fornøyd med noe jeg eier, ikke noe jeg har laget. Det er ganske komisk. For jeg eier mye, mener mye og har laget mye. Grunnen er like enkel som den er dum, jeg er en perfeksjonist, men en utrolig dårlig perfeksjonist. I møbler bryr jeg meg ikke om skruehull, skjeve vinkler eller upussede flater – om jeg lager det selv – om andre gjør slikt kritiserer jeg dem huden full. Denne teksten er fin. Det syntes jeg akkurat nå, men snart – om muligens et kvarter –forakter jeg den og slik er det med alt. Det er ikke en ulempe, men heller ingen fordel – det gjør meg til et levende vesen og et levende oksymoron.





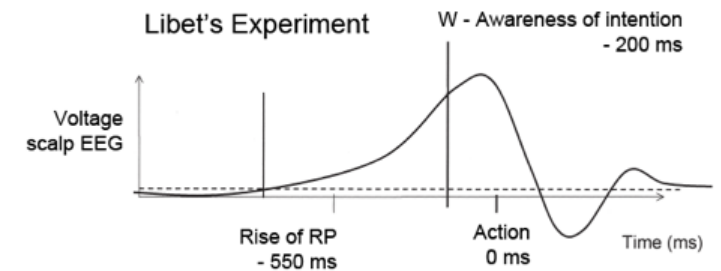
What was the purpose of cave paintings?

Cave art is generally considered to have a **symbolic or religious function**, sometimes both. The exact meanings of the images remain unknown, but some experts think they may have been created within the framework of shamanic beliefs and practices.



<https://www.britannica.com> › Visual Arts › Painting

# THE SECRET LANGUAGE



*Synopsis*—The above diagram gives empirical evidence of the *unconscious*. It shows how the rise of RP (Readiness Potential) in the brain *precedes* conscious voluntary action, or awareness of intention. So, what exactly are we talking about when say that we work with *design*? Can we facilitate the discussion of processes that involve the rise of RP before W (the awareness of intention) by conceiving the threshold to conscious *reflection* at W, in cinematic/theatrical terms? That is, by involving choices that exceed the format of ‘reflection in text’ and involve choices for a more unstaged manuscript: steps to hold anxieties that cannot be contained...

“Raise your words, not your voice. It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder.” — Rumi

This essay is an attempt to make sense of why we develop designs to predict – showing piece by piece – a giant puzzle. Drawn to face the fear of such puzzles. Collecting knowledge, also made me unsure of how to communicate it. Our perceptions are not always the truth, because they are coloured by our history and biases. We test our perceptions by communicating. Therefore, we find inspiration through people who share our perception of the world. We survive by communicating. We must understand our differences in order to accept each other.

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Jennie Steen

However, by changing according to the knowledge we gain on our journey, especially from our mistakes, it becomes important for us to communicate our experiences. Telling stories and communicating with each other is decisive for us in order to survive. Making cave paintings in order to share knowledge through a visual language, made humans learn faster and more productively. Saving time and experience in order to gain the perception of the actual truth: to hold, even as it cannot ever be wholly contained.

We live in a time of uncertainty. The world is moving towards a more divided society, uncertainty prevails and a stronger need to seek comfort with the familiar and known. It will create a dangerous loop of failing to communicate with others, as we are too scared of being alone. Having a fluxed panicked mind, forces you to take advantage of it and try to discover the truth by looking for answers everywhere. Making it hard to translate all the information received, because there are a lot of stories collected in the attempt to see a larger picture. This scary lonely feeling you get when you look at the stars at night, realising how small and meaningless everything seems. In the time being you try and look for comfort in places you haven't been before: travelling in mind, body or the internet.

This overload of information can be overwhelming. About knowing the truth about the self, the world and the future. The film creator Terrence Malick is communicating philosophy in a new language than before. When we think of language we think of the vocal language. But what language really is just making sense of a pattern: we see this in hieroglyphs, when we discovered the first hieroglyphs, pictures of humans with heads like birds or other animals, we could see a pattern, therefore we understood that this was a language.

Humans are good at seeing and finding patterns, and this is how we perceive things. By reading, discovering and inventing patterns. That is what language is, just a pattern of different signs. That's how Mozart made music. And how Freud discovered psychoanalysis, the new way of understanding. The language of the unconscious mind. The unspoken language. Seeing the pattern of cognition, by researching behaviour and memories to understand your mind's pattern in order to predict and change

your own future pattern, or the human pattern in history. That's why we learn from history, to unlearn and break patterns.

Humans tend to search for patterns everywhere, music is therefore a language we can communicate and feel connected with for instance, Terrence Malick's cinematography. We can catch the critique of language theorised by Derrida in his texts, as explanations we could only understand by having the same context (books and ideas that were written ages ago in a different language) that we receive through our own bias. And I also think that's a reason why Terrence Malick is a vantage point to understand Lacan and Heidegger's theories: he is using his passion as a vehicle to explain his work or study. He expressed that the language he spoke while teaching Lacan's theory and studying him, is hard because it is preserved to those who have knowledge to understand.

Written language is a boundary, it is a limited language for those who are introduced to the knowledge. Film is a more visual and allows you to understand through your sensory system, seeing and learning from others' perceptions. Understanding the artist life in order to understand the true meaning behind the work. How getting a deeper insight on personal struggles, gives you the truth about the intentions behind one's work.

I have a memory of Henrik Ibsen's play *Little Eyolf*, I somehow connected with the play without understanding. I think it was my unconscious mind that somehow was drawn to this play, not having the words to describe why I connected. The fascination of the play later got me to do some research about Ibsen's life and how it was connected by the plot. The play is about the human responsibilities, where the little son Eyolf is neglected from both of his parents and ends up drowning.

Learning that Henrik Ibsen had a son he didn't have contact with, made me draw the conclusion on how the artist used his talent in writing play to ask the question to himself. The skill of being able to go back to memories to try and understand something from the past, made me aware how powerful the mind is, and it is possible to visit those memories to try and make sense of it later. Is the artist's life important for the art to give meaning to others?

Consider this experience: how children start to seek for different truth when they discover the “glitch” as an informant lies to them. Visiting a memory of my granddad lying to me about being from the police, when he found me and my cousin after we as kids had run off. And this is when I started to be critical and search for my own perception of reality at a very young age. I think this forced me to learn the hidden language of people, the unspoken ones. I learned to read people’s mind, from reading the pattern of behaviour. Since the experience made me question the truth, it made me question everything, revisit memory in order to learn from experience.

Designers and artists connect with the audience with speaking a kind of secret language. It is when we work in flow, or just feeling right about our decisions, without knowing exactly why we do what we do. Afterwards, we try and explain or understand the reason behind why we did what we did. In order to give meaning of what we do, we are trained to go back in our memories to understand why. And then we learn that in the state of *flow*, it is our unconscious mind that speaks. Our true desire behind the work is shown, it reveals who we are.

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