



Blom Jorund Bilkstad, SCHAFT –faweret (2021)

How far would we have come with this flyer-series if it hadn't been for Wilhelm Bendz's painting of the Waagepetersen-home, from 1836? How far would we have come with that painting if it hadn't been for the identification of past, future, current and present time-zones as parts of the painting?

How far would we have come with the identification of these parts of the whole if it wasn't for a parallel between the timescapes W-home in Bendz's painting and the relation between the *past* (photography), the *future* (drawing) and the *present* (writing), in the *current* traffic of public culture.

That is, the traffic of public culture that we are part of every day? Would we have had these prerequisites it looking at the painting with [Adolf Loos's](#) eyes? The kind of question that could keep you up at night. For instance, he thought of Goethe and Beethoven as Modern (rather than as Romantics).

Daniel Myrick, *The Objective*, Movie (final scene)

The two assumptions that we have examined critically so far—that artefacts are historical and all human beings have a story to tell—open two ways of taking stock/knowledge of what we are working with in design, that lean on *mereology*: the analytical and generative study of part-whole relations.

In other words, there are other prerequisites than us all having a story to tell, and that the origin of all artefacts—as made up objects—is historical. And the alternative: the *present* where the paths of the *current*, *past* and *future* cross and interface. It is achieved as at a cost, and is a key to knowledge.

Which means that, for instance, when we are standing before a painting, a drawing, a computer screen we are standing by a window. But it is *not* a window to a landscape—even though that's what it can look like—but unto a *time-scape*. From the current, past, future we can transpose the present.

That is, we can move and stand in a different time than our own, and intercept what the painting (...) is saying to us, from there. From our current *here-and-now* we can take a decisive step into the painting's *there-and-now*. This is an idea proposed by Agamben in *What is the contemporary?*

Or, if you will, an *idea* and *practice* of the contemporary: not matter how far back or forth in time—how much removed we are in time and space—we can think and act as *contemporaries*. This is an important prerequisite to what writing is and does in design. How it is part of the design work.

Writing is a *mirror*. It catches the reflection of things. Which why it is a visual tool: different, but at the same level, as the image. If the image is a window to a time different than our own, writing is what can bring us *back*. Coming from the there-and-now to the here-and-now can enrich our present.

Which means that it brings us from the trip: whether good, bad or simply different. It helps us develop our judgement, determining whether we presently are in a worse or a better place. Not all stories are good for other people, for the planet or to the people who tell them. *But how can we tell?*

Well, this is precisely what we may ask of writing: how can I tell, when telling has to do with making up my mind? How to I write to make my bid, in terms are more decisive than just voicing my opinion? How can I tell, in terms that allow other people to get what my point is? To saddle them.

That is, bringing other people to your saddle-point. Not to agree with you, but to reach the place where they can discuss with you. That there is a point to the argument, and that the better argument may win. In other words, to draw the intended benefits from a democratic culture. Discussion.

For how much would it help if I had simply been a time-traveller the home of Waagepetersen (W)—in that specific aspect which has to do with the way this home came through to the public culture at that time—which is somehow locked into the painting, if you couldn't bring it out (but just feel it)?