

IT'S  
nice  
to  
be  
nice,  
*try*  
*it*

GREGORY S. MAASS  
&  
NAYOUNGIM

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(1) ASPIRIN: Aspirin, or acetylsalicylic acid (A.S.A.) is a salicylate drug, often used as an analgesic to relieve minor aches and pains, as an antipyretic to reduce fever, and as an anti-inflammatory medication. In countries where Aspirin is a registered	trademark owned by Bayer, the generic term is “A.S.A.” Aspirin also has an anti-platelet or “anti-clotting” effect and is used in long-term, low doses to prevent heart attacks, strokes and blood clot formation in people at high risk for developing blood clots. It has also been	established that low doses of aspirin may be given immediately after a heart attack to reduce the risk of another heart attack or of the death of cardiac tissue. The main undesirable side effects of aspirin are gastrointestinal—ulcers and stomach bleeding—and	tinnitus, especially in higher doses. In children under 19 years of age, aspirin is no longer used to control flu-like symptoms or the symptoms of chickenpox, due to the risk of Reye's syndrome. Today, aspirin is one of the most widely used medi-	cations in the world, with an estimated 40,000 metric tons of it being consumed each year.  source: Wikipedia.org
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(2) BERGEN, NORWAY:  
Where initial work on the  
*Tofu Flow Chart* took place.

(3) BEUYS, JOSEPH:  
Major Inventions:  
*Fettecke: Fatcorner/Fatedge*  
The *Fatcorner* (1982/1989)  
was an artwork of the ger-  
man artist Joseph Beuys.  
Beuys installed it on the  
28th of April 1982, for  
a planned reception for  
the following day of the  
Lama Sogyal Rinpoché,  
empowered by the Daila  
Lama in Europe, after which  
a seminar of the FIU held  
place, in round about 3 m  
height in the corner of his

Studio Room 3 at the Art  
Academy Düsseldorf with  
five Kg of butter.  
A cleaner of the Art  
Academy Düsseldorf elimi-  
nated the fat in 1986.  
Johannes Stüttgen  
claimed ownership of the  
artwork, because Beuys  
started this artwork with  
the words: “Johannes, jetzt  
mache ich dir endlich deine  
Fettecke” translating as:  
“Johannes, now I finally  
make a fatcorner for you.” It  
came to a lawsuit. The state  
of North Rhine-Westphalia  
paid indemnification in  
court of second instance an  
amount of 40,000 DM as a

settlement.  
It was the second case in  
which an artwork of Beuys,  
wasn’t recognized as such  
and destroyed. On November  
3, 1973 a Bathtub surfaced  
with sticking plaster and  
gauze bandages was cleaned  
during a folksy evening of  
the local SPD-association  
Leverkusen-Alkenrath and  
used otherwise. Also in this  
case an imdemnation of DM  
40.000 is heard to have been  
paid. This event was the sub-  
ject of a TV advertisement  
for a cleaning agent and is  
often mistaken with the de-  
struction of the *Fatcorner*.  
The end of the *Fatcorner*

makes this work one of the  
most famous of the artist’s.  
The work was provocative  
to a large part of society  
and led to controversies  
concerning the question of  
what could be considered  
art. Beuys himself com-  
mented: “A *Fatcorner* is  
not made to the effect of  
greasing a table with fat,  
but a *Fatcorner* is made, in  
order to stand in opposition  
to other processes, which  
such a plastic, vulnerable  
material builds in space and  
time, therefore these things  
with fat lay claim to theory.  
And this theory is maybe  
naturally not always pres-

ent, when people see such  
an experimental assembly  
in a museum.”

A singular moment  
(Modern mythos), origin of  
creativity, induced through  
brain damage by embed-  
ded shrapnel and neural  
rewiring, through depres-  
sion untill death. This is a  
description of Joseph Beuys’  
plane crash in WWII:  
In 1942 Beuys was  
stationed in the Crimea  
and was a member of  
various combat bomber  
units. On 16 March 1944  
Beuys’ Ju 87 plane crashed  
on the Crimean Front.

The pilot was killed but  
Beuys was found by a  
German search commando  
and brought to a military  
hospital where he stayed  
from March 17 to April 7.  
This incident, and Beuys’s  
subsequent embellishment  
of it, is perhaps the most  
controversial aspect of  
his artistic persona. Beuys  
later recounted how he  
had been rescued from the  
crash by Tartar tribesmen,  
who had wrapped his bro-  
ken body in animal fat and  
felt and nursed him back  
to health. Beuys recounted  
the story in 1979:  
“Had it not been for

the Tartars I would not be  
alive today. They were the  
nomads of the Crimea, in  
what was then no man’s  
land between the Russian  
and German fronts, and  
favoured neither side. I had  
already struck up a good  
relationship with them, and  
often wandered off to sit  
with them. ‘Du nix njemcky’  
they would say, ‘du Tartar,’  
and try to persuade me  
to join their clan. Their  
nomadic ways attracted  
me of course, although by  
that time their movements  
had been restricted. Yet it  
was they who discovered  
me in the snow after the

crash, when the German  
search parties had given  
up. I was still unconscious  
then and only came round  
completely after twelve  
days or so, and by then I  
was back in a German field  
hospital. So the memories  
I have of that time are  
images that penetrated  
my consciousness. The last  
thing I remember was that  
it was too late to jump, too  
late for the parachutes  
to open. That must have  
been a couple of seconds  
before hitting the ground.  
Luckily I was not strapped  
in — I always preferred free  
movement to safety belts...

My friend was strapped in  
and he was atomized on  
impact—there was almost  
nothing to be found of him  
afterwards. But I must have  
shot through the windscreen  
as it flew back at the same  
speed as the plane hit the  
ground and that saved me,  
though I had bad skull and  
jaw injuries. Then the tail  
flipped over and I was com-  
pletely buried in the snow.  
That’s how the Tartars found  
me days later. I remember  
voices saying ‘Voda’ (Water),  
then the felt of their tents,  
and the dense pungent  
smell of cheese, fat and  
milk. They covered my body

in fat to help it regenerate  
warmth, and wrapped it in  
felt as an insulator to keep  
warmth in.”  
Although entering Beuys’  
rhetoric somewhat later  
than some commentators  
have acknowledged, this  
story has served as a  
powerful myth of origins for  
Beuys’ artistic identity, as  
well as providing an initial  
interpretive key to his use  
of unconventional materials  
(amongst which felt and fat  
were central).

source: Wikipedia.org

cuteness  
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(4) PHILLIP K. DICK: On February 20, 1974, Dick was recovering from the effects of sodium pentothal administered for the extraction of an impacted wisdom tooth. Answering the door to receive delivery of extra analgesic, he noticed that the delivery woman was wearing a pendant with a symbol that he called the “vesicle piscis”. This name seems to have been based

on his confusion of two related symbols, the ichthys (two intersecting arcs delineating a fish in profile) that early Christians used as a secret symbol, and the vesica piscis. After the delivery woman’s departure, Dick began experiencing strange visions. Although they may have been initially attributable to the medication, after weeks of visions he considered this explanation

implausible. “I experienced an invasion of my mind by a transcendently rational mind, as if I had been insane all my life and suddenly I had become sane,” Dick told Charles Platt. Throughout February and March 1974, he received a series of visions, which he referred to as “two-three-seventy four” (2-3-74), shorthand for February-March 1974. He described

the initial visions as laser beams and geometric patterns, and, occasionally, brief pictures of Jesus and of ancient Rome. As the visions increased in length and frequency, Dick claimed he began to live a double life, one as himself, “Philip K. Dick”, and one as “Thomas”, a Christian persecuted by Romans in the 1st century A.D. Despite his history of drug use

and elevated stroke risk, Dick began seeking other rationalist and religious explanations for these experiences. He referred to the “transcendently rational mind” as “Zebra”, “God” and, most often, “VALIS”. Dick wrote about the experiences in the semi-autobiographical novels *VALIS* and *Radio Free Albemuth*.  
source: Wikipedia.org

(5) FENG SHUI: Feng shui (traditional Chinese: 風水; simplified Chinese: 风水; pinyin: fēng shuǐ; pronounced fehng-shway in English) is an ancient Chinese system of aesthetics believed to utilize the Laws of both heaven (astronomy) and earth (geography) to help one improve life by receiving positive Qi. The original designation for the discipline is Kan Yu (traditional Chinese: 堪輿; simplified Chinese: 堪舆; pinyin: kānyú; literally: *Tao of heaven and earth*). The words ‘feng shui’ literally translates as “wind-water” in English. This is a cultural shorthand taken from the following passage of the *Zhangshu* (Book of Burial) by Guo Pu of the Jin Dynasty: *Qi rides the wind and scatters, but is retained when encountering water*. Many modern enthusiasts claim that feng shui is the practice of arranging objects (such as furniture) to help people achieve their goals. More traditionally, feng shui is important in choosing a place to live and

finding a burial site, along with agricultural planning. The goal of feng shui as practiced today is to situate the human built environment on spots with good qi. The “perfect spot” is a location and an axis in time. Some areas are not suitable for human settlement and should be left in their natural state. BAGUA (eight symbols) Two diagrams known as bagua (or pa kua) loom large in feng shui, and both predate their mentions in the *Yijing* or *I Ching*. The Lo (River) Chart (*Luoshu*, or Later Heaven Sequence) and the River Chart (*Hetu*, or Early Heaven Sequence) are linked to astronomical events of the sixth millennium BCE, and with the Turtle Calendar from the time of Yao. The Turtle Calendar, found in the Yaodian section of the *Shangshu* or ‘Book of Documents’, dates to 2300 BCE, plus or minus 250 years. It seems clear from

many sources that time, in the form of astronomy and calendars, is at the heart of feng shui. In Yaodian, the cardinal directions are determined by the marker-stars of the mega-constellations known as the Four Celestial Animals: East: the Bluegreen Dragon (Spring equinox)—Niao (Bird),  $\alpha$  Hydrae South: the Red Bird (Summer solstice)—Huo (Fire),  $\alpha$  Scorpionis West: the White Tiger (Autumn equinox)—Xu (Emptiness, Void),  $\alpha$  Aquarii,  $\beta$  Aquarii North: the Dark (Mysterious) Turtle (Winter solstice)—Mao (Hair),  $\eta$  Tauri (the Pleiades) The bagua diagrams are also linked with the *sifang* (four directions) method of divination used during the Shang dynasty. The *sifang* is much older, however. It was used at Niuheliang, and

figured large in Hongshan culture’s astronomy. And it is this area of China that is linked to Huangdi, the Yellow Emperor, who allegedly invented the south-pointing spoon. source: Wikipedia.org (6) FLOW CHART: Decision tree learning, used in data mining and machine learning, uses a decision tree as a predictive model which maps observations about an item to conclusions about the item’s target value. More descriptive names for such tree models are classification trees or regression trees. In these tree structures, leaves represent classifications and branches represent conjunctions of features that lead to those classifications. In decision theory and decision analysis, a decision tree is a graph or model of decisions and their possible consequences, including chance event outcomes, resource costs, and utility. It can be used

to create a plan to reach a goal. Decision trees are constructed in order to help make decisions. A decision tree is a special form of tree structure. Another use of trees is as a descriptive means for calculating conditional probabilities. A pseudorandom sequence of tetrominoes (sometimes called “tetrads” in older versions)—shapes composed of four square blocks each—fall down the playing field. The object of the game is to manipulate these tetrominoes, by moving each one sideways and rotating it by 90 degree units, with the aim of creating a horizontal line of blocks without gaps. When such a line is created, it disappears, and any block above the deleted line will fall. As the game progresses, the tetrominoes fall faster, and the game ends when the stack of tetrominoes reaches the top of the playing field and no new tetrominoes are able to enter. source: Wikipedia.org

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**G**  
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galleries  
Artspace DeFKA, department  
for philosophy and art  
(Assen, the Netherlands)  
BIT Teatergarasjen  
(Bergen, Norway)  
Galerie du jour Agnès b.  
(Paris, France)  
Gallery Shilla  
(Daegu, South Korea)  
Gana Art Center  
(Seoul, South Korea)  
Kuenstlerhaus S11  
(Solothurn, Switzerland)  
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(Glasgow, Scotland)  
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**H**  
“The Handsome Tofu” (exhibition),  
Artspace DeFka (Assen,

**I**  
ideas

(7) FUN (infinite jest): A few individuals view recreation as largely non-productive, even trivial. Excessive recreation is not considered healthy, and may be labeled as escapism. However, research has shown that recreation contributes to life satisfaction, quality of life, health and wellness, and that the use of recreation as a diversion may have clinical applications to individuals with chronic pain and other health im-	pairments. In some cultures and religions, recreation is encouraged on certain days and discouraged on others.	(8) GAMEPLAY, TETRIS: Tetris game manuals refer to the seven one-sided tetrominoes in Tetris as I, J, L, O, S, T, and Z—due to their resemblance to letters of the alphabet—but players sometimes use other names for the pieces, such as “stick” for I or “snake”	for S. All are capable of single and double clears. I, J, and L are able to clear triples. Only the I tetromino has the capacity to clear four lines simultaneously, and this is referred to as a “tetris.” (This may vary depending on the rotation and compensation rules of each specific Tetris implementation. For instance, in the Super Rotation System used in many recent implementations, certain rare situations allow T, S and Z to ‘snap’	into tight spots, clearing triples.)	Colors of tetrominoes: Alexey Pajitnov’s (original designer) prototype for the Elektronika 60 used green brackets to represent blocks. Versions of Tetris on the original Game Boy and on most dedicated handheld games also use monochrome or grayscale graphics. But most popular versions use a separate color for each distinct	shape. Prior to The Tetris Company’s standardization in the early 2000s, those colors varied from implementation to implementation. For example, the cyan piece is a different shape in nearly every version of the game. This means that the common habit of referring to pieces by color is not very sensible, except among players of a particular version.	source: Wikipedia.org	(9) HEALTH: A strong indicator of the health of populations is height, which is generally increased by improving nutrition and health care, and is also influenced by the standard of living and quality of life.	Genetics is also a major factor in people’s height. The study of human growth, its regulators, and its implications is known as Auxology.	source: Wikipedia.org	(10) HUMOUR: A way of dealing with pain, frequently contains an unexpected, often sudden, shift in perspective, effectively it explains that humour occurs when the brain recognizes a pattern that surprises it,	and that recognition of this sort is rewarded with the experience of the humorous response, an element of which is broadcast as laughter	source: Wikipedia.org	(11) ILLUSION, ILLUSIONS: see <i>Der Schein des Scheins</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
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illuminator  
illusion, illusions<sup>(11)</sup>  
imagination  
incongruity  
independent mind  
Infinite Jest  
    see literature  
information science  
installation(s) (In situ)  
intentional  
interpretation  
inventor  
    see Chan, Jackie  
    see Shulgin, Alexander  
    see Tesler, Nicola  
    see Zuse, Konrad  
irony<sup>(12)</sup>

J  
juxtapose

K  
K2000, 101  
    see Hasselhoff, David  
    see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
    see drawings  
    see kitchen foil shade  
    see Squarepants, Spongebob  
    see Patrick  
Kacheln-Racing, 50-51  
    see architecture  
    see “Auto-Focus”  
    see vehicle  
kitchen foil shade  
    see An awkward moment  
    see Duck/rabbit ambiguity drawing  
    see drawings  
    see K2000  
    see “Kim Kim Gallery”  
    see manual arts  
    see mirror  
kitty  
    see cuteness  
    see Tale of three kitties  
“Kim Kim at Rob-ert” (exhibition),  
    Rob-ert showroom (Berlin, Germany)

    see galleries  
    see www.kimkingallery.com  
“Kim Kim Gallery” (exhibition),  
    Market Gallery (Glasgow, Scotland)  
    see billboards  
    see leftovers  
    see www.kimkingallery.com  
    see promotion  
K.iwi, 29, 31, 34  
    see anagama  
    see “Auto-focus”  
    see Fountain  
    see Scaffoldings  
    see reproduction  
kiwi  
    see food  
    see Flow chart  
Klangfiguren (sound-figures)  
    See Chladni, Ernst  
Kuenstlerhaus S11 Solothurn  
    (Switzerland)  
    see “Two million years of art”  
    see galleries

L  
landscapes  
language  
laughter  
    see Freud, Sigmund  
    see the unconscious  
leftovers  
legend  
    see Aspirin  
    see baroque  
letters  
Levinas, Emmanuel  
Licca-chan  
    see “Auto-focus”  
    see Beaut Beauty Bewdie  
    see cuteness  
    see eye witness  
    see legend  
    see Manga eye scheme evolution  
    see pure  
    see toy  
literature  
    see Alice in Wonderland

    see Infinite jest  
logic  
    see architecture  
    see manual arts  
logo  
    see “Kim Kim Gallery”  
    see promotion  
look (looking)  
    see “Auto-focus”  
    see eye witness  
    see Manga eye scheme evolution  
    see Superfly  
    see Flying Eye  
lost formats

M  
The mad hatter<sup>(13)</sup>  
    see Alice in Wonderland  
    see figurine  
    see manual arts  
    see personality  
    see readymade  
Mad hatter’s tea party, 72-74  
    see Alice in wonderland  
    see food  
    see “The handsome tofu”  
    see sweet-bitterness  
manga  
Manga eye scheme evolution, 51-53  
“Matter is plastic in the face  
    of the mind”  
    see “Auto-focus”  
    see legend  
    see Licca-chan  
manual arts  
    see anagama  
    see food  
    see baroque

martial arts  
    see Chan, Jackie  
    see Manga eye scheme evolution  
    see legend  
meaninglessness  
mental health<sup>(14)</sup>  
metaphorical status  
method  
methodology  
mild  
    see Flow chart  
    see Tofu  
    see wellness  
milieu  
miniatures  
    see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
    see “Two million years of art”  
Minimalism  
mirror  
    see “Auto-focus”  
    see kitchen foil shade  
    see pin-up  
    see reflection  
    see Wheels on meals  
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    see readings  
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Mona Lisa overdrive, 76-83  
    see architecture  
    see construction  
    see cityscapes  
    see landscape  
    see personality  
    see reappropriation  
    see science fiction  
    see Seoul  
    see Seoul Station City Gallery  
    see shelving  
    see silhouette

(12) IRONY: The different senses of irony revolve around the perceived notion of an incongruity between what is said and what is meant; or between an un-

derstanding of reality, or an expectation of a reality, and what actually happens.

source: Wikipedia.org

(13) THE MAD HATTER: Historically, the use of quicksilver in hat manufacturing led to insanity among hatters. The Hatter is a fictional character initially encountered at a tea party in Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and later again as “Hatta” in the story’s sequel, *Through the Looking Glass*. He is popularly referred to as the “Mad Hatter,” but is never called by this name in Carroll’s book although the Cheshire Cat does warn Alice that he is mad, and the Hatter’s eccentric behavior supports this.

(Likewise, the chapter in which he first appears, “A Mad Tea-Party”, is often erroneously called “The Mad Hatter’s Tea Party” but in fact it takes place in the garden of the March Hare.)

The Hatter explains to Alice that he and the March Hare are always having tea because, when he tried to sing for the Queen of Hearts at a celebration of hers, she sentenced him to death for “murdering the time”. For reasons that are never explained, he escaped decapitation, but he comes to the conclusion

that time itself was indeed “murdered”

(14) MENTAL HEALTH: Mental health refers to a human individual’s emotional and psychological well-being. Merriam-Webster defines mental health as “A state of emotional and psychological well-being in which an individual is able to use his or her cognitive and emotional capabilities, function in society, and meet the ordinary demands of everyday life.”

According to the World Health Organization, there is no one “official” definition

of mental health. Cultural differences, subjective assessments, and competing professional theories all affect how “mental health” is defined. In general, most experts agree that “mental health” and “mental illness” are not opposites. In other words, the absence of a recognized mental disorder is not necessarily an indicator of mental health.

One way to think about mental health is by looking at how effectively and successfully a person functions. Feeling capable and competent; being able to handle normal levels of

stress, maintain satisfying relationships, and lead an independent life; and being able to “bounce back,” or recover from difficult situations, are all signs of mental health.

Encompassing your emotional, social, and—most importantly—your mental well-being; All these aspects—emotional, physical, and social—must function together to achieve overall health.

source: Wikipedia.org



see Snoopy  
more methods  
multiples  
see [Aspirin](#)  
see art fairs  
see [Crystals](#)  
see [Golden turd](#)

**N**  
Neo-Dada  
neglectable (negligible)  
niceness  
niche  
Nietszsche, Friedrich  
[Not coming straight to the point](#), 90-91, 93, 95  
see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
see slogans  
see “Two million years of art”  
[Novalis](#)  
nutritious  
see [Flow chart](#)  
see food  
see Tofu

**O**  
“Oh, Baby I like it raw”  
(exhibition),  
Stadtmuseum Lichtenberg (Berlin, Germany)  
Open space Bae (Busan, South Korea)  
organize  
oscillations

**P**  
painting  
see [Bearded door](#)  
see [Tale of three kitties](#)  
Paris (France)  
Patrick  
see “Don’t Hassle the Hof”  
see friends  
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see Hasselhoff, David  
see “Two million years of art”  
peacefulness  
see Licca-chan

see Tofu  
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see Chan, Jackie  
see Hasselhof, David  
see Filliou, Robert  
see [Freud, Sigmund](#)  
see Licca-chan  
see Squarepants, Spongebob  
see Patrick  
see Snoopy  
see [Spike](#)  
see Zuse, Konrad  
perspective  
philosophical investigation  
photography  
see [Arswipe rocket, Toilet paper still life](#)  
see everyday life  
pin-up  
see pop culture icons  
see [Beard door](#)  
see [Tale of three kitties](#)  
see [Wheels on meals](#)

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podium  
see [Scaffoldings](#)  
see [Sofa](#)  
see [Freud, Sigmund](#)  
Pop Art  
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see references  
see Chan, Jackie  
see Hasselhoff, David  
power wrestling  
see health  
see martial arts  
practical  
see schnell-schnell  
see reappropriation

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profile  
projection  
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see logo  
see pop culture icons  
see Tofu meets Coca-cola  
ProveRommet  
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see Tofu  
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see “The handsome tofu”  
see legend  
see shine out  
see [Tofu shelf](#)  
pun<sup>(15)</sup>  
punching card  
see computers  
see “Kim Kim Gallery”  
see wall paper  
pure<sup>(16)</sup>  
see Licca-chan  
see Tofu

**Q**  
Qi<sup>(17)</sup>  
see martial arts  
questions

**R**  
Rancière, Jacques  
readings  
see image reading  
see misreadings  
reality<sup>(18)</sup>  
reappear  
reappraise  
reappropriation  
see bowling balls  
see [Mona Lisa overdrive](#)  
see “Auto-focus”  
reason  
recycling  
references

see pop culture icons  
reference library  
reflection  
see “Auto-focus”  
see kitchen foil shade  
see “Kim Kim Gallery”  
see mirror  
see [Wheels on meals](#)  
reform  
reproduction  
see [K.iwi](#)  
see [Tomte Laerdal](#)  
reservoir of imaginary meanings  
riddles  
ritual  
Ritter, Johann  
(Light-Figures, Fire-Script)  
R.MUTT  
see [Fountain](#)  
see [K.iwi](#)  
Rob-ert (Berlin, Germany)  
see guerilla  
see “Kim Kim Gallery”  
see “Kim Kim at Rob-ert”  
see presentation  
[Rubber duck](#), 27  
see “Auto-focus”  
see [Candle dog](#)  
see cuteness  
see [Scaffoldings](#)  
see [Sea lion](#)  
see vintage

**S**  
satellites  
De Saussure, Ferdinand  
[Scaffoldings](#), 30-31, 34-35  
see architecture  
see “Auto-focus”  
see [Candle dog](#)

(15) PUN: A low form of humour

(16) PURE: The absence of impurity in a substance.

(17) QI: In traditional chinese: 氣 In simplified Chinese: 气 In traditional Chinese culture, qi (氣; Pinyin qì , Wade-Giles ch’i Jyutping hei; Japanese ki; Korean gi) is an active principle forming part of any living thing. It is frequently translated as “energy flow”, and is often compared to Western notions of *energeia* or *élan vital* (vitalism) as well as the yogic notion of *prana*. Manfred Porkert described relations to Western

universal concepts: “Within the framework of Chinese thought no notion may attain to such a degree of abstraction from empirical data as to correspond perfectly to one of our modern universal concepts. Nevertheless the term qi comes as close as possible to constituting a generic designation equivalent to our word ‘energy’. When Chinese thinkers are unwilling or unable to fix the quality of an energetic phenomenon, the character

qi 氣 inevitably flows from their brushes.”

References to things analogous to the qi or “flow” of energy that sustains living beings are found in many belief systems, especially in Asia. Philosophical conceptions of qi date from the earliest recorded times in Chinese thinking.

These early texts give an indication of how the concept developed. The philosopher Mo Di (also known as Mo Zi or “Master Mo”) used the word qi to refer to

noxious vapors that would in due time arise from a corpse were it not buried at a sufficient depth. He reported that early civilized humans learned how to live in houses to protect their qi from the moisture that had troubled them when they lived in caves. He also associated maintaining one’s qi with providing oneself adequate nutrition.

In the “Analects of Confucius”, (composed from the notes of individual students sometime after

his death in 479 B.C.), “qi” can mean “breath”, and it can be combined with the Chinese word for blood (making 血氣, xue-qi, blood and breath) and that concept can be used to account for motivational characteristics.

source: Wikipedia.org

(18) REALITY: *La raie alitée d’effets* speaks both of the homophonic “reality” and the literal “line confined to its bed” (*raie alitée*).

see [Castle](#)  
see [construction](#)  
see [Golden turd](#)  
see [K.iwi](#)  
see [Rubber duck](#)  
see [Sea lion](#)  
see [Spike](#)  
see [Tomte Laerdal](#)  
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    see [practical](#)  
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science fiction  
sculptures  
[Sea lion](#), 26-27  
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    see [Candle dog](#)  
    see [cuteness](#)  
    see [Rubber duck](#)  
    see [Scaffoldings](#)  
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seismic zone  
[Seriously easy going](#), 90-91, 92, 95-96  
    see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
    see [slogans](#)  
    see “Two million years of art”  
Seoul (South Korea)  
    see “Bridge”  
    see [Gana Art Center](#)  
    see [Mona Lisa overdrive](#)  
    see [Seoul city gallery](#)  
shape-shifting  
shaped shapelessness  
    see [Ghost Snoopy](#)  
    see [Snoopy Transfiguration](#)  
    see [Tofu shelf](#)  
    see [Tofu computers](#)  
shared  
shades  
    see [kichen foil shades](#)  
    see [shine out](#)  
    see [Sofa](#)

shelf, shelving  
    see [Scaffoldings](#)  
    see [Tofu shelf](#)  
[She’ll be right](#), 90-91, 92, 95  
    see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
    see [slogans](#)  
    see “Two million years of art”  
shine out  
    see [Castle](#)  
    see [Crystals](#)  
    see [Golden turd](#)  
    see “Kim Kim Gallery”  
    see [kitchen foil shade](#)  
Shulgin, Alexander(19)  
    see [inventor](#)  
    see [personality](#)  
    see [Psychic gold-foiled silhoutte](#)  
sign system  
silhouette  
    see [Mona Lisa overdrive](#)  
    see [Psychic gold-foiled silhoutte](#)  
singularity  
slogans  
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    see [Peanuts](#)  
    see [cartoons](#)  
    see [personality](#)  
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    see [sibling](#)  
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    see “Auto-Focus”  
    see [formlessness](#)  
    see “Oh, Baby I like it raw”  
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    see [Florida snowman](#)  
    see [shaped shapelessness](#)  
    see [Trucker’s restroom](#)  
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    see [everyday life](#)  
    see [Football socks](#)  
    see [furniture friendly](#)  
    see [reform](#)

[Sofa](#), 48-49  
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    see [furniture friendly](#)  
    see [miniatures](#)  
    see [shade](#)  
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    see “Auto-focus”  
    see [Ebonite](#)  
    see [cartoons](#)  
    see [flow glaze](#)  
    see [found objects](#)  
    see [Peanuts](#)  
    see [personality](#)  
    see [sibling](#)  
[Spongebob Delirium](#)  
    see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
    see [kitchen foil shade](#)  
    see [Patrick](#)  
    see [Squarepants, Spongebob](#)  
Spongebob jumping from the hairy  
    leg of David Hasselhoff, while  
    escaping from the cartoon  
    headhunter  
    see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
    see [landscape](#)  
    see [sculptures](#)  
    see [Squarepants, Spongebob](#)  
    see “Two million years of art”  
“Spongebob the Movie”  
    see [cartoons](#)  
    see [Hasselhoff, David](#)  
    see [Patrick](#)  
    see [pop culture icons](#)  
    see [Squarepants, Spongebob](#)

[Solothurn, Soleure, Solezza](#)  
    (Switzerland)  
    see [The best small country in the world](#)  
    see [Florida snowman](#)  
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    see “Spongebob the Movie”  
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    see [everyday life](#)  
    see [photography](#)  
[Stone Cold Kiwi](#), 40-41  
    see “Auto-focus”  
    see [Basket Case](#)  
    see “Oh, Baby I like it raw”  
    see [power wrestling](#)  
    see [suiseki](#)  
    see [Stone cold Paris](#)  
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sublime  
subtitle  
suggestion  
suiseki  
    see [Basket Case](#)  
    see [landscape](#)  
    see [scale](#)  
    see [Stone Cold Kiwi](#)  
    see [Stone cold Paris](#)  
    see [Superfly](#)  
super modernity  
superstrings<sup>(21)</sup>  
[Superfly](#), 46-47

(19) ALEXANDER SHULGIN: Alexander “Sasha” Shulgin (b. June 17, 1925 in Berkeley, California) is a Russian-American pharmacologist, chemist and drug developer. Shulgin is credited with the popularization of Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA—also known as Ecstasy) in the late 1970s and early 1980s, especially for psychopharmaceutical use and the treatment of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. In subsequent years, Shulgin discovered, synthesized, and bioassayed over 230 psychoactive compounds. In 1991 and 1997, he and his wife Ann Shulgin authored the books PiHKAL and TiHKAL on the topic of psychoactive drugs. He

is currently continuing his work at home in Lafayette, California, and is writing a new comprehensive psychedelic drug index. It was in the late 50’s that Shulgin had a series of psychedelic experiences that helped to shape his further goals and research, beginning with an experience with mescaline. He would later write

that everything he saw and thought “had been brought about by a fraction of a gram of a white solid, but that in no way whatsoever could it be argued that these memories had been contained within the white solid... I understood that our entire universe is contained in the mind and the spirit. We may choose not to find access to it, we may even

deny its existence, but it is indeed there inside us, and there are chemicals that can catalyze its availability.” Shulgin developed more than 230 psycho-active drugs, some of which make LSD look like an aspirin. source: Wikipedia.org

(20) SPIKE: His appearance is similar to that of Snoopy, but he has a perpetually sleepy look, and sports a long, droopy mustache and a fedora. He is called Snoopy’s older brother. Spike lives alone in the desert near Needles, California. (21) SUPERSTRINGS: Superstring theory is an attempt to explain all of the particles and fundamental forces of nature in one theory by modelling them as vibrations of tiny supersymmetric strings. It is considered one of the most promising candidate theories of quantum gravity. Superstring theory is a shorthand for supersymmetric string theory because

unlike bosonic string theory, it is the version of string theory that incorporates fermions and supersymmetry. The basic idea is that the fundamental constituents of reality are strings of the Planck length (about 10–33 cm) which vibrate at resonant frequencies. Every string in theory has a unique resonance, or harmonic. Another key insight provided by the theory is that no measurable differences can be detected between strings that wrap around dimensions smaller than themselves and those that move along larger dimensions (i.e., effects in a dimension of size R equal those whose size is 1/R). Singularities are avoided

because the observed consequences of “Big Crunches” never reach zero size. In fact, should the universe begin a “big crunch” sort of process, string theory dictates that the universe could never be smaller than the size of a string, at which point it would actually begin expanding. Our physical space is observed to have only three large dimensions and—taken together with time as the fourth dimension—a physical theory must take this into account. However, nothing prevents a theory from including more than 4 dimensions, per se. In the case of string theory, consistency requires spacetime to have 10, 11 or 26 dimensions. The conflict

between observation and theory is resolved by making the unobserved dimensions compactified. EXTRA-DIMENSIONS: Our minds have difficulty visualizing higher dimensions because we can only move in three spatial dimensions. One way of dealing with this limitation is not to try to visualize higher dimensions at all, but just to think of them as extra numbers in the equations that describe the way the world works. This opens the question of whether these ‘extra numbers’ can be investigated directly in any experiment (which must show different results in 1,

2, or 2+1 dimensions to a human scientist). This, in turn, raises the question of whether models that rely on such abstract modelling (and potentially impossibly huge experimental apparatus) can be considered scientific. Six-dimensional Calabi-Yau shapes can account for the additional dimensions required by superstring theory. The theory states that every point in space (or whatever we had previously considered a point) is in fact a very small manifold where each extra dimension has a size on the order of the Planck length. source: Wikipedia.org



see “Auto-Focus”  
see bowling balls  
see eye witness  
see Flying eye  
surfaces  
Surprise surprise, 103  
see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
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see kitchen foil shade  
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see Patrick  
see personality  
see sibling  
swiss plaited loaf (Butterzopf)  
see bread  
see Florida snowman  
see food  
see swissmade  
swiss made  
see The best small country in the world  
see cuteness  
see wellness  
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see paintings  
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see bitter-sweetness  
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see BIT Teatergarasjen (Norway)  
see food  
see pop culture icons  
see promotion

(22) TOFU MEETS COCA-COLA: Small Tofus built out of paper, Coca-Cola

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Tomte Laerdal<sup>(23)</sup>, 28-29, 31, 34  
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see Scaffoldings  
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tourism  
see vehicle  
see wellness  
toy  
see computers  
see Licca-chan  
see Tetris  
see snowman  
see Tomte Laerdal  
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see Florida snowman  
see “Two million years of art”  
“Two million years of Art” (exhibition), Kuenstlehaus S11 (Solothurn, Switzerland)  
see “Don’t hassle the hof”

(23) TOMTE LAERDAL: Tomte Laerdal was a manufacturer of plastic toys in the 1960s and early 1970s. Laerdal was based in Stavanger, Norway.

see Filliou, Robert  
see slogans  
**U**  
uncertain  
Uncertainty principle<sup>(24)</sup>  
(Unschärfenrelation D)  
unconnected  
unexpected  
universal language

**V**  
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vehicle  
see Tomte Laerdal  
see tourism  
see toy  
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vice versa  
see sibling  
see reproduction  
vintage  
see Tomte Laerdal  
visible without being legible  
Visionary<sup>(25)</sup>  
see “Auto-focus”  
see bowling balls  
see inventor  
see Flying eye  
see Shulgin, Alexander  
see Superfly  
see Tesla, Nicolas  
see Zuse, Konrad

visions  
visitant

**W**  
wall paper

(24) UNCERTAINTY PRINCIPLE (Unschärfenrelation D): In quantum physics, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle states that locating a particle in a small region of space makes the momentum of the particle uncertain; and conversely, that measuring the momentum of a particle precisely makes the position uncertain.  
In quantum mechanics, the particle is described by a wave. The position is where the wave is concentrated and the momentum, a measure of the velocity, is the wavelength. Neither the position nor the velocity is precisely defined; the position is uncertain to the degree that the wave is spread out, and the momentum is uncertain to the degree that the wavelength is ill-defined.  
The only kind of wave with a definite position is concentrated at one point, and such a wave has no wavelength. Conversely, the only kind of wave with a definite wavelength is an infinite regular periodic oscillation over all space, which has no definite

see Artspace DeFKa  
see “Kim Kim Gallery”  
see punching card  
see wellness  
wellness  
Wheels on Meals<sup>(26)</sup>, 44-45, 54-55  
see Auto-Focus  
see Chan, Jackie  
see food  
see pop culture icons  
see vehicle  
Wittgenstein, Ludwig  
see duck-rabbit ambiguity  
see universal language  
Woodstock  
see Peanuts  
see sibling  
see Snoopy  
see Snoopy Transfiguration  
Woody Allen story (apocryphal)<sup>(27)</sup>  
words

**Y**  
Yes Way, 90-91, 93-94  
see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
see slogans  
see “Two million years of art”  
You had me at Hello, 90-91, 93-94  
see “Don’t hassle the hof”  
see slogans  
see “Two million years of art”  
see Woody Allen story (apocryphal)

**Z**  
Zen  
see Tofu  
see peacefulness  
see wellness

position. So in quantum mechanics, there are no states which describe a particle with both a definite position and a definite momentum. The narrower the probability distribution is for the position, the wider it is in momentum.  
source: Wikipedia.org  
(25) VISIONARY (subcategory: INVENTOR): Defined narrowly, a visionary is one who experiences a vision or apparition connected to the supernatural. At times this involves seeing into the future. Certain people are capable of going into the visionary state via meditation, drugs, lucid dreams, day dreams, or art.  
source: Wikipedia.org  
(26) WHEELS ON MEALS: *Wheels on meals* is a 1984 Hong Kong action film directed by Sammo Hung. Jackie Chan and Yuen Biao play cousins who run a fast food van in Barcelona.  
(27) WOODY ALLEN STORY (APOCRYPHAL) “You had me at Hello”: The phrase

is incorrectly assumed to be from a Woody Allen film (*Annie Hall*), uttered by a nymphomaniac whose erotic fantasy is to be raped by strangers while canvassing New York apartment buildings for cash donations to the Salvation Army. The phrase is actually uttered in the 1996 film, *Jerry Maguire*. The dialogue is:  
Jerry Maguire: I love you. You... you complete me. And I just...  
Dorothy: Shut up, just shut up. You had me at “hello”.





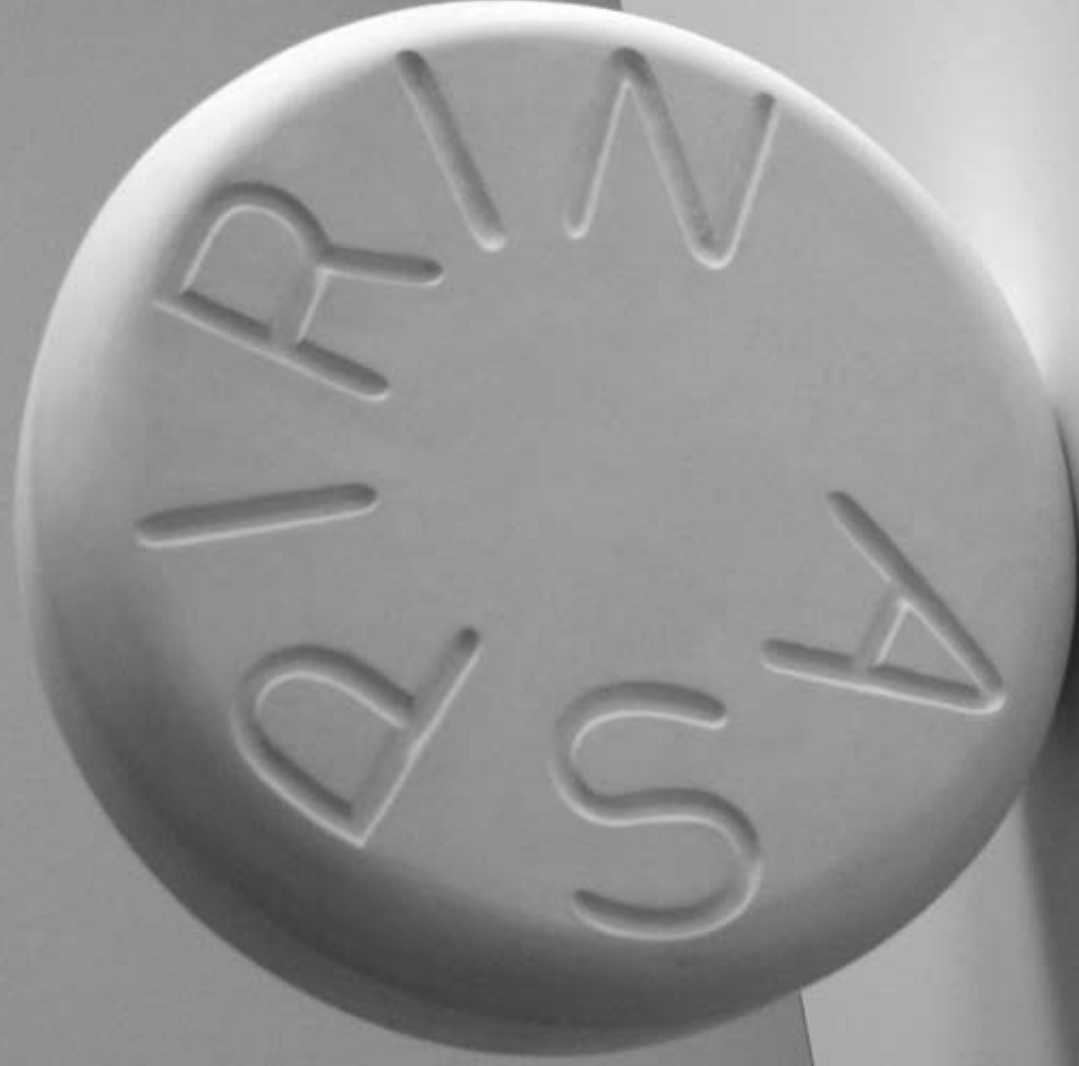
Ceramic fired in an Anagama kiln  
painted wood base

"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea



Ceramic fired in an Anagama kiln  
painted wood base

"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea



















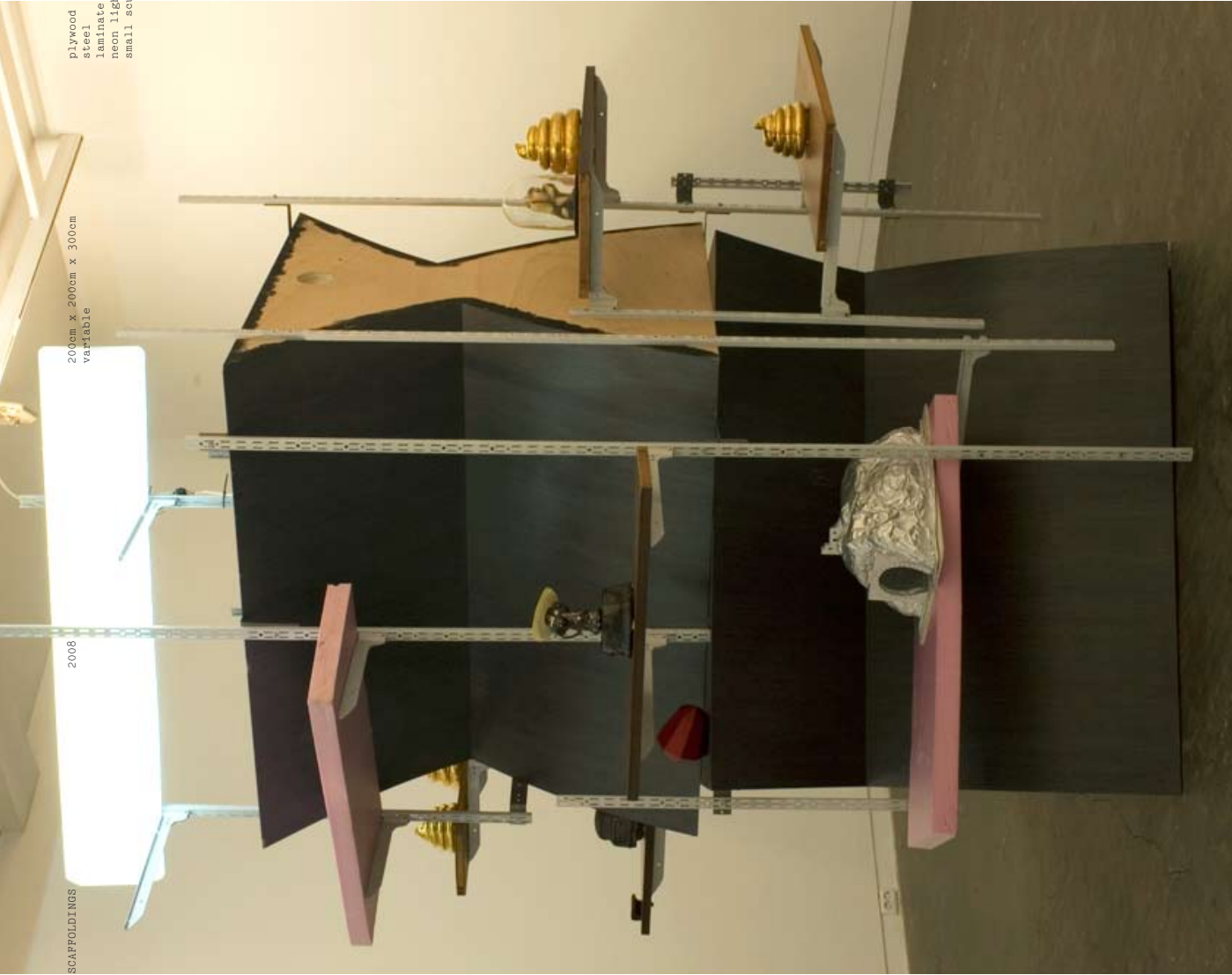
Glass  
colored ceramic



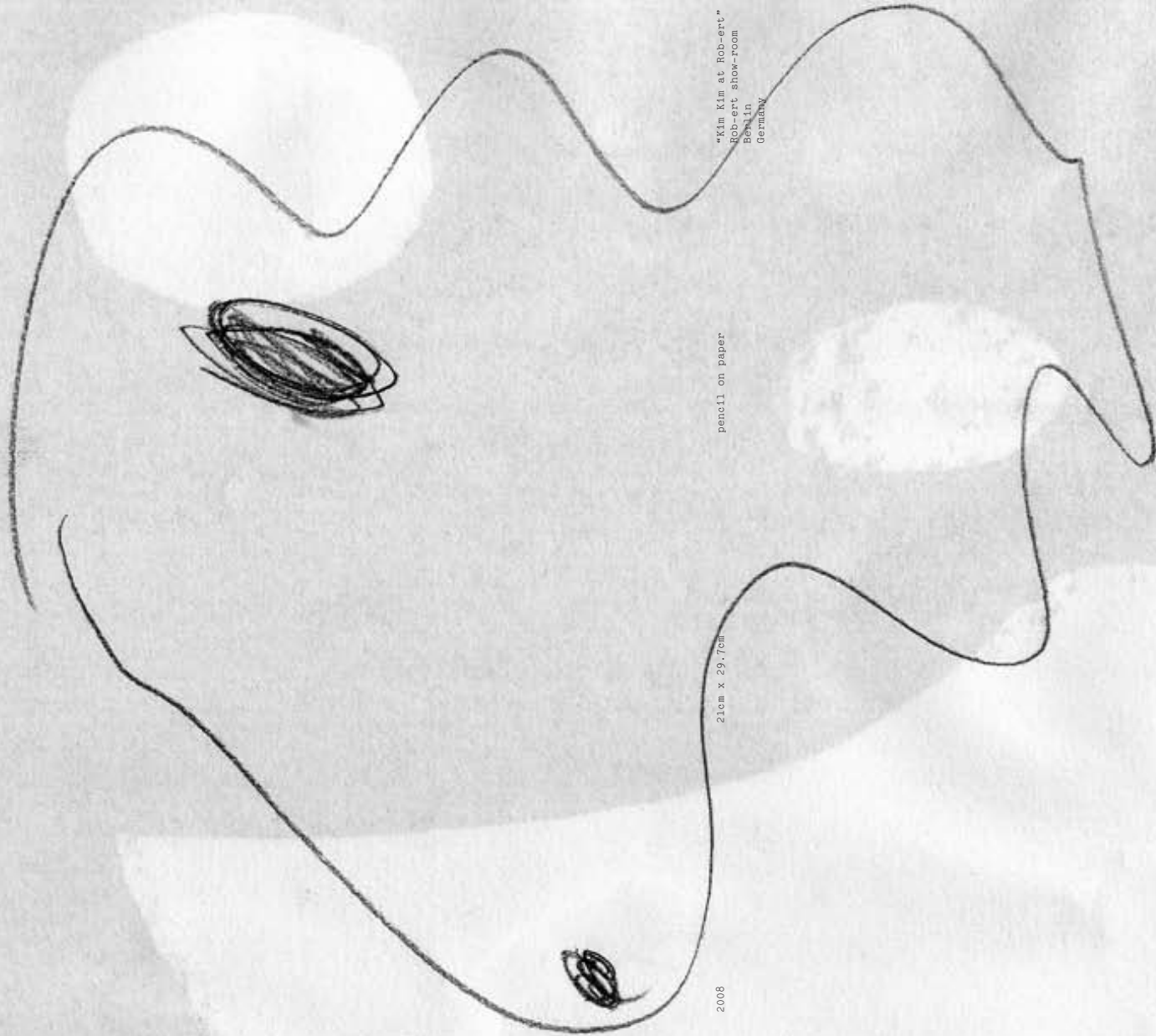
ceramic  
flow glaze  
straw hat  
fake hair



\* Spike lives alone in the desert near Needles, California, only occasionally interacting with the principal characters in the strip. Generally in visiting Snoopy. His friends are mostly inanimate saguaro cacti. As the only saguaros in California are in the Whipple Mountains fifty miles south of Needles, Spike must live somewhere in this wilderness area.









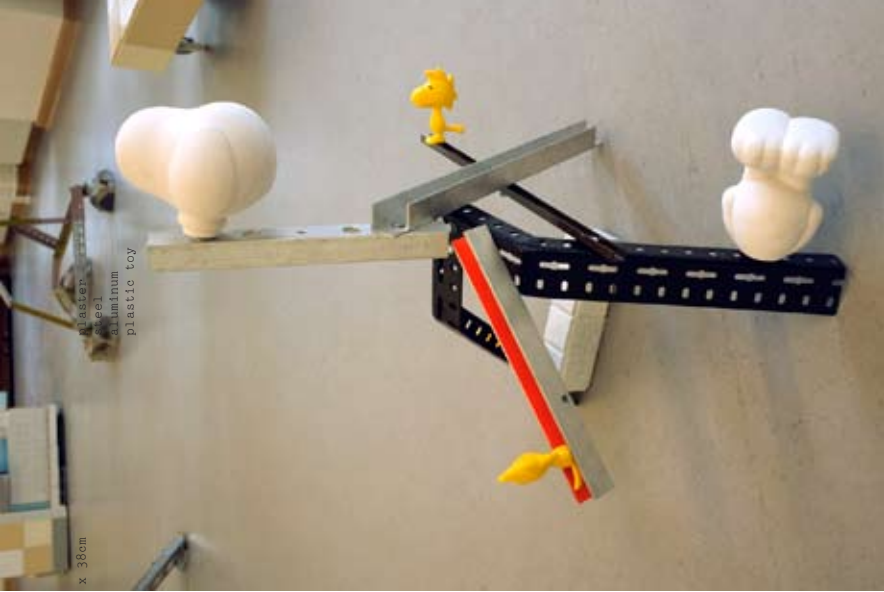
plaster  
steel  
aluminum  
plastic toy

"Oh, Baby I like it raw"  
Stadtmuseum Lichtenberg  
Berlin  
Germany



plaster  
steel  
aluminum  
plastic toy

"Oh, Baby I like it raw"  
Stadtmuseum Lichtenberg  
Berlin  
Germany





"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea

"Oh, Baby I like it raw"  
Stadtmuseum Lichtenberg  
Berlin  
Germany



"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea

"Oh, Baby I like it raw"  
Stadtmuseum Lichtenberg  
Berlin  
Germany











bowling ball  
floor paneling  
PVC  
plexi-glas

"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea



bowling ball  
floor paneling  
PVC  
plexi-glas

"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea



















acryl color on canvas  
painted door

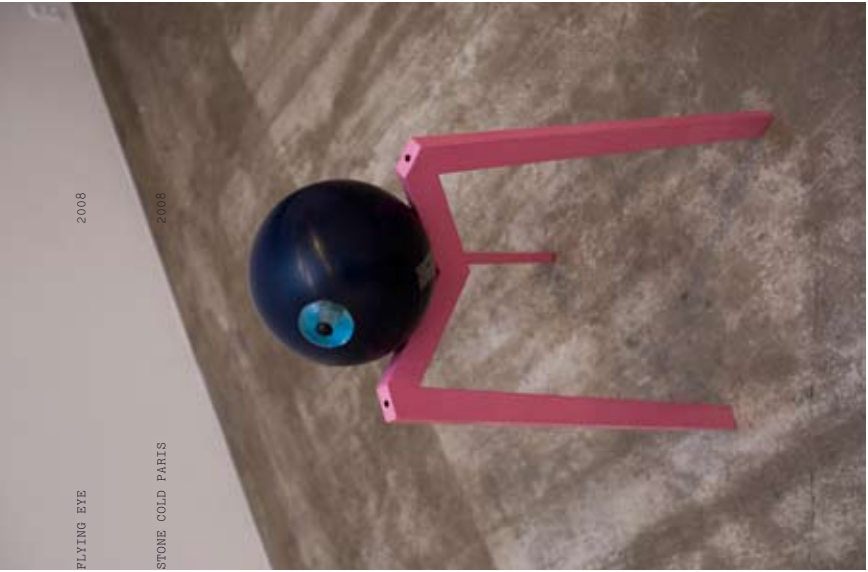
"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea



acryl color on canvas  
painted door

"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea





FLYING EYE

2008

STONE COLD PARIS

2008



bowling ball  
plexi-glass  
steel

45cm x 90cm x 45cm

steel  
wood  
paint

186cm x 45cm x 42cm

"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea

"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea

"Oh, Baby I like it raw"  
Stadtmuseum Lichtenberg  
Berlin  
Germany



DANGO BRIDGE

2008

80cm x 96cm x 80cm

wood  
steel  
paint

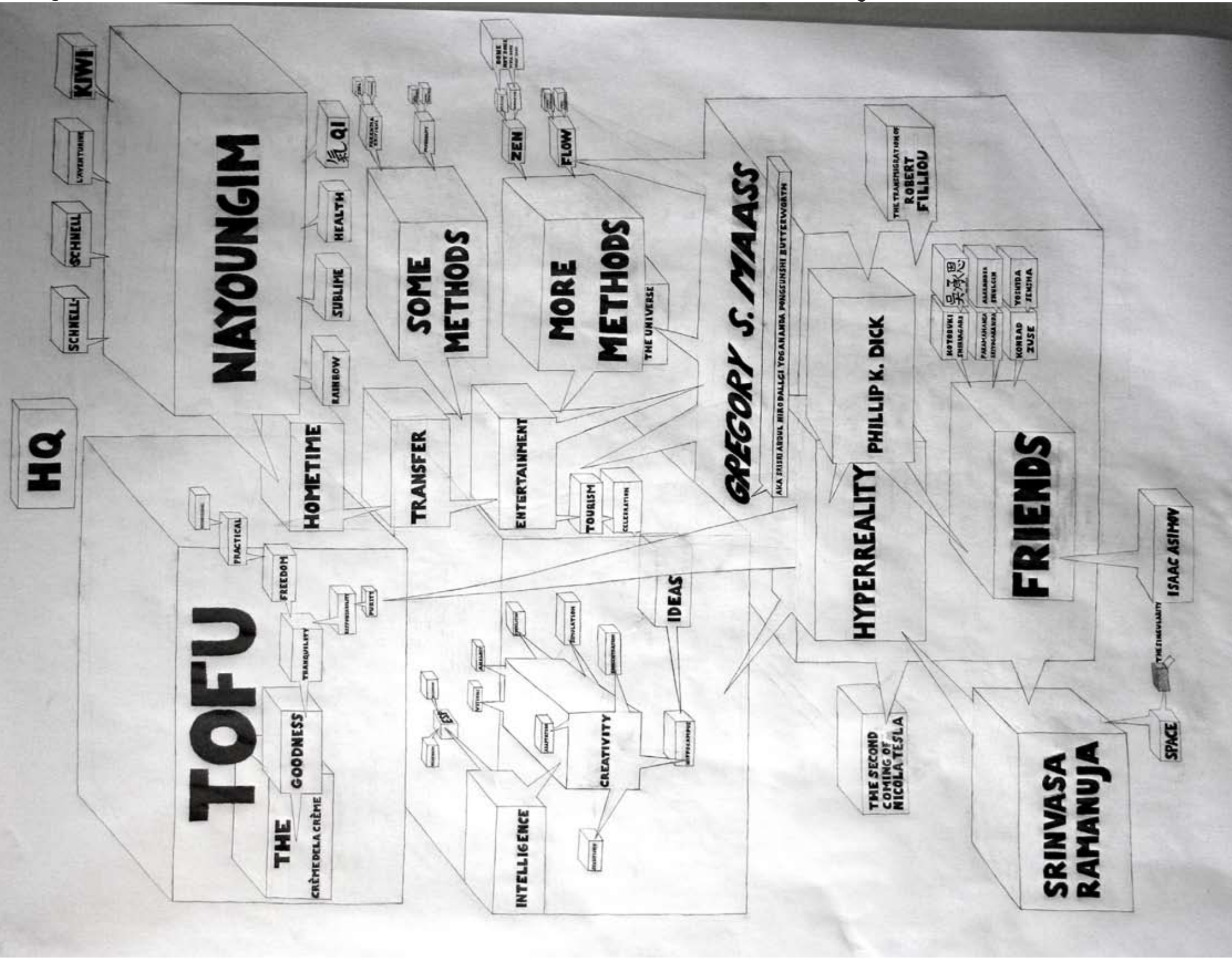
"Auto-focus"  
Gallery Shilla  
Daegu  
Korea



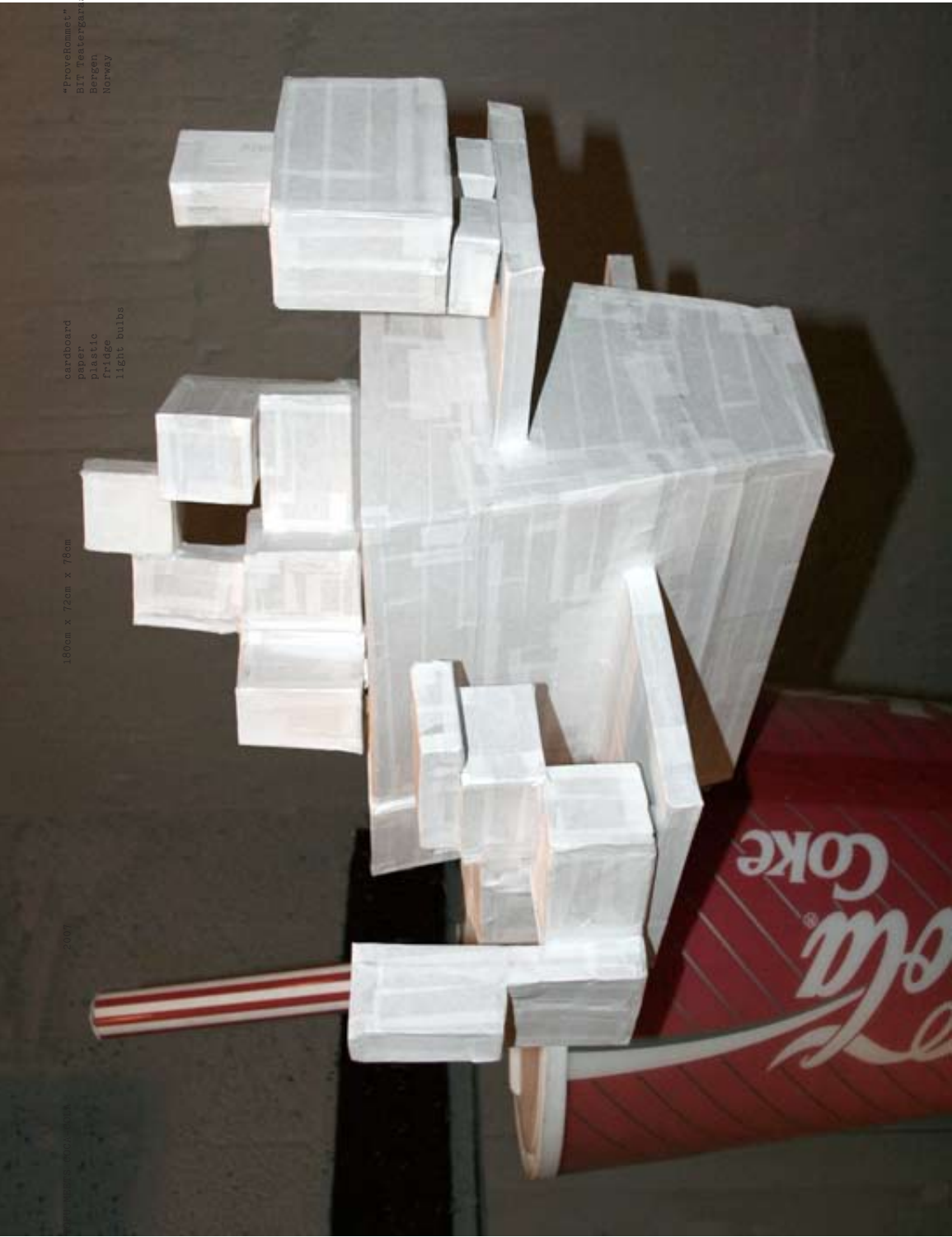












"ProveRommet"  
BIT Teatergarasjen  
Bergen  
Norway

cardboard  
paper  
plastic  
fridge  
light bulbs

150cm x 72cm x 70cm

2007



"ProveRommet"  
BIT Teatergarasjen  
Bergen  
Norway

cardboard  
paper  
plastic  
fridge  
light bulbs

150cm x 72cm x 70cm

2007





2011 COMPUTERS

2007

each approx. 15cm x 15cm x 20cm



"The handsome tofu"  
Artspace DeFoka  
Assen  
The Netherlands

carpenter  
paper

70



TOPU SHELVES

2007

176cm x 96cm x 45cm

wood  
laminated  
steel

PSYCHIC GOLD-FOILED SILHOUETTE

2006

125cm x 98cm x 2cm

frames  
stools  
golden foil

[all]  
"The handsome tofu"  
Artspace DeFoka  
Assen  
The Netherlands

71







122cm x 110cm x 106cm

variable

wood  
laminated  
plexi-glass  
hats  
Mad Hatter figurine  
bamboo  
fake maple leaves

"The handsome tofu"  
Artspace DeFka  
Assen  
The Netherlands



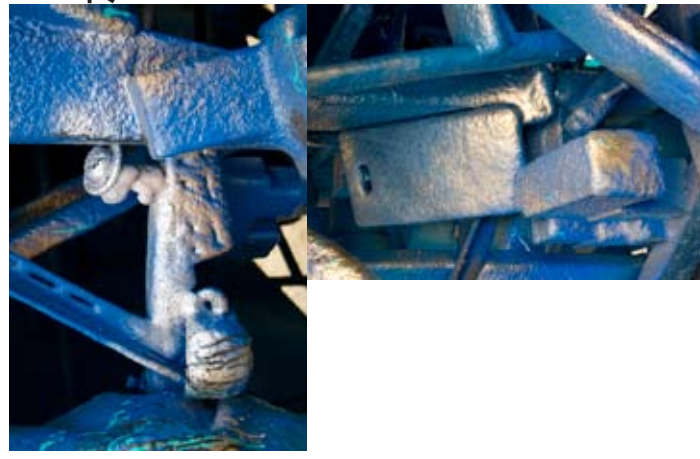
122cm x 110cm x 106cm

variable

"The handsome tofu"  
Artspace DeFka  
Assen  
The Netherlands



















250cm x 250cm x 350cm

wood  
sponge  
polyurethane  
plastic  
steel  
paint

Seoul city gallery  
Seoul  
Korea



2008

wood  
sponge  
polyurethane  
plastic  
steel  
paint

Seoul city gallery  
Seoul  
Korea



SOCK DRYER  
(SEOUL VERSION)

ARSWIPE ROCKET  
TOILET PAPER STILL LIFE

2008

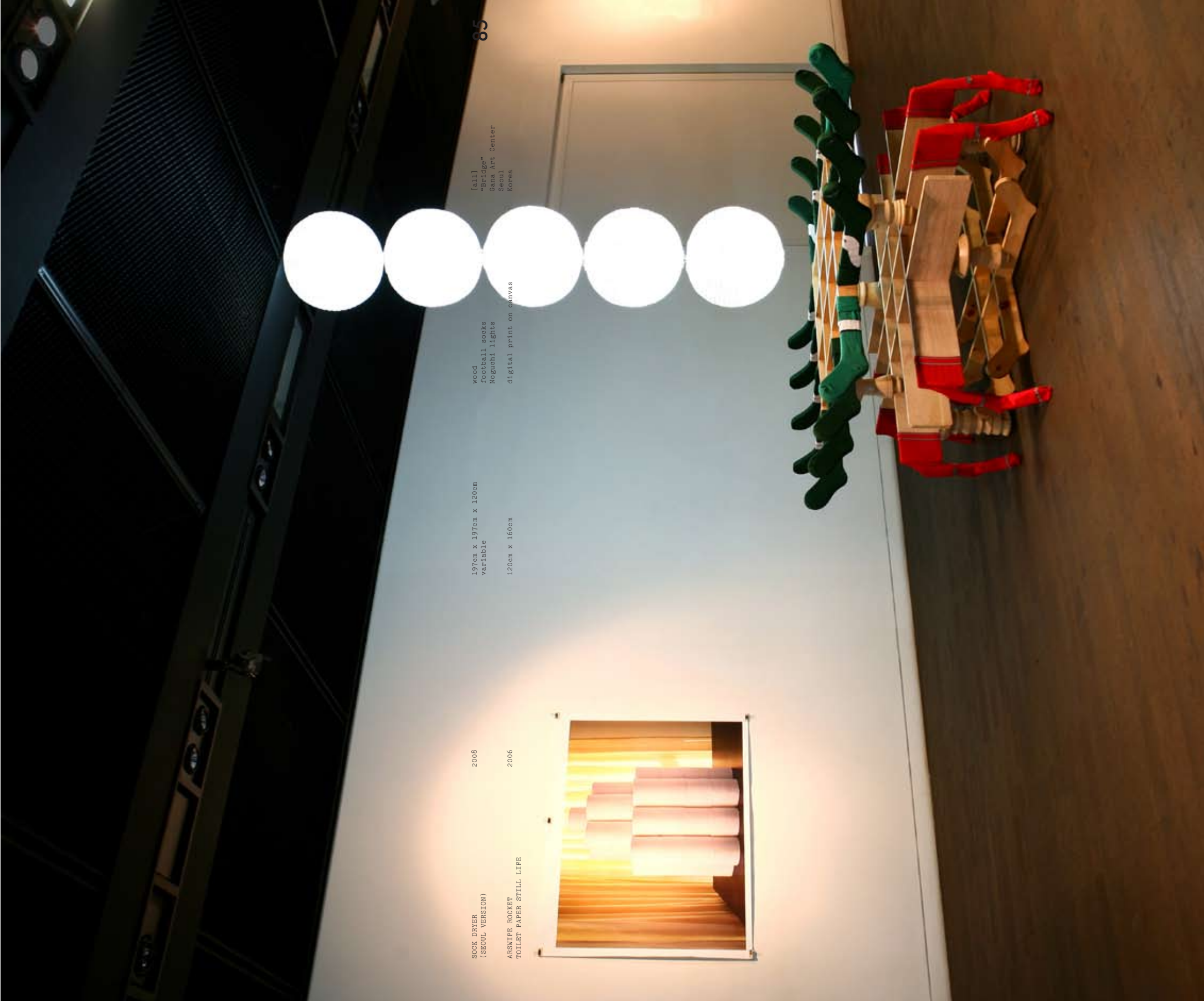
2006

197cm x 197cm x 120cm  
variable

120cm x 160cm

wood  
football socks  
Noguchi lights  
digital print on canvas

[all]  
"Bridge"  
Gana Art Center  
Seoul  
Korea



SOCK DRYER  
(SEOUL VERSION)

ARSWIPE ROCKET  
TOILET PAPER STILL LIFE

2008

2006

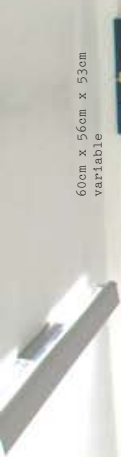
197cm x 197cm x 120cm  
variable

120cm x 160cm

wood  
football socks  
Noguchi lights  
digital print on canvas

[all]  
"Bridge"  
Gana Art Center  
Seoul  
Korea







SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS JUMPING  
FROM THE HAIRY LEG OF DAVID  
HASSELHOFF, WHILE ESCAPING FROM  
THE CARTOON HEADHUNTER

2007

variable  
210cm x 150cm x 160cm

"Two million years of art"  
Kuenstlehaus S11  
Solothurn  
Switzerland



SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS JUMPING  
FROM THE HAIRY LEG OF DAVID  
HASSELHOFF, WHILE ESCAPING FROM  
THE CARTOON HEADHUNTER

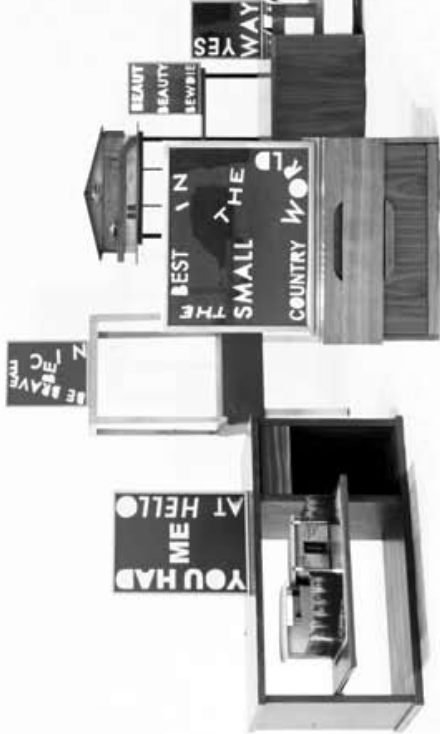
2007

furniture  
model, mountalp  
plastic  
curtain  
tie

variable  
210cm x 150cm x 160cm

"Two million years of art"  
Kuenstlehaus S11  
Solothurn  
Switzerland















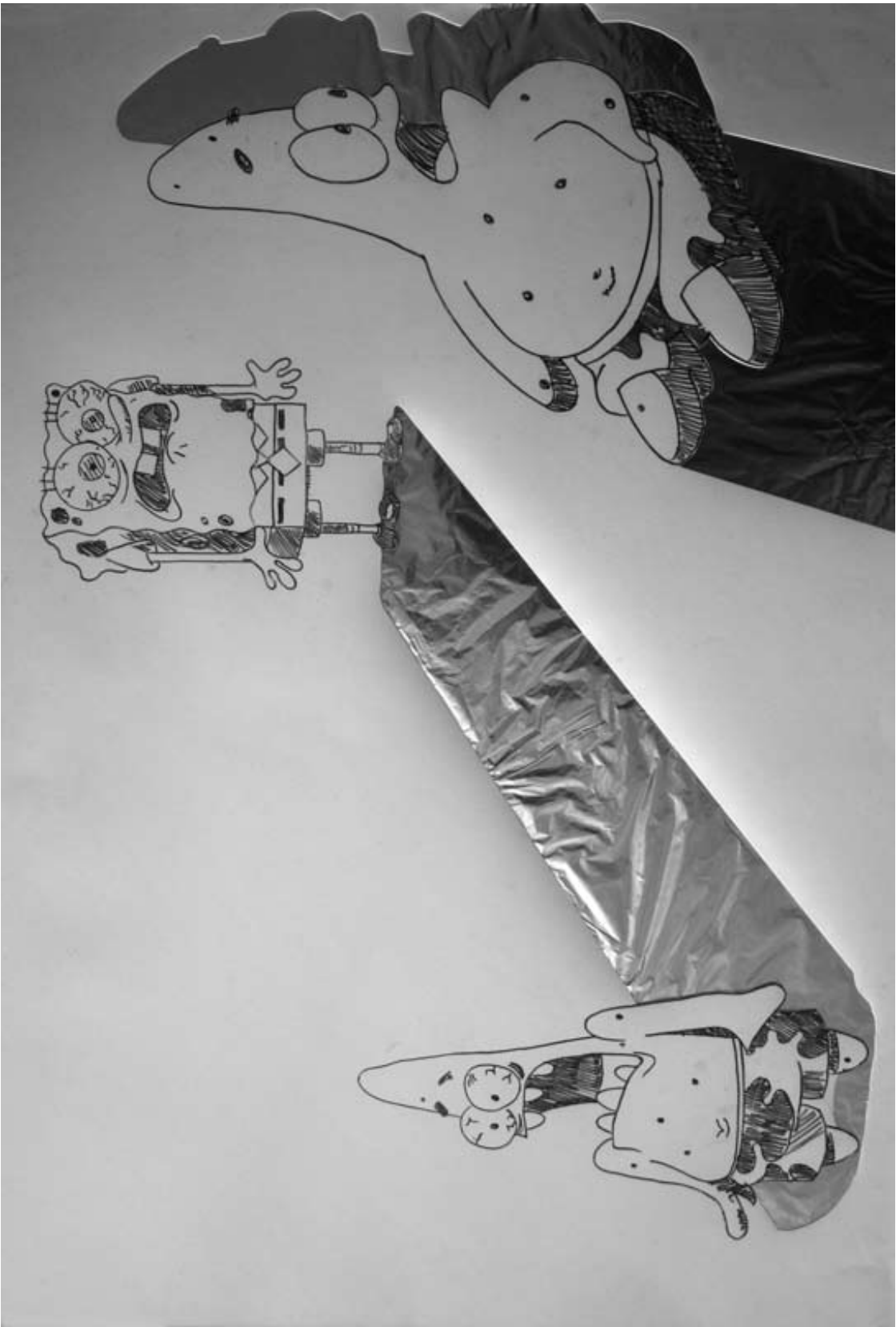
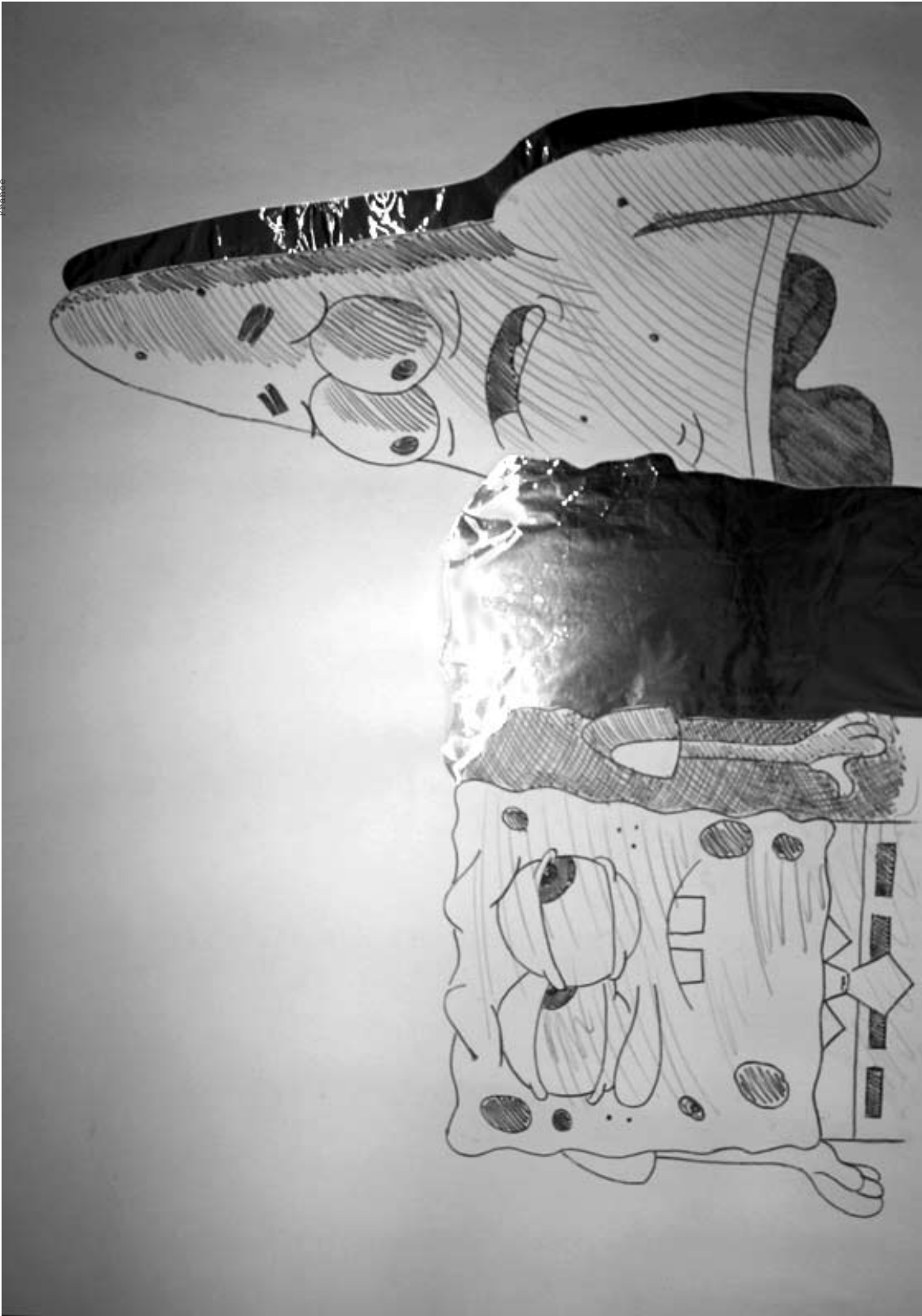


"Two million years of art"  
Kuenstlehaus Sll  
Solothurn  
Switzerland

"Two million years of art"  
Kuenstlehaus Sll  
Solothurn  
Switzerland







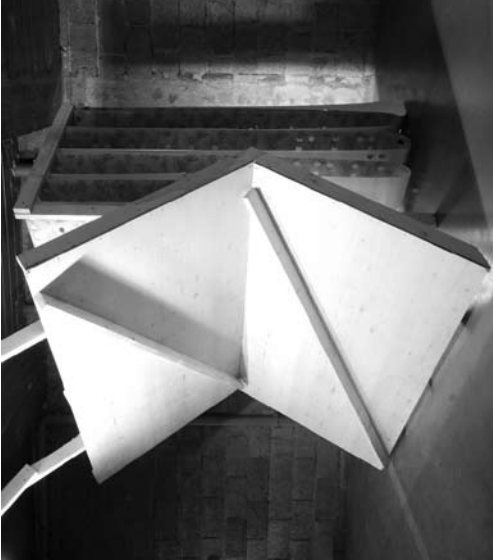












A SEISMIC ZONE OF INCONGRUITIES

The installations and drawings by Gregory Maass and Nayoungim documented in this book consist mostly of widening gaps between the constituent parts. They form a seismic zone, riddled with ravines and fissures, eminently unstable cityscapes of found objects, catchy remarks, dumb puns, cartoons, gleefully deliberate ugliness, blunt parody. To the untrained eye, there is very little to keep the whole shebang from falling in over your head, leaving only rubbish. But the installations give the appearance of knowing that you’ve seen as many bad television shows as they have, and as many commercials, and as many films, and you know that they know, and they know that you know that they know. And they appear to know, and secretly build on a good deal of, say, Neo-Dada and Fluxus and Pop Art, and they have zapped from Concept to Minimal and back, and all that has taught them to keep their formlessness apart from their meaninglessness, making sure that the chasm between the dumb and the ugly is widening, that the real is only suggested, and that your curiosity is getting involved. Perhaps you have been through a moment, as a child in school, when you gave up drawing because cartoons always looked more convincing than anything you yourself could draw. Perhaps you have been to parties where people would tell you the plot of films and television programmes they had seen the other day, instead of telling from their own experience. This art seems to be willing to talk about such moments.

SPONGEBOB FLUXUS

Still, would you really want to go to an art gallery to see ugly brown second-hand chests of draw-

ers installed in combination with toy houses and a toy gas station and wacky little phrases such as “seriously easy going” and “not coming straight to the point”? Would you go to an opening when the invitation card showed a film publicity photo of David Hasselhoff in swimming trunks on the beach, holding cartoon figure SpongeBob SquarePants in the palm of his hand? Yes, really, David Hasselhoff, the actor from the TV series “Baywatch” and “Knight Rider”? Why should the artists expect you to? What is the aesthetic and even contemplative reality of this art, underneath its tremendous surface panache for incongruity and irony?

The photograph of David Hasselhoff looking at SpongeBob SquarePants is a direct (but hardly obvious) reference to art history. The French, Fluxus-affiliated artist and poet Robert Filliou proposed “Art’s Birthday” in 1963. He suggested that 1,000,000 years ago, there was no art. But one day, on January 17th to be precise, Art was born. Filliou says it happened when someone dropped a dry sponge into a bucket of water. In 1973, Filliou celebrated the tenth birthday of art’s 1.000.000th birthday, and from that year on, the birthday of art has been a yearly occasion for a great diversity of artists. By appropriating the photo of Hasselhoff and Spongebob, publicity material for the feature film “SpongeBob the Movie” (Paramount Pictures/Nickelodeon, 2004) for their invitation, and by calling their show *Two Million Years of Art*, Gregory Maass and Nayoungim have provided the birth of art with a face and a name. Filliou, who lived from 1926 until 1987, can’t possibly have been thinking of this combination of cartoon sponge and ham actor when he postulated a birthday for art. (Nayoungim and Maass doubled the age of art from one to two million years “because of the recent discovery of far older humanoid ancestry”, a move which simultaneously undermines



Filliou's gesture and yet deals with it as if it had the authority of a scientific finding from the natural history of Homo Sapiens.)

Filliou's instauration of "Art's Birthday" is an ambivalent and troublesome piece of art. On the one hand, it isn't even a piece. Nor is it, for that matter, a poem; it is just a gesture, a grand suggestion, uniting all of mankind in a single history of the imagination while at the same time ignoring completely all established art history, and insisting on an originary myth for art that is painfully dumb and brings art within the reach of anyone who is capable of dropping a sponge in a bucket. And that, it has to be admitted, includes Hasselhoff and his audience. On the other hand, such suggestions or "fluxus pieces" are insidious, like pop tunes with their hook lines they tend to nestle themselves inside the brain, like successful publicity strategies they pop up at unexpected moments, forcing their point of view on the situation. So, of course, there are not only websites for "SpongeBob the Movie" and for David Hasselhoff, but also for "Art's Birthday". Go to [www.artsbirthday.net](http://www.artsbirthday.net) for events and parties now organized each year.

Filliou questioned the status of the artwork and the artworld, always claiming that spontaneity and originality are what really matters in art, often working with cheap materials, leaving his compositions without polish or finishing. With the gift for catchy slogans that characterizes so many artists on the edge of conceptual thought, art and poetry, he came up with what he called the "principle of equivalence", stating that "well-made", "poorly made", "not made" are equivalents in art. It follows that for Filliou, art is firmly lodged in the domain of the hypothetical and the imaginary. That this is so, is also demonstrated by his firm insistence that everybody is an artist, and that it is the task of the artist to demonstrate that; a conviction which he also expressed in the formula "art is what makes life more interesting than art". Art, for Filliou, can change the world by demonstrating the universal reality of the imagination. He sought to make works of the greatest possible simplicity, looking for a language that is universally understood.

## UNIVERSAL INSINUATION, UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

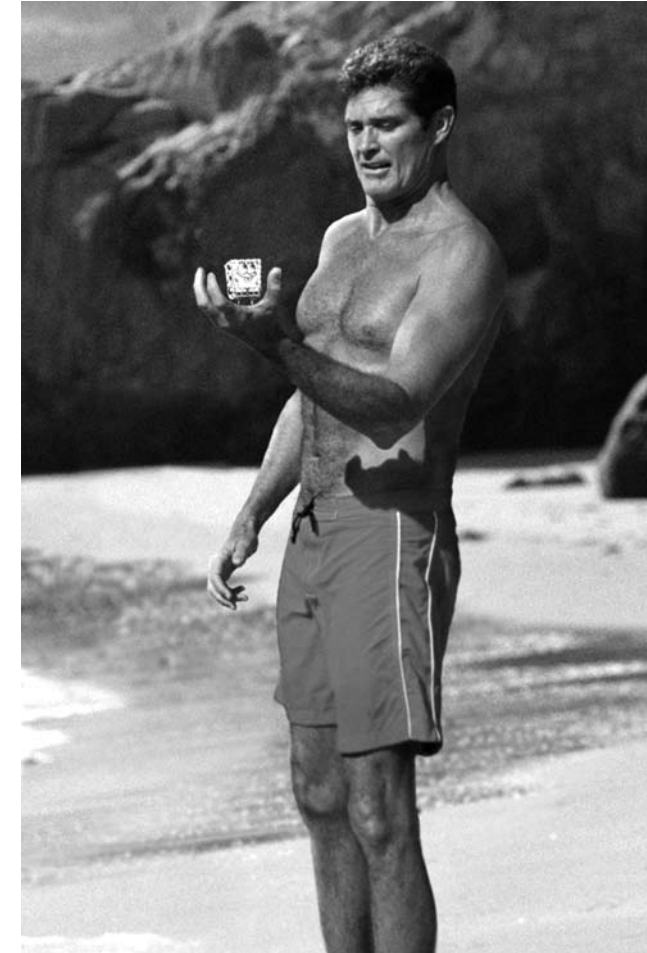
It isn't hard to see that the work of Nyoungim and Maass is riddled with forms of language and code. Once you start looking for them, the question is rather where to stop. Language insinuates itself everywhere, initiating all kinds of metaphorical readings and misreadings.

In the *Handsome Tofu* show (Assen, The Netherlands, 2007), tofu acts as body double for the sponge, proving its ability to soak up countless tastes, shapes and meanings. Tofu's flexible and adaptive qualities are celebrated by a key piece for the show, the *TOFU flow chart*, a hand-embroidered banner which showcases the artistic methodology of Nyoungim and Gregory S. Maass. The flow chart unapologetically diagrams the connections between (among others) Zen, the sublime, creativity, visions, goodness, the artists themselves, entertainment, kiwi's, science-fiction — pointing to tofu as the final outcome, the *crème de la crème*, nutritious symbol of symbols.

Tofu is also the underlying structure of a sculpture that resembles nothing so much as a bunch of cheap old kitchen-sink cabinets. The viewer may well wonder on which side of the sink the refrigerator should go (the inevitable IKEA question) before noticing that the plastic laminate boards actually form the letters T—O—F—U.

The sculptural installation *The mad hatter*, a character from Alice in Wonderland, is on one level a recreation of a Japanese-style tofu dish, in which the tofu, once again, is made out of plastic laminate, while the bean sauce is represented by hats. The acrylic body of an electric guitar is completed by having a French baguette stand in for the neck. The tasteful tableau is completed by autumn leaves (plastic) hanging from the ceiling; this being standard decoration in Japanese supermarkets (information courtesy of the artists).

In an earlier show (Bergen, Norway, 2007), Maass and Nyoungim had already tested and approved of the shape-shifting potential of tofu, by making a collection of small tofu box-like assemblages, which might or might not be scaled down models of mainframe computers, suprematist skyscrapers, and satellites. All these



Right: A production still from "The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie" (2004) turned invitation to Maass and Nyoungim's 2008 exhibition *Two Million Years of Art* at the Künstlerhaus in Solothurn, Switzerland.



**KIM KIM  
GALLERY**

subjects, computers, skyscrapers, and satellites, had figured in their work before. Fixing these tofu replicas on top of an appropriated Coca-Cola refrigerator may have served simply to add a bit of extra relish to the show, or to add a whiff of East (tofu) meets West (coke), or even to insinuate the biography of Robert Filliou, who worked for Coca-Cola in the US before he worked for the UN in Korea (where tofu is the national dish) and immersed himself deeply in the teachings of Zen buddhism.

Maass and Nayoungim's 2008 shows *Two Million Years of Art* and *Don't Hassel the Hof*, respectively in Solothurn, Switzerland, and Galerie Agnès B., Paris, both play with the substitution of Hasselhoff for Filliou, respectively for the man who gives birth to art. Each letter of Hasselhoff's name is represented individually by a catchy little phrase, organized in the shape of a capital H, A, S, E, L, O, or F. Each catchphrase in turn is upbeat to the point of being self-contradictory: "yes way" instead of "no way", "seriously easygoing", "you had me at hello". (This last phrase, so the artists informed me, they remembered vaguely, perhaps mistakenly, from an early Woody Allen comedy—*Annie Hall*?—where it was or wasn't pronounced by "a full-fledged nymphomaniac whose erotic phantasy is to be raped by strangers while collecting money for the Salvation Army in New York apartment buildings".)

The phrase "Don't Hassel the Hof" was found by the artists on a David Hasselhof-fan t-shirt. Maass and Nayoungim got some extra mileage out of this play of words by taking the word "Hof" to stand for "farm", as it does in German, representing this by model farmhouses, exhibited in a landscape of not-too-alluring brown tables, cupboards and chests of drawers. The phrase "She'll be alright", is installed, without any need for transliteration, with a model Shell gas station, exhibited next to the farms.

Other installations in these shows are derived from Hasselhoff's role as lifeguard in "SpongeBob the Movie". The film scene in which SpongeBob has to jump from one of Hasselhoff's legs to the other to escape from a cartoon headhunter, performing this James Bond-like act of daring athleticism while Hasselhoff is body-skiing through the surf, is represented in the part of an installation of a papier maché island with a

blue plasticine foot of Hasselhoff surfing through spray water. (Once again, background information provided by the artists.)

There is also a snowman-like sculpture made out of blankets and various tissues, inspired by similar snowmen discovered by Maass and Nayoungim to be part of the folklore of (guaranteed snow-free) Florida. The snowman may or may not refer to Hasselhoff, Squarebob, Filliou, and sponges. It refers with certainty to imaginary representations of the human figure, and for better or worse, it represents the eternal rebirth of art.

Another show, in the Market Gallery in Glasgow in 2008, introduces the "Kim Kim gallery". "Kim Kim" answers and echoes Glasgow's "Mary Mary" gallery for contemporary art. The show itself consists simply of the letters K, I, and M, built of great sheets of plywood, each letter brightly lit by its own lights, empty billboards announcing nothing more than their own tautological presence. The scaffolding that supports these letters is draped with long folds of wallpaper with an arcadian motif. These folds of wallpaper are punched in a systematic fashion, like the now outdated punchcards that were used some thirty years ago to feed encoded data into computers.

Kim Kim Gallery also has an internet existence; see [www.kimkingallery.com](http://www.kimkingallery.com). Nayoungim and Maass use it as a magnet to attract other artists with a most independent mind. Kim Kim Gallery may also, one of these days, develop into an actual gallery.

If these shows do not quite live up to Filliou's demand for art as a universal language, they certainly do exhibit a willingness to employ all kinds of materials to warp each other's meaning into metaphorical status. Nothing is left quite as it was before. Each presumably stable form of language is slightly tilted, at least for the duration of the show. Tables represent mountains, but only "as if": they are still, ostensibly, just tables. Plywood and wooden slats make billboards and road signs, but only as long as you're willing to play. Each piece grinds your nose in the reality of the reservoir of imaginary meanings that everyone carries around with him. If the work of Nayoungim and Maass is, like Filliou's, looking for a language that is universally understood, it does so by exploring the detour through the imagination, accepting that the history

Top left: Inauguration of the Kim Kim Gallery at the Market Gallery in Glasgow, Scotland. (2008) Bottom: Logo for KimKim Gallery, designed by Gregory Maass & Nayoungim.



of mankind's imagination is not without a good dose of flukes and blunders.

## CARTOON DIAGRAMS

Next to SpongeBob SquarePants and David Hasselhoff, several drawings in the *Two Million Years of Art* and *Don't Hassel the Hof* shows contain a figure that is known as the duck/rabbit. It is a cartoon drawing that can be seen either as the head of a duck or as the head of a rabbit. This cartoon has become unusually famous in intellectual circles, since both Ludwig Wittgenstein and Ernst Gombrich have used it in their books.

Wittgenstein used the duck/rabbit in his "Philosophical Investigations" to further his anti-illusory explanation of the workings of language and perception. In his older "Logical-Philosophical Treatise", he had already mentioned a geometrical figure, a cube or dice that can be seen in two ways, with either the square  $a$ - $a$ - $a$  or  $b$ - $b$ - $b$  coming to the front (it can also, easily, in some contexts inevitably, be seen as a square sponge). At this moment in his philosophical development, Wittgenstein was firmly convinced that language, to be meaningful, must be organized according to purely logical rules. Later in his life, the duck-rabbit cartoon was to him but a more intricate version of the geometrical cube, a more natural and real-life version of the same ambivalent figure, useful as a more demanding test for his approach to the philosopher's stone, Universal Language, since the duck/rabbit shows how pure logic is mixed in with the psychological realities of context-based expectations.

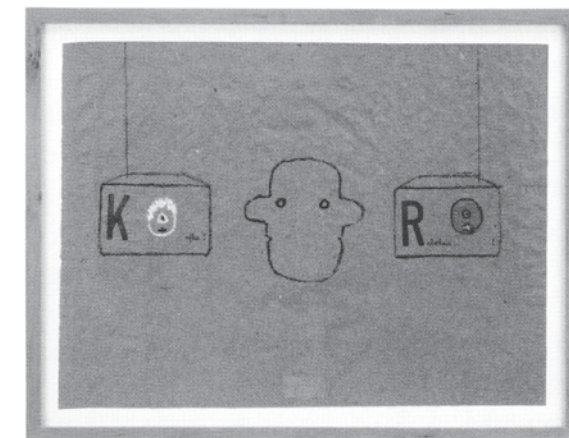
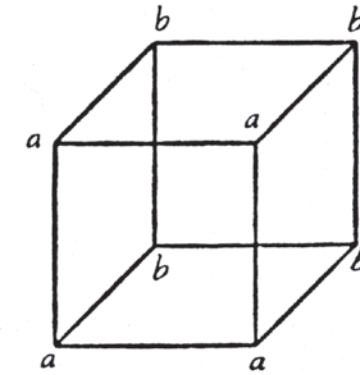
Ernst Gombrich used the selfsame duck/rabbit cartoon as a basic example of art's magical potential to create illusions. This cartoon, made up for the purpose of having two equally convincing meanings, demonstrates the mechanism of illusion; according to Gombrich, "we cannot, strictly speaking, watch ourselves having an illusion." As Gombrich explains, "Ambiguity—rabbit or duck?—is clearly the key to the whole problem of image reading. For as we have seen, it allows us to test the idea that such interpretation involves a tentative projection, a trial shot which transforms the image if it turns out to be a hit. It is just because we are so well trained in this game and miss so rarely that we are not often aware of

this act of interpretation." And Gombrich reminds his readers that "Representation is always a two-way affair. It creates a link by teaching us how to switch from one reading to another."

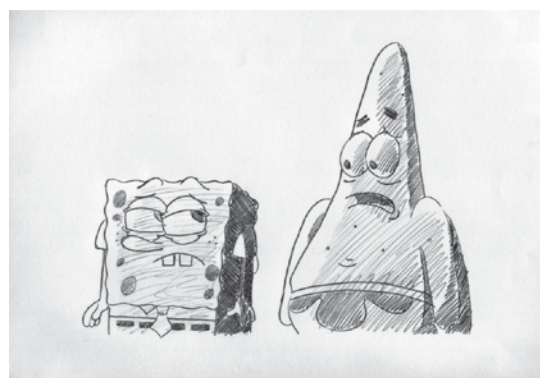
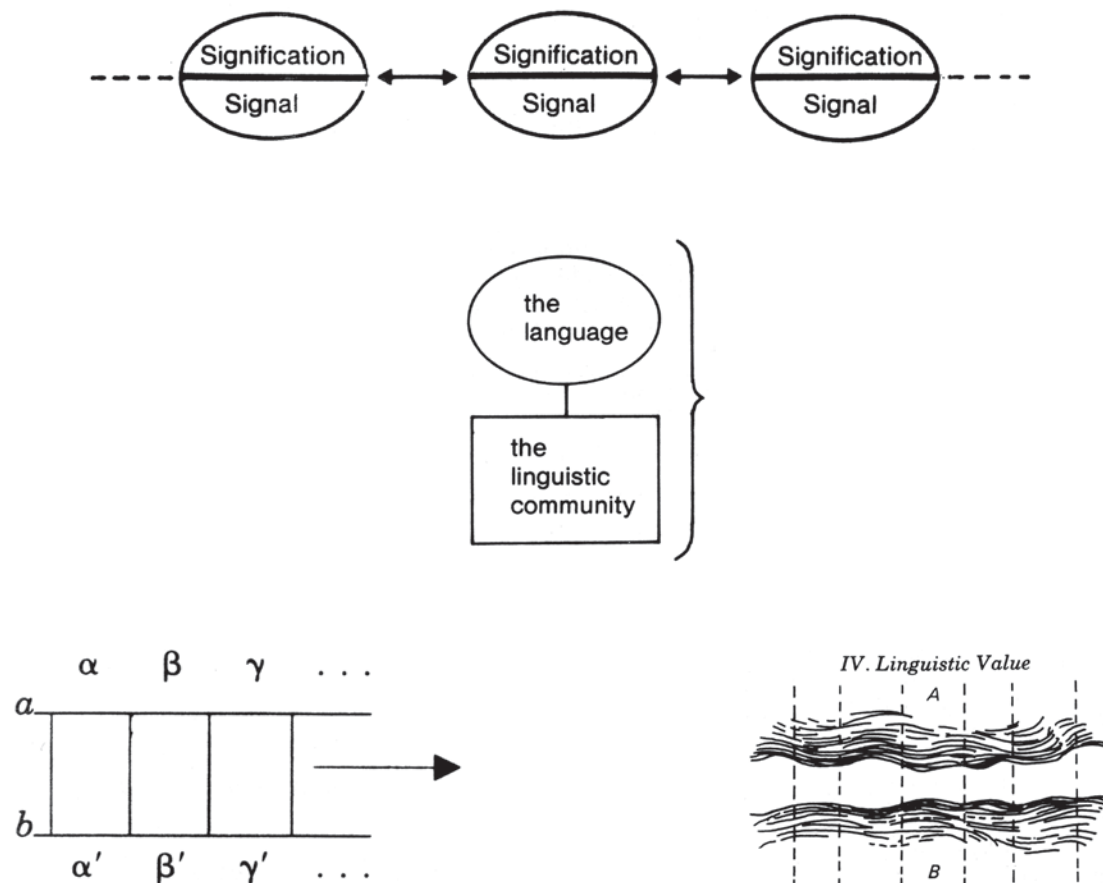
The anonymous artist who came up with the drawing of the duck/rabbit (it appeared in 1892 in the German humor magazine *Fliegende Blätter*) probably understood this very well when he gave his cartoon the caption "Which animals resemble each other most closely?", and answered with "ducks and rabbits".

If this cartoon has become, in the able hands of Wittgenstein and Gombrich, a diagram that represents and explains the seemingly universal mechanism of interpretation, it may also be used to represent the opposite notion. That is the possibility that all diagrams that claim to represent universal language may also be seen as cartoons. Wittgenstein himself demonstrated in his late work that his early "Treatise" definitely had something of a cartoon in its insistence on postulating a single logical structure for valid language as such. Perhaps Wittgenstein's work itself (often addressed as the ambivalent combination of "Wittgenstein I" and "Wittgenstein II") is something of a duck/rabbit. Wittgenstein never could let go of the burning desire for a final release from ambivalence. His philosophical work symbolizes the uncertain status of the centuries-long project to connect language without ambivalence to extra-linguistic realities, to create a universal language by eliminating all suggestion and projection from language. It is a project that has produced many riddles and iridescent bubbles shimmering with a bright new world.

Another diagram that may easily be (mis)taken for a cartoon is Ferdinand de Saussure's sketch which illustrates the "mysterious process by which 'thought-sound' evolves divisions, and a language takes shape". Saussure is the founding father of semiotics, the science of linguistic signs. His work has contributed a great deal to the belief that systematic analysis is universally applicable to language. Saussure's "Course in General Linguistics" is full of seductively clear diagrams, in which signal and signification are neatly separated in adjoining boxes, or shown to be related to each other like the letters of the Greek alpha-



Clockwise, from top left: The duck/rabbit drawing from Ernst Gombrich; the cube/dice from Wittgenstein's *Treatise*; the duck/rabbit diagram from Wittgenstein's *Investigations*; one of Robert Filliou's *Video Models* (1969).



bet. Elsewhere in the book, the tricky issue of how “the language” and “the linguistic community” are connected is solved visually with a single accolade plus a tiny, well, connecting line.

The central diagram in Saussure’s book, the key to the crucial riddle of language, the connection of ideas and sounds, labours to obtain a similar clarity, but doesn’t quite succeed. Saussure puts forward that “In itself, thought is like a swirling cloud, where no shape is intrinsically determinate.” He adds that “The substance of sound is no more fixed or rigid than that of thought.” How to connect these two in a convincing manner? Saussure simply postulates that “One might think of it as being like air in contact with water: changes in atmospheric pressure break up the surface of the water into series of divisions, i.e. waves. The correlation between thought and sound, and the union of the two, is like that.” But isn’t it only in cartoons that a storm at sea can result in waves in the water that are mirrored directly by waves in the air or in the clouds? And yet Saussure’s seascape sketch, aided by the letters A and B and a few dotted lines, successfully pulls off a confidence trick, and allows the reader/viewer to think that this comparison indeed explains how language takes shape. But does the diagram really provide a scientific clarification of the origin of language? Isn’t it remarkably similar to the older assertion that the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters? Or, to put this diagram to another test, if someone wanted to throw a sponge into Saussure’s water, how would he be able to distinguish air from water, how could he tell these twins apart?

A third, older example offers itself to be added to these two attempts to discover the universal truth about language. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, German musician-scientist Ernst Chladni discovered what he called *Klangfiguren* or sound-figures. Chladni found that he could use a violin bow on a metal or glass plate covered with sand. The oscillations in the plate would produce many attractive symmetrical figures in the sand, most figures made up of curves, some of straight lines. As these figures corresponded to specific tones, they were understood by Chladni’s audiences to be both natu-

ral and symbolic at the same time. It was as if musical tones had drawn their own pictograms, hieroglyphs, or letters in the sand. These sound-figures were seen by many scientists, poets and philosophers as a very strong indication that nature itself consisted of language, a language that lay waiting just under Nature’s surface to be translated and understood. Johann Ritter, a scientist who did pioneering work on electricity and a contemporary of Chladni’s, speculated on the deeper meanings of electrical and acoustical oscillations, thinking they lay at the bottom of every sensorial experience, including light (“visible tone”), sound (“audible light”), smell, taste, and all feeling. According to Ritter, Chladni’s figures made clear what sound-figures mean to our inner life: light-figures, fire-script. According to Ritter, every sound-figure was also an electrical figure, and every electrical figure corresponded to a sound-figure.

It doesn’t take much thought to realize that Chladni’s figures, however fascinating, do not present an actual language. On the other hand, the insights that Chladni, Ritter and their co-workers gave in the possibilities for transforming and transmitting oscillations of all kinds have in the long run resulted in the invention of telephones, gramophones, radio. They prefigure all the media that are now used to make language circulate universally, developments that figure large in the natural history of mankind’s imaginative uses of language.

Ever since Chladni travelled across Europe to demonstrate his sound-figures, romantic philosophers have employed his *Klangfiguren* to speculate on the relationship between language and nature. Chladni and Ritter can be found in the works of Novalis, Friedrich Nietzsche and even Walter Benjamin, who all thought of their scientific speculations on the natural origins of language as highly stimulating. Novalis, who knew Ritter personally, wrote in his philosophical novel *The Novices at Sais* about the tantalizing perspective on language opened by Ritter and Chladni: “Men travel in manifold paths: who so traces and compares these, will find strange Figures come to light; Figures which seem as if they belonged to that great Cipher-writing which one meets with everywhere [...] In such Figures one anticipates the key to that wondrous Writing, the grammar of it; but this Anticipation will not

Top down: Four Saussurian diagrams: three elliptical shapes divided horizontally, to produce a chain of signification/signal units; a diagram of ‘the language/the linguistic community’; diagram of a sound sequence; the sea/wind thought/sound diagram. Bottom: Gregory Maass & Nayoungim, *An Awkward Moment*, (2008).



fix itself into shape, and appears as if, after all, it would not become such a key for us.”

Friedrich Nietzsche associated Chladni's sound-figures with artistic creative forces. He used the *Klangfiguren* to voice his opinion that the artistic potential to create shapes isn't quite free and arbitrary. Just as Chladni's sound-figures are related to the sound itself, so are artistic images connected to an underlying activity of the nervous system, which Nietzsche thought of as an utterly tender oscillating and trembling.

Walter Benjamin, last not least, was impressed by Ritter's speculations. To Ritter, *Klangfiguren* plus electricity suggested the interconnectedness of spoken and written language, music, architecture, sculpture and art, plus their belonging to the divine language of natural creation. Nothing less bold could, according to Benjamin, do full justice to the symbolic vigor of language. The sound-figures suggest that even what hasn't been written may some day become legible.

#### A PLUNGE INTO SUGGESTION

In the natural history of mankind's imagination, never have so much language, imagery and music been transmitted as today. This may mean that our intuitive forces have become bloated like an over-saturated sponge. It may also mean that the imagination of our generation is better trained than that of any earlier generation, swollen like the physique of a body-building movie actor. Can we even distinguish whether we are passive subjects in this process, or have some power of agency? Can we tell, having been brought up on television and games, what their influence means to us?

According to Gombrich, we have to accept that we are, all of us, both sponge and artist: “Representation is always a two-way affair. It creates a link by teaching us how to switch from one reading to another.”

By their blunt disregard for surface harmony, their aggressive reappropriations and their unusual combinations of stuff from all walks of life, Maass and Nayoungim trace formerly unknown faultlines in mankind's imagination. They do not plead “All power to the imagination”, but dem-

onstrate a few of the irksome powertricks that suggestion has up its sleeve. Their installations may not propose a fresh diagram for a Universal Language, they certainly are an eloquent advocate for universal suggestibility, celebrating the weird happenstances that accompany so many attempts to give meaning.

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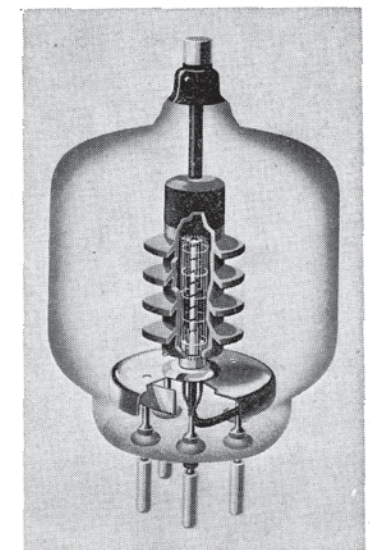
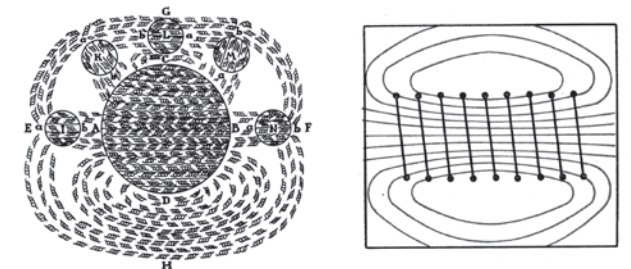
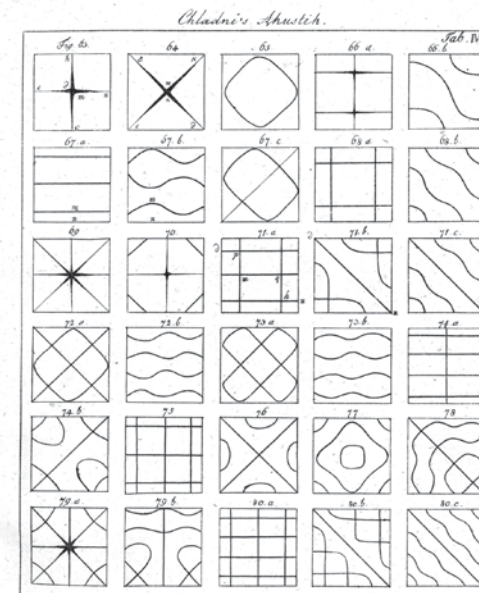
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Clockwise from top left: A selection of Chladni's Klangfiguren; a diagram of magnetism (possibly drawn by Descartes) and of electromagnetic force fields (from a physics textbook); drawing of a radiotube; a Peter Arno cartoon from the 1940's, depicting a magician picketing the RCA radio building (then the center of U.S. broadcasting) with a sign that reads “unfair to organized magicians”.

GREGORY MAASS & NAYOUNGIM

We developed a series of slogans which we applied as part of our sculptures for the “Don’t hassle the Hof” installation, where we spelled the letters of the word “HASSELHOF”; the origins are not coherent or essentially relevant. We would like to know what you think about the slogans, or what you have to say about them and our use of these forms. (*You may shape this question into a more elegant form*)

The slogans for the “Two Million Years Of Art” and “Don’t Hassel the Hof” (*one “f”, Hasselhoff two*) in situ installations, which are essentially the same, are the following (in alphabetical order):

H: YOU HAD ME AT HELLO  
A: BE BRAVE BE NICE  
S: THE BEST SMALL COUNTRY  
S: IN THE WORLD  
E: BEAUT BEAUTY BEWDIE  
L: YES WAY  
H: SHE’LL BE RIGHT  
O: COMING STRAIGHT TO THE POINT  
F: SERIOUSLY EASY GOING

The book’s title IT’S NICE TO BE NICE, TRY IT is another slogan, which we would like you to examine.

(*Maybe this is too scholarly for you, please change it if it feels uncomfortable.*)

JONATHAN LAHEY DRONSFELD

What do I think of them? Well, as usual when I first look at a work of art I don’t think anything. It’s as if my thinking migrates to somewhere else, to somewhere called *seeing*, and to what is to be seen, the ‘what is’ being less on the side of thinking than of seeing. Works of art draw out the seeing *in* thinking, they foreground the seeing in think-

ing, they step to the side of thought and sense in favour of the sense of seeing. And if what I see thinks then it shows its thinking, puts it up to be viewed, and the thing thinks in terms of how it can be seen.

What I see are spreads of heterogeneous things: reflections of thinking—if we take thinking to be made up not of propositions or even sentences but of heterogeneous elements, series of snapshots or explosions, stops to the endless circulation of words or the cause of their fall-out. It is in this sense that artworks show thinking, by capturing the fall-out and the stopping.

What things? I see words cut out of green felt, words reflected back from underneath by silver foil. And between these two, the felt and the foil, another surface given by words, by the feeling of words and the word as foil. The words comprise another surface of the work, or rather this surface unifies the work, as the space in which the words play. There is the play of surfaces, at least three, and there is the surface of the play of words which unites all the surfaces and brings them into play by playing between them. What the words say is nothing but play. Rather than say something these words play. The words are not so much there to be read as to take part in my seeing, to play with my seeing and to allow their play to be seen. If they say anything it is ‘there is play’. That is their sense, beyond which the words do not ask to be made sense of. They are visible without being legible.

Insofar as they do not function to say anything which makes sense, insofar as their sense is play and that they play without speaking sensibly, and insofar as the words are one more form of the sensible, the slogans are closer to *things* which speak rather than words saying some-

thing, they are things which show words rather than words which refer us to things. A disjunction takes place between the slogans and what they refer to. The slogans are different from each other, yet they are the same thing. They are the same in two ways. First they are the repetition of one form, the indefinite iteration of the form of the slogan; second they repeat the sameness of that same thing each time a different slogan is uttered, a sameness reflected and presented by the look of the words, or the letters they spell, given by the way the materials of which they are made are shared across the letters the slogans spell. These two senses, then, are kept apart within one thing which is the work. And we might say that the work of the work is to reverse the relation between visibility and legibility. Here visibility is not simply the means to an end, something to be effaced in favour of what the words say. Rather, visibility *is* the end, but an indefinite end, an end without end, deferring and holding off a legibility which would efface by writing the visibility of what is to be said. The work achieves this by enacting the reversal of the relation of letter to word; here words spell letters.

The slogans are all components of one proper name, Hasselhof. The worded letters form the community of the peaceful and ordered province of Hasselhof, most of whom find work in the rehab farm there, the place where stars go to feel good again, good about their name, free of the hassle of their name. The slogans are the verses the star must learn to incant authoritatively if he is to rehabilitate the former privilege his name granted him to himself and bring it back into his own possession; to reconstruct, or to construct for the first time what was missing from the beginning, the relationship of propriety over his own name, he must learn not to see the starry reproduction of it. The peaceful province of this verse farm is the site of an oscillation—between the shiny, blinding name that must not be seen, and the slogans that must be learnt in order not to see it and not be blinded by it.

Made up of the most normal objects, furniture, petrol station, mountains, this installation is the most unusual and abnormal of places, a displacement from the usual and the everyday as the condition of the possibility of returning to normal. The peaceful province of Hasselhof is the place where the unusual *in* the normal is covered over by the abnormal use of words, a

realm where thinking is reduced to slogans, and where language becomes no longer a picture but something simply seen. Be nice to yourself, stop beating yourself up, or beating up on yourself rather. See the rabbit in yourself, not the duck. Forget the duck, ignore the duck-rabbit, go with the rabbit. No perception, no moral ambiguity there, try it, be brave be nice, go upbeat, it’s nice, you’ll see.

So what do I have to say about these slogans? As you can see, very little. The words get on perfectly well without me. They just as little need what I say about them as I do what they show me. And this indifference is perhaps the opening that allows me to say something about them. This reciprocal semi-autonomy shown by the works is precisely the space in which I am invited to become the apt respondent to what I see. And what do I see? I see the funny.

GREGORY MAASS & NAYOUNGIM

We’re thinking of adding a subtitle from quite a different field, borrowed from the novel *Valis* by Phillip K. Dick: **Matter is plastic in the face of mind.** (*The original is also printed in bold font.*) We really enjoy this phrase, it resonates with us.

“On February 20 1974, Dick was recovering from the effects of sodium pentothal administered for the extraction of an impacted wisdom tooth. Answering the door to receive delivery of extra analgesic, he noticed that the delivery woman was wearing a pendant with a symbol that he called the “vesicle pisces”. This name seems to have been based on his confusion of two related symbols, the ichthys (two intersecting arcs delineating a fish in profile) that early Christians used as a secret symbol, and the vesica piscis. After the delivery woman’s departure, Dick began experiencing strange visions. Although they may have been initially attributable to the medication, after weeks of visions he considered this explanation implausible. “I experienced an invasion of my mind by a transcendently rational mind, as if I had been insane all my life and suddenly I had become sane,” Dick told Charles Platt.

“Throughout February and March of 1974, he received a series of visions, which he



referred to as “two-three-seventy four” (2-3-74), shorthand for February-March 1974. He described the initial visions as pink laser beams and geometric patterns, and, occasionally, brief pictures of Jesus and of ancient Rome. As the visions increased in length and frequency, Dick claimed he began to live a double life, one as himself, “Philip K. Dick”, and one as “Thomas”, a Christian persecuted by Romans in the 1st century A.D. Despite his history of drug use and elevated stroke risk, Dick began seeking other rationalist and religious explanations for these experiences. He referred to the “transcendentally rational mind” as “Zebra”, “God” and, most often, “VALIS” (Vast Alien Living Intelligence Satellite). Dick wrote about the experiences in the semi-autobiographical novels VALIS and Radio Free Albemuth.”<sup>(1)</sup> (*The underlined parts are by me.*)

[*Maybe we could cut this Wikipedia quotation a little, the Christian-hallucination part is not so thrilling to me (he had many more, which are more interesting, like his son being gravely ill, which may have saved his son's life because his son actually was diagnosed as gravely ill), I am more interested in the medical aspect and the blurring of reality and super-reality as a result, but never mind that (Dostoyevsky seemed to have had a similar medical condition in his frontal lobe)*]

We would like you to analyze the subtitle/slogan as a subtitle to our book. (*Please change the question's construction to your needs*)

JONATHAN LAHEY DRONSFIELD

One can attempt to make sense of the relation between matter and appearance—if these are indeed the stakes of Dick's gnomic remark—in a manner which does not reduce the face to a metaphor, by turning to how the face is characterised by Levinas: “The other who manifests himself in the face as it were breaks through his own plastic essence, like someone who opens a window on which his figure is outlined.”<sup>(2)</sup> It would be enough to end the citation here. But what Levinas says next establishes the link to art: “His presence consists

in *divesting* himself of the form which, however, manifests him. His manifestation is a surplus over the inevitable paralysis of manifestation.” Artworks divest themselves of the material form which nonetheless manifests them in that they transform their material, make it foreign to itself, and thereby avoid paralysis. The affectivity of art resides in its materiality but is not reducible to it. The otherness of artworks breaks material form and flows through it. Hence no artist can guarantee the affect of his art. To find the most appropriate plastic form an artist is prepared to play one material off against another. To play with materials in this way is for the artist to take a chance with them. But chances are never taken by oneself – the viewer is being invited to take it along with the artist, the viewer is being asked to follow the materiality of art in its withdrawal from the everyday, the normal, and the normative. And part of the chance is that something will be glimpsed which would otherwise have remained unseen, something that the artist no less than the viewer may not have seen or thought existed, something about oneself, one's potentiality, glimpsed in a world divested of its everyday forms, something about the world and its potentiality, glimpsed at the moment its materiality is made foreign to itself, something about the possibility of action, but where the act remains with the work itself and gains its worth in *not* being in the world but in forming another world which acts as a surface to this one. Such is the indifference of artworks, and the disinterestedness of our contemplation of them. By challenging the causal relation between doing and consequence the artist is playing with the world, sidestepping its morality. But in doing so he puts at risk our understanding of the world he presents. The risk is not run by the artist as if it were simply the outcome or function of a decision, it is inherent to the event of art insofar as art is the breaking of the causal link between intention and effect, precisely in the way that the materiality of art is made foreign to itself. In this is the materiality of art its face. The materiality of art is the face of the artist, it is the artist's outside, the outside of his intention, the outside of his concept, the threshold where the work is no longer his own, no longer his propriety but instead more properly his proper impropriety, and it is where the viewer, too, experiences an

outside of himself. In short, it is the frontier, the surface, where language is made possible. It is not surprising therefore if the first response is silence. On the contrary, silence is the proper response if language can only be spoken using the sense and the reference disturbed and interrupted and made foreign by art.

GREGORY MAASS & NAYOUNGIM

One last thing we would like you to clarify is, we would like to know what you make of our method and attitude towards themes and materials we often use in our work, in which we connect presumably unconnected themes and materials. So for instance the part of the installation “Don't Hassel the Hof” where the leg of David Hasselhoff is represented by a heating isolation tube, the hair on the leg is drawn with a liquid gold decoration pen, the foot and surf is realized in blue plasticine on a foot rest, the leg reaches out of a tunnel opening in a schematic Swiss mountain papier-mâché model standing in for a fictive island, the whole is installed on an stainless steel pole with a curtain hanging down from the rim of the island like a changing cabin on the beach, and Spongebob is represented as an actual sponge in its original packaging with a belt and eyes glued on, jumping from one leg of David Hasselhoff during body skiing-swimming to the other.

This part of the installation is inspired by a scene taken from “Spongebob the Movie” in which Spongebob is jumping from one leg to the other of David Hasselhoff who is helping Spongebob to get back to his hometown “Bikini Bottom”.

(*We are not really sure what part of this stimulating background information is neglectable*)

JONATHAN LAHEY DRONSFIELD

I am. Ah, sorry... my leg.... Wait... Ooh, that's better. Where was I. <sup>(3)</sup> If only I could photograph that I would draw it! No, that's not where we were, not quite. I said I could *see* the funny. You're right, the themes and materials of your work are unconnected, disparate, heterogeneous, at odds with each

other, and perhaps not understandable at all. Yet there is something into which these elements are gathered together if not into a homogeneous unity then at least into one thing. And that one thing I would call a stance, or a next step. Of course the heterogeneous elements are brought together because they can be made to play with each other. But what is the play here? Jacques Rancière calls it the joke.<sup>(4)</sup> Rather than purporting to be the detective revealing the “secret connection” between these elements, a connection which can only be political, and which is secret because it is political, the artist would bring these things together as if there were a secret, only to have the last laugh in showing that there is no secret to reveal. But this escapes neither the logic of revelation (the last sentence) nor the myth of the artist being master over his materials (the origin of meaning). So the boot is on the other foot. The supposition would be that because there is no more secret there is no more politics, hence art no longer need take on the task of social criticism or take a stand on social issues, which would amount to an acceptance that the means or procedures at art's disposal are no different from those available to the powers art would otherwise resist, and that its operations of delegitimation or decoding are themselves forms of domination. But this schema still retains the opposition between art on the one hand, and ‘the media’, advertising and corporate, commercial entertainment on the other—as if art and the media can still be discerned beyond their indiscernible operations—as well as the logic of the *telos* and the myth of revelation.

That there is nothing to be revealed does not mean that there is nothing to be shown. On the contrary, that there is nothing to be revealed means that everything can be shown. All the heterogeneous elements out of which this sculpture is fashioned can be brought together under the empirical. With the *Don't hassle the hof* installation you have set up a territory over which the empirical can freely roam in all its genius (as Deleuze might say) and superbity (Levinas), a *terra aesthetica* on which the empirical can wander aimlessly, can stride, can slip up, not some thing but the empirical itself, allowed a move-

(1) From the Wikipedia entry on Phillip K. Dick, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip\\_K.\\_Dick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_K._Dick)

(2) Emmanuel Levinas, “The Trace of the Other” (1963), trans. A. Lingis, in Deconstruction in Context, ed. Mark C. Taylor, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, p. 351.

(3) “..not to the point of losing the ‘self’ completely, because at a certain moment, you notice that your leg is asleep” Jean Genet, interview with Hubert Fichte (1975), Fragments of the Artwork, trans. Charlotte Mandell, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003, p. 119.

(4) Jacques Rancière, “The politics of aesthetics”, <http://theater.kein.org/node/99> (accessed 2006).

ment which gives your set ups coherence and unity. Here the empirical roams free of politics, the order of politics does not hold, politics has no special place, for art affords the empirical a liquidity which exceeds it. This is art's performativity, showing merely empirical objects and mute things walking the earth, inscribing themselves in nature and speaking freely, slipping up, showing us making us see or affording us the chance to glimpse something otherwise not visible to us. This is not the revelation of a secret, it is the realisation of potentialities of things, of nature, of ourselves.

Art lives outside of itself. To the extent that it takes its materials—tofu for instance (*The Handsome Tofu, Tofu Shelf*), or blankets (*Snowman*), or leaves (*Mad Hatter*)—from the world, its materials are not its own. Art is dependent on a world of things which are independent of it, ruled by their own laws, but this does not mean that it is helpless. It laughs. It laughs by descending to the level of groundlessness, to the level of there being no law or rule for how it gathers together its elements, a level with no height and no depth—or in other words, a surface. That art cannot live in itself is not a joke, it is something to be laughed at. Were it to try and re-enter itself through a claim to a materiality which is properly its alone it would kill itself. Instead it stages relations of propriety/impropriety, not as an opposition but as an exchange across a single surface, a surface without hierarchy, a surface without principles to distinguish what is proper from what is not.

“There just isn’t anything funnier and more cheerful on the world’s stage than the presumptuousness of those little worms called man.”<sup>(5)</sup> *Don't hassle the hof* strides out into the light of this strange territory, a sheer *terra aesthetica* surface-stage on which heterogeneous elements commingle and co-habit with man, a co-habitation which means more than that they share the same space, it means that things, nature, ourselves, co-emerge with that space, the surface given by the stride of art. But this striding out is also a step back. *Don't hassle the hof* is a work which, seeking to show something otherwise without foil or unfelt, at the very moment of succeeding steps back and withdraws from life, the opposite direction taken by politics, a moment

which could not come to concreteness without that step back affirming the border between art and life. It is a kind of madness this step back, this interval between life and art (an interval the *Mad Hatter* piece captures beautifully). And it is in this interval between art and life set up by the work that we are afforded the moment and the space to become the apt respondents to what we see, and part of coming up with an apt response is to ask—and this is what for Nietzsche takes us beyond the joke of our presumptuousness—why can oneself as an individual stride out, how can one become an individual in this foreign territory to which we have been displaced.

You have sent me these questions as a way of allowing me to say something about your work. Taken seriously, the questions themselves say something about what can be seen, themselves show something of what can be seen, and as such the questions are no less a part of what can be seen than are the works they refer to. The questions do not simply function to provide the conditions of saying something about specific aspects of the work, they are part of the work's legibility, and they are one of the conditions for the visibility of the works they raise questions about. But at the same time their own legibility threatens to over-write what they presume can be seen. Thus I see the function of my responses in part to hold off what is asked, and certainly not to concretise the questions by answering them on their own terms, in favour of allowing what is question-worthy about the works to emerge as, precisely, a question for us.

GREGORY MAASS & NAVOUNGIM

*utterly yours*  
Greg. & Nayoungim

JONATHAN LAHEY DRONSFIELD

In admiration,  
Jonathan

(5) Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* (1874), trans. Peter Preuss, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980, p. 55.



IT'S NICE TO BE NICE, TRY IT  
Gregory S. Maass & Nayoungim

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Artspace DeFKa, Assen  
Openspace Bae, Busan  
Altes Spital, Solothurn  
Kuenstlerhaus S11, Solothurn  
Seoul City Gallery, Seoul  
Placc, Genk  
Galerie du Jour, Paris