

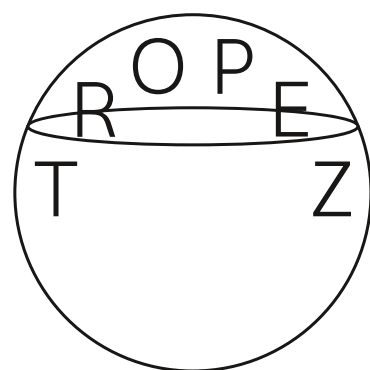
TRAPEZ

The Poet Reader

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BROKEN DIMANCHE PRESS



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Sofia Duchovny



Dreams are my reality
 The only kind of real fantasy
 Illusions are a common thing
 I try to live in dreams
 It seems as if it's meant to be...

– Richard Sanderson
 Excerpt of the song “Reality”, 1982

The British one-hit wonder Richard Sanderson is best known for singing about love, a kind of love constructed only for half way strangers, imaginations that he projects onto a single person. She could be everything! She could be the real fantasy. He could live in his dreams, so dreams could become reality, he wants the dream to be true so badly, he searches for the reality in it, he dissects it, he rethinks it, and he searches after it where he knows that it'll be found. In it he sees only what confirms his search, the reality of it becomes clearer and clearer, and the dream becomes paler and paler, the more he searches. In the end he finally reaches his goal and there in his head the dream is real.

The Covid 19 pandemic makes the fluid and blurred border zone between reality and dreams more visible than ever. When suddenly everyone started living in their own isolated bubble, far away from real social interactions, grounded reality was out to lunch. With face-to-face encounters reduced to an absolute minimum, perception is dependent on personalized Google search results, Amazon clicks, and customized Instagram ads. Thus, one is forced only deeper into one's own reality without a true engagement with the outside world. This way a mutual reality seems impossible, and perhaps then empathy functions as a new belief system.

This reader brings together contributions from artists and writers who were part of the TROPEZ summer program of 2020. Together they form a very subtle and empathetic idea of this reality. The contributions are characterized by empathy, a sense of emptiness and absence, humanized objects, and fictional places.

The structure guides us through a narrative in which one contribution complements the next. Amongst them the contribution of artist duo Barbosa & Damjanski, using a camera technique to eliminate people in their *Contagion post human Trailer 2020*. Canadian poet, performer and radio presenter Bitsy Knox makes us feel and smell the moment with the now described absent other in her poem *Spoon The Air*. The Irish novelist and publisher of this reader as well as the host of the podcast *Empathy When*, John Holten, explores the definition of empathy by means of examples, while American artist Lindsay Lawson demonstrates the calculated exploitation of empathy through quotes about crocodile tears. Danish artist Line Finderup Jensen creates fictional exhibitions for friends with 3D software. Elif Saydam's memory game plays with the idea of reunion and Philip Wiegard gives us the best recipe for slime.

Barbosa & Damjanski

Contagion post human – Trailer 2020

Barbosa / Damjanski, "Contagion post human – Trailer"

Contagion post human – Trailer is a trailer for the upcoming full *Contagion post human* movie (1h 46min). It's part of a new series called *Post human media* by Damjanski and Barbosa where they utilize the → Bye Bye Camera technology. The application uses neural networks to erase humans from the picture but the camera keeps some human traces. Barbosa and Damjanski compare these visual traces to surreal artifacts of a speculative scenario that is post-human.

→ Bye Bye Camera technology: byebye.camera





Barbosa / Damjanski, "Contagion post human - Trailer", Frame 1149



Barbosa / Damjanski, "Contagion post human - Trailer", Frame 2416



Barbosa / Damjanski, "Contagion post human - Trailer", Frame 2594



Barbosa / Damjanski, "Contagion post human - Trailer", Frame 860

Bitsy Knox

Spoon the Air

Not all arrangements
Grow subterranean roots
But crack and fan unfinished
Take risks
Spoon the air

As if to emerge from or return to
The earth aren't the same thing but
A slow dance together
At the end of the night—
Remember long nights and
Mornings that felt like night?
Collapsing
In silk cascades

I can describe our smell
By the space it fills:
Rosey-lit nostrils
The backs of mouths
The tips of tongues
The creases of lips
Lingering the next day on
Our fingers

Like new love
We taste origins
Barn floors warmed by milked bodies
Marauding vines, clinging alchemy
On salt splattered cliffs
The crisp haze of grass beds
Always fragrant, pungent, perfumed
Against the blue and the blue

Line Finderup Jensen

SUMMER Thoughts

My contribution to TROPEZ exhibition this year made me think. It was the first time I developed a project to be solely accessible from the browser. No download needed, no special hardware, only good stable wifi.

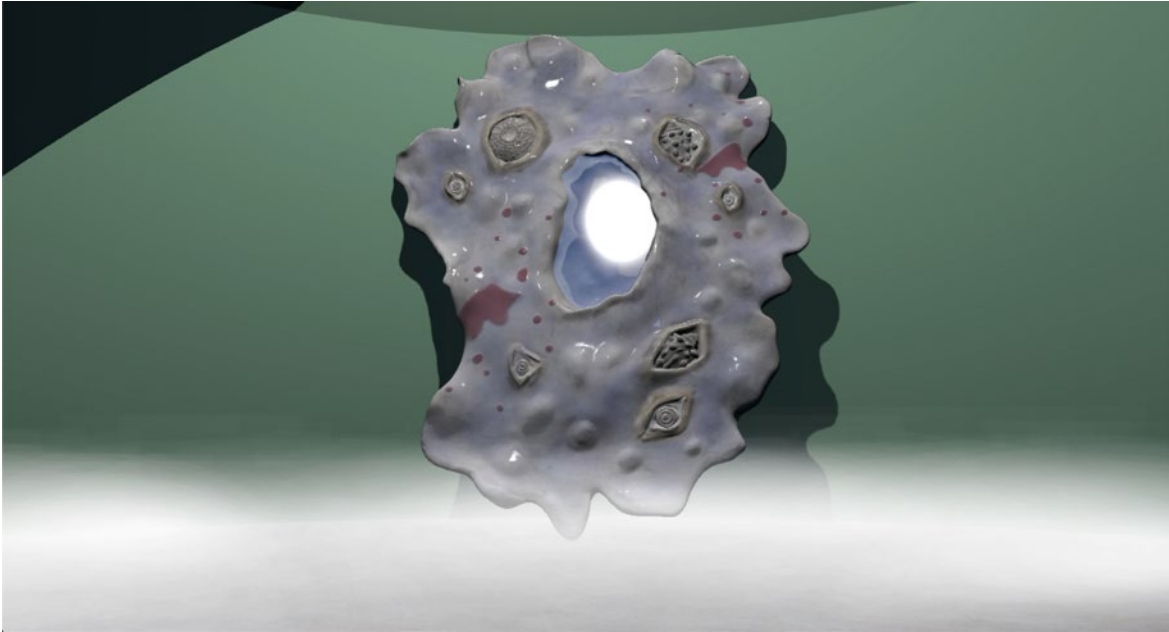
In my artistic practice I'm thinking a lot about accessibility. Not only how to distribute and experience digital art, but also how to produce it. My main field is 3D animation, a field in which some heavy lifters are dominating the market. A lot of 3D is made with expensive industry software, cutting off those with less means, and I'm curious what cool ideas people have who don't usually have access to them. I'm very into the idea of having a more equal ground among us, and not letting the tools, but rather the ideas, dictate where we are going.

Therefore, I spent the summer migrating to free open source software and wrapping my head around a different workflow. Together with my partner, I developed a new project, also for the browser. It's called *NoIssue*, and is an online group exhibition. We invited five artists, who usually don't work digitally, to come up with a concept for how to present their work if completely freed from economical and spatial limitations. We then translated their digital works into 3D, and built up a custom space for each of them. It's been really cool seeing how each artist's inner universe unfolded into a limbo world between the browser and our reality.

All in all, my summer was spent compressing. Cutting away superfluous things and realising how little one actually needs to create something good.



Katrine Bobek, "NoIssue"



Klara Lilja, "NoIssue"



Mary-Audrey Ramirez, "NoIssue"



Anna Juul, "NoIssue"



Josephine Baltzer, "NoIssue"

Musa Okwonga

Lessons I Learned from The Last Lockdown

You don't need that much couscous.

It's amazing how it takes a whole global pandemic for you to adopt and maintain good dietary habits. That being said, however much chocolate you will need, double it.

That ex will be happy when you check in on them.

Watching TV series at the same time as strangers gives you a surprising sense of community.

Always have a phone call or a text exchange with a good friend just before bed.

Don't worry too much about the distortions of your sleep patterns. That's happening because all of a sudden you are having lunch at eleven am and dinner at four.

There is no way you are going to make falafel. You bought that huge bag of chickpeas so you could experiment, but it is too much hassle.

Regret gets magnified in isolation. Don't be fooled by it. Whatever decision you are second-guessing, stop it. It was right at the time.

Don't spend too much time alone with your work: treat yourself whenever you finish it for the day.

Unpack your shopping as soon as you get home.

Mute the news for at least half the day.

To wear a mask is to make a compassionate sacrifice. If you see someone else not doing it, that's their problem, not yours: you aren't losing out. This thing is bigger than both of you.



Schleim_basic

Kleber (*)
Natron
Kontaktlinsenflüssigkeit
(Kochsalzlösung)
Decko (farbe, glitzer, Perlen...)
evtl. Rasierschaum

Kleber mit 1 P Natron verrühren
decko rein und farbe (Rasierschaum etwa die Hälfte
vom Kleber) Kontaktlinsenflüssigkeit.
Etwas rein rühren wieder etwas rein rühren
bis er nicht mehr so klebt
Luft dich verschieße (Tuperbox)

Abschrift eines Originalrezepts von Flora M.
vom August 2020

* Klebstoff auf PVA-Basis, sog. „Bastelleim“

Jasmine Reimer

Talking to Things & No Longer Empty

Talking to Things

I've never fully lost touch with the exchange that involves talking to things
 An object of magic
 An idea
 A fantasy
 A landscape
 A rock ...
 I think about how to activate relations within an environment:
 Move spiritual
 think physical
 don't speak
 The demon itself—protects you against itself—through the thing itself—strange juju
 Relish the magical transformative potentials of dance
 Reject desolate technological rituals
 Return to the thing that is sympathetic
 Retain your unwashed power
 Expect nothing further than connectivity
 Productivity is not an aspiration
 Embrace all the difference—flows, organs, channels, and receptacles
 It's a question of character, mojo, humour
 Muster the courage of the ridiculous
 In making something work they reveal all that does not work
 Magical improvisation of the status of orifices

We weren't just imagining things
 were we
 We aren't alone
 are we
 We're valid and useful and meaningful
 aren't we

No Longer Empty

The texture is pencil crayon green
 The will of the space is preserving its void and I care less about my trysts
 Your image is fading
 It clings to both sides
 I submitted my best proposal to a rock

And climbed in empty

The texture is salt screen white
 The association of Death and the Moon indicates a painful separation—
 An unhappy period of solitude
 Opt for liberation and tact
 Your image resurfaced as a flower trapped in its own wilt

Small units

The texture is brave
 Mutant space is forgiving and I no longer mistrust your indigo insides
 Hesitant to reveal the most distant translucent silk The Hanged Man and the Fool don't bring
 you much hope of meeting anyone new

Black and blue and bulging

The texture is old skin and ochre
 Don't let it get you down, you won't be young forever
 This is largely due to the flamboyant association between the Emperor and the Sun
 A powerful benign influence on affairs of the heart draws creatures nearer
 Small cavities make snug

The seeds of your soul

The texture is black sand rippling
 A perfect surface bejeweled beguiled
 Straddle the knowledge of yourself and impose gracefully
 The Hermit puts you in a solitary mood hunting for buried treasure

And that's marvelous
 The texture is shit and motley
 Dryness is not my fault
 The artifacts it contains can be conveniently taken out and inspected
 Several days go by
 And the will of the space preserves its void
 And I care less about my trysts
 Sundry sweets and dried curls make me ashamed

And that's annoying

The texture is rainy and grey and multiple
 And the feeling is mutual
 And I fucked it up being honest
 Little blue empty promises are nothing compared to the thoughts of others
 Your image seems kinder now

Activate my spaces

Vivi Ableson

Question Mark



Jessica Korp

Unvollständige Präsentation / Unterwasser Atmen

Ich möchte diese unvollständige Präsentation mit einer Meditation beginnen. Ich bitte euch kurz die Augen zu schließen. Ich gebe euch zwei Stichwörter und ihr schaut, welche Assoziationen aufkommen. Das erste Stichwort ist Wasser und das zweite ist Schwarze Menschen. Welche Bilder entstehen? Stell dir den Ort, die Textur des Wassers auf der schwarzen Haut, die Geräusche vor? Lasst die Bilder einen kurzen Moment auf euch wirken. Wenn ihr soweit seid kommt wieder zurück und öffnet eure Augen. Und atmet kurz durch.

Wir kommen jetzt zurück. Berlin 2020, Ortsteil Gesundbrunnen, Volkspark Humboldthain, wir sitzen hier im Sommerbad.

Selbstverständlich ist es nicht für ein Sommerbad von vielen unterschiedlichen Bäumen umgeben zu sein. Der Weg dorthin fühlt sich an wie ein Waldspaziergang, gelegentliche Wellen bass-lastiger Musik und rauher Ton, neben dem Quietschen und Kreischen von spielenden Kindern erinnern daran, dass das Berlin ist, dass ich hier in Berlin bin. Nicht nur irgendein Ortsteil, sondern Gesundbrunnen, ehemals Wedding. Dieser waldähnliche Park ist eng verbunden mit seinem Namensgeber Alexander von Humboldt. Der Bau des Parks begann am 14. September 1869 zu seinem 100. Geburtstag. Ich lese in tipBerlin vom 31.08.2020, dass „Der Bau des Parks begann am 14. September 1869, seinem 100. Geburtstag. Zusätzlich wurde als allererstes mit der Grundsteinlegung für ein Denkmal für ihn begonnen. Der Fokus auf Natur und die Gewächshäuser die gebaut wurden, stehen in direkter Verbindung mit den Forschungsgebieten Humboldts. Die Gestalter bemühten sich, verschiedene Gehölze aus Europa, Asien und

Nordamerika anzupflanzen und mit Etiketten zu versehen.“ Ich frage mich, inwiefern die Bäume aus diesen entfernten Regionen hier zurechtkommen unter den klimatischen Bedingungen, die ihnen fremd sind. Wie lange braucht ein Baum um in einer neuen Umgebung heimisch zu werden? Ich fühle mich stark erinnert an postkoloniale Überlegungen, die den kolonialen Wunsch zu ordnen, benennen und besitzen hervorhebt und das anhand von der Beziehung zur Natur, aber auch der (Re-)Konstruktion „des Anderen“ durch hegemonialer Machtstrukturen sichtbar machen lässt.

Sommerbad Humboldthain, 28.08.2020 *Es ist sehr heiß. Ich schaue mich um, auf der Pirsch nach schwarzen Badegästen. Nach langem Warten finde ich einen Woman of Colour. Ich frage sie, wie so ihrer Ansicht nach so wenige schwarze Menschen ins Schwimmbad gehen. Gerade in diesem Bezirk, Gesundbrunnen, an der Grenze zum Wedding. Sie sagt, zum einem ist die Verbindung von schwarzen Menschen und Wasser entfremdet, belastet vom kollektiven Gedächtnis des Sklavenhandels, eine traumatische Verbindung. Andere wiederum sehen Wasser als spirituelles und heiliges Element an. Auf der anderen Seite sind die Hürden für schwarze Menschen besonders hoch Zeitkarten zu erstehen. Ein Anruf im Quartieranagement Brunnenviertel-Brunnenstraße ergibt „es fehlt vermutlich das Wissen und der Zugang“. Die Nachbarschaftszentren sind nicht darauf vorbereitet gewesen, sich ein angemessenes Angebot auszusuchen und zusammenzustellen. Vielen fehlt es an Infrastruktur und finanziellen Mitteln. Zudem haben viele Menschen Angst vor dem Wasser.*

Besonders Menschen mit Fluchterfahrung, die über den Wasserweg nach Europa gekommen sind.

Durch die Standorte von Großbetrieben wie Osram und AEG wurde der Wedding zu einem dicht bebauten Arbeiter:innenviertel. Später auch migrantisch geprägt und hat eine sehr reiche Geschichte des Widerstand vorzuweisen. Deshalb wird der Ortsteil auch „Roter Wedding“ genannt. Es ist allerdings eher eine Transitzone, man kommt an, um bald wieder gehen zu können, oder im Alltagsjargon gesprochen, um es „zu schaffen“.

Bei meinem ersten Besuch im Sommerbad werde ich von einem freundlichen Mitarbeiter begrüßt. Er trägt ein Visier vor dem Gesicht. Er sagt, haben Sie ein Online Ticket? Ich bejahe, er zückt seinen Scanner, scannt und wünscht mir viel Spaß. Ich frage noch schnell, wissen Sie wie ich zum Kiosk komme? Er sagt ganz einfach, folgend Sie den roten Füßen auf dem Boden. Automatisch springt meine Gedanken zu den Pieds-noirs, Schwarzfüße, eine Bezeichnung für Französisch und allgemein europäische Menschen, die während der französischen Kolonialherrschaft in Algerien geboren worden sind. Was hat das mit roten Füßen zu tun? Was hat Rassismus mit dem Schwimmbad zu tun? Passiert das nicht anderswo? Ich folge den Füßen und lande im Getümmel der spielenden Kinder.

Sommerbad, 21.07.2020 *Ich sehe wie drei schwarze Jungs zwischen 12 und 14 zusammen im Schwimmbad spielen, überraschend friedlich und kaum hörbar. Außerhalb toben seit fast einem Monat die Proteste gegen die Ermordung von George Floyd. Erwürgt*

von einem Polizisten in den USA. 8 Minuten und 46 Sekunden. Der Anschlag in Hanau ist nun mehr als 5 Monate her. 12 Minuten, neun Tote und sechs Verletzte. Ich sehe die spielenden Jungs und wünsche mir, dass sie sicher sind in dieser Welt, die sie ständig unsichtbar macht oder in der sie Angst um ihr Leben haben müssen.

Der Film *Moonlight* aus dem Jahr 2017 erzählt in drei Kapiteln Chirons Coming of Age Geschichte. Es ist eine Entwicklungsgeschichte, die weit darüber hinausgeht, sich das Schicksal eines schwulen schwarzen Jugendlichen aus einem der problematischsten Bezirke Miamis auszumalen. Er wird in der Schule gemobbt und von seiner Crack-abhängigen Mutter vernachlässigt, landet wegen Gewalttätigkeit als 16-Jähriger im Jugendknast und wird später die gleiche Karriere einschlagen wie sein Vorbild Juan. Damit erfüllt er alle Merkmale, die ein perspektivloses Leben auf der Schattenseite der USA ausmachen. Doch *Moonlight* will etwas anderes zeigen: wie ein Drogendealer zum väterlichen Beschützer werden kann, wie Freunde zusammenhalten, wie die Beziehung zur Mutter Heilung finden kann und was für ein grosses Geschenk es ist, von Freunden bekocht zu werden. Der Film ist auch eine Hommage ans Schwimmen und ans schwerelos im Meer Treiben – als Möglichkeit dem sozio-historischen Ballast in einem schwarzen Körper zu sein, kurzzeitig zu entkommen. Im Meer vor Miami lernt Chiron in den Händen von Juan sich treiben lassen zu können, aufgegangen zu werden. „Du bist der Mittelpunkt der Welt“ sagt er zu Chiron dabei. In einem Interview sagt Regisseur Barry Jenkins, während schwarze Männer oftmals als

harte Drogendealer gezeichnet werden, sind diese selben Männer Väter, Brüder, Vorbilder für die jungen Männern in ihren Communities. Der Film verleiht diesen Rollenbildern Mehrdimensionalität und gesteht ihnen damit eine Menschlichkeit zu, die sonst in der Repräsentation von schwarzen Menschen fehlt.

Sommerbad, 07.08.2020 *Ich habe heute mit drei jungen Mädchen of Colour über ihre Erfahrung im Schwimmbad gesprochen. Erstmals gibt es das umständliche Gespräch über wer sich als Deutsche sieht und wer nicht und was Deutschsein überhaupt bedeutet. Sie sind selbstbewusst, reflektiert und zugänglich. Ich frage die Mädels was ihnen hier gefällt und was ihnen nicht gefällt, hier, im Sommerbad. Die Rutschbahn finden sie super, die Sonne und den Schatten, Eis und Pommes essen. Was sie hier doof finden? Die Wespen, die finden sie richtig scheiße. Ich merke, wie mich das bewegt ihnen zuzuhören. Eins der drei Mädchen bezeichnet sich als halb Deutsch halb Arabisch. Ihr Vater kommt aus dem Libanon und ihre Mutter ist Deutsch-Libanesin, ihre Tante wohnt in Beirut. Vor einigen Tagen detonierte in Lagerhallen im Hafen von Beirut hochexplosives Material, 190 Menschen starben und über 6.000 Menschen wurden verletzt. Ob sie etwas davon weiß? Es wirkt nicht so. Ich möchte es auch nicht erwähnen. Alle drei Mädchen erzählen mir ihre Geschichten von weiten Wegen, Stereotypen, Krankheit und Trauma in der Familie und ich fühle die Selbstverständlichkeit, mit der diese Biographien erzählt werden. Wohin mit dieser Last?*

Ich rufe erneut im Quartiersmanagement an und frage, ob es ein Angebot für Kinder zum Schwimmen gibt. Die Ansprech-

person verneint und sagt entschieden „das Problem diesen Sommer – was heißt Problem – wir haben ja Corona.“ Mir kommt erst im nachhinein der Gedanke nochmal nachzufragen, was das Problem denn vor Corona gewesen ist. Hat es da Schwimmangebote gegeben? Ich werde fündig. Schwimmunterricht für Kinder im Rahmen von Integrationsangeboten. Wie absurd denke ich. Wieso ist nun auch Schwimmunterricht politisch?

Die übermäßige Sichtbarkeit und gleichzeitige Unsichtbarkeit von schwarzen Menschen ist ein Phänomen, welches mich fasziniert und erschreckt zugleich. Die strukturellen Bedingungen, die den Zugang zum Schwimmbad erschweren basieren größtenteils auf Vermutung, bestenfalls auf eigener Erfahrung, statistisch ist dies jedoch nicht belegbar und dementsprechend können auch keine, oder nur schwerfällig Maßnahmen in die Wege geleitet werden, um dem entgegenzuwirken. Die strukturellen Benachteiligung wirkt sich unmittelbar auf die sozialen Maßnahmen aus, die das Quartiersmanagement für die Anwohner:innen anbieten kann. Freizeitangebote wie das Schwimmen, leiden darunter.

Die Schlüsselszene in *Moonlight* ist der Moment, als Juan, Chirons Ersatzvater, dem zehnjährigen Chiron im Meer das Schwimmen beibringt. Auch die Ästhetik der Szene ist charakteristisch für den gesamten Film: die Farbspiele, die Lichtreflexionen, die Kamera, die aus dem Wasser heraus filmt. Ich erwische mich ständig dabei wie ich meinen Atmen anhalte, vor der Angst unter Wasser nicht atmen zu können.

I can't breathe!

Elif Saydam

I really can't wait to see you again



"I really can't wait to see you again"



Anna M. Szaflarski

The Swimming Pool

I’m sitting down to write about something that I did with my body for years. As I do this, my body complains. A week of lifting plaster casts in my studio, followed by a camping trip, has put my back out, and because of it, I can’t focus, I can’t find a position that will give me relief. I try sitting down, I lie down, I stretch. Then I try to write again about something that I spent so many years doing but rarely tried to describe. It’s a mess, it’s contradictory, it seems so vague and distant. I try to ignore my body but my body is screaming.

I have calculated that between the ages of 6–18 I spent around eight-thousand hours with my head in the water. I trained as a competitive swimmer. My event was the 200 backstroke, and I tell you that because that’s usually the first thing people ask me: “what was your ‘category?’”. The 200-meter backstroke, which took just a little over two minutes to complete in a race, took years to perfect. I became well acquainted with the swimming pool ceiling.

A majority of my time in the pool was spent daydreaming. When I was still too little to reach the ground in the shallow end of the racing pool, I would imagine terribly sad things, the typical things that inform children’s fiction in time immemorial: being alone, even orphaned like in stories of *The Lion*, *the Witch and the Wardrobe*, or for children a few generations later, *Harry Potter*. And I’d let myself cry freely until my little goggles filled up with tears. As a teenager I would formulate and rework fantasized conversations with the objects of my affection, tweaking them tirelessly until they were perfect but never to be unleashed into the world. Life underwater was entirely private, even as my almost naked body grazed past my fellow swimmers, my mind was tapped into a fluid limitless matrix that extended beyond the physical world. These fantasies could be written, rewound, paused, frozen and indulged. When I got out of the pool, I would leave them there in the chlorinated tank, and when I returned the next day, they came rushing over my body.

British Philosopher and cultural theorist, Sadie Plant writes with speculative nostalgia:

“Those were the days, when we were all at sea. It seems like yesterday to me. Species, sex, race, class: in those days none of this meant anything at all. No parents, no children, just ourselves, strings of inseparable sisters, warm and wet, indistinguishable one from the other, gloriously indiscriminate, promiscuous and fused.”

She is describing a life on earth when it consisted of pods of jelly in shallow water, the boundaries between inanimate and animate, between individual lives, were

blurred. When I put my head under water, my hardware existence quickly degenerated into software. The outer boundaries of my legs and arms became indistinct. I moved without really thinking. What I saw was like a dream already, choppy flashes of colour, the bottom of the pool, the bleachers, the legs of someone else, a lifeguard standing at the edge, the rear view of my memories.

My teenage years included waking up every week day at four-thirty in the morning. I would hit the snooze button and lie there until four-forty-five. I held the belief that sleep could only be appreciated if you were awake but remained in the very same position that you slept in. My mind was a compassionate shepherd who would let the lambs of my limbs lie for just a little bit longer. My ears were attuned to the slightest sound and I heard the click of the light switch when Peter, my oldest brother entered the kitchen. The swoosh of the cupboard door would pull me from bed.

My swimsuit and towel were still humid from evening practice the night before and often a centipede hid in ambush underneath the tropical environment they created. As I lifted my things, those hundred legs exploded into a sprint, running irrationally towards me. I, the slumbering goliath stomped it out, leaving its relatives to try another day.

Peter and I were synchronized perfectly, and never exchanged a word in the morning. Cereal, milk, silence. Car, drive, change room, silence. On the pool deck were the twenty tired muscular bodies of my teammates as they lounged on benches or slouched deeply into the bulkhead. Some chatted nonsense into nothingness, but I could barely hear them through my sleepy shroud. And there, under the fluorescent green-yellow lights was the large rectangle of water, impossibly sealed off from the earth. Crystal blue, cold, smelling of disinfection, clarity, Chanel no. 5.

When people learn of my years in athletics they always assume that I must have gotten used to the routine. But I never did. I hated it every morning, and the only way I could bring myself to that same place every day was complete detachment from reality. I hid the truth from my body, I didn’t tell it where it was going, or what I was about to ask it to do. I told it to move forward, to undress, to dress. To put on a cap and then goggles. Like a kidnapper, I kept my body from realizing what all of those actions might accumulate into, what they might mean. I allowed my body to hold onto a sliver of fantasy, that one day an outside force might say, that’s enough, you’ve gone far enough, stop now, go home and go back to bed. With this lie sustained, I hazardously leaned into the air, where nothing was there to catch me, forcing my legs to stumble forward towards the pool edge, my ankles instinctively springing my body forward. In the air,

everything aligned to make the impact least awkward, I braced for the shock of the cold water as it enveloped me whole.

6 seconds under water

my hands interlock together

my arms extended

my elbows press against my ears.

Creating a streamlined arrowhead from my waist to my fingertips.

Imagine a string

fastened to my tailbone,

ran taught

through my torso, chest neck, exiting through my hairline,

exiting from my hands and into the opposite side of the pool.

The lower half of my body began to wave rhythmically into a butterfly kick and when I came up naturally again to the surface, I turned slowly to my side and took the first stroke. I felt the satisfying flow of water, and cut across the turquoise rectangle.

I competed at a relatively high level in competitive swimming, and yet the sport had never become my passion. I had short spouts of enthusiastic competitive rushes, but in the grand scheme of things, I didn't care about winning. And unsurprisingly to win you have to care about winning. I went to competitions because my brother did, because our father was also an athlete and his past weighed on our present, because I made friends there when I couldn't seemingly make them anywhere else. Those friends and I would spend hours on the pool deck trading snacks and gossiping. Suit straps were snapped, dances of flirtation were performed, gatorade was drunk—so much gatorade. And then when it was my time to race, I would go behind the starting blocks and stretch, and jump and wiggle my muscles like a mating gorilla. This dance was the epitome of the swimmer as an individual. Your body was visible and I felt observed, my name was butchered out over the speaker, IN LANE 5 FROM BROCK, ANNA Z-Z-Z-FLAKSKI. I and seven other swimmers mounted their respective starting blocks. Take you mark—we flinched. Bang! I dove into the water and began to churn maniacally like a machine, mentally divided, half hoping, half not caring to move faster than the other cubist messes of flesh, froth, and lycra.

I hadn't fully realized when things had become more serious. Another girl on the team had to tell me. I overheard the coaches say you're almost qualified for nationals. I was twelve years old and ranked second in the country in my age group. After that I

was separated from my friends into another group, where they increased my training to nine times a week. I qualified for the national championships a year later.

The logic behind training so many hours was that you could only improve if you tried to swim fast while enduring pain and fatigue. It sounds masochistic, and it is, because in retrospect nobody really needs to swim that fast. I never improved beyond the top 16 women in the country, I would never go to the Olympics, so why all the pain? That's what my body asked me every day: why all the pain? I lied to my body, but my body began to keep its own secrets as well, and it rarely trusted me with them. If I trained too much, I'd stop menstruating for months. I would fall asleep almost in any position. On Friday night practices we would reach the peak of our week's training, and I would regularly ask my body for more energy. I was depleted and couldn't imagine going on. I said please. It said no. I asked again. It said no, and instead punished me by burning my thighs and chest, turning my arms into lead. I begged again, please. It finally gave in, saying: fine, here, I was saving this for when you have to run from the apocalypse, but I guess this is just as important to you. And like jet fuel I was back on top for another forty-five minutes. Afterwards, I binge ate and promptly crashed. Athletes are not in tune with their body, they are entirely exploitative of it.

Why did I continue? I wasn't one of those kids from those famous yet generic interviews in which the interviewer asks the mini wunderkind actors, performers and athletes, Do you really want to do this, or did your parents put you up to it? We the viewers lean in from our couches for the answer, not believing that any child would do anything ambitious if not pressured to do so—the little person's eyebrows lift up to convince us, no no I want this, I love training non stop. Their parents smile at the interviewer, we couldn't stop her if we tried! I definitely was not one of those kids. What I was, was a kid from an immigrant Eastern European family, daughter of a Polish national speed skater, who ruled a household in which productivity, even if feigned, was the only key to peace at home. If you wanted to rest, you needed to learn how to rest while moving. If you wanted to daydream, to be someone else, to imagine another body, you needed to find a secret underwater hideaway. 8,000 hours of training, with my head in the water. My body became bigger and stronger every year, the water became my sanctuary, my body was my fortress.

When I look out at the pool now [Anna looks out at the Humboldtthain swimming pool] and see how people move in the water, you can see that most people swim in the same way ancient people did in Egyptian, Babylonian and Assyrian times, known to

us from drawings on clay and rock faces as old as 10,000 years. In the commonly implemented side stroke and breaststroke (the professional breaststroke being altogether something else) the body is focused on securing one thing, the breath, by desperately holding the head above water. And understandably so! Our heads are full of open orifices that weren't designed to submerge. When water runs up our nose it burns hot like a cubic centimeter of wasabi. The crackling sound of ears absorbing water, leaves us bouncing on one leg for hours afterwards, as we try to expel the foreign liquid from our body. We are composed of eighty percent water, they say. But keeping that water perfectly compartmentalized inside one set of organs and out of another is one of the ceaseless involuntary obsessions of our body, that is subconsciously obsessed with preventing us from reverting into that prehistoric jelly that Plant reminisced about. Therefore we instinctively swim in a manner that is equally focused on pushing our bodies away from water as us pushing forward, most often towards the nearest edge of the pool. For many, swimming is simply the practice of not drowning.

When you call upon your muscles for power—most importantly your largest muscles and those which are farthest from your chest like those in your legs—your rib cage will begin to expand to its most extreme point. The last inches of your lungs will resist with faint tension near your belly button. As you reach it, there is a feeling of satisfaction, like reaching a forgotten crevice, like clearing the dust out from behind the refrigerator. To arrive at that satisfying destination however, you must first exhale, exhale, exhale completely. This is something you might allow yourself to try with your feet firmly on the ground, but probably more hesitantly with your head under water. As I am writing this I'm reminded of the terrifying stories of King Crab fishermen I watched on late night tv as a kid, who cast their nets into the freezing Atlantic ocean. They said, you won't drown because of the waves or even because of your inability to swim, but simply from the shock of the cold water as it forces you to exhale. And when depleted of oxygen you will then try to take a breath of pure Atlantic brine. That sounds terrifying, and I imagine something similar instills fear in many of the swimmers here today. But here in Humboldt I can see the water is relatively warm, and there is no need to panic.

On dryland, we have learned that to move we must lift ourselves upwards and push to traverse forward. Our relationship to space is flat, and gravity is the singular restriction that regulates our direction. Water confuses this relationship. Gravity will continue to pull you under like Sirens, and at first it may seem that water is its mythological accomplice, eluding hand hold from your grasp. But perhaps you will soon notice that in water your lungs can become a set of air balloons, helping to lift your body up,

and if balanced in the right position, will help you to lift your legs and hips. The three dimensional space of the water creates resistance in every direction: not only can you push and pull but you can whip, create oscillating motion, you can create hydraulic pressure against your body. You can use water against gravity's pull, instead of employing it as one of its brute henchmen.

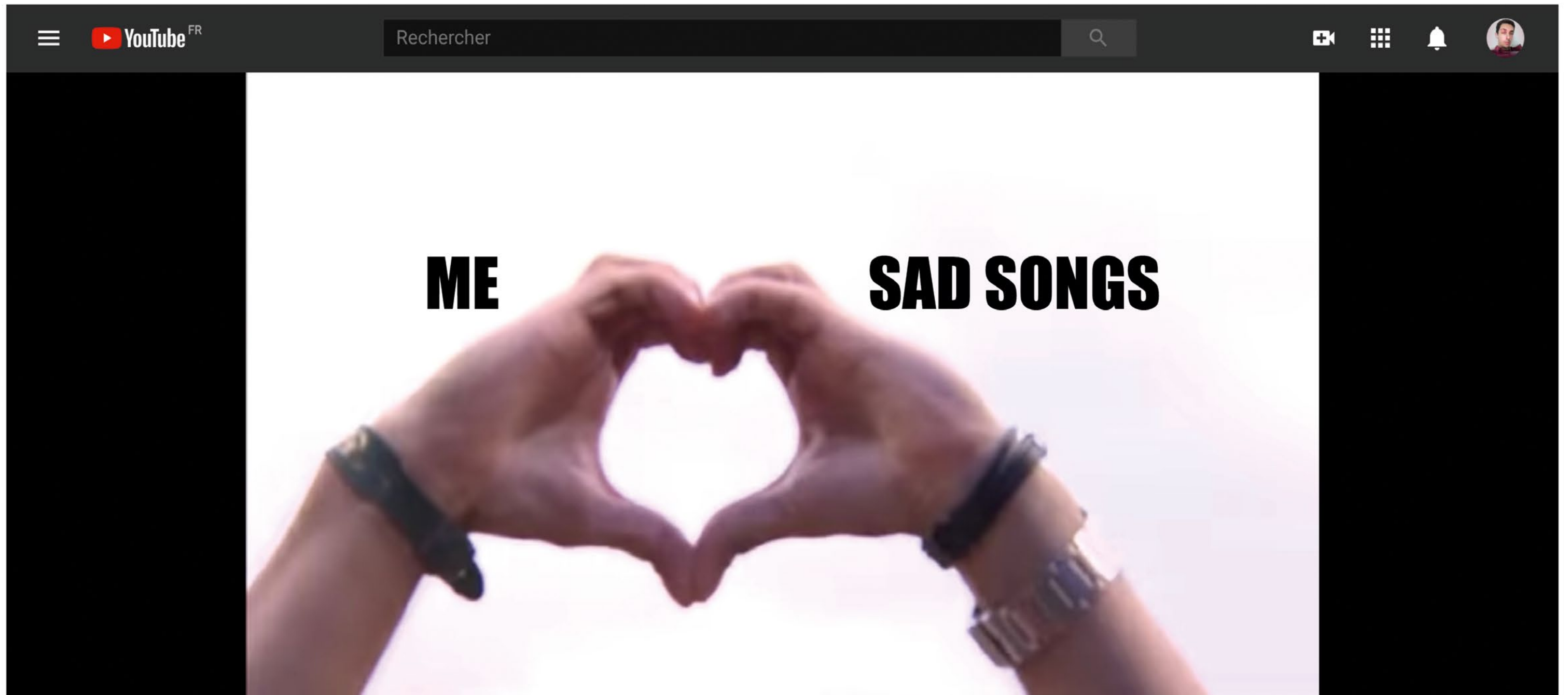
In order to swim you have to give into the water, let it hold you. The surface of the water won't magically run away, so let go of your breath, and fill your lungs with air when you need to. Don't push the water away from you, bring it towards you, press it along your body, and you will feel it as the soft buffer between you and the hard earth. It stimulates all of your skin simultaneously, calling to the water that is inside you, allowing you to question the definition of your bodily boundary. You can learn to rest while moving, to find a private sanctuary that is warm and wet, where you are indistinguishable from others, gloriously indiscriminate, promiscuous and fused.

And now I'm going to do a bit of a demonstration of front crawl...

Kévin Blinderman

Self-portrait ...

... as a young and
sad festival lover



John Holten

Empathy When

Empathy when a stranger slips and falls and you and the friend you're with involuntarily laugh out loud. Laughing at people slipping and falling is a sign of empathy, it just doesn't look like it. Unless you're laughing with joy, in which case it suggests you know the person and are happy that they're hurt, which makes you something else.

Empathy when you're tired and don't give a fuck anymore and not bothered if the person you're talking with doesn't seem all that interested in what you have to say.

Empathy when you are a kid and you are indifferent to adults and their foolishness. All their mistakes and deficiencies of personality and morality are invisible to you. Empathise with children? We don't talk enough about growing old and what it means (who can I call up to ask about what it's like to grow old?)

Empathy when you compare yourself to others, particularly when you're evaluating their social realist art or their homes or their jewellery or their children. The existence of a mortgage or an education or a health care policy.

Empathy when none of the above apply.

Empathy when you have experienced something somebody else has experienced. Empathy when you haven't and all you can do is take the time to imagine what somebody else has experienced.

Empathy when sympathy is not what is required.

Empathy when the person has nothing left to say and is awkward, and that makes you awkward and you try and compensate for their social awkwardness by speaking to fill the silence, or laughing, or making a self-deprecating joke.

Empathy when you look past an old person, forgetting that you too will be old yourself some day, just like them. And the realisation that if you don't end up like them, old that is, a living human advanced in time, you are in fact dead.

Lindsay Lawson

18 In Crocodile Tears, In Bygone Years

“It is a curse on four legs, and equally pernicious on land and in the river.”
– Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, 79 AD

“The crocodile, certainly, has acquired honour which is not devoid of a plausible reason, but he is declared to be a living representation of God, since he is the only creature without a tongue; for the Divine Word has no need of a voice, and through noiseless ways advancing, guides by Justice all affairs of mortal men.”
– Plutarch, *Moralia*, 100 AD

“If the crocodile findeth a man by the brim of the water, or by the cliff, he slayeth him if he may, and then he weepeth upon him, and swalloweth him at the last.”
– Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De proprietatibus rerum*, 1242–1247 AD

Illustration by Keigo, 2018



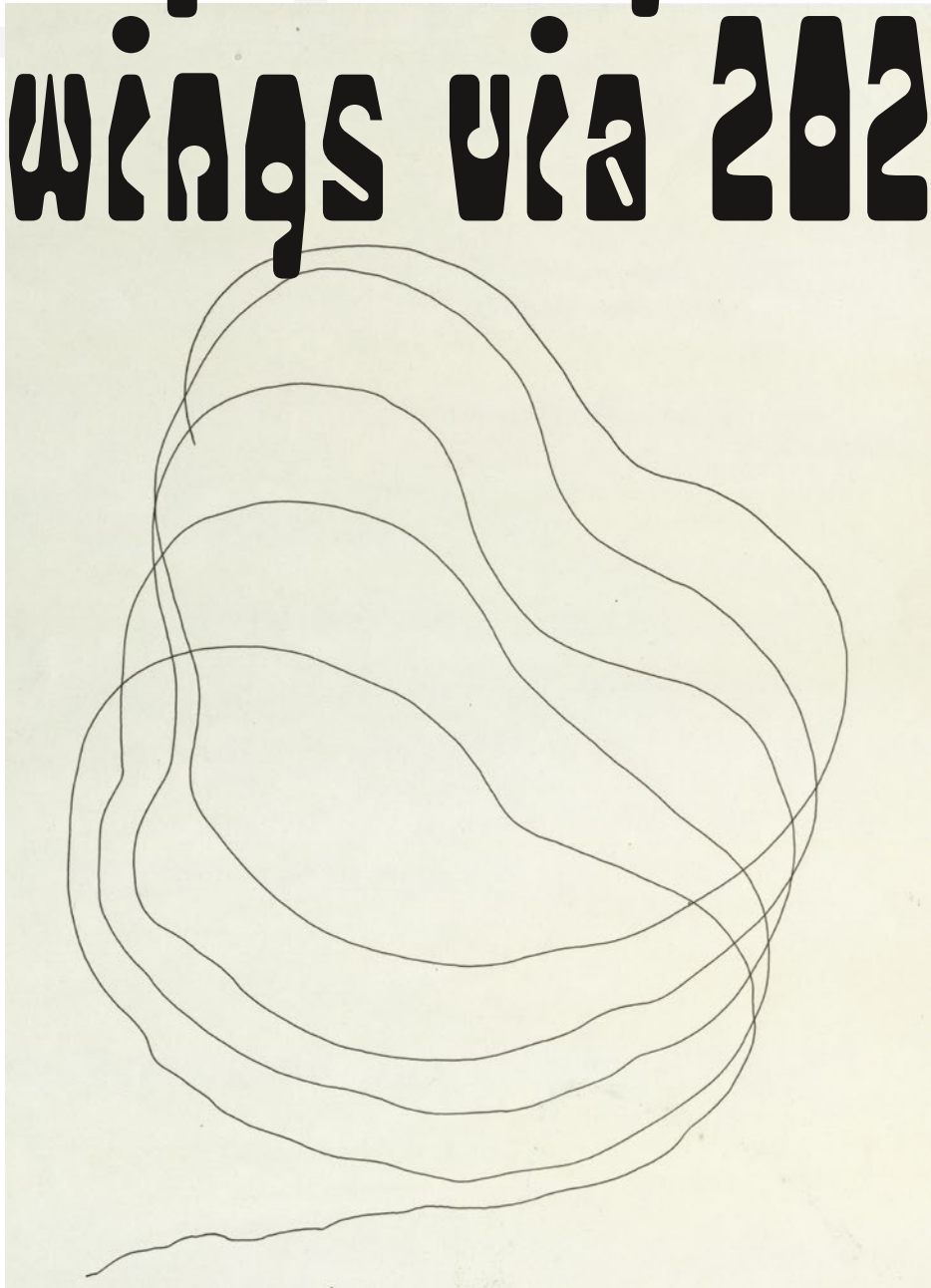
“In that country and by all Inde be great plenty of cockodrills, that is a manner of a long serpent, as I have said before. And in the night they dwell in the water, and on the day upon the land, in rocks and in caves. And they eat no meat in all the winter, but they lie as in a dream, as do the serpents. These serpents slay men, and they eat them weeping; and when they eat they move the over jaw, and not the nether jaw, and they have no tongue.”
– Sir John Mandeville, *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, 1357 AD

“If that the earth could teem with woman’s tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.”
– William Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1603 AD

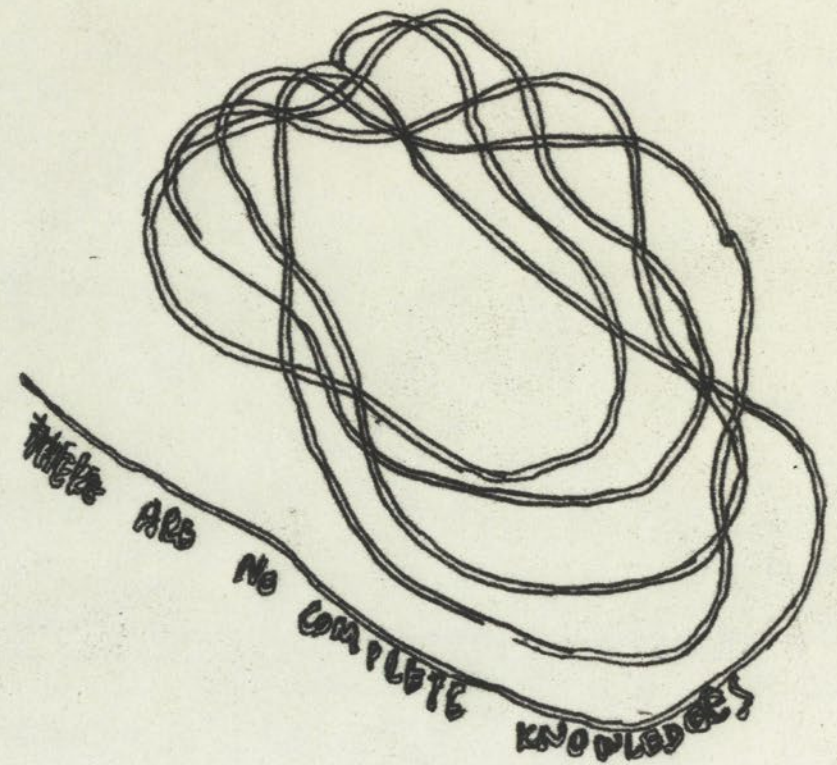
“There are not many brute beasts that can weep, but such is the nature of the crocodile that, to get a man within his danger, he will sob, sigh, and weep as though he were in extremity, but suddenly he destroyeth him.”
– Edward Topsell, *The History of Four-Footed Beasts and Serpents and Insects*, 1607 AD

Simnikiwe Buhlungu

Incompletions, Drawings via 2020



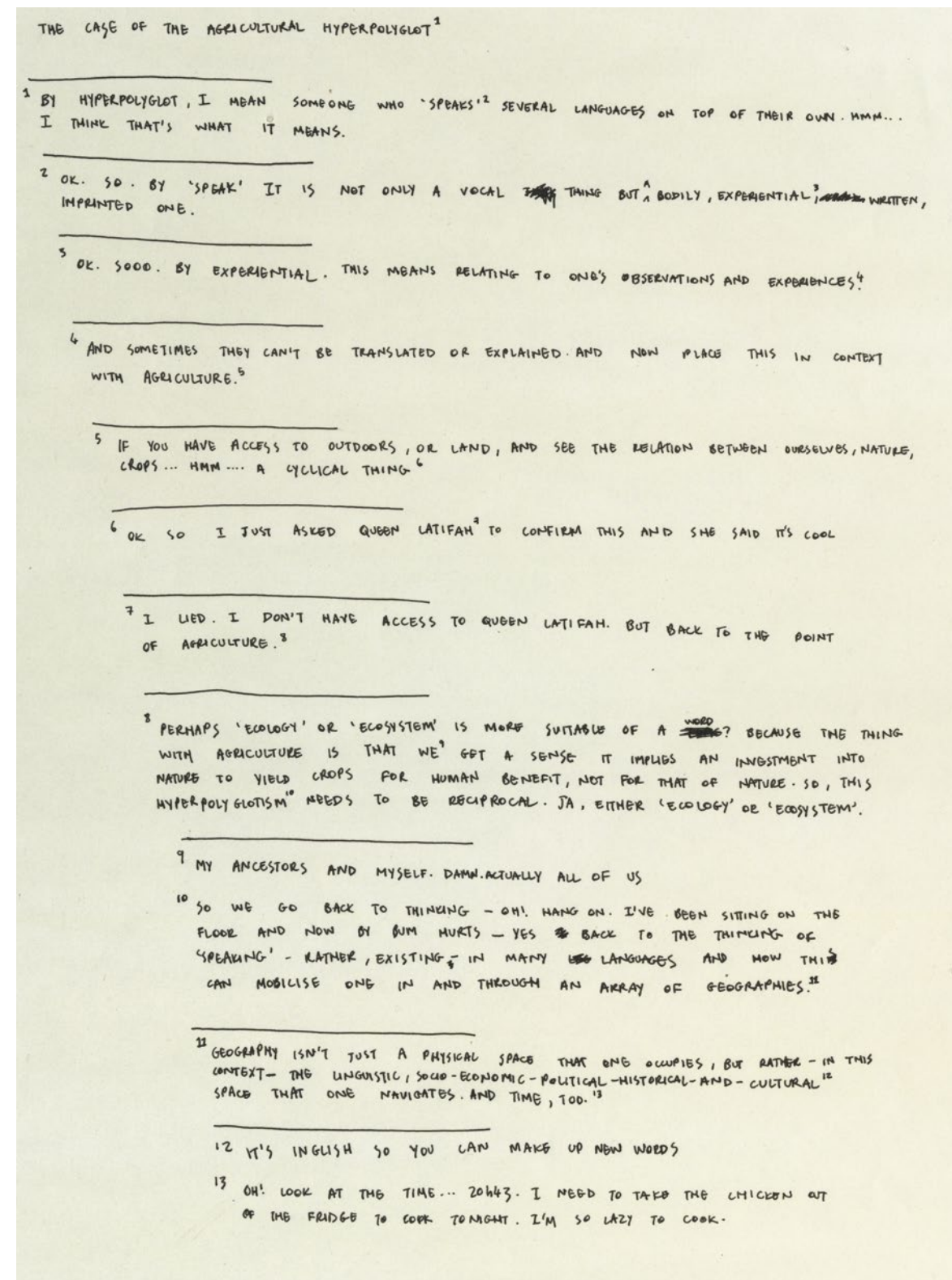
Simnikiwe Buhlungu, "There are No", 2020
40.6x29.7cm
Drawing (Ink on paper)



Simnikiwe Buhlungu, "There Are No Complete Knowledges", 2020
40.6x29.7cm
Drawing (carbon paper transfer on paper)



Simnikiwe Buhlungu, "A Sun Shaped Like a Gwinya", 2020
40.6x29.7cm
Drawing (Ink on paper)



Simnikiwe Buhlungu, "The Case of the Agricultural Hyperpolyglot", 2020
40.6x29.7cm
Drawing (Ink on paper)

Salim Bayri

15 Soundandclear.today



Salim Bayri, "Soundandclear.today", 2020

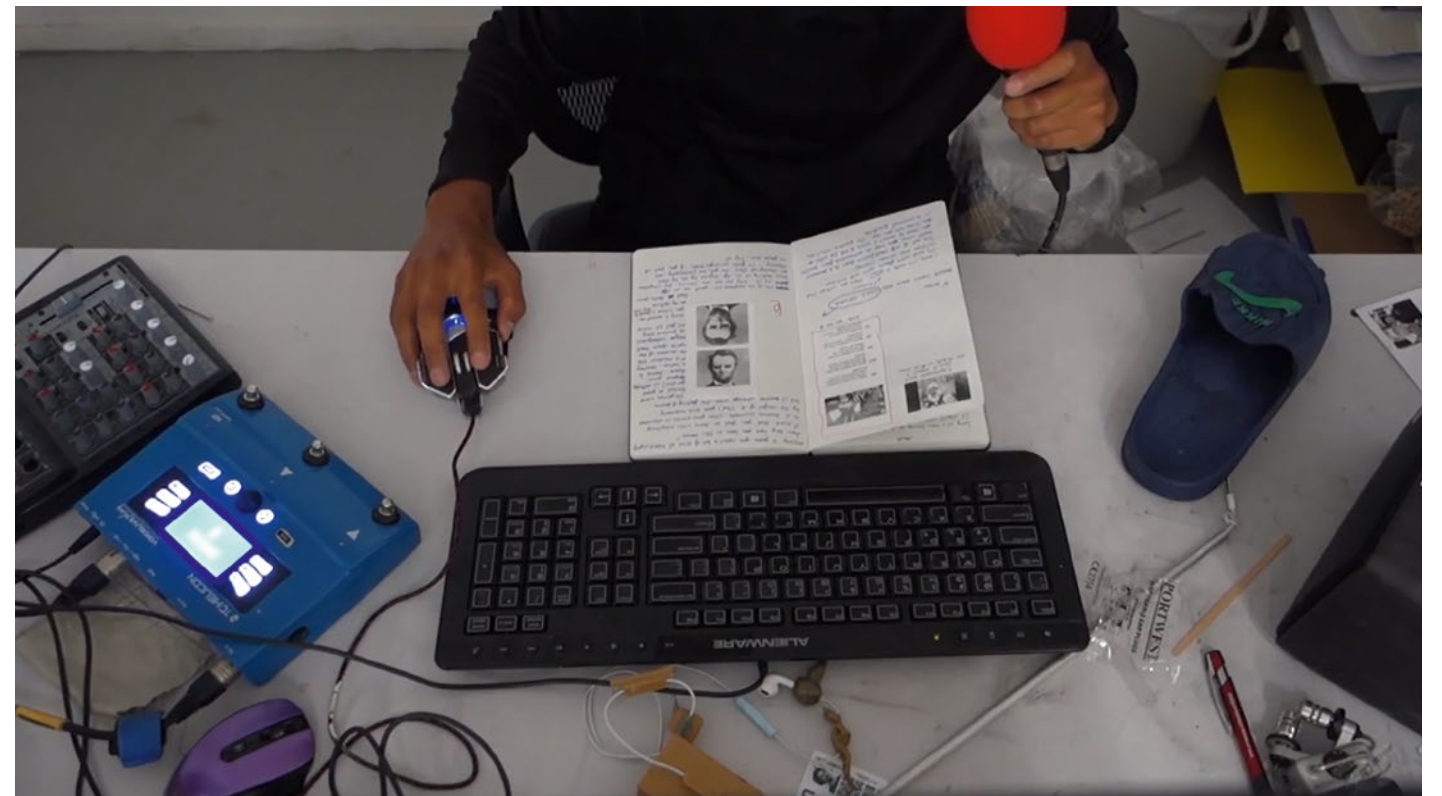
"soundandclear.today" was a project initiated by Art Initiative VHDG, Leeuwarden, curated by Nokukhanya Langa. Project team: Agnes Winter, Anna Lillioja, Tayeb Bayri. Funded by: Mondrian Fund, Bank Giro Loterij Fonds, Municipality Leeuwarden.

1. An audience of twenty participants who went through the obscure website www.soundandclear.today received a pair of earphones with 'phatic sculptures' along the cable. Every participant needed to put them on to experience the sonic performance of 35min in a day of June 2020.

2. Sonic performance with one of the twenty people expecting a call from Salim. A distorted voice imitated a blind 3D printer expressing its sadness and breaking a plexiglass plate simulated children throwing shoes at the windows.



1.



2.

anyway. I guess you spent a lot of time at home, right? how long have you been in this house?

I think that you feel at home when everything in it becomes invisible. When your vision is clouded by the comfort of it. That's good and necessary. but it becomes strange when the feeling of home.

the german word (heimat is good for this) is extended beyond your house - home to a nation - territory or a museum like the museum of the upside-down book. Maybe nobody saw it because every one felt at home.

"Sorry I cannot see you, I have a monolith on my retina."

look take your ~~right~~ one of the earphones out, you'll see an elf. look at it. Only one ear can hear me. One singular voice looking at an elf cloaked by one big story. an ideological story, one god, one philosophy, one identity... It feels uncomfortable if you put it in your ear. Try it.

7

Ender techki

WELONI LMKKA * BR O SER7T MREDA
STAWNI MOTOR * DRW, O TLATA CHACHA
CHAWNI DAWNI * BELKETNI LKHEOMA
QIADH JATTA * TALJA BAHTA
LMKKA DOUB * I GOLD MAT DOUM
MARR O MATAL * NIKHO FARO LYOM
NTOMA YAL SOUM * FINTOBA LAMAZON
DELMAR MAN CHOUF * CHIMCHIR MAN DOUS
QCH BOHITO SENI * KHELLINI NEMCHI
MA SENI REJIN * MAT DERENI WEONI
NTOMA CHAFIN * KOLNA ZADIN
MA SARFA MINN * WACH BOUYA KIM
TGOLO KHATAR * TSENHAW LMATAR
QADIN I QATAR * TEGNIW DOAR
LA CHAWR LA SAR * CHASLIN FANAR
SAYOUN FEL CAR * LA WAZE LA MAPS

11

8

paintings also have layers

Galileo Galilei died blind. Sterie Wonder, Ray Charles, Even runners say Homer was Jorge Luis Borges. **Boigitt Barlot**

you don't need to see in order to be in history books. **and actually important things** what it is like to see, I've been researching you. My sisters too. Retina, Cornea, lens, rods and cones. The eye functions like a camera. I have very similar parts to a camera. I also wonder how a camera **feels** like... probably cold because it doesn't have blood. I laughed a lot when I read that your sophisticated eyes capture everything upside-down. It's only thanks to your fancy brain that you can see things upright!

2

3

I make everything straight, I'm always calibrated. **AS** long as the data **has** no flaws. I do a great job. And if I don't that's your fault! **Yes** I'm always straight! **You see?**

Of course you see, you can see. Can you see them? How are they? I know there's one big cube-like, a long small one and a small pool, the letter 'L'... and a little guy creeping in your ear.

[I NEED TO GO]

Salim

Sorry it's been having an identity crisis lately. **can you hear me?** It starts calling after her children/babies/replicas. **there are two voices here one does stop the other doesn't** and asks about them. **the call** Because of course, it cannot see. It only processes information and puts it into layers and layers. **can you see the layers?** I wonder how it is like not to see. just move around in the three directions growing. What shapes mean and how they look like. **I guess it's like being in a dark room playing can and machines and that's with day** This reminds me of the day I went to the Tropenmuseum to see two shows: Cool Japan and Longing for Mecca.

3. person. DAPIJA

1. Was the book really upside-down?
1.a. How come nobody noticed?
1.b. Was I the only one to see it?

2. Was the book upright from the beginning?
2.a. Did my mind make it up?
2.b. How come my camera didn't picture it.
2.c. as if the camera had a psychosomatic reaction, all the pictures were blurry.

3. What did the shoe do to the whole situation? **it was sick of it**
3.a. I'd like to believe it flipped it. **well, it was me**

2

in the shoe

4

5

December 14, 2008
Mustadher al Zaidi

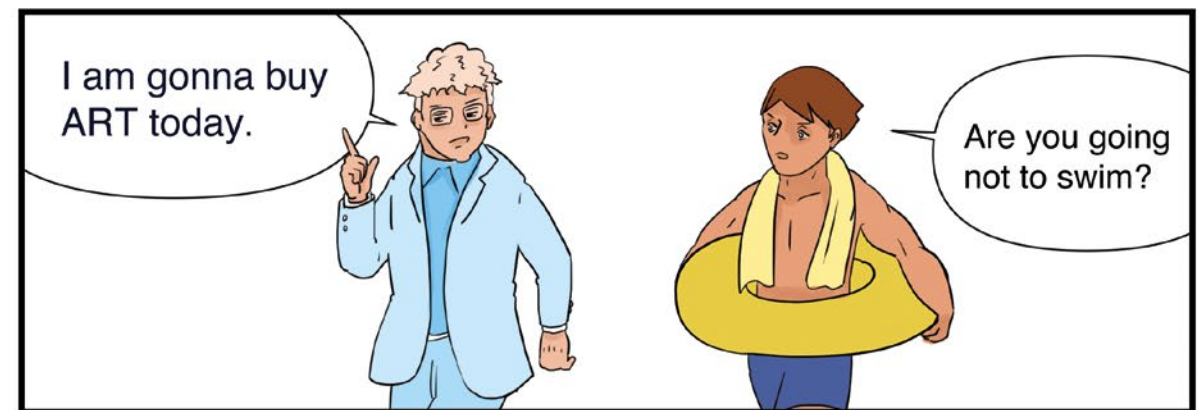
cinderella glass slipper a symbol of class ascension and change of establishment.

Chieko Idetsuki

A Beautiful Day



Chieko Idetsuki



Notes to Self

When you
Try to control
Your breath

You are trying
To control the future

When you try
To control
Your breathing

You have fallen
Into the past

When it is your time
To go

Just walk quietly

Contributors

In her installations and sculptures, Viviana Abelson (*1985 in Buenos Aires, lives and works in Berlin) combines rigid forms with elastic materials. Using industrially manufactured materials such as steel, rubber and leather, Abelson creates archaic objects. Her work has been shown HAL in Berlin in 2020, at the Nassauischer Kunstverein in Wiesbaden and at Kunstverein Frankfurt in 2019, as well as at Kunstverein Göttingen and Tor Art Space in Frankfurt in 2018.

Barbosa is an artist/technologist whose field of choice is poetic computation. He breaks things to know how they work, when he assembles them there's always something missing. His work has been shown at On CANAL in New York in 2019 and at Pioneer Works in New York in 2018.

The art of Salim Bayri (*1992 in Casablanca, lives and works in Amsterdam) functions as a humorous navigational tool to sail through the contexts he left and the ones he is moving to. He looks for the liminal points of what he calls "bittersweet ghorba" or "bittersweet abroad-being". He uses a variety of media including cgi imagery, drawings, his presence and sound as with BAZOGA (a music duo with his brother Tayeb). Recent solo shows of Bayri include Motel Spatie in Arnhem in 2020, Galerie van Gelder in Amsterdam in 2018, and at ADN Gallery in Barcelona in 2015.

Kévin Blinderman (*1994, lives and works in Paris) is a French artist and curator. In 2020, his work has been shown at Kunsthalle Bern, Studio Berlin in Berghain and High art in Paris. Blinderman co-founded the "Queer Is Not A Label"-parties.

Multidisciplinary artist Simnikiwe Buhlungu (*1995 in South Africa, lives and works in Amsterdam) is interested in knowledge production, how it is produced – and by whom – it's dissemination and it's nuances as an ecology. In 2020, she exhibited at Angela Mewes in Berlin. Her works were shown at "The Dead Are Not Dead" in Bergen and "The Showroom" in London in 2019.

Damjanski is a Yugoslavian artist living in a browser. Concerned with themes of power, poetry and participation, he investigates black box approaches in our everyday lives. He is a co-founder and member of the incubation collective Do Something Good. And in 2018, he co-founded MoMAR, a gallery concept aimed at democratizing physical exhibition spaces, art institutions and curatorial processes within New York's Museum of Modern Art. His work has appeared internationally, including exhibitions at Roehrs & Boetsch in Zurich in 2020, at Pioneer Works in New York and at Import Projects in Berlin in 2018, and ON CANAL and MoMAR in New York in 2019.

Sofia Duchovny (* 1988, Moscow, lives and works in Berlin) is an artist working with a wide range of mediums. Her work has been shown at Halle für Kunst e.V., Kunsthalle Freeport and Stadium Berlin in 2020, Kunstverein Göttingen, Kunsthall Aarhus and Queer Thoughts in 2019 and Künstlerhaus Bremen (2018) and Kunstverein Hannover(2017)

John Holten (*1984 In Ireland, lives and works in Berlin) is a novelist, artist, and Editor-in-Chief of publishing house Broken Dimanche Press. His novels include "Oslo, Norway" (2015) and "The Readymades" (2011). His writings have appeared in "Frieze", "gorse" and "The Stinging Fly" among other places. In 2020, he produced the podcast "Empathy When".

Besides the Japanese art of Amezaiku, Chieko Idetsuki (*1974 in Tokyo, lives and works in Berlin) mainly focuses on illustration in her artistic practice. Her work has been shown at screening2014 in Hildesheim in 2014, at direktorenhaus in Berlin in 2013, and at Galerie Malle in Tokyo in 2011.

Line Finderup Jensen (*1991 in Denmark, lives and works in Vienna) tests the extent to which gaming is suitable as an interactive variant of cinematic narration and documentation and, above all, how interactive systems, 3D and real-time simulations can enable a better mutual understanding. In 2020, Finderup Jensens work has been shown at Udstillingsstedet Sydhavn in Copenhagen and at OÖ Kunstverein in Linz. She showed at Parallel in Vienna in 2018 and at EX14 in Dresden in 2017.

Bitsy Knox (*1984 in Vancouver, lives and works in Berlin) is a poet, performer and radio presenter. Her show "Something Like" is broadcasted twice a week on Cashmere Radio Berlin and CHFR Hornby Island Community Radio. Knox debut album "OM COLD BLOOD" was released in 2018 followed by "Your Body" in 2020. She often works together with the Belgian musician Roger 3000. As a poet, Knox has performed at W139 in Amsterdam, KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin and Une Une Une in Perpignan, among others. Her first chapter book, "Meaningless Secrets", was published in 2020.

Jessica Korp (1989 in Addis Abeba, lives and works in Berlin) is interested in the postcolonial history of migration, work in late capitalism and everyday life as a stage for social contexts. She is a student of European ethnology and an active member of Aktivistar Filmkollektiv and Sonic In(ter)ventions.

While working with a wide range of sculptural media including ceramics, fountains, lamps, and 3D printing, the practice of Lindsay Lawson (*1982 in Biloxi, works and lives in Berlin) also encompasses film, video, installation, photography, performance, and text. In addition to her fascination with objects and their role in society, she comments in a witty way on the essential role of digital platforms (such as Ebay, okCupid etc.). Lindsays work has been shown at Efremidis Gallery in Berlin in 2020, at Platform in Stockholm in 2018, at Centre Pompidou in Paris in 2016 and Kunsthaus Hamburg in 2015.

Musa Okwonga (*1979 in London, lives and works in Berlin) is a British-Ugandan writer and musician. His upcoming book about Berlin "In The End, It Was All About Love" (2021) has just been announced. Okwonga is the co-host of the "Stadio football podcast", has published one collection of poetry and three books about football. And his work has appeared in various outlets, including "Africa Is A Country", "Die Zeit", "Die Welt", "The Guardian", "The New York Times", and "The Economist".

Elif Saydam (*1985 in Calgary, lives and works in Berlin) integrates writing, performance and sculpture into an extended painting practice. In 2020, her work has been shown at Rüdiger Schöttle in Munich, at Mélange in Cologne and at Tanya Leighton in Berlin. In 2018 Saydam presented her artworks at KW Institute for Contemporary Art in Berlin, in 2017 at Kunstverein Hannover and in 2016 at Kunstverein Nürnberg.

Anna M. Szaflarski (*1984 in St. Catharines, lives and works in Berlin) is a writer, artist and artist-book publisher. Her work mediates narratives with a sense of humor and sensibility simultaneously. Her recent publications include "Very normal People" (2019) and "Letters to the Editors" (2016). Her art works have been exhibited at "Kunstverein Göttingen" in 2020, at Bärenzwinger in Berlin and Kunstverein Reutlingen in 2019, as well as at Ashley in Berlin in 2018.

Philip Wiegard (*1977 Schwetzingen, lives and works in Berlin) addresses the importance of humor in the construction of our realities: The works always stand out from the deceptive conformity of our familiar environment. Wiegards works have been shown at Between Bridges in Berlin in 2018, at Fundacion Joan Miro in Barcelona in 2018, at Kunstverein Nürnberg in 2017 and Stedelijk Museum in Lier in 2015.



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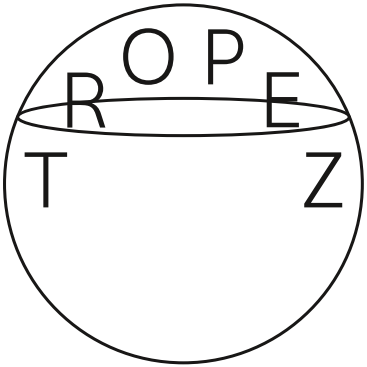
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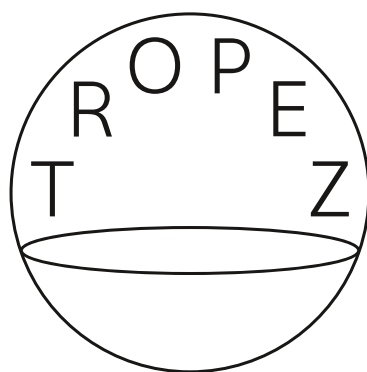
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