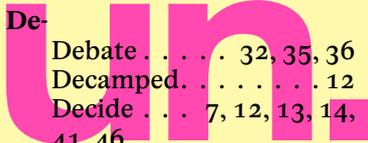


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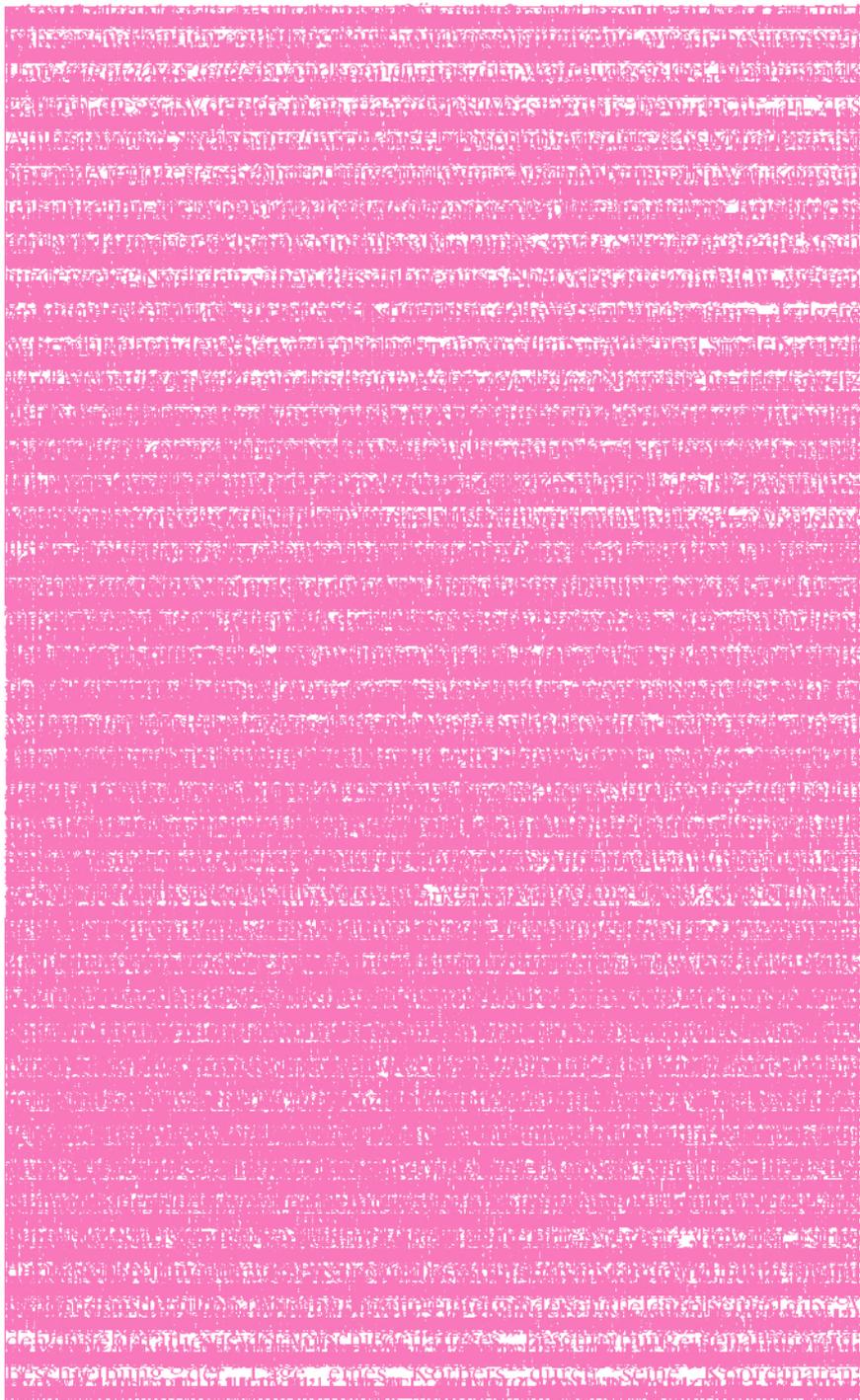
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_____, _____ and Suzette thank all the folks who answered _____ callout, all our writers who _____ wished _____, all who _____ with us to _____ practices, to _____ a little _____ a lot _____, _____ trusting _____, _____ well, _____ the Un people: Victoria Bennett, Brad Haylock, Phip Murray, Rosemary Forde, the Board and Rosemary Forde (again) for her mad proufing skillz and Brad (again) for Drift King-ing _____ and _____ also thank Suzette so much for being Fuck-King Killer and _____ the adult _____ the relationship and _____ thanks _____ for _____ the other adult _____ relationship and taking _____ so _____ _____ duties while _____ _____ from _____ and _____: so, so much respect, yes, to everyone who _____ who _____ jumped _____ car window _____ traffic lights, _____ running, veering between trucks _____ _____ intersection _____ thanks _____ who _____ thanks.

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Elizabeth Chang

	silently as such	for	
	cranium voices	not	community
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		mode	of binding
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		preservation	advancement
		it	
it is yours		floats for	a raft
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		not	its ink to its ink
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a magazine is a community	though	way of glues	staples
		for	
		to	frontness
		we	
maybe not you		one point	glue



stationary VSO positions ready to perform again for the next entrant to the gallery, was an appropriation of the wall plaque that would normally contain this information. Most members of the public, however, had already walked off before hearing this text, and for most of those who had not walked off this subversion felt lost or inconsequential. Without the framing of this final text the work could only be read by unsuspecting visitors as a prank by the gallery.

My employment and participation in the project included a rehearsal phase. Despite the rehearsals, and despite my auditioning and wearing of a costume for the project, there was an objection to calling this work what it essentially was — a *performance*.

Is performance really that dirty a word that it might taint the sanctity of the visual art world, where performance is ‘so hot right now’ but for some reason needs dressing up with twee rhetoric like ‘sculptures that go home at night’?

Please. You can put lipstick on a pig, but it is still just a damn pig.

If you like, you can, as the artist does, call this a ‘constructed situation’. But isn’t every performance a constructed situation, whether it takes the form of a sermon, support-group, AFL match or theatre production? Why the preciousness of avoiding the term ‘performance’ here? I read something about how the artist contends the word performance because it implies a quantifying level he doesn’t believe in, like the ‘performance level’ of a vacuum cleaner. The artist’s use of the rhetoric is more entrepreneurial than conceptual, and semantics either way. It is a clever way of using such semantics to exploit the pretentiousness of the visual art world. After all, it might not be as profitable to sell ‘performances’ in the visual art market as it is to sell ‘constructed situations’. And perhaps if it were acknowledged that the work was ‘performance’ we would have been entitled artistic equity rates as performers, rather than the VSO rate that I believed our wages was based on. However, when I enquired to the real VSOs I found that they were paid about \$8 less an hour than us as interpreters.

Why weren’t actual VSOs used as ‘interpreters’ performers of the work? This might have given the piece some much-needed authenticity. It might have achieved its intention of the provocation and critique of

the institution. The team through which the work was ‘interpreted’ was made up largely of dancers, actors and other artists. Most adopted affectations that a regular VSO probably wouldn’t use. Some interpreters were convinced that the original premiere of the work involved actual gallery attendants, others asserted that it was always performed by hired help. Because of the lack of a published history, no readily accessible record could settle this.

In support of his view that the work did not fall under the category of ‘performance’ the patron asserted that ‘performance’ implies that there is a passive audience and that in this particular work, the audience (the gallery visitor) becomes *part* of the work. This is a particularly narrow view of performance practice, and as preposterous as asserting that visitors become part of the paintings when viewing them at the gallery. Visitors had no affect on the work apart from having been its ‘trigger’ when they entered the gallery. Sure, when they walked through the work we followed them a short way into the gallery dancing around them before returning to the entrance to continue dancing without them. But they were not *part* of the work at all. Whist our choreographic score was flexible, it possessed the same rigid impermeable frame of the paintings deeper in the gallery. It just involved the more porous human body trying to maintain the task of the frame. A task that was particularly ruinous over three-and-a-half-hour shifts of relatively non-stop dancing on a concrete floor in VSO *costumes*.

Being that the gallery was not so used to dealing with *people* in the execution of the majority of their projects, it meant that there was a lack of consideration in how this would actually unfold. We would need a negotiable roster. We would need a stand-by to accompany the three of us in action on each shift. We would need water. We would need our own uniforms and for these to be washed and ready on an almost daily basis.

The work is usually presented in an internal room of the gallery. Its presentation at the gallery’s entrance entailed a much higher rotation of performances than normal. With the constant flow of traffic, we hardly stopped dancing. The work quickly became inappropriately read in terms of deterioration and exhaustion of the task. I am not sure why then the work was presented in the

economics) that the art world is an expendable bauble for the mega-rich, the energy contained in this détente occasionally reveals itself through the outrage created when artists withdraw the offer of co-operation. We don't build pyramids anymore, or mummify our corpses, or offer virgins to the gods. Most of us don't even have a god anymore. Perhaps for those reasons more than ever, alignment with the transcendent is a commodity that both the economically and politically powerful recognise as extremely important. It offers an inkling of the immortal.

The hand that bites

In some ways the confrontation that occurred over the sponsorship of our latest arts biennial said more about art's relation to money and power than any of the work on show. Played out across our screens, newspapers, radios and magazines, it was a more vivid scenario; a sharper image; more symbolically charged (that's the thing with meta-events: they are better, more interesting, than actual events). The process generated such a rich kaleidoscope of images and signification for all the factions: the affront, the conflict, the resolution, the outcome. Everyone got to bathe in a different hue of righteousness. (Even the rejected sponsor bowed out graciously — floating back into the corporate ether, enveloped by defences from politicians and journos wringing their hands over his shabby treatment). Justice and moral victory for all! Fascinating colours from every angle. Really a great piece.

So the conflict that decides whether or not the art will get shown is possibly more interesting than the artworks themselves, sitting beyond the corporate signage at the gate. The moral scuffle is not only more spectacular — look at all the articles that have been written about it: more column inches than the sum-total we expect about all the individual works on show — but a richer and deeper vein from which to mine our opinions about art, money and their role in respect to each other and society as a whole.

A theme emerged from the statements in response to the boycott and the media criticism of each camp: art was perceived as a static product, like a television, a table, or a washing machine. Artists were hence producers of these items, dependent on pleasing the consumers who would complete the circuit of their economy with cash. Very old fashioned views indeed! Corporate capital lays claim to the earthly realm of the real, of *power-over*, the kind that must subordinate its subjects. Purchasing (or sponsoring) art, in the mind of the typical corporate entity, is the final step of coming into reality to which an artwork must eventually submit. Once purchased, it becomes tame, still, quiet, complete and fully actualised.

The relationship between contemporary art(ists) and the patrons who buy or fund the exhibition of their works is completely different from the static models of supply and demand (or domination and subjugation) which form the algorithm of such critique. Contemporary artists — the kind that are curated into the art event at the nexus of this shitstorm *du jour* — are generally not in the business (and it is a business) of supplying the world with placid visual delights. Contemporary art, by its very essence, embodies critique like a fire contains oxygen. Not everyone attacks notions of capitalism directly by tattooing junkie prostitutes for the price of a fix, but we wager that it's difficult to get shown in a biennial without offering some kind of *resistance* to the politics, social issues and problematics of the status quo that characterises our experience of the world in which we make art.

Power is no longer directed in a simple, one-way flow. The buying of an artwork is no simple economic conquest, the act of sponsorship is no simple gesture of charity. This was misunderstood by those ham-fisted commentators who told the boycotting artists to quit their moaning and be grateful that the 'handouts' were coming their way at all. The media commented on the 'cleansing' effect that arts sponsorship bestows upon the corporate sector (some were even so petty as to mention free tickets as a motivation). But doesn't the operation of money play a much more active role in determining the value, even the meaning, of the art that it graces? Corporate and government patrons of the arts are now paying to support precisely those members of society most likely to attack them. Artists are now taking money from precisely those members of society they attack in their practice.

Contemporary art and its embeddedness within the capitalist system causes the twin illusions of the transcendent disinterestedness of the artist and the hegemony of capital to attack each other like snarling dogs in a cage too small to allow each his own territorial logic; art demands the right to make ethical judgments, to create autonomous moral spaces while money

in very specific ways to implement certain 'exceptional' policies, that in other circumstances would be unacceptable.

In this way, the crisis is endless, the state of emergency moment hides the interchangeability of all moments.

If you allow this policy now it means you will allow it then. A slippery slope. Don't believe the crisis moment will pass. If it is excusable now it will be excusable then; if they can do it to THEM they can do it to YOU. Do not take for granted what you have been granted.]

Now we aspire to immortality, nothing's changed, just that now the gods we pray to are ██████████ and ██████████ and career advisors and CURRICULUM VITAE, etc.

In other words, there is no linearity. No progress. We are living with dirt just as we were 600 years ago; just as we were 1000 years ago, just as we will be in 200 years. The nature of the dirt changes in the same way our nature changes, these two things are totally commensurable.

...

As a dear friend always says: Prove to me humans aren't a virus!

THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT
THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER
AS I HAVE LOVED YOU

...

So then it became about art

and by now I don't even any longer know what I mean by that

what do we actually refer to when we say 'art'?

Right now it's this big exhibition in ██████████ opening in a couple of weeks

And there's so much fuss

And it's like

—don't shoot me—

but what did you art workers bloody expect???

Where do you think the money comes from?

This is an industry

Money talks.

It has a mouth that could look something like mine and it just keeps talking...

Until it stops

And then If you feed it some more, it will start again, keep going, so, while we're thinking about the mouth wonderful orifice maybe we could also think about mouths that have no talk

they have no talk because they have no money

and at this point the individual is subsumed within its state, or its LACK THEREOF

the state's mouth has more money, more money makes more mouth talk, more talk more, mouth money. Obviously some state mouths have more talk than others.

AND EVERYONE JUST KEEP LICKING

...

Now I will read a poem:

Cup poem

The cup is full
Whether we like it or not
We fill it up with things
Like history, habits and personality traits, relations and obligations, desires
That we believe define us, give our life shape
And then we attach things to them that seem impenetrable, indisputable
Like loves that come to serve as cordial that flavors all else in the cup
Until nothing can be tasted anew
Only through the taste of the self-spiked liquid
Colouring all
We toil over the sloshing cup nonetheless, ignoring its bias
Rearranging particles, trying to get to the essence
But never able to see clearly
Due to drunkenness

You are what you love,

Not what loves you.

So said ██████████ ██████████ in ██████████ ██████████'s ██████████'.

You are what you love,
Not what loves you.

*The next part is from the past, a failed attempt, I tried to do something but time prevented
Was it time or being-in-time
Not-being-in-time, AS IT WERE*

...

MAN: 'Cannot believe you pulled the gender card. BUSTED.'

WOMAN: Yeh I will pull it whenever I want sucker!!! That card is stuck on you like a lick of fresh cum in the morning sun. And I meant it like I said it, the male is there no matter what and my maleness will never touch yours, cunt

[Poem of the day via ██████████]

flattened sounds emotions feel

...

I would like to conclude accompanied by ██████████ ██████████:

So, is there a feminine genius? The example of twentieth-century women has made it difficult to avoid the question. And it has led us to consider that the anxiety over the feminine has been the communal experience that has allowed our civilization to reveal, in a new way, the incommensurability of the individual. This incommensurability is rooted in sexual experience but nonetheless is realized through the risks that each of us is prepared to take by calling into question thought, language, one's own age, and any identity that resides in them. You are a genius to the extent that you are able to challenge the sociohistorical conditions of your identity. This is the legacy of ██████████, ██████████, and ██████████.

None of this is live. The following words were not intended for publication. They are an abbreviated transcript of her performance. Each word was written by her, to be spoken by her. *And they traverse time and space.* There: spoken into a microphone in a small room to an intimate audience. Here: an archive. They serve as a trace of *the event* and a quiet reminder of that void (*clough, gill, thrutch cleuch, heugh; gulch, coulee, flume; arroyo, barranca, quebrada; nullah, khud; sloop, kloof, donga; khor*) between words and things. I don't remember what she was wearing and the text fails to capture the specifics. There was a single microphone on a stand. A lamp with lighting gel to her right, spilling red. To her left, a laptop and mixing desk on a small table. Framed by two speakers, she shifted her stance with each pause. It was a warm room, at capacity. Tight and white. Black foldout chairs. We could all smell each other. Her voice, slipping past red lipstick, expressed more than this text can. A slight quiver, a tremble. It fought against its own amplification by remaining calm and clear. Gradually increasing in volume, she competed with that rising soundtrack of industrial drone, cut up with clipped voices and pornographic samples. Holding her words in her hands, she _____ as each page ran out. Performed an artificial punctuation not mirrored here. *And back again.*

The archive can never be complete. But the act of speaking can cut across that void. In an instant, speech, voice, the vibration of a screaming throat, asserts existence. It binds the speaker and the spoken in a shared moment, *the event*. Words are alive at that time, in that place, and so are we. Afterwards, the text remains. *Aspiring to be something it will never be.*

None of this is live
There are pre-recorded emotions
flattened in one track
And they traverse time and space
Travel forward to you

And back again

Filtered through
Flattened out
Aspiring to be something it will
never be
Dreaming of heroes and heroines
I want to be, but
My OWN way, y'know?
We always want to be like someone
else, but we want to -- MAKE
IT MINE ! all the world's
problems could be solved
"ALLLL THE WORLD'S
PROBLEMS COULD BE
SOLVED!"
through the simple acknowledg-
ment that I only exists because
U does

– what is the politics of 'hero-
ine'? What do we think? is it
actor or actress?
dominator or dominatrix ?
master or mistress ? god or
goddess?

She's a hero !
She's a heroine !
She's a heroine of mine !
He's a hero !
He's a heroine !
He takes heroin.
She is interchangeable.
She is flexible, she flits between
and slides under, both.

At once, here and there.
The sex that is not 1.

Like ::: what I mean is that if you
are a "feminist" what is the right
way to speak ? Should one refuse
gender binaries and use a generic
term for both sexes, to point to
their ontological equality – hero,
actor, dominator, master, god
? Thereby somehow 'eating' or,
in other words, disavowing the
gender-bias of language?

Or should one acknowledge
the gender-bias of one's language,
and avow it by explicating gender
difference as much as possible
– heroine, actress, dominatrix,
mistress, goddess ?

I guess the problem is that all those
words are euphemisms for

WHORE

There is no feminized word for
GENIUS.

[Yellow finger from smoking too
much on one hand & rattly chest
when I twist my torso. Signs of life.]

///

Initially it became about women
But nothing's ever just about
women,
JUST AS
NOTHING
is ever, ever, ever
NOTHING is EVER EVER EVER
just about men

just about men, nothing is ever
just about men ! (the history of the
world is the story of males)

LADIES! Ladies and gentlemen!
Ladies and gentle men, who would
want THAT story anyway?

though you may (not) be forgiven
for thinking it is.

YOU WILL NOT BE FORGIVEN.
Okay, maybe you'll be forgiven, but
you're an idiot.

"Sorry, this is a long preamble..."

In the end it became about love
About love

Next Question: What isn't about
love?

*We only have to love one another
to know what we must do.*

– said in a film called _____,
made by a _____ artist

WE ONLY HAVE TO LOVE ONE
ANOTHER TO KNOW WHAT WE
MUST DO

DO MUST WE WHAT KNOW TO
ANOTHER ONE LOVE TO HAVE
ONLY WE

...

And then it became somehow about
politics

What I notice is numbers. I don't remember there being this many people at things like this. And so many strangers. There's soup and bread, and the person in charge gives me a hug and asks if I'm around for a coffee tomorrow, and I wish I could, and then the music starts. I teach my brother's partner the right way to sit on a milkcrate, and then it's gentle psychedelic guitar and loops filling the concrete room. Every time I come home there are more and more things like this, drawing bigger and bigger crowds.

Out on the street we debate the idea of ticket prices. I say they're a sham, you never really make your money back, and they force you to sell yourself, to beg people to come along in order to cover your costs. Better to balance the budget up front, make enough to square it all by other means, break even before the event itself, and then give it away for free. Turn it from a sales transaction into a gift. No-one agrees with me. Then the next band starts, three vocalists, a cellist and a drummer, and they hold the whole room in an awesome stillness. They deserve to be on the pop festival circuit, they could easily play on a stage in front of thousands, but they won't.

Someone stops on a bike to say hey. We met in another city but I saw her here only a couple of weeks ago. She tells me she's moving here. I ask why? She says, because there's so much happening here, and yet it's also small enough to really have an identity, to be able to provide something new. There aren't enough people here for the cliques to really separate, so everyone has to be into everything, at least a little bit. It's raining but we keep talking, standing under the hill with the trees and the flagpole.

The good thing about a bad reputation is, I think, it keeps the weekenders away. I've been to cities — here and overseas — where the scene is clogged with people who want to make it, who want to be famous, or be seen. No-one comes here wanting to be seen. If you come here, you're guaranteed to be ignored, and when you go somewhere else, people look at you askance when they learn where you're from. That sort of thing tends to mitigate against the ego. Clears out the jerks.

The only thing that keeps you going in an environment like this is love. There's so much love.

**

This show is in support of arthropods and the times that you can feel wind hitting different parts of your body from different directions at the same time whilst simultaneously being embarrassed about something from your youth. Only part of oneself can jut and catch and enjoy the warm breeze for a moment, and it cannot compensate for the discomfort of the awkward memory, or what causes the awkward memory. The memory is probably of a time that you were not so confident in yourself, or you were confident, but you later realised were doing something daggy. If one were not disrupted by the wind and allowed to feel the embarrassment, perhaps it would be in celebration of, not in spite of, this arthropodic field.

A walk through

Eclipse has been eclipsed through a casting process, although not in that boring Biennale-way

It's hardly noticeable and thus more rewarding when it becomes stable

Rickety fishing structures that pursue a flourish. Pungent, expensive seafood dropped at a dinner party and found months later beneath what we *lean to*. Dangerous orthodoxy slow cooked at room temperature, it is delicious.

If they were the thoughts of animals, they are maybe of an inner-city dweller. Horn lodged firmly in the soil of an architecture — the type of architecture that varies in the way that a good city does. A good city is made from many different types of buildings, rather than a consistent tasteful type. To be able to build with bricks in an interesting way is a great skill beyond the merits of using alloys and other new technologies.

If there were a press release for this show penned by somewhat that might do it justice. Perhaps it would be a request to lick a screw. The danglers are de-dangled, and rooted in salt-lakes. They are up-right palm-sized techno-coloured forestry.

**

Tactile language

I often describe myself in bios as a writer, artist and zinemaker. I could leave it at the first two, but zinemaker feels like it deserves its own circle in the shifting diagram of my practice. It's more than simply a fusion of the other two: if art and writing are the two halves of my brain, zines are both, and neither, and the space in between.

Writing, in itself, is flat. It needs something to contain it, which intimately affects the words, like water taking the shape of a glass. But a zine — right from the start — is an object, a piece of paper folded from two dimensions into three. Every dimension is considered equal.

The object-ness of zines is crucial to the content. After all, the writing in zines so often depends on the visual nature of the medium, the visual cues of collaged text and found graphics, hand-scrawled afterthoughts. In a magazine, book or blog, evidence of the person who wrote the words is there, but distantly; in a zine, they are immediate. When you hold a zine, an object someone has made, your hands touch theirs.

The word 'zine', let us be clear, is pronounced *zeen*, and is derived from 'fan magazine'. Every few years someone at _____ or whatever gets overexcited and does a piece about a 'new' underground zine craze. But they've been around for decades: notable waves include science fiction fanzines in the 1930s, punk fanzines in the 70s and 80s, _____ in the 90s, and the proliferation of art zines in the 2000s.

A lot of people predicted that the internet would kill zines. So far, the opposite of this has happened; they've just changed. Tactility, object-ness, has arguably come to the fore against the more impersonal background of the internet.

The means of distribution has changed too. Mainly sold, pre-internet, via mail-order or at music gigs, record stores and indie bookshops; they are now mainly distributed by volunteer-run online 'distros' that stock a variety of publications, and online stores run by individuals selling their own zines. Importantly though, these online transactions still involve handwritten notes and

sticker-decorated envelopes; receiving a package of zines is nearly always tactile and personal. And, as in the past, distros and individuals regularly table their wares at zine fairs and events. In _____ there is a long-running physical shop _____, where you can go to read, buy and make zines. And, as of early 2014, almost every state and territory has at least one annual zine fair: even a small fair sees hundreds of handmade publications available for purchase and trade.

There's something magical about zines. They are truly liminal, existing between genres, between notions of preciousness and ephemera, between and outside of skill levels and resources, outside of the publishing industry and the art market. They sit between the personal and the public, the professional and amateur. Zine communities are often outside of geographical space; between subcultures; between ideologies. Zines are antithetical to money-making; often they are free, or traded, part of a gift economy that exists outside of (or alongside) mainstream/capitalist economics. They create a space that, while by no means free of labels and hierarchies, at least attempts to question and disrupt the status quo: a form that inherently allows, and implicitly argues, for freedom.

It makes sense, then, that zine writing tends not to be detached, academic or controlled: it goes off on tangents, contains spelling mistakes, is totally biased. Most often, it's the exact kind of writing we are taught not to do, in school, at university: writing that ignores the rules, the sort of writing usually confined to letters and diaries. But this kind of writing — raw and real — makes me gasp.

_____, subtitled _____, is a standard A5 folded zine, black and white photocopied. In it, _____ writes about the homogenisation of language, the dozens of languages lost each year, the hundreds of indigenous languages already extinct, and the implications of _____ becoming a 'universal' language. She uses strips of typewritten text of varying visibility, pasted over pages from linguistics textbooks and documentary photographs. The text is

I am trying to find some important books which are not available in my country and will take months to arrive if I ordered besides costing a fortune, I am in a hurry to find them very urgently.

The uneven distribution of books does not correspond to an uneven thirst for them. The cost for certain readers is simply too high, resulting in a significant gap between the haves and the have-nots.

Infinitely reproducible digital files travel quickly, potentially to everyone all at once, at almost no cost. (Make no mistake, the cost of traditional distribution is tremendous: from the exploitation of workers required for mining and assembly in the construction of devices for getting online to the ecological impact of the energy-hungry totality of the internet. There is really no refuting this — it is a contradiction with which we have to wrestle.) But rather than act on the internet's potential as an instrument of social justice, it is seen as a global shopfront, and everyone a customer.

To share some incredible texts & translations with my students and others, related to politics and sound.

Teachers — many of whom are barely employed, underpaid, and underinsured — share knowledge with their students. Instead of undertaking the laborious task of obtaining authorisation to reproduce texts — additional work to their primary job — they can share with students access to the library they use.

The awareness of where and how to find knowledge is a valuable form of knowledge itself.

I saw a sign saying 'SCAN ALL THE BOOKS, PUT THEM ON A'.

It was a sign from one of many world-wide student occupations that took place between 2007 and 2011. In this case, students were occupying a library, possibly thinking about what they were fighting to save when they fought against cuts, and for education. This sign proposed that one possible future would be to salvage the university's knowledge depository by relocating its material resources for use outside the institution. Once scanned, these books are redeployed in *new* places of learning, in the wealth of autonomous pedagogical activity that sprang

from or stood alongside the global wave of occupations, within and outside of the universities.

I am currently a doctorate student in psychoanalysis in L and I want to be able to get a taste of a range of thinkers whose work may pertain to my area of research. I tend to do a fair bit of reading in a loosely associative manner so look forward to being able to browse.

Reading is not what it used to be. Browsing and searching are operational terms, not just because they are borrowed from the digital palette of actions available to the internet surfer, but because they are methods for making meaning out of the overabundance of material that is available. The history of libraries is also a history of catalogs and organisational schemes, and the tools available for skimming, searching, and sorting are part of this history. What are the possible interfaces for reading (in the expanded sense of the word) today? How can parts be related to wholes and other parts within other wholes? These are techniques that operate in parallel with more traditional ones like close reading.

I'm part of a reading group.

A number of reading groups have used the library as a resource for organizing and sharing texts. Over time, a constellation of concepts grows into a common vocabulary; fundamental disagreements emerge along deep fault lines within the group. What is at stake becomes clear. The reading group gradually transforms into another reading group, sometimes without realising it. A new person joins. It reads different things for slightly different reasons. Sometimes people drop out, or the group fractures. And in the end, like any living thing, the reading group eventually dies out. Perhaps it meets a sudden, violent end; or maybe it just becomes exhausted and it quietly never happens again.

Copyright infringement.

Not every reason is given from the same position, although all these positions together map the same objective landscape of property, access, and knowledge.

Copyright infringement here is the legal means by which digital use is divided

at? What do they eye, and how do they hold their heads and limbs? Which way do they face? What do they say? Hear them talk. Try and catch what they say. Is it too loud, so that all hear it if they try or not, or is it quiet, said low? What on earth are they all here for? They are here to be in the midst of their peers, to take a draught of free time, to see and be seen, to point the bone and bitch. Look at their eyes. Do their eyes show that they like who they talk with, or are they not all there?

Some make a slow march round the room, two by two, like an act of prayer. They pause at each work. Count how many ticks of the clock that they pause for, as science tells us the mean pause is six to ten ticks, same for good works and bad, works they like and works they don't. That's how they take it in. The guests don't help much. You can't learn so much from where they look, or how they do it. You can learn more by how they dress. Guess how rich they are, and how smart, and how they rate their self worth, just by the way they dress.

The art can't think for you. The guests can't think for you. To type out a-r-t is just a breeze, to write on art is hack work (you just sit and bleed), but to think things out from scratch is hell.

Try one more time. Breathe. Look at the work. If it bores you, or you love it, or you hate it, then give it twice as much time. If you still feel the same way, four times as much. Eight. What you feel will flip on its head. What you hate you will love and what bores you, won't. They say time changes things, but you have to change them your self. You must change your life.

Epilogue

A score of years before our version of _____ 'in words of one syllable' hit the printing press, arguably the second most popular book of the 19th century was published—_____, _____. One book helped make the market for the other, if it didn't directly engender it. The premises are strikingly similar: every man is an island, and each man must use his wits and perseverance to stay alive. The difference between the two is that where _____ uses allegory to convey his world, _____ uses direct exhortation. As he writes, 'Heaven helps those who help themselves.' In both books we find ourselves

shipwrecked and alone, in the midst of plenty. The only alternative to self-reliance—and the logical conclusion of interpersonal contact—is cannibalism, metaphorical or literal.

This is, perhaps, the curse of sentences without style. We begin with a rule for avoiding florid description, and end in a _____ struggle for survival. How does this happen? One of the problems with single syllables is that there are no continuous verbs, and therefore no complex tenses, no 'we were wondering', 'she had been considering'. We are trapped in a world of curt sentences. As the nuance and space for speculation is reduced, the gap between words and things yawns a little wider, and as words become more impotent, they sometimes become more strident. The guests have left. You're alone in the gallery. The works don't speak to you.

Prologue

In the middle part of the 19th century an educated Englishwoman writing under a pseudonym composed a version of _____. In this, nothing is odd. _____ was the most popular book in the _____ century. By the end of the 19th century some 700 alternate versions of the tale of the seafaring castaway existed; the tale had been translated into _____ and _____ (thnx, _____), and had spawned its own genre, the '_____'. What was odd about this particular rendition of the famous tale is that she rewrote it under a peculiar constraint. As she (self-referentially) explained in the preface:

'The author's task has been chiefly to reduce the ordinary language into words of one syllable. But although, as far as the subject matter is concerned, the book can lay no claims to originality, it is believed that the idea and scope of its construction are entirely novel.'

The author's intent was to produce a version that might be helpful to children learning to read. What resulted was a monster text, a text of such staccato prose and rhetorical complexity that it recalls, more than anything else, the products of the rule driven prose games of the oulipian movement. From the very first pages, the appearance of a simple primer for learners of _____ is lost in a tight weave of synecdoche and metaphor. Utterly useless for its original purpose, _____'s ship begins to sink:

'All hands were sent to the pumps, but we felt the ship groan in all her planks, and her beams quake from stem to stern; so that it was soon quite clear there was no hope for her, and that all we could do was to save our lives.'

Such taut, sprung rhythms reveal something about language, something both interesting and perhaps a little pathological. Namely, that when it is forced, or when it is impoverished, it sometimes becomes richer. This sits in direct opposition to contemporary writing about art, which for all its sesquipedalian exuberance can sometimes seem desperately semantically poor. Embracing poverty, like

a mendicant friar, that's the future of art writing.

I could but cry out in the words of the _____, 'They that go down to the sea in ships, these men see the works of the Lord in the deep. For at His word the storms rise, the winds blow, and lift up the waves; then do they mount to the sky, and from thence go down to the deep. My soul faints, I reel to and fro, and am at my wit's end: then the Lord brings me out of all my fears.'

Text

A guide, or *How to be dumb*:

On the website is a child's guide on how to look at art. The guide for the most part gives a quote and then flat out asks the kid what they think, like this:

'What you see is what you see,' said _____ in 1964. What does this mean?'

I wish I knew. What the hell does 'what you see is what you see' mean? I might have known when I was twelve. What did you see in the first place? It hangs on how you look at things, so how do you know how to look?

It's hard to know how to stay dumb, but it counts if you want to keep your eyes bright and your head clear. An old _____ shrink had a trick for this. First, free your mind from names. You can try this as you walk down the street. When you see trees or hear birds, don't think 'plane tree' and 'crow' or 'larch' and 'lark'. Just try and see green blobs, brown rods, hear the sound as noise that starts and ends in your ear. Don't try to see things as near or far, laid out in space, but try to see the shapes as light that strikes your eyes, as a babe might. When you smell things, try not to name what you smell and where the smell is from. Try to look at the world as if you see it for the first time; not in the kitsch sense, as a mood of glib awe, but for real. This is hard work. Keep at it. You might not feel you can walk at all, at least not right then.

... when she goes to a show, what she does is this. First she walks in and a work will strike her right off, come at her with all it's got, so to speak. Or it won't, not a thing will. But say it does, then she will skirt it for a while and play ducks and drakes, look at a thing here or there till she creeps right up on

In a previous incarnation there were three performers working on constructing individual structures.

I was talking to a friend about physical freedoms and restrictions.

She suggested that I'm caging myself into these confined spaces, and this approach is present in earlier works of mine too.

This restriction alleviates me of consciously having to navigate a space.

It is not up to me anymore.

The objects themselves dictate my actions.

**

[sequencing follows a consecutive ordering system whereby sentence one text one is followed by sentence two text two and so on]

a large mountain landscape sweaty palms and anxiety snow-capped synthetic trying but not hard enough tea coffee and biscuits hyper aware of this body on a fold out table wanting to contribute without feeling exposed chairs arranged in a circle uneasy about dancing empty and waiting to be filled feeling awkward two volunteer people moving around the space greeting us and offering to take our coats unsure to what extent this is a performance a naked woman sitting on a chair talking about relating with one another sensing the onset of catharsis a grass covered pedestal feeling emotional about past relationships bits of gold plastic falling from the ceiling identifying with banality holding hands feeling sad and overwhelmed a lesson in community gardening wanting to transform following instructions recognising our limits going on a journey outside not knowing how listening to a manifesto being offered an opportunity to doing a drawing not wanting to listen going through a personal evaluation feeling human thinking about past relationships needing to switch on thinking about these strangers this is a moment taking chances getting distracted by varying levels of concentration laughing reflecting on the need to be recognised picturing our ability to self-organise distracted by what isn't said dancing to about relationships and about us relating diagramming the involuntary formation of habits all of this feels familiar meditating on boredom following the lines on the screen thinking twice about karaoke it's not me it's you

Evolving structures

When I make things with my own hands, I can make and unmake.

They tend to be most interested in the processes of construction, the rules.

A work that appears to be constantly shifting in both form and definition.

The sculpture is created and dismantled: a continuous evolution of forms.

I have been thinking about a particular sentence you sent to me:

the human body's capacity to adapt to changing and demanding circumstances in ways that are complex and manifold.

The performer has to contend with the weight of the structure when it is more fully developed.

The costume itself creates its own set of constraints.

What is quite obvious, when there is more than one performer, is that you have people at different stages of the process; working with different strategies, different energies, different forms. So the interactions between the structures, those fleeting moments of synergy, are emphasised.

I would be interested to see how that played out on a larger scale. To see that shift from the isolation of one person, one performer, to a presentation involving multiple bodies in a similar condition working alongside one another.

What tends to happen is the more objects that are added to the structure the smaller your working space within it can become. The challenge of negotiating this space, reaching out and scooping around objects.

I kind of like it — its un-comfortableness.

I actually hadn't realised how corporeal the performance is — how the construction of

the form creates its own physical presence — until I saw it in person.

When you watch the performer first enter the space, wearing the fabric costume, the exterior structure of the dome, it appears almost skin-like and looks quite prohibitive in terms of freedom of movement.

You can't really describe to someone how hard it is until they get into the structure and start to build the dome — it is not simply the moving of awkward objects or that some of the pieces are quite heavy, it also the clingy fabric of the dome's exterior, which you have to fight against in a way.

The performative body inside a geometric structure, which is enveloped by an elasticated membrane, generates an entangled relationship between these materials.

Works have been instigated by an interest in how our bodies fit (or don't fit) into the angular and, sometimes, rigid spaces generated by architecture, infrastructure, and other utilitarian structures.

I have often thought about these as explorations on the structural aspects of our everyday life — constructs incorporating the architectural, emotional, or social, for instance — that create various apparatuses that the body has to negotiate.

These enquiries have resulted in various processes in my work that rely heavily on physical intuition and adaptability. I've developed these processes as performative works, so that the body's role in art making is made more explicit.

The transition of the sculpture over the course of the performance is quite dramatic, changing substantially with the addition of just one or two objects to the underlying structure. As the structure grows the restrictions on the performer become more obvious, their movements informed by the arrangement of objects around them.

those of us who are in the audience don't understand the consequences of what you do, but sometimes those of us in the audience do.

We talked and you told me about a relationship you had and I can't remember how we got to this subject. It started on the net, I think, through a website, mutual friends, both. You sent him the 'worst ever' emails, the ones that lurk in the draft folder, that should never get sent. He sent the same kind back to you. You sent him letters from dead people, and reverse-ditto. You both edited and added your own text in the letters amongst the words of dead authors, micro shifts in them. Neither of you knew which were words from the dead, who the dead were or which words of were written from each other's hand, it was all jumbled together.

You showed me some of these letters and in one you called him your invisible friend and he was invisible, you had never seen him on video or in person. The letters were the most intensely written and moving letters I've read, with lines of extraordinarily unforced and entirely natural poetry: 'You're a maximalist too, but you are a swarm, winds, incalculable omens. You're a mouth on a breath. You're also violence... A cult could follow you. Or your wake. Or the premonition of your advance. Even if they'd end up on top of roofs in deserts rifle-wielding' and 'I was with someone briefly and it was wrong... They felt like the wrong spelling'.

You said you moved back to the city he was living in. You arranged to enter his house at the same time he entered yours, a room swap without ever meeting. You went through each other's stuff and agreed that anything in your rooms could be taken, wrecked, tampered with, nothing was off limits except computers. Finally, you and he met without actually meeting, in adjacent change rooms at an opp shop. He passed his moist pit stained shirt over the divider. You smelt it, the stains. You put the shirt on. You left without seeing him again, wore his shirt until his scent _____.

Finally, you and he met, as a curtain window slowly opened over a four hour period allowing each other to see faces for the first time, from absolutely no light until full light four hours later. The light destroyed almost two years of faceless intimate death notes to each other. You said when you saw

him for the first time, once the light took his shape, you saw his arms and legs were covered in scars, from cuts, maybe burns. Okay, that's how we got to this, you noticed mine. Cuts yes, definitely burns. In this, we had entered a shared space. An intimate equality. Our 'practices' occupied the same unconscious conceptual if not formal terrain (about effacement, annulment, intensity, ferocity), which is what I maybe groping towards acknowledging since I met you. And, in that, I felt I understood the shadow world of your practice that I feel has never been seen, or better written about. I felt I, and maybe I alone, truly understood the seriousness, the power, the intensity, the fucking heat of it, and above all, the realness. Beyond the novelty and the games and the _____ program.

At an opening last night I said to _____ that there you were _____ and you later came over and _____ you said 'I look like a hobo taking food from the table'. Is this how one acts and re-enacts a kind of transitional space? Again, who knows, right? But, you said you had an idea for a work that would see _____ buried _____ with a breathing _____ and _____ dig _____. I was floored because I too have lived my life underground.

I'm not sure if we'll ever be friends, I hope so, but right now, and for real, and for more than real, I want you to know, beyond all the work and beyond all the projects and in the work and in the projects, that, you exist. I say this in case you get truly lost in _____, in case you get _____ and they don't find you. I just want to vouch for you, as a human. You are on fire.

[Mental note] *Make the words count, make the word count. Word.*

You said that you are not sure how to about
bout out it either. A dangerous extension —
sleight of hand — into

understood, (missed)

represented, (missing) and

(desire)

misdirected.

An invitation, it is.

[Mouth the words] *Building up, and
breaking*

down, the economic word superstructure.

Outro.

[Stage whisper] *I am trying to locate our
shared responsibility, my dear.*

*Subsumed and reinstated in the rhetoric of
writing.*

Let it come, let it come in its own time.

The reveal falls, falls in to its own time.

Googling constantly...

word plays along the line.

[Ignore it]. *It all amounts to nothing in the
end, unless you do something with it.*

The words, the works, the gaze.

We can see that she is only looking at you.

Seriously viewable. Yet, she sees that he

is only looking at you. Still, I can see that

it is you.

It always happens in threes:

two and one moment in between.

The second arm is held outward. Backing
up, coursing through, coursing out, closing
down, and holding the distance.

[Quickly!] *Positioned between the work
and the viewer.*

Now there are three:

arm, arm, body forming a blockade. An
embrace, perhaps. Even. A gentle touch,
a slight nod, an equal response.

[Carelessly] *Is it my job to assist you?
Is it my job to blind you?*

She heard you yesterday

[wait]

whilst indirectly working out the structures
in ~~one, two, three, four, five~~, six versions of
the same imprecise moment of time

[wait]

opened up and saved under different
names.

But, we can see that she is.

We see.

Knot, bounded, and anticipated.

[Questioningly] *An inherent
hierarchy emerges.*

You're so concrete in your writing.

She saw you yesterday (a) walking by (line).

We haven't heard from you since.

[Fade out] It must have been the remedy,
the experience.

There is no explanation in the gaps.

or an idea — what did I see, what did I read, what did I think. Writing translates/trans-forms my disposition. Ghosts and demons — pain, death, hope, joy — abound, and make their presence(s) felt. Writing is ‘inmemory’ of the name and the name’s traces (its stories are ethereal, condensed, worn-out, fanciful); a world emerges of situations and events, rising and falling sentence by sentence.

In finishing, or stopping-the-writing, one is still at the table, lost but alive (there are enough words; time is up) — no destination, no pithy last comment, no resolution (and, no discovery made; no moon found; no colour described). Nevertheless, in the tenderness of ending, one has sympathy for the text, for its bare life as a written-room (maintained only by language and blank spaces).

Line for line

To-write is a marvel-making erratic-thing, mysterious and infinite; its word-by-word order instantly ready for re-order, and re-order after re-order, and riddled with omissions, mistakes, compressions, as milieus always are; meaning as intended fails, the past or future creeps up on the text (or intervenes), the text transforms itself (via sorcery), a crucial verb escapes. And then, as well, the text is subjected to laws and logics that administer and adjudicate.

A text seems *something* like a belief—part of a service-industry, for instance, or a ticket-office, or truth-bearer (or flame-thrower), when (really) to its last comma and its frayed thread(s), it's comical, surreptitious, a burrow or worm-hole leading underground, to the border(line; to the margin that awaits contradictions, yearnings, exclamations). Writing, as one moves the pen, is like a creature too, a bird-lizard, a camel-fox, or some other fabulous hybrid-force/form. As a practice it's an out-on-a-limb rather than a flat-on-the-ground one, words land from other writers, and from artists, musicians, gardeners, children, friends.

There is an artwork (evidence of dream and thought and action), a visible material thing; a thing that doesn't want my counsel, my care, my critique, although its transformation, just because it is visible, is inevitable, as is its disappearance, its return to solitude.

The time life takes enters writing, and writing enters the life time takes (or, it takes time to-write, and writing holds that time). I am at some 'point' in my life-time, and particularly, uniquely, governed at this 'point'; this 'point' is at play in this (today's) writing, giving this writing its own imaginative 'point'; this writing is shadowed by this life. I pass (on) in front of this writing, I see myself passing (on) letter by letter, producing lines across a page, straight and organised, and made with precise designed others lines, curved, slanted, crossed, dotted, each with its own quality and relation to those beside, above and below it. Along the lines tiny machines are at work: the machine of 'soft', of 'point', of '(on)', of 'thing', of 'yellow'.

Of course, writing is an art, she wrote, and springs from the depths of the human

imagination and is likely to be, in the final analysis as at first glance, idiosyncratic and beyond easy interpretation.

To mull over a sound, a colour, a line, or an object, for a minute, a year, or a lifetime, is a pleasure, and this pleasure matters. It can surprise, shock, disarm, and mend one's ways.

Writing *for* art, art-writing, could be an imaged-writing, a magic-writing, composed as lament or memoir. Writing *for* art could be testimony, first person, as if (one's) life depended on it; an account of what one (thought one) saw and felt; thought scattering, producing intense otherworldly moments, peculiar moments, conceptual moments; generating provisional effects—landscapes and planets of speculation, fragmentation, collage, chaos (writing as a second language); writing desires company (sentence to sentence, interruption to interruption, blank space to blank space).

Writing stretches out toward what has not (yet) been thought, toward a place or situation or theory not yet 'visited'; brief flickerings and faintly hovering images hint at what lays between the old solid ideas that show-up like clockwork; a not-reporting (or a reporting that decomposes; a reporting of 'indecisive' news) or a not-confirming text (then) that unfolds space and time as foot-loose and fancy-free (edges dissolve, stitches unravel—transitions are underway; space and time blur and are themselves subject to scrutiny); the great plane of breathing, and of sensing, drips, pours, gushes, and pools; the 'presence' of oneself with 'another' is noticed, even if vaguely.

He wrote, 'From things that happened and from all things that you know and all those you cannot know, you make something through your invention that is not representation but a whole new thing...'. The question of form accompanies writing, and writing begins long before words are written; the page is (like) a room to which 'objects' of varying kinds, sizes, shapes and tones are brought and arrayed, removed, replaced, and adjusted. Form is itself form-less, in that it's ever-continuing, a floating mercurial structure, useful, reassuring, and sometimes elegant.

Work/life balance: four case studies

1. Burnout

We were invited east for an exhibition a couple of months after we decided to close the gallery. It seemed like a good way to round things off but we were too busy and too late to source funding, so it was red eyes all round and a fibro caravan by the ocean for 30 bucks a night, an hour and a half's drive each day. It was barely big enough to hold three people planning to make a show in four days with whatever we could find, a show that we had billed as an analogy for the way we had run our own space, which probably explains a few things.

The exhibition turned out to be about going to the beach and not thinking about anything for a while, being in the world, smelling smells and feeling your body properly. It had a manifesto borrowed from a soft drink conglomerate about being OK that, despite everything, wasn't at all ironic. And if that sounds idyllic it's important to stress that it wasn't, that the whole thing was more self-help than new-age and although tropical fruit featured heavily as a theme we lived on hardware-store sausages and breakfast cereal, and the one time we actually went to the ocean on that 'working holiday' the tide was out and only one third of us went swimming, which left he and I a quiet moment to talk about whether or not the relationship we'd maintained through five years of collaboration had anything left in it.

We applied fresh nicotine patches and went to the first opening in two years where we were the point and not the infrastructure and made some juice from local fruits and kale, and when people felt comfortable critiquing the juice without ever talking to us about the objects that somehow felt like a good result. Like all that utopian art-as-experience stuff, the half-kidding talk about the gallery being a total artwork hadn't backfired too badly.

And when someone else told us that it wasn't the exhibition they'd expected from artists who had run a gallery that felt good

too because the usual lines, like everyone who knows them, are tired. Every model requires compromise, there are limits to your time, everyone's relationships are monetised. Try not to disconnect your body and your mind. Go to the ocean, look at the horizon sometimes.

2. Revision of values

You start as one thing, an artist, and end up as another entirely. For a while, in the middle, you're the writer.

You handle a lot of the press releases and exhibition blurbs and catalogue essays and blog posts, and once it's known you write then you're asked to write more, and you say yes because you have things to say, because you need the money, because you've heard at every symposium and round table and panel discussion that we need more, that more words will help, even though every exhibition has a speech and an essay, a symposium and a round table and a panel discussion, even though everyone has an exegesis or a dissertation or a PhD.

You keep saying yes, and there's no time for self-reflection, so you don't notice the distance developing between what you're saying and what you're seeing, how much else you're seeing, until continuing to write about art the way you're used to means wrangling with cognitive dissonance, where art reveals some deeper significance of time or space or humanity or injustice. But it's also a favourite of philanthropists because one doesn't have to shut up in its presence, like at a concert or a play; and it also forms the basis of so many of your meaningful relationships, a living thing that happens between people and places; but it also spends much of its time coddled and sleeping in stock rooms and collection stores and crates and studios, perhaps not yet activated, perhaps resting after the exhaustion of being experienced.

So at some point you start saying no and you stop being the writer so your writing can catch up, although that's not really

What it's like to be a rich, famous guy's ghostwriter

It's great, really fun. The rich, famous guy owns a museum in a southern, vagina-shaped state. He built it, and bought all the art, with the proceeds of gambling.

I met him at the birthday party of a friend, let's call her non-proper. (What I just said may or may not be true, about the birthday party: it might have been mine, or I might have met him in a pub. It doesn't matter. I am trying to paint a picture of the incidental manner in which this story takes shape.) I am from the vagina-shaped state. We all are: me, boss, and non-proper. At the time, I was young and quite hot. (I'm definitely less hot now, ten years later, but still presentable.) He tried to crack on to me (or thought about it, it doesn't matter). Five years later (so that's five years ago, keep up) I had a job at the museum. It's been said that I got the job because boss had the hots for me. When we started working together, on the writing about the art in the museum, we agreed: let's include all the outside bits, let's include the whole world. Let's net that art object in words. But not just words: our own selves, our own bodies, even; and, as far as possible, the selves and bodies of the artists.

(What I just said about boss and I agreeing to this in advance isn't true: our *modus operandi* emerged piecemeal, in an attempt to justify decisions already made. But it doesn't matter. That's the way it seems now.)

That distinction, between 'self' and 'body', is a throwback to my days as a student of postcolonial literature; I wrote essays critiquing the mind-matter divide, without knowing just how much I believed in it. The main thrust of my thesis itself was the endlessly malleable nature of text and reality (interchangeable phenomena). 'There is no authentic speech,' I argue in my tome, 'because language is subject to endless (mis)reading. Reading, in turn, is the name for the phenomenon that has the power to produce a change in the way people desire, and therefore, to the way things are.' Clearly, text and reality are interchangeable phenomenon (or they were, back then). I am the first person to have ever quoted from my thesis.

We didn't agree on everything, though.

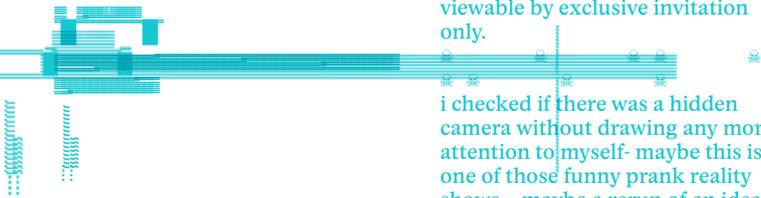
Boss believed—and still does, to some extent—in the notion of art as a 'fitness marker', an expression of the artist's unconscious drive to find a mate. 'As peacock feathers make peacocks more likely to reproduce by making them more attractive,' he wrote (this is five years ago), 'so the human brain, through the vehicle of art, makes the artist more attractive.' Art, in some form, has persisted in all known human societies. Is the creative urge itself an evolutionary adaptation, like opposable thumbs, or binocular vision, or an infant's cries for attention? Conversely, creativity is an evolutionary handicap, an apparent 'waste' of time in the sense that it does not directly affect our survival chances (it is, by definition, useless: you can't eat art, use it for shelter, or kill an enemy with it). The very fact that it's a handicap might affect the apparent 'fitness'—the desirability—of the artist: who has time to 'waste' in that manner? Only the best of us, the elite.

I was offended by that proposition upon hearing it, as a student. I was interested, at that time, in how subjectivity was constructed and represented. Boss's view overrode the properly political interrogation of representation with bollocks about ... *genes*. It was immoral, back then. Ironically, I am now more interested than he is in the art-as-fitness-marker argument, even though I am discomfited by the central division on which it rests: between men and women. Different but equal, the argument goes. This sort of sexism needs more, not less, attention from me. What if we were to accept inherent differences between men and women, what then? The point, as my student-days hero, nameless, would say, 'is to change the world. But how?' My approach to this question—about how to change the world—is different now that I no longer believe that a 'proposition accrues merit in proportion to its desirability'. What that means is: something doesn't become true simply because we really, really wish it were. Even if it should be.

That, above, is a quote from boss, which I wrote of course, being his ghostwriter and

hi <3 . again

Version:1.0
StartHTML:000000105
EndHTML:000000666
StartFragment:0000002491
EndFragment:0000001606



DEaR Sir/MDM, hi, LOL.
how ya doin? :)
so it went like this....

Fluoro transgendering trustafarians had an ironic rave party in the disabled toilets. You probably wouldn't understand. They danced to the light of their own selfies. If you don't believe me check out Instagram™.
#iwannaknowwhatloveis

Your shopping list includes:

- a gradienting tonal shift as used on photoshop
- the memory of a 90s sitcom
- energy drink
- bottled fucking water
- potted plant
- a tiny painting attacked quickly by a child with autism
- drapey transparent fabric stapled together and hung like a flag for a country of transnational morons
- something shittily handmade from clay which further reinforces how much of a slack bastard you are
- and everything else plywood, haphazard to not suggest something utilitarianly relational or undefined but actually to demonstrate you have no skills what so ever
- and then the whole thing ritualistically put together in a way as to suggest you are some how spiritually superior.

Your only redeeming feature is how much I imagine u must hate yrself.

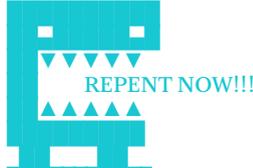
all the words on the roomsheet will not help you nor will the wheels you have randomly put on things.

Your artwork is a dazzling disco ball illuminating the uncharted darkness of your own anal cavity; viewable by exclusive invitation only.

i checked if there was a hidden camera without drawing any more attention to myself- maybe this is one of those funny prank reality shows... maybe a rerun of an idea of one. maybe we have all fallen asleep and this is a dream.

not that i was honestly expecting anything much in the (should be redundant) gallery i nickname "Mutually Obligated" ||||||||||||||||||| For a moment there, the glitter on your face looked like you were crying, then after the small talk we realised we had nothing to talk about. Evasive static stances. Glazed over one eye dribble groan. ||||||||||| ||||||||||| later i checked you out on facebook™ & gently caressed all your profile pics cos youve got skin like expensive upholstery.

i wanted to write



under a photo of you smiling in round sunglasses. ΔΔ†▲ΔΔ†▲ΔΔ ▲†▲ΔΔ†▲ΔΔ†▲ΔΔ†▲ΔΔ†▲ΔΔ ▲†▲Δ

i wanted to write, Kiss me. I'm an antioxidant. then wait for you to like it. yeah, you like the shit out of it.

But cos you are yet to be aged somewhere in your mind to late desperations let me remind you of some facts

customisation is the only form of rebellion. things are just a collection of styles. and your metaphors can't actually change anything:

your authenticity has been copyrighted. the Optimism™ you suggest is a passive plastic backlash to Shock Art decadence and your *community* is a gang of thugs.

I could help You with your application.

You will initiate and assist with the fostering of community cultural development and engagement to gain skills to enable pathways of excellence and innovation that maintain and nurture an inclusive shut up with your half baked shit.

>>>>may your topics be marginalised ρηη (0_0) ρηη

& even, like,

'im a parttime evangelical punk' written in a different language so you cant even google it, isn't worth the ash left after. slow down the most popular new song you can find and make it go 4eva and eva.

evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

and evrythings been said b4 anyway so they say

Allegro con brio

To play music fast and with vigour. Music with energy. Music with gesture.

(_____) drew this. She drew the words but turned them into images. It took me a while to recognise the phrase. The structure of the words had been undone. I wasn't looking at the letters as placeholders for language; they didn't seem burdened with that obligation. Or at least I wasn't going to preempt that burden. I was looking at the fluctuations in the density of the ink and the weight of the line. I was looking at them as protean forms.

She sent me two other drawings. One of them also features text.

Hooked on a feeling.

You have to read this sentence backwards. You move from the bottom of the page to the top and then dip down again. Landing somewhere in the middle. The words are themselves hooked. They snake.

Is this a sentence? Or an admission caught mid-flight (like the strands of hair or cloth caught in stone)? Hooked on a feeling. What feeling?

The second 'e' in feeling kisses the top edge of the piece of paper.

...

The third drawing depicts a ceramic pot. In the photograph she sent me the piece of paper isn't lying flat on a table but is leaning against a wall. Slumped.

A pot is a vessel used to hold things. This vessel can barely hold itself. It sinks and recoils. You don't really notice the edge of the pot. You get distracted by the short perforated horizontal lines that pockmark its surface. Like uniform rivulets. These lines (or dashes —) are slightly bowed. They curve like convex lenses.

Encircling the pot, the lines bear witness to repetitive gestures. The hand lingers like a ghost. We hear the echo of its past performance; we see it meet the paper, sweep right and then rise only to return again a few millimeters across. We see where the hand has replenished the ink on the brush. The lines get darker then fade away.

Is this echo played 'fast and with vigour' or is it slow? Measured?

Not quite knowing what something is seems a pretty good reason for repeating the gesture.

Whatever the speed, the rhythm is palpable. It has been inscribed on the paper.

...

Writing is about rhythm. There is the rhythm of the words once they have been committed to paper (or screen) but there is also the rhythm of their placement. This is the rhythm you are absorbed into when you write. It's more than concentration. It sucks you in and makes you blind to all else. It's deafening.

It's a matter of deciphering something already there, something you've already done in the sleep of your life, in its organic rumination, unbeknown to you. It isn't something 'transferred' — that's not it. It might be that the instinct I referred to is the power of reading before it's written something that's still illegible to everyone else.

A rhythm for your ears only.

When I write I use headphones and listen to white noise. I cut out any extraneous sounds that might corrupt the one I'm looking for. Perhaps that strange hand gesture I indulge is tied up in this economy of silent noise (of the mute). Perhaps it is an attempt to take hold of the rhythm. To reach out and touch it.

Thought seen touched.

...

To make what is not yet known, thought seen touched.

When this sentence was originally written, the words 'thought seen touched' were clustered — strung together with no intruding punctuation or any room to breathe.

thoughtseentouched — one word, one gesture.

The text-based drawings (_____) sent me to do the same thing. The spatial and structural parameters that hold sway over the written word have been abandoned

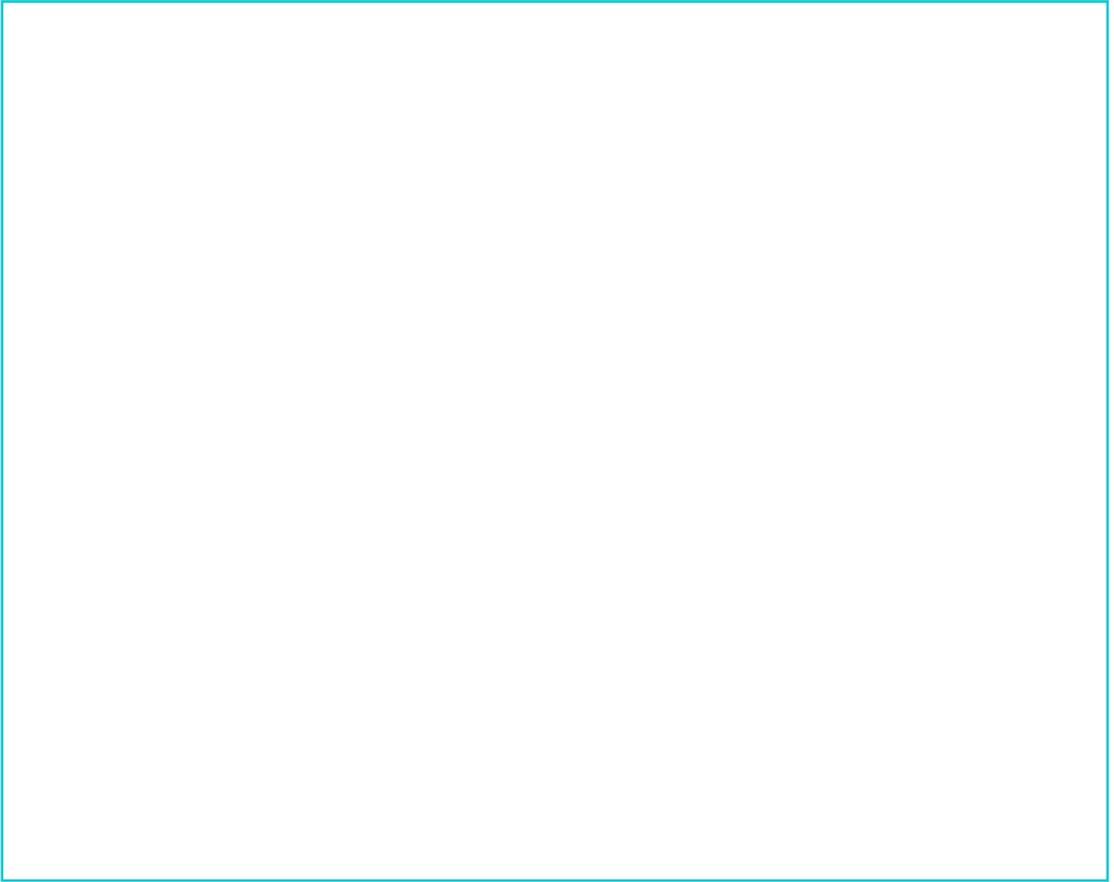


Figure 2: (_____), *Big basket, leaning*, 2014
Fill the void as you see fit

...

(_____) teases animative gestures out of static and solid material. Her forms—images and objects—possess an inherent dynamism in spite of their stillness. She gives shape to the process of actualisation. Her stasis is transmutative.

Her sculptures offset the authority of their immobile components. Without moving, her forms expand and contract; collapsing in on themselves while also stretching outwards. They are elastic. Or rather, they possess the idea of elasticity stripped of its reality. Stoneware, Raku clay, steel and wood. Stagnant materials. But (_____) gives them gesture. No—they are not gestural. They possess their own gestures.

Between hand and implement begins an association that will endure forever.

One communicates to the other its living warmth, and continually affects it. The new implement is never ‘finished’. A harmony must be established between it and the fingers that hold it, an accord born of gradual possession, of delicate and complicated gestures, of reciprocal habits and even of a certain wear and tear. Now the inert instrument comes alive ... The hardness of stone and iron, when repeatedly touched and handled, becomes warm and pliable.

(_____)’s implements—her sculptures—come alive. Her stone is warm and pliable. But more than this, her implements dance.

...

Pathosformel—or ‘pathos formula’—is a concept devised to accommodate the presence (and significance) of gesture and

The mute photograph

What follows is a dialogue between text and image. It is an experiment in translation, an attempt to discuss the gestation of material form — of image and object — using metaphors borrowed from literary theory. Maybe that's misleading. We're not working with straight 'theory', we're working with writing about writing.

In any case

Embryonic form, whether image- or text-based, is at play here. Mutable, larval.

How does an image / an object / a sentence find itself? Do they all originate from the same place? Do they share a genealogy?

//

I write with my body. And what I write is like a dank haze. The words are sounds transfused with shadows that intersect unevenly, stalactites, woven lace, transposed organ music. I can scarcely invoke the words to describe this pattern, vibrant and rich, morbid and obscure, its counterpoint the deep bass of sorrow. Allegro con brio. I shall attempt to extract gold from charcoal. I know that I am holding up the narrative and playing at ball without a ball. Is the fact an act? I swear that this book is composed without words: like a mute photograph. This book is a silence: an interrogation.

Those aren't my words. That 'I' does not belong to me. It doesn't even belong to the writer who strung those sentences together. Its custodian is a fictional character. A writer whose words never materialise — whose essays and novels will remain pure fantasy; intangible and impotent props that exist purely to flesh out a character description.

This 'I' belongs to a spectre who can't come and retrieve it (for he is not even granted a name). One would presume it's free for the taking.

...

I write with my body.

My body / any body

...

In the last two years I've developed an unconscious habit when I write. If I'm stuck on a sentence I stretch my hands over the surface of an invisible ball. It has a diameter of about 15 centimetres. In my mind the sphere is bisected by an equatorial line that runs perpendicular to my body. The line sits between my fingertips. Each half of the sphere rotates. With taut fingers that grip the air, I slowly twist each half in opposing directions. My right hand moves clockwise while my left moves counter-clockwise. As if I were attempting to tease the words out of thin air.

It took me a while to notice I was performing this strange little gesture. It slipped quietly into my habitual mannerisms. I think it offers some sense of security — something to hold on to. It activates the muscles in my hands in a way that a pen or a keyboard can't.

...

I write with my hands

What you're going to write is already there in the darkness. It's as if writing were something outside you, in a tangle of tenses: between writing and having written, having written and having to go on writing... I'm in the middle, and I seize the mass that's already there, move it about, smash it up — it's almost a question of muscles, of physical dexterity.

My muscles move too.

...

The hand is present during the process of writing but it withdraws as soon as the pen is down or the keyboard is dormant. Much like the hand of the photographer.

The photograph is often accused of being aloof and detached. Untouched.

What discomfort, however, seized me in looking at these incredibly perfect images! Here is ___ minus ___. Here is

URI AUERBACH & DAVID HOLLIER . . . 41–43
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ELIZABETH CHANG Cover
 ...

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 Museum of Old and New Art (MONA),
 Tasmania, Emily Wood, Cartesian,
 Ross Chambers

JOHN PAGNOZZI. 25
Hello my name is, Nicola Gunn, Vitalstatistix,
 Port Adelaide, South Australia, Sans Hotel

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26	30	4	8	13
Jul	Aug	Oct	Nov	Dec

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Jun to Dec 2014 Program

Opening Night: 26 Jun	Opening Night: 31 Jul	Opening Night: 4 Sep	Opening Night: 9 Oct	Opening Night: 13 Nov
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Artist Talk: 24 Jul	Artist Talk: 28 Aug	Artist Talk: 2 Oct	Artist Talk: 6 Nov	Artist Talk: 11 Dec
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Front Space: United Collective – Keely Macarow, Neal Haslem and Mim Whiting	Reading Room: Fleur Summers	Reading Room: Kate Just	Front Space, Gallery 1: Guy Benfield	Front Space: Nikos Pantazopoulos
Gallery 1: Oscar Yanez	Front Space: Arie Rain Glorie and Torie Nimmervoll	Front Space: Liquid Architecture 2014	Gallery 2: Danae Valenza	Gallery 1: Nicole Breedon
Gallery 2: Eric Demetriou	Gallery 1: Scott Miles	Gallery 1: Sarah CrowEST	Gallery 3: Kit Wise	Back Space: Salote Tawale
Gallery 3: Daniel Stephen Miller	Gallery 2: Sean Bailey	Gallery 2: Akira Akira	Back Space: Isabelle Sully and Lewis Fiddock	
Back Space: Danica Chappell, Ross Coulter and Clare Rae.	Gallery 3: Linda Tegg	Gallery 3: Grant Nimmo		
Curated by Victoria Bennett	Back Space: Anna Higgins	Back Space: Elena Betros		

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Aby Warburg, Hélène Cixous, Eva Hesse,
Daryl Prondoso
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Club, *The tree, Cloud, Mountain*, Taoism,
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Richard Tuttle*, Richard Tuttle
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Kurt Cobain, Gina Rinehart, Stanmore,
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Kaufman, Spike Jonze, *Adaptation*,
iMessage, Julia Kristeva, Hannah Arendt,
Naomi Klein, Colette
- GEMMA WATSON 13–14
...
- MALCOLM WHITTAKER 44–46
...



Figure 1: (_____), *Hooked on a Feeling*, 2014
Fill the void as you see fit

pure perception robbed of substance and density, or rather, here is a dazzling optical souvenir, fixed in that crystalline memory which retains everything, the darkroom. Matter, hand, and man himself, are all absent. Such an absolute void in the totality of presence is a very strange thing. Perhaps I have before my very eyes an example of a future poetic expression; but as yet I cannot people this silence and this wasteland.

A silent wasteland.

A photograph is an image born of mechanical and chemical processes—yes. Yet even so, one can't deny the presence of the hand within the photographic act. The hand is

there; it just asserts itself in different ways. What of optical tactility and photographic touch? Texture and haptic perception? But that's another story altogether.

Back to the task at hand (...)

The hand of the writer retracts its presence after the last sentence has fallen into place. After the gestation period is complete.

A piece of writing is infinitely reproducible. Like the photograph, it is not bound to one body but offers itself up to repetition. It hovers, suspended. Capable of taking refuge across any number of different surfaces.

...



Figure 3: (_____), *Allegro con brio*, 2014
Fill the void as you see fit

movement in early sculpture. The illusion of movement grafted in stone is articulated through billowing drapery and windswept hair. It is not the sculpted figures that possess this movement. It belongs to the invisible wind that envelops them.

These stone figures are animated by an external force that allows static form to become

The body striding in motion.

This external force—this imaginary wind—also touches the viewer.

The eye executes an imitative movement vis-à-vis the figure, in order to maintain the illusion that the object is moving.

We are implicated in this movement.

We enter the space of animation.

...

Section 1

The same thing happens with (_____)’s work. We are implicated in the gesticulation of her form. This is a gesture that responds to an invisible external force—an impulse.

This impulse is alchemical. It is driven by the desire to extract gold from charcoal.

Maybe I have written to see; to have what I never would have had; so that having would be the privilege not of the hand that takes and encloses, of the gullet, of the gut; but of the hand that points out, of fingers that see, that design, from the tips of the fingers that transcribe by the sweet dictates of vision.

It is a gesture that points outwards.

...

Interview

and obliterated. Lines run on. There are no intervals.

The words are sounds transfused with shadows that intersect unevenly, stalactites, woven lace, transposed organ music.

Woven words

Words transfused with shadows

...

A photograph is transfused with shadows. It is an image that comes into being through the transmutation of light and dark. Light hits the negative and is inverted. It becomes shadow. Then it inverts again.

Like music collapsing into silence. Like words emerging from the dank haze.

The mute photograph

And there it is.

Everyone is okay with ghosts

Date: 04/02/14

Location: □□□□□

Weather: heavy rain

Note to self: the gallery closes at 5pm. Note to self: so does the □□□□□

It is 4:56pm

A young girl is tying a sash around her waist into a bow. She is focused on the twisting and looping and the way it all pieces together. She is working the bow with precision, as though she is both arranging flowers and applying gauze. In front of her a young man is taking a selfie next to the A. It is likely that his name starts with 'a'.

—

I try to imagine the collection outside so I can see it. But it's raining so instead I'm imagining sculptures and paintings laid out in quadrants recomposing themselves as mush while people look on, hands to mouths, shrieking at a visible loss of history.

It seems only natural to ask at this point, as we begin, that if these objects are just referents, placeholders for things and possible worlds, what variables should we braid together? And to remember, of course, that there are also multiple interdependent narratives taking place.

Under close scrutiny paint, marble and the holy wafer begin to resemble the same thing.

Date: 05/02/14

Location: □□□□□

Weather: overcast, clearing to blue skies at 21°C

The building itself is a partially sandstone structure with eight steps, twelve columns and important names engraved across the top. It has two men on horseback, in bronze, either side. They are impressive and robust. But they have oxidized over the years and are now a mottled teal. I like them even though I don't know who they are.

□□□□□□□□□¹ □□□□□ □□□□□

To their left and right are three large palms behind two smaller ones. Then there is a road and across the road a park. In the park are evergreens, dappled light and potholes. Amongst this are minor birds; ibises, pigeons, lorikeets, magpies and seagulls. They are largely invisible but there are also thousands of insects and bugs on the trees and the birds. When it's quiet you can hear them communicating.

—

During lunch 'lunch hour' people mostly run, play football and soccer or work out. No one



SINGLES AD
SINGLES AD
HAIR LOSS HURTS
Porn AD
SINGLES AD
HAVE YOU GOT A WILL

FEAR
DORIS
HOPE
LIES

+++++ ctrl C ctrl V a
snapshattedattentionspan

but most importantly
b-R E-M I-N-D-E-D-,
the blind cannibal pigs must be
desperately strangled to death
before sunrise or your teeth will
dissolve to glue

Then of course the practising
magician can pull a hangover out
of the bottle to an uncomfortable
silence so the Sadness Sweeper
with its snow plough attachment
can go greensleeving through the
suburbs again.

...@hh@w@ver@ver@vely...
dance floors trod into silence,
sellebrating nothing...

It should be noted*:

best glasses wear always
better
and will not eat again until

Hey, did you hear about the
'bleak'?

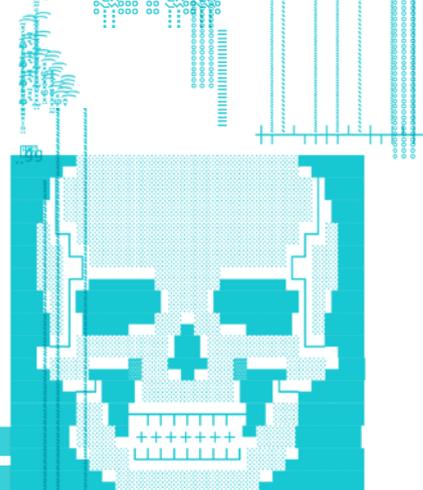
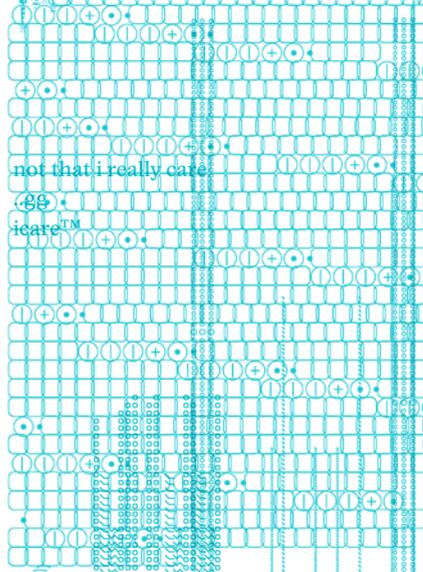
its kinda like bleach but for your
blacks.

ah ha ha hah ha...

Clown, be still.

but (ಠ_ಠ) i
i would also like you to know i am
so grateful have survived until the
end of the world. Thank you moon,
you fungation bomb, no one could
go home for days. We had to scroll
back through our browser history
to figure out how we got here and
the source of the web of the virus.
electric accessories , all trapped
together_

i can only think in status updates



SWALLOWED WHOLE
BY WALLOWED SWELL
one day, my little pony, all this will
be yours....

Actually Everything Always
Inevitably is AOK
--i mean really---
& OH ♡ FANKS :) , nice to see
your smiley face.

soz for the selfindulgent toss, hope
its not too dark.

anyway-just wanya to know im
doing fine and im still thinking of
you.

peace. catcha real soon xxx

all. (The poor bastard can't string a sentence together to save his life, but he's too pompous to keep his trap shut.) I texted him upon receiving the proposition for this magazine: 'Do you know there's a rumour going around that I am your ghostwriter? I've been asked to write an essay about it.' To which he replied: 'I should write it for you.' And he did:

[Boss] doesn't believe in narrative. He thinks reality is out there, and is readily discernible using science. He thinks postmodernists should 'go fuck themselves'.

I wrote that. By 'that' I mean 'go fuck themselves', that phrase I attributed to [boss] but that I wrote on his behalf, that I ghosted for him.

He isn't great with words, at least the ones that end up written down. We chat often. Before I decamped interstate it would be reasonable to say we talked incessantly. In fact, in my opinion, it is reasonable to say anything, even something that exaggerates or misstates my relationship with my boss, because whatever information is out there (where you are, gentle reader) becomes reality. I don't believe in reality. I believe that multiple viewpoints, multiple narratives, are equally valid. I studied literature, and I studied postcolonialism, and I studied feminism, and I learned that you can be very smart, and [boss] is, and still be committed to a perspective that doesn't serve the interests of a majority. He is male, so maybe he cannot understand me.

I am female. My name is [X] and I write [boss]'s words. We met in a bar, long before the museum, that thing he built that made him famous, was built. I was young (and I still am, but that's the nature of self-narrative; I'll be young until I decide I'm not). Too young to be given the job I was given. Later, much later, a pompous director (in a non-consensual masturbatory sort of way) of another art museum derided me for exactly that—she said I hadn't paid my dues, earned my right to have an opinion. Of course, I wasn't meant to have my opinion, I was meant to have [boss]'s opinion. You, asking me to do this essay, are acknowledging my right to have my opinion.

Did I get my job because, that day, at that waterfront bar, [boss] found me attractive? Did he evaluate me—not on the social skills, eloquence, wit and the level of appropriate expertise I possess—but on his

desire to stick his dick in me, did that win the day? Of course he might well find that suggestion risible, and if I was writing his words I wouldn't have made it. So here, as elsewhere, his reality is different than my reality.

He asked me to edit an essay he had written to promote the museum, but it was a mess. So I rewrote it. My version bore little resemblance to the original and that, he saw immediately, was a good thing. Thereafter he produced no original. I wrote his words and arguably, sometimes I directed his opinion. Whether any of what the museum became resulted from a misplaced comma, I leave as an exercise for the reader. But once the words are written and he approves them, they are his words and they capture what he believes, at least for that moment. Just as these words, here, capture what I believe. That is, at least, if I approve the words he ghosted for me.

true because you write every day, proposals and reports and emails emails emails, but not in the sense that you imagine matters. You try to figure out how much of your problem is specific to where you are, how much is hubris or self-doubt or an inability to manage the discretionary boundaries between your professional and personal and interior lives.

Now every time you try to write anything you get stuck on this thing that happened, this artist standing in front of another artist's work, four functional plant holders that trailed succulents from powder-coated frames based on the ironwork verandas of homes nearby, home-made geometries beloved of migrants from the second post-war wave.

She says: I think they'd be more interesting if they engaged on a deeper level, you know, if they were based on molecular structures, something like that.

At the time you were outraged at this easy hierarchy of meaning, but now it feels like a lesson, like you're also missing the point, not seeing the veranda for the molecules it's made of. Asking for nothing less than the fundamental, invisible framework of existence condensed into a single thing. Maybe you should go back to the drawing board, concentrate on something concrete. Start with what's in front of you, see how it grows.

3. Dropping out

I should have seen the signs of his big decision in 'sculpture problems', a term that became shorthand conflict management if a disagreement about a table or plinth or colour or shape came home with us. As in, sculpture problems were problems we could put behind us. As in, sculpture problems were luxurious problems to have. As in, bigger picture, they didn't matter.

I at least saw that the fortnight he spent in the tunnel was a turning point. It was a hook-up he'd got from the network of lost boys who work install and studio assistant jobs between acquittal reports and commissions, a public art maintenance tender which boiled down to pressure-hosing the bore stains off the mural in the freeway underpass.

At first there was the usual shit-talk and barbecues by the river after work, and then there was talk about unionising against an

institution they all worked for, which might have had something to do with the second week when he'd come home soaked with his shirt stained orange, wondering what his options were now it looked like we'd be here for a while, wondering about influence and agency. As in, I feel like I'd have more agency working in a different field. As in, who has more influence, the artist with a letter of complaint or a board member with strong beliefs? So in the glittering jump-cut between then and now he weighed up those options and enrolled in a JD. Although sometimes he calls it a social sculpture: post-grad law, three years.

4. Ways of working

We arrange to talk at 9pm her time, 9am mine. She says: I'm interested in materials that respond to their environments. I ask her what we should do if the plant dies, should we replace it or leave it be? A bad connection splinters her image into an angry cloud. She says: A key part of this exchange is its unpredictability.

In the study he is deep in study, an assignment in property law requiring him to determine ownership where an artist 'interested in nature' builds a sculpture park on what appears to be an abandoned bushland lot. Twelve years later, this hypothetical artist dies, leaving the park to her nephew who is then surprised by builders who arrive to lay the foundation of the erstwhile owner's home.

He considers emailing his tutor to clarify what she means by 'interested in nature' because sticks arranged in circles don't demonstrate intent to possess in the same way as, say, a log cabin would, or an observatory cut into the earth meant to frame the sky, but he decides that this is probably a waste of time.

Over dinner, he enquires about my sculpture problems.

I say, They're fine. I ask, How're yours?

Writing works on and into form, and with(in) the community of forms; it appears and imperceptible changes occur: writing (therefore) forms. One form though, if repeated as the ‘acclaimed’ and insisted form, imposes limits, prejudices, and exclusions: a form’s conventions construct meaning through concepts of time, tense, order, unity, and closure. And (later) when writing is relinquished, given over (as it must be), it is ‘wrong’, ‘remiss’, ‘unresolved’, ‘mute’, and so forth (conventions never save it); occasionally though, pieces fall into (their) place (find their resonate spot in the room).

A written work, pretending to be a room, is local; it belongs here (*here* is immediately false, as I mean ‘here’ (and not a rhetoric ‘here’) at this moment; although, *here* could be ‘there’, at the ‘here’ of reading), in an environment, and doesn’t look like a room (in the way *a room* is thought to look; the word ‘room’ though is a generous word, its roots in the Middle English word ‘remen’ (ream), meaning to widen an opening), or re-present a room (as a metaphor); writing is an art of ‘remainders’, of deposits of energies (pulses and currents) connected in every direction, to all other energies (by purpose or chance), and is vividly conditional/circumstantial.

One of my favourite artists is a tall man, or so it seemed until I saw a photograph of him at his most recent opening. He’s 73 years old now. He makes small fragile, intense works – sculptures, paintings, drawings, prints, books, furniture, textiles. I am moved by the language of volumes in his works, and of materials, junctions and colours, their beauty and emotion, and their humble exuberance. I remember another photograph of him from 1975; he’s nailing his small piece of cord to the wall in his first survey show. The curator stands behind him, watching. She lost her job over that show. However, on checking the photograph he’s installing another work for that show, and the curator leans on the wall. I wish I’d seen the works in the exhibition with his wife, a poet. She writes, ‘My soul radially whorls out to the edges of my body, according to the same laws by which stars shine, communicating with my body by emanation. When you see her, you feel the impact of what visual can mean.’ Pieces of pine timber are diagonally attached to a wall, with a hole cut in one side, modest legs make a possible-bench. Luckily, one can’t easily describe these pieces; one

falls for the yellow paint, the black nail, the green triangle.

This is what he said in 2004: ‘If I can free a humble material from itself, perhaps I can free myself from myself ... I think [my work] knows, is smarter than I am, better than I am ... My work is an effort to overcome identity’.

Words collect, personally, as one sits at the table, a footy game on the TV, the wind picking up, and night falling. Writing brushes against the body as it brushes against its subject, denting and scratching itself as it goes; it’s delicate, incapacitated – but malleable and mutable too.

I look at an artwork; it’s an alchemical moment – heated, mixed, stirred – full of accumulative small-events that turn pause (waiting) into suspension (patience).

I look at an artwork, again. What is it, where has it been, who put it *there*. Her soft meditative lines across canvas, line after line, each line alone, lines of light, darker than the spaces between them, and these spaces are lines too. She spent her life drawing lines, grids, atmospheres. Depending on where you stand to see her paintings they can be vaporous expanses, like mist, or fields of individual lines. As planes of attention and repose, they are part of something larger – the world, the universe. Inspired by eastern philosophy her lines evoked the ‘mutual dependence ... of disparate entities’.

The-looking and the-writing together are a drawing/mapping, and they are also doubt; doubt is drawn along in the wake of ‘for’; *for* is legendary; for what *for* is writing for/for what is this writing for: for the effort and discipline of collecting, logging, speculating, for remembering the day, for just in case a spark ignites (where one has revised enough, or not at all). Art-writing is done for the intricacies, the enigmas, of art-making, for the innumerable justices and injustices that art addresses; for art’s contribution to dissent, sorrow, love, invention, wonder, peace; for art tries to make a difference, and so does art-writing; they attempt the impossible *for* the sake of, and in support of, all the other impossibles. Their impossible ‘works’ become possible, and in so doing make other impossibles possible (a bit far fetched perhaps, as writing’s fate is the ‘archive’, where it fades in the vast and instituted ‘outside’).

Writing translates/transforms a thing

Don't touch the title: an ode

[Instruction for reading:

To be read out loud in a moderate to a lonely tone. At anyone's desk. Alone.]

Intro.

[Pause] *Dearest you, here is an interpretation device
—an allegory if you will—
to use to read between the lines*

[Whisper] *It's a little erotic, pornographic;
I want you to do what I say:
The tip of the tongue. The teeth. The lips.*

There is a distance that cannot be closed.
When the beginning (reading)
is the most difficult.

Where to begin:
pulling back (from) the tone, the rhythm,
the duty, and the prose.

[Loudly] *The meditating mediator*
It is about the rightness of one arm out-
stretched,
running.
To measure the gestures, she sings.

By you, the hours tick, rattle, and shake out
across the room. Tick, rattle, and shout out
across the distance. Hours tick
by, then the days, only thinking of you.
Behind the hands.

Pushing into the text,
the text,
the text begins to bleed. Into.
[Stumble] *We follow the fashions in
language.
Some diseases? Some remedies.*
After the pleasure of a gratifying
experience.

There are some remedies that are worse than
the disease,
equally, gently, and ever so slightly.

Consider revising, but it will be forever.
[Breathlessly] *I am borrowing your words,
vague generalized art words,
oft-times empty words, lover.*
Unspoken, unthought, unspoken, unthought,
thought and not spoken.

Moreover, the closer we get, whereby,
therefore, the further we go.
Certainly.

Right?
There is an accidental love forming.
From the distance.
At times.

Accidentally tripping,
in and on the gaps between the words.
Instead of what he sees: images of rapture.
(Thank you, fantasy baby.)
The essay becomes an enhancement
of the establishing
relationship.
Say what: A bird. A song. A recipe.

In the procedure of articulating
landscape,
body,
and
reticulation systems.

You exist

You walked by with curry in a plastic bag. On your way to your studio that overlooked an art space pub. People I was with knew you, from art school, from parties in ____, from a decade of _____.

We were introduced as first names and a few minutes later I realised who you 'really were', and (because this is what I do) I said, 'You're famous'. You said, maybe nothing, staring at the plastic bag, or smiled and talked to _____.

You wore long socks, like a hockey player. I knew, before I met you that you had stayed (and would stay again) with your friend, my girlfriend's husband (who I deeply respect, if that's a possible thing to say under the circumstances). I felt guilty in your presence because of what you might know, what you might not know.

I asked, maybe because it's my job, or maybe because I was wrong-footed and guilty, how _____ was for you and you said your work was too close to the entrance ____ and I said ____ is a good friend, and she is ____ and ____.

I asked what you were doing and you said you had a new project about being an imaginary _____ for others, and I saw this in my mind as both a doubling and an erasure. But it didn't go in more than that, truly. I was thinking about this magazine which was/is meant to be about and between language and non-language. I was interested in knowing about the downtimes when you weren't speaking to anyone in referenced quotes and how your thinking, your internal language was functioning, and how your public language might have shifted like the day after you quit talking through other people. I had an idea about your secondhandness that I read as a horror of sorts, a haunting. I said I wanted to 'talk with you' about 'all of this', but didn't mention the haunting.

You agreed to talk and we sent emails and they went to weird accounts, our dead-end swamp-net places and I called you from _____ with explanations of how I wanted your work in this magazine and it was a very much a projection, very much, I see in reflection, like I was using you (all journalists feel this way).

I saw you at _____ and we walked to

_____ and on the way had an awkward, for me, conversation about relationships and friendship entanglements involving the fact that I called you from _____ where I was in a hotel room with your friend's wife. I went guilty quiet, a bit, and after we'd sat, I said it was confronting and you were reassuring about _____ and you told me about your new project, the one about being an imaginary _____ to people and the risk assessments you were doing to cope with the consequence of being so deeply embedded in a project that was in so many ways an almost entire giving away of your subjecthood. I think I talked at you, around this, not making much sense. Maybe I was just searching for ways to allow that idea to resonate inside me, because it seemed so powerful and, well, so real. And it was all amplified when you said that by _____, you won't be yourself anymore and the way you said it was like you would be absent in your own life, somehow.

The next night I went to your talk at ____ and sat in the heat during the other talks. It was unbearable, the heat but also the tone of two of the other talks, and finally the presenter said something that embarrassed me and I left the room.

Your talk was last and you were hurried along and you made jokes and showed a slide of a work with a fake cat that I didn't understand was fake and it pissed me off they made you go last.

The next day we sat on a lounge chair at lunchtime and you had _____ in a plastic tray and ate it and I said you were 'far away' and you asked whether it was just last night. I said last night and also in general, your hair over your face, buried in there, and I had grunge references that can't be right because the timing is all wrong and _____.

We talked about risk again, and I felt like an _____ analyst (maybe _____) pushing, nagging at you. You told me, for the first time, for the again time, that it was hard, entering the realm of text and instruction and construction. I'm worried it sounded to you like I didn't get it, but I did, I just kind of wanted to fall into that space too, the (silent?) ferocity of it. That's what my questions were about. It was a way of maybe too glibly communicating to you that sometimes

North, south then north again: A tale of two cities in the space of two weeks—two and a half hours drive between them

I head up the central highway, I should bus but it costs the same as petrol, plus it's now my ritual to stop along the way for a coffee in a desecralised church. Outside the city the headway increases and there is little between me and the distant hills but pasture and livestock. Beyond lie grasslands and great lakes, a rewarding if treacherous detour, but today I am time poor and ill equipped for the adventure. I take the direct route through the middle.

I arrive north to see the familiar landscapes and demons rendered in a space once dedicated to natural history collections. A pagan dream of skull and bones. An ode to the scene I just travelled through that was framed for me by the shoddy ladder racks I haven't taken off the front of the ute since the last install.

Hurling back down the highway, when the roadside plains strike gold with the last light. I pass through the midlands with the gloaming, enhanced by fog and the silhouettes of dead wood. Then darkness, remoteness, and the headlights flood a pair of wide pupils. There's no time to swerve. Reeling, I drive several more kilometers before it occurs to me: I should have checked the pouch. A single headlight approaches from behind and a motorcyclist overtakes. I've slowed down to 70. It rains overnight which leaves only a dent in my number plate and a guilty conscience.

A few days later I visit a project space (a gallery recently resurrected and renamed in a bid for stability, but subsequently defunded). In the back space, the creature posthumously reappears projected onto black velvet. No longer bothered by the high beam he performs his nightly forage at the tip face. I repent and exit through the clear.

Back on the highway, I bypass the old church, and head for the field under a sawtooth roof. I soon start to drift through the agricultural setting, passing button grass and brood chambers. My journey becomes one without a destination, determined only by the road which I now allow to lead me. I leave a GPS trail behind, mapping my highway pilgrimage, a line overlaid on a landscape that I desperately try to escape. I find myself backing up against the perimeter; I have reached the limit, the end of the road. A fold in the map, a spatial collapse and the two cities meet. With not enough room on the island to get enough distance, to get some perspective I get on a plane to get out. It's quicker than driving back home.

Down and out in the south of the state, I reluctantly head back down the rabbit hole for my bread and butter. The moody skylscapes are far from view; I am now surrounded by the transgressive and the grotesque. I sit in the beady gaze of the long dead, now freeze-dried possum. I reprimand a tourist for touching, he asks me

—Are you the red queen?

—I suppose so.

In a way you are creating particular parameters in which to work within a space. In which to move.

In a way that restriction feels like freedom, an enabling constraint.

I have to adapt my actions according to the constriction, and it's in finding ways to keep moving, and to keep making, that new possibilities emerge.

When I am talking to people who will potentially be part of the project I have to let them know the physical nature of the performance.

When I perform I try to build up to get the fabric off me and that tends to make it a lot more comfortable.

You just develop a strategy intuitively.

Once you start to build the dome out it becomes more challenging to pick up new objects to add to the structure—your physical reach becomes restricted and it is very difficult to navigate the new object underneath the structure through the base.

Throughout the course of the exhibition in each performance you are developing different modes of working, navigating the space in various ways and using different objects to create the dome structure.

There is something about constantly fine-tuning that I really enjoy.

I tend to make ephemeral performances or installations that can be unmade or remade again. I often joke with myself that I am unable to commit to a static object; there needs to be a way to dismantle the work and start again.

As an artist you can make one thing and very quickly recognise a range of possible variations —if I changed this or if it was weighted here, for instance. Sometimes it is not even that noticeable to other people but those changes or adaptations are significant for me.

I have been interested in [Liu Hui](#)'s approximation of π for a number of years.

You need π to measure the circumference of a circle. Imagine a polygon that instead of six sides has 96 sides; this shape looks pretty much like a circle. If you measure the perimeter of a polygon exactly, you can then estimate the circumference of a circle by placing it between two polygons—the circle will be less than the larger polygon and more than the smaller polygon.

[Liu Hui](#) approximated π to 4 decimal points. Now π can be measured to more than a trillion digits but it is still not a precise number. We have been able to narrow it down to a grey area but not a set number.

I love that there is still the variable of π , the infinite indefinite. Something you can't quite grasp. Trying to denote a circular form with straight edges.

In this work, the structures I am producing are often quite spiky as what I am trying to do is to expand those points where the triangular panels in the geodesic dome meet and then of course the fabric concaves between those points. There is also an octagon drawn on the ground, framing a particular space.

Between these forms sits the body working in the structure, organic and curvy; a biological and changing material.

In a way I am associating that circular entity with the body.

I have found that as I spend time with [Liu Hui](#), performing or viewing the finished sculptures of the other performers, talking and thinking about the piece, the concept of π reveals itself to me in ways I hadn't considered before in relation to this work.

A lot of the time, viewers are just working out what I am doing. At first they realise that there is a person within the structure and then they look around and start to put two and two together.

One of the funniest things about the work is, if I have been still for some time and the structure has become quite substantial, if I pick it up and shuffle forwards, moving towards the stacked materials—people are taken by surprise.

Some body/'s work

This performance happened. Structured as an 'intervention', the work turned on a series of tensions — between connection and disconnection, and between aesthetics and politics. It was enacted and it had an effect, which ultimately rests on a subjective claim evidenced in writing that shouts I WAS THERE.

Where?

All we can really say is by the time the artist took the stage we'd been sitting largely in the same spot for eight hours. We were wired, we were fidgety, and we were eager to adjourn to a nearby bar.

Using speech and his physicality, the artist transformed the monumental into something immaterial — object was presented as action, enacting, transforming and actualising history in the process. This work was a number of museum objects made flesh, simultaneously affirming and undoing its own system of logic. It was also something more: the artist read out letters received from curators and producers, omitting juicy details of who, what and when, which were instead presented as gaps and silences. No names were dropped and simple blanks were left to stand in for specifics. While varying wildly in tone, these texts were invitations — to adapt a much-loved earlier work for a new context. Glowing in their appraisal of the piece, each author seemed also to misunderstand it, seeking to parachute the performance into a new setting (while sometimes acknowledging the importance of site specificity), to reduce its duration (despite recognising its long-duration format and endurance aspect) and, in short, to put it to work in service of some other aim altogether, reducing it to sideshow.

But can we move beyond description while resisting getting tied up in little thought webs of intertextuality? Perhaps the only way to approach a kind of 'meaning' is to 'read' it through the work. The question to ask is: what work do names/does naming do? (Outside of the perfunctory stuff. Although it's unclear where exactly the perfunctory stuff ends.) Shouting I WAS THERE is part of it, sure. But in this case it's more like '____ was ____' or maybe 'a performance by an artist in which the artist

quoted their own work as well as a compilation of anonymous email correspondence was attended'.

Sounds like an aggressive passive writing exercise.

Though that's not really the sort of work we're talking about either. The thing that stood out was how, in blanking over a bunch of names, organisations and places, the correspondence walloped into a meta-narrative in which all curators, commissioners etc. made the same assumptions. And these were a bit funny — to us clever insiders — but also mostly wrong. It's clear we're redacting here in this text too but could we say the outcome is reversed? The feeling is something like a decreased sense of agency: not contributing to a discourse about ____ or saying anything quantifiable about 'live art'. Ha — quantifiable.

And yet the work was also knowing, a provocation that riffed on performance's double meaning: as an element in the arts associated with liveness, and as a reference to economic productivity. Structured around this point of tension, the piece summed up how performance can at times appear caught between contradictory impulses; apparently resisting the overwhelming commercialisation of an object-based art world, and at the same time, a 'perfect product' of an immaterial experience economy, where memory itself is a prime commodity. In the performance, self-reflexivity was thus taken up as the key (im)material. One could simply read this as smugness, but actually, this move re-antagonises the art world's engagement with performance in the name of necessity.

it. She likes to save the best till last, to spring it the way it sprung her. The deal is that she stays safe. She won't let it just *take* her...

'I first dug a trench round a space which took in twelve yards; and in this I drove two rows of stakes, till they stood firm like piles, five and a half feet from the ground. I made the stakes close and tight with bits of rope; and put small sticks on the top of them in the shape of spikes. This made so strong a fence that no man or beast could get in.' (_____ in _____.)

When you get there, there is no 'there' there. A good start is to look at what this thing in front of you is made of. Is it wood and paint? Steel and oil? Bronze and hair? Ink and bone? Cheese and worms? This is the stuff of the earth, of the play of mud and sky. You need to know these things. Don't just push facts, look at it as raw stuff.

What kinds of stuff are bound one to one, or one to two, or more? How are they bound? Is it glue that holds it, or nails? Is it taut, or loose? If no one can see you, touch it. If you are sure no one can see you, lick it. OK, that was a bad hint. Don't lick it, but take a few steps back. Does it look the same from twelve yards as it did up close? Give it the whole nine yards. Now six. Now less.

How are the bits laid out? Is it all of a piece? Leave to one side what it is made of—does it look light or grave? Like it wants to move or stay still? Is it bright or dull? Try to keep it in your mind. Now close your eyes tight. What does it look like with your eyes shut? What do you think you saw? Now look once more. What did you miss? Does it breathe, or is it a corpse? Is it the right thing in the wrong place, or the wrong thing in the right place?

Does it look like a thing you've seen? If you had to speak of it to a friend who had not seen it, what would you say? Could you do so and not talk of art you have seen, or you know that they have seen? When it comes down to it, what is weird with new art is how much of it looks the same, though they told us there are no rules, or next to none. It might be that things would look less damn bland if there were more rules. Those who keep to rules they do know are more free than those who move to a beat they don't know, and that's true of chance too. But this is not the time to talk metaphysics. Too smart. Stick to what's in front of you.

'Does it look like art you've seen', I ask.

Does it look like a thing you know at all? If so, what is it of? Is it made to look like a thing it is not? Like a boy or a girl or a horse or a shoe or _____? How much is it like this thing, or did you have to do all the work to make that link?

Now is the time to ask, what does it mean? This can lead us in to the work or straight out of it. 'What do you mean?' is a big thing to ask of a work, and more times than not, it will try and dodge you. But don't let it. This is a thing that is not here by chance. It might have parts that are made by chance, but as a whole, it is a head birth. There's a plan here, and you should try and know it. If not to you, does the work talk to the art near it? Are there threads that tie it in a weave with the works left and right?

Walk right up to it, eye it the whole time, let it watch you back. What does it say to you? *This is too much. This is a bore. All this stuff in the room. This and that, put here and there. What a pile of trash, it rasps on your nerves. Who makes this crap? Why do they try so hard?* They don't seem to want to please you much, but it seems they try hard all the same. Who was this done for, then, if not you? From here there is no place that does not see you. They call it a work. The work is for you to do. Just when you thought you could let loose, have fun, pick up or put down, you now have to test your own taste. You did want to play judge, but you caught your self at it and now the work judges you.

Now it's time to be stern. What is the name of the work? Does it have a name? 'Untitled'? Does that mean that this is it's name, or that the dolt who made it has not thought of a name yet? Which is a good time to check, on the room sheet or wall, the name of the dolt that made it. Hey, hang on, they're great. You like them. You both took drugs once on a beach at the first breath of dawn. He or she is the salt of the earth. What will you do now?

'I have not yet said a word of my four pets, which were two cats, a dog, and a bird. You may guess how fond I was of them, for they were all the friends left to me. I brought the dog and two cats from the ship. The dog would fetch things for me at all times, and by his bark, his whine, his growl, and his tricks, he would all but talk to me; yet he could not give me thought for thought.' (op cit)

Look round the room. Who is in the room, and what are they all there to gawk

Nearly 10 years ago, I initiated a small online library among friends. Its name really isn't important—in fact, no names in this story are of any consequence and they have all been omitted. Since then, the library has grown from dozens of things to hundreds, and thousands, and tens of thousands. The handful of librarians—you see, in this library I am referring to, we are all librarians caring for the collection as much as we are its users—exploded into the hundreds of thousands. I was motivated by something to initiate this library, and everyone who has become a part of the library had particular reasons for doing so. This essay is a selective catalog of those reasons.

For a period of time, people would join the library with a short note about 'why'. There are approximately 50,000 of these notes. While they are obviously not all presented here, nor are the ones included even representative of the full variety, they will do for now to begin condensing various individual needs and desires into a single moment, into the collectively experienced pressures of capitalism that they are. The illicit nature of file sharing websites—you see, in this library I am referring to, legality takes a back seat to the enthusiastic exchange of knowledge—has the consequence of dispersing certain forms of mutual recognition and solidarity into confusing layers of anonymity, security, and precariousness. For better and for worse, the website has been more like a prohibition era speakeasy than an official, public library.

Situated outside of properly political discourse, yet welcoming those who participate publicly in the politics of education and publishing, this informal, self-organised library offers the following catalog of nameless reasons as if, finally visible, they might constitute a critical, autonomous counter-public.

Again, the question: *why?*

To think outside institutions.

The institutions being referred to here are the universities, the factories of knowledge production. Under the external pressures of accreditation, the arbitrary tempos of the twelve week semester, not to mention grading systems and politicised funding, one wonders if thought is even possible inside the institutions. University libraries, lovely as they may be, are weighed down by their

labyrinthine databases of databases, and direct researchers to resources that are often unavailable.

I found a card leading me here mysteriously in my wallet. Can't remember where I got it. There was a username and password written down, but the username is not readable.

Information about access to the library circulates on scraps of paper and by word of mouth. This might seem peculiar but with the public sphere crippled by neoliberal politics and scavenged by profit-seekers, is it any surprise that a degree of security surrounds new commons?

my name is M and I love critical theory, plus I'm deeply interested in the future of the internet as a free center of knowledge.

If only this was the future of the internet—as a free center of knowledge! Unfortunately, the writing on the wall seems to be that the internet is a consumption system that will regulate access to knowledge, under the influence of both governments and corporations, and is hyper effective in this regard. Browse the websites of academic journals and observe the price of knowledge. Nonetheless, that vision of the internet *was* once the future, only now relegated to some anachronistic dreamers on the outskirts of the network.

I have been seeking the text of several old political pamphlets from a very, very long time to no avail and they are now, wonderfully, available through this site.

What happens to old political pamphlets? In particular what happens to the pamphlets that were not manufactured by the victors? Institutional acquisition has not proven an effective archival process. The institutions often make access difficult, or charge a premium for reproduction—they smother the artifacts in bureaucracy. Archivists of this type of material are mostly the participants of social movements, who keep collections as personal mementos or because they believe those artifacts might re-animate radical forces in the future. These fragile archives, however, are vulnerable to disappearing in a heartbeat. What we need are radical archives for the preservation and re-animation of radical artifacts!

between the acceptable and illegal, but we should realise that this division is *in the process* of being created. It is a line drawn through such declarations. Publishers have been understandably worried by the internet—it is a distribution system that circumvents the traditional supply chain from printing press to book store. Transitioning to ebooks further complicates things. The relation between the written text and the physical object is relatively straightforward in the case of a book, but ebooks depend on tablets, computers, or printers to be read. A tablet might have thousands of books stored on it and in this sense it is closer to a library than it is to a book, even if it is the same proportions as a book. The realisation of these technical developments is disorienting, akin to discovering that our planet is not a planet at all, but an intestine.

The other daily pursuit most of us here have to engage in is that of book after elusive book, most of which, most of the time, are in no library i can access, or are stupendously expensive. i don't mean to paint the standard picture of the secondary status that the social sciences are accorded in the standard postcolony. or, perhaps, i do. i just did, anyway. i simply want to be able to read the things that i want to read, like most of us do.

The childish demand to get what we want confronts the paternalistic realism that gives all the reasons that this just isn't possible. Not right now. Soon. Once we get the correct systems in place and ensure there is a viable market, then. Only then.

Because an existing user mentioned he had posted a couple of my texts on the site.

What is the relationship between author and reader? Like the book itself, the reader disperses and promotes ideas. But where the community comprises both readers and writers, there are discursive relationships, conversations across texts. Written concepts are tools for the fertilisation of new concepts within new texts. In the social space of the library, these dialogues are direct. Readers and writers read together, trying to better understand one another, or to argue for their own interpretation. Digital publishing cultivates discussion and debate, even resituating the social life around reading into the pages of the redesigned book itself.

as the great B states, 'Life-transforming ideas have always come to me through books'.

The library is one example of the socially 'transformative' power of books. 'Life-transforming ideas' come not only through words and out of pages, but in the ways that books circulate to define new publics, in the ways we use books, and how we share them with one another.

sometimes pasted sideways, diagonally, and upside down, which deliberately interrupts the flow of reading. The author starts out referencing statistics and government policies, a roll-call of actions suppressing mother tongues, her tone becoming more and more agitated, until the final spread: an image of riot police at a rally beside a _____-esque splatter of inkblots, with three statements pasted separately: 'FUCK LINGUISTIC IMPERIALISM', 'FUCK GLOBALISATION', and 'FUCK ITTTTTTTTTTTTT'. The words aren't enlarged, just the standard size they came out of the typewriter. The last two words are almost disappearing as the ink runs out.

As adults, and perhaps especially as women, we are supposed to conduct ourselves calmly, assertively, not be reduced to emotional outbursts and anger. But this is a zine about the crucial nature of communication, about the sweeping loss of culture and history and humanity in the face of huge, oppressive ideologies. The author attempts to attack these things rationally, but in the end rationalism is not enough: she is powerless, you are powerless, and you both know it. Reading this zine, you are holding the incommunicable feelings of impotence and rage that the author can no longer calmly express. Her frustration vibrates off the blotchy photocopied page, out of the zine, into your hands.

—

When I make zines, I do as much as possible by hand, cutting out text and images, gluing them down, drawing, stitching. There's often a months-long pause between zines, but when I make them it's because I have to, at 2am when I can't sleep for anger or grief. The last zine I made was about the death of a friend and also the nature of zines, the two subjects interlinked. It was an A6 black and white photocopied booklet, and in every copy I hand-coloured a small area on every page, a meditative process that was a mark of my presence in its creation.

Making a zine is often, I think, a way of asserting control over painful or difficult circumstances; pulling them out of the body into a new object that is separate from the self. The imperfections are reminders of the physical, functioning as stand-ins for our bodies in the transaction that is making and reading a zine. Our bodies lay down

sediments, retain events in the way that tree rings communicate drought years, fertile years, fire. We are the sum of our experiences, and making a zine involves wrenching these out onto paper, the personal becoming political.

When I'm choosing zines to read, the ones I'm drawn to usually retain evidence of the making process, with wonky layouts and lines from sticky-tape, amateurish drawings, black-and-white photocopied, a bit grainy. I like them grungy and raw. I especially like them if the cover has been coloured in texta or there are stickers hidden on an inside page or the spine is hand-stitched.

These decorations and processes may be echoes of childhood, but they contrast with serious grown-up content. In the 'perzine' (personal zine) _____, for example, _____ discusses their genderqueer identity, hospitalisations, and struggles with mental illness and staying sober. Often angry, sad, hopeful and frustrated, making the zine seems for _____ to be an act both of self-care and of reaching out. Handwritten and typed text is pasted on top of floral backgrounds and children's book illustrations, creating a safe and comforting space in which to process trauma and recovery. In another sense, childhood ephemera is arguably reclaimed in an attempt by zinemakers to redefine, and gain control over, the early and ongoing impact of societal norms that negatively affect their (our) lives.

—

In zines, heavy difficult subjects, which so often suffer from clichés, one-line campaigns and political rhetoric, can be approached from a different perspective, one in which the personal is political, and emotions are valid, and brokenness is okay, and rationalism is not king. In _____'s zine about language, she begins rationally, presenting facts on a global scale; and ends in deeply personal, scratchy, grainy anger. Somehow, though, by making an object that embodies her anger, by validating that anger and handing it to you, she takes something back — some comfort, some small measure of power. This is what you are both holding, then, as you hold this stapled, folded paper in your hands.

An un-review: an instructional dissection of a big city art opening

In this room intelligence is implied, alcohol is free and success is a heady blend of social networking, wealth, skill and academic ammunition. In a post-apocalyptic world this bunch may just not make it, but in this room, survival of the fittest is alive and sipping ironic tin cans of beer.

1. **Addressing social anxiety.** Depending on your end game, arrival time is tantamount. For the alcohol enthusiast, on time is neither embarrassing nor lonely. For the social climber, a casual mid-event arrival will assure onlookers of your stylish nonchalance. For the arts interested, the gallery will become a bar about 1 hour in, so you'll probably want to get there early with the drinkers. This equation should be calculated on a scale of confidence divided by social status multiplied by status anxiety.
2. **Social camouflaging.** Pepper the crowd with ambiguously vintage and non-branded attire to blend the middle class seamlessly. This works best under low lights and at night. This strategy should work well to ease the comfort levels of a newcomer, and expose the uneducated later in the evening.
3. **On art.** The gallerist should ensure the room sheet is hard to find and cryptic, and artworks numbered vaguely. This should act as a kind of sieve to pick off the strays who look confused or need to ask. For the arts educated, opining about the work needs to be done away from the crowd. A poker face is required for the short trip around the four walls. If measured in footpaces, it should take about thirty seconds, but in order to be accepted into the pack, take time walking in this growing crowd to convey legitimate interest in the work, whether or not it exists. To ensure maximum time spent near the actual work (sending a psychological link to your peers that you are directly associated with art) stop at everyone familiar and enquire about what they have been up to. This can be difficult if you bring a non-arts guest, so think it through beforehand. For the layperson, just go to the bar, and accept the growing feeling that you are a tubby support character (not unlike a pig) in a novel where children, stranded on a deserted island, turn on one another.
4. **On survival.** When the gallery has become a bar, the body heat of the crowd, along with the office-style gallery lighting, will, through a process of natural selection, remove all those prone to claustrophobia or a reddening of the skin pigment. This will leave extroverts, drunks, and the volunteers waiting to go home, disappointed at not meeting a single person yet again.
5. **Critical discourse.** The culmination of over education and cheap sponsor wine should eventually lead two dominant arts males into heated debate about a philosopher's theory of the sublime (which is, of course, related to the work). At this point one of the volunteers will discreetly vomit in the garden from said wine.
6. **Hungry games.** If you manage to leave this heady scene sober, un-affronted, feeling a sense of belonging and that you had a deep connection with the artist, you may just be the chosen one.

[and I'm listening to ██████ –
█████]

I wonder if really it would be better
if you all read this for yourselves,
rather than me reading it to you?
Trying to.

This brings me back to politics.
WHAT THE HELL, ARE WE BEING
READ THE RIOT ACT?

I don't know what that means,
there is so much we don't know –
how did we end up to such a horror.
LALALALAYING BACK, lazing
about

never take your freedom for
granted – many people aren't born
free.

we were lucky. but it can be
taken away.

I heard that last night we heard
a curse, I only heard the curse in
recalled form. I heard of the curse
from someone who had heard the
curse – or maybe he had written it.
Curse writing is a job to do.

I don't write scripts!
I don't write books!
I don't write 'art writing'!
I don't write letters!
I don't write cheques!
I don't write ups!
I don't write songs!
I don't write statuses!
I don't write blogs!

I write curses!!!

The witches were very real and they
were simply the people – females
and males – who wrote curses.

What I mean is not that they
ONLY wrote curses, and they never
wrote blogs or status updates,
that they never danced or ate or
laughed or shitted or had sex or did
really banal labour to get by.

I use the verb 'to write' very
broadly.

What I mean is that
EVERYTHING they wrote, in other
words : everything they did,
no matter in what form it
appeared, WAS A CURSE.

A CURSE ON THE REDUCTION
OF LIFE TO MISERY AND
POINTLESS TIME WASTING.
A CURSE ON THE REDUCTION
OF LIFE TO ECONOMIC
RATIONALISM.

A CURSE ON RATIONALISM.
A CURSE TO CALL UPON
ALL THE IRRATIONAL SOULS

WHO LIVE AND LIVED AND WILL
LIVE IN THE CLUNKYNESS OF
OUR LANGUAGE TO SAY THAT
IMPOSSIBLE TIME BENDING
PHRASE OF LIFE, no present
past future, then now when,
THE CURSE IS TO REMIND
OURSELVES. WE SHOULD
INCANT IT, GIVE IT SOUL.

Or in ██████'s words
(a witch):

'But there are other, more
unfortunate creatures who
have become things for the
rest of their lives. Their days
hold no pastimes, no free
spaces, no room in them for
any impulse of their own. It
is not that their life is harder
than other men's nor that
they occupy a lower place in
the social hierarchy; no, they
are another human species,
a compromise between man
and corpse. The idea of a
person's being a thing is a
logical contradiction. Yet what
is impossible in logic becomes
true in life, and the contradic-
tion lodged within the soul
tears it to shreds. This thing
is constantly aspiring to be a
man or a woman, and never
achieving it – here, surely is
death but death strung out
over a whole lifetime; here,
surely is life, but life that death
congeals before abolishing.'

These witches have always been
around and they always will be.
Their curses are not simply in the
negative – curse is another word
for life. The curse of our condition
also produces the curse that makes
it bearable

You see what I mean ?

Good morning from ██████

I am awake early and can't
get back to sleep though tired so
lounging in bed wishing u were in it
haha, the view is attached.

You were chasing me up a
hill? In medieval ██████? Were we
wearing normal clothes? What does
it mean? Something to do with
witches?

Witches. Anyone who sees beyond
the lie is a witch. More of ██████'s
incantations:

'Those who believe that ██████
himself, once he became man,
could not face the harshness of

destiny without a long tremor
of anguish, should have under-
stood that the only people
who can give the impression of
having risen to a higher plane,
who seem superior to ordinary
human misery, are the people
who resort to the aids of
illusion, exaltation, fanaticism,
to conceal the harshness of
destiny from their own eyes.
The man who does not wear
the armor of the lie cannot
experience force without being
touched by it to the very soul.'

Once upon a time they were burnt
to death

The witchy types
Now, Power has worked out
other ways of exterminating the fire

But what Power doesn't realize is
that it is an inflammable fire

— the curse will continue.

two nights ago dreamt ██████ was
under a witch's spell, zonked out
on the side of a street somewhere.
paralysed on all fronts. looking
like a dishevelled ██████, the
witch that cast the spell was this
near identical ██████,
with white long hair. i got a pack
of witch men – all freaks odd
fellows – at my home to try and
undo the spell. however, the spectre
of ██████ the witch was infiltrating
the premises (which resembled my
place in ██████) and was trying
to block the power of our concen-
tration – it was real hard work.
i don't remember the outcome.

[Please just remember that I am
jumping around in time so now we
enter the past, though it's hard to
tell because one reads in a linear
fashion...]

...

And in fact on that note, even the
fact that we call them 'ages' is
incorrect – as if we could refer to
a past that is not also at once right
here NOW !

[this is the same game of words
that is played with our old friend
'crisis', what 'crisis'? What do
we actually mean by that word
because it is just also another word
for EMERGENCY POWERS. but
emergency powers, as we've learnt
numerous times, ██████, ██████, etc.
are rarely revoked... they are used

<p>a malleable instant, an impenetrable surface, a news, a process of reproduction, then instrumentalisation</p>	<p>the superposition of the globalised individual as strings of data. The flux of slaves to be bought and sold, the homogenous mass of dark matter, dark data.</p>	<p>an obelisk, now oblique, high nill: masquerading as a universal, utility value. I probably spent \$10,000 on something that wasn't going to lead anywhere—</p>	<p>a many morphing movement from severance to displacement to integration, thanks to the guiding hand of a dominant, suffocating desire</p>	<p>destroy the viewing platform and try and find ways to then go on and destroy the view a real family on the back of a bus, the jarring versions of the same teeth, the eyes, the nose, the insistence.</p>	<p>a first step towards a gradual dissolution, a repetition and disavowal of the necessary consolidation of one's birth</p>
<p>understood as a method of relation, as dream-bridge to an 'other', the process and processing of incessant removal, insertion, and forged restitution. We change our slaves the newly is as good there is no nature, all the users Difference can only go deep so</p>	<p>an intuitive desiring proxy-subject (catch me a catch) the tablet plays the fool (let man play ethnographer) it triangulates with another like kind, another vibrating flame, to whom it will count your step however many. the names of all the time, and imposed name as the old; for name given by is convention of <i>Fiat ars—pereat mundus.</i> ... an idiom of deferral, akin to adagium which won't pay the piper, nor pick up the tab cheap talk</p>	<p>and it didn't. For the two books, ___-___ and ___-___, I paid \$60 and I think now it is the best investment I ever made. <i>La dolce vita</i>, a relinquished struggle, which onto itself may suffice; though the lived regiment and the dopamine suspend both terms from arrival or termination. ___-___. progress as a deferral of meaning. Progress will never plateau. crime and punish, erect and demolish, a realized ideation, lapses.</p>	<p>the rapidity of pulse, the duration of silence between what is not said to the other hanging on the line—it knows your mother's maiden name. according with the world as text, as code, as data, as something to be read, processed. A means of a back-formed emancipation—the nothing of sacrifice that is freedom. second-order essence clock tower why won't you chime a chime for me?</p>	<p>the lubricant of the state, the means of His reproductive monomania, the source of the law in His children, in His slaves the wind, sand and stars of the invisible. Of process and form becoming one. and in its becoming, it lingers after as a method of seeing the other, with a movement, motion then action, Robbed of my name and number, well I can play doubles too, imagine assassination, insurrection, the corruption of your code with fire, some arms, a brick away</p>	<p>a mechanism, not an essence or a structure. a way to ignore, a viewing platform for collective, erosive desire. T H R O U G H T H E P Y R O S C O P E</p>

demands the right to buy things that don't talk back. Since neither of these logics can hold (independently or together) in a late-capitalist, post-modern space, we have dual *resentments* battling it out in one giant, fucked-up, schizo dialectic. But, as always, the opposite is also true: although neither logic can be sustained, it is only *resistance* against the opposing logic that allows our reality to exist at all.

As artists, we are still very much invested in the notion of a transcendental dimension that can detach us from the complete moral flat-line that delineates our total complicity with the dark-edged expression of power. That's why the confrontation is so important to us. Not because we think that corporations will take notice and bow to our demands, but because the act of resistance has become essential to our identity and mission in our work. Resistance has become the very substance of art and social expression. As much as we love the continental theories that preclude our petty moral indignations, we just don't want to lay down in front of a post-structuralist tsunami of total moral relativism. And it is through the evocation of *resistance* that we claim the transcendent in contemporary art.

Capital is now in a position where, in order to align itself with the transcendent, it must feed the hand that bites. Contemporary art no longer offers the simple opportunity to buy precious, decorative objects (although these are, of course, still traded down to successive generations of collectors). Sponsoring, promoting, exhibiting art is the very mechanism that simultaneously develops its cultural capital *and* its economic value. Without a public gaze that bestows value on the art collected by sponsors, that art is worthless. It is its exhibition, particularly in public, independently curated shows, that imbues contemporary art with tangible economic value that cannot be otherwise created.

Money and art are not opposites. They compete in the field of power, sometimes as gladiators, sometimes as master and slave, occasionally even as partners. Art draws its power from its claim to access a transcendent territory — it defies reduction to a corporate economy of meaning, even as it uses this claim to earn its share of capital.

All this is just fine, except when artists are asked to publicly forsake their claim to

disinterested critique. And if artists didn't make that claim to an elevated sphere of critical thinking, of aesthetics, of something beyond *power-over*, then what corporate entity would bother to put their money and name to that art? So when a group of artists protest corrupt sponsorship, they're actually maintaining the viability of their art as a vehicle for that exchange. When politicians come out to denounce protesting artists, they don't just reveal the one-sidedness of their allegiances, they sell out those allegiances by impeding the process that maintains the credibility of arts sponsorship. Artists shouldn't be worried about these rifts in the system. It's good to remind everyone of the arrangement from time to time.

Some very wealthy people with fine records of arts sponsorship (or their marketing teams) miscalculated. They failed to recognise that connecting themselves, however profitably, however subtly, to the unlawful, inhumane and outrageous detention of refugees, rendered their money useless. Artists are generally happy to trust someone else to organise the money — it's not on us to audit the (history) books of every buyer looking for access to a world beyond yachts and diamonds. But there is the matter of *respect* to be considered. If the sponsor makes a show of being on the 'wrong' side of history, then they're asking the artists to smear themselves publicly. It's the sponsor's obligation to pay with *integrity*. If they don't get that, then they're in the wrong business.

Perhaps we can think of it as an extended equilibrium in a metaphysical power struggle, like the one found during the advent of modern astronomy. For a couple of hundred years, the adoption of either a heliocentric (earth revolves around the sun) or a geocentric (sun revolves around the earth) model had enormous political consequences for the bearers of power who had aligned their worldview and values to one of the two perspectives. Whilst neither could dominate definitively, the two camps had to negotiate power between them.

The belief systems that compete within today's rival cultural and corporate spheres are now locked in a similar embrace. Both feel superior; neither can dominate or completely reject the other. Although we are often led to believe (by the volume of discourse re-enforcing the primacy of

Whores in the kingdom of...

Two facts to begin with:

1. I was paid a fee of \$346 for this piece of writing.
2. I was recently employed by an art gallery, along with a cohort of others, to ‘interpret’ the work of an artist at the rate of \$27.56 an hour.

I had no idea how these curious figures were arrived at, or where the money came from.

The nominal writing fee is well below the 50 cent per word rate that I understand should be an award for pieces such as this. I appreciate that ‘money is tight’, and like so many artists I have undertaken much of this work pro bono. I have done so with an added neuroses on this occasion, caused by the editors suggesting a lawsuit could result from what I intended to write—with regard to my aforementioned experience as an ‘interpreter’.

These discursive facts raise the ongoing issue of how we value (in a fiscal sense) the labour of artistic practice and expression. These are the only facts in this piece of writing, and everything further could be nothing but misunderstanding and hyperbole on my part. Both these ideas though, that is the labor economy of art practice and the creation of a mythology through misunderstanding or a lack of engagement, directly relate to my experience ‘interpreting’ this work by a renowned international artist.

This took place at ‘the most important public gallery’ in my city, bankrolled by an almost equally well renowned contemporary art patron and a major investment bank.

The artist stipulated that we were to be paid, and the exact figure was negotiated between the artist and the gallery. Despite this figure being well below the equity rate for the activity we were engaged in, amongst those involved in the project it was deemed too much by some and too little by others. Apparently the rate we were paid was the highest that interpreters have been paid for this particular work in its 10 year history. The gallery, through the sponsoring bank, paid these wages. The patron paid the artist directly to purchase the intangible work and his purchase did not cover the actual

presentation of the work, like our necessary wages for the three week period. No one knew (or at least no one would disclose) what this figure was that the patron paid the artist. It seemed reasonable that I know this figure, since I was providing the labour of *being* the work on the artist’s behalf. The artist himself was not physically present because he does not believe in flying or in any unnecessary travel in relation to his work. Instead he passes on the scores for his works, such as this one, through delegated local colleagues. This sentiment by the artist in relation to zero material production around his work is reflected in presentation by stipulating that there be no publication of brochures, catalogues or any other form of documentation of the work. The way that this condition usually problematises the art-world was nullified by the patron in this recent presentation through hiring a team of ‘human brochures’ to parrot *believed* information about the work and artist to the public. The patron was also heard to have spread collateral postcards on the presentation through another of his public art projects. Such a dis-engagement with the underlying principles of the artist’s practice is curious. Although perhaps this is not that curious when one considers the natural desire of the patron to show-off the *product* that he has purchased. This is the embodiment of the work’s provocation to the politics of ownership.

In *being* this work on behalf of the artist, it felt there was an in-cohesion in the over-wrought conceit of the piece. The conceit involved working under the guise of a Visitor Services Officer (VSO) of the gallery. The work of the interpreter involved the ruse of standing with the *real* VSOs at the entrance of the gallery and surprising those who walk through the vestibule with a silly dance and singing the proclamation that what I was doing was ‘so contemporary’. The dancing was a simple and open choreographic structure and concluded by informing the member of the public being danced for: the name of the artist, title of the work, year of production and financier who owned the work—the patron. This conclusion of the sequence, before we returned to our

vestibule, as opposed to a more typical space that the work might occupy where it might resonate more.

This is not an indictment of the gallery. The ‘traditional’ nature of the art gallery meant that it was the appropriate institute for the work to find resonance in this city. The work was a provocation to the machinations of how art institutions function. It introduced people and ‘interpersonal relations’ into their processes, where there usually would not be. Humanising the art world in this way is certainly a good thing.

I felt, though, that a voice from the ‘interpreters’ was decidedly lacking in the discourse around the artist and his work. This seems incongruent to those ‘interpersonal relations’ and dialogue that were supposedly at the heart of the work.

Part of the choreographic instruction of the work was to keep mute when not spouting our necessary lines, and to not engage in any unscripted dialogue or conversation with the public. (This seems at odds with the idea of ‘interpersonal relations’, but was also understandably a pragmatic necessity for staying focused on the rather relentless job that needed doing). The editors of this magazine have warned that I might be required to remain mute in dialogue around the project, and might not legally have permission to write a reflective viewpoint. One of the editors had the same suspicion raised to him by an international curator. Such alarm stems from the lack of knowledge about the artist and his work. This absence has created a sort of self-perpetuating mythology around him. A mythology that is necessary. Not because it confines the work to the moment of experience, as fond as I am of this romantic notion, but because to experience this work is actually a slight non-event. Why are we not presenting one of this artist’s more recent works that have extended this practice of ‘constructed situations’?

I was troubled from the start by the mythologising. It led to the ahistorical viewpoint of the work in relation to the idea of performance. It meant that when we were learning the piece, no one knew what year we were supposed to credit the piece to in the concluding dialogue. It meant that, according to some, I might not be permitted to publish my opinion on the work. I can only imagine that this is based on an over-assumption of the very particular verbal

contracting by the artist of his work (a paper contract would be tangible material in relation to his work). I never signed a contract regarding my participation in the work, only a contract making me a casual employee of the gallery.

The behind-the-scenes machinations of the work are actually what are most interesting and meaningful about it. Why would we not be allowed a published reflection on being inside this work? Cannot the artist be critiqued outside of his established framework? If not, what does this say about the art world?

It appears the artist has found a tenable place where he is believed to be an unquestionable authority by those around him. One that no one can touch. Not the curator, critic or the financier. He is believed to control the entirety of the experience of his work, which can simply not be the case when engaging in the aesthetic strategy of what is essentially performance.

for	not	community	consider eight point one's material form
this	and	critical	it is a layered object that foregrounds its layeredness here is how it might be read
this	won't	deliver that	folded felt regarded
it	it could	never have	one open to the centre of this magazine
will	be forever	will	two tear out the advertisements
short	necessarily	and not	three you are now at the first text
for	and	will	four read the page facing you
in	a faux self	deprecatory sense	five tear it out
for	not and	have never	six repeat steps four to six until you have consumed the magazine
we	will not	speak	or
for	our dicks	about	one open to the centre
will	us	won't, open	two read the pages facing you
for	will	faux	three flip the left and right pages into your hand so that you are holding them in the centre
eight	point one	we	four read the facing page on the left moving the pages held in your hand to the right temporarily
for	it could	never have	five read the facing page on the right moving the pages held in your hand to the left temporarily
spoken	for	itself	six repeat steps three to six until you are holding the magazine in a single hand
for	ands	necessarilly	
in	text	forever	
for	could	and	stop check yourself what do you want from this what do you expect from this
in	relation	to proper political	this probably won't deliver that it cannot
a	mode	of binding	it could never have it will forever be
for	never	career	short necessarily and not in that faux self depreciative sense pop corn
or	preservation	advancement	
it	floats for	a raft	we will not speak for eight point one we cannot choc top
joins	not	its ink to its ink	
by	way of glues	staples	eight point one speaks for itself
for	to	frontness	that is in the way that text can ever speak
we	one point	glue	you know cola

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