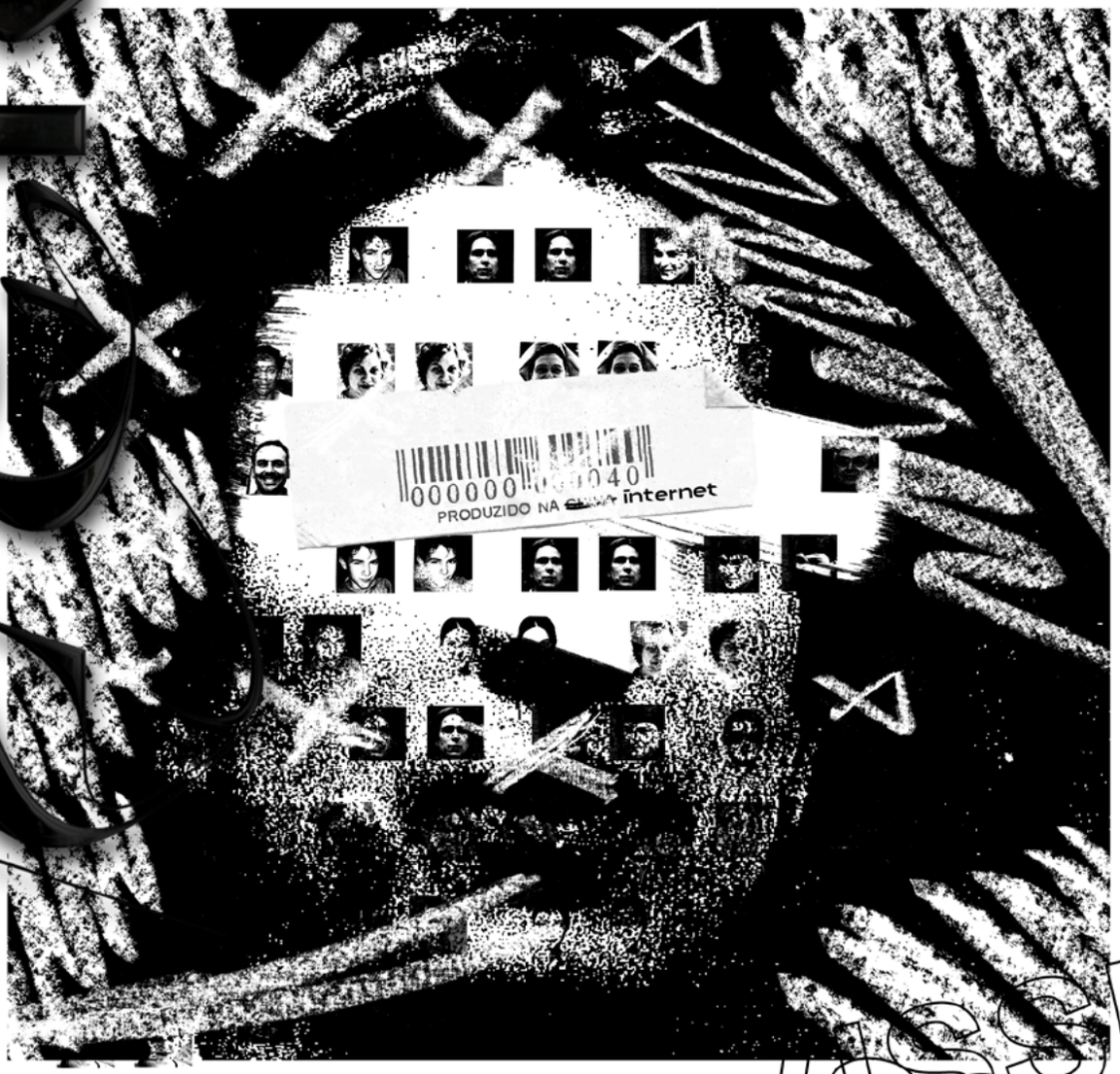
zero



ISSUE
000000001

hello

your visit is very important to us

how can i help you?

my name is [redacted] and I'm
your host today.

I will guide you through this magazine

seek out for me this way

welcome to Número Zero

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

JAYGO BLOOM,
LAUREN HOUSEGO
AND DANIEL BUENO

ALEX AFFONSO,
FREDERICO HEER,
JULIO MARIUTTI AND
LAURA TEIXEIRA

LAURA ROLIM
DIAS ZERNIK AND
VALENTINA BRENNER

TO THE BRITISH SCHOOL
OF CREATIVE ARTS (EBAC)

SPECIAL THANKS
TO OUR EXTERNAL
COLLABORATORS

ABDULLAH ELÍAS
ALEXANDRE LINDENBERG
ANA LUIZA DIAS BATISTA
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THANKS TO
ABC DINAMO, BLAZETYPE,
AND SWISS TYPEFACES,
FOR ALLOWING
THE USE OF THEIR
TYPEFACES APOCALYPSE
(BLAZETYPE),
FAVORIT PRO AND
MONUMENT GROTESK
(ABC DINAMO), BLACK
MAMBA AND BRRR
(SWISS TYPEFACES)

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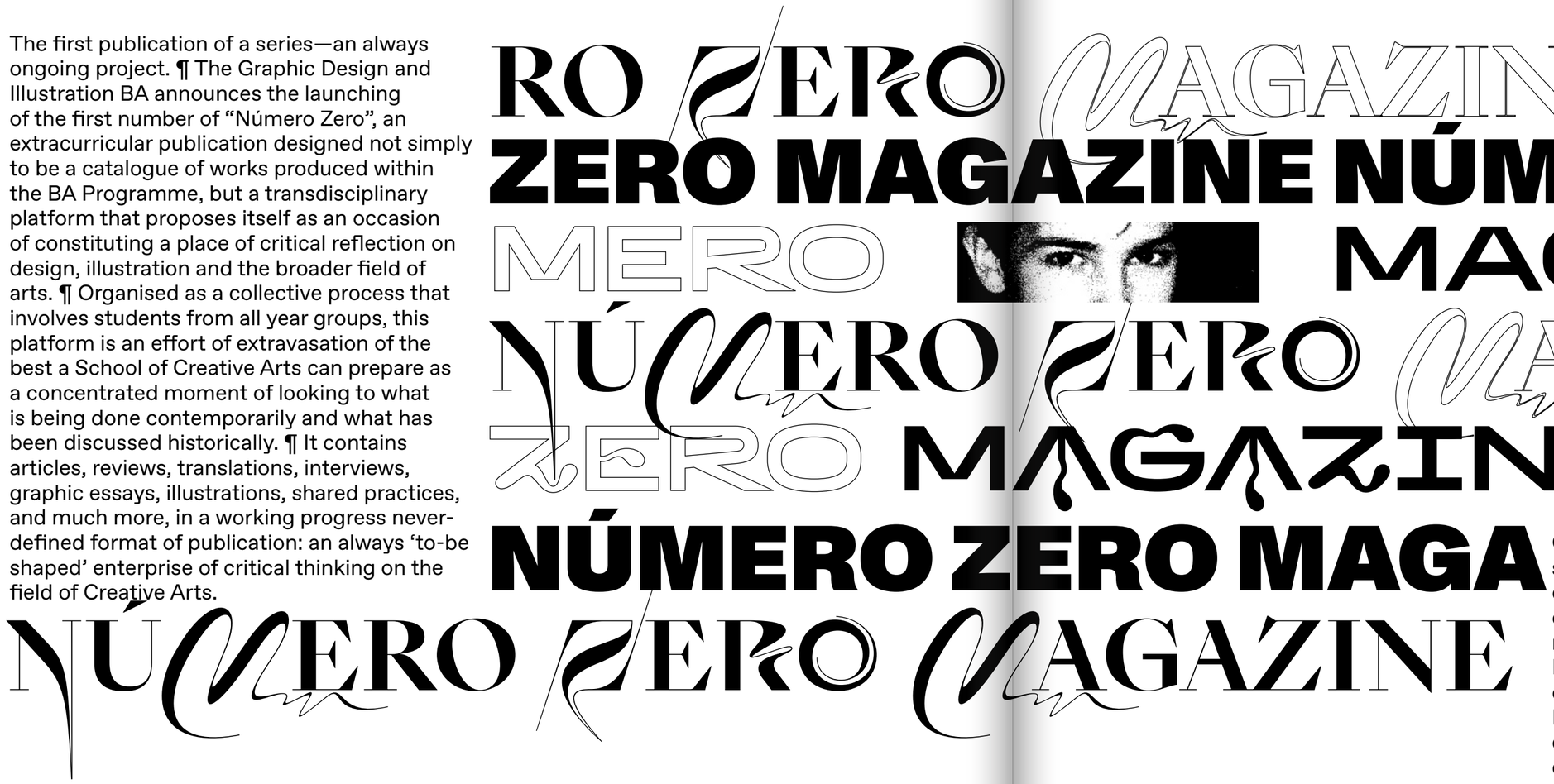
"FROM THE ADVERSITY WE LIVE IN" HELIO OITICICA

Brazilian culture and its people thrive on versatility and change, yet the critical debate within its education is all too often interested only in the qualities of orientated outcome and technical skill. This can result in learning that neglects issues such as the critical function of art and design within society and can overlook designs allegiance to cultural practice and collaboration. ¶ Recent events have shaken the axis of world art & design education. Some Universities struggled, whilst here at The British School of Creative Arts in São Paulo we transitioned seamlessly. What follows is the school's BA British Design Department response to the new normal; versatile, challenging in outcome and totally Digital. ¶ The publication occupying your screen space explores the qualities of process generated by a riot of stand-out collaborative, virtual and digital phenomena. It is a monument to the ambition and creative talent that motivates our department of future artists, designers and world change makers. It has been conceived as an expanded, online, open-collaborative experience, designed for the Online-Everything, embodied through non-linear narrative and social processes. It is freely distributed in support of the new-world-normal to teach us how to look at life [again] through design. ¶ "Number Zero" will help you navigate the disruption of a post-tilt/post-shift world. A superabundance of subjects converges within its contents, subjects that whilst increasingly being used as tools for critical discussion and motivation within the studio, are also conduits to help us consider the relevance of design and quite conversely, to engage in near future fictions and the sociological threats of our new, every day, digital dependency. ‡

The first publication of a series—an always ongoing project. ¶ The Graphic Design and Illustration BA announces the launching of the first number of “Número Zero”, an extracurricular publication designed not simply to be a catalogue of works produced within the BA Programme, but a transdisciplinary platform that proposes itself as an occasion of constituting a place of critical reflection on design, illustration and the broader field of arts. ¶ Organised as a collective process that involves students from all year groups, this platform is an effort of extravasation of the best a School of Creative Arts can prepare as a concentrated moment of looking to what is being done contemporarily and what has been discussed historically. ¶ It contains articles, reviews, translations, interviews, graphic essays, illustrations, shared practices, and much more, in a working progress never-defined format of publication: an always ‘to-be shaped’ enterprise of critical thinking on the field of Creative Arts.

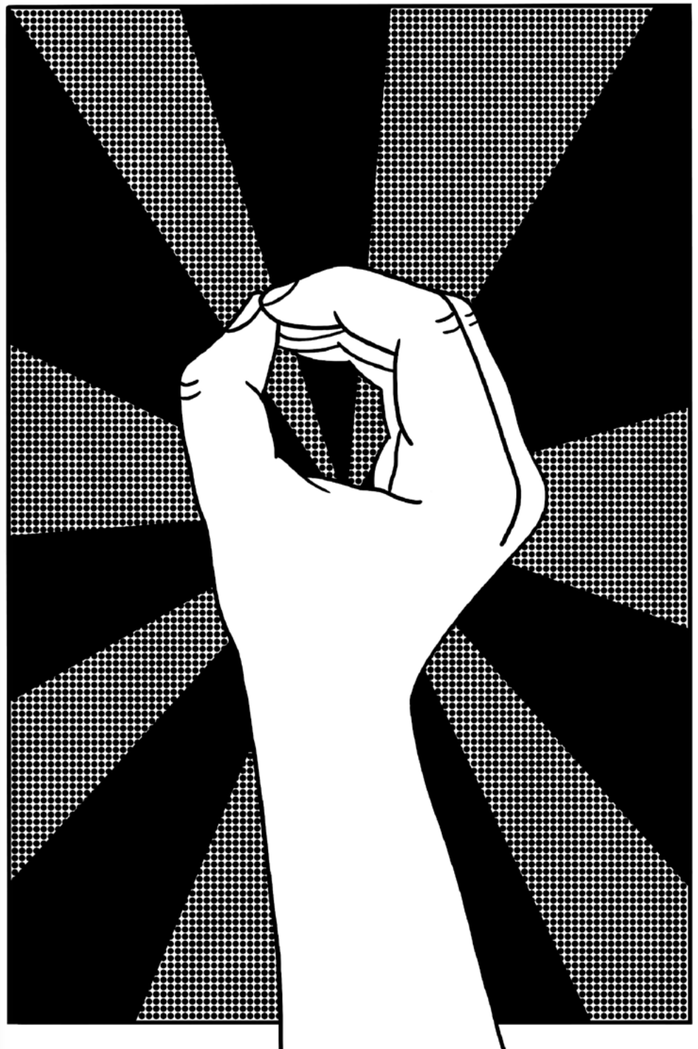


O primeiro de uma série, ou, um projeto sempre em andamento ¶ “Número Zero” é a primeira edição de uma promessa de continuado espaço de produção e debate no campo das Artes Criativas na atualidade. Pretende ser não apenas um momento de extravasamento daquilo que o Bacharelado em Design Gráfico e Ilustração da Escola Britânica de Artes Criativas vem produzindo ao longo dos últimos anos internamente ao ambiente acadêmico, mas, sobretudo, uma ocasião auto reflexiva e crítica, apta a intervir no meio contemporâneo. ¶ Feita pelos alunos do curso, e amparada pela orientação de professores do Programa, a publicação pretende, por meio de artigos, entrevistas, ensaios visuais, práticas compartilhadas entre alunos, designers, ilustradores e artistas, e traduções de textos referenciais da área, instaurar um espaço em que a realidade de atuação dos campos do design e da ilustração se possam ver refletidos em um pensamento crítico, capaz de propor novos termos ao debate do campo expandido das artes e da cultura hoje. ‡

NUMBER ZERO

JÚLIA VASCONCELOS

The number zero has been a complex issue throughout history. In order to better understand what this number means and represents, it's necessary to go back centuries (even before Christ) and observe how it emerged, autonomously, in different civilizations. ¶ In ancient Indian culture, for example, it was possible to have an understanding of emptiness. If you open a Sanskrit dictionary, you can find a thorough explanation of the Indian term for zero: *shúnya*. This word, if used as an adjective, means empty, desert, barren—absence or lack of something and, if used as a noun, is nothing, a vacuum. It makes sense, doesn't it? This Indian symbolism for the number zero traveled all the way to Europe, when the Arabs decided to adopt it. They propagated the term *shúnya*, that in Arabic was translated to *shifr* and that later received Latin versions such as *zephirum*, *zephyr*, *zephron* until receiving the denomination that it has today: zero. ¶ In the Americas, the Mayans conceptualized their own views for the idea of nothingness through a numbering system. This system consisted of points and dashes, which indicated the units and dozens. However, there were two notations for the zero: one composed the numbers, a closed ellipse that resembled an eye; the other, with more symbolic usage, alluded to one of the calendars of the Mayas. ¶ The Greeks did not believe in a representation of emptiness. For them, there was no practical use for the concept, considering it even unsightly. Zero was nothing more than mere abstraction, as Aristotelian philosophical thought affirmed: "the world is what we see and touch with our senses". ¶ And the first to come to a notion of zero close to what we use today were the Babylonians. They were the ones who created the "positional numbering system" in which the digits have values for the position they occupy. It can be said, then, that the Babylonians created a way to graphically represent nothing, showing the abstract in a concrete way. ¶ But, after all, what is the number zero? ¶ Well, usually, it's related to the idea of something non-existent, something null. For many, it's a harmless number. I bet you even forget about it from time to time, am I right? I find it intriguing. It is, at the same time, everything and nothing. It's a void full of meaning, an innovative number. Allow me to explain: ¶ Zero can be used in several ways: in physics, extremely large and extremely small quantities can be represented by powers of ten, playing a fundamental role; in binary language, data is encoded in sequences of zeros and ones, where it represents an absence of energy or absolute impurity; and in arithmetic, where it came as a real revolution and consolidated itself as one of the most important notions ever created. ¶ In mathematics, rules that apply to all other numbers do not apply to it, zero only obeys to them when and how it pleases. At the same time that it can be considered useless if it's to the left side of another digit—the famous "good-for-nothing"—the more to the right it comes, the more its value increases. I find that, at the very least, curious. ¶ All considered, it can be said that the number zero was one of the greatest mysteries and one of the greatest intellectual reforms of mankind. It was able to completely change the course of the formal sciences and bring new reflections on its use. It forces us to rethink everything (or almost everything) that we once took for granted: from the arithmetic division to the essence of movement, from calculation to the possibility of something emerging from emptiness. ‡



JÚLIA VASCONCELOS

NUMBER ZERO

NÚMERO ZERO

EDITORIAL

As visual students, of creative disciplines, it wouldn't be possible to think our own work without indiscipline, and experimentation. It has to be by trying to understand where it comes from and where it goes to, the common sense and the issues, the expression and the rules, the structures and the reactions, the voices and the safe places, and yet, all the balance. ¶ The following works have indiscipline, or anomie—a breakdown of standards, normlessness, lack of continuity—as common ground: be it in an inner dialogue, in their representation itself, or even in the subversion of the own and specific language as an expressive and experimental tool. ¶ And it was through physical and digital compositions, illustrations, photographs, critical studies, feature columns and interviews that the student body coordinated this central theme, developing it alongside with so many others, leading the group constructing the magazine to realize some tendencies between the dynamics of the contents, as if the own texts and images gravitated in a state of anomie, unordered and irregular, aligning and un-aligning themselves with no pre-assumed or conformed rigidity. Some, by the nature of their subjects, asked for proximity; others, however, deflect one another. ¶ Not in an attempt to domesticate them, but instead, to possibly make more fluid the dynamic between them, we separated the magazine in four blocks that dialogue between each other: the first, "structure and its lost", is about weaves and construction processes that are out of our reach—objects, cities, constellations—and that at times take

their own uncertain, autonomous path; the second, "to fall into the void and travel", takes in account resignification movements, experimentation and language criticism and of the space; the third, "contest", raises subjects related to tensions and urgencies related always to the present; and lastly, "post-chaos, pre-chaos", offers individual readings about passages, transitions and will for change. ¶ Thinking about all these issues, the first edition of this student magazine, a naturally super experimental project, invites questioning about the current society and proposes different perspectives capable of reframing our collective understanding of the contemporary situation. We aren't fools, but we seek fullness and the absolute—are we sitting in Nowhere Land, 000? ‡

EDITORIAL

TAINÁ FECCHIO
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
NUCLEIRO

STRUCTURE ITS LOSS

BÁRBARA PEREIRA
NÚMERO ZERO

THE IMPORTANCE OF SCALE: URBANIZATION AND SOCIETY

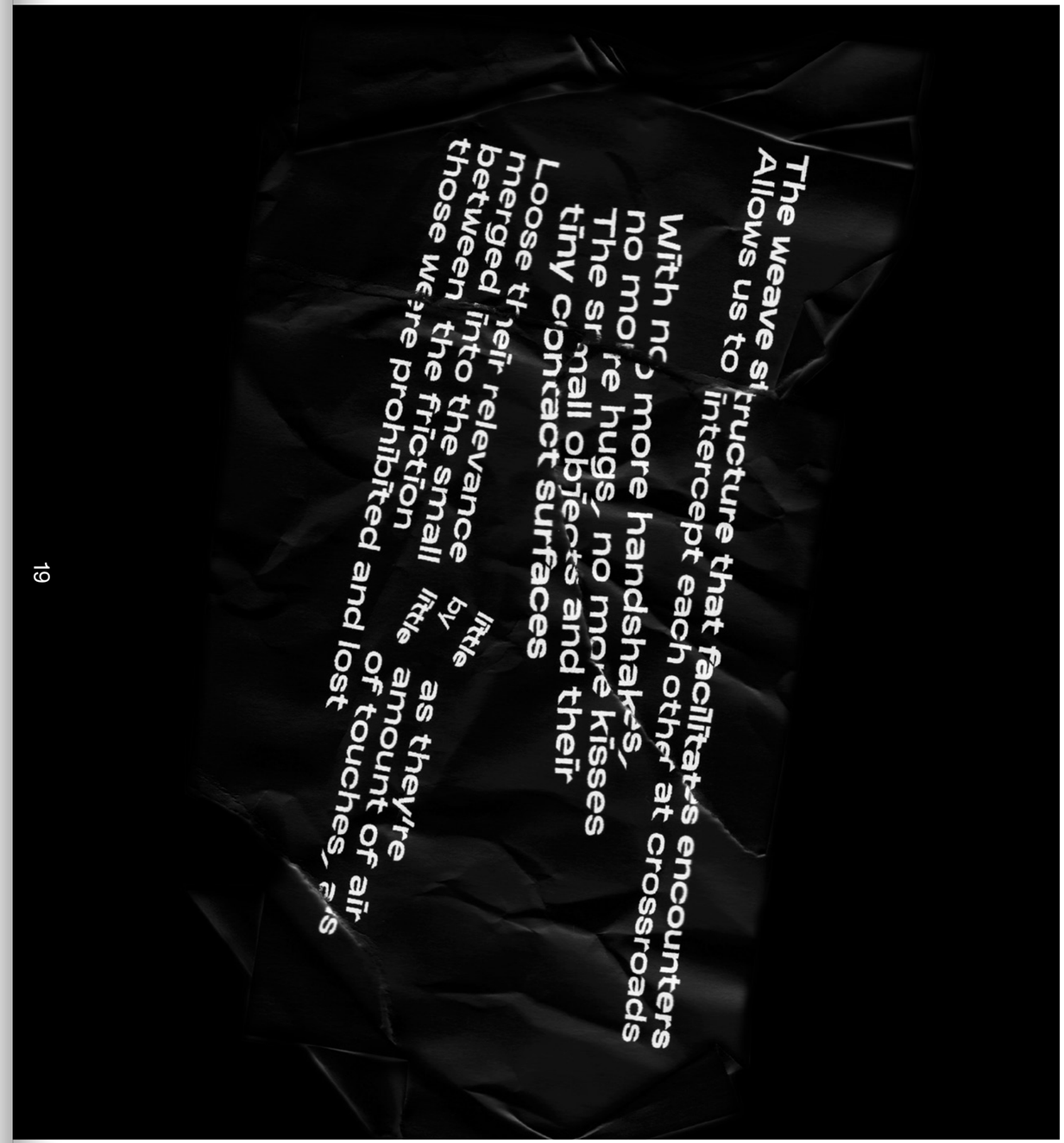
A straw hat translates the relation between the large and small-scale in a society. ¶ To understand how a straw hat is made, first it's necessary to understand the structure of its weave, and to understand the weave is to know that there are several shapes it can take, and ways to build it. ¶ In return, different forms of weave tell us about different societies and what those look like. ¶ A society is the product of the relationship between objects. Just as there are several types of straw hats, there are several types of structures in society; and through the same kinds of movements of choice and re-purposing, both hats and societies are built. ¶ One of the underlying reasons for a society is to establish a network of relationships between its citizens, giving them purposes, functions and tastes to share, thus forming a community. ¶ Something united, inter-twined, embed within a sustaining foundation—The Form of a society is the weave, the connector: a structure of relationship to all its proportions. ¶ The relationship between Form and Function of a society must be clear. In order to understand this, rules of proportion (and one can think about the ideas of William Morris) must be applied: ¶ By understanding the small object, it's possible to plan the large object. To not let the large, however large, lose their scale in relation to the means of production of the small ones is the primary goal. ¶ And by keeping ratio and scale, by not letting proportions between small and big in any way be lost, it's understandable that there is the

everything lives/inside
everything/but in the
base there's a flaw/
a missing linklacking
piece/an unravelling
thread/the lattice/
a structural meshskein

same means of production to every object imaginable: a brick, a fireplace, a street, a neighbourhood, a building or even an entire city. ¶ But between the hand scale and the urban scale there's a stretch, and it may happen that the latter may be forgotten in the process. So, it's necessary to increase care for the smaller object, of the small scale, and the means of production related to it, so it's produced with pleasure and clarity, guiding the large-scaled ones to the same successful path. Morris once stated that modern life has depersonalized the intrapersonal relationship that comes from the object, and that this relationship was bound to disappear. This was an instigation for people to master their own line of work if they're not to be alienated. Therefore, everything man-made is to be judged, and by doing so, people would have a direct intervention with the social structure in which they live. ¶ Understanding how objects are made and consequently how everyday life is proposed, one can rethink society: from the smallest object to the largest, never losing grip of the scale ratio. If this is true, instead of just admiring a poster, maybe the structure of a society will evidence itself as far as we are able to comprehend its grid. ¶ In the mid-20th century, at a time of architects and engineers, this care got lost and as expected, Form and Function diverged. An excerpt from the book "All That Is Solid Melts Into Air" mentions Brasilia under these terms: ¶ *[...] is of immense empty spaces in which the individual feels lost, as alone as a man on the moon. There is a deliberate absence of public space in which people can meet and talk, or simply look at each other and hang around. [...]* ¶ *Niemeyer was right about one thing: when Brasilia was conceived and planned, in the 1950s and early 1960s, it really did embody the hopes of the Brazilian people; in particular, their desire for modernity. The great gulf between these hopes and their realization seems to illustrate the Underground Man's* point: it can be a creative adventure for modern men to build a palace, and yet a nightmare to have to live in it.*** ¶ This haste for modernity made it excessive: the kind of organization planned for the city is eventually lost, quickly leading to a place of total construction, in where the care for the small scale is forgotten. ¶ This is to say that loss of scale is a technical matter: as technique becomes technology, what was formerly done in name of society, is no more, and social connection dissipates. ¶ This is the result of planning error, meaning that the moment in which the ways of a hand-made, solid foundation disappears is the moment when the problems laid down to every construction emerges, be it a city or a social sphere. The scale then ceases to be functional and becomes ideological, changing its use in practice and noticeable within the concrete forms that no longer carry the totality of its builder, but instead moulds them. ¶ Through this lack of sense of ratio, it's clear that the utopia we shared with Morris did not come true, the dream of affinity between small and large is no longer, and the relationship between Form and Function is lost. ¶ And now, in the contemporary age, there is a yearning for the construction of increasingly large cities. The role of man tends to become more invisible; the scale is lost and consequently the knowledge is lost. The human being does not recognize his own creation. He becomes ignorant of what at first was his own desire. ‡

* Dostoyevsky, F. and Jakim, B. (n.d.). *Notes from underground*.

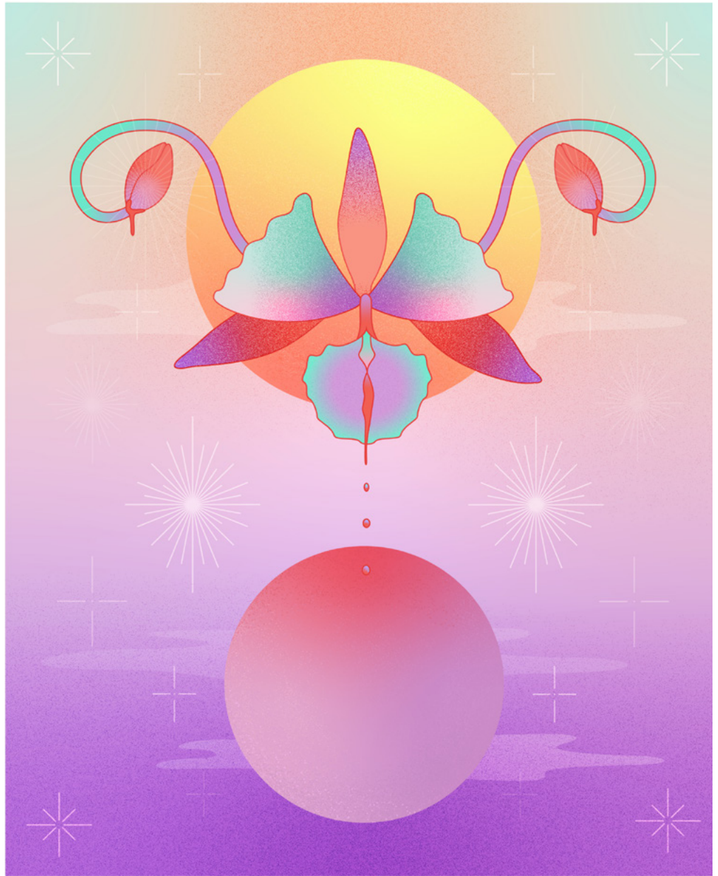
** Berman, M. (2010). *All that is solid melts into air*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 7.



ASTROLOGICAL ANALYSIS

FRIDA KAHLO

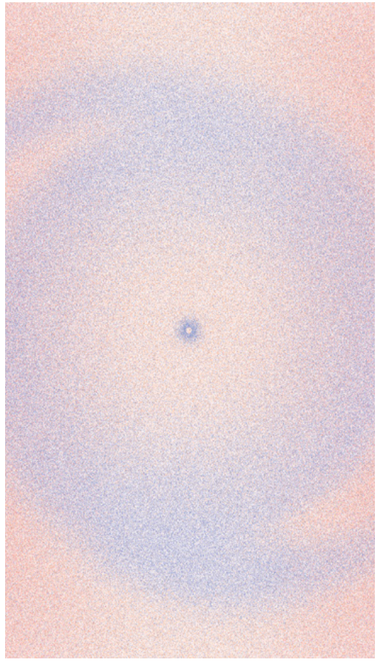
There is a cosmic reason why Frida was constantly portraying herself in her paintings. That reason might be the one and only: self Leo. I mean, self-love. This self-centred energy, the urge of having recognition of who she was and her creations, the beauty and her fame can be explained through the many aspects of her ascendant (the way you present yourself to others and the world) which is Leo, and her Sun (ruled by Leo) in the eleventh house of her natal chart. Her eleventh house is placed with some planets, which gives much emphasis to her social life, especially because one of them is the Sun and the other is Jupiter. The house in which the Sun sits is the area of your life you feel the most yourself and connected to your essence. It brings a lot of energy and light to the house it is in. And everything Jupiter touches, it expands. Then, if you put together her ascendant with her Sun and Jupiter in the tenth house, it is understandable how Frida's life and self image reverberates everywhere up to the modern day. These aspects indicate a large scenario for her social persona and visibility for her self-expression. It is very different from other artists that got their fame and recognition through their artworks after they have died. Frida was pretty popular in life, and still has her face stamped even on clothes or decor objects. ¶ Although her art had great visibility, her personal life was her most intense work. We could say that one only exists through the other. She went through a disease, an accident, a long and horrible abusive marriage, abortions, affairs with women and men, divorce, remarriage and a suspected suicide. ¶ The accident happened under many tense aspects that were forming in the sky with her natal chart. On the day of the accident, the tragedy happened under a difficult aspect between Jupiter and Pluto and Uranus conjunct with Saturn. These aspects affected Frida's natal chart directly to Mars forming a conjunction with Uranus in Capricorn and opposing Sun and Neptune in Cancer. In other words, the unpredictable energy of Uranus was influencing Saturn's structural energies. Then there's Pluto, the planet of intense transformations (or as people used to call it, the planet of death) that was being largely intensified by Jupiter and affecting Mars' aggressive energy to her spine, due to this conjunction with the out-of-nowhere Uranus in Capricorn. In astrology, the energy of Mars, that is more aggressive, or Jupiter with unpredicted Uranus means accident, or not a favourable moment to have surgeries or anything too risky. The major impact of the accident was in her bones, which is the part of the body we have related to Capricorn. ¶ And in the process of her pain and struggles, it was essential for her to express herself through paintings, very much likely as a way of maintaining her sense of importance and respect. Frida had this Cancer and Neptune way of self-expressing and expanding her creations to deal with her pain, and at the same time make it valuable to the world. It is notable that she was in a quest for an understanding of who she was and what she represented to the world in such circumstances. ¶ Frida, as a genuine Cancer, had to survive the political and social demands on women about giving birth to a child. As much as she spoke of feminist and contemporary issues, she lived an abusive relationship with Diego Rivera. Her will to have children came from the Moon energy in her chart. Cancer, ruled by the moon, has a creative and maternal energy. And Taurus,

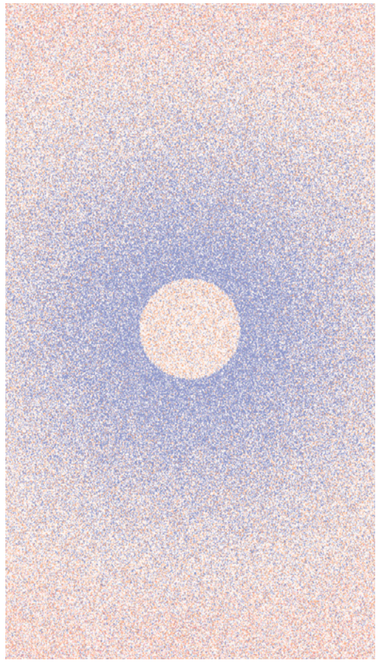


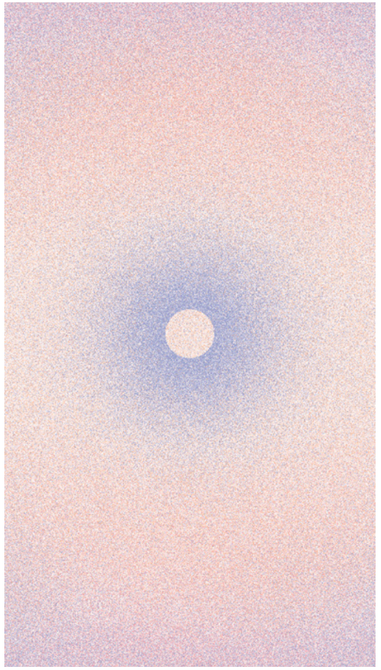
THASSI KATO
ASTROLOGICAL ANALYSIS | FRIDA KAHLO
NUCLEIRO

the sign her moon is positioned in, wants to nurture the idea of having a family. That explains her plans of studying Medicine before the accident happened. But this tragedy made this possibility unlikely. ¶ In *El Abrazo de Amor de El Universo, la Tierra (México), Yo, Diego y el Señor Xólotl* (1949), she represents Diego, her husband, as her baby. She painted herself holding him nude, along with other maternal symbols, like Mother Nature and God as sources of life, giving the idea that their relationship was being held by a divine force, as something beyond her strength to detach from. ¶ Frida assumed a mother and wife role in relation to Diego. This behaviour comes from the distorted energies of her Sun and Moon, and since giving birth wasn't a possibility, she ended up investing all that energy in her marriage. She took advantage of her creative power through her paintings, but her level of need for recognition as a woman was greater than what anyone could give her. She never found the love and recognition she was always seeking in her relationship with Diego. Their marriage was filled with psychological abuse and cheating, an affair of her husband with her own sister and several abortions. And still that was not enough for her to leave him for good. ¶ In this painting there is *Cihuacoatl*, a goddess from the ancient Mexican mythology, that represents the Mother Earth, motherhood, childbirth and even abortions. She is holding both Frida and Diego in her arms with milk dripping from her breast emphasising the baby figure Diego embodied for Frida. But even though he is represented as an innocent figure, he has a third eye that symbolises wisdom and a higher connection to other realms. They are all being embraced by an even higher force as if their relationship was a mission from above being secured by God. Or maybe it was just a way of her dealing with the sorrow of her miscarriages and seeing those tragedies as having a divine purpose. ¶ One accurate thing in some of Frida's paintings is the duality. In this case, that is represented by day and night, Sun and Moon, life and death. ¶ In the Mexican culture, death is celebrated as the return to life to begin new cycles and here represented by their dog *Xólotl*. The duality she represented in her paintings, in her roles as mother and wife, in her affairs with both women and men, the various famous artists and friends, and in her vast intellectual and humanitarian communication, are manifested through the Gemini Venus in the eleventh house. Gemini is the ruler sign of Mercury, the planet of everything related to communication, intellect, plurality and sociability. When Venus, the planet of love, beauty and finance, is in Gemini, it likes to be nurtured by the exchange of knowledge in all kinds of relationships, especially the love ones. It seeks for experimentation of various skills and different partners too. There is also an ease for learning and seeing things from many perspectives, which is what is observed in this painting through life and death represented. ‡

**bones collapse/shrinks
wane and dissolves/the
shell:/different structures
of different orders/appear
less solid/a raw crab,
under its shell/like a
heart/palpitates**







ALL AT THE SAME TIME, HERE

Richard McGuire uses the same framework to move non-linearly through the history of the planet over billions of years ¶ One of the first pages of *Here* shows the drawing of a swampy landscape. The date, in the upper left corner, leaves no doubt: a scene takes place in 8000 BC. Over the nature that dominates this double page, a comics frame behaves as a window, leading the reader to 1989. There, we see a traditional family scene, with people telling jokes on the sofa of a living room. ¶ Immediately, Richard McGuire's artifice is clear: the framing of all double pages is always the same, and it is up to each frame to present a fragment of it in a different year. On the previous page, for example, the situation from 1989 takes place in the same room, but in 1955. The patterns on the wall change, as well as the colour of the decorative elements, but there is a continuity in the window and curtain lines from one frame to the other. Using this innovative structural proposal, the author transits in a non-linear and fragmentary way through the history of the planet, restricted to a defined spatial section. ¶ Let's continue in 1989: in that year, the so far unknown McGuire made his mark on the pages of the *RAW* publication with a six-page story called "Here" - the second of his career. Inspired by the course he took with Art Spiegelman, the artist developed a comics that pleased the author of the award-winning graphic novel *Maus*. Spiegelman inserted the short narrative experience in the ninth edition of the sophisticated magazine he created and edited with his wife, Françoise Mouly. *RAW* sought to renew the comics scene with experimental works, to show that it was possible to go beyond sex, drugs and eschatology in *underground comics*. This story in black and white and retro style caught the attention. Even an inattentive look realizes that there is something unusual here: frames within frames, of different sizes and formats, start to overlap.

ALL AT THE SAME TIME, HERE
DANIEL BUENO
ALL AT THE SAME TIME, HERE

ALL AT THE SAME TIME, HERE

McGuire came up with the idea when, moving to an apartment in 1988, he started to wonder who had lived there before him. When he had made the first sketches, he heard a friend describe the interface of the Windows operating system, which aroused in the artist the conviction that he could explore the structure of windows to simultaneously frame different fragments of time. This break from the traditional reading of comics made those pages a milestone. Aware of his innovation, McGuire started thinking about expanding it. ¶ The idea gained strength with the death of his parents and the process of emptying their house. The result was the transformation of the short comic into a book with more than three hundred pages, launched in 2014. ¶ According to the author, the "room of the story" is the drawing of one room of his house. In the new version, the framing of this space takes into account the peculiarities of the book as a support, positioning the corner just at the centre of the core.

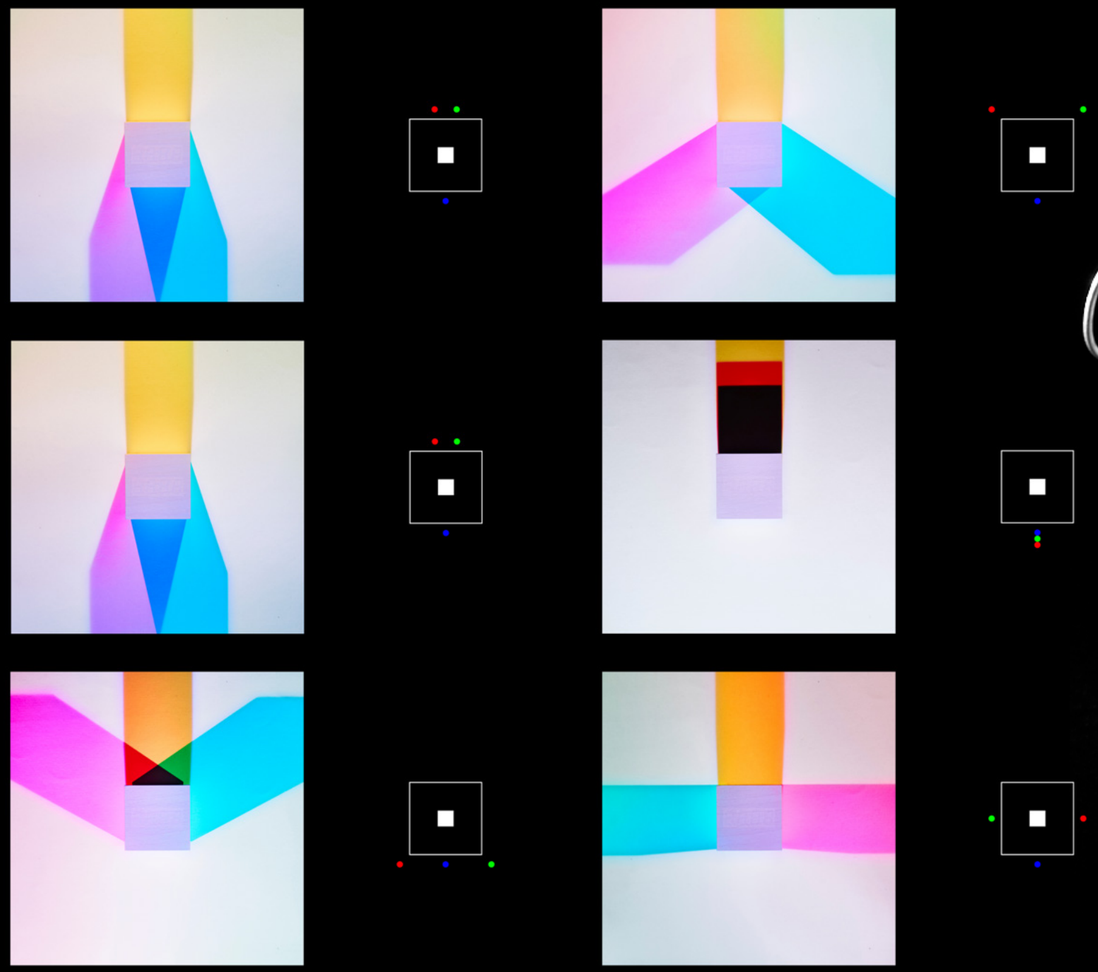
Several generations have followed in the room of this old house and, with them, many changes in habits and technologies, and ways of occupying spaces. The story spans thousands of years, but the room concentrates many events and acts as a guiding thread. Despite the fragmentary reading, the author seeks to make connections between the different situations, preventing the reader from getting lost. ¶ **Freedom** ¶ The higher number of pages allowed him to produce graphic essays and the insertion of new stories. The freedom in the use of comics frames has produced unusual graphic explorations, such as those longitudinal cut-outs, which show only the top of an old tree, or nothing more than the feet of the inhabitants. Some of his "windows" highlight details: a hand, a part of a face, an isolated object, speech bubbles. Some double pages travel through temporal fractions of milliseconds, precipitating movements similar to those of animation.

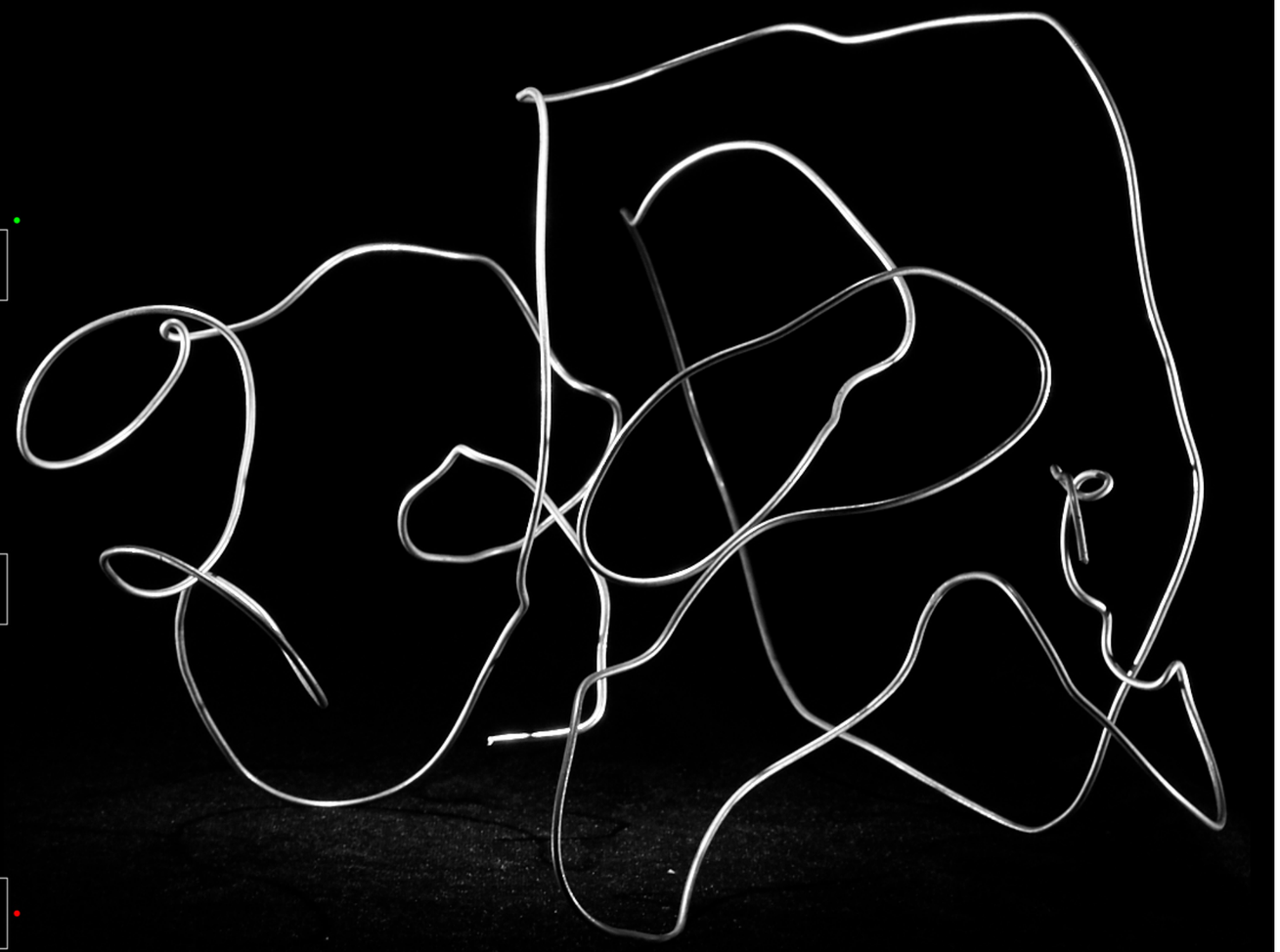
Certain passages exaggerate the contrast, and others stick to familiar themes - like mothers with babies of several generations or a multitemporal party. ¶ A singularity of the book is the variety of treatments in drawing. McGuire is a multifaceted artist, founder of the post-punk band Liquid Liquid and creator of toys. Some of his children's books, and even some covers for *The New Yorker*, for example, appeal to a more geometric style. In Here, however, we see painted landscapes, soberer and vector scenarios, pencil scribbles, naturalistic outlines that seem to have started from digital photos. ¶ Any admirer of the 1989 version must have looked with some fear at the development of *Here* in graphic novel. Nevertheless, McGuire was able to develop the initial ideas. There is greatness in the new Here, and the influence of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, by Stanley Kubrick, possibly contributed to this. The onslaught in broad and sublime scenarios, the transformations of nature, the different scales of things, the great events and the perception of everyday life, birth and death, the feeling of simultaneity, all converge to the existential drama. ¶ In the face of so many changes, each instant—even those frozen in a small frame of history—seems to have more importance. Everything changes, except the framing that is placed, with the help of metalinguistic frames, before the reader, to tell an inexhaustible story of time. ‡

ALL AT THE SAME TIME, HERE

DANIEL BUENO

First Published in: *Quatro cinco um* - a revista dos livros, n. 8, December 2017.





The project discusses a field of action between: idea and process. From the existential reflection: the constant impermanence, this work is made up of several versions and variations that do not result in an end point.

In the visual translation of these values, the conclusion is: the very process of formation is the work itself. These works open a field of autonomous interpretation, to which each spectator in his reading time, projects his reality.

REPORT ABOUT MATCH

TAINÁ FECCHIO
REPORT ABOUT MATCH
NUCLEIRO

It's an object that reveals a number of hidden fetishisms by its process of obsolescence and by its ephemeral characteristics. It activates physical and tactile memories - as does the coin, and the key (this second one with sexual connotation, through the act of insertion).

Its formal characteristics are intrinsically merged to its functionality: the thin and long body that grows smaller and 'disappears' rapidly when lightened, expressing fragility and finitude; the length that extends the gesture of the action, making the reach of the tip that sparks against the sandpaper; the fleeting durability that conducts to an inevitable and short death.

There is also, as in the key, something erotic in the match. In the act of lighting the tip of a phallic frame, it's indispensable the abrasion between two bodies—the movement of scraping, scratching, anyway, of friction, is essential for there to be combustion, spark, euphoria, lust.
But between sex and death inevitably a moment of complementary opposition is made present, which suggests comfort or stability, stasis.
It's at this point that the object, up in flames, forgetting the fragility of life through its reproductivity and permeability, complexifies itself.
As capable as it

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is in approaching ideas of finitude and continuity, the coordination of the present is the predominant one. In Latin, it reads in the label of its most circulated brand, “fiat lux”, “let light be made”—expression that, doubling as a biblical reference, spreads in a complex way (by its traditional, religious, mythological character) the meaning of that presence. The dead tongue, as an elaborated lexicon, is a medium, that, if seems more appropriate for shapes and images than for functional things, here, by distancing the thing it assigns from any running vocabulary, in last instance, comprehends it.

Now, the notion of death can be extended and comprehended by the understanding of vanitas or memento mori, also religious, which reminds the spectator of the fragility of life—maybe also self-announced in the character of withering of the match, that defies the frivolity of consumer goods.

As a reproducible object, its disposition is clear. The packaging already informs: “contain 40 matches”; “contain 50 sticks”. A specific pleasure of the object is concerning its elevated number: it’s its repeated use attached to the promise of eternity, disguised as a distant finitude, which brings the consumer closer to a never-ending satisfaction—another product that takes advantage of this dynamic is the chocolate Bis.

Tied to the repetition, the life-death duality, anyway, the possibility of the object not to be defined but through its obsolescence process, is the constant that, by lighting a match, fire is created: the first human epiphany. It’s the matches’ capacity to forget of its smallness and prove the thunderous possibility to stock, in one’s fingers, one’s

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hands, and let feel, In some level, the monumental power of the humanities development.

So it's to be assumed that the match, as something that surpasses the order of necessity dictated by the capital, is reduced to an ordinariness, without ever leaving the public arena. In this sense, the object doesn't have any need to eroticize anymore to guarantee its space in the circulation routes, thus its appearance being disposable in the economical sense —something that reminds seals and tickets, passports and alike, that, inserted in the market sphere, participate in it in dissident velocities, producing a very unique kind of attraction to the individual that consumes it. It's as if the match had its own "rent-seeking", in the impression it gives of dispensing use; as if it circulated autonomously, relying on its symbolic values and intrinsic fetishes.

Having its market values attached to an eroticism that can't be unlinked from the consumption, the object zeals for its autonomy, behaving itself modest and silently: the labels, that are hardly necessary and, moreover, redundant; the pattern of simple boxes (among which only the glued paper on the top gets altered); the wood or cardboard boxes deliberately bad in quality in which the sticks hide inside. The object is on the design field as an idea, but design itself doesn't fit in it.

Inflated objects, created seeking profit, hide their natures and make use of devices so that an image beside themselves is built; and, through it, a worship destined to them. And the consumer, not having means to defend himself, is forced to have them, as much as they cannot correspond to the satisfaction they promise. These hyper-fetishized

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and eroticized ones have a lowered chance of survival when compared to a product such as the match, that, parallelly at the consumer area, has completely different competitive structures.

The objects that disagree from the dynamic of appearances, given in the open market dispute, must be rebels, and, therefore, self-categorizing, once they detain in themselves some kind of pleasure for their own possibility to overflow: their materiality blend with sensations-permanences—the matches attribute to themselves the actions of lighting, heating, burning, inflaming, “frictioning”, consuming, fading, wearing, extinguishing —and so make us forget their use, function and immediate utility.

The completeness given by the ownership of the obsolete object is through a system of memory and feeling, possible through the ability to immerse and transport to our reality, the present time, entering it without mediation, and then updating the subjects desire for spontaneity.

The match, luminous, creates an aura beyond itself, which shine obfuscates its ordinariness. It’s precisely in this projected iridescence, in the constructed inflammation, in its possibility of a super-image, that resides its particular appeal—a self--conscient appeal, residing in the use itself, that doesn’t allow defense by the part of the subject.

The time of consumption of the match is the time that it is self-consumed. An absolute time, but that ends sudden and decisively: it either is or isn’t—there is no memory capable of embracing it, no more than a small, brief stain of light in the eyes.

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also they defying/the flame it
makes/and ends without notice/all
of a sudden/the light/burns the
tip of the fingers/extinguishes and
goes away/and leaves
us in the dark/with our
fingers still/numb/trying
to reach/another one

'Ignition'–the artist interfered on the text font, replacing the letter 'i' for images.

Ana Dias Batista (1978) was born in São Paulo. Graduated and PhD in visual arts at ECA-USP, she held solo shows at Brazilian institutions such as Centro Cultural São Paulo, Art Museum of Pampulha and Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo and at the galleries Marília Razuk, Mendes Wood, Ybakatu and Leme. She received the Pampulha scholarship and the awards Conexão Artes Visuais (Funarte, 2008) and ProAC (São Paulo State Culture Secretariat, 2009 and 2015). She has recently joined the group shows OEI #79 redigera/ publicera/ distribuera! (Moderna Museet, Stockholm), Avenida Paulista (MASP, São Paulo), Temporary Contemporary (Bass Museum, Miami), Imagine Brazil – Artists' Books (DHC/ART Fondation pour l'Art Contemporaine, Montréal, Canada) and Alimentário (Oca, São Paulo and MAM, Rio de Janeiro).

TAINÁ FECCHIO
REPORT ABOUT MATCH
NUCLEIRO

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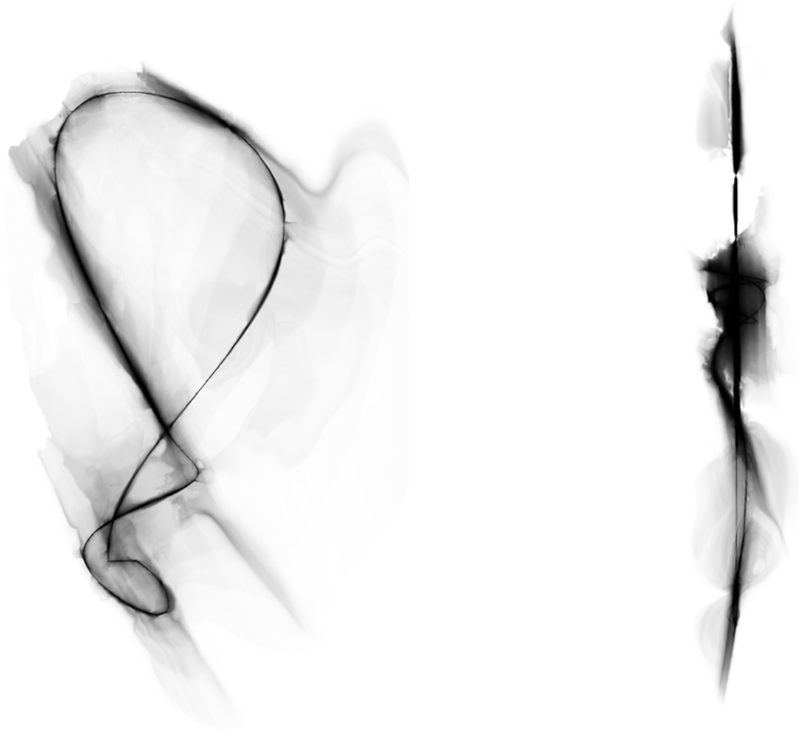
MONO

Mono is a project that emerges from the intersection between two perspectives from my own upbringing. ¶ The first one concerns the surface of the work: an irony in relation to the anesthetization of "art and technology." Unlike the accuracy, uniformity and flatness attributed to computers, the images are printed onto engraving paper sheets and present drawings that look like organic stains of ink—a kind of gesture that is only possible due to the inconsistencies and minimal irregularities of the physical world. Besides, the blackness of the screen is replaced by the whiteness of the paper, while the white of the digital line light is replaced by the black of the printing ink. This gestural drawing just reveals itself when observed with meticulous attention: a perfectly straight line or just a small graphic pattern that repeats itself reveals that this is a digital construction. At the same time, the proportional matter is 9:16, a reference to computer screens and televisions. ¶ The second concerns the construction procedure: an overlay of contradictions. Through programming, a synthesizer generates random sounds that are viewed on a virtual oscilloscope (sound/image). This visualization moves uninterruptedly, but just two frames are captured, also



through a random choice (moving image/static image). Although the oscilloscope is three-dimensional, with a different sound at each of its axes, the images exported are flat (three-dimensional/bi-dimensional) and are treated in video software that tries to calculate motion blur and the movement between frames (static image/moving image). Absolutely failing this calculous, the stains appear that then are the printed matter (digital/analogic). ¶ Obviously, this long procedure is not present in the final work and doesn't reveal itself in its form. However, within these transformations, the flaws and incongruities accumulate, allowing the appearance of a possible gesture. ‡

Matheus Leston is a multimedia artist whose works criticize and question the relationships between art and technology, and between music and visuality. He created the multimedia projects *Orquestra Vermelha* (awarded by the Programa Rumos), *Moiré*, *Menos* and *Ré*. He works within electronic music and also integrated the Patife Band, having composed soundtracks for the series *Contos do Edgar* as well as for many short movies. He has worked at Instituto Tomie Ohtake, Fundação Bienal, and integrated the exhibitions such as: Errar (Oi Futuro), Caos e Efeito (Itaú Cultural), Adrenalina (Red Bull Station). He is, among an extense net of collaborators, one of the founders of Bloco, a multimedia experimental studio that develops projects for brands, artists and events.

MATHEUS LESTON
MONO

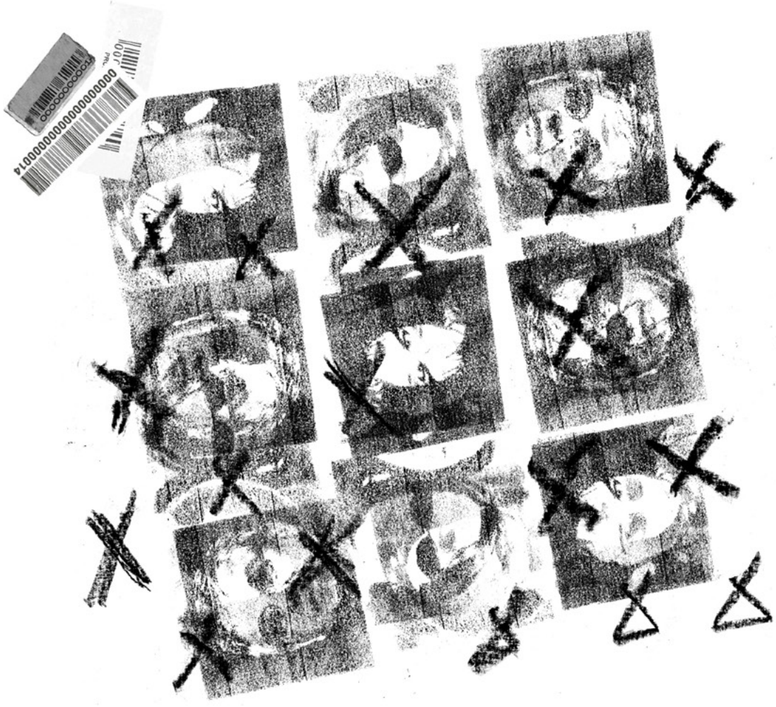
FALL IN RANGE & STROLL

BÁRBARA PEREIRA
NÚMERO ZERO

Between all things and the void
Between mess and organization. In
impermanence. In the non-action. In
the repetitiveness. Restlessness. Calm.
Shortness of breath.

Lungs filled with air so we speak, we use
our words: we think of them as if they
came in opposites. One. Another. Without
realizing it.

As if they
existed between
almost everything and almost
nothing, the emptiness, the air in which we
commute. Between sound and silence. The
text and the reader—we breathe together.



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objets aux coins: a conversation on a corner

DAY 1

Cadu Riccioppo: I am thinking about how would your work—which has been formed regarding an urban way of thinking marked by the production of misplaced objects, addenda, objects formed by an almost "manual" attempt to adapt architecture to everyday, ordinary, unexpected needs—understand itself, far from the Brazilian landscape, and now facing a city that, like Paris, must have much less incidence of adaptive solutions like these...

DAY 2

João Simões: As soon as I got here and started walking around the city, I noticed that there were some objects that seemed unexplainable, or whose function did not explain itself to us just by looking at them. And I wondered what kind of referents I would have to mobilize to suppose a use for them in practical life. One of these objects is an iron hoop I saw, first, on the wall of a house, right next to a street sidewalk and to a niche containing a fire hose. If this hoop were about three feet above where it was, it would be like the ones on drug store fronts we use to leave the dogs. If it were attached to a door, it could well be one of those old door knockers... Anyway, the hoop is always used to tie, hold, or pull something. Sometimes it also appears in a larger size: there is one of them which is attached to the retaining wall on the banks of the Seine—certainly used as an anchorage. And this same hoop, incidentally, could work as one of those horse hitching posts. There are other objects that, at first sight, seem to belong to a similar family: those spheres that appear on top of walls, those pinecones, often made of ceramic or metal. Sometimes, the shapes of these have their decorative motifs replicated in the detailing of furniture—tops of headboards, chairs... Some other times, they appear on the floor, bigger, preventing carriages or cars from hitting the doors' frame of the entrances of houses. Not to mention that objects like this can also present themselves, larger or smaller, next to rivers and canals, to serve as a place for tying up boats. Both hoops and pinecones are objects produced in a modular way and have multiple uses—at the door of a house, on top of a wall, at the edge of a canal. The idea of walking around the city looking for these kinds of objects—things that are very similar, modularly produced, but possibly describing very different functions, seemed to me something that could respond to an understanding of how my work would behave around here—an exercise of looking at an object and imagining a use for it according to its forms and the place it is. A specific type of object I found in the city caught my attention: a "corner object", attached in the corners, in the setbacks, step-like recessions of many buildings. Depending on where they are, these "corner objects" seem to be used to hold or tie something—eventually one can lock their bicycle there, or, maybe, in the old days, it could have been used to tie horses... But I'm not convinced that they were actually designed for these uses. As they vary a lot in shape, height and typology, these objects, among those other objects I've found, seemed to me the most intriguing. I started photographing them, and, then, I noticed that they appear in buildings that advance towards the sidewalk, often between the limits of two buildings, and never around corners. Some seem to be very old, but others seem to have been produced recently. In the same building, sometimes, there is more than one of them, and they can be similar or different. I asked about it in the city, and people do not seem likely to know the use of them—I've only got speculations. The "corner objects" probably vary in functionality, however similar they may be to each other. I have separated some photographs I've taken to show you.

JOÃO SIMÕES X CADU RICCIOPPO OBJETS AUX COINS: A CONVERSATION ON A CORNER NUCLEIRO

C: Looking at these images, I get the impression that these corner objects are modular, but of a modular reasoning of a very specific time. They are there, occupying those corners not because they have been left forgotten there, but because they are guaranteed, preserved, maybe due to an impression that they are the proof of the past of the city.

J: In the same building, one might find several objects of this kind. Some of them have been renovated, and now, made of a round tube, they touch two walls of a corner. So, they are objects that demand to be redone, restored. They do not seem to be things from a mere past; they must still have a function...

DAY 3

C: This may be true, but that does not actually mean that they have a function: it may be that sometimes an object is redone just because it was already there, and already belonged, somehow, to the environment where it was; in such a way, that the simple fear that it could eventually be part of the past (the long-established routine, the habit), restores and rearranges it immediately, even before understanding or testing its pertinence—the necessary time for something to be transformed into heritage is uncertain; sometimes, the mere suspicion that something could bare a mark from the past is enough to make us preserve it—and this describes a sense of "conservatism" in general... Art nouveau, which, as a first impulse, lasted for only a decade or so, was replicated in Paris as in Brazil until when? The 1970s? This is not by chance. A gate continues to be made with Art Nouveau stylistic elements, and this might happen because that style of designing gates ended up being constitutive to the way a gate is thought to be. Form is not always equivalent to function, as modernism wanted. From the historical point of view about the city, about the city landscape, there must be many things that exist in a certain way, which may have been defined by this or that cultural moment, but whose form was mixed with the very conception of the objects. Today, when you think about "gates", you think about Art Nouveau, even if you want to deny it, don't you?

J: Walking around Paris and taking the whole city under observation, I tend to think of it as an extremely functional place. My problem, though, is that I come across these objects, which seem to be of a surplus condition, and they do not immediately reveal their reason to be.

C: Maybe, this can be explained by the fact that there has been, specifically in Paris—and, maybe, in Haussmann's urban renovation —, a plan that redesigned the whole city. And these objects would belong to that time, to that urban vocabulary; and, if they were left to be here and there, and not everywhere, it is because there has not been a second urban renovation that would redesign, resignify, remove or restore a definite meaning to them. And then they are leftovers, they are indexes of the past. But, suddenly, those things that have remained become part of the Parisian character, and, for that reason, without much questioning, they are kept. If we think about the case of the Paris subways, they have not been entirely preserved but because "there is something historical there, it is necessary to safeguard, to conserve". But the thing is that not everything says "history" in those subways. They have wrong drains, doors that have been removed, leaving strange architectural frames on the walls, dysfunctional mechanical things, that do not demonstrate the need to be perpetuated in the name of history (at least if we think that "history" is not something one must apply to any object that has been kept through time just because it was). It is that part that does not tell us about history, that is resistant to prove its historical value, that is a problem (your work usually looks at these things...).

J: The problem is that there are objects similar to our "corner objects", that vary in height, and sometimes demonstrate uses, functionality, meanings. For example, there are some that have some claws, and that are placed at a height relative to the windows of the first floor of a building. These, certainly, would be there to prevent anyone from climbing the walls of the house. Regarding those that have functions like this, the others only seem to vary in height.

C: Perhaps the industrial modules with which they have been made are really easy to be traced—they are very similar to those that compose the urban furniture one can find in a park, for example. This gives the impression that we know where the material for the construction of these objects came from—and therefore, the question about where these objects came from does not actually matter that much; it should be easy to find out. What we do not know is why it is still part of the urban landscape. I mean: I can possibly know where the modules came from, or at least I know where to find them in the already established history of things. But this has nothing to do with style: it has to do with the immediate history of the production of modular objects, which, from some point in history on, will be used by whatever stylistic tendency, not implying, then, that the way of producing things will in fact respond to that idea of a "formal will" (exactly the point at which doubts arise about how much the old notion of style, of "zeitgeist", has been definitely lost in modernity). If the style is restored, it must have to do with the way the city perceives itself: built with concrete and iron; having no setbacks. It must have to do with an external aspect to the production of the objects... The factory, the industry, here, seems to supply the modular object—some must be moulds from the age of Louis XV, others from the time of Haussmann... From where it came, it must be possible to retrace. But the question is why this kind of thing still exists as ordinary urban furniture, and does not provoke revolt, horror, discomfort, does not arouse the desire for reform, withdrawal, or a will to get rid of it. Because, let us face it, their function is no longer explicit from the pedestrian's point of view, who could well discard them when rethinking how the city could be from now on... The yellow colour, the Parisian cream, could have been discussed this same way, but it was a standardization of the landscape that was accepted, and then, Paris being all cream is a feature of urban agreement—which means that the colour has nothing to do with style. But these objects vary in pattern, they are not exactly an agreed vocabulary...

unacknowledged/
dislodged/edges

J: What I notice about the height of these objects is that—perhaps not necessarily, but in most of them—those that stand in taller places look like they were produced by some specific companies, maybe directly related to protection or even urban safety. When hanged higher, they respond to a will to protect the building from being climbed. While others, located closer to the ground, must respond to a decision of preventing one from sleeping or sitting there... And then they would be fully functional. Like those trapped close to the pipes that rise through the walls; they isolate and protect the pipes from being broken or climbed. And there is the proximity of these objects to a series of self-explaining furniture, such as those that are installed close to the windows and on the edges of the roofs of a building to prevent pigeons from perching there—objects that are easy to buy, and that eventually look like these objects we are talking about, with the same sharp points at the top... But this furniture that avoids pigeons is surprisingly recent: the problem of the pigeons must be very old, and only recently it has been discovered how to deal with it. And the other objects that look like ours are those that prevent homeless people from establishing themselves next to the buildings—objects that circulate platforms and stones that could serve as a resting place, sharp objects installed on the floor... But these new objects must be from the 1970s, or so (they are made of plastic, wire, after all, made of disposable materials). The point is that our objects, when they evade the scale of the human body, that is, when they are much lower than a parapet, for example, preventing the body from supporting itself against them, or, conversely, when they are high enough to expel the immediate bodily scale ratio with them, they tend to demonstrate their functionality more immediately.

C: There is a human scale in all this urban furniture. Guimard's subway stations, their signs, somehow fit this pedestrian scale. At least in the central area of Paris, it is only when the pedestrian crosses a square or rounds a corner that these signs become legible, that the furniture presents itself. Perhaps there is a narrative of the city regarding what it supports as an element at the disposal of pedestrian visibility. It is an Art Nouveau object that does not work within the larger scales, through its imposition over the smallness of the body. What seems to happen there is that these objects, from which it is expected to have had a vertical impact over the citizens, from the highest to the lower classes, appear, on the contrary, much more slowly, throughout a kind of derivation process. In fact, in Paris, people do not have the habit to paint their gates, each of them with a different colour. Gates *have* specific colours. Probably, within this determination of how the objects are underlies an explanation that is not one of a process of absorption, by the popular sphere, of something (the Art Nouveau artistic inventions) that was once erudite; nor of a simple habit that was determined by a specific moment (the Haussmann's renovation, for instance). It seems to me that both Art Nouveau's urban efforts and Haussmann's previous ones had to respond to a comprehension of the city space and its circulation, which involves observing something about the pedestrian's behaviour...

DAY 4

C: I was thinking that these objects might not be just urban furniture, but they may be part of the history of the very emergence of this kind of thing.

J: Today, looking at some Art Nouveau buildings, I was thinking about the amount of iron that seems to exceed the necessary to guarantee the functionality of things; at most, it is used up to 30% more than needed, but no more than that. I look at some windows of that time, and their iron bars, which might have served to the protection of children and animals, full of curves, have today safety nets installed behind them. This proves the use of iron was not excessive. Some façades have the limits between one and another pavement crossed by iron elements,

but even there the used amount of iron is not that much. Looking at our corner objects, one cannot be sure about the function of each of them: some seem to protect pipes that were there and were later removed; others do not. Today, I saw one that was a simple and single iron bar, just attached to a certain height between two walls. Regarding the function of protecting the corner from becoming a deposit of anything, it was not enough. Therefore, below, on the floor, there was a kind of triangular concrete bevel, suspending the sidewalk towards the corner of the walls...

C: Customarily, when reinstating the criticism that modern movements made about the Art Nouveau buildings and objects, we tend to say that Art Nouveau has to do with covering the surface of things—the structure of things would already be given, and the "style" would consist in betraying that structure...

J: Yes, and this is false... A building can have different types of windows, and this can also be a way to compensate the necessities of each floor on which they appear: on the first floor, one window may be small, with a balcony surrounded by an iron fence; on an upper floor, another window can be larger, without a balcony and with less iron. Of course: the first floor would be facing the street, and even so, it needs ventilation; the highest one doesn't need to be defended from the exposure to the street. Having different windows does not mean that the façade varies from window types for a simple decorative reason. Today I saw an apartment building whose right side of the façade was different from the left one, but even so, the whole looked symmetrical. Each inhabitant has to deal with their apartment in a different way; one has a terrace but does not have a window that receives full sunlight; another has a bright house but has no terrace. This does not prevent these two apartments from being brought together in harmony in relation to the façade of their building. It is an architectural reasoning that works by means of decorative compensations.

JOÃO SIMÕES X CADU RICCIOPPO OBJETS AUX COINS: A CONVERSATION ON A CORNER NUCLEIRO

C: Of course. But I would recall this critical comment towards the decorativism of Art Nouveau because it has something that still seems interesting to me, if properly pursued—i.e., if we could perhaps correct it in relation to what concerns that "mere surface", "mere covering of things". What we usually call the "Art Nouveau style" is frequently something we identify as "appliques" in gates, façades; but this style might eventually concern less the buildings in which one sees these elements, and moreover a specific reasoning about the urban sphere: a stylistically ordering of the public space. And, if so, this is not any organization, but one that must be on the surface. Haussmann also organized the space of the city, but maybe not exactly that of sociability—and the sociability demands style (again, habit, routine, commonplaces). In addition to the large and decorated façades, we detect "Art Nouveau", in general, in specific elements marked by the use of metal, above all, but which appears in an urban and not domestic vocabulary.

J: Yes, Art Nouveau lasted for about 15 years, which is a very short period of time; short, but just enough to elaborate a set of elements that would compose a strong stylistic vocabulary.

C: And probably the solutions that emerged there lasted, and, then, later, became a kind of fever, mania, because it was not exactly about touching the surface of things, but, rather, establishing the connection between the pedestrian scale and the park scale; between the scale of the park and the scale of the houses; and so on. If there is a reason why that style has been criticized as severely as one can read in Adolf Loos, it does not lie in the problem of facings, but in the very fact that what should be the structure of things—the metal—has become a decorative element. It came out, became an exoskeleton of the urban scale—and the idea of exoskeletons is close to the heart of Art Nouveau also in its predilection for motifs of insects, dragonflies, lobsters, cicadas...

J: And when the motifs are floral, they tell of an appreciation for a specific organic sense: plants whose flowers are open and rigid. Many of the floral motifs, the plants that appear on the façades of the buildings, are frontal: from a botanical point of view, showing their greater capacity to capture sunlight; from a functional point of view, offering themselves figuratively by their largest side to cover windows and balconies, protecting the interiors from the sun.

C: The falsehood of Art Nouveau is, in fact, given—it makes metal pretend that it is not metal...

J: Today I was passing by the Quai Branly and was observing its artificial lake. Around the lake, there is a metal fence painted in brown. The stems of the fence, just because they are slightly curved and painted, resemble that type of vegetation that can be found in any lake. Although this is a modernist way of dealing with the need to create an urban vocabulary, and has much fewer curves than any Art Nouveau fence, a"naturalization" is necessary for its function to accommodate itself in the city.

C: Our objects may be part of a moment when a reasoning is forming of how to prepare a vocabulary for what is public or has a public scale. I wonder if there are not many other objects like these, which nevertheless do not appear or show themselves so easily; and perhaps our objects only appear to us because they are on a very direct scale in relation to the body, to the pedestrian; because they create a continuity of vocabulary between one block and another.

J: For sure. Concerning the stylistic continuity between one building and another, and, consequently, between one of these objects and another, sometimes it exists, sometimes it doesn't. These objects of ours seem to respond in general to the building they are applied to, and not to a replication that describes a continuity, like the grillage of a park. This leads us to believe that, if they are objects placed later in the buildings, as urban solutions, and not as part of the constructive thought of each building, it is an urban solution that is unique to each type of building, and not as one which is simply a vocabulary of the entire city, no matter the construction that happens to be applied. But, still, visually, when walking around the city and looking at one, then another, then another, they seem to be replicating something of each other.

C: If we are right to presume that these objects must have at least spread in connection with Art Nouveau, they might tell us something about an idea of gradation: more than an elegant garment, capable of proceeding by highlighting a building against another one, the "Art Nouveau style" would then concern this gradation, a kind of continuous—and never interrupted—movement between one urban element and another. And this can maybe raise the suspicion that Art Nouveau does not echelon things from the domestic environment to the public space—from the small sugar bowl to the pantry furniture, from the furniture to the pantry, and from that to the whole interior of the house, and then to its external façade—but just the opposite. Especially since the iron, the central element of Art Nouveau, does not appear with that much power in the domestic environment, but on the streets. If this is true, then the narrative of scale of this style might perhaps be better told beginning from the outside: the curve of the street demands the curve of the sidewalk, which demands the curve of the façade, and this demands a curved balcony and window, entering, this way, the domestic space, where objects would also be curved.

J: The narrative of iron is exactly that. Observing a specific Art Nouveau building the other day, a tenant arrived, and, to open the door, he had to almost crouch to reach the handle, which was super low—as the gate was very small, everything was open at the top, but the lock was at the bottom of it. There's something about separating the building from the street, but this is produced by something that occurs underneath. The fence follows the landscape of the street, because the building is at the end of a kind of alley; and then, the Art Nouveau fence repeats the view from the street, decreasing, like the visual effect of it, in perspective towards the end of the alley. It is the fence that indicates that there is, in that alley, a building to be seen.

C: Sure, and after that, there must be a functioning of this style that demands the tenant to continue the compensation of that perspective from the city to the alley towards the interior of his house via the gate. The will of "total art" must present itself as an effect that begins in the city (and, then, it can no longer be explained as a moral problem, which begins in the bourgeois individual, as that modernist critic wanted). If this situation was to be reversed, the approach should have been to start a modification in the visuality of the urban sphere, and not in the criticism of the small wallpaper, slipper, or sugar bowl—and this was in fact what has happened when the urbanist took the place once occupied by the architect...

J: Watching that tenant duck down to open the door was amusing: he had to submit himself to Art Nouveau to open the gate of his own house. And I kept thinking that, from the individual's point of view, one must learn how to open one's own door, and each door inevitably has a way to be opened. If there was a pattern, it would also be individualized from the point of view of the door of one's own house—some need to pull, others have to push, others have to turn the key around and a half; the fact that there is a standard does not overcome this individual scale, which has to do with the knob, its age, then the key, then the key core, and the smaller the thing, the more it needs to be understood by the owner.

C: From an individual point of view, everyone learns to open their own gate, no matter how modular the gates are. Perhaps this is something about making the pedestrian go through a very unique experience, which the practicality of life does not bear. This constitutes a place of eroticism that is averse to the standardization or repetition this practicality of life implies.

J: For sure—the criticism of Art Nouveau that is worthwhile concerns only the accessibility to goods...

C: ... And this is true: Art Nouveau, which is produced in foundries that are not in the central region of the city, only appears in the centre—the industry from which the objects come is not Art Nouveau, it is a warehouse.

J: Yes, what would be feasible today—because producing iron like this or that would only depend on the existing moulds and the amount of iron available...

C: ... Hence, the moralism of Loos, its anti-eroticism: his "Poor Little Rich Man", who wants his whole house decorated by an artist, covered with art, could not be a petit bourgeois; whoever wants *style* is thinking about style in fact, and therefore has time to spend with it...

JOÃO SIMÕES X CADU RICCIOPPO OBJETS AUX COINS: A CONVERSATION ON A CORNER

J: ... And the fact that he wants his whole house decorated detail by detail means that—and this is the fabula docet in Loos' story—when he gets a gift from his grandson and the gift does not match the house, probably what happens is that he would not like the gift anyway.

C: We are talking about our objects, and we were led to think about Art Nouveau, because over these objects hovers the idea that they are unnecessary. Haven't you seen other objects like that?

J: Almost everything I saw, I am able to assume that was once necessary, but, then, has lost its function, remaining as if they were memories of functional things—remnants of objects that were supposed to hold signs once, hooks that were supposed to hold plants, and so on. Other than that, everything looks somewhat just decorative—ceramics, appliques. And the criticism does not extend to them... Today, walking to look for these objects again, in some corner, on top of the façade of a store, I saw a volute that served to hold a small sign, whose curves, turns, did not make any functional sense, but looked like the movement of a plant. But, then, a few steps further on, there was another façade of a store, where there was an absolutely similar element, but this time with a figurative plant motif at the end of its curves. The foliage of this other gave sense to the first, which was more geometric.

DAY 5

C: That sounds good to think about: we could assume that, agreeing with the modern narrative which wants to see abstraction as the final evolution of forms, the oldest had to be the one with the plant, and the newest, the most abstract one. But we could also assume just the opposite: that the geometric one has to be the first, and, in the need to repeat its function, and therefore trying to understand the underlying figure it probably represented, the one with the figurative leaf could well be the one that came later, as a need to understand it via figure replacement...

J: I remember reading something about the iron and glass greenhouses from the turn of the 19th to the 20th Century: iron and glass have been used for the construction of houses for a long time. The architectural object that most exhibited the development of iron and glass, and was therefore taken up as a model when iron began to be produced on a larger scale in the late 19th Century, was the plant greenhouse—and the experience of entering a greenhouse and looking from the inside to the outside may well explain something of what we are talking about. The iron is not curved, but, looked at against the light, and with the plants growing over it, it looks curved, lacy. This happens because, from the point of view of those who look against the light, the buds of plants and the veins of foliage and flowers are contrasted, twisting the lean grid of the building modules. Hence, branch, root, stem, the structural parts of plants, suddenly merge with the iron in Art Nouveau motifs.

C: Especially when looking at the gates of houses, this problem becomes more evident—and perhaps the gates may be the very place where problems like these appear decisively, more than the façades. At some point in history, the buildings needed gates, when they needed to isolate themselves from the city, not only from the point of view of security, but also to settle the issue of the separation between public and private spaces—and this is a problem enunciated both by Art Nouveau and by modernism in architecture, in which the façade of an apartment will be just glass, but elevated above street level, and therefore protected from it. However, the gates do not exactly configure private space, except metaphorically; and the elevated glass and concrete boxes, the modern compromise solution, are already a private space, but behaving like a public one. When I was an Art Nouveau pedestrian, the gates and fences, throughout the time I was walking in front of a building, played the role of deflecting my attention from what was there, in the interior of the house, to the contact surface between the house and the street...

J: It is very common to see here in Paris objects that protect the first floor from the gazes of the street, some of them similar to our objects—iron bulkheads, which are sometimes replaced by the sandblasting of a part of the window glasses. In an Art Nouveau building that I saw here, this solution did not occur: it was a two-story apartment: the first floor

JOÃO SIMÕES X CADU RICCIOPPO OBJETS AUX COINS: A CONVERSATION ON A CORNER NUCLEIRO

has an opened view from the street, and one could see a staircase that led to the second floor. But there was no intimate space on the first one: the bedrooms, the spaces of intimacy, were probably on the second, and from a pedestrian's point of view, one can't see what's inside the second-floor window. This way, the façade of this building can be continuous, without these addenda that, in other buildings, present themselves already on the first floor, disturbing the façade's unity.

C: I have the impression that our objects are more related to a time of dilation of the passer-by, of those who walk, than to a specific functionality. The Art Nouveau gates are not very high, but the time you spend walking—absorbed by the gate—works as the necessary time to protect the intimacy of the building from the street, even if it happens visually. Couldn't it be that our objects, which are not exactly Art Nouveau, are the way that Art Nouveau expanded its coverage towards the peripheries of the city, where what Art Nouveau had of a prominence or class differentiation ceases to operate? If that was the case, then we would have to actually think in terms of style in relation to it. Because in Art Nouveau houses, all of them in the centre of the city, and belonging to the upper classes, the building itself must have already solved, in its architectural design, without any addenda, the problems that continuously beset (if not describe) the upper classes—security, isolation, protection, differentiation. But this specific pleasure, of the flaneur eye being erotically entertained by the curved element, dissenting from that straight practicality of life, may have overflowed out of the centre...

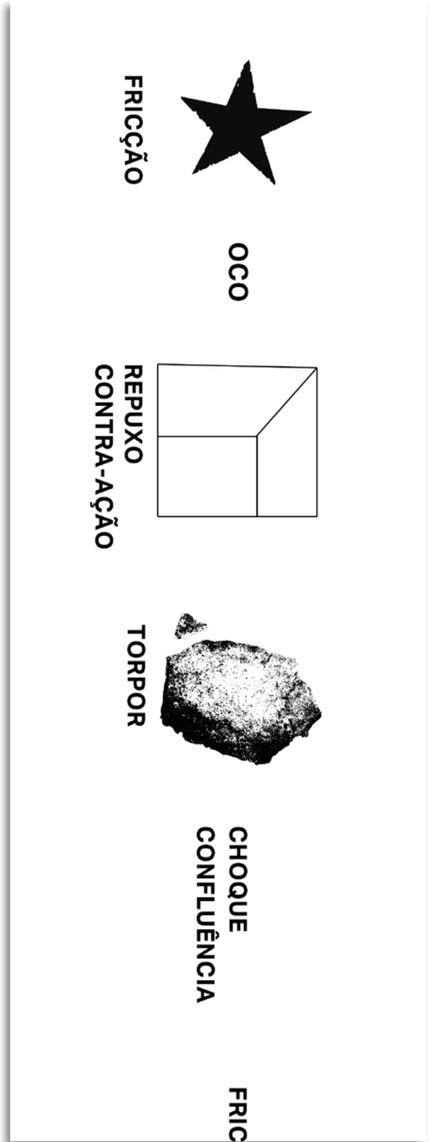
J: It is not absurd to think this way... Some of our objects have a very Art Nouveau semblance, and, therefore, they must state class differentiation; and others look much more like functional objects. But these are made of the same material, with curves as well, only not requiring us to stop to look at them, or to spend time in doing that. And still, they do not go unnoticed. Perhaps they blend in more with the amount and distribution of iron, structure, and modules of urban furniture. But they don't become modular at all; one is different from the other, but with the same amount of iron. And the expensive part of their production is not the iron, it is the mould—a more economical solution would be to

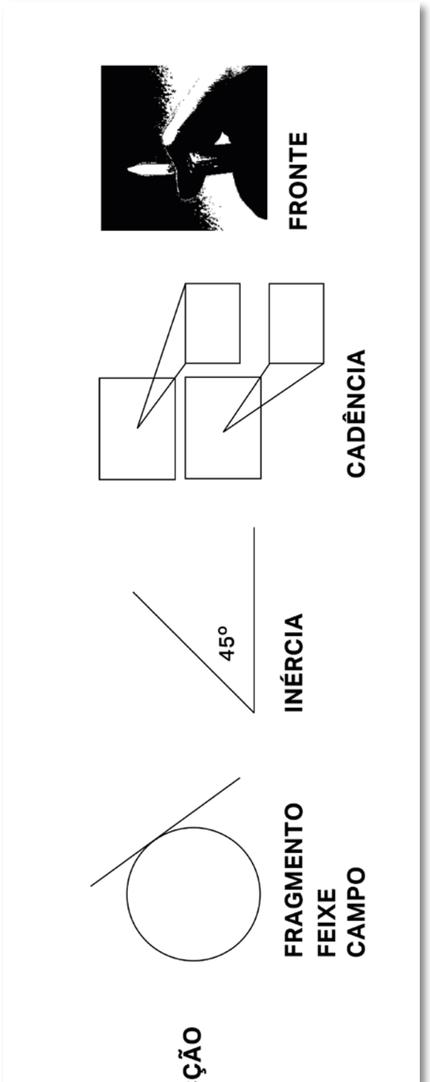
produce a single mould for everyone who cannot afford the differentiation, and make a single mould for those who could. This would be a possible urban solution for the time. What they—the peripheral and the central ones—do have in common is the same scale. Our objects don't get bigger or smaller as we move from the centre to the periphery of the city.

C: But it may be that such objects are not, in order to be cheaper, made by the logic of a mould for each house of the highest classes (therefore several moulds, each one of them by the price of one), and a single mould for the whole of lower classes (a hundred by the price of one). Perhaps, it may be that these hundred are made from parts of the moulds of the singular ones, but recombined singularly—from the point of view of mass production, perhaps that would be feasible during the beginning of that Century, and the recombination sounded as "individual" as the custom made; and, thus, the stylistic element that concerns the idea of "individuality" was guaranteed, even if it was not a singular individuality, but a recombined one, and therefore marked by a public project that was sneaky baroque, rhetorical, pleading "variation" in the place of "uniqueness". If this were true, this wouldn't be about neither material nor object—but a matter of means of production. How many people melted iron and poured it into the mould during the Art Nouveau *epoque*? And what if there were not the moulds of the gate of that specific family that have remained, but the mould that makes the top piece, then the one of the left section of another house, plus a straight mould of something else, which, recombined, would make a corner object which resembles, but is not, an Art Nouveau piece repeated fifteen years later, by the same person who poured the iron in the mould made for that family, and for another, and another, recombining them as a new one?

J: There is one breach within the Art Nouveau production: it requires everything to be custom made. But, in terms of architectural design, many buildings have two corner objects; in the name of unity, they have to be similar; in the name of style, slightly different. This situation obligates the sphere of production to vary a single mould, which borrows to this same sphere an idea of variation that sounded more feasible for the operator who was "simply" destined to cast the iron than that logic of individualization. He already had to slightly modify the first mould to produce the second one. This variation implies not making a new mould anymore but modifying or replicating its features. If the situation was one of thinking of how to produce "custom made" objects for a public scale, and not for that ultra-individual one, the solution could likely be: modifying (or, else, recreating, eventually by other means than casting) the first mould, one, two, three, four, a hundred times... ‡

João Simões is a visual artist. He has integrated several group exhibitions, such as: Ratos e Urubus (Centro Cultural São Paulo, 2019-2020); Mostra do Espaço das Artes (I, II, and III Editions, EdA-USP, 2017, 2018 and 2019); Programa Nascente (MAC-USP, 2017). He is the author of "Idas e vindas de Minas Gerais" (with Cadu Riccioppo, In: *Gerais*. FUNARTE / Edições Aurora, 2017) and "1, 2, 3" (folder for Raul Mourão's exhibition - EdA-USP, 2017, with Nícolas Mangolim). He was one of the creators of Debates da Arte Contemporânea, a series of lectures held at EdA-USP (2016-2018). He gave drawing and photography workshops at SESI-Ouro Preto (2017). Currently, he is an exchange student at ENSAD (École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs), in Paris, through the Mobility Program of the Department of Visual Arts-USP.





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THE PUBLIC DESIGN OF SÃO PAULO

THE PUBLIC DESIGN of SÃO PAULO

São Paulo is a city filled with signals. By completing 450 years, sunk in this “signage babel”, it is necessary to inquire: how many of those signs are of public interest? ¶ To what extent have designers dedicated themselves to interventions in the urban landscape that might rely on the citizens needs and in which the public service is involved? High-quality projects do exist, but the general balance is not exciting. ¶ Let’s begin by remembering three public visual interventions that occupy a highlight spot in the landscape and belong to a category that we could call “blind by overseeing”: traffic signs, street address identifications, and floor coverings. ¶ The information related to vehicle traffic is a subject that deserved to be thoroughly examined. It is omnipresent, it beacons our movement through the city, be it using collective or individual transportation, be it by foot. If we think about the depth of this presence and the space that it occupies in the landscape, we’ll be surprised. ¶ From the point of view of access to the main destinations,

São Paulo isn't poorly serviced. However, even as this basic need it is being fulfilled as is, there's still a lot in the design area to be done. The support and the graphic language resent any form of refinement, the technology is far from its desirable status—after all, it's hard to deny that even the so-called smart traffic lights have only medium IQs. ¶ To improve all these would imply voluptuous costs, given the dimension of the issue, but its importance is vital, in every sense of the term. ¶ The signs of address identification are the result of a 1978 project. In relation to the preceding situation, they represented a leap of information, as there has been a mass growth regarding the orientation of its inhabitants. ¶ The former signs, usually fixed at the corner buildings, only showcased the street name, while the new project included both the support and its location as well as the sign itself. ¶ The information came to be readable from both sides, the spelling of the street names was standardized, and the block number and zip code were added. Today, this all sounds obvious, and the signs melted in such a way to the landscape of São Paulo that they appear to be the result of a spontaneous generation. It's a success story: it was adopted by dozens of cities, becoming a synonym for street identification throughout Brazil. In the last years, in high traffic routes, a second sign started to be implemented, of bigger dimensions, visible from a long distance, sometimes luminous, seeking to solve the legibility issue due to the moving vehicle. However, in many cases, the design of the support and the spelling of the names created noise for the understanding of the information. The reading from afar issue deserved to be broken down through the same comprehensive view of the 1978 project. ¶ At last, the third intervention included in the category is the floor pattern with the drawing of São Paulo state. Who is the author of this project? This also seems to be the result of spontaneous generation. ¶ São Paulo's response to the brilliant solution of Copacabana's sidewalk, as shy as it might be in its drawings, it's an insightful solution. Through three square pieces—one white, one black, and one black and white, divided diagonally—it's created an infinite pattern of repetition. ¶ The result is a component easy to manufacture and install, which ends up stating itself as an identity recognizable by the citizen. Perhaps it is a good portrait of São Paulo's pragmatism: in contrast to the winding sea curves and mountains from Rio de Janeiro, the serious geometry from the map of São Paulo's state. ¶ There's a second group of interventions, that we could call total design. In this standout, for their magnitude and meaning, the subways' and Avenida Paulistas' environmental projects, concluded in the '70s. Each in its own way, provide answers that go beyond a pragmatism of short scope. ¶ There are demands regarding objective information to be supplied, but there's also the concern of building an environment that is able to meet the users' needs of comfort and sensorial stimuli. ¶ The subways environmental project is as good as the transportation service that is offered. Moreover, it's a dissociable part of it. This is about the most successful public informational system for the citizen in São Paulo, a reference to the entire country. It's hard to separate what is signage from what is ambience to what is architecture. ¶ The communication system begins in how the naming of the stations, an example of commitment to the city's history and the concrete references of the users. It continues in the identification of the stations in the urban landscape through discrete yet notable signs. ¶ After the user enters the station, in virtue of the absence of external references, all orientation becomes the responsibility of the signage, which gives us the dimension of its importance. ¶ In 1990, during the implantation of São Paulo's station branch, a chromatic environmental project was developed, creating a direct dialog between design and architecture and showcasing how it was possible to expand the understanding of what signage is. ¶ The dissonant note is an account of the excessive growth of space claimed by advertisement content that has been taking place in the last years. This puts in jeopardy the efficiency of an exemplary system. ¶ Paulistas' environmental project is another story of success. In the time of its implantation, the highway was the lane of commercial expansion to which was turned the attention of all the city. The project involved both signage and urban furniture. ¶ After its implementation and for years on end, São Paulo's official portrait became the Highway landscape. With its distinctive black totems, the lane names written vertically, subverting enrooted perceptual habits, caused turmoil at that time. In fact, it anticipates the need to project the information to be read from the moving vehicle, and not only by the passerby. ¶ The work represents the concretization of the utopia that moved urbanists, architects, and designers at that time—one of a global reordering of the cities landscape. Let it be heavily considered the questionable character

CHICO HOMEM DE MELO
THE PUBLIC DESIGN OF SÃO PAULO
NUCLEIRO

of the utopia, as the quality of the given answer was one of the public design experiences that best deserve to represent amongst the most important ever fulfilled in Brazil. As the years went by, it was patched-up and altered, until its complete current de-characterization. ¶ Staying in the sphere of big urban projects, it's important to note the interventions of the Municipal Urbanization Enterprise (EMURB), among which stand out Praça da Sé (Sé square), done by occasion for the construction of the subway. All the flooring design was idealized with the concern of qualifying each space accordingly to its predominant use. ¶ But what drives more attention is the compass rose around ground zero. A point of great meaning for the city, reference for the counting of distance and the numbering of streets, this small totem was lost in the space of the square. ¶ The compass rose, in granite and marble, returned the significance of the totem to the city, providing the place with the dignity and symbolism it deserved. ¶ There's a last intervention that deserves to be remembered, this one more connected to the graphical language than the environmental one. It is the visual identity project of São Paulo's town hall, started in 1990, during Luíza Erundinas' management. For the first time, there was systematic concern for the visual standard regarding the messages issued by towns' administration. ¶ The project included the managements identification signage and all design elements for each department. The building site signs and visual treatment for its fleet of public buses, and all broadcasting posters for public events. ¶ Today, the space taken by city halls' institutional marketing continues to grow, as much as the funds that are consumed by it. However, this assemblage of resources came to be managed by publicity agencies with very distinct objectives in relation to those that guided the project of 1990. ¶ Although the visual pollution deters from the scope of this article, it is appropriate not to completely miss out the problem. The task of elaborating appropriate legislations in the interest of the city and its inhabitants is another face of urbanists, architects and designers' performance. ¶ Over the past decade, multiple efforts have been made in this sense, with the possibility to be resumed and reflected upon, fundamental to finance the positioning and action of those professionals involved. Worthy of note are the projects of the avenues Angélica and Pacaembu, this being an intervention of magnificent reach, a case study of total design to be examined with attention. ¶ This brief panorama of public interventions formed in São Paulo indicates that the city is increasingly condemned to the culture of private design, centred in commercial and immediate interests, or, in what concerns the public sphere, to projects submitted to the imperatives of political marketing. On both fronts, the interests of the city and of the citizen seem to receive an increasingly diminished attention. ‡

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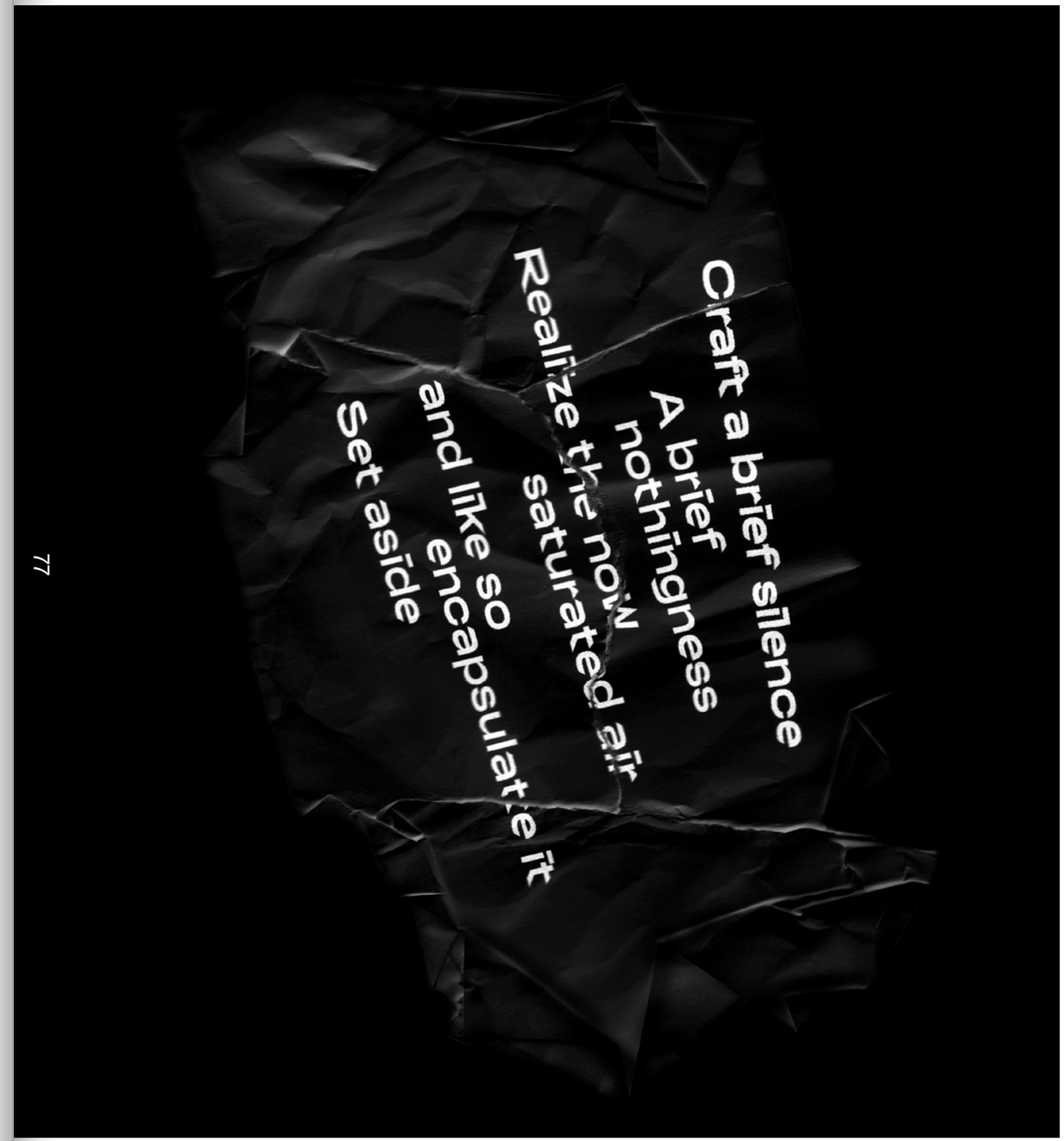
* First published in: *Revista Projeto Design*, São Paulo, n. 287, jan. 2004.



This work seeks to look at words not only as reading mechanisms but also as a visual object. As from these elements and the meanings that each one carries, it's proposed to the reader to review and reform the linguistic unit of the syntax, revealing new narrative meanings.

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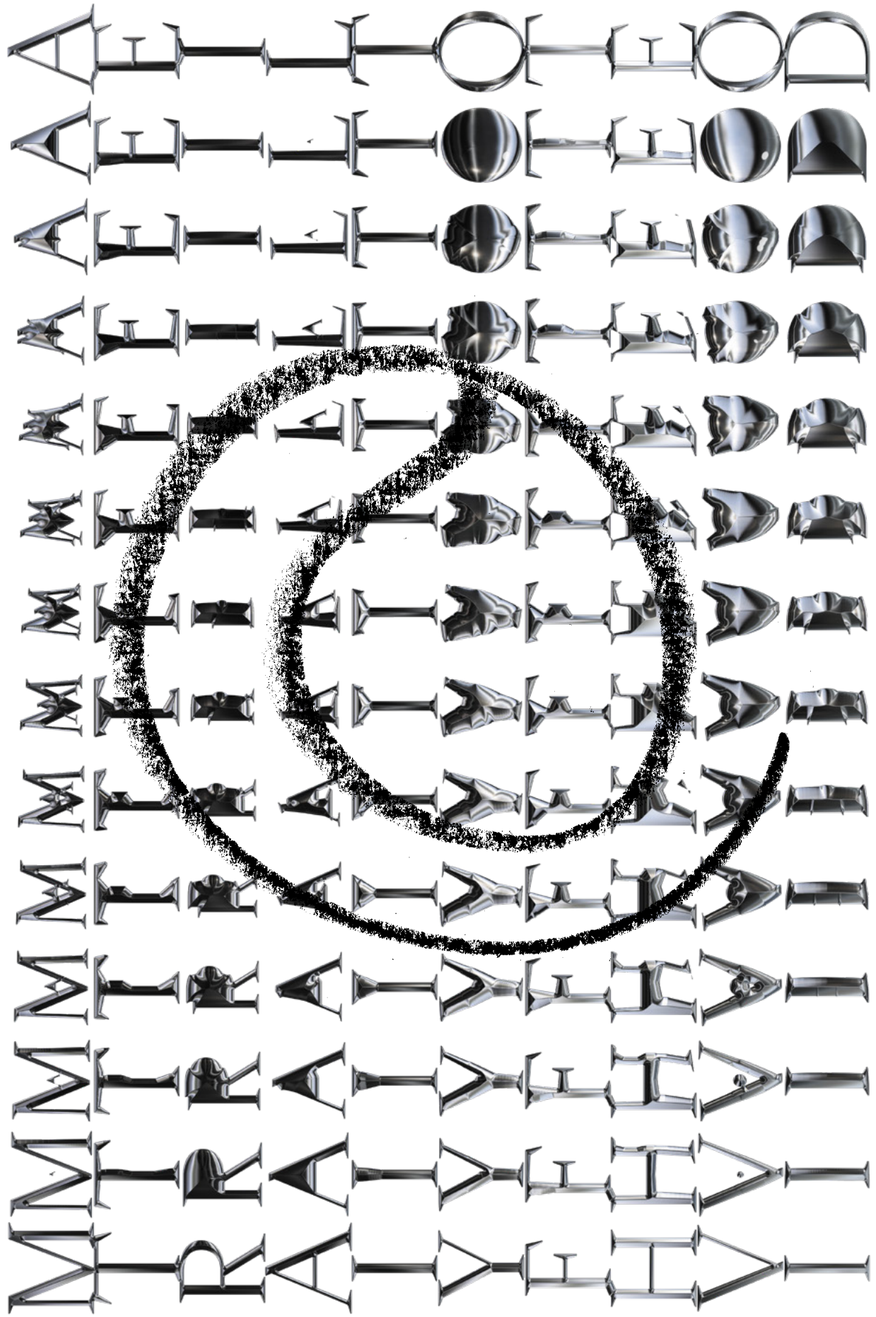


Conceived in 1919 and executed in 1964, ‘Air de Paris’ by Marcel Duchamp might be one of the first artworks to openly enunciate the notion of emptiness within the art field in the last century. It consists of an ampoule inscribed with the following: ‘Marcel Duchamp 1964 50cc air de Paris’. The title suggests that the content is the main element and the receptacle is merely circumstantial, which seems ironic when considering the (im)materiality of the former and the aesthetic complexity of the latter. ¶ This operation should be understood not as movement nor a trend but rather as a statement originated under specific conditions and that responded to a certain kind of reflexivity. Artists who resorted to this strategy shared a radical view on art foundations. It is in this confrontational context, then, where we need to situate those practices that explored absence as a starting point and exercised a notable impact on the art institution, forever changing its role in society. ¶ These notions of absence were recurrent within Conceptual Art. Indeed, it is in this context in which many artists questioned the need for creating objects or images in order to ‘produce art’—with this stance, conceptual artists brought into play the reasoning of a tradition that for centuries had been producing unique and valuable objects. In this sense, conceptual art practices were the univocal background from which artworks dealing with the invisible arose in the second half of the twentieth century. Conceptual Art meant a decisive move away from the tradition of retaining the aesthetic experience into one single object one may address as a piece of art conveyed via ephemeral actions that directly confronted notions established by the art institution. Conceptual artists used a set of disparate practices that systematically subverted the rules and blurred the distinction between art and day-to-day life, demystifying the status quo embodied by the traditional art apparatus with a huge influx of propositions. ¶ In ‘The sense of Order’, E. H. Gombrich discusses the structural environment of the artwork. He argues that an appropriate frame passes unnoticed—it is mainly when it is inappropriate that we are suddenly aware of its existence. A similar impression happens to occur with artworks that deal with notions of absence and invisibility. Very often, they put an emphasis on the conditions under which art functions and is sanctioned. In this way, artists point out the elements that conform with such ‘proper frame’. Artists that work under the rubric of institutional critique are keen on dismantling the normative and seemingly neutral codes that rule the production, dissemination and consumption of art. ¶ This procedure can be clearly observed in Yves Klein’s ‘The Specialisation of Sensibility in the Raw Material State into Stabilised Pictorial Sensibility, The Void’ (1958), that consisted of presenting a gallery completely absent of artworks. Although the artist had projected the artworks in his own mind, visitors would encounter a space stripped bare of what validates itself. Pushing further the discovery of the power of emptiness towards an acknowledgment of the underlying things we are not used to perceiving, in Michael Asher’s work at the Claire S. Copley Gallery in Los Angeles (1974), the artist removed the wall that separated the gallery space from the gallery office where the actual business of art takes place. In another example, Rauschenberg’s ‘Erased de Kooning drawing’ (1953), the artist literally erased a drawing by Willem de Kooning. With this action, Rauschenberg attacked head on the high modernist tradition

LUANA GRACIANO
MATERIALITY OF THE VOID
NUCLEIRO

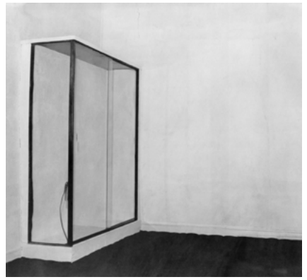
Marcel Duchamp. Air de Paris, 1919/1964.

**open paths and/
fill the absence:/
something breaks/
far from the eyes**

that was embodied by the writings of formalist art critic Clement Greenberg. The paradox here is that practices that address and confront the invisible institutional structures rely on notions such as emptiness and acts of withdrawal. By subtracting an element of the equation—ultimately, the artwork itself—artists make visible the previously overlooked conditions that allow art to be produced and consumed. For instance, when Marcel Duchamp decided to withdraw himself and present 'Fountain' (1917) under the name of R. Mutt, his action not only shocked the exhibition organisers and audience but also, and more importantly, questioned the very foundations of art and authorship. ¶ Actions that take the form of withdrawal are a refusal to take part in the 'strategies' of the space. 'Strategies', according to Michel de Certeau, are regulations and impositions to control and normalise actions and behaviours that are supposed to be proper in a given space. Under de Certeau's scope, everyday life is nothing but a minefield—a highly constrained battleground where regulation and control systems are set to normalise behaviours and minimise acts of dissent. These artistic practices that aim to subvert the seemingly neutral context of the art space could be interpreted as Michel de Certeau's 'tactics'—a set of actions that free the space from such authority in order to subvert the dominant order. It is by actively choosing not to conform to the dictates of the institution that artists free themselves from imposed rules and traditional preconceptions. By choosing to dissent, these artists' sudden break imposes a state of reflexion and creates consciously avoid the production of objects also problematise the notion of property and authenticity. When the triad producer-object-owner is disrupted a sense of lack of credibility arises and interrupts its most fundamental object maker, then, is called into question. Equally, the institution is also questioned—if art is not concerned anymore with physical objects, then the idea of the museum understood as a repository of artefacts (objects of art) is seriously challenged. This is

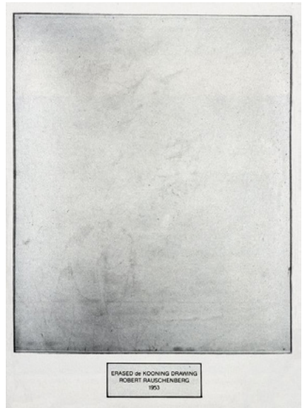
Michael Asher. Untitled, 1974.

in fact one of the most critical issues art institutions have to deal with in order to accommodate those radical approaches. A direct result of those practices since the sixties was indeed the reformulation and development of the idea and role of art institutions in society. In this sense, the choice of not-making, or the making under new parameters, sabotages not only the art structure but also the capitalist horizon in which we live. ¶ The act of absenteeism understood as a political statement has also been used in the context of the art boycott. Several examples of art boycotts have appeared in the last couple of decades. David Beech, in the book 'I can't work like this—a reader on recent boycotts and contemporary art' states that art boycotts resemble labour strikes due to the withdrawal from participation. He argues, however, that the art boycott is almost entirely symbolic, as it does not have any real impact on the activities or profit of those who, for instance, are patrons or sponsors of major institutions such as museums and biennales. By targeting those sponsors, who arguably try to 'artwash' their dubious reputation by supporting exhibitions and art-related events, the institution is, by extension, the one under fire. In our current situation in which public funds for the arts and culture are being dramatically reduced, institutions are pushed to find new ways of financing—one recurrent strategy is to partner with private organisations to be able to fund their programmes and carry on with their missions. ¶ The refusal to participate in and/or to produce objects of art is part of a political discourse of resistance in a wider sociopolitical context. The driving forces under capitalism are also imposed within the logic of contemporary art production—namely growth, efficiency and productivity. Notions such as nothingness, invisibility, absence or withdrawal are relatable to a wide range of meanings, and the materiality of these abstract conceptions might be difficult to trace. Nevertheless, emptiness can be liberating while effacing barriers of conventions and allowing us to have a glimpse of what is beyond those barriers. ‡



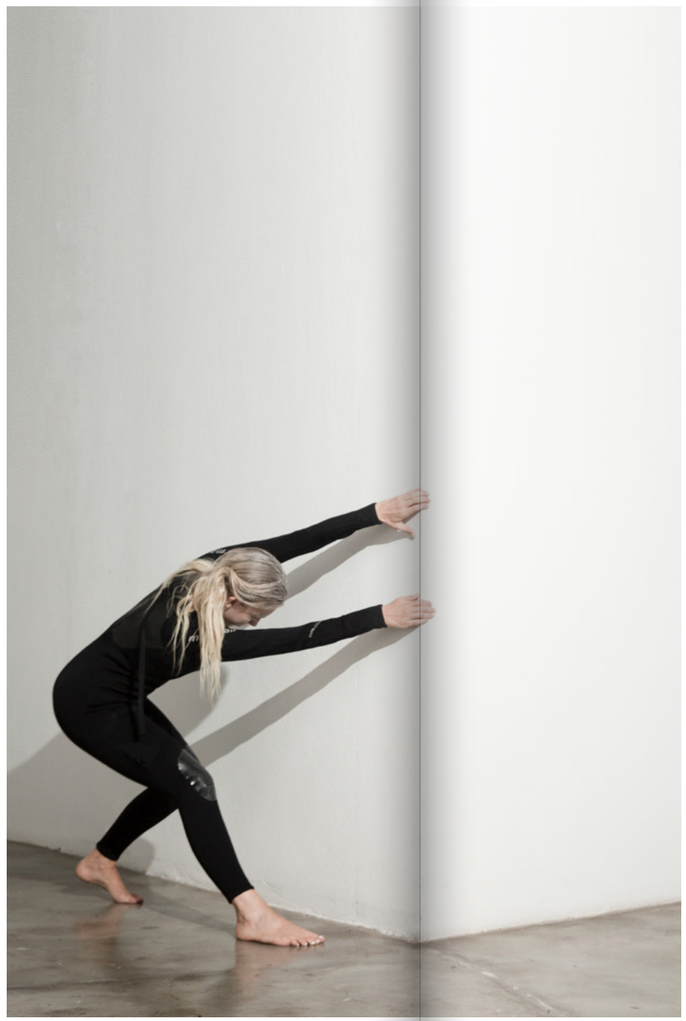
Yves Klein. The Specialisation of Sensibility in the Raw Material State into Stabilised Pictorial Sensibility, The Void, 1958.

Robert Rauschenberg. Erased de Kooning Drawing, 1953.



CAROLINA PINHEIRO
A CONFERENCE OF BEINGS

00086

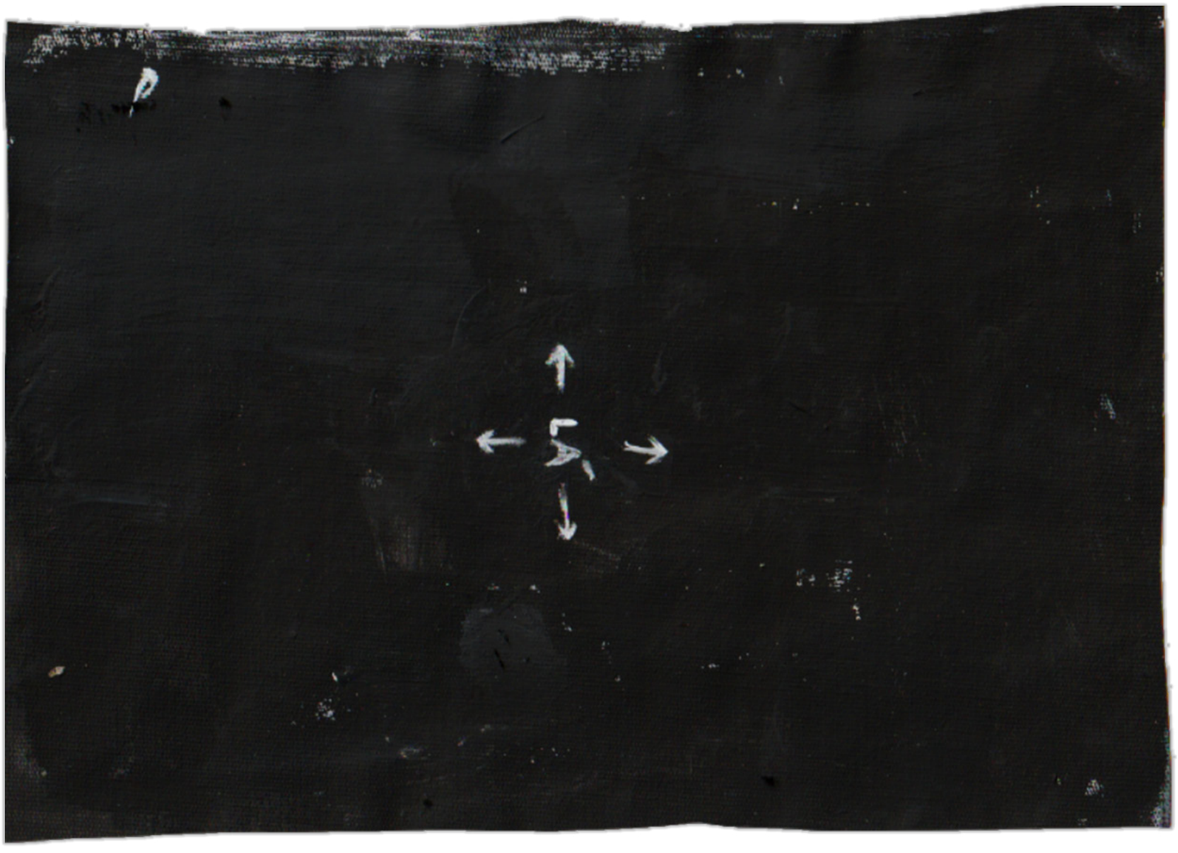


NUCLEIRO

E

DANIELA FEDERIGHI

STRUGGLE



BÁRBARA PEREIRA
NÚMERO ZERO

TACACÁ

"Food also transforms the body, and tailors us with what the modern man used to call "nature". In open and community kitchens, it's impossible not to realize how the world is so much more alive than we imagine it. The kitchen was never a place only of production and of food transformation, as the industrial order at all costs made it to be. As spaces that excel in experimentation, kitchens were always home to phármako practices (the knowledge about what is medicine, what is poison, what can heal and what can kill), herbs, spices, broths, scents, sensations, affections." Alana Moraes, excerpt from *Experimentação*

INGREDIENTS

For the tucupī
1 liter of *tucupi*
3 garlic cloves
Chicória-do-pará
1 pack of *alfavaca*

For the jambu
Salt
1 pack of *jambu*
Water

For the shrīmp
500g of dry shrimp, salted and with shells

Serves 2 portīons

For the gum
½ cup of *tapioca* gum
½ cup of cold water

For the tacacá
2 liters of water
Salt
2 garlic cloves
1 pack of *chicória-do-pará*

To prepare the *tucupi*: in a pot, boil the *tucupi* with garlic, *chicória-do-pará* and alfavaca, to add scent. Set aside.
To prepare the *jambu*: in another pot, heat the water. When it boils, salt to taste. Blanch the *jambu* in the water. Then put the *jambu* into a recipient with water. Set aside.
To prepare the shrimp: clean the dry shrimps. After that, wash them in cold water, to unsalt. Set aside.
To prepare the *tacacá*: in a third pan, add the water, salt, garlic and leaves of *chicória-do-pará*. When it boils, remove the garlic and the leaves of *chicória-do-pará*. Add the dissolved *tapioca* gum, beating non-stop, so it doesn't get lumpy. Serve in *cuias*, following the proportion ¾ of *tucupi* for ¼ of gum, with the *jambu* leaves and the dried shrimps.

Laíssa Moreira

ART IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Laerte, *A Insustentável Leveza de Regina Duarte* [The Unbearable Lightness of Regina Duarte], 2020.

GABRIELLE MOTA

"The lightness/weight opposition is the most mysterious, most ambiguous of all"

(Milan Kundera, 1982)

Lightness and heaviness are two broad concepts that are commonly used to describe people's feelings towards their life experiences. During times when the needs of the social and political fields are met by the government, a hopeful environment is provoked and can reflect positively on society's mindset. However, during times of instability—be it social, political or economical, it's reasonable that a community will share a mix of feelings of fear, uncertainty and anxiety. In both moments, art plays mitigating and fundamental roles that are crucial to society. ¶ Often the search for lightness can be perceived as a compensatory measure, a defence mechanism. An example would be the quarantine state of the current Covid-19 pandemic crisis, that imposes limitations (for those who can follow it) and negatively impacts the general well-being and mental health of the population. Without being able to leave their houses, people began to view art as a refuge from the harsh reality, not necessarily trying to hide from what is happening worldwide, but rather looking for small moments of relief amid a tragic scenario. In order to help balance people's feelings throughout quarantine, artists have been intensely sharing their work, live performances and hope-filled messages through social media: this exemplifies the fundamental role art plays in supporting people to cope during over-whelming times, providing a little more lightness. ¶ But does the claim for lightness amidst a pandemic have its limit? Whilst a large percentage of the population deals with the loss of freedom and uncertainty about the disease's status and health systems that are on the verge of collapse, there are those who claim that the situation needs to be taken lightly. However, within this context defending lightness with exaggerated optimism may demonstrate a lack of empathy and an attempt to undermine the seriousness of pandemic events. ¶ Describing the persona drawn by the Brazilian cartoonist and illustrator Laerte Coutinho in *The Unbearable Lightness of Regina Duarte*, she makes an accurate parallel between the lightness defended numerous times by Regina Duarte (Brazilian actress and former special secretary of culture) and the concept of lightness addressed by the writer Milan Kundera in his work *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. ¶ In an interview broadcasted by the CNN television network in early May when more than nine thousand deaths from Covid-19 had already been registered in Brazil, Regina Duarte complained about the "unbearable morbidity" brought by the pandemic, encouraging viewers to take things "lightly", like her. Amidst this speech are nostalgic allusions to the Brazilian military dictatorship period, minimizing the torture that occurred during that period. The actress's "light" way of behaviour originates from a positivity of denial and twistedness in which thoughts and issues considered uncomfortable or "heavy" are replaced by a kind of automatic (if it was not deliberate), response that keeps repeating "stay light", even if that means ignoring lives being lost due to the pandemic and torture and persecution during the dictatorship. ¶ This is what Laerte illustrates so well in her cartoon: Regina Duarte living her "state of lightness", supported by an instrument of torture, unaware of how the very same object's weight is being used to crush the people below her. Here, Laerte creates a powerful analogy via the title of the cartoon and by comparing Regina's lightness towards her lack of sensitivity. ¶ This dynamic becomes even more evident when compared to Kundera's view of the lightness concept in the Totalitarian Kitsch aesthetic, produced by the right-wing parties of the first half of the 20th century. It was the epitome of lightness, developed upon ideas of thoughtlessness and that which "offers instant emotional gratification without intellectual effort" (Walter Benjamin). An aesthetic also intended to create an artistic hegemony that would give out a positive image of the current political regime, thus implementing emotional and intellectual control over the population: covertly parading as a nationalistic ideal, covering up the real perverse truth of the government. ¶ In this manner, Laerte's cartoon points towards the principle of the lightness that Duarte claims, which, like Kitsch's lightness is rooted in the greatest of weights, used as a mask for cynicism, cruelty and the real weight behind the ideals she defends but insists on denying. ¶ Whilst many people look for the balance between the reality of the circumstances experienced and the reality of how to deal with them, Laerte seeks the opposite, she is part of the artistic class that takes on the intense and important task of addressing heavy topics in their Works, even in chaotic times; grounded in criticism and denunciations about relevant subjects, providing a clear example of the analytical and reflective role that art holds towards society. ‡

take/accept/the weight and gravitate/curved back/and chin up/up the hill

GABRIELLE MOTA

ART IN TIMES OF CRISIS

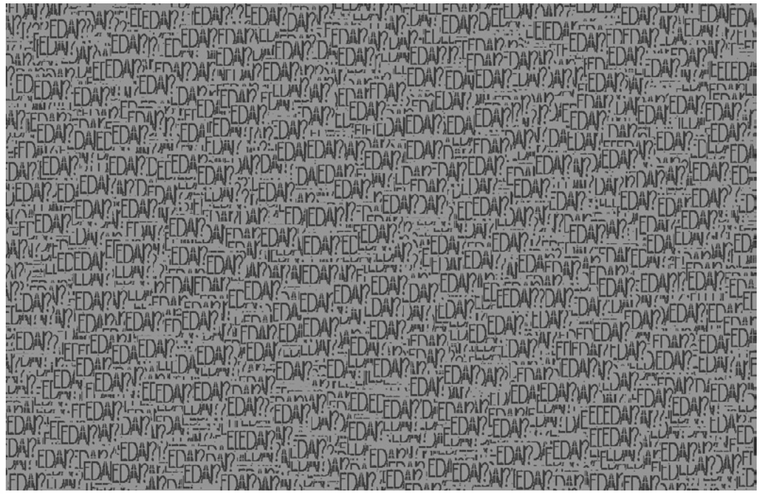
NUCLEARO

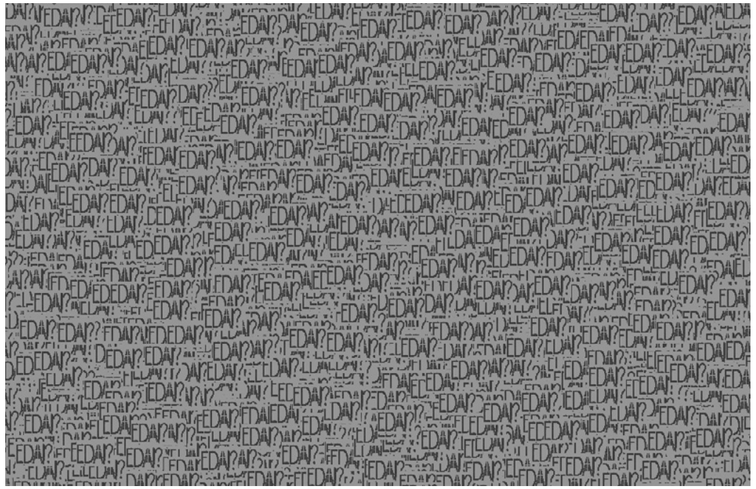
GAIA FERRARA

This illustration was created for an article about the outrageous acts of black/brownface during Philadelphia's New Years Parade. The focus of the work was to bring awareness to this unacceptable act that still happens in 2020, but without giving the people who did it any spotlight.

JÚLIA DUMER

The starting point for this work was a specific statement the Brazilian President has made about the Covid-19 death rate in a press-conference. The image is repeated as many times as the number of deaths by the day it has been produced (29th of May).





ADVICE FOR *ASPIRING* ACTIVISTS

BRING THE *WAR* HOME

Share your views, protest, and activate your own community. Destroying black neighbourhoods and cities only makes things worse. Bring the fight to where it lives. Fight with conviction and personal consequence.

COVER YOUR FACE + EYES

Wear a mask and cover your eyes. This serves the dual purpose of shielding your identity and protecting against tear gas, and other non lethal attacks.

GET OUT *YOUR* FEELS

Unless it's about you, don't make it about you. While there are emotional responses, societies are ruled by law and prosecuted through evidence. The way you feel is not a fact.

STOP SNITCHING

Every image you share online becomes public domain and can be used as evidence. Don't share identifying marks or faces of protesters.

© chris slupski

ACTIVISM *IS* ACTIVE

Every day in every way, when the cameras are off and no one can see. Stay motivated: continue to make informed decision, boycott, strike, reform policies, every action is political, demonstrate! Use your expertise and skills to enact equitable change!

COPS ARE EVERYWHERE

Be aware of your surroundings, under cover police use entrapment tactics, open up spaces for crimes to occur. It is not a crime to protest or speak your mind, the police will find any way they can to silence us.

BE THE *WATER* NOT THE WAVE

Revolutions are pacified through acceptance. Beware of what you are accepting and what you choose to follow and share. Long term changes come through long term actions.

Abdullah Elías is an artist, designer and curator, primarily working in socially engaged arts initiatives. For the last fifteen years, he has delivered projects in collaboration with public and private institutions, galleries and grassroots organizations in Philadelphia, Bangkok and London. His work investigates the socio-political entanglements of objects and spaces as well as themes of faith, decolonization and gastronomy, through public interventions and programming, installations, performances, deconstructive storytelling and trolling, which collectively aim to address social inequities. Elías also facilitates the strategic, conceptual and sustainable development of community-led projects. Through various modes of community engagement and co-design, Elías has supported holistic platforms for long-term economic and cultural growth, working in partnership with a wide range of socio-economic groups.

A LOOK UPON ACID DESIGN AND ITS REFLECTIONS ON THE GRAPHIC DESIGN CONTEXT:

an informal interview with contemporary designers

Over the past few months I have been developing a research on the so-called style “acid design,” a term that has gained recognition due to its very radical and expressive graphics, showcased in many designs nowadays. My interest in this field led me to different reflections upon the ideas this style represents and enhances and, so, I conducted a series of separate interviews with the following designers: Tobias Raschbacher, Alexandre Lindenberg and Tom Arena. In order to spark a debate on this subject, I decided to combine these interviews in a way it might provoke you, the reader, as to reflect upon the ideas here shared and, hopefully, give some understanding about these designer’s practices and their relationship with “acid design”.
These interviews were part of the research made for a paper called “Acid Design: a look upon the new era of graphic design style”.

First I would like to know how familiar you are with the term “acid design”; have you heard it before? What do you think it means?

In my perception, “acid design” is a very loose term, which got a lot of attention through social media, especially Instagram. I do not know if there is any reliable definition of this term, so I think it is quite intuitive and probably got a lot of influence from other non-conventional design fields and languages such as typography, one might expect in the metal music scene. So in general, I think acid design tries to combine those rough elements with contemporary design attempts. It radically tries to differentiate from the clean and more “swiss” approach to visual communication.

Tobias Raschbacher Alexandre Lindenberg Tom Arena

I think it is very interesting to call it that way because most of this kind of design reminds me of the posters of raves from Acid House. I think that this will of rupturing has already happened quite a few times in design: to raise a reaction against the logic that the design project is based on functional rationalism. I wouldn’t exactly call it a movement for this is an overused term—since it implies that there is a written manifesto, or that this rupture is promoted by a specific group or had a central direction. I think that this type of unity no longer exists, neither in art in general nor in design. But I do believe you can call it a trend; it is easier than calling it a movement.

It is true that we often hear this term linking with designs that have onto their composition more saturated colors, also scratching the image of a cartoon like what we could see during a trip on acid precisely, a very precise reference to the history of raves and drugs.

While it is clear that this style distances itself from a more modernist design tradition, what can you say about this arising idea of change which is attached to a more radical approach to design?

This rupture has happened before quite a few times. In the 80-90s there was a technological revolution in the way projects were conceived. Before then, the tools for designing layouts were manually cutting and pasting, and when the graphic software were introduced, they added a lot of possibilities for designers that questioned some paradigms from modern design. Until then, to create the composition of a text, the designer went through a printed font catalogue and ordered a ribbon-shaped photolith from the supplier with the text printed in a predetermined size and thickness to make the composition manually, and this required the designer to pre-program the solution and the entire process. And creating a font was far from the reality of many designers. ¶ When the digital software appeared, it was such an opening for exploring possibilities that the rupture was made there. The modern design and functionalism were much connected to the need to respect a determined methodology in order to operate with the resources that already existed. The facility of operating with the computer’s resources allowed for intuitive experimenting that wasn’t possible with the limited handcrafting techniques of before, which demanded that the graphic solutions went through a filter of rationality and assertiveness. Designers of that time, like Peter Saville, the people from Cranbrook School, David Carson and foundries like Émigré questioned Massimo Vignelli’s book (The Vignelli Canon) and the strict

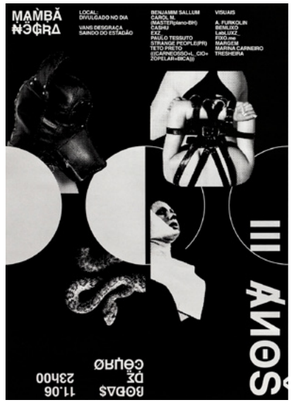
methodologies of Josef Müller-Brockmann's grid construction, with its scale of adequate font sizes for the composition. At some point, these designers saw that the possibilities of their time allowed them to go further and that there wasn't a reason to narrow themselves into such an unbending composition methodology. ¶ It is also possible to say that this technological shift promoted a change to the way affectivity circulates, and subjectivity is produced, and this also had an impact on the production of language. And that has happened again. Now, we've had another technological revolution - an acceleration of the processes of communication and the expansion of technical possibilities with the development of much more efficient data plans and the deepening of social media usage. Almost no one reads printed newspaper anymore nor needs to rely on books as a source of information; the internet is much more accessible and condenses an information of high quality in a much more agile way. This shift in the way information circulates promoted, again, a values crisis and a post-modern reaction, that makes uses of new language resources, that has resulted in 'acid design'.
It is possible to think about a pendulum movement of trends; because after this first rupture of the 80-90s, in the 2000s it was already visible the saturation of these innovations of language and their absorption within the market and common sense. From there on, design studios like Experimental Jetset raised a discussion based on the exploration of the material truth of objects as the central axis of their thought, and that brought back minimalistic solutions or the usage of typefaces like Helvetica. What is happening now, from 2010 until present days, again goes against valuing material truth and the modern ways of conceiving design; typography has taken on a more gestural and synthetic character with the digital resources of visual finishing in 3D, or the simulation of immaterial and digital realities.

Of course, visual communication is more than just simply conveying a message from sender to receiver. Every small decision that is made during the design process transports bits of information as well, and that comes from which typeface will used, as we consider who is the type designer/the type foundry behind it, if it is a just a free font that one found on the internet or a system font, everything to the point you can feel the designer's subjectivity behind it. Practitioners of the field of the design surely have a trained eye and maybe overthink and analyse a visual communication piece far too much than just simply enjoying it. In general, the communication should reach far more people than designers who just think of why this typeface is used and so on. But still, even if people have nothing to do with design, every element of let's say, a poster, plays an important role how they decode the information subconsciously. Generally, I like to experiment a lot with different styles

Tobias Raschbacher Alexandre Lindenberg Tom Arena

and also try to integrate a lot of motion design or concept product design in my work. I think that this 'acid design' is radically trying to differentiate from the more conventional graphic design as mentioned before and one way to do is experimenting heavily with typography. The unconventionality of a typeface reflects the whole design piece and has a huge impact on how receivers would read the content of it. Furthermore, bold letters are more suitable to be translated into a 3D graphic which can also be found in some acid design pieces.

Alexandre Lindenberg
Alexandre is a designer in São Paulo. He graduated from FAU/USP and is currently part of Estúdio Margem. His work varies from visual identities to experimental projects for different areas - from exhibitions to electronic music parties.
Interview made via video call on July 3rd, 2020



Looking throughout various designers and their works, I came upon many references related to technology and the usage of elements that convey and give a more industrial and technological feel to the work. How do you think this embrace and engagement with digital solutions applies to contemporary designs, in relation to your work and in general?

I think this has to do with a certain romanticism towards the early computer graphics era in which 3D graphics were heavily used, not to say overused. In my work I try to minimize too heavy influences from such an era in order to produce more contemporary and experimental design and typographical artworks. Since I am still changing my interests concerning graphic design from time to time, I try out a lot of ideas and this technological aspect may only be one of them, that I like to incorporate now. The influence of technology can be seen directly in my work when it is an animation that uses mechanical movements that are inspired by a machine or when the surface of something tries to imitate metal or any other rough material.

In general, the influence of technology on art is not a new thing, it can be observed by the futurism of the early 20th century where new technologies influenced the aesthetics of many artworks and paintings. What I mentioned before about material truth, now comes in full hand. The moment you use other mediums of media, such as animation, the discussion of material truth is almost entirely vanished because then it doesn't make sense to talk about materiality when your medium is a digital screen. You won't discuss the materiality of pixels inside your computer screen the same way you discuss the layers of printing and offset photoliths when what is in question is the resource management (since each colour put there means another printing plate) or when it is still possible to think about a poetic materialist choice of overlaying primary colours in transparency or the tectonics of the ink layers which makes the practice of the offset resembles the practice of engraving. What is digital doesn't acknowledge limits nor materiality. And that knocks off the modern discussion of materiality... At the same time that

the designer is ethically running the risk of aligning his language to the spectacle of the image, and therefore authenticating the spectacular dimension of the image.

Tobias Raschbacher
Tobias is a graphic designer and student based in Vienna. In his work he mainly combines bold typography with three dimensional objects. Animation also plays an important role in his compositions. His commercial work is mostly related to the music industry.
Interview made via email on March 26th, 2020

I have always appreciated technology, I am passionate about old computer interfaces and also by the spirit of racing, racing cars, motorcycles, engines and so on. These two areas include a large number of graphics technologies that I try to transcribe in my work, for the typography as working it in a more chrome visuals, I think that it is a reference coming especially from the 80s, an inspiration from the posters or the titles of the movies. But, for me, these graphics come from a time where it was being used mostly because they wanted to give a futuristic—as in relation to Futurism, historically - dimension to a work. Ironically, today we take this up which is rather paradoxical, because compared to the 80's - almost 40 years ago today—we use them in 2020, as per say, the future. God knows how graphics will be squeezed in 2060 then.

I personally have a lot of difficulty trying to see where this is going. The logic is to own the noise, the irony of ugliness, working with all of the rejected elements from "the ethics of language" and opening a field of expressivity and of the designer's subjectivisms to try and produce something that is a visual criticism on the breaches that the profession has. There is a badly resolved tension in the theoretical field between what is the place of expression and the risk of collaborating with the spectacle by imposing the subjectivity in the process of transmitting a message, of masking the truth of the content through language resources that deflect from the message's truth. But even if you are working in the most purist way, your subjectivity will always be there. Who will draw a line to determine where it's acceptable for a designer to put his subjectivity in a message? What is this end point? Even when you are choosing to use Helvetica since it is an allegedly neutral font, you aren't getting rid of the message chosen by the designer; you chose to input into that text the idea of neutral value and impartiality.

We know that language evolves with technology, how do you think this is going to happen in relation to this new "style" in graphic design history?

There is an ethic paradigm from traditional design that imposes that language needs to be timeless, and that the designer needs to appeal to the less expressiveness under the threat of condemning the message to be imprisoned onto the time it was placed, and lose its strength within time. ¶ When you are talking about a hospital's visual identity, a subway's signage, for example, there has to be a paradigm, the language needs to be the more eternal and unchangeable as possible, But if it's a work for a music festival, something that is in constant change of language, the designer must be connected to the production of signs from that time—that, one way of another will change in the spare of months' time, there will be other songs with other aesthetical values and there will be different graphics resources to deal with this new musical language. It is unbearable to sustain only on the tools from the traditional design to deal with transient objects, it is incongruous. The resources just can't handle it.

As for thinking more about the underground scene that is going on, I think it's starting to take hold in some terms. It is turning to very futuristic stylistic referencing, but we often see others are turning to work on a more vintage aesthetic. I think it's still a niche market, even if we talk about 'acid' which is quite recent, we will see how it will be in the future. It's like wine, it gets better over time.

And to what extent would you say your work relates to that style?

I would say that I integrate parts of 'acid design' in my work but not exclusively just that, I also deal with separate elements of it. Since I think most of the works which can be considered as 'acid design' are way too visually overloaded and contain many visual elements that do not serve any purpose. Considering I am still a student, I have the luxury to try out a lot of different experiments to see which visual language fits my intentions and personality best. ¶ Of course, I do follow some rules from design process as I think about my choice of the typeface before starting to work on a project. Generally, I tend to use fonts from young designers and independent foundries that have a certain own character and are in a subtle way unique. I think that those independent type designers understand most what the design generation, which I am part of, expects as well as desires and express what they want to say. But most importantly, it is also an ethical question if I, when coming to create a project, what it means buying the license of a typeface from a huge foundry or if I could support a young designer like me with my purchase.

In the studio, we are passing through a bit schizophrenic period, living in the struggle of this crisis. Because of our FAU-USP education, all of our background comes from this direction of trying to be as synthetic as possible starting from the materiality of the colour, to the font and the support. ¶ Our work for Mamba Negra was like that in the beginning, but even since it is an electronic music party and by being close to this whole environment that produces a lot of language in a very effervescent and transient way, this paradigm started to become a bit outdated, and the modern synthetic resources started to become insufficient. By being closer to the digital space and for having a more mocking tone, keeping up with these paradigms became unsustainable. We do have other works that go onto a completely different path, very opposed to 'acid'. Meanwhile Mamba was asking for us to explode. The minimalist synthetic path became way too behaved and too hygienic to support the irony of the party's discursive content. In our work, Mamba is where we have the space to experiment, of embracing the transitory aspect because we know in a month most likely it will change to a new theme, a new feeling and expression that will be aligned to something much different from before, and that's where we approach the "acid design." But there are other parties that are way more radical than us, like Club Tormenta or Baile em Chernobyl, that are much more connected to the language of "acid design" than us. ¶ The Mamba project has flirting with a few of the resources from acid design but at the same time we couldn't just ignore the first identity and purpose of Mamba, where we had influence from graphic punk but with the structure of modern layout, which discussed of material truth coming from the noise generated by the xerox and the dirty from the mix of foreign glyphs and the Latin alphabet (but they still were in Helvetica).

There is still much to talk about how graphic designs' rules and paradigms are going through a rupture with the new ways to articulate and propose languages to graphic design. What are your takes on this?

It all depends on what you want to do, the experimental is very important, you have to test a lot of things to really get to know each other I think, testing different method supports, how the software helps a lot so we tend to lock ourselves in it but we mustn't and try to constantly look for getting out of your comfort zone. The magic with art is that there is no rule, not really. And for those with rules, inside the graphic area, have been given to them so they can learn, as I tend to say, masters the rules then breaks the rules.

Tom Arena
Tom is a designer and concept artist from Genova. His works have a great expressiveness by his "acid" character, via hand designed types (drawn by him and later digitally finalized). Due to his aggressive and expressive style, he works with party posters and the music industry as well.
Interview made via email on May 15th, 2020

There will be people who find it beautiful and other ugly, but what is beauty anyways? In art there is no beauty and ugliness I find.

Until when will this be a rupture and not be absorbed? Until a couple of years ago the distortion of typography, the disposition of an illegible language of logotypes from black metal bands, the three-dimensional and artificial finishing in 3D, the excessive resources and visual symbols that remind of tribal tattoos and the visual identity of a sports auditorium program were unthinkable as an aesthetic guide for avant-garde production. And now, Lady Gaga has released a new album in which the visual communication is all about that. Until when will this language will become new and radical, aggressively melted, suddenly digital? ¶ There is a legit need to expand the limits of language. Just think until when a trend can stay fresh and when will it just become a mere copy and simulacrum. There are a lot of people replicating elements from this kind of design in an uncontrolled way—just look to the Instagram profiles that are everyday reproducing the "acid design." Those who will resist this process will be the pioneers of this style — like the works from Metahaven, Jonathan Castro or Mirko Borsche, for example; which is what everyone else is trying to reach. ¶ This dynamic is part of a production of language. If you look back in history and analyse Woodstock's posters, even though it's a bit tacky , it is a piece that definitely wasn't supposed to be composed with Helvetica; it is a dated poster, but bearing the gestuality of its own time, they made sense to that whole generation. So, if the language dies and becomes something else tomorrow, what will persevere will be the attempt of the subject to question the standard aesthetic of one's time, and that is part of what configures the agencies of the subject in the world.

Where does your inspirations come from? How do they work within your process?

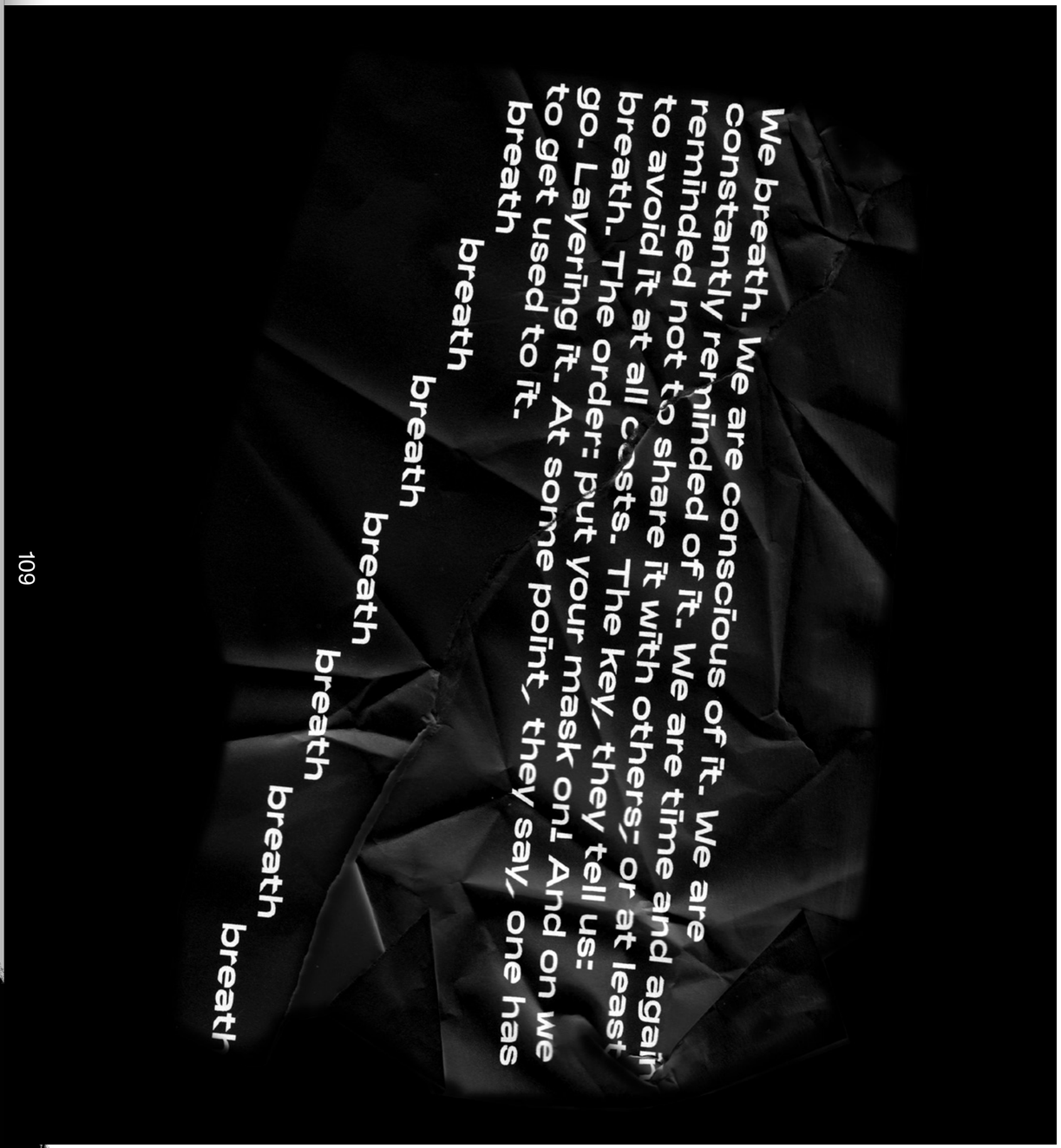
Inspiration is basically everywhere. The most obvious one is of course, other graphic design pieces, but also other design disciplines such as product design or speculative design. Also, more technical disciplines, like engineering, are able to give me new thoughts on my approach towards my work. Of course, art, as fine art and paintings, is a huge source of inspiration that I have as well. As much as science too, that can be seen on one of my projects, which is called Bryond, that is based on the DNA scissor CRISPR which is potentially able to modify human embryos. But I also get inspired in my daily life, I see something interesting every day, anywhere—whether it is just shapes, surfaces or colour combinations or mechanical constructions or products which inspire me to do animations or new kinds of 3D renderings.

Tobias Raschbacher | Alexandre Lindenberg | Tom Arena

Music inspires me a lot, there are certain artists like Travis Scott or Slimka (who come from Geneva) who inspire me when I am currently doing my work, I feel like it gives me motivation.

What can you say about the hybrid language media and its relation to this style and to graphic design as a whole?

I think that graphic production has always been related to the technological resources and the subjective issues that emerge from the exchange of affectivity that those medias provide. Today's graphic design practice requires solutions for a visual identity that trespass the static medium of the printed media or of the necessity of compression of the image in fewer frames. Today, animated stories on Instagram replace the printed poster, and that affects the method on how the designer will approach a visual narrative. The horizons were broaden by the necessity to deal with the depth that the screen and the navigation through networks provide; and the nature of this medium is undeniably spectacular as an immaterial mirror and detached from physical reality; it is an ephemeral, mutable, digital nature and this is what guides the choices of this style. ‡



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"The awakening to experience a coexistence with the Divine Garden, with love and kindness. A NEW AGE to live without fear, to embrace the differences, and be united as human beings. Make the change, share, and respect mother Earth"

112

The work reflects the expectation of a better world after all the chaos we are experiencing. A world with more love and respect, in which education is for everyone, less industrialized and more human so that we can know ourselves to make a real difference in the world and our communities. A system that stops seeing people as machines, but as complex and plural beings that can add up in different ways. The tree embracing the planet represents a return to the roots and at the same time the transformation of the consciousness of human beings in which we understand that nature is not our possession, we who are part of it and will return to it at one time or another.

GABRIELA DI FOLCO

BRUNA KAMEI

PSYCHO

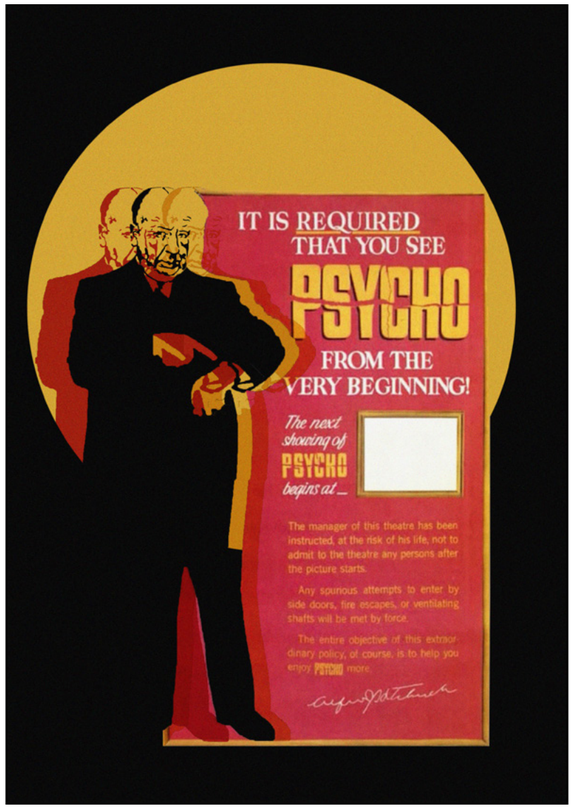
I think it is interesting to observe the process of creation of a project, the references and inspirations used—sometimes even more than the final piece. It is the most curious part, where you can have a little idea of how it was made on the backstage and the complexity of the process. In a movie scene, there are techniques (framing, schematic cuts, references, passage of time, sequence, etc.) that are carefully thought and tested so those few seconds can pass some feeling to the public. And, usually, it isn't noticed by who's watching, but in the end it makes the whole difference. ¶ The painter Edward Hopper fits

but there's a loudness lurking/silently following with its eyes/our silhouettes

well on the subject I want to approach, as well as the filmmaker Alfred Hitchcock. They both portray very well the feeling of mystery. "House by the Railroad" (1925) was the inspiration to the scenario of Psycho—the Bates Family house had as reference the Victorian house from Hopper's artwork. I wondered the reason why Hitchcock had chosen this painting for his film? Maybe he was just a fan of the painter, but it is more likely that he has previously studied his works. I think it is curious that in many of Hopper's paintings, the framing is similar to the cinematographic ones, as it was a frozen frame from a movie scene. This is not by chance: Hopper was a huge fan of cinema—Producers often hired him to watch their movies before anybody else so that he could help divulge the film posters intent. Another aspect that Hopper's paintings go by is that they seem to be isolated, silent and mysterious places, seen from a distant point of view. Because of the dramatic light Hopper creates, his art pieces pass some kind of atmosphere, messing up with the psychological. That house isn't a random Victorian house, but one that has a personality. Some people say they feel peace and calm when they look at it. Others say the house looks like haunted. ¶ Hitchcock was one of the most influential film directors ever, his explored scenarios were the same as those of the present days' society fears: night, dark and lonely places. Consequently, this model of similar collective fear, generated a type of identity within society that remains until today—It is almost an established standard for North American movies. ¶ The strength of Hitchcock's work is that he brings his movies to people's everyday situations and constant fears. On Psycho, he explores this fear and builds the thriller based on the insecurity and suspicion between people within a society. When you don't know the people around you,

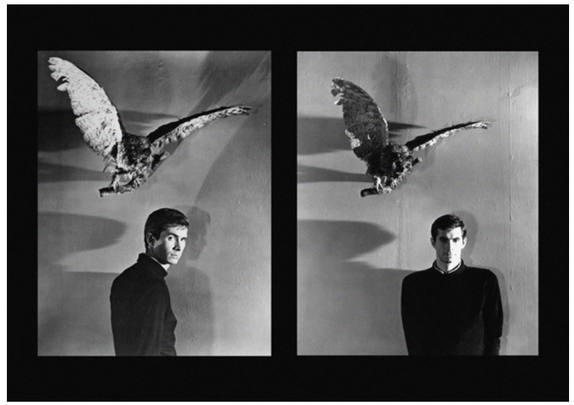
Edward Hopper. House by the Railroad. 1925. Oil on canvas. 24 x 29" (61 x 73.7 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York

any of them can be a potential killer (just like Norman, who, at the beginning of the movie seems harmless, until he became the murderer of the story). Despite the scenario being the way it is—the dark house, previously thought to pass the thriller/horror atmosphere—turning everything kind of distant for the viewer, the approached subjects are really present and real to people, explaining why, even so, there is tension in Hitchcock's movies. ¶ When Psycho was released, the screens were living through the peak of glamour, Hollywood, musicals, western, fantasies etc. and the horror movies—which ones used to be those with giant monsters and ETs—were no longer successful. Hitchcock introduced a new kind of horror, the psychological one, which demonstrates itself so tangible and possible in people's lives that it was destined to win the public's attention once and for all. He did it on such a smart way: the director, instead of following the chronologic way a film production used to be, made the reverse path. Hitchcock before anything, studied a lot his target, the public. On this way, he knew exactly what to do to win the audience's attention. He controlled people without them even notice it. ¶ This was the biggest secret of Hitchcock's work and the reason why it was so good. He used to say "There is no terror in a bang, only in the anticipation of it"; in other words, the feeling of fear is in the expectation of the scare and not in the act of it. The director also used to say he preferred to focus his attention on the 'before', since five minutes of tension is worth more than five seconds of impact. This is why in many of his movie scenes, he shows the public what the characters don't know yet. The example he used to give was the one with two people talking sitting on a table and one of them puts a countdown bomb under it. The tension is much bigger and longer if the public knows that there's a bomb. In Psycho, the director plays with it in the suspense scenes, once he prolongs them—like the scene in which Laila, sister of Marion (the murdered character), goes to the hotel to investigate and decide to check the Bates' house. The scene in technical terms is pretty simple: alternation between the focus on the actress getting closer and her point of view of the house, but the repetition and the extension of it, causes an affliction and tension for those who are watching. ¶ Hitchcock had to pay out the production with his own money, so it was



Psycho (1961). Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Los Angeles: Shamley Productions.

necessary to use cheap resources to have a low budget and that's why the movie is B&W. Besides it makes things more accessible, it was also easier. The classic shower scene is an example of it. Once the colours didn't matter, they used chocolate syrup to simulate the blood. Another curiosity about the production with low budget is how they decided to make the sound effects. To represent the stabs, the director made cuts in yellow melons. ¶ Hitchcock also used some subtle techniques to raise the thriller of his movies. Some of the scenes of suspense or terror were the sequences of abrupt and quick cuts to increase the tension and the position of frames, leaving some subliminal messages or a mystery. In the shower scene, for example, each cut would symbolise a stab on Marion. With this strategy, the director didn't have to show Marion naked or the violent act of murder explicitly to spectators to have the impression of that they had seen both of things and feel the tension (in any case, things that used to be censored by that time). This scene was also very revolutionary for that age, because the murder of the—until then—protagonist was something unexpected and innovative. ¶ The director also works with the frames and plays with symbolisms. A scene of Psycho where he shows it very well is when Norman and Marion are talking and having dinner in the hotel office. At the beginning of the conversation, the stuffed birds of the scene are small and are landed. At the moment they start talking about Norman Bates' mother and the conversation becomes more aggressive, the camera's position turns to an object behind Norman—a naturalized owl in attack position, subtly showing the second personality of the killer. After the conversation (and before her murder), Marion gets up to return to her room and stands in front of a crow, which is a common symbol of death. Hitchcock used many symbolisms, another case is the painting that hides the hole in the wall used by Norman to observe Marion when she undresses. The painting is an interpretation of a biblical story of Suzanna, that summarizing, represents two men taking advantage of a woman while she is bathing. ¶ The film was based on Robert Bloch's book Psycho, which was inspired by the life of psychopath Edward Gein. As Hitchcock brought many innovations that depended on the idea of secrecy to impact the audience that would eventually watch his movie, he purchased all the Robert Bloch's books he could find, and in addition he released posters warning the audience to arrive in time for the session. Those who appeared late would be forbidden from entering the auditorium, since watching the film from its very beginning was essential to a full understanding of it. ¶ Hitchcock makes use of many techniques to keep his audience within the atmosphere of mystery. At the beginning of the film, Marion wraps a roll of money in a newspaper, the camera keeps framing and focusing on it, so the public thinks that the reason for Marion's death was the money. Another method is Marion's long dialogues with secondary characters. When Norman appears, the viewer thinks he is a character with no consequence regarding the narrative. ¶ The grace and attraction of Hitchcock's films aren't in the grandiosity of cinematographic acts—He made a classic with only the techniques that were financially available to him at that time, but they are within the poetry and the things he presented through the sublime. In Psycho, the plot unfolds slowly until big happenings can change the perspective of the story at a stroke. It is interesting how Norman Bates causes fear and insecurity in having someone like him as a neighbour, but also, even though he is evil the script makes you feel pity, cheer for him, and sometimes identify in a certain way,

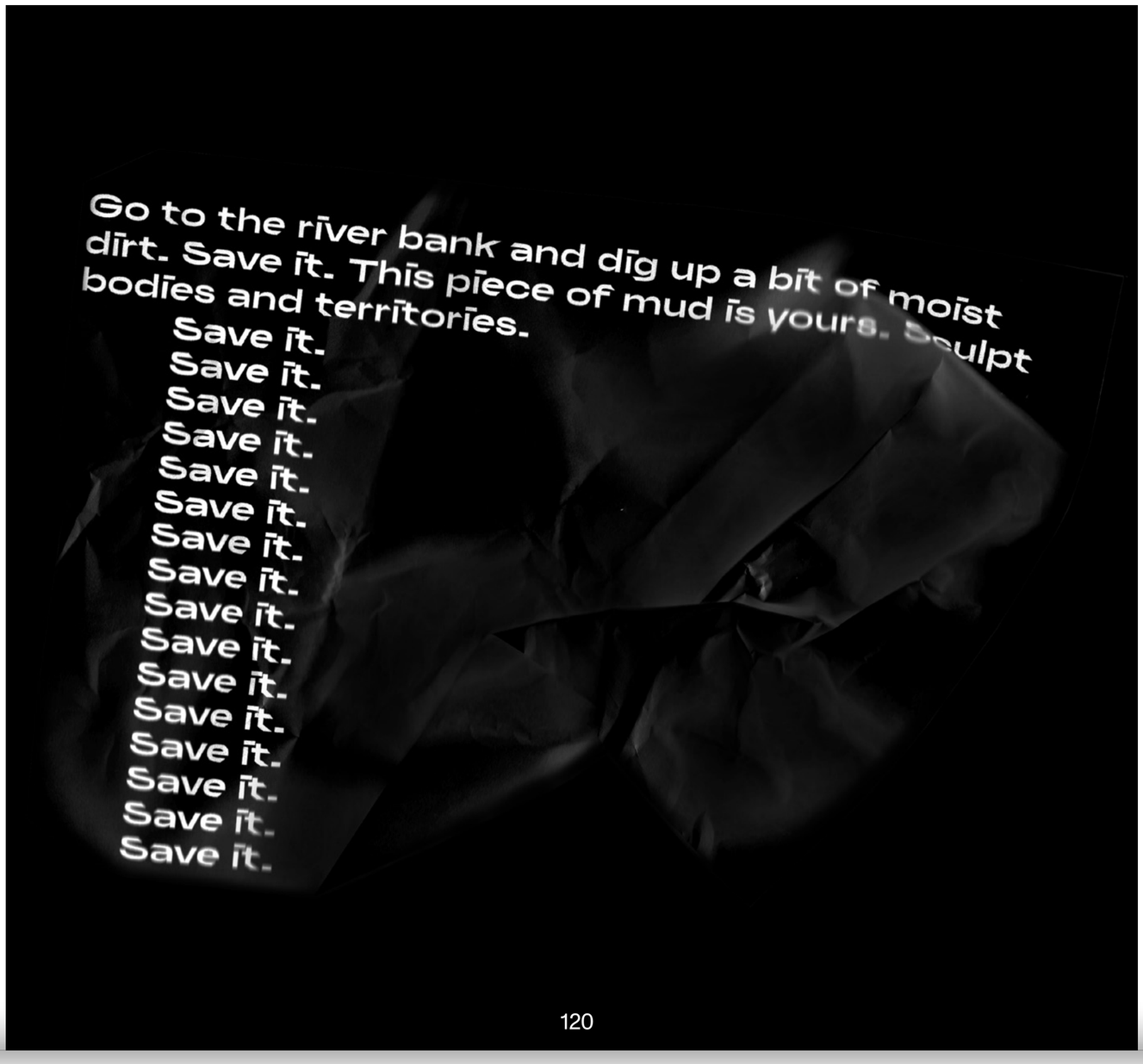


Psycho From The Very Beginning

with the character. ¶ The film presents real life stuff, the question of mental illness, what human beings are capable of, fear and identity of society and the process and methodology of the production of the work. Its ways of managing references, symbolisms, effects and soundtrack, even without a high budget makes Psycho very inspiring for the arts in general. ‡

BRUNA KAMEI
AN ANALYSIS OF ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S PSYCHO

POST-CHAOS
PRE-CHAOS



This work is about representing the female nature in different forms. It is an invitation to women artists to make their versions of what they think represents the feminine nature and their own nature. In the illustration there is a combination of a floral fabric background as a way to include nature in the interpretation.

the contemporary & venus

I'm at a thrift shop, looking for a unique object that can be used in my project about a missing ancient civilization. I see a sculpture, it looks like an ancient stone figure. I take it. ¶ My eyes slide down through soft and abstract curves, subtle details of breasts and hips, that somehow lead into recognizing a human and feminine figure. The material is confusing—grey, cold and heavy and looks like some type of stone, but... Something happens, it falls down and breaks. Does it break? Stone doesn't break... Its true content has been revealed: it's made from ceramics! Fragile and light ceramics, and the base was made from heavy marble, everything was planned for a perfect replica. I feel de-frauded, my ancient sculpture has been made from a mould. ¶ The illusion is lost, it's not unique, or old, but a pretension, an imitation. But, of what? Why? Where does it come from? ¶ I start a thoughtful investigation in sculpture history, and I found what seems to be the original models: the Prehistorical Upper Palaeolithic Venus sculptures. Having no arms or legs, a small set of defining curves, the abstracted shape, the facelessness, the disproportion, somehow, this actual sculpture is better proportioned than the ancient ones... The archaic Venuses had more visible disproportions, they followed a diamond figure, being the hips and stomach the wider parts, with overly small heads and shoulders, and they were recognized as feminine not just because of breasts or hips, but because of the absence of masculine sexual parts—men were always represented with an erected penis. Anatomical omissions and proportional distortions, perspective angles that enlarge the parts that are more proximate to the source of view, and diminishes the parts that are further, persuade into thinking from a physical point of view of self. As Leroy McDermott Anthropological

> *"Nobody's born a woman, they become one".*
>
> Simone de Beauvoir

essay* said: ¶ "Upper Palaeolithic Venus figuring represents ordinary women's views of their own bodies... Visual information obtained from a self-viewing perspective... An adaptive response to the unique physical concerns of women... their existence signified and advance in women's self-conscious control over the material conditions of their reproductive lives" ¶ Self-view follows up a psychological field in issues of self-perception. This can be explained in the anatomical study of the figures. Women tend to think of ourselves in larger proportions, the sensation of swelling in our body parts contributes to this perception. Thinking about Leroy's explication, image creation as a response to our need of auto-examination could be because of biological processes being stronger and more variable than men, led to need of self-knowledge, concerns about health, hygiene, by using representation as a form. Were there genealogical studies and representations of knowledge in the prehistoric era? Why is it the first time I'm hearing about this? ¶ The Venuses embodied the first representations of humans, the first tradition of image-making, the first forms and figures

[re]sculpt the own image/fragmented/ farce made by other hands

known. But men were recognized as the only creators of prehistorical figures, never the idea of women building self-representations was considered. This reveals the subjectivity that relies on an androcentric view of the world and history, men being the centre of everything. The patriarchy existing in institutions and structures that formed what we know in every field, Science, Arts, Sociology, etc shows idiosyncrasy. Women have been erased from history as creators and protagonists and were replaced with a body-object form, as something that is presented by someone else, by men, based on and eroticization according to their heterosexual interests. Men illustrating women, and enlarging body parts as a result of their sexualized contemplation. The realism of form and content, shows an isomorphic relationship with nature, characterizing the real motivations and intentions behind this first representation of the human figure. The disproportions clearly show a feminine self-inspection, signs of ancient gynaecology based on an own self-experience, rather than an icon that was admired by a masculine experience, and all this is unknown. ¶ A strong contrast exists with our contemporary idea of the feminine body, where self-representation inside imagery isn't considered at all. ¶ Form is more indicative of common cultural traditions than content. Culture interacts with perception, our view of the world is formed by the context we were inserted into, we function according to social structures and learned behaviourism patterns. If the knowledge of woman's protagonism in history was hidden and unknown because of patriarch views of the researches, how did patriarchy interact with the women's self-perception? ¶ Women have been defined in relation to men. The meaning of the female was being constructed as a representation through the image or object of appreciation for the male observer. The feminine body is seen from outside, as a body-

* Self-Representation in Upper Palaeolithic Female Figures, Leroy McDermott, 1996.

** Renascence painting "The Birth of Venus" by Sandro Botticelli, 1486

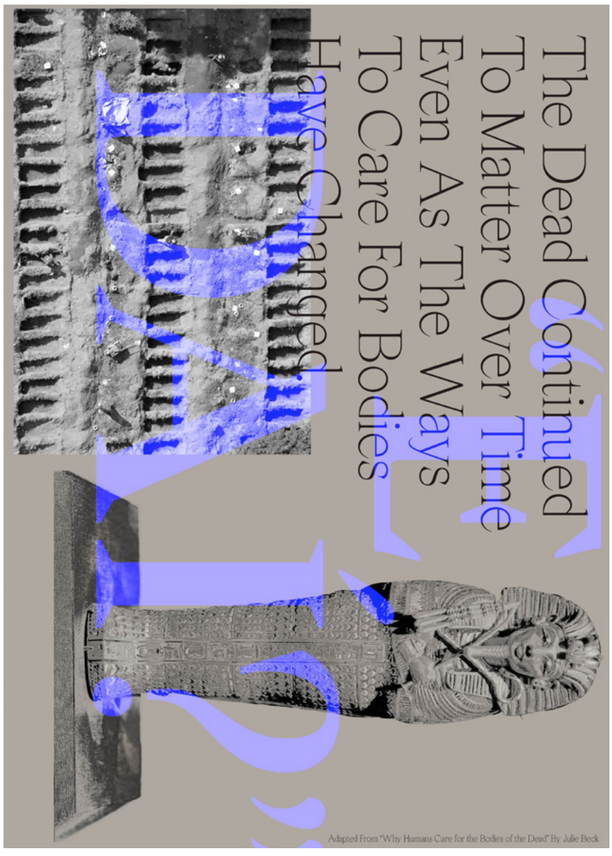
*** Painting Susanna e i vecchioni by Artemisia Gentileschi, 1610

object. The eroticization and sexualization of our bodies follow up a long path back in art history. ¶ Looking at the sculpture again, I can note that the body shown is way thinner than the one in the Venuses, the breasts are smaller, the curves are more accentuated, an "8" rather than a diamond. Me as a woman looking at the mirror never described myself as an "8" figure, but always had that craving in my mind, this so-called and desire of "fitting into" beauty pattern. ¶ Looking back in art history, this beau ideals variated a little. The woman's body was a central motive in arts, usually presented nude. It was an object of admiration when it was covered, and of desire when it was nude. In the XV it was an object of celestial purism idea of youth and beauty, virtue, images like The Birth of Venus** or in the XVI Susanna e i vecchioni*** it was of sexual deprivation and necessity. Religion had an important play in women's objectification and inferiorization through art and dogmas of inferiority, sub ordinance, being fragile and submissive to the male. The female body was always an object and never a subject. ¶ Even though a strong feminist movement came afterward, in the 1900s with a fight for self-knowledge and autonomy of the woman's body, the pop-art movement, and globalization brought back, stronger than ever, women eroticization. The revolution of the image, the graphosphere, the industrial revolution and the emergence of sexuality as a discursive object is a development of Western societies, the main influencers in globalization. Sexuality proliferated within capitalism. ¶ Art questions everything. Art questions reality. The body is the place where the world is questioned. The detachment of our identity thus our bodies. The banality and devaluation of art and its content. The impersonation of the female self. The appropriation of an ancient tradition of self-imagery representations. A contemporary Venus. ‡

MARIA YOMA
THE CONTEMPORARY VENUS

John Doe steps in long and quick strides onto piled, lifeless bodies. He looks at it with a certain disgust in his face. However, with a taste of relish from the minimal contact. "Those are only parasite bodies", someone confesses.

Deprived. Removed. Suffocated. Suppressed.
Oppressed. Repressed. Condemned.
Asphyxiated.



A reflection on our relationship with death and how it's affected during the pandemic. Written in purple: "So What?", in reference to Jair Bolsonaro's response to the thousands dead in Brazil due to Covid-19. Adapted from the article "Why Humans Care for the Bodies of the Dead" by Julie Beck.

“Greetings from paradise” is a series of postcards and stamps, resulted from a research about Paradise, its descriptions and representations, led by the question: "how to represent something you have never seen?". The idea is to imagine what kind of landmarks would be showcased from "Paradise", if it was a touristic destination and how would they be showcased. The postcards imply a communication, but only the front is shown, leaving us with the question: “what kind of message would someone send from paradise?”

TODAY IS A DAY OF NOTHING. TODAY IS THE ZERO HOUR.
IS THERE BY CHANCE A NUMBER THAT ISN'T BUT NOTHING?
THAT IS LESS THAN ZERO? THAT BEGINS IN THAT WHICH HAS
NEVER BEGUN BECAUSE IT ALWAYS WAS? AND WAS
BEFORE ALWAYS? I CONNECT MYSELF TO THIS VITAL
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CONTAINED AND TOTAL. ROUN NG OR END,
I'M THE DOT BEFORE THE STOP.
FROM ZERO TO INFINITY I GO WA AT
THE SAME TIME EVERYTHING IS S
ALWAYS BEEN AND IMMEDIATELY

CLARICE LISPECTOR

EXCERPT FROM "A BREATH OF LIFE".

AWAY FROM ARCADIA

A SPARKLE AWAY

MANUELLA MARTINS
A SPARKLE AWAY FROM ARCADIA

TODAY IS A DAY OF NOTHING. TODAY IS THE ZERO HOUR.
IS THERE BY CHANCE A NUMBER THAT ISN'T BUT NOTHING?
THAT IS LESS THAN ZERO? THAT BEGINS IN THAT WHICH HAS
NEVER BEGUN BECAUSE IT ALWAYS WAS? AND WAS
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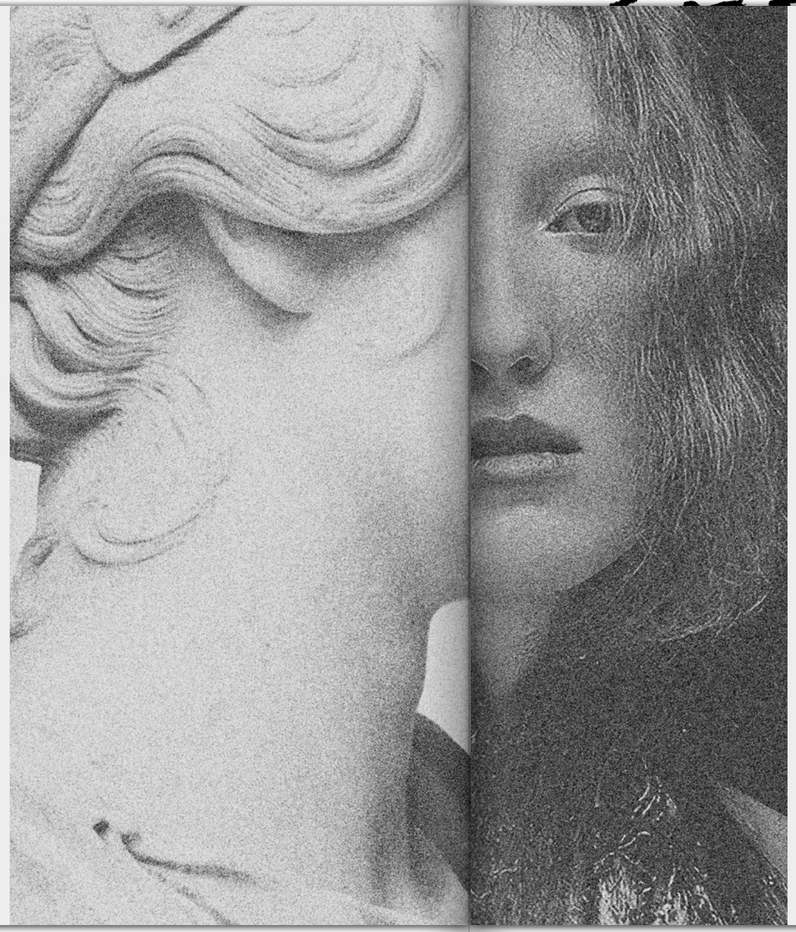
EXCERPT FR



You look at it
and it shines,

you move it and it shines
even more.

TIME
NG OR END,
STOP.
AT

MANUELLA MARTINS
A SPARKLE AWAY FROM ARCADIA

TODAY IS A DAY OF NOTHING. TODAY IS THE ZERO HOUR.
IS THERE BY CHANCE A NUMBER THAT ISN'T BUT NOTHING?
THAT IS LESS THAN ZERO? THAT BEGINS IN THAT WHICH HAS
NEVER BEGUN BECAUSE IT ALWAYS WAS? AND WAS
BEFORE ALWAYS? I CONNECT MYSELF TO THIS VITAL
ABSENCE A
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FROM ZERO T
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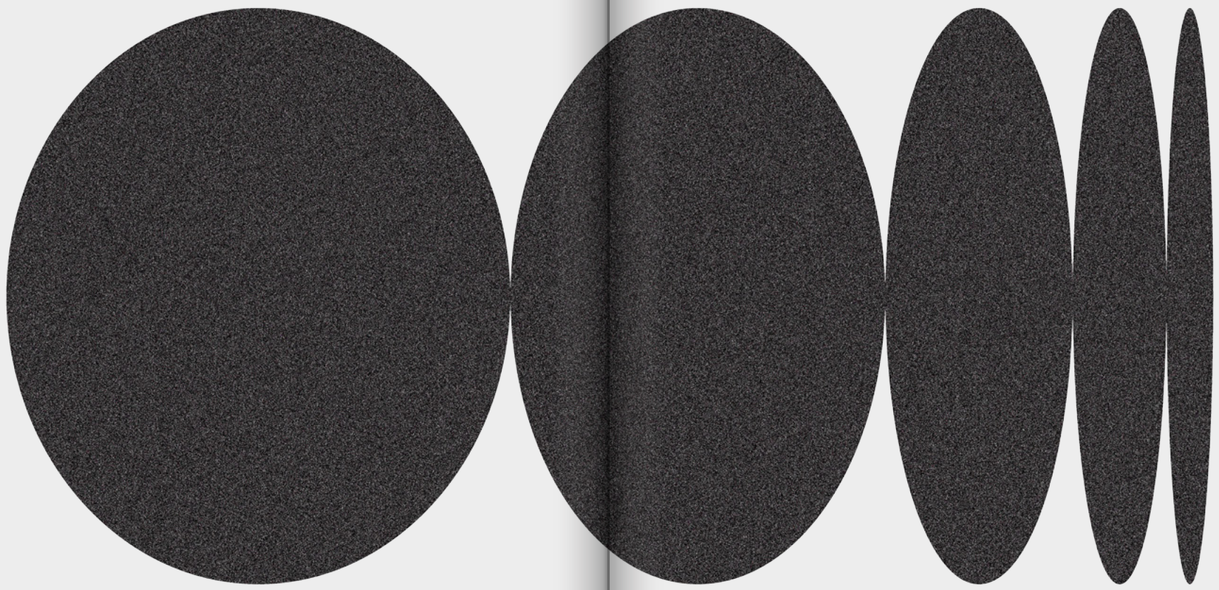
The unusual curves and texture amuse you as your fingers travel through it. For a moment, you come to a realization: even a tonne wouldn't be heavy enough to make you not want to carry it. But it is not, **it is almost weightless; in fact, so light that it could be flying,** flying towards the so desired utopia, with the wind slipping through its wings, so close that it could almost be tasted, until something stopped it.

The weight of silver's immortality comes knocking on the door, and what was once a dream becomes just another mere illusion.



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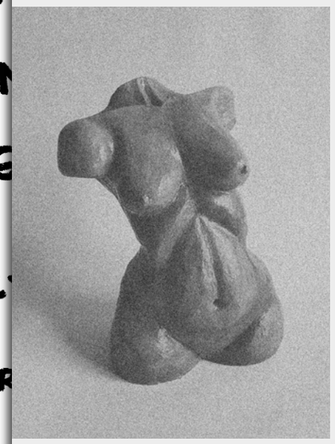
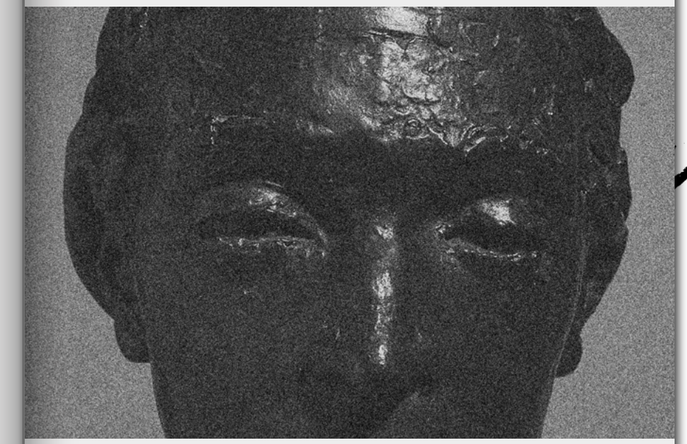


"We find ourselves today in the midst of a modern age that has lost touch with the roots of its modernity."[1] The contemporary world as the promise of transformation and growth for those who seek adventure and joy has shifted itself into an environment that overflows fragmentation, loss of identity, dislocation, competition, and uncertainty–a contemplation of life's constant dissatisfaction. The urge of returning to what was once a natural state of being is no longer a desire but a necessity, thus the new conception of a "personal spring" is given, where room for desires and insecurities can be found, a place that no longer reflects upon a "where" but rather a "what".

Born under a social agreement that was never agreed to in the first place, trapped into a so-called "free will" that was built up within fences, shaping the way to communicate, socialize, make physical contact, and express emotions. **The materialisation of the idealisation of freedom can only be fulfilled in a place as small as the ego.** It is a perennial human aspiration to seek utopia; we feed upon expectations daily, and just like dreams happen in parallel to life, so does the idea of what life should be–and that's where nature comes in.



[1]See: Berman, M. All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience Of Modernity. Verso Publishing: London, 2010, p. 15.

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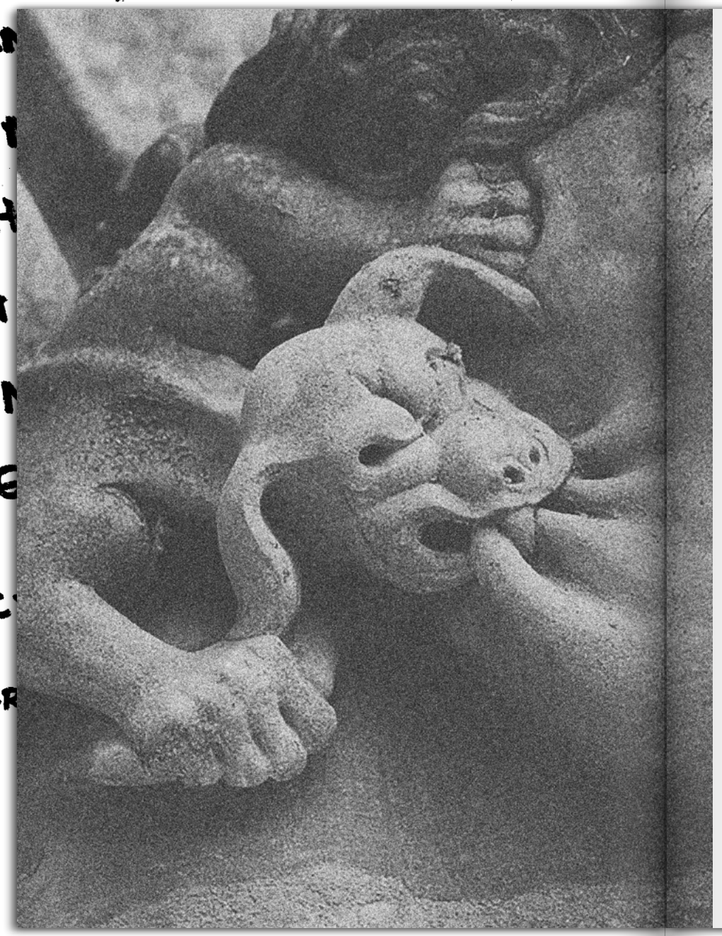
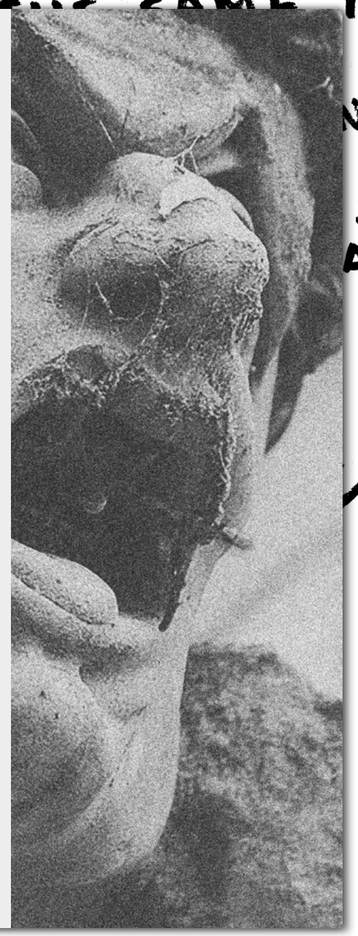


Cicadas undergo an incomplete metamorphosis, going through three different stages–egg, nymph, and adult. Females lay their eggs on a twig, and once the twig dies and falls, the eggs are left on the soil, digging their way underground where they will live, depending on species, for a period that can go between 1 to 17 years. Once the soil gets warm enough in spring, nymphs dig exit tunnels to find air. They climb, the adult wriggles out, and can now sing to attract females; the cycle starts all over again.

This same process of metamorphosis can be found in the action of realising the idealisation of utopia. This embodiment takes place in a short period, while the rooting of its constitution is long and slow. The will to be, in a space, be it physical or in the field of ideas, that gives you freedom of mind, is built for many years; but the dazzling moment of this same idealisation, which can be provoked several times, lasts just as long as the life of a cicada. **Like the spark of a lighter in the dark, which does not reach its peak but intends to raise its flame.**



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Along with strangeness, comes the satisfaction of being different, the eccentric causes buzz and discussion. The necessity of projecting yourself in a place of oddness through which differentiation and exclusion from the commonplace become possible, allows the opening of several doors into a journey towards reflection, meditation, and questioning. **It is in this very place that the dazzling of power over itself occurs.**

At the same time that the feeling of denial of what is mundane and ordinary expands, there is a parallel transformation from the idea of taste for consumption to what is a psychic function. **The willing to decorate comes as an escape valve,** allowing the repudiation for functionality, and for the practical life's imposed productivity, paving the way for a self-winding of things, for a successive twisting digression over itself. To spend a life contemplating instead of acting is to live a life that aggressively denies practicality. The opposition of consumption is stated through taste, pleasure, and eroticism– the same place where the foundation of the ego appears.

MANUELLA MARTINS
A SPARKLE AWAY FROM ARCADIA

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Humans crave for physical interaction whatever they may be;

Humans crave for physical interaction whatever they may be; there is an urgency of touching something that doesn't necessarily make immediate sense, simply for the possibility of wanting and the power of acquiring it. **There is an intimacy that presents itself in the willing of inventing an individual space that provides the necessary support for the creation of a "personal spring".** A space in which the problems that beset the current condition are transcendent or resolved: "utopian Consciousness wants to look far into the distance, but ultimately only in order to penetrate the darkness so near it, of the just lived moment, in which everything that is both drives and is hidden from itself. In other words, we need the most powerful telescope, that of polished utopian consciousness, in order to penetrate precisely the nearest nearness."[2]

[2]For this matter, see: Bloch, E. "The Principle of Hope" (1954-59). In: Noble, R. (Ed.). Utopias. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press,1995, p. 12.

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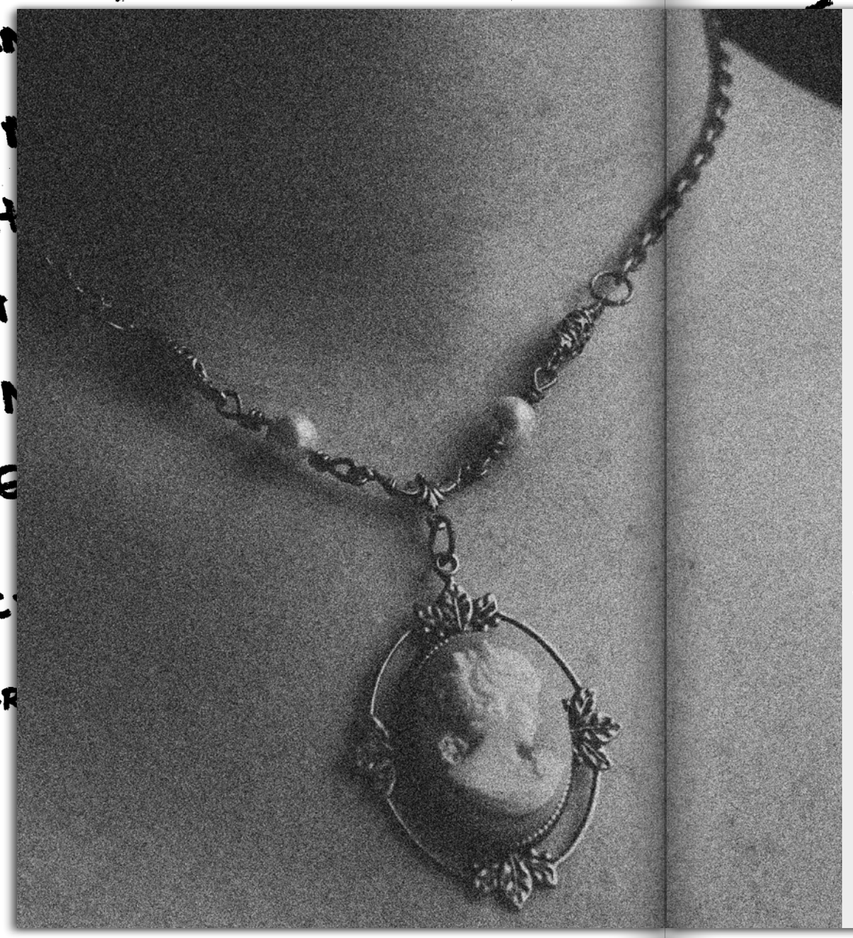

The subjection of the object to a rigid system of logic concerning its use and material goes against the emphasis of its pure organic structure. A way of approaching what has never been seen, and thus stroking the anxiety of latent nostalgia for what never really existed beyond imagination. The transportation to another dimension into another version of a life; "the essential claim of the sublime is that man can, in feelings and speech, transcend the human. What, if anything, lies beyond the human - God or the gods, the daemon or Nature - is matter for great disagreement."[3]

Ivory, pearls, noble ceramics, copper, rhodium, silver, gold, precious stones: materials that open room to the possibility of reaching out for the place of true enchantment, where desires are not only generated but reassured. An indirect but substantial invitation to Arcadia.

[3]Search for: Weiskel, Thomas. "The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence" (1976). In: Morley, S. The Sublime. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009, p. 12.

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EXCERPT FR

SPARKLE AWAY FROM ARCADIA

the cicadas singing/
go like this:/fulfillment
of death/in life/
beginning and end in
unison/final aspiration

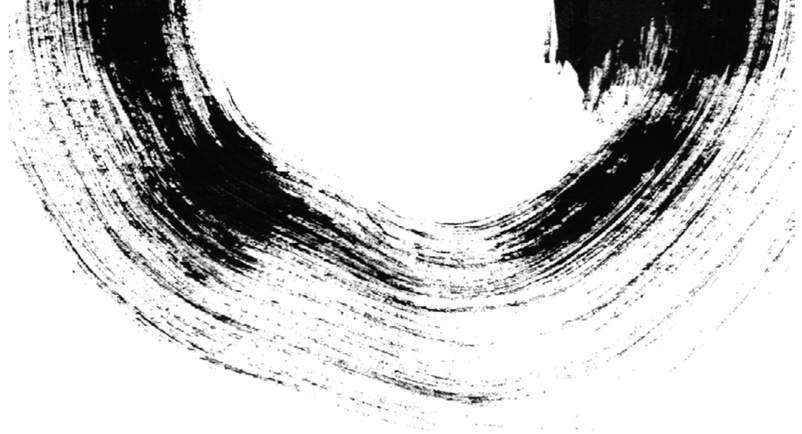
MANUELLA MARTINS
A SPARKLE AWAY FROM ARCADIA

The pictures here presented are of humans that have never existed. Those images were generated on *www.thispersondoesnotexist.com/* through generative adversarial network (GAN), a system that consists on training sets to generate new data with the same learned statistics. In this case, GAN was given a set of photographs of people so it could generate new set of photos that have unarguably a human-like resemblance. Therefore, none of the portraited people actually exist, nor their presence or identity—except for their generated image. Artificial intelligence and other technologies that produce all sorts of contents are opening possibilities to create and manipulate realistic imagery, unsettling our trust on visual evidences and shaking core values of society. Within the theme of this publication, anomie—unconsciously being part of the collectiveness and losing your self-identity—those images are an allegory of twisting beliefs and disrupting the sense of reality of the spectator. Initially, the faces are presented full of their human resemblance, but as you browse through the pages, they fade out, losing their definition and no longer being identifiable, but rather being part of a composition. Those people are part of Número Zero, and Número Zero only.

EDITORIAL DESIGN BREAKDOWN

The set of choices that structure the editorial design of the magazine is directly related and aligned with the purpose of the publication. It can be seen on all its elements, from the magazine format to its typographical choices, from the use of the grid to the colour palette.¶ The chosen format for a magazine naturally reflects its form of production and the expected reader's experience when handling it. For Número Zero, the digital format emerged as an alternative distribution strategy during this period in which the first edition was carried out. As a digital file, the magazine can be accessed by any devices or operating systems. Therefore, considering the support in which the magazine would be seen, its resolution follows the most common aspect ratio for computer monitors and mobile phone: 16:9.¶ Despite the choice of a digital support to conceive the magazine, the project ironically sought to transpose elements from printed matter to the virtual space, refusing to resort to tricks inherent in the digital medium—such as interactivity or motion graphics. The visual elements presented nostalgically emulate physical attributes of a printed publication—shadows on the spine that simulate scanned pages, handwritten notes, crumpled or folded sheets, handmade scratches, booklet inserts and so on. ¶ A narrative is built throughout the magazine through sheered elements that create a new reading direction—kickers, section openings and running heads rotated clockwise by 90 degrees introduce a new read to its referred content. This feature, in addition to suggesting the vertical reading of the mobile format, encourages the reader to look at it from a different perspective.¶

The use of multiple typefaces seeks to push the boundaries of editorial design conventions and illustrates the several voices behind this project. This is a key element of the publication that together with different uses of the grid spotlight the form of the text and its constant transformation, be it varying position, weight, size or style.¶ It is notorious that the basic colours of the magazine—black and white—referrers to binary images. Those images consist of pixels stored as a single bit—i.e., a 0 or 1 and often arise in digital image processes such as thresholding and dithering. Some input/output devices, such as laser printers and fax machines can only handle this kind of images. ¶ Despite the constant denial of the digital environment, a reference to the act of scrolling can be noticed on the refusal of breaking paragraphs, using the paragraph glyph instead and keeping the text a continuous thread, giving full emphasis to the visual load that the published works carry. The intentional absence of breaks, pauses or indentations defies one of the main procedures of text composition, and the lack of a breath gives a feeling of anxious giddiness inherent in social media. ¶ In short, the choices of design are inquisitive and integrate elements in order to reflect the new perspectives and critical reflections proposed by this publication. The magazine as it is presented today is a transdisciplinary platform designed to constitute a space for students and professionals to present and articulate a critical reflection on the broader field of Creative Arts.



ABC DINAMO

FAVORIT PRO

Design by Johannes Breyer, Fabian Harb, Erkin Karamemet, Immo Schneider, Robert Janes, Daniel Chessari, Maria Doreuli, Liza Rasskazova and Panagiotis Haratzopoulos
Spacing and Kerning by Igino Marini, Font engineering by Chi-Long Trieu
Released in 2018

Favorit® Pro is a straightforward low-contrast grotesque that combines a rigid drawing with subtle oddities and a humorous touch. It is an extension of the Favorit® family, supporting languages written with Cyrillic and Greek alphabets. Favorit® Pro allows fluent designs throughout 108 languages and across 9 weights, each drawn with corresponding italics. At the same time, it was sought after a balance in the use of spurs and terminals so as to keep the tight character of the typeface, but also to preserve the typical curvy style of the Greek letters. Favorit balances between being an experimental and traditional typeface. The “б” in Favorit echoes the “y”, but at the same time has a more traditional alternative design.

ABC DINAMO

MONUMENT GROTESK

Design by Kasper-Florio, Larissa Kasper, Rosario Florio
Family Extension by Dinamo and Robert Janes
Spacing and KeWrning by Igino Marini
Mastering by Chi Long Trieu
Released in 2018

Monument Grotesk owes its point de départ to a few contours Kasper-Florio stumbled upon online in 2013 in Palmer & Rey’s New Specimen Book, 1884, on page 81. It relied on a sturdy and compact skeleton, high vertical contrast and surprisingly sharp end strokes. The “o”, “c” and “e”, with their squarish inner counters pressing against their outer parts, or the elongated “r”, in particular, gave reason for a couple of screenshots, and later, a digitisation. Monument Grotesk carries the chronology of its development within itself: two characteristic stages of the "r"-glyph, “r.2” (2015) and “r.1” (2014), have been re-introduced to the character set—allowing you to travel back in time by using the typeface’s OpenType features.

SWISS TYPEFACES

BLACK MAMBA

ART DIRECTION BY SWISS TYPEFACES
BASED ON SANGBLEU TYPEFACE
ALTERNATE CHARACTERS DESIGN BY
LIUDMILA BREDIKHINA
SWISS TYPEFACES
RELEASED IN 2019

Black Mamba was created inside the Lab from Swiss Typefaces’ Research & Development department where they explore new ways of thinking about shapes for the future. By bringing together samples of the SangBleu styles Empire Bold and Sunrise Air in their test tubes and adding a drip of dark hot chocolate. A first evaluation showed the two faces didn’t blend. Instead they spawned a font suffering from bipolar disorder, alternating between a bold uppercase and light caps in the lowercase slots. The reaction couldn’t be stopped, though, and they soon witnessed abnormally formed letters. The mutations ranged from mild glitches (‘J’, ‘U’) and spasmodic hiccups (‘B’, ‘R’) to glyphs with severe seizures: a throbbing ‘M’, a squirming ‘Q’, sizzling arabesques. ‘E’ grew angrily lashing tentacles. ‘Z’ pierced right through the cover plate with venomous spikes. The letters started joining into words that looked like typographical Tourette’s. The supervisor reached for a scalpel, but it got ripped from her hand. The last thing they saw was a serpentine creature rising up and smashing the lights. Swiss Typefaces regrets to announce the outbreak could not be contained.

SWISS TYPEFACES

BRRR

Design by Emmanuel Rey / Swiss Typefaces
Released in 2019

With extra broad proportions and boxy capitals, BRRR makes words look like trains. Its angled terminals (a, g) have the immediacy of letters written with a chisel tip marker. The stepped joins where diagonals meet (M, W) imply the same tool—used in a rush, as insinuated by the smeared i dot. BRRR has largely monolinear strokes, except for the pinched shoulders and bowls. It’s not monospaced, but with bars on I or J, BRRR adopts some of the aesthetics associated with fixed-width fonts, and indeed it has been used in stacked settings where vertical relationships are at play.

BLAZETYPE

APOC

Designed by Matthieu Salvaggio
Released in 2018

Apoc, the battle between Light and Dark.
“As I stood upon the sand of the sea...”
The typeface family design process of Apoc started with the finding of a lettrage made for a book cover about the book of Revelations. Its clear historic link to Humanistic letter shape and proportions, as well as an extended x-height and squared serifs, Egyptian like with a twist, but somehow there is something refreshingly new in the way the counter-forms seem to be displayed. Apoc Revelations is thin and sharp with aggressive serifs, almost as if they were cut by a knife. It does wonders when displayed in headlines and brings the lightness of your layouts up when used in plain text in smaller sizes.

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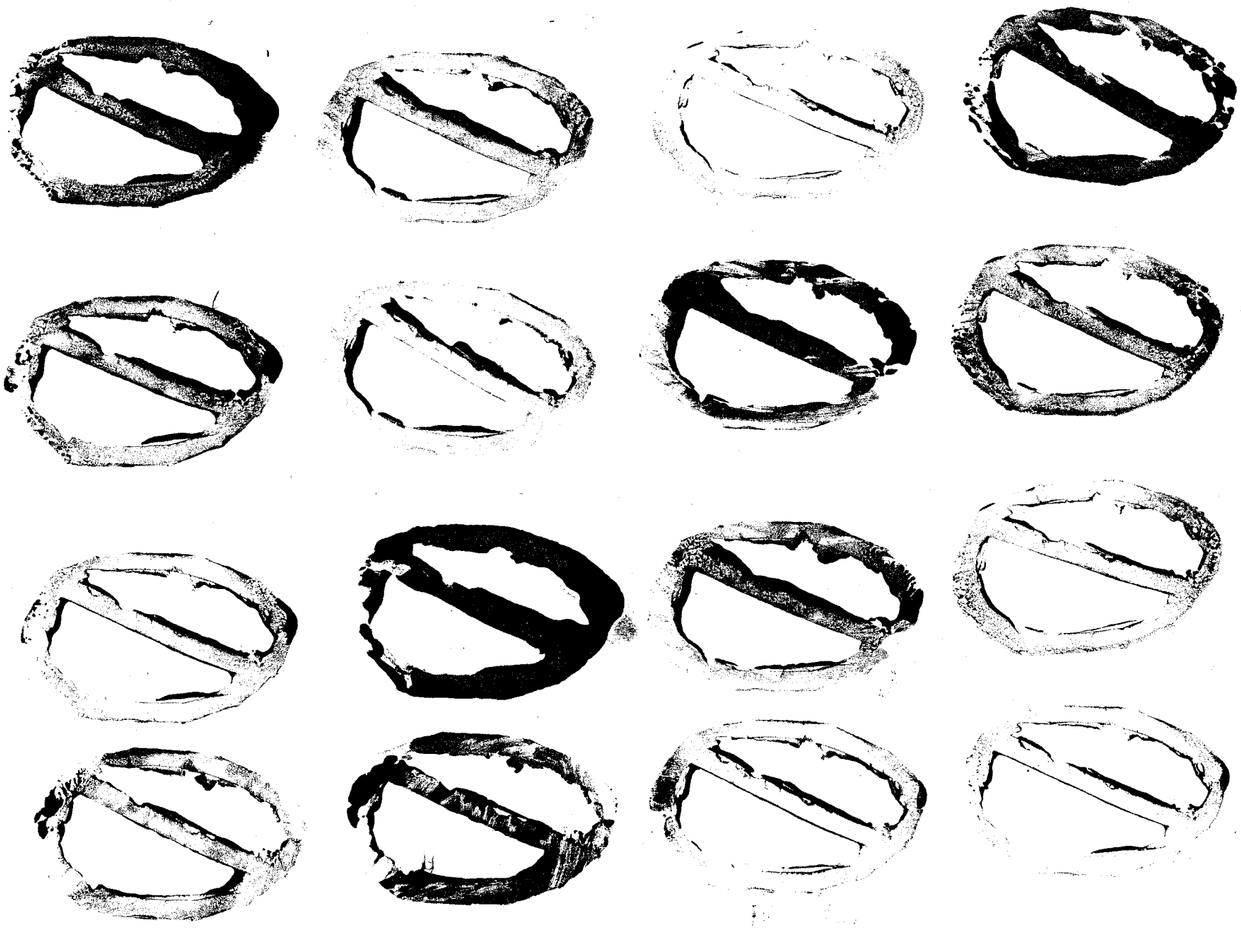

Este compêndio em língua portuguesa de uma revista nascida no interior do processo formativo de uma Escola Britânica, ainda que sediada no Brasil, não pretende ser, jamais, uma versão em português completa dos esforços de constituição de debate que norteiam as linhas de atuação do Bacharelado em Design e Ilustração da Escola Britânica de Artes Criativas. Optou-se por disponibilizar em língua portuguesa uma versão apenas reduzida dos anseios de intervenção pública das atividades do curso, prezando por aqueles textos cujo teor encontra expressão e conteúdos imediatamente traduzíveis - quando, naturalmente, não se trata de versões para a língua inglesa de textos anteriormente publicados em português, e, portanto, já disponíveis ao leitor brasileiro -, do mesmo modo que, ao longo da publicação, o problema da língua se apresenta de maneira decisivamente atrelada às questões de forma que todo trabalho de arte enfrenta em sua irredutibilidade, ainda que face ao processo de internacionalização enfrentado mundialmente por todo aquele que almeja uma participação na esfera das artes.

"Da adversidade vivemos"
Hélio Oiticica

Por Jaygo Bloom
Programme Leader

A cultura e o povo brasileiros prosperam na versatilidade e na mudança, ainda que o debate crítico em sua educação com muita frequência esteja interessado apenas nas qualidades de um resultado determinado e das habilidades técnicas ali envolvidas. Isso pode resultar em uma formação que acabe por negligenciar questões fundamentais como a função crítica da arte e do design na sociedade e ignorar o comprometimento do design à prática e à colaboração culturais. ¶ Os eventos recentes abalaram o eixo da educação mundial em arte e design. Algumas universidades ao redor do mundo enfrentaram tal situação de maneira problemática, ao contrário do que ocorreu com a Escola Britânica de Artes Criativas, em São Paulo, na qual a transição para um novo tipo de aprendizado se deu de modo inusitadamente promissor. O que se segue é a resposta do BA British Design da Escola ao novo normal; versátil, desafiador em seus resultados e totalmente digital. ¶ A publicação que toma o espaço de sua tela explora as qualidades de um processo gerado pelo irrompimento de um fenômeno colaborativo, virtual e digital. Trata-se de um monumento à ambição e ao talento criativo que motivam nosso departamento de futuros artistas, designers e produtores de mudanças no mundo. Concebida como uma experiência on-line, expandida, abertamente colaborativa, destinada a um Online-tudo, e incorporada como um processo social e narrativo não linear. Disponível inteiramente ao apoio deste novo-mundo-normal, para nos ensinar como encarar (de novo e de novo) a vida através do design. ¶ "Número Zero" o acompanhará neste mundo pós-tilt, pós-shift. Uma superabundância de questões converge em seu conteúdo, questões que, enquanto se tornam ferramentas cruciais para as discussões e os fundamentos críticos da atividade prática, comportam-se também como conduítes para nos atinar com a relevância do design e, um tanto inversamente, nos engajar nas ficções de um futuro próximo e nos percalços sociológicos desta nossa nova, cotidiana, dependência digital.

Número Zero
O primeiro de uma série, ou, um projeto sempre em andamento

Por Cadu Riccioppo
e Luana Graciano
C&CS e Design Module Leaders

"Número Zero" é a primeira edição de uma promessa de continuado espaço de produção e debate no campo das Artes Criativas na atualidade. Pretende ser não apenas um momento de extravasamento daquilo que o Bacharelado em Design Gráfico e Ilustração da Escola Britânica de Artes Criativas vem produzindo ao longo dos últimos anos internamente ao ambiente acadêmico, mas, sobretudo, uma ocasião auto reflexiva e crítica, apta a intervir no meio contemporâneo. ¶ Feita pelos alunos do curso, e amparada pela orientação de professores do Programa, a publicação pretende, por meio de artigos, entrevistas, ensaios visuais, práticas compartilhadas entre alunos, designers, ilustradores e artistas, e traduções de textos referenciais da área, instaurar um espaço em que a realidade de atuação dos campos do design e da ilustração se possam ver refletidos em um pensamento crítico, capaz de propor novos termos ao debate do campo expandido das artes e da cultura hoje.

O Número Zero

Por Júlia Vasconcelos

O número zero tem sido uma questão complexa ao longo da história. Para entender melhor o que esse número significa e representa, é preciso voltar séculos atrás (antes mesmo de Cristo) e observar como ele foi surgindo, de forma autônoma, em diferentes civilizações. ¶ Na cultura indiana antiga, por exemplo, era possível ter o entendimento do que era o vazio. Se você abrir um dicionário de sânscrito, é possível encontrar uma explicação minuciosa sobre o termo indiano para o zero: shúnya. Essa palavra, se usada como adjetivo, significa vazio, deserto, estéril, ausência ou falta de algo. E, se usada como substantivo, é nada, vácuo. Faz sentido, não? Essa simbologia indiana para o número zero viajou até a Europa, quando adotada pelos árabes. Propagaram o termo shúnya, que em árabe traduziu-se para shifr e que mais tarde foi latinizado para zephirum, zéfiro, zefro até receber a denominação que tem atualmente: zero. ¶ Nas Américas, os maias produziram sua própria interpretação para o nada através de um sistema numérico. Esse sistema era composto por pontos e traços, que indicavam as unidades e dezenas. Entretanto, havia duas notações para o zero: uma servia para compor os números, uma elipse fechada que lembrava um olho; e, a outra, com uso mais simbólico, fazia alusão a um dos calendários dos maias. ¶ Já os gregos não acreditavam em uma representação do vazio. Para eles, não existia uma utilidade prática para o conceito, chegando a ser antiestético. O zero não passava de uma mera abstração, como o pensamento filosófico aristotélico já dizia: "o mundo é o que vemos e tocamos com os nossos sentidos". ¶ E os primeiros a chegar a uma noção de zero foram os babilônios. Foram eles que criaram o "sistema de numeração posicional", em que os algarismos têm valor pela posição que ocupam, utilizado até os dias de hoje. Pode-se dizer, então, que os babilônios criaram uma forma de representar graficamente o nada, mostrando o abstrato de uma maneira concreta. ¶ Mas, afinal de contas, o que é o número zero? ¶ Bom, normalmente, ele é relacionado à ideia de algo não-existente, algo nulo. Para muitos, é um número inofensivo. Aposto que você até se esquece da existência dele de vez em quando, estou certa? Eu o considero intrigante. Ele é e não é. É um vazio repleto de sentido, um número inovador. Permita-me explicar: ¶ O zero pode ser utilizado de diversas maneiras: na física, quantidades extremamente grandes e extremamente pequenas podem ser representadas por meio de potências de dez, onde cumpre um papel fundamental; na linguagem binária, os dados são codificados em sequências de zeros e uns, onde representa ausência de energia ou impureza absoluta; e, na aritmética, onde veio como uma verdadeira revolução e se consolidou como uma das noções mais importantes do pensamento. ¶ Na matemática, as regras que valem para todos os outros números não se aplicam para ele, o zero só as obedece quando e como bem entende. Ao mesmo tempo em que ele pode ser considerado inútil se acomodado no lado esquerdo de um outro algarismo, se tornando o famoso "zero à esquerda", quanto mais a direita ele vem, mais valor ele aumenta. Acho isso, no mínimo, curioso. ¶ Pode-se dizer, então, que o número zero foi um dos maiores mistérios e uma das maiores reformas intelectuais da humanidade. Foi capaz de mudar completamente o rumo das ciências formais e trazer novas reflexões a respeito da sua prática. Ele nos obriga a repensar tudo (ou quase tudo) o que algum dia já tomamos por certo: da divisão aritmética à essência de movimento, do cálculo à possibilidade de surgir alguma coisa do vazio.

UM OLHAR SOBRE O "ACID DESIGN" E SUAS REFLEXÕES NO ÂMBITO DO DESIGN GRÁFICO: uma livre entrevista com designers contemporâneos

Por Letícia Souza

Ao longo dos últimos meses, estive desenvolvendo uma longa pesquisa sobre o então chamado "acid design," termo que vem crescendo dentro da cultura do design gráfico e está sendo reconhecido por ser agressivamente radical e expressivo nos projetos de vários designers que vêm surgindo. Meu interesse sobre o assunto levou a que eu refletisse sobre o que esse estilo representa e, para isso, conduzi uma série de entrevistas, realizadas separadamente, mas aqui reunidas sob questões comuns, com os designers Tobias Raschbacher, Alexandre Lindenberg e Tom Arena. Com isso, espero promover um debate que provoque a você, leitor, a refletir sobre as ideias aqui compartilhadas e, quem sabe, entender mais sobre as práticas desses designers e sobre o "acid design."

Primeiro, gostaria de saber o quão familiar você é com o termo "acid design" – se você já ouviu falar dele antes, e se sabe o que significa?

TR: Na minha percepção, "acid design" é um termo muito solto, que ganhou muita atenção em redes sociais tais como Instagram. Eu não sei se existe alguma definição confiável para esse termo, e, então, acho que se trata de algo mais intuitivo, que provavelmente ganhou muita influência de outras áreas de design não-convencionais e linguagens como a tipografia, de maneira que podemos esperar que venha do cenário da música metal. Em geral, penso que "acid design" tenta combinar esses elementos duros com contemporaneidades do design. Ele se difere radicalmente do design mais limpo e da abordagem mais "suíça" da comunicação visual.

AL: Acho interessante chamar esse tipo de design dessa forma, até por que os elementos dessa linguagem lembram os cartazes das raves de acid house. Penso que esse movimento de ruptura já aconteceu algumas vezes dentro do design – de se levantar uma reação contra a lógica que pensa o projeto de design baseado no racionalismo funcional. É difícil chamar de "movimento"; esta é uma palavra desgastada; dá a entender que há um manifesto escrito, ou que essa ruptura seja promovida por um grupo específico, ou tivesse direção central, e acho que não existe mais esse tipo de unidade, nem na arte em geral e nem no design. Mas acredito que dá para chamar de tendência – mais facilmente do que de movimento.

TA: É verdade que nós ouvimos esses termos relacionados com o design que possui na sua composição cores mais saturadas, também quase arranhando a imagem de um desenho animado, como vemos numa viagem, no uso do ácido, precisamente – uma referência precisa à história das Raves e do uso de drogas.

Enquanto está claro que esse estilo impõe uma distância com relação ao design moderno tradicional, o que você pode dizer sobre essa ideia de quebra, que vem crescendo com uma abordagem mais radical no campo do design?

AL: A quebra já aconteceu algumas vezes. Nos anos 1980, 1990, houve uma revolução tecnológica na forma como se projetava; até então, as ferramentas para o desenho de layout eram o recorte e a colagem manuais, e a introdução do software de edição gráfica abriu uma série de possibilidades que colocaram em crise alguns dos paradigmas do design moderno. Até então, para compor um texto, o designer fazia uma consulta a um catálogo de fontes impresso, e encomendava de um fornecedor um fotolito em forma de fita, com o texto impresso em tamanho e espessura pré-determinados, para fazer a composição manualmente, e isso exigia que o designer pré-programasse a solução e o processo inteiro. E fazer uma fonte, então, era algo mais distante ainda da realidade de muitos designers. ¶ Quando os softwares digitais apareceram, houve uma abertura de possibilidades que promoveu uma ruptura. A lógica do design moderno e funcionalista estava muito conectada à necessidade de se respeitar uma metodologia, para conseguir operar com os recursos que existiam. A facilidade de operar com os recursos do computador abriu um campo para a experimentação intuitiva, que não era possível com as limitações técnicas de até então, estas que demandavam que as soluções gráficas passassem por um filtro de racionalidade e assertividade. Designers dessa época, como o Peter Saville, o pessoal da escola de Cranbrook, o David Carson e foundries como a Emigre questionavam o livro de cânones do Massimo Vignelli ou a metodologia rígida de construção do grid do Josef Müller-Brockmann, com sua escala de tamanhos de fonte adequada para a composição. Em algum momento, esses designers viram que as possibilidades do seu tempo lhes permitiriam ir mais longe, e que não havia razão para se restringir a uma metodologia rígida de composição. ¶ É possível dizer também que a mudança tecnológica promoveu uma mudança na forma como circulam os afetos e como se produz a subjetividade, e isso também tem um impacto na produção de linguagem. E isso aconteceu agora de novo: nós tivemos outra revolução tecnológica, com uma aceleração dos processos de comunicação e expansão de possibilidades técnicas, com o desenvolvimento de planos de dados muito mais eficientes e com o aprofundamento do uso de redes sociais. Quase ninguém mais lê jornal impresso ou precisa recorrer aos livros como fonte de informação; a internet é muito mais acessível e condensa uma alta quantidade de informação de forma mais ágil. E essa mudança na circulação da informação promoveu de novo uma crise de valores e uma reação pós-moderna, que lança mão de recursos de linguagem novos, o que resultou nesse "acid design". ¶ É possível falar de um movimento pendular de tendências; porque, depois dessa primeira ruptura dos anos 1980, 1990, nos anos 2000, já era visível a saturação dessas inovações de linguagem e sua absorção pelo mercado e pelo senso comum. Daí, estúdios como o Experimental Jetset promoveram uma discussão baseada na exploração da verdade material dos objetos como eixo de pensamento, e isso trouxe a volta das soluções minimalistas ou do uso de fontes como a Helvetica. Já o que está acontecendo agora, de 2010 para cá, novamente vai na contramão de valorizar a verdade material e o raciocínio moderno; a tipografia tem assumido um caráter mais gestual e sintético, com os recursos de acabamento visual em 3D, de simulação de realidades imateriais e digitais.

TR: É claro que a comunicação visual é mais do que só simplesmente transportar uma mensagem do emissor ao receptor. Toda pequena decisão feita durante o processo de design também carrega partes da informação, seja pela escolha da tipografia que vai ser usada, em que consideramos o type designer/foundry por trás dela, ou pelo fato de que seja somente uma fonte gratuita, encontrada na internet, ou aquelas que já vêm direto no computador. Tudo isso, até um ponto em que você consegue sentir a subjetividade do designer por trás dela. Os praticantes na área do design claramente têm um olho treinado, e talvez analisem demais uma peça de comunicação visual, em vez de só se aproveitarem dela. Em geral, a comunicação deve alcançar muito mais do que os designers que pensam o porquê dessa tipografia, e assim por diante. Mas, mesmo assim, mesmo que as pessoas não tenham nada a ver com a área do design, todos os elementos de, por exemplo, um pôster, têm um papel importante em como eles irão decodificar a informação de forma inconsciente. Geralmente, eu gosto de experimentar com vários estilos diferentes, e de tentar integrar bastante motion design ou conceitos de design de produto no meu trabalho. Eu penso que esse "acid design"está tentando se diferenciar de forma radical do design convencional, como mencionei antes, e um modo disso ocorrer é pela tipografia. O uso não convencional de uma typeface reflete na peça total de design e tem um grande impacto em como os receptores irão reagir e ler o conteúdo ali posto. Além disso, as letras em negrito são mais adequadas para serem convertidas para um gráfico 3D, que também é um recurso muito utilizado nas peças de "acid design." ¶ Olhando para muitos designers e para seus trabalhos, eu noto que há muitas referências relacionadas à tecnologia e ao uso de elementos que transmitem uma ideia mais industrial e tecnológica nos projetos. Como você acha que tem operado essa ideia no design contemporâneo, envolvendo e abraçando o elemento digital, seja no seu trabalho ou no design como um todo?

TR: Eu acho que isso tem a ver com um certo romantismo ligado ao começo da era dos gráficos de computadores, quando os gráficos 3D eram muito, para não dizer em excesso, utilizados. No meu trabalho, eu tento minimizar as influências mais fortes daquela época, para poder produzir peças mais contemporâneas e experimentais de design e projetos tipográficos. Como ainda estou mudando meus interesses sobre design gráfico de tempos em tempos, eu tento ao máximo testar ideias, e esse aspecto tecnológico me parece ser um dos quais estou gostando de incorporar mais. A influência da tecnologia pode ser vista diretamente no meu trabalho quando faço alguma animação que usa movimentos mecânicos baseados em máquinas, ou quando a superfície de algo tenta imitar o metal ou qualquer outro material rígido. Em geral, a influência da tecnologia não é uma coisa nova; ela pode ser observada no Futurismo do começo do século XX, no qual as novas tecnologias trazidas pela revolução influenciaram as estéticas de muitas produções e pinturas.

AL: O que falei antes sobre verdade material se encaixa aqui perfeitamente. Quando você utiliza outros meios de mídia, como a animação, essa discussão da verdade material quase que evapora, porque não tem mais sentido falar em "materialidade", quando seu suporte é uma tela digital. Você não vai discutir a verdade material dos pixels na sua tela da mesma forma que discutia as camadas de impressão e o fotolitos do offset; quando está em jogo a gestão de recursos (já que cada cor significa mais uma chapa de impressão); ou quando ainda é possível pensar em uma poética material de sobreposição das cores primárias em transparência; ou na tectônica das camadas de tinta que assemelham o offset à prática da gravura. O digital não conhece limites, e nem materialidade. E isso derruba a discussão moderna a respeito da materialidade... Ao mesmo tempo em que eticamente o designer corre o risco de alinhar sua linguagem à imagem do espetáculo, e terminar validando a dimensão espetacular da imagem.

TA: Eu sempre apreciei a tecnologia, sempre fui apaixonado por computadores antigos e interfaces, assim como pelo espírito das corridas, dos carros de corridas, motocicletas, motores, e por aí vai. Essas duas áreas incluem um grande número de tecnologias gráficas que eu tento transcrever para os meus trabalhos, a um ponto em que penso a tipografia trabalhada mais em formas cromadas como uma referência que veio dos anos 1980, uma inspiração dos pôsteres ou também dos títulos dos filmes. Mas, para mim, esses gráficos vêm de um tempo em que esses elementos eram usados para dar um ar mais futurístico – uma relação historicamente estabelecida com o movimento Futurista, por certo – ao trabalho. Ironicamente, hoje nós continuamos a utilizar esses parâmetros, o que é meio paradoxal, já que, se comparados aos anos 1980 (quase 40 anos atrás), os utilizamos em 2020, que, como se dizia naquela época, era o futuro. Só Deus sabe como os elementos gráficos vão ser em 2060, então!

AL: Tenho dificuldades em imaginar aonde isso vai dar. A lógica é assumir o ruído, assumir a ironia do feio, trabalhar com tudo o que é rejeitado como "ética da linguagem" e abrir o campo da expressividade e da visão subjetiva do designer para tentar produzir alguma crítica visual nas frestas que a profissão oferece. Existe uma tensão mal resolvida, na teoria, entre o que é o lugar de expressão do designer e o risco de colaborar com o espetáculo pela imposição da subjetividade no exercício de transmitir uma mensagem, mascarando a verdade dos conteúdos através de recursos de linguagem que desviam a verdade da mensagem. Mas, mesmo que você esteja trabalhando da forma mais purista, você sempre estará colocando sua subjetividade. Quem vai colocar uma régua capaz de delimitar de até que ponto é ético o designer colocar sua subjetividade na mensagem? Que régua é essa? Até na hora que você escolhe a Helvetica por ela ser pretensamente neutra, você não está livrando a mensagem da escolha do designer, do gesto do designer; você escolheu investir aquele texto com a ideia e com o valor da neutralidade e da imparcialidade. ¶ Sabemos que a linguagem evoluí, assim como a tecnologia também o faz. Como você acha que isso ocorrerá em relação a esse novo "estilo" na história do design gráfico?

AL: Há um paradigma ético do design tradicional, que impõe que a linguagem deve ser atemporal, e que o designer deve apelar para o mínimo de expressividade possível, sob ameaça de condenar a mensagem a se aprisionar ao tempo em que foi colocada, perdendo, assim, força com o tempo. Quando você trata da identidade de um hospital, da sinalização de um metrô, isso tem que ser um paradigma - a linguagem tem que ser o mais eterna e imutável possível. Mas, se o objeto de trabalho for um festival de música, que está em constante mutação de linguagem, o designer deve estar conectado à produção de signos daquele tempo – que, quer você queira, quer não, não vai mudar nos próximos 6 meses; haverá outras músicas, com outros valores estéticos, e vai haver outros recursos gráficos para dar conta dessas novas linguagens musicais. Não dá pra se apoiar apenas nas ferramentas do design tradicional para lidar com objetos transitórios. Isto é incongruente. Os recursos simplesmente não dão conta.

TA: Olhando para a cena mais underground que está acontecendo, eu penso que existe uma ação que está em jogo, e que não se modificará. Ela está se tornando uma referência de estilo futurístico. Mas vemos muitas vezes que outros designers estão na verdade se apropriando de uma linguagem vintage. Acho que ainda se trata de um nicho de mercado; mesmo se falarmos sobre o "acid", que é bastante recente, temos que ver como isso será no futuro. É como o vinho: melhora com o tempo.

E como você diria que o estilo do seu trabalho se relaciona (ou não) com esse estilo?

TR: Eu diria que eu integro muitas partes do "acid design" nos meus projetos, mas não deixo o reduzo exclusivamente a isso; gosto de lidar com elementos que, dele, já se destacaram, uma vez que eu penso que a maioria dos trabalhos que podem ser considerados "acid design" são visualmente super carregados e contêm muitos elementos visuais que não servem tanto ao que eu pretendo produzir. Considerando que eu ainda sou um estudante, tenho o privilégio de testar muitos experimentos diferentes para ver qual linguagem visual se adequa melhor às minhas intenções e à minha personalidade. Mas, é claro, eu sigo algumas regras do processo de design quando penso na escolha da tipografia, antes de começar um projeto. Geralmente, eu tendo a usar fontes de designers jovens e foundries independentes que tenham seu próprio caráter e sejam sutis à sua maneira. Penso que esses type designers independentes entendem melhor o que essa geração do design, da qual eu faço parte, espera, e também necessita e expressa, tem a dizer. Porém, o mais importante é a questão ética de saber se eu, quando vou fazer um projeto, faço algo mais significante quando compro uma licença de fonte de uma foundry enorme ou apoio um jovem designer, como eu.

AL: Nós, como estúdio, estamos num período meio esquizofrênico, vivemos o embate dessa crise. Por sermos formado pela FAU-USP, todo o processo de formação que tivemos tinha como norte a procura da solução mais sintética possível a partir da materialidade da cor, da fonte, do suporte.¶ A identidade da Mamba Negra foi assim no começo, mas, até por se tratar de uma festa de música eletrônica, e estar próxima de um ambiente que produz linguagem de maneira muito efervescente e transitória, esse paradigma foi ficando um pouco defasado, e os recursos sintéticos da modernidade começaram a soar insuficientes. Por estar mais perto da comunicação digital e ter um tom de voz muito debochado, manter esses paradigmas foi algo que se tornou insustentável. Nós temos projetos que vão por outro caminho, super oposto a esse. Enquanto a Mamba estava pedindo para explodir, o caminho da síntese minimalista foi ficando comportado e higiênico demais, para dar conta da ironia discursiva da festa. Dentre os nossos trabalhos, o da Mamba é aquele em que temos mais espaço para experimentar, para abraçar o transitório, porque, no próximo mês, o que estará dando o tom da próxima edição é um tema novo, um sentimento, uma expressão alinhada com algo muito diferente do anterior; e, aí,

nos aproximamos mais do acid design. Mas tem gente muito mais radical que a gente - tem as coisas do Club Tormenta ou do Baile em Chernobyl, que estão muito mais próximas da linguagem do acid design.¶ O projeto da Mamba tem dialogado um pouco com os recursos do acid design, mas ao mesmo tempo não dá pra fugir 100% da identidade original da Mamba, que tinha um pé no discurso gráfico punk, mas com uma estruturação de diagramação moderna, que discutia a verdade material do ruído gerado pelo xerox e pela sujeira da mistura de glifos estrangeiros no alfabeto latino (mas, ainda assim, era o alfabeto da Helvetica)..¶

Existe uma discussão sobre as regras e os paradigmas que estão passando por uma ruptura nos novos modos de propor linguagens do design gráfico. Quais são suas percepções sobre isso?

TA: Tudo depende do que você quer fazer. O experimental é muito importante; você deve testar todas as coisas para realmente entender os dois, eu acho, testando diferentes suportes de metodologias; como o software, que te ajuda muito, mas nós temos a tendência de nos prendermos nele; e não devemos, devemos tentar sair da nossa zona de conforto. A mágica da arte é que há não regras, não de fato. E, quando há regras, dentro da área gráfica, elas foram criadas para que serem aprendidas e, como eu geralmente digo, dominadas, para, então, serem quebradas. Haverá quem ache isso feio ou bonito, mas, o que é beleza, afinal? Em arte, não existe beleza nem feiura, eu penso.

AL: Até quando essa linguagem vai ser uma ruptura e não vai ser absorvida?
Há uns anos, a distorção da tipografia, a disposição da linguagem ilegível da logotipia de bandas de black metal, o acabamento tridimensional e artificial em 3D, o excesso de recursos e símbolos visuais que lembram tatuagem tribal e a identidade visual de programa de auditório esportivo eram impensáveis como norte estético para uma produção de vanguarda. E, agora, a Lady Gaga lançou um disco, e a linguagem que ela usa em toda a comunicação é essa. Até quando essa linguagem vai ser nova e radical, agressivamente derretida, subitamente digital?.¶ Existe a necessidade de expandir os limites da linguagem, e isso é legítimo. É só pensar até quando uma tendência se mantém fresca, e quando vai se tornar apenas cópia e simulacro. Existe muita gente replicando os elementos desse design de forma descontrolada – é só olhar para os perfis de instagram que aparecem todo dia reproduzindo o acid design. O que vai resistir são os pioneiros disso – a produção do Metahaven, por exemplo, do Jonathan Castro, do Mirko Borsche, que todo mundo tenta ir atrás..¶ Essa dinâmica faz parte da produção da linguagem; se você olhar para a história e analisar o cartaz do Woodstock, por mais que ele seja cafoninha, é uma peça que com certeza não deveria ter sido composta com Helvetica; é uma cartaz datado, mas que, com a gestualidade do seu tempo, deu sentido àquela geração. Então, se a linguagem morrer e virar outra coisa amanhã, o que ficará é a tentativa do sujeito de questionar a estética padrão em determinada época, e isso é parte do agenciamento dele no mundo.

De onde vêm suas inspirações? Como elas se envolvem no seu processo?

TR: Inspiração está basicamente em todo lugar. A mais óbvia é, claro, outras peças de design gráfico, mas, também, outras disciplinas de design, como o design de produto, ou o design especulativo. Também as disciplinas mais técnicas, como a engenharia, foram capazes de fornecer novas abordagens para o meu trabalho. Mas, é claro, as artes, como as artes plásticas e a pintura, são uma grande fonte de inspiração também. Tanto quanto as ciências, que podem ser vistas em um dos meus projetos, chamado Bryond, e que é baseado numa tesoura de DNA CRISPR, potencialmente capaz de modificar embriões humanos. Mas eu também tomo inspirações da minha vida cotidiana, vendo algo que eu me interesso todo dia, em qualquer lugar – seja uma forma, superfície, combinações de cor, construções mecânicas ou produtos que me inspirem a favor de novas animações ou novos tipos de renderings 3D.

TA: A música me inspira muito, alguns artistas como Travis Scott ou Slimka (que é de Geneva) me inspiram quando estou fazendo meu trabalho, sinto que me dá motivação.

O que você tem a dizer sobre a linguagem híbrida da mídia, e como isso está relacionado ao design e a esse estilo em particular?

AL: Acho que, em todos tempos, a produção gráfica se relacionou com os recursos tecnológicos e lidou com a problemática subjetiva que emerge da troca de afetos que as mídias proporcionam. A prática do designer hoje pede que as soluções para uma identidade visual transbordem o suporte estático da mídia impressa ou da necessidade de compressão da imagem em poucos frames. Hoje, o cartaz impresso deu lugar para o stories animado do instagram, e isso afeta a forma como o designer aborda uma narrativa visual. Os horizontes foram ampliados pela necessidade de raciocinar com a profundidade que a tela e a navegação das redes proporcionam; e a natureza dessa mídia é inegavelmente espetacular enquanto espelho imaterial e descolado da realidade física; é uma natureza efêmera, mutante, digital, e isso é o que norteia as escolhas desse estilo.

Objets aux coins: a conversation on a corner

João Simões e Carlos Eduardo Riccioppo

Dia 1
Carlos Eduardo Riccioppo: Eu fico pensando como o seu trabalho, que foi se formando diante de um raciocínio urbano marcado por aquilo que exatamente se associa a objetos tortos, adendos, que vão sendo formados pela tentativa quase que “manual” de adaptar a arquitetura a necessidades cotidianas, ordinárias, imprevistas, se veria, distante da paisagem brasileira, e agora diante de uma cidade que, como Paris, deve possuir muito menor incidência de soluções construtivas ajambradas como essas...

Dia 2
João Simões: Assim que eu cheguei aqui e comecei a andar pela cidade, eu passei a reparar que tem alguns objetos que parecem sem explicação, ou cuja função não se exibe facilmente quando a gente olha pra eles. E eu fiquei imaginando quais referentes eu teria para encontrar um lugar para o uso que eles poderiam possuir na vida prática. Um desses objetos é uma argola de ferro, que eu encontrei, primeiro, chumbada na parede de uma casa, bem rente à calçada, e essa argola estava bem ao lado de um nicho, que continha uma daquelas mangueiras de bombeiro. Se ela estivesse uns cinco palmos acima de onde estava, seria como aquelas que ficam nas fachadas de farmácias, e que a gente utiliza para prender os cachorros. Se estivesse presa a uma porta, ela bem poderia ser um daqueles batedores de porta antigos – uma aldabra... De qualquer maneira, a argola serve sempre para amarrar, segurar ou puxar alguma coisa. A argola também aparece em tamanho maior; eu vi uma delas presa no muro de arrimo da beira do Sena – certamente, utilizada como ancoradouro. Essa mesma argola, aliás, é muito semelhante àquelas que substituem os postes para prender cavalos. Há outros objetos que parecem, quando olhados à primeira vista, poderem pertencer a uma família semelhante a desses objetos: aquelas bolas que aparecem em cima de muros, aquelas pinhas, muitas vezes de cerâmica ou metal. Às vezes, as formas dessas têm seus motivos decorativos replicados no detalhamento de móveis – topos de cabeceiras de camas, cadeiras... E, quando maiores, às vezes aparecem no chão, próximas a portadas ou portões de casas, impedindo que carruagens ou carros batam nas paredes dessas entradas. Para não mencionar que objetos assim também podem se apresentar, maiores ou menores, junto a rios e canais, para servir de local de amarração de barcos. Tanto aquelas argolas quanto essas pinhas são objetos produzidos de maneira modular, e possuem múltiplo uso – na porta de uma casa, em cima de um muro, à beira de um canal. A ideia de olhar para a cidade e tentar encontrar, nela, esse tipo de objeto, que é muito parecido, modularmente produzido, mas que tem (ou pode ter) funções muito diversas, me pareceu algo que responde a uma compreensão de como o meu trabalho poderia se comportar por aqui – este exercício de olhar para um objeto e imaginar um uso para ele de acordo com a sua forma e com o seu lugar. Mas, um tipo específico de objeto que eu encontrei na cidade me chamou a atenção: um “objeto de canto”, que fica preso nas quinas e dobras recuadas de muitos edifícios. Dependendo do lugar onde estão, esses “objetos de canto” parecem servir para segurar ou amarrar alguma coisa – às vezes têm espaço para que se prendam os cadeados de uma bicicleta, ou talvez, antes, para se amarrar cavalos... Mas eu não estou convencido de que eles foram pensados para esses usos. Como eles variam muito de formato, altura e tipologia, dentre todos os outros objetos que eu encontrei, estes me pareceram os mais curiosos. Eu comecei a fotografá-los, e, nisso, reparei que eles aparecem em prédios que avançam em direção à calçada, muitas vezes entre dois prédios, e nunca nas esquinas. Alguns parecem ser muito antigos, mas outros desses objetos parecem ter sido feitos há pouco tempo. Num mesmo prédio, às vezes, há mais de um deles, e eles podem ser semelhantes ou diferentes. Falei com muita gente que mora na cidade, e as pessoas não parecem demonstrar saberem o uso desses objetos – apenas especulações. Eles devem variar de funcionalidade, por mais semelhantes que possam ser entre si. Eu separei algumas imagens para mostrar a você.

Dia 3
C: Olhando para essas imagens, eu fico com a impressão de que esses objetos de canto sejam modulares, sim, mas de uma época específica. Estão ali ocupando cantos não porque eles sobraram esquecidos ali, mas porque eles são garantidos, conservados por uma impressão de que são a prova do passado da cidade.
J: Num mesmo prédio tem vários objetos desses. Alguns deles foram reformados, e, de tubo redondo, tocam duas paredes de um canto. Então, são objetos de canto que demandam serem refeitos, restaurados. Não podem ser mero passado, devem ter uma função...
C: Pode ser, mas isso não significa que tenham função: pode ser que o objeto seja refeito só porque ele já estava ali, e já pertencia, de algum modo, ao ambiente em que estava, de tal maneira, que o simples medo de que ele seja parte do passado (o costume, o hábito), o restaure e rearranje, antes de testar sua pertinência – o tempo de transformar um objeto em patrimônio é incerto; às vezes, a mera suspeita de que algo seja uma marca do passado é suficiente para que coisas sejam conservadas. Isto é algo que justifica o conservadorismo num geral... O Art Nouveau, que, enquanto impulso primeiro, durou cerca de uma década, replicou-se em Paris como no Brasil até quando? Até a década de 1970? Isso não é por mero acaso. Um portão segue sendo feito com elementos estilísticos Art Nouveau porque o estilo de fazer algo pode ter acabado por se confundir com o modo como se pensa que um portão é. Nem sempre a forma equivale à função, como quis o modernismo. Do ponto de vista histórico sobre a cidade, sobre a paisagem da cidade, deve haver muita coisa que subsiste de uma determinada maneira, que pode ter sido definida por este ou por aquele momento cultural, mas cuja forma se misturou à própria concepção dos objetos. Hoje, quando se pensa “portão”, pensa-se em Art Nouveau, mesmo que se queira negar isso, não?
J: O meu problema é que eu tenho andado por Paris e olhado a cidade inteira, e ela é extremamente funcional; e, no entanto, há esses objetos, que são uma sobra, que não revelam imediatamente o motivo de estarem ali.
C: Talvez isso se explique porque terá havido, especificamente em Paris – de repente, na reforma urbanística do Haussmann –, um plano que redesenhasse toda a cidade. E esses objetos seriam daquela época, pertenceriam àquele vocabulário urbanístico; e, se sobraram aqui e ali, e não em toda parte, é porque não terá havido uma segunda reforma urbanística que os redesenhasse, ressignificasse, retirasse ou repusesse sentido definido a eles. E então eles são sobras, são índices do passado. Mas, de repente, essas coisas que são sobras passam a fazer parte da feição de Paris, e por isso, sem grandes questionamentos, são mantidas. Se a gente pensar no caso dos metrôs de Paris, eles não foram mantidos senão porque “tem alguma coisa de história aqui, então é preciso manter, conservar”. Só que nem tudo diz de história nos metrôs. Ali há ralos errados, portas que foram removidas, deixando rastros de batentes nas paredes, coisas mecânicas disfuncionais, que não demonstram a necessidade de serem perpetuadas em nome da história (ao menos se nós entendermos que “história” não é algo a ser aplicado a qualquer objeto que foi mantido através do tempo apenas porque subsistiu). Essa parte que não diz da história, que não comprova seu valor histórico, esta, sim, é um problema (o teu trabalho costuma olhar para essas coisas...).
J: O problema é que há objetos semelhantes a esses nossos objetos de canto, que variam em altura, têm uso, funcionalidade, significado. Por exemplo, há alguns que possuem algumas garrinhas, e que são postos a uma altura relativa às janelas do primeiro pavimento. Estes, certamente poderiam servir para impedir que qualquer um escalasse a janela da casa. Com relação a esses que têm função, outros só parecem variar em altura.
C: Talvez os módulos industriais que os compõem sejam mesmo fáceis de ver – são muito semelhantes àqueles que compõem o mobiliário dos parques, por exemplo. Isso dá a impressão de que a gente saiba de onde o material para construção desses objetos veio – então, esta questão – “de onde esses objetos vieram?” -, deixa de importar um tanto. Ainda que a gente não saiba de onde vieram esses módulos, deve ser fácil pesquisar isso. O que a gente não sabe é o porquê disso compor a paisagem urbana ainda. Eu sei de onde vêm os módulos, ou pelo menos sei onde reencontrá-los na história já consagrada. Isso não tem nada a ver com estilo: isso tem a ver com a história imediata da produção de objetos modulares, que servirão a partir de algum momento da história a qualquer estilo, não implicando, então, que o modo de produzir as coisas responda à “vontade formal” de se fazer as coisas (algo que deixa uma dúvida acerca do quanto a noção de estilo, de zeitgeist, se perdeu na modernidade). Se o estilo se repõe, ele deve ter a ver com o modo como a cidade se percebe: misturar concreto e ferro; deve ter a ver com “não ter recuos”; deve ter a ver com um aspecto externo à produção dos objetos... A fábrica, a indústria, aqui, parece fornecer o objeto modular – uns devem ser moldes do Luís XV, outros da época do Haussmann... De onde veio, deve ser possível retraçar. Mas a questão é por que isso existe como um mobiliário urbano comum, e não cause revolta, horror, incômodo, não desperte vontade de reforma, de retirada, de se desfazer disso (porque, convenhamos, a função deles não é mais explícita do ponto de vista do pedestre, que bem poderia descartá-los na hora de repensar como a cidade poderia ser agora)... O amarelo, o creme de Paris poderia ter passado por isso; mas tratou-se de uma padronização da paisagem que foi aceita, e, então, Paris ser toda creme é um traço de acordo urbanístico – não é estilo. Mas esses nossos objetos variam de padrão, eles não são exatamente um vocabulário acordado...
J: O que eu reparo a respeito da altura desses objetos é que, talvez não obrigatoriamente, mas em grande parte deles, os que são mais altos têm uma cara de terem sido produzidos por empresas específicas, talvez relacionadas diretamente à proteção ou à segurança urbana, mesmo – esses presos mais ao alto respondem à vontade de proteger o edifício de que ele possa ser escalado; já outros, situados mais rentes ao chão, devem responder a uma decisão de impedir que se durma ou sente-se ali... E aí eles seriam totalmente funcionais. Como aqueles que são presos perto e isolam um cano que sobe por uma parede, impedindo que o cano seja escalado em direção à janela de uma residência, ou que seja quebrado. E há a proximidade desses objetos a uma série de mobiliários que se auto explicam, como aqueles que são instalados próximos a janelas e nas beiradas de telhados para impedirem que as pombas fiquem ali – objetos que são fáceis de comprar, e que eventualmente se parecem com esses objetos sobre os quais estamos falando, possuindo as mesmas pontas afiadas na parte superior... Mas esse mobiliário que impede que as pombas se assentem é surpreendentemente recente: o problema das pombas deve ser muito antigo, e só agora se começou a saber lidar com isso. E os outros objetos que se parecem com os nossos são aqueles que impedem que moradores de rua se estabeleçam junto a trechos de edifícios – objetos que circulam plataformas, pedras, que poderiam servir de local de descanso, objetos pontiagudos instalados no piso... Mas esses novos objetos devem ser dos anos 1970, ou coisa assim (eles são, afinal, feitos de materiais descartáveis, de plástico, arames...). A questão é que esses nossos objetos, quando evadem a escala do corpo humano, ou seja, quando são muito mais baixos do que um parapeito, por exemplo, impedindo o corpo de se apoiar, ou, inversamente, quando muito mais altos, expulsando a relação corporal imediata com eles, tendem a demonstrar mais imediatamente sua funcionalidade.
C: Há uma escala humana em todo esse mobiliário urbano. O metrô do Guimard, seu letreiro, se encaixa de alguma maneira a essa escala pedestre. Ao menos na região central de Paris, é somente quando o pedestre atravessa uma praça ou dobra uma rua que os letreiros dos metrôs vão se mostrando legíveis, que o mobiliário se apresenta. Talvez exista uma narrativa da cidade no que diz respeito ao que ela suporta de elemento posto para a visibilidade do pedestre. É um Art Nouveau que não funciona na escala maior, de imposição ao corpo. Ao contrário, o que me parece que acontece ali é que esses objetos, sobre os quais se espera terem tido um impacto vertical, de cima para baixo, aparecem mais aos poucos, por uma espécie de derivação. Não há, aliás, em Paris, o hábito de cada um pintar seu portão de uma cor. Portões têm cores específicas. Provavelmente, essa determinação de como os objetos são passa por uma explicação que não é de absorção, pela esfera popular, de algo (as invenções Art Nouveau) que uma vez foi erudito; nem de um simples hábito que foi determinado por um momento específico (o Haussmann, de repente). Me parece que tanto os esforços urbanísticos do Art Nouveau quanto aqueles anteriores, do Haussmann, devem eles mesmos responderem a um modo de compreensão do espaço da cidade, da circulação na cidade, o que envolve observar os pedestres por ali...

Dia 4
C: Uma das coisas que eu pensava é que esses nossos objetos talvez não sejam apenas mobiliário urbano, mas façam parte da história do surgimento do mobiliário urbano.
J: Hoje olhando para objetos Art Nouveau, fiquei pensando na quantidade de ferro que sobra a mais do que o necessário para a funcionalidade dos objetos; quando muito, talvez seja apenas um terço a mais do que o necessário, mas não mais do que isso. Fico olhando para algumas janelas da época, e reparando nas grades dos parapeitos, que talvez servissem para proteger crianças e animais, repletas de curvas, e o que eu noto é que hoje muitas têm telas por trás delas. Não havia um gasto excessivo de ferro. Em algumas fachadas, há elementos de ferro que escalam o edifício de um andar a outro, é claro; mas a quantidade de ferro não é tão grande assim. Olhando para os objetos de canto, não dá para ter certeza a respeito de cada um deles: alguns parece que protegem canos que estiveram ali e depois foram retirados; outros não. Hoje eu vi um que era uma simples barra de ferro, apenas presa a certa altura entre duas paredes; do ponto de vista da função de proteger a quina de virar depósito de qualquer coisa, ela não seria suficiente. Então, embaixo, no chão, havia uma espécie de elevação de concreto que suspendia a calçada em direção à quina formada pelo encontro das duas paredes.
C: Quando a gente costumeiramente repõe a crítica que os movimentos modernos fizeram ao Art Nouveau, a gente tende a afirmar que o Art Nouveau tem a ver com uma cobertura de superfície das coisas – a estrutura das coisas estaria já dada, e o “estilo” consistiria em trair essa estrutura...
J: Sim, e isso é falso... Um edifício pode ter janelas de tipos diferentes, e isso pode ser só um modo de compensar as necessidades de cada andar em que elas aparecem: no primeiro andar, uma delas pode ser pequena, com um balcão cercado por uma grade de ferro; num andar superior, outra janela pode ser maior, sem balcão e com menos ferro. É claro, o primeiro andar estaria posto para a vista da rua, e, mesmo assim, necessita de ventilação; o mais alto, não. Haver janelas distintas não significa que a fachada fica variando de tipos de janela por um mero motivo decorativo. Hoje eu vi um prédio de apartamentos cujo lado direito era de um jeito, e o esquerdo, de outro, mas, mesmo assim, o conjunto parecia simétrico. Cada morador tem que lidar de um jeito com o seu apartamento; um tem um terraço, mas não tem uma janela que recebe inteiramente a luz do sol; outro tem uma casa iluminada mas não tem terraço. Isso não impede que esses dois apartamentos possam ser harmonizados em uma unidade relativa à fachada do edifício em que estão. Trata-se de um raciocínio de arquitetura que trabalha com compensações decorativas.
C: Claro. Mas eu reporia esse comentário crítico ao decorativismo do Art Nouveau porque ele tem algo que ainda me parece interessar, se bem feito – se pudéssemos talvez corrigi-lo com relação aquilo que ele diz respeito à “mera superfície”, “à mera cobertura das coisas”. O que a gente chama de “estilo Art Nouveau” é comumente algo que a gente identifica como “apliques” nas fachadas, nos portões; mas isso talvez diga menos respeito ao edifício em que vemos esses elementos, e, mais, a um raciocínio específico sobre a esfera urbana: de ordenar estilisticamente o espaço público. E aí não é uma organização qualquer, mas uma que é de superfície. O Haussmann também teria organizado o espaço da cidade, mas talvez não exatamente o espaço de sociabilidade – e sociabilidade demandaria estilo (novamente, hábito, rotina, lugares-comuns). Para além das fachadas que podem ser grandes, detectamos “Art Nouveau”, em geral, em elementos específicos: no uso do metal, sobretudo, mas que aparece em um vocabulário urbano, e não doméstico.
J: Sim, o Art Nouveau durou cerca de 15 anos, o que é um período de tempo muito curto; curto, mas suficiente para levantar um monte de elementos que comporiam um forte vocabulário estilístico.
C: E provavelmente as soluções que surgiram ali perduraram e, depois, viraram febre, mania, porque elas não tocaram exatamente na superfície das coisas, mas, sim, na ligação entre a escala do pedestre e a escala do parque; entre a escala do parque e a escala das casas; e assim por diante. Se tem um motivo de o estilo ter sido alvo de críticas tão severas quanto aquelas do Adolf Loos, por exemplo, ele não reside no problema da cobertura, mas no fato de que aquilo que deveria ser a estrutura das coisas – o metal -, virou elemento decorativo. Ele veio para fora, foi se tornar um exoesqueleto da escala urbana – e sabemos de cor os motivos de insetos, libélula, lagosta, cigarra que inundam o Art Nouveau.
J: E quando os motivos são florais, trata-se de um apreço por um sentido de orgânico específico: plantas cujas flores são abertas e rígidas. Muitos dos motivos florais, das plantas que aparecem nas fachadas dos prédios, são frontais: do ponto de vista botânico, exibindo sua maior capacidade de captar luz; do ponto de vista funcional, oferecendo-se como que figurativamente, como o lado maior que protege as aberturas de portas, janelas e balcões.
C: A falsidade do Art Nouveau está, de fato dada – o Art Nouveau faz o metal fingir que não é metal...
J: Hoje eu passei pelo Quai Branly, e fiquei observando seu lago artificial. Em volta do lago, tem uma grade de metal pintada de marrom. As hastes da grade, só por serem ligeiramente curvas e pintadas, lembram aquele tipo de vegetação que pode ser encontrada em um lago qualquer, capins, gramas ou relvas. Por mais que este seja um jeito modernista de tratar a necessidade de criação de um vocabulário urbano, e tenha muito menos curvas do que um gradeado Art Nouveau qualquer, a “naturalização” se faz necessária para a sua função de se acomodar na cidade.
C: Esses nossos objetos talvez façam parte de um momento em que se está criando um raciocínio sobre como preparar um vocabulário daquilo que é público, que deve possuir escala pública. Fico imaginando se não existem muitos outros objetos como esses, que todavia não aparecem ou não se deixam ver de modo tão simples; e esses nossos talvez só apareçam para nós porque estão em escala muito direta com o corpo, com o pedestre; porque criam uma continuidade de vocabulário entre um quarteirão e outro.
J: Sim, sobre a continuidade estilística entre um edifício e outro, e, consequentemente, entre um objeto desses e outro, às vezes há essa continuidade, às vezes não. Esses nossos objetos parecem responder no geral ao edifício em que estão, e não a uma replicação sua que se dê em continuidade, como o gradeado de um parque. Isto leva a crer que, se eles forem objetos postos depois nos edifícios, como soluções urbanísticas, e não como parte do raciocínio construtivo de cada edifício, trata-se de uma solução urbanística que se singulariza a cada tipo de edifício, e não que é simplesmente um vocabulário da cidade, tanto faz a construção. Mas, visualmente, andando pela cidade e olhando para um, depois outro, depois outro, eles parece que vão replicando alguma coisa entre si.
C: Se estivermos certos em supor que esses objetos devam ter ao menos se espalhado em ligação com o Art Nouveau, eles talvez digam algo sobre uma ideia de gradação: mais do que uma roupagem, capaz de proceder pelo destaque de um edifício em

relação a outro, o “estilo Art Nouveau” diria respeito, então, a essa gradação, espécie de movimento contínuo, e não interrompido, entre um elemento urbano e outro. O que talvez levante a suspeita de que o Art Nouveau não vá escalonando as coisas do ambiente doméstico para o espaço público – do açucareiro para o móvel, do móvel para a copa, para o interior da casa e depois para a fachada, mas o contrário. Mesmo porque o ferro, que é o elemento central do Art Nouveau, não surge com tamanha potência no ambiente doméstico, mas na rua. E aí a narrativa de escala desse estilo talvez possa ser melhor contada de fora para dentro: a curva da rua obriga a curvar a calçada, que obriga a curvar a fachada, o balcão, a janela, assim adentrando o espaço doméstico, onde os objetos serão também curvados.
J: A narrativa do ferro é essa mesma. Observando um prédio Art Nouveau específico em um passeio, um morador chegou, e, para abrir seu portão, ele teve que quase agachar para girar a maçaneta, que era super baixa – em cima era tudo aberto, mas a tranca era embaixo. Tem uma coisa de separação da rua, mas feita por baixo. A grade acompanha a paisagem da rua, porque o prédio está no fim de uma espécie de beco; e, então, a grade Art Nouveau acompanha a vista da rua, diminuindo também com um efeito visual de perspectiva em direção ao fim do beco. É a grade que avisa que ali, naquele beco, há um prédio a ser visto.
C: Sim, e depois disso, deve ter um funcionamento desse estilo que obrigue o morador a continuar a compensação da vista da cidade para o beco via portão para dentro do ambiente da casa. A vontade de “arte total” deve se dar como um efeito que começa na cidade (e aí ele deixa de poder ser explicado via um problema moral, que começa no indivíduo burguês, como quer aquela crítica modernista). Se for para reverter a situação, o partido deve ser o de começar uma modificação na visualidade da esfera urbana, e não na crítica do papel de parede, do chinelo, do açucareiro – e isto foi de fato o que ocorreu quando o urbanista tomou o lugar do arquiteto na modernidade...
J: Olhar aquele morador abaixar para abrir o portão foi divertido: ele teve que se submeter ao Art Nouveau para entrar na própria casa. E eu fiquei pensando que, do ponto de vista do indivíduo, você tem que aprender como abrir a sua porta, e cada porta tem, fatalmente, um jeito de ser aberta. Se se tratasse de um padrão, ele também seria individualizado do ponto de vista da porta da sua própria casa – algumas precisam puxar, outras empurrar, outras dar uma volta e meia na chave; o padrão não supera essa escala individual, que tem a ver com a maçaneta, com a idade dela, depois com o miolo da chave, depois com a chave, e, quanto menor a coisa, mais ela necessita ser entendida pelo dono.
C: Do ponto de vista da pessoalidade, cada um aprende a abrir seu próprio portão, não importa o quão modulares os portões são. Talvez isso seja algo sobre obrigar o pedestre a uma experiência muito singular, que a praticidade da vida não suporta, e este seja um lugar de erotismo que é avesso à praticidade da vida.
J: Sim, a crítica ao Art Nouveau que vale a pena diz respeito à acessibilidade aos bens.
C: ... O que é verdade: o Art Nouveau, que é produzido nas fundições que não estão na região central da cidade, só aparece no centro – a fábrica de onde seus objetos vêm não é Art Nouveau, é um galpão.
J: É, o que hoje seria viável – porque produzir ferro assim ou assado só dependeria do molde existir e da quantidade de ferro disponível...
C: ... Daí o moralismo do Loos, que é anti erótico: o “Pequeno pobre homem rico” dele, que quer a casa inteira decorada por um artista, recoberta de arte, não poderia ser um pequeno burguês; quem quer estilo está pensando sobre estilo de fato, tem tempo para isso...
J: ... E o fato de que ele queira a sua casa inteira decorada detalhe a detalhe, leva a que – e este é o momento da fabula docet do Loos -, quando ele ganhe um presente do neto dele e o presente não combine com a casa, provavelmente o que acontece é que ele já não gostaria do presente de qualquer maneira.

Dia 5
C: Mas, a gente está falando desses nossos objetos, e fomos levados a pensar sobre o Art Nouveau, porque sobre esses objetos paira, para nós, a ideia de que eles sejam desnecessários. Você não viu outros assim?
J: Quase tudo o que eu vi disso eu sou capaz de supor que uma vez foi necessário, mas que, depois, perdeu a função, sobrando como se fossem memórias de coisas funcionais – restos de objetos que antes deveriam segurar placas, ganchos que deveriam segurar plantas, e assim por diante. Fora isso, tudo parece um tanto simplesmente decorativo – cerâmicas, apliques. E esses não cabe criticar... Hoje, andando para procurar de novo esses objetos, em um canto qualquer, em cima da fachada de uma loja, vi uma voluta que servia para segurar uma plaquinha, cujas torções, giros, não tinham uma funcionalidade aparente, mas pareciam com o movimento de uma planta. Mas, aí, alguns passos mais adiante, havia outra fachada de loja, na qual havia um elemento absolutamente semelhante, mas que, desta vez, tinha motivos figurativos de planta nas pontas de suas curvas. A planta da segunda dava sentido à primeira, mais geométrica.
C: Isso parece bom para se pensar: a gente poderia supor que, no caminho moderno que quer ver a abstração como a evolução final das formas, a mais antiga era a que tinha a planta, e a mais nova era a mais abstrata. Mas poderíamos também supor o exato contrário: que a geométrica, numa loja, era a primeira, e, na necessidade de repetir a função, mas entendendo a figura, a da planta bem poderia ser a que veio posteriormente, como uma necessidade de compreensão dela via reposição da figura...
J: Eu me lembro de ler algo acerca das estufas de ferro e vidro em um texto da virada do século XIX para o XX: o ferro e o vidro eram utilizados já há alguns séculos na construção de casas. O objeto arquitetônico que mais exibia desenvolvimento de ferro e vidro, e que portanto foi retomado como modelo quando o ferro passou a ser produzido em maior escala no fim do século XIX, foi a estufa de plantas – e a experiência de entrar em uma estufa e olhar de dentro para fora dela talvez explique algo disso que a gente está falando: o ferro não é curvo, mas, olhado contra a luz, e com as plantas crescendo contra ele, parece curvo, rendilhado. Isso acontece porque, do ponto de vista de quem olha contra a luz, os brotos das plantas e as nervuras das folhagens e flores ficam contrastados, torcendo o grid enxuto dos módulos de construção. Daí, ramo, raiz, caule, partes estruturais das plantas se misturarem com o ferro na formação dos motivos Art Nouveau, de repente..
C: Sobretudo nos portões de casas esse problema se adensa – e talvez os portões possam ser mesmo o lugar sobre o qual problemas como esses apareçam de modo decisivo, mais do que as fachadas. Em algum momento da história, o prédio passa a precisar de portão, quando ele precisa se isolar da cidade, não só do ponto de vista da segurança, mas também para resolver a questão da separação entre espaço público e espaço privado – e esse é um problema enunciado tanto pelo Art Nouveau quanto pelo modernismo em arquitetura, em que a fachada de um apartamento vai ser de vidro, porém elevada acima do nível da rua, e, portanto, protegida dela. Mas os portões não configuram exatamente espaço privado, a não ser metaforicamente; e a caixa de vidro elevada, que é a solução de compromisso moderna, é já espaço privado, mas se comportando como público. Quando eu era um pedestre Art Nouveau, os portões e grades, ao longo do tempo em que eu passava por um edifício, faziam o serviço de desviar a minha atenção de dentro da casa para a superfície de contato entre a casa e a rua...
J: Sim, e o que é muito comum de ver aqui em Paris são esses objetos que protegem o primeiro andar da vista, alguns deles parecidos com os nossos objetos – anteparos de ferro, que, às vezes, são substituídos pelo jateamento de parte do vidro das janelas. Em um prédio Art Nouveau que eu vi por aqui, essa solução não ocorria: ele era um apartamento de dois andares: o primeiro era aberto, e dava para ver uma escada que levava do primeiro ao segundo andar. Mas não havia espaço de intimidade no primeiro: o quarto provavelmente estava no segundo, e, do ponto de vista de pedestre, não dá para ver o que tem dentro da janela do segundo andar. Daí, a fachada desse prédio pode ser contínua, sem esses adendos que, em outros prédios, estão já no primeiro andar, perturbando a unidade da fachada.
C: Eu fico com a impressão de que esses nossos objetos de canto digam respeito mais a um tempo de dilatação do pedestre, de quem anda a pé, do que a uma funcionalidade específica. Os portões Art Nouveau são baixos, mas o tempo de você passar a pé – absorvido pelo portão – é o tempo do prédio ser protegido com relação à rua, e funciona visualmente. Será que esses nossos objetos, que não são exatamente Art Nouveau, não são o jeito que o Art Nouveau chegou mais em direção às periferias da cidade, onde aquilo que o Art Nouveau tinha de destaque ou diferenciação de classe vai deixando de operar? Se fosse isso, aí teríamos que pensar mesmo em termos de estilo com relação ao Art Nouveau. Porque nas casas Art Nouveau de fato, no centro, das classes altas, o próprio edifício já deve resolver, em sua arquitetura, sem os adendos, os problemas que assediavam (se na verdade não descreviam) as classes altas – segurança, isolamento, proteção, diferenciação. Mas esse prazer específico de o olho do flâneur ficar eroticamente entretido com o elemento curvo, dissidente da praticidade reta, talvez tenha transbordado para fora do centro...
J: Não é um absurdo pensar nisso. Alguns desses nossos objetos têm muita cara de Art Nouveau, e, portanto, devem avisar de diferenciação de classe; mas, outros, têm muita cara de objeto funcional, mas são feitos do mesmo material, e também com curvas, mas não demandam a gente parar para olhar, ou desviar o olho, gastar tempo. E, mesmo assim, eles não passam despercebidos. Talvez eles se misturem mais à quantidade e distribuição de ferro, estrutura e módulo do mobiliário urbano. Mas eles não se tornam modulares de vez; um é diferente do outro, mas com a mesma quantidade de ferro. E o mais caro não é o ferro, é o molde – o mais barato seria produzir um único molde para todos que não podem pagar a diferenciação, mas fazer um único molde para quem pode. Essa seria uma solução urbanística possível para a época. O que eles mantêm entre si é a mesma escala – os nossos objetos não ficam maiores ou menores conforme a gente avança do centro para a periferia.
C: Mas pode ser que tais objetos não sejam, para serem mais baratos, feitos pela lógica de um molde para cada casa de classes mais altas (portanto vários moldes, cada um custando o preço de um), e um único molde para as classes mais baixas (o preço de um dividido por cem). Talvez, possa ser que essas cem sejam feitas de partes dos moldes daquelas individuais, só que recombinadas – do ponto de vista da produção em massa, talvez isso fosse viável no decorrer daquele começo de século, e a recombinação soasse tão “individual” quanto a feitura sob medida, e, assim, o elemento estilístico que diz respeito à ideia de “individualidade” estivesse garantido, mesmo que se tratasse de uma individualidade não feita, mas recombinada, e marcada, então, por um projeto público que fosse sorrateiramente barroco, retórico, de variação. Não se trataria, se assim fosse, nem de sobra de material, nem de objeto, mas de uma questão de meios de produção. Quantas pessoas fundiam o ferro e o derramavam no molde na época do Art Nouveau? E se não sobraram exatamente os moldes do portão da família tal, mas, sim, o molde que faz o pedaço de cima, depois o da seção da esquerda, mais um molde reto de outra coisa, que, recombinados, fizessem um objeto de canto que lembra, mas que não é, Art Nouveau, feito quinze anos depois, pelo mesmo cara que derramava o ferro no molde feito para aquela tal família. Será que não se trata disso?
J: Há uma brecha dentro do modo de produção Art Nouveau: tudo deve ser feito sob medida. Mas, em termos de design arquitetônico, muitos edifícios possuem dois objetos de canto. Em nome da unidade do edifício, eles devem ser semelhantes; em nome do funcionamento do estilo, devem ser ligeiramente diferentes. Tal situação obriga a que a esfera da produção varie um único molde, o que empresta à mesma esfera uma ideia de “variação”, que deve ser mais viável para o operário que estava “simplesmente” destinado a fundir o ferro do que aquela lógica da individualização. Ele já tinha modificado ligeiramente o primeiro molde para produzir o segundo. Essa variação não implica fazer um novo molde, mas modificar ou replicar suas características. Se a situação fosse uma que implicasse pensar sobre como produzir objetos “sob medida” para uma escala pública, e não para aquela escala ultra individual, a solução poderia ser: modificar (ou, então, recriar, e aliás eventualmente com outros materiais que não o ferro fundido) o primeiro molde uma, duas, três, quatro, cem vezes...

Arte nos tempos de Crise

“A oposição leveza / peso é a mais misteriosa e ambígua de todas” (Milan Kundera, 1982).

Por Gabrielle Mota

Leveza e peso são dois conceitos amplos, comumente usados para descrever como as pessoas se sentem em relação a suas experiências de vida. Ao passar por momentos em que as necessidades dos campos social e político estão sendo atendidas pelo governo, o ambiente de esperança reflete positivamente na mentalidade da sociedade. Mas, em tempos de instabilidade social, política e econômica, é natural que a comunidade compartilhe de uma mistura de sentimentos, como medo, incerteza e ansiedade. Nos dois períodos, a arte desempenha papéis atenuantes e críticos, cruciais para a comunidade. Muitas vezes, a busca pela leveza pode ser meramente compensatória, um mecanismo de defesa, como ocorre durante a atual crise da pandemia de Covid-19 e o estado de quarentena dela derivado, que impõem limitações que impactam negativamente o bem-estar geral e a saúde mental da população (pelo menos naqueles que podem se submeter ao distanciamento social). Sem poder sair de casa, as pessoas começaram a ver a arte como refúgio da dura realidade, não necessariamente tentando se esconder do que está acontecendo no mundo, mas procurando pequenos momentos de alívio em meio a um cenário trágico. A fim de ajudar a equilibrar os sentimentos das pessoas em quarentena, vários artistas têm compartilhado intensamente seu trabalho, performances e mensagens de esperança através das mídias sociais. Esse movimento da classe artística exemplifica o papel fundamental que a arte exerce em ajudar as pessoas a lidarem com tempos avassaladores, tentando trazer mais leveza.¶ Mas, até que ponto a reivindicação de leveza no meio de uma pandemia tem limites? Enquanto parte da população lida com a perda da liberdade, a incerteza sobre o status da doença, os sistemas de saúde quase em colapso, e com milhares de pessoas perdendo a vida, ainda há quem afirme que a situação precisa ser enfrentada de maneira leve. Contudo, nesse contexto, defender a leveza, com otimismo exagerado, demonstra falta de empatia e vontade de minimizar a seriedade dos fatos.
É a exatamente esta persona que a cartunista e ilustradora brasileira Laerte Coutinho retrata na sua charge A Insustentável Leveza de Regina Duarte, fazendo um paralelo preciso entre a leveza defendida inúmeras vezes por Regina Duarte (atriz brasileira e ex-Secretária da Cultura) durante uma entrevista, e o conceito de leveza abordado pelo escritor Milan Kundera em sua obra A Insustentável Leveza do ser.¶ Em entrevista concedida à rede televisiva CNN no começo de maio, quando só no Brasil já se registravam mais de 9 mil mortes por Covid-19, Regina Duarte reclamou da “morbidez insuportável” que a pandemia do Covid-19 trouxe, incentivando que os espectadores ficassem, como ela, “leves”, enquanto fazia alusões saudosistas à propaganda e à época da ditadura militar brasileira, minimizando a tortura daquele período. O modo de comportamento “leve” da atriz provém de um positivismo denegatório e perverso, que ignora pensamentos e assuntos considerados desconfortáveis e pesados, focando apenas em sustentar a leveza, mesmo que tais assuntos sejam as vidas perdidas devido à pandemia ou a tortura e a perseguição durante a ditadura.¶ Isto é o que Laerte ilustra tão bem na charge: Regina Duarte vivendo sua leveza, sendo sustentada por um instrumento de tortura ,enquanto pessoas são esmagadas pelo real peso que há por trás dela. É neste cenário que o paralelo que Laerte traça com o título da charge se faz ainda mais evidente, ao comparar a visão de Kundera sobre a leveza da estética do Kitsch produzida pelos regimes totalitários do século XX. O Kitsch era a epitome da leveza, baseando-se na incapacidade reflexiva e se oferecendo como uma espécie de “gratificação emocional instantânea, sem esforço intelectual” (Walter Benjamin), pensado de modo a criar uma hegemonia artística que passasse uma imagem positiva sobre o regime político vigente, e, assim, exercendo um controle emocional e intelectual sobre a população, e tudo isso mascarado como um ideal nacionalista que pretendia encobrir a real faceta perversa daqueles governos. Dessa forma, a charge de Laerte aponta o princípio de leveza reclamado por Regina, que, assim como a leveza do Kitsch, está enraizado no maior dos pesos, disfarçando o cinismo e a crueldade reais por detrás dos ideais que lhe são evidentes, mas que insiste ainda assim em negar. ¶ Enquantos muitos procuram pelo equilíbrio entre a realidade da circunstância vivida e o modo com o qual lidam com ela, Laerte procura o oposto. Laerte faz parte da classe artística que assume a intensa e importante tarefa de abordar em seus trabalhos temas pesados, mesmo em épocas caóticas, por meio de críticas e denúncias a questões relevantes, com o que elabora de maneira clara o papel analítico e reflexivo que a arte assume na sociedade.

Relato sobre fósforo

Por Tainá Fecchio

É um objeto que revela inúmeros fetichismos encobertos pelo seu processo de obsolescência e por suas características efêmeras. Ativa lembranças físicas e táteis – como também faz a moeda e a chave (esta segunda inclusive com conotação sexual, no próprio ato de inserção). ¶ Suas características formais estão intrinsecamente aderidas a sua funcionalidade: o corpo de madeira fino e longo que diminui e ‘desaparece’ rapidamente quando aceso, expressando fragilidade e finitude; o comprimento que prolonga a ação do gesto, fazendo o alcançar da ponta que incendeia na lixa; a durabilidade fugaz que conduz à inevitável e breve morte. ¶ Há aqui também, como na chave, qualquer coisa de erótico no fósforo. No ato de acender a extremidade de um bastão fálico, para o qual é imprescindível o atrito entre dois corpos – o movimento de raspar, de riscar, enfim, de fricção, é essencial para que haja a combustão, a faísca, a euforia, o tesão. ¶ Mas entre o sexo e a morte inevitavelmente se faz presente um momento de oposição complementar que sugere estabilidade ou conforto, stasis. É nesse ponto que o objeto em chamas, esquecendo a fragilidade da vida através da sua reprodutibilidade e permeabilidade, se complexifica. ¶ Por mais capaz de reiterar ideias de finitude e continuidade, é a coordenação do presente que prevalece. Em latim, diz no rótulo da marca mais recorrente, afirmando um agora, “fiat lux”, faça-se a luz – expressão que, dobrando como referência bíblica, difunde de forma complexa (por seu caráter tradicional, religioso, mitológico) o sentido dessa presença. A língua morta, como léxico rebuscado, é um meio, que, se parece mais adequado para formas e imagens do que para coisas funcionais, em última instância, aqui, ao distanciar a coisa que designa de qualquer vocábulo corrente, compreende-o. ¶ Já a noção de morte pode ser estendida e compreendida pelo viés da vanitas ou memento mori, também religioso, que relembra o espectador da fragilidade da vida – quem sabe também auto-enunciada no caráter do esvair-se do fósforo, que desafia a frivolidade dos bens de consumo. ¶ Enquanto objeto reprodutível, é claro seu dispor. As embalagens já avisam: “contém 40 fósforos”; “contém 50 palitos”. Um prazer específico do objeto está relacionado ao seu número elevado: é seu uso repetido vinculado à promessa de eternidade, disfarçada de finitude distante, que aproxima o consumidor de uma saciação sem fim – outro artigo que goza dessa dinâmica é o chocolate bis. ¶ Atrelado à repetição, à dualidade morte/vida, enfim, à possibilidade de o objeto não se definir a não ser através de seu processo de obsolescência, está a constante de que, ao riscar um fósforo, cria-se fogo: a prima epifania humana. É a capacidade do fósforo esquecer-se de sua pequeneza e prover a possibilidade estrondosa de se estocar nos próprios dedos, nas próprias mãos, e sentir, em algum nível, o poder monumental do desenvolvimento da humanidade. ¶ Pressupõe-se então que o fósforo, como algo que extrapola a ordem da necessidade ditada pelo capital, fica reduzido a uma ordinariedade, sem jamais abandonar a arena pública. Nesse sentido, o objeto não tem necessidade de se eroticizar para garantir espaço nas vias de circulação, e portanto sua aparência pode ser descartável no sentido rentável – algo que faz lembrar selos e ingressos, passaportes e afins, que, inseridos na esfera mercadológica, participam dela em velocidades dissidentes, produzindo um tipo muito singular de atração ao sujeito que o consome. É como se o fósforo tivesse “renda própria”, na impressão que transmite de prescindir de uso; como se circulasse autonomamente, bebendo dos seus valores simbólicos e fetiches intrínsecos. ¶ Tendo seus valores mercadológicos ligados a um erotismo que não pode ser desvinculado do consumo, o objeto zela por sua autonomia, comportando-se singela e silenciosamente: os rótulos, que sequer são necessários e, inclusive, redundantes; o padrão de caixas simples (entre as quais só se altera o papel colado na face superior); a madeira ou papelão deliberadamente de má qualidade em que se escondem os palitos. O objeto está no campo do design como ideia, mas o design não cabe nele. ¶ Os objetos inflados, criados visando lucro, ocultam suas naturezas e fazem uso de artifícios para que uma imagem para além de si seja construída; e, através dela, uma idolatria a eles destinada. E o consumidor, não possuindo meios para se defender, é forçado a tê-los, ainda que não correspondam à satisfação que prometem. Esses objetos hiper-fetichizados e eroticizados têm uma chance menor de sobrevida se comparados a um produto como o fósforo, que, andando paralelamente na área de consumo, tem estruturas competitivas ímpares. ¶ Os objetos que destoam da dinâmica das aparências, dada na disputa aberta do mercado, devem ser rebeldes, e, por isso mesmo, autocategorizantes, uma vez que detêm em si alguma espécie de gozo por seu próprio transbordamento: sua materialidade se confunde com sensações-permanências – os fósforos se acendem, queimam, inflamam, friccionam, consomem, desgastam, extinguem, acabam, apagam – e então fazem esquecer seu uso, função e utilidade imediatas. ¶ A completude obtida através da posse do objeto obsoleto é dada através do sistema de recordação e sensação, possível através da capacidade de adentrar e teletransportar para nossa realidade, ao tempo presente, adentrando-o sem mediação, e então atualizando a vontade de espontaneidade do sujeito. ¶ O fósforo, luminoso, gera uma aura para além de si, cujo brilho ofusca sua ordinariedade. É precisamente nessa iridescência projetada, na inflamação construída, na sua possibilidade de super-imagem, que reside seu apelo particular – um apelo autoconsciente, residente ao próprio uso, que não permite defesa por parte do sujeito. ¶ O tempo de consumo do fósforo é o próprio tempo em que ele se autoconsome. Um tempo absoluto, mas que acaba súbita e decisivamente: ou ele é, ou não é – não há memória que o abarque, para além de um pequeno machucado de luz breve nos olhos.

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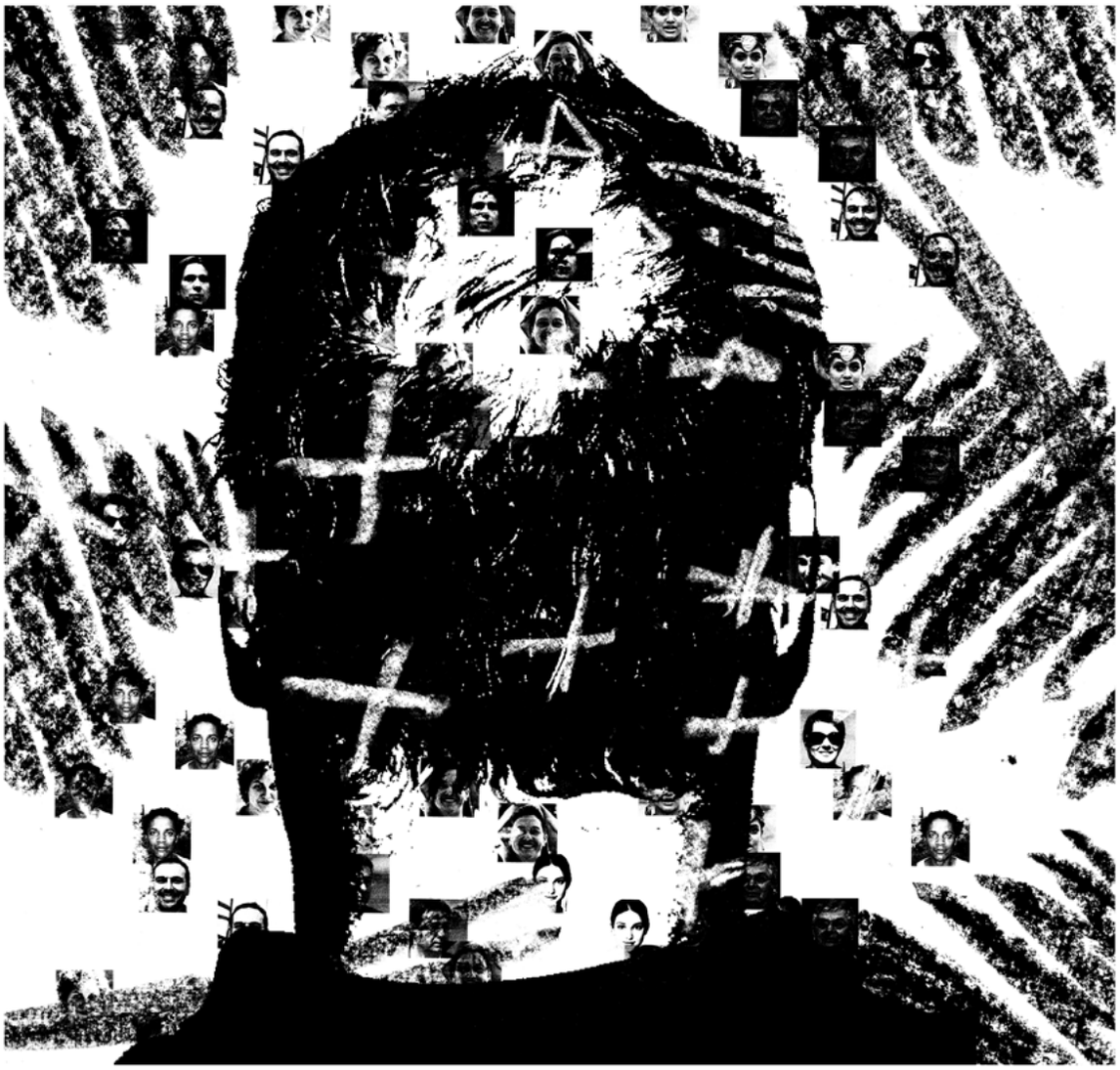

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