making is thinking making

Wilfrid Almendra
Eva Berendes
Alexandre da Cunha
Julia Dault
Dewar & Gicquel
Ane Hjort Guttu
Hedwig Houben
Teppei Kaneuji
Edgar Leciejewski
Rita McBride
William J. O'Brien
Eva Rothschild
Hans Schabus
Koki Tanaka

Witte de With
Center for Contemporary Art
info@wdw.nl www.wdw.nl

note to the reader

The book you are reading will change over the course of the exhibition it accompanies, *Making is Thinking*. It embodies the notion of process that is so central to the exhibition and to each of the included artworks.

The book can be read online or downloaded, forwarded and printed. It will grow in installments, and will be completed before the end of the exhibition. If you enjoy what you see so far, or are intrigued to know more, come back to our website to catch up on the latest variant, or sign up to receive notification of the subsequent chapters.

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introduction

An accelerating division between making and thinking has marked European society since the Industrial Revolution. In our current digital, (allegedly) post-industrial epoch, we in the "developed" world are increasingly distanced from physical production. Consumer goods are manufactured far away by people we never meet, distributed through channels too complex to trace, and transported by means we never see. When our products break, we replace them, unable to fix their high-tech circuitry or rewrite their computer programs. Daily life is filtered through the screen of the television, laptop, or smartphone. Even the most symbolic entity—money—has become digitized, traded and placed in virtual pyramids to the point of vanishing completely.

Several movements are emerging that seek to reclaim production, to regain a sense of control by getting involved once more in the processes of making. The revival of self-sufficiency is fuelled as much by the growing debates on sustainability as by the economic recession and its accompanying conservatism.[2] And this resurgence of interest in making is not limited to grass-roots activists or enthusiastic hobbyists, but is shared by politicians and policy planners alike. In his bestselling book, *The Case for Working with Your Hands or Why Office Work is Bad for Us and Fixing Things Feels Good* (2009), Matthew Crawford argues that manual work is more intellectually engaging and rewarding than so-called "knowledge work."[3] Crawford—who quit his job as head of a Washington think-tank to repair motorcycles for a living—writes: "We want to feel that our world is intelligible, so we can feel responsible for it. This seems to require that the provenance of our things be brought closer to home. Many people are trying to recover a field of vision that is basically human in scale, and extricate themselves from dependence on the obscure forces in a global economy."[3] He calls for a rethinking of the hierarchical separation of workers into blue- and white-collar jobs, and a total re-evaluation of our education system, which currently privileges the creation of flexible "knowledge workers" over those with practical skills or manual know-how. While his vision of different vocations is rather polarized, his book convincingly traces the separation of makers and thinkers that characterized the twentieth century.

In recent years, craft has re-emerged as a way of making that offers an alternative set of values to those of industrial production, global capitalism and mass consumerism. The title of this exhibition

1 See also Suzanne Moore, 'Bland leading the bland', *The Guardian*, 26 November 2010, p.21
2 According to the British Minister for Culture, Ed Vaizey, this is now "the hottest book in political circles." Cited by John-Paul Flintoff in 'White-collar work is doomed: get your hands dirty', *The Sunday Times*, 2 January 2011, p.19. Flintoff continues: "Michael Gove, the education secretary and David Willetts, the universities minister, are among the book's biggest fans."
3 Matthew Crawford, *The Case for Working with Your Hands*, Penguin, London, 2009, p.8

comes from a book that makes just such a proposal: *The Craftsman* (2008) by Richard Sennett. "Making is thinking" was his maxim as he wrote the book. Sennett is a sociologist and ethnographer who has written extensively on capitalism and labor, studying the new economy and its effects on the way in which we work. His motivation for writing *The Craftsman* came from a desire to know "what life was like for ordinary workers within the machines of contemporary capitalism."[4] In talking with these "ordinary workers," Sennett discovered that work had become "a privatized domain in which the emphasis was no longer on doing work well," but on doing it efficiently, which led in turn to the loss of a sense of agency.[5] In examining the quality of work under new capitalism, Sennett asked himself what an alternative could be, and struck upon the notion of "craftsmanship." Through a wide range of examples, Sennett argues that craftsmanship offers continuity between pre- to post-industrial times. For him, craftsmanship is anything that involves a literal connection between the hand and the head.

Such a reassessment of craft offers a radical way for rethinking questions of work, both within and beyond the artistic field. Strangely, neither Crawford nor Sennett explore visual art in their analysis of "manual" work that is intellectually rewarding. This is precisely the location at which I wish to posit this exhibition. At stake here is a paradigm for making that fuses previously oppositional positions, which I have tried to evoke by using seemingly paradoxical terms such as "conceptual craft" and "intuitive industry." The artists included in *Making is Thinking* are people whose work I have encountered over the course of my travels in the past few years, from Ghent to Tokyo, Cholet to Chicago. Hailing from diverse backgrounds, their work presents alternatives to the products of the aforementioned rational, post-industrial, digitized European society. The idea for the exhibition emerged from my discussions with them and they represent a subjective selection rather than an exhaustive illustration. While each work has its own agenda, several overlapping areas of interest are discernible: There is a fascination with the role of the amateur or even hobbyist, occupied with absurdly time-consuming activities that verge on meditation (Wilfrid Almendra, Dewar & Gicquel, Teppei Kaneuji, Hans Schabus). There is an analysis of the process of creation, and its transformation into a new moment of creation (Hedwig Houben, Ane Hjort Guttu, Edgar Leciejewski). There is an exploration of sculpture's relation to the applied arts and a flourishing of decoration in the reassessment of certain Modernist tropes (Julia Dault, Rita McBride, Eva Rothschild, Eva Berendes, Alexandre da Cunha). There is the avoidance of conscious thinking and the emphasis on intuition, instinct and tacit knowledge (William J. O'Brien, Koki Tanaka). In many of the works there is a knowing humor or irony, which deflates the pious earnestness that can accompany discussions of craft. In all, there is a proximity to production and a keen awareness of process.

The author E.M. Forster famously asked "How can I tell what I think till I see what I say?"[6] For me, the process of curating is comparable to the thinking process. An exhibition is not a *fait accompli* —it is just the beginning. To highlight the importance placed on process by *Making is Thinking*, the accompanying publication will develop over the course of the show. It will think along with the exhibition, if you will, and be made available online in installments, each free to download from `www.wdw.nl`. Four writers have been invited to contribute: Alice Motard, who shares my curatorial interest in craft, will give a historical perspective by writing about William Morris. Solveig Øvstebø, whose exhibition *Looking is Political* (2009) was influential on my thinking, will interview Ane Hjort Guttu. Yoshiko Nagai, whose conversation and original way of looking at artwork I have long valued, will write a short story inspired by the work of Teppei Kaneuji. And curator Gavin Delahunty will write about thinking. These chapters and the shorter texts that follow in this guide provide some entry points into the practice of the participating artists. However, what you make of the exhibition could be another story entirely.

Zoë Gray

4 Talk by Sennett at Arminius, Rotterdam, 26 November 2010.
5 Ibid.

6 *Aspect of the Novel*, 1927, u.p.

works in the exhibition

Alexandre da Cunha

Born 1969 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).
Lives and works in London.

❶ ***Palazzo***, 2009
Mop heads, wool, metal
406 × 370 × 770 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Vilma Gold, London

❷ ***Kentucky Macramé***, 2010
Mops, planters and concrete
65 cm (diameter) x 55 cm
Courtesy of the artist
& Dennis Braddock & Ms. Janice Niemi

❸ ***Green Fountain***, 2009
Concrete, planters, plaster, drinking straw
140 × 40 × 40 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Vilma Gold, London

Alexandre da Cunha uses everyday materials to think through art historical references. His fascination for mass-produced items such as beach towels, shoehorns, plant pots, or toilet plungers establishes an economy of means that leads us back to the 1960s sculptural movements of Arte Povera and Neo-Concrete art. The playful materiality of his work shifts between the extremes of the readymade and the labor-intensive handmade. Da Cunha combines an instinctive approach with a formal exploration of his materials.

Two of his works included in this exhibition re-use the domestic string-headed mop and transform its component parts into decorative items, which blur the boundaries between fine and applied art. *Palazzo* is a large suspended screen of knotted mop heads, whose scale and title suggest grand interior design. *Kentucky Macramé* uses the very modest hobby of macramé weaving to decorate a plastic planter filled with concrete, resulting in a beautiful pot with consciously exotic overtones. *Green Fountain* displays a similar sense of humor, as a pile of planters topped with a coconut and drinking straw act as a loving parody of *Endless Column* (c.1918) by Constantin Brancusi, one of the heroes of Modernist sculpture.

Julia Dault

Born 1977 in Toronto (Canada).
Lives and works in New York.

❹ ***Untitled 17 (11:00 am–4:00 pm, January 20, 2011)***, 2011
Plexiglas, Formica, Everlast boxing wraps, string
194 × 170 × 75 cm
Courtesy of the artist

❺ ***Untitled 18 (4:00 pm–9:00 pm, January 20, 2011)***, 2011
Plexiglas, Formica, Everlast boxing wraps, string
243 × 189 × 110 cm
Courtesy of the artist

❻ ***Duchess***, 2010
Oil on canvas, garbage frame
35.5 × 46 cm
Courtesy of the artist

❼ ***Triple Crown***, 2010
Oil on canvas
50.5 × 50.5 cm
Courtesy of the artist

❽ ***Barnes Dance***, 2010
Oil on canvas
40.6 × 30.5 cm
Courtesy of the artist

❾ ***7/6 Time***, 2010
Oil on canvas
50.8 × 40.6 cm
Courtesy of the artist

Julia Dault is an anti-illusionist. She wants her work to be as honest as possible, and for each finished piece to capture the immediacy of its making. All of her sculptures are made on-site, where she bends sheets of construction materials such as Plexiglas and Formica, then suspends them in place. The pieces are held together by commercially available ropes and strings, such as bricklayers' mason line or the cotton hand-wraps used by boxers, and are anchored to the wall at one or two points. The metaphorical tension of the work is generated by the literal tension of the materials. Dault sets rules for herself and seeks to apply rigor to the intuitive process of making. For example, her own physical limitations determine the sculptures' size, which in their finished state represent the meeting point between her capabilities and the physical properties of her materials.

When painting, Dault uses a similar approach, and the final compositions are also determined in part by chance. The canvases included in this exhibition were made by pulling a tool through the topcoat of paint while it was still wet. This is Dault's way to render visible the gestures of her hand, to reveal what lies beneath the layer of paint, and to provide a transparent entry point to her process.

Teppei Kaneuji

Born 1978 in Osaka (Japan).
Lives and works in Kyoto.

❿ ***Tower (Movie)***, 2009
Blu-ray Disc, 30 min loop
Animated by Teppei Kaneuji, Chihiro Mori and Kenji Itagaki.
Filmed and music by Teppei Kaneuji and Lyota Yagi.
Edited by Kenji Itagaki.
Courtesy of the artist & ShugoArts, Tokyo

⓫ ***Tower (Drawings)***, 2011
Courtesy of the artist & ShugoArts, Tokyo

Teppei Kaneuji's work emerges from the hyper-consumption of contemporary Japan. He embraces the flow of mass-produced items and incorporates them into his installations and collages. His practice also draws upon the automatism of the Surrealists, incorporating accident and unconscious thoughts into the work. Reflecting upon his time at art school, Kaneuji describes how concepts initially presented an obstacle to his practice: "there was a time when I couldn't make anything. That is not to say that I had no concepts, but that I couldn't put them into words and therefore came to think that I *didn't*. [...] When, at first, I tried to create something based on a concept, I couldn't do it, but if I tried to explain why I made what I had once I had finished, I could manage quite easily. From that time on, I felt liberated."[1]

The work presented here is one of Kaneuji's few films, an animation that took several years to complete, depicting a tower drawn in ballpoint pen. The acrid smoke billowing from its chimney suggests serious industrial processes are happening inside, but only cartoon-like objects emerge: green slime, bubblegum, string, toothpaste, even a disembodied hand bouncing a basketball. There is something simultaneously unsettling and entertaining about this tower, engaged in a charade of productivity. Perhaps it is analogous to the artist's studio – or indeed his mind – to whose workings we are not privy, only to its outcomes.

1 *Teppei Kaneuji: Melting City/Empty Forest*, Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan, 2009, p.118-119

Hedwig Houben

Born 1983 in Boxtel (The Netherlands).
Lives and works in Brussels.

⓬ ***About The Good and The Bad Sculpture***, 2009
Video with sound, 4:30 min
Courtesy of the artist

⓭ ***Colour and Shapes, A Short Explanation Of My Artistic Practice***, 2010
DVD with sound, 11:30 min
Courtesy of the artist

⓮ ***Untitled***, 2010
2 videos, 10:30 min each
Courtesy of the artist

Hedwig Houben analyzes her own process of creation and uses this analysis as a new moment of creation. In other words, all of her works are highly self-conscious moments of reflection and performance. The form that they take varies from lecture to public intervention, from sculpture to video. In *About The Good and The Bad Sculpture* and—less didactically—in *Untitled*, Houben explores questions such as how to make a visual decision, or why certain things "work" in sculpture. For the latter, she asked other people to choose which colors or shapes they preferred, and then swapped the colored sheets of paper and reshaped the small pieces of clay accordingly. In *Colour and Shapes, A Short Explanation Of My Artistic Practice,* she assigns anthropomorphic qualities to the different shapes that appear in her work, explaining the emotional or organizational impact they have on her, on each other, and on the finished work.

Houben's videos play with the idea of presentation, leaving the viewer uncertain as to exactly what he or she is witnessing. Her performances highlight the fragility of talking about one's own work as an artist, revealing how this can be a moment of extreme exposure. However, her keen sense of humor and the work's understated absurdity prevent it from falling into mere pastiche.

Eva Rothschild

Born 1971 in Dublin, (Ireland).
Lives and works in London.

⓯ ***Yr Inner Child***, 2009
Fabric, wire, jesmonite, fiberglass, hardboard, paint, powder-coated steel
223 × 61 × 58 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Collection Ken and Helen Rowe, London

⓰ ***SUPERNATURE***, 2008
Leather, foam, aluminum wire, wood, Perspex
600 × 280 × 500 cm
Perspex wall 305 × 555 cm
Courtesy of the artist & The Modern Institute / Toby Webster Ltd., Glasgow

Eva Rothschild's studio-based practice is rooted in the sculptural tradition of artists such as Eva Hesse and Barbara Hepworth. She experiments with the materials she gathers, which range from tiny glass beads to rolls of masking tape, elaborating an increasingly varied sculptural vocabulary. As critic Caoimhin Mac Giolla Léith writes, "Her work is informed by the legacy of sculpture forged through processes of industrial production and [...] obliquely acknowledges the precedent of certain strains of 1960s sculpture, as well as more general aspects of 1960s counter-culture. Yet it has always seemed even more apparently indebted to the tradition of domestic or artisanal craftsmanship."[2]

In the two works Rothschild presents at Witte de With, the forms are opened up, their insides on display. In both, her interest in the frame or support is evident. The round shape of *Yr Inner Child*—whose brightly colored interior surface evokes the child of its title—is not placed atop a typical white, wooden plinth. Instead its open metal stand becomes part of the work, giving the impression that the oval shape has legs. The two planes of *SUPERNATURE* are derived from shattered glass, suggesting the architectural dimension of splintered window frames. Like her major commission *Cold Corners* for Tate's Duveen galleries in 2009, the sculpture occupies a large space yet has little actual volume, suggesting a close affinity with the economy of line drawing.

2 "A lexicon of forms", in: *TATE ETC.*, Summer 2009, Issue 16, p.82-83

William J. O'Brien

Born 1975 in Eastlake, Ohio (USA).
Lives and works in Chicago.

⓱ ***(Untitled), Topical Descent***, 2010
Mixed media on paper, 50 elements
122 × 1097 cm (installed)
Courtesy of the artist; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York

⓲ ***Untitled***, 2009
Colored pencil and ink on paper
114.3 × 91.4 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York

⓳ ***Untitled***, 2009
Colored pencil and ink on paper
208.3 × 91.4 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York

⓴ ***Untitled***, 2009
Colored pencil and ink on paper
115.6 × 91.4 cm
Courtesy of the artist; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York

William J. O'Brien works with diverse materials including textiles, paper, metal, and ceramics, producing drawings and sculptures that often subvert the expectations of their medium. He is interested in gesture and movement and his emphasis is on the physical quality of the material he employs, both as he experiences it in the making process and as the viewer experiences it in the finished work. At Witte de With, he is showing two very different types of drawing. The three *Untitled* color pencil drawings have a meditative quality, due in part to their labor-intensive production and almost psychedelic patterns. O'Brien begins without a fixed composition and lets the design develop as he proceeds, losing himself in the process. He describes the process as being akin to quilting, where he does not control the final outcome.

His other sequence of drawings presented here are hung salon-style to create one coherent installation from very diverse elements. For O'Brien, working in series is important as it allows a formal language to emerge, while still permitting a wide range of subjects. Here those subjects reveal the continuous creative production of the artist in a semi-autobiographical manner.

Koki Tanaka

Born 1975 in Tochigi (Japan).
Lives and works in Los Angeles.

㉑ ***Take an Orange and Throw it Away without Thinking Too Much***, 2006
Single channel DVD, color, sound, 7:12 min
Created in residency program with Le Pavillon, art research laboratory of the Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Courtesy of the artist; Aoyama Meguro, Tokyo; & Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou

㉒ ***Everything is Everything***, 2006
8 channel HDV transferred to Blu-ray Disc, color, sound
Each film is between 1 and 2 min
Courtesy of the artist; Aoyama Meguro, Tokyo; & Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou

Koki Tanaka works primarily in film and video, capturing actions that he creates with banal objects or everyday phenomena. *Everything is Everything* was made by the artist when he traveled to Taiwan to take part in the 2006 Taipei Biennial. Arriving in a country known for its cheap plastic consumer goods, Tanaka created a sequence of filmic vignettes in which store-bought objects are juxtaposed with one another, or transformed by minimal interventions. His *Take an Orange and Throw it Away without Thinking Too Much* – installed in the stairwell of Witte de With – functions almost as a contradiction to this exhibition's claim for thought in action, minimizing the role of thought in the creative process and emphasizing instead the importance of spontaneity.

Tanaka cites Bruce Nauman as an important influence on his work, while critic Midori Matsui has contextualized Tanaka's work within a tendency that she terms Micropop. In the generation of Japanese artists born between the late 1960s and the late 1970s (to which Tanaka belongs), Matsui sees "a reluctance in taking strong political stances or proposing salient social paradigms."[3] Instead, they tend to produce works that "embody a process of association induced by insignificant details in everyday life. The combination of details in individual works of art and cross-referencing among the parts of different works reflect the ways in which the unconscious, as a mechanism for the random unification of images, connects different elements in a manner that defies rational order."[4]

3 *Winter Garden: The Exploration of the Micropop Imagination in Contemporary Japanese Art*, The Japan Foundation, Tokyo, 2009, p.5
4 Ibid., p.9-11

Dewar & Gicquel

Daniel Dewar:
Born 1976 in Forest Dean (England).
Lives and works in Paris.
Grégory Gicquel:
Born 1975 in St Brieuc (France).
Lives and works in Paris.

㉓ ***The Hairdresser's Birthday Treat***, 2006
Ceramics, wood, wool
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artists;
& Collection Hervé Loevenbruck, Paris

㉔ ***Cocoa Tourismo***, 2006
Wood, wool
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artists;
& Collection Hervé Loevenbruck, Paris

㉕ ***Handcrafted Pick-axe***, 2003

㉖ ***Handcrafted Trowels***, 2003
(Both made together with Wilfrid Almendra)
Courtesy of the artists (see p.14).

Dewar & Gicquel are professional amateurs. Whether weaving massive carpets, making large temporary installations from clay, or carving in wood, stone or steel, they are—as Alice Motard dubs them—"unapologetic and inquisitive practitioners of a wide array of artisanal techniques."[5] Motard continues: "Dewar & Gicquel's use of traditional artisanal techniques is first and foremost an excuse to recapture a sense of physical confrontation with the material aspects of art-making."[6]

The form and scale of their work is often simultaneously monumental and domestic, heroic and bathetic. Amongst the recurrent allusions to pop culture, there is a discernible fascination with boyish pastimes such as BMX biking and motocross and the stereotypes with which they are associated. Dewar & Gicquel are also intrigued by the way in which people turn to their hobbies for a taste of the exotic, learning the crafts of another culture —Ikebana, for example—as a means to reach some imagined "authenticity." The two large "necklaces" presented here—with their tongue-in-cheek titles and their bizarre mix of carved cricket bats, wooden shells, over-sized worry beads and improbably heavy motorcycle helmets pile on the disparate cultural references for maximum comic effect.

Rita McBride

Born 1960 in Des Moines (USA).
Lives and works in Rome and Düsseldorf.

㉗ ***Stratacolor***, 2008
Milled laminate on wood
122 × 86.5 × 30.8 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Verna
& Mai 36 Project, Zurich

㉘ ***Fanout Template***, 2006
Inkjet print
61.5 × 91.5 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Verna
& Mai 36 Project, Zurich

㉙ ***Yellow Circle Template (large)***, 2006
Inkjet prints
64 × 120 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Verna
& Mai 36 Project, Zurich

㉚ ***Mars Mascot Template***, 2006
Inkjet print
91.5 × 61.5 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Verna
& Mai 36 Project, Zurich

㉛ ***Cielprojap Template***, 2006
Inkjet prints
58.5 × 105.5 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Verna
& Mai 36 Project, Zurich

Writing about Rita McBride's work in 2002, critic Dominic van den Boogerd stated: "Never before, in thriving countries, has the gap between physical labor and production been so great. The corporeal feeling of the palm of the hand [...] is now linked to the shifting of a mouse."[7]

In a series of works made between 2006 and 2008, McBride recreated French curves and engineering templates from the pre-Photoshop, pre-CAD era. Revealing the artist's nostalgia for these tools—which she used as a student—the works are not, however, mere replicas. The sculpture *Stratacolor,* a freestanding *paravent* that undermines its own screening function by being pierced with holes, evokes postmodern interior designs such as those by the Memphis Group (1980-1988). The inkjet prints of brightly colored drawing tools complicate the simple idea of the artist's homage to a pre-digital technique, as they are clearly labeled as computer print-outs. These images of drawing tools have the metaphorical potential to create subsequent images, which imbues them with a potency or sense of anticipation.

5 catalogue essay in *Unto This Last*, Raven Row, London, 2010, p.25
6 Ibid.

7 "No fixed address", *472 New Positions*, De Pont, 2002, p.44

Ane Hjort Guttu

Born 1971 in Oslo (Norway).
Lives and works in Oslo.

32 ***Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform***, 2009
17 black and white photographs, c-prints
50 × 70 × 8 cm each
Courtesy of the artist

33 ***How to Become a Non-Artist***, 2007
Film of 20 stills with voiceover
DVD projection, 12 min
Courtesy of the artist

Ane Hjort Guttu is interested in the socio-political processes at work within artistic practice and artistic education. She has created films, publications and installations exploring the quest for individuality in aesthetic education. In *How to Become a Non-Artist*, the narrated slide show screened here on DVD and originally presented as an illustrated lecture, Guttu documents works of art made by her young son around the house. She analyzes his creative decisions and finds profound meaning in his forms and his simple gestures, never forgetting the potential comedy of her project.

Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform is a series of twenty black and white photographs showing three-dimensional shapes that Guttu found in the attic of Oslo's former National College of Arts and Crafts. They are studies in form made by students between 1960 and circa 1980, their title taken from the course assignment.
They are the remnants of a Modernist method of art teaching, where close attention to form was the principal focus. These monochromatic objects are photographed in the museum style of high Modernism, reminding us of the original context to which they aspired. Elegantly shot, printed and framed they also acquire an elegiac air, and allow us to reconsider these forms through the filters of photography and history.

Hans Schabus

Born 1970 in Watschig (Austria)
Lives and works in Vienna

34 ***Der Turmbau zu Babel***, 2010
La Torre di Babele, Ricordi 2000,
(69 × 96.8 × 2 cm)
Turmbau zu Babel, Piatnik 1000,
(44.1 × 67.5 × 2 cm)
La Torre de Babel, Educa 1500,
(60 × 85 × 2 cm)
Der Turmbau zu Babel, King Cards 1000,
(48.4 × 68 × 2 cm)
Turmbau zu Babel, Ravensburger 5000,
(102 × 153 × 2.5 cm)
La Torre di Babele, Ricordi 1000,
(50 × 70 × 2 cm)
Wood, cardboard, glass
Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris

Hans Schabus is a different kind of artist depending on the season. For most of the year, he is to be seen creating large site-specific installations or projects, such as the escape tunnel he built between his studio and Vienna's Secession gallery (*Astronaut (komme gleich)*, 2003) or the dinghy he built and sailed into different ports around the world (*arrival photos*, 2002-2009). However, in winter he hibernates and creates "winter work," comprising simple, repetitive, monotonous actions as a form of creative meditation. For example, over the course of two winters, he organized his entire stamp collection of almost seven thousand examples according to their color (*Welt*, 2007/2008) and framed the leftover stamps with only their backs on view (*Übrig geblieben (Welt)*, 2008).

Turmbau zu Babel is composed of six different jigsaw puzzles, each one of which features an image of the painting *The Tower of Babel* (c.1563) by Pieter Bruegel the Elder (which hangs in Vienna's Kunsthistoriches Museum, a smaller version of which is in the collection of Rotterdam's Museum Boijmans van Beuningen). From the beginning, it was the back of the puzzles that interested Schabus, rather than the image itself, and the time-consuming process of constructing this fragmented monochrome. "Most necessary work is the work that seems unnecessary," said the artist during a recent phone-call, adding: "It's painful not to work and therefore it might be healing to regenerate [oneself] through monotonous practice..."

Wilfrid Almendra

Born 1972 in Cholet (France).
Lives and works in Cholet.

㉕ ***Handcrafted Pick-axe,*** 2003
Wood and steel
96 × 6 × 62 cm
Courtesy of the artists

㉖ ***Handcrafted Trowels***, 2003
Wood and steel
35 × 12 × 11 cm
Courtesy of the artists

(Both made together with Dewar & Gicquel, see p. 12)

Unlike many of his contemporaries who delegate production to technicians, Wilfrid Almendra makes a point of trying to master each new technique that his work requires. For him, remaining in control of the making process is essential as it is here that the artwork actually takes shape. The time taken in execution is an important element and several of his works involve highly repetitive gestures, which absorb him entirely for days on end, turning him into an almost mechanical being.

His two works in this exhibition are handcrafted building tools, which he made with the duo Dewar & Gicquel, with whom he often collaborated at the start of his career. Together they were interested in hand-making elements that are usually mass-produced. They took a certain obstinate pleasure in the time needed to produce these simple steel objects, which could otherwise be bought in any hardware store, undermining the convenience of machine-produced commodities, and highlighting the meditative effect of time-consuming labor.
For Almendra, it was also important that the tools themselves should refer to building and gardening. Like many of his other pieces, the works presented here refer to two very particular environments: the French suburbia of his youth and the rural Portugal of his ancestors. This emphasis on personally crafting his sculptures, his ethos of *bricolage*, the time he dedicates to the realization of each piece, and the particular aesthetic that he brings to them —at once intellectual and kitschy, professional and amateurish—make Almendra a master of suburban zen.

Edgar Leciejewski

Born 1977 in East-Berlin (Germany).
Lives and works in Leipzig.

㉟ ***Wand 28.04.2009***, 2009
C-print on aludibond, wood, framed
136 × 170 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Parrotta, Stuttgart / Berlin

㊱ ***Wand 28.06.2008 (Studie)***, 2008
C-print on aludibond, wood, framed
60 × 60 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Parrotta, Stuttgart / Berlin

㊲ ***Wand 30.07.2008 (Studie)***, 2008
C-print on aludibond, wood, framed
60 × 60 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Parrotta, Stuttgart / Berlin

㊳ ***Wand 25.03.2008***, 2008
C-print on aludibond, wood, framed
150 × 200 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Parrotta, Stuttgart / Berlin

㊴ ***Wand 30.07.2008 (Studie II)***, 2008
C-print on aludibond, wood, framed
60 × 60 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Galerie Parrotta, Stuttgart / Berlin

Wands [Walls] are a series of photographs of the walls of Edgar Leciejewski's studio, whose titles specify the date on which they were taken. The artist works with different analogue cameras, a Sinar 4"x5" for the large images and a Hasselblad 6×6 cm for the three square ones. As he uses only daylight, he chooses analogue film in order to capture as much information in the finished prints as possible. Leciejewski writes: "I like it when you see the papers on the wall and you immediately get a sensitive feeling on your fingertips. I think for this work it is important to show the material in its raw state, or material as material." [8]
His subject is photography itself and his own studio practice. His pristine c-prints reveal his craft as a photographer, while examining the endless possibilities of that craft. In this way, his *Wands* series can be considered in the tradition of the painter's self-portrait at his easel, displaying his skill while simultaneously representing his profession. As Orit Gat has pointed out, these layered photographs of interiors are also built like seventeenth century Dutch interior paintings. [9] There is a *mise-en-abyme* of image within image, but without a hierarchy of one being more important than another.

8 Email correspondence with the artist, January 2011.

9 "The Thickness of Material," unpublished, u.p.

Eva Berendes

Born 1974 in Bonn (Germany).
Lives and works in Berlin.

40 41 42
Untitled, 2009
Silk, silk paint, metal, lacquer, magnets
Each 121 × 121 cm installed
Courtesy of the artist & Jacky Strenz Galerie, Frankfurt/Main

43 ***Untitled***, 2009
Cardboard, lacquer, wood, 3 found ceramic objects
130 × 150 × 80 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Jacky Strenz Galerie, Frankfurt/Main

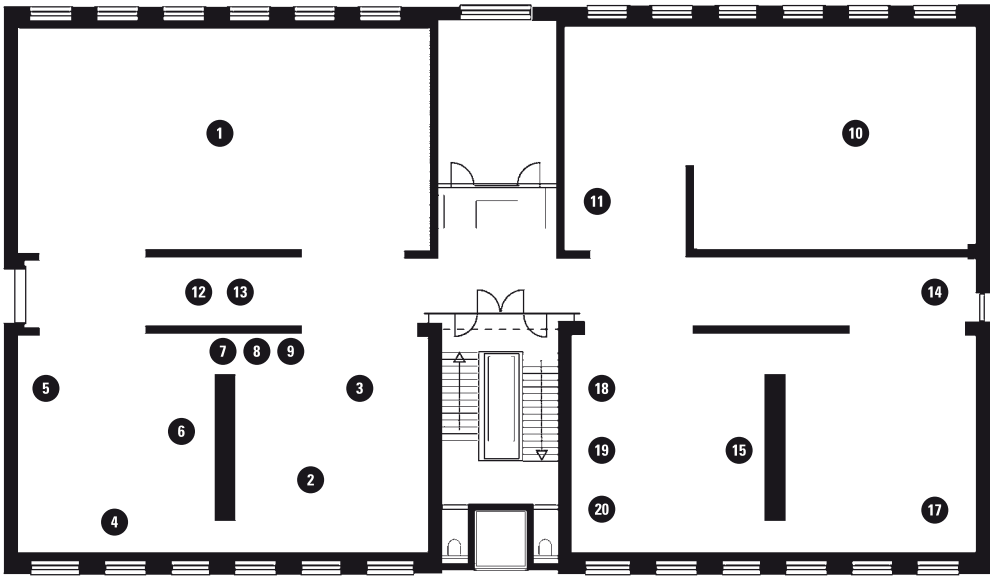
44 ***Untitled***, 2009
Cardboard, lacquer, wood, 4 found ceramic objects
160 × 170 × 90 cm
Courtesy of the artist & Jacky Strenz Galerie, Frankfurt/Main

"Eva Berendes is part of a generation of younger practitioners who have self-confidently revived interest in various seemingly archaic traditions of 'artisanal' artistic production—without relapsing, however, into an uncritical romance with craft and the manual for their own sake," writes critic Dieter Roelstraete. She is known primarily for her sculptural works using textiles, cloth and thread, reminiscent of "the constructivist art of the early Soviet period, when a remarkable group of female artists hastened the integration of 'applied' textile arts into the rarefied, hierarchically rigid domain of so-called 'fine' arts." **10**

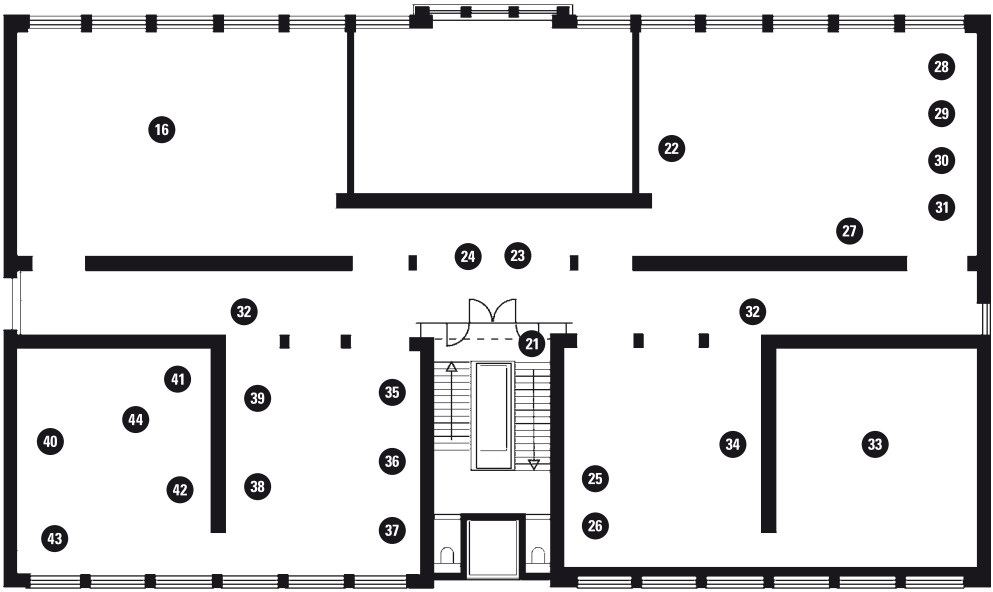
Berendes is also influenced by postmodern design and architecture, for example by the work of the Memphis Group (1980-1988). One element of particular interest to Berendes is the way in which Memphis designers outfitted objects with patterns or surfaces that appear to completely ignore the objects as such. The two cardboard sculptures presented at Witte de With are covered in grid patterns that, in their size and proportion, resemble ceramic tiles and were inspired by tile-covered architecture that Berendes saw in Tokyo. However, the only actual ceramic material is here represented by modest vases and jugs found by the artist and arranged atop the sculptures. Whether the latter function as display stands for the ceramics, or conversely, whether the ceramics are intended as a decorative *raison d'être* for the sculptures, remains open. The grid-like pattern of the sculptures' surface is echoed in the composition of the spray-painted silks, whose own support structure is visible. This interplay between construction and painting is typical of Berendes' work, which thrives on such apparent antagonisms.

10 Exhibition text, *Eva Berendes & Michael Van Den Abeele*, Galerie Elisa Platteau, 2010

floorplan of the exhibition



2nd floor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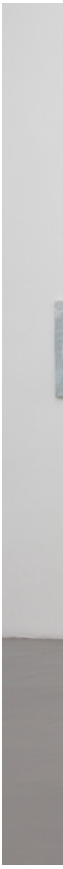
3rd floor

images from the exhibition

Julia Dault,
Untitled 17
(11:00 am—4:00 pm, January 20, 2011),
2011

Julia Dault,
Untitled 18
(4:00 pm – 9:00 pm, January 20, 2011),
2011

Julia Dault,
Untitled 18
(4:00 pm – 9:00 pm, January 20, 2011),
2011



foreground, from left to right:
Julia Dault,
Triple Crown; ***Barnes Dance***;
and ***7/6 Time***,
2010

background:
Alexandre da Cunha,
Palazzo,
2009

Alexandre da Cunha,
Green Fountain,
2009

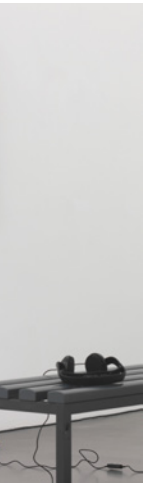
Alexandre da Cunha,
Palazzo,
2009

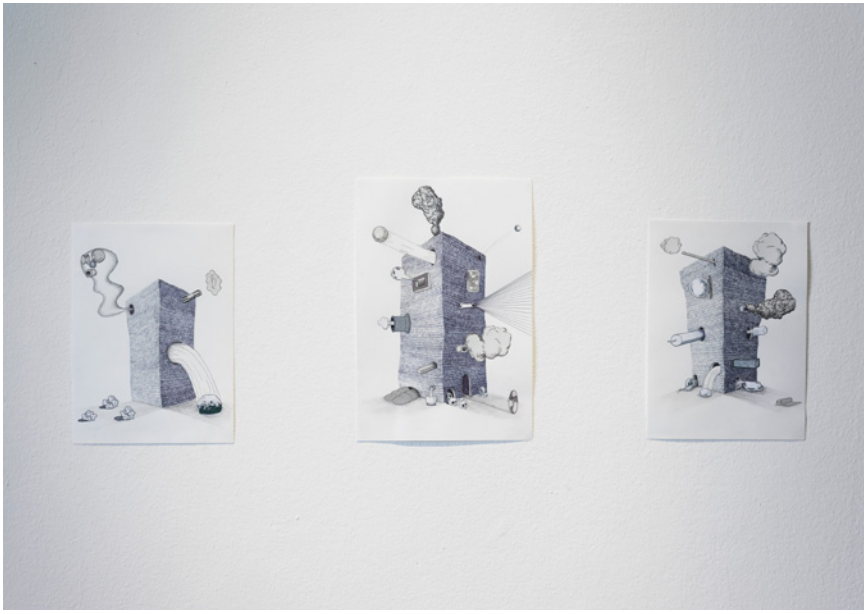
background:
Alexandre da Cunha,
Green Fountain,
2009

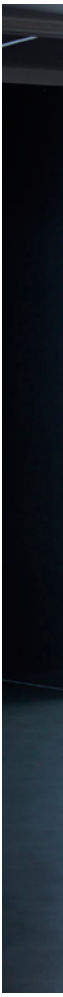
foreground:
Alexandre da Cunha,
Kentucky Macramé,
2010

Hedwig Houben,
Untitled,
2010

Hedwig Houben,
About The Good and The Bad Sculpture,
2009







Teppei Kaneuji,
Tower (Drawings),
2011

Teppei Kaneuji,
Tower (Movie),
2009

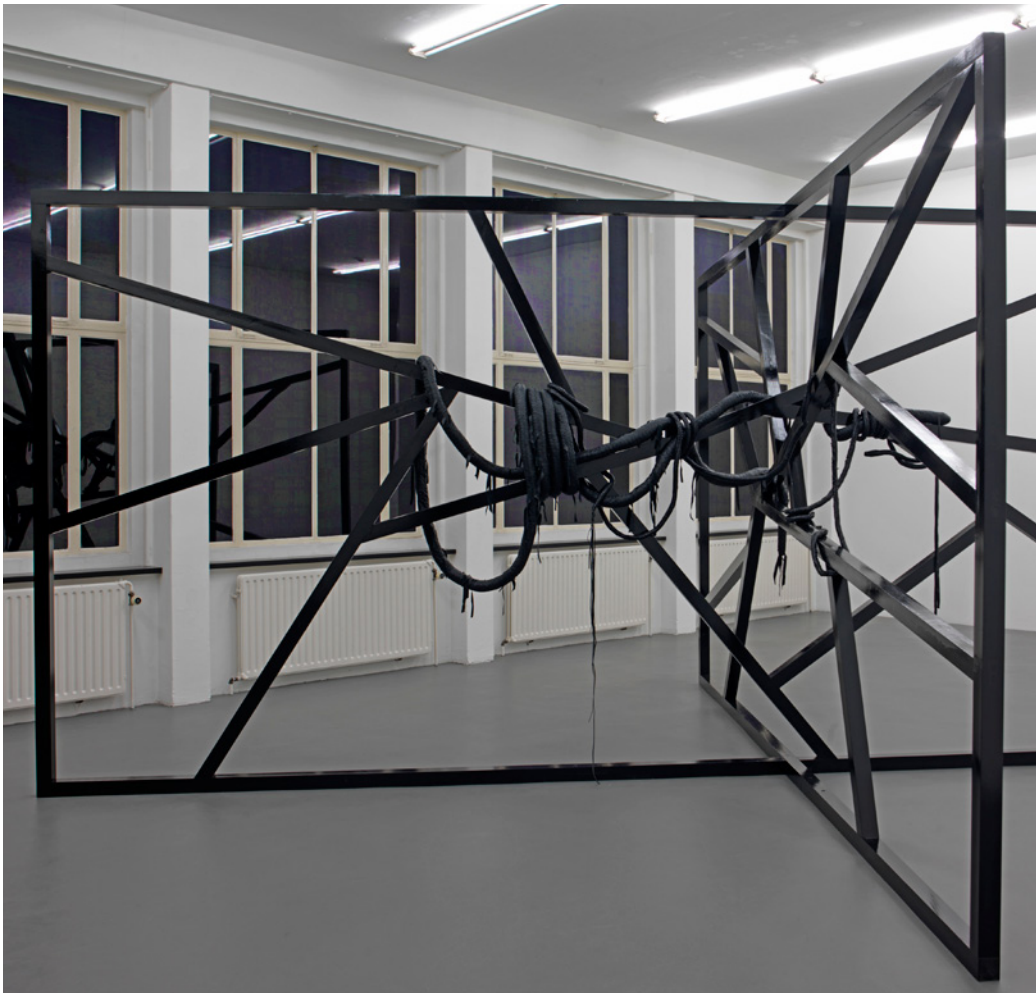
William J. O'Brien,
Untitled, 2009

Eva Rothschild,
Yr Inner Child,
2009

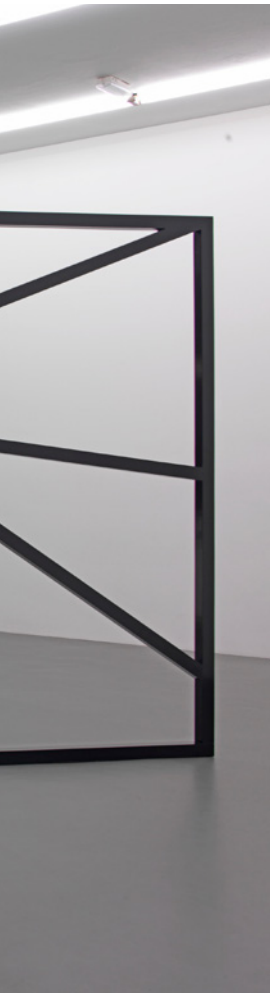
William J. O'Brien,
(Untitled), Topical Descent,
2010

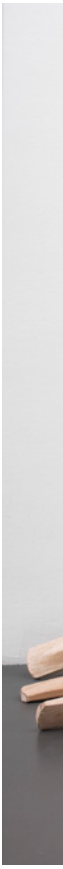
Koki Tanaka,
Take an Orange and Throw it Away without Thinking Too Much,
2006

Koki Tanaka,
Everything is Everything,
2006



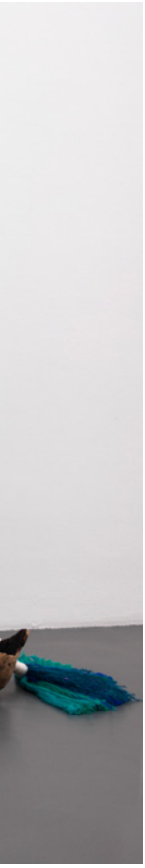
Eva Rothschild,
SUPERNATURE,
2008





Eva Rothschild,
SUPERNATURE,
2008 (detail)

Daniel Dewar & Grégory Gicquel,
The Hairdresser's Birthday Treat
and ***Cocoa Tourismo***,
2006

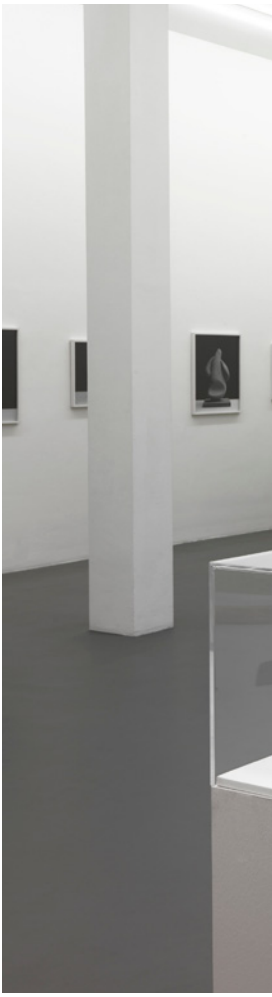


background, from left to right:
Rita McBride,
Fanout Template; ***Yellow Circle Template (large)***;
Mars Mascot Template; and ***Cielprojap Template***,
2006

foreground:
Rita McBride,
Stratacolor,
2008

background:
Ane Hjort Guttu,
Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform,
2009

foreground:
Rita McBride,
Stratacolor,
2008

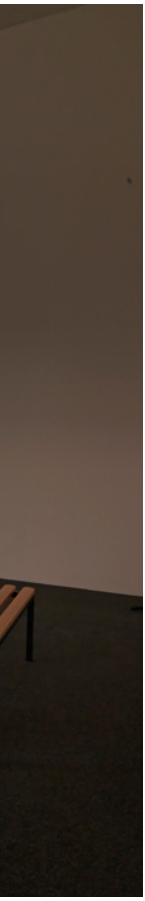


background, left:
Ane Hjort Guttu,
Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform,
2009

background, right:
Hans Schabus,
Der Turmbau zu Babel,
2010

foreground:
Wilfrid Almendra,
Handcrafted Pick-axe and ***Handcrafted Trowels***,
2003 (both made together with Dewar & Gicquel)

Ane Hjort Guttu,
How to Become a Non-Artist,
2007



Edgar Leciejewski,
Wand 25.03.2008,
2008

Edgar Leciejewski,
Wand 28.06.2008 (Studie)
and ***Wand 30.07.2008 (Studie II)***
2008

foreground, from left to right:
Edgar Leciejewski,
Wand 25.03.2008
and ***Wand 30.07.2008 (Studie II)***,
2008

background:
Ane Hjort Guttu,
Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform,
2009

Ane Hjort Guttu,
Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform,
2009 (detail)

foreground:
Eva Berendes,
Untitled,
2009

background:
Eva Berendes,
Untitled,
2009

foreground:
Eva Berendes,
Untitled,
2009

background:
Eva Berendes,
Untitled,
2009

when skills became a problem: theories of craft since the dawn of industry

by Alice Motard

As other ages are called, e.g.,
the ages of learning, of chivalry,
of faith and so forth,
so ours I think may be called
the Age of makeshift.
William Morris, 1894[1]

The Platonic distinction between intellectual work and manual labor—which, in the realm of art, manifests itself in the guise of a long-held distinction between conceptual practice and craft—is one of the most enduring conceptions in Western thought.[2] However, this view is increasingly being challenged as historians have come to acknowledge the crucial role that craftsmen, thanks to their technical resourcefulness and capacity to innovate, have played in technological developments. The countless tools invented by traditional craftsmen to streamline certain aspects of the production process must therefore be seen as markers of their impact on progress.

In *Making is Thinking,* one work in particular encapsulates the attitudes and antagonisms that run through the entire exhibition, by humorously engaging with the question of tooling. The result of a collaboration between Wilfrid Almendra and Dewar & Gicquel, it consists of handmade garden and construction tools—a pickaxe and two trowels, to be precise—which are indistinguishable from their mass-produced counterparts. The disarming simplicity of this piece undercuts many current artistic debates, poking fun at notions such as the autonomy of the artwork, the distinction between original and copy, or the question of artistic (in)competence. Alluding to gardening and masonry as activities one either embraces or endures—depending on whether they are carried out as leisure (gardening as a pastime) or out of financial necessity (construction is one of the professional sectors that employs a majority of immigrant workers), in other words whether they play a role in one's

1 William Morris, "Makeshift" (paper presented at a meeting sponsored by the Ancoats Recreation Committee at New Islington Hall, Ancoats, Manchester, 18 November 1894), http://www.marxists.org/archive/morris/works/1894/make.htm (accessed 5 February 2011).

2 See Plato, "Book IX: Socrates – Glaucon," in *The Republic* (360 BC), http://www.classicreader.com/book/1788/36 (accessed 5 February 2011): "And why are mean employments and manual arts a reproach? Only because they imply a natural weakness of the higher principle; the individual is unable to control the creatures within him, but has to court them, and his great study is how to flatter them."

lifestyle or livelihood—the works inhabit ideological or social structures in which craft appears to have been marginalized. Furthermore, the making of these replica tools is tautological insofar as it presumably required the use of standard or "real" ones.

The equation between craftsmanship and morality, and therefore the assumption that craftsmanship is naturally gratifying and vested with emancipatory potential—a notion explored by the sociologist Richard Sennett in his book *The Craftsman*[3]—lies at the origin of the ideas propagated by the Arts and Crafts movement, which emerged in Victorian England as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution and the decline of skilled manual labor.[4] Under the leadership of prominent public figures such as the critic John Ruskin (1819–1900) and, later, the artist and writer William Morris (1834–1896), its followers advocated a pure and authentic aesthetic inspired by forms found in nature, affirming their taste for irregularity and asymmetry as expressions of the profoundly human dimension of manual labor. They projected an ideal vision in which the craftsman and the designer were one, where craftsmanship and life were inseparable. This ideology brought forth the craftsman ideal—the quest for meaningful work through which the worker achieves self-fulfillment—that pervades the writings of Ruskin, and is most forcibly expressed in *The Stones of Venice* (1856), in which he states: "Now it is only by labour that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labour can be made happy; and the two cannot be separated with impunity."[5] Following Ruskin's

3 Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (London: Penguin, 2008).
4 The Arts and Crafts was a reformist movement born in 1860s Britain. It was mainly active from the 1880s to 1910, a timeframe coinciding with the latter half of Queen Victoria's reign.

5 John Ruskin, "The Stones of Venice," in *Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 47.

image:
Wilfrid Almendra with Dewar & Gicquel, *Handcrafted Trowels*, 2003. Courtesy of the artists.

lead, Morris disapproved of the new model of labor organization induced by industrial modes of production—the social division of labor— arguing that it led to the estrangement of the worker (and hence affected his dignity), but also to goods of lesser quality, as he pointed out in a lecture on "Makeshift" held in Manchester in 1894.[6]

To illustrate what he understood by "makeshifts that have to do with the industrial productions of men," he proceeded via a lengthy enumeration of goods, from the "common vulgar un-ideal subjects of food and drink" to clothing and dwelling. He argued that these had been affected by the "disease" of Makeshift, and that no one would attempt to use them unless they were forced upon them "by the fact that they supplant the genuine useful wares which we would use if we could."[7] He then extended his definition of makeshift to architecture, fine art and literature, before applying it to essentially immaterial products such as entertainment, education, and, ultimately, politics, which, against all odds, he posited as "the shortest or perhaps the only road to the change which we can follow."[8] The change he had in mind was aimed at establishing social equality, the only situation that "brings about one condition of equality for all; [...] which can draw out to the full the varying capacities of the citizens and make the most of the knowledge and skill of mankind, the gain of so many ages, and thus do away for ever with MAKESHIFT."[9] Morris' convictions and the programmatic tone of his address were characteristic of the movement's stance toward the economy and politics.[10]

The notion of craft is contingent *per se*. The very concept of craftsmanship as a discrete form of making was not articulated until the turn of the nineteenth century and the first wave of industrialization in England, which is rather more recently than is commonly assumed. It was, moreover, defined via its difference from art on the one hand and industrialization on the other. In a recent talk, the art historian and theorist of craft and design Glenn Adamson argued that in order to come into existence, the concept of craft required that the idea of the "single-authored fine artwork" be established as the norm, and that industrialization be under way: "Craft as individual skilled handwork, which is distinct from other ways of making things—fine artwork and industry—cannot exist until you have the concept of industry and the idea of machine manufacture on the one hand, and this idea of the fine artwork as something above and beyond craft activity on the other."[11]

6 Morris, "Makeshift".
7 Ibid. Cunningly, he excluded two realms of activity from his near-exhaustive list: "instruments made for the destruction of wealth and the slaughter of man" *and* "that mass of machinery for the production of marketable wares."
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Morris was one of the founding members of the Socialist League in 1884 alongside Eleanor Marx, the daughter of Karl.
11 Glenn Adamson (in a conversation with John Roberts at Raven Row, London, 20 July 2010).

This concurs with the idea that the potential radicality or subversiveness of craft derives from its "non-art" and "second-class" status.[12] In *Thinking Through Craft,* Adamson describes craft as a "dynamic phenomenon," to which he ascribes five different principles or properties that are fundamentally incompatible with the modernist project, yet paradoxically indispensable to it: the supplemental, the material, the technical, the pastoral and the amateur.[13] Modernist discourse is underpinned by the belief in technological progress and art's struggle for autonomy. By introducing the notion of supplementarity, a term coined by Jacques Derrida, Adamson demonstrates the conceptual practicality of craft when analyzed in terms of relational subordination: "[...] to say that craft is supplemental, then, is to say that it is always essential to the end in view, but in the process of achieving that end, it disappears."[14] According to this point of view, craft is most efficient when silent. Looking at modernity through the prism of craft, Adamson ultimately proposes an *ex negativo* definition of modern art. Modernity, which Adamson describes as "the least well-understood chapter" in the history of craft, the moment "when craft becomes a problem," thus denotes the period in time when the means of reproduction brought forth by industrial modes of production were introduced into the realm of art—the moment when, for the first time in history, a work of art could be produced by others in the name of its author, the artist. The readymade invented by Marcel Duchamp in 1913 marked the beginning of a new situation in art, in which the act of creating was replaced by selecting and naming. In *The Intangibilities of Form,* the art critic and philosopher John Roberts proposes a "labour theory of culture" based on the relation between "skill, deskilling and reskilling," which he sees as constitutive of modernity.[15] Modern artistic practice can thus be defined as emerging from a triangular relationship between three modes of production: traditional workmanship, which involves a certain amount of technical know-how and practical knowledge of materials (skills); appropriationist strategies in the tradition of the Duchampian readymade and drawing on existing objects (deskilling); and the production of ideas, which are informed by knowledge on a meta-level and are subsequently distributed (reskilling). The latter is probably the most complex to grasp to the extent that it requires immaterial abilities which could be termed "entrepreneurial" or summed up as "agency." However surprising it may seem, this line of thought can be likened to Morris' advocacy

12 Adamson, *The Craft Reader* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010), 2; *Thinking Through Craft* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2007), 4.
13 Adamson, *Thinking Through Craft*, 4.
14 Ibid., 13.
15 John Roberts, preface to *The Intangibilities of Forms: Skill and Deskilling in Art After the Readymade* (London: Verso, 2007), n.p.

of Socialism as an empowering social force and an antidote to makeshift.

Roberts goes on to pinpoint the invention of the readymade as the event that stood at the inception of the critique of value and the modernist dialectic of skill and deskilling. He suggests that despite the expansion of the concept of authorship in the wake of the readymade, the notion of craftsmanship did not so much subside as dissolve into a wider debate, notably on what distinguishes artistic from productive work. In keeping with Duchamp, whose own work refuted this dichotomy, Roberts founds his assertion on the Marxist principle that "there is no significant difference between physical and intellectual labour under the law of value."[16] By doing so, he contradicts the academic debates that have tried to cast Duchamp as a consumer. According to him, Duchamp was a producer—not only of concepts but also of forms: "[...] at no point does Duchamp see the readymade in absolute terms as the end of craft in art as such."[17] As proof, he points to the artist's assisted readymades from the 1920s and 1930s, which he sees as "a demonstration of the interchange of immaterial or intellectual labour and craft."[18]

If we admit that craft survived the readymade, the question remains how it was affected by what we have come to call the "dematerialization of the artwork," a strategy that dominated the artistic agenda in the late 1960s and early 1970s. First, one would be hard pressed to name more than a handful of truly dematerialized artworks, of which Robert Barry's *Telepathic Piece* (1969) is undoubtedly the most radical incarnation. Secondly, many works produced in those years, although loosely affiliated to this strand of art, put the emphasis on the creative process rather than genuine dematerialization (I am thinking in particular of the work of Robert Morris, Eva Hesse and Richard Serra, which would later be labeled "Process Art"). Thirdly, the period under consideration was marked by open social dissent and calls for civil rights, with (ethnic, social or sexual) minorities starting to voice their concerns publicly; accordingly, craft was strategically used to highlight the marginalization of various social groups. By co-opting the codes of craft to undermine those of gender, 1960s feminist art practice in particular exemplified the function of craft as an "instrument of self-recognition and critique."[19] Later, postmodernism, proceeding from a fragmented viewpoint, would unreservedly reassert the materiality of artwork as a mark of its acute awareness of its commodity status. Even though postmodernism may be behind us, its effects still make themselves felt, precisely because it forcefully challenged

16 Ibid., 42.
17 Ibid., 53.
18 See, for instance, *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1919), Duchamp's famous reworking of Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*.

19 Alex Rauch, "An interview with Glenn Adamson," 17 February 2009, http://www.portlandart.net/archives/2009/02/glenn_adamson_t.html (accessed 5 February 2011).

the modernist project and irrevocably dismissed the utopian idea of a goal worthy to be shared by all.

While the exhibition *Making is Thinking* reprises the leitmotif that Richard Sennett pinpoints as his "guiding intuition" in writing *The Craftsman*—in which he expresses his concern over the erosion of manual labor in postindustrial society and the fact that the constraints of productivity and efficiency are immune to that most basic of intentions, "the desire to do a job well for its own sake"—it avoids equating craftsmanship with moral integrity.[20] It equally resists the dilution that the notion of craft undergoes in Sennett's book, where it is applied to a near-limitless range of activities. Positioning itself firmly in the realm of the visual arts, *Making is Thinking* brings together a series of works that address their own conditions of production in a post-conceptual vernacular, while simultaneously reintroducing a palpable degree of materiality (even in those instances where it is merely suggested or mediated through photography, video or digital animation). Whether it is defined as "thinking in situations" (Joseph Albers) or "thinking in form" (Theodor Adorno), making is closely linked to thinking. The diversity of practices that can be observed in *Making is Thinking* is indicative of the ease with which today's artists approach the notion of craft. Rather than fetishizing or celebrating it, they put it through the mill, so to speak, only to find out that craft is as accommodating as ever. Whereas Koki Tanaka exploits its non-discursive essence, Hedwig Houben reverses this paradigm. Rita McBride and Teppei Kaneuji use craft as a virtual interface to explore its potential applications. Ane Hjort Guttu investigates the links between craft and learning. Edgar Leciejewski illustrates its reproducibility. Alexandre da Cunha, Eva Berendes, Eva Rothschild and Julia Dault transcend it by reconciling it with the modern and the industrial. William J. O'Brien and Hans Schabus embrace it obsessively, while Wilfrid Almendra and Dewar & Gicquel keep slaving away by choice. Whether reenacting its history, subverting its prejudices, revealing its problematic nature, or seeking refuge in the social or ideological structures to which it has been relegated, the artists in *Making is Thinking* reconnect with craft by following diverse and unpredictable paths. Unconstrained by the need to redefine the notion of craft as such, they use it as a medium through which to make their thinking processes visible.

20 Richard Sennett, acknowledgments for *The Craftsman*, 9.

Alice Motard (born 1978 in Paris) is a curator based in London. She holds MAs in Curating Contemporary Art (Royal College of Art, London) and Art History (Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne and Freie Universität, Berlin). From 2003 to 2006, she worked in the educational departments of Palais de Tokyo and Frac Île-de-France/Le Plateau in Paris. In 2007 she was a curator in residence at the Frankfurter Kunstverein in the framework of its Deutsche Börse Residency Program. Since September 2008, she has been working as Deputy Director & Exhibitions Organizer at Raven Row, a not-for-profit contemporary art center in London, where she recently curated the show *Unto This Last* (2010).

Translated from the French by Patrick (Boris) Kremer

the emancipation of forms

a conversation with Ane Hjort Guttu by Solveig Øvstebø

SØ Your work *How to Become a Non-Artist* (2007) is a video where you show various arrangements of everyday objects made by a four-year-old boy. In the voice-over, you analyze the aesthetic decisions he makes. How do you view this work in relation to the themes explored by the exhibition *Making is Thinking*?

AHG *How to Become a Non-Artist* was created after I'd observed my son and how he worked with understanding the world through finding out how things can be used. I documented all the small "installations" I found around the house. He thought by doing—that's often the most effective way to learn.

The objective of the work is not to discuss his learning process, but to problematize what is considered art. In the film, I discuss what these small interventions in space may mean and whether they're formally and aesthetically interesting. At the same time, I'm trying to offer a way out of this rather limited discourse about what "works" and "doesn't work." The work points to a state of affairs where the notion of "good and bad form" no longer exists; where everything, and thus nothing, can be called art, and where we are no longer preoccupied with this distinction. After all, this is an old dream for many artists: a dissolution of the distinction between art and life.

SØ Presenting dichotomies in order to clarify theoretical points is a method frequently used both in historiography and in the establishment of an ideology. In an artistic landscape where one is trying to get away from conventional oppositions like modernism/postmodernism, periphery/center, form/content, it may appear problematical to use these dichotomies. In Bergen Kunsthall's exhibition *Looking is Political*, in which you also participated, we tried to shed light on how the traditional distinction between so-called political art and formal aesthetic projects seems to be breaking down.[1] The exhibition *Making is*

1 *Looking is Political*, Nairy Baghramian, Ane Hjort Guttu and Bojan Sarcevic. Bergen Kunsthall, 16 January – 19 February 2009.

Thinking also touches on this by equating "thinking" with "making." But despite this general wish to see antithetical concepts as equally valid, the association with the original opposition seems to be lurking in the background.[2]

AHG Yes, I think we still orient ourselves in terms of these dichotomies; they structure our thinking. It's interesting to look at what we do when we say: "making is thinking." It may look as though we're both establishing and cancelling out such a dichotomy, but I wonder whether we're rather reinforcing the dichotomy by denying it, and whether it would be more constructive to reject it from the outset.

SØ This is a dilemma. Presenting a new or different direction often requires a presentation of what you want to get away from. Isn't a direct rejection also a confirmation of prevailing conventions? Can one avoid this theoretical paradox?

AHG In this respect Jacques Rancière has a good point, in that he understands such dichotomies or oppositions not only as opposites but equally as value judgments. He writes something along the lines of them being "allegories of inequality," and that the opposition established between seeing and acting in theater, for example, simultaneously involves a strong claim that action is "more valuable."[3] This means that it becomes a political move to transcend or to challenge these oppositions. Maybe one could find a political potential here—when art transcends the categories in which it is placed, or shows that to think is also to create, to see is also to act, etc. That's why I have also worked a lot on investigating how formal aesthetic approaches are political.

SØ Just as art that is characterized as "formal" is associated with a particular aesthetic, so too is "conceptual art" marked by a particular iconography. Trying to break down conventional distinctions would thus have consequences for how the gaze perceives conceptual art, for example by seeing it as formalistic?

AHG Yes, it's a difficult job to decipher the various complex layers of meaning in art—I feel this strongly when I talk to students about what things mean. What connotations do we get from a Euro-pallet with a stack of silk-screen prints on it? When does it go from representing something "alternative" to being perceived as a convention, and how can it be

2 See also "Political Art?" issue of *TEXTE ZUR KUNST*, 80 (December 2010).

3 Jacques Ranciere. *The Emancipated Spectator* (New York: Verso, 2009).

won back? Knowledge of context is extremely important, especially in art education.

But in general, I must say that I experience the opposition between form and content as incredibly alienating, since as an artist you are constantly working—deeply and inwardly—with aesthetic decisions. In the end, you no longer know what form is. Is jumping up in the air form? The same is true, of course, with my son: when he blows up these two balloons, does he know what is form and what is content? Do I know? Does the distinction make any sense at all in this action? It's interesting to think about how you can work differently—how you can start from a quite different point from the "scientific" one (where there are definite categories). Art is often assigned the function of representing a kind of breaking-down of dividing-lines, but without in fact shifting the categories, and thus challenging the hierarchies. The Surrealists said that you had to *practice* poetry, and maybe that's what I mean—practice rather than represent.

SØ As I see it, your works rarely offer explicit political comment. The political dimension lies more in the way you turn the focus on artistic activity itself as a radical position in society.

AHG Art that can be used to change the world is political. That's why I'm critical of the idea that political art is only the art that takes up current political issues. Often such art just constitutes the prevailing ideology, by being market-adapted, but also by consolidating the idea of what politics is. As I've mentioned before, I'd like to see art "emancipated from itself" to a greater extent, so that we can experience it as an expression of the humanity that lives in all of us, and on which everyone can draw.

SØ Many of the works in this exhibition make reference to the concept of intuition. How would you situate intuition in relation to thinking?

AHG Intuition is a kind of wordless knowledge—that is, knowledge that you have acquired through visual or felt experience, but to which you don't have access through language. The artist reaches into her background experience and pulls up intuitions, and they can be assembled and combined in various ways. This presumably also means that intuition doesn't necessarily have to be either creative or exciting. It's necessary to develop a critical intuition, rather than to imagine that the intuitive always produces something genuine or true. I think you can often replace intuition with research.

SØ In your other work in *Making is Thinking*, the photographic series *Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform* (2009), you present studies left behind by students at the Arts and Crafts School in Oslo, 1960-1980. Each form draws its references from a modernist, formal-aesthetic tradition. This work of yours exemplifies precisely how intuition, this wordless knowledge, is influenced by outside systems.

AHG Yes, in these studies it is of course difficult to know which approaches are intuitive and which follow direct advice from the teacher, for example. But I think they make it clear that the borderline between intuition and learned convention is very finely drawn. I'm interested in the traces of pedagogical ideology that lie latent in these forms, how the original assignment, the teacher's ideas, and post-war educational policy can be detected in an ostensibly "pure" modernist formal idiom.

SØ Can you be more specific? In what way can we see traces of ideology in these studies?

AHG We see, for example, that most of them are made in plaster, that they aren't reinforced, nor are they cast. In other words, they must have been carved. I've been told that they mostly come from an obligatory class that was called "Experimental form," and which continued well into the post-war period—one of the "freest" classes in a course that was otherwise mainly about technique and material theory. A common exercise on this course was to give each of the students a block of plaster and get them to carve out a shape from it. That might seem poetic, with reference to the idea of working *per forza di levare* [by taking something away]. Plato himself, and later Michelangelo, viewed a sculpture as the perfect form that was latent in the stone and had to be liberated from it. But actually, that's an un-pedagogical and almost obsessive-compulsive method. If the aim is to learn to understand form, one should be able—even in high-modernist art training—to try out, to look, to add, remove, look, discuss, add again, etc. The exercise helps you to maximize the feeling of a meaningless risk that has always been typical of art students. And I imagine that this very risk was an authoritarian pedagogical element. As Jimmie Durham writes: "Artists who teach begin to act in paternalistic ways to the students (who are almost never really considered as colleagues, no matter the fine words). This leads to a perception of 'power' on the part of the teacher, which feels good; especially because artists have so little 'power' in life."[4] The "Experimental form" class was experimental within a limited discourse about formal concepts like static, dynamic etc., and the efforts of the students were

4 Jimmie Durham. Visual essay in *A.C.A.D.E.M.Y.*, ed. Angelika Nollert, Irit Rogoff, Bart de Baere, Yilmaz Dziewior, Charles Esche, Kerstin Niemann, Dieter Roelstraete (Frankfurt-am-Main: Revolver, 2006), 56.

presumably as much about mastering established ideas of free form as exercising real freedom. When I saw these studies, it was as if I recognized the feeling of standing in front of a drawing or a sculpture and seeing that it's turning out wrong, that it cannot be "saved." If you use the illustrated study as an example, you see that it lacks equilibrium and authority. It's a typical example of something that the language of modernism called "weak form." It doesn't have sufficient balance and seems quite unmotivated, almost comical. As a sculpture in this genre, it's a failure. And I know this kind of failure very well from my own training.

SØ In terms of the relation between making and thinking, it appears that you set up an intellectual distance from what you are commenting on or presenting. Could one say that you operate as a kind of analyst of others' formal-aesthetic processes and of what these mean in a larger context?

AHG I'm preoccupied with the idea that aesthetic choices are also ideological, and I'm extremely interested in exploring the degree to which there is an aesthetic freedom, and how it can materialize. For me, artistic activity is about exploring the limits of freedom and pointing to or transcending them. I think that's what I'm trying to do through these two works.

SØ Maybe there are interesting connections here with Koki Tanaka's exploration and testing of new uses for everyday objects or Eva Berendes' establishment of obscure links between things that resemble each other visually?

AHG Yes, I think both these artists show some really fine works. Tanaka actually challenges these things in a very formally conscious way, but it's as if there's more behind it; he tries to turn something functional into something formal and vice versa; the formal becomes functional or dysfunctional. And Berendes creates visual connections that—in some way—also become social; for example, it may seem that there really exists some political or

image: Ane Hjort Guttu. Detail from *Static Dynamic Tension Force Form Counterform*, 2009. Courtesy of the artist.

historical connection between the flea-market vases and a painted silk. Maybe she somehow highlights links that we don't know about, but that still can be real or active. Or maybe these connections appear when they are established by the artist. Maybe she conjures up connections in an almost shamanist way?

SØ One strand of the exhibition *Making is Thinking* focuses on thinking about "making" and "creating," on a contemplation of the craftsmanship aspect of art production. How do you relate this to your own artistic practice?

AHG I realize that it's important for me to create things in the form of objects, images or processes, but I've never been particularly interested in the handmade. There's an interesting claim that is presented in the exhibition—that precisely this kind of long drawn-out craftsmanship represents a kind of "thinking without a brain." For me, this kind of activity has almost paralyzed thinking; all handcrafted work has become a kind of "skill" that follows given patterns. I did an incredible number of drawings until I began at the Academy of Art, and I tried to reach a state where thought was supposed to disappear and then something free was supposed to come out. But in reality, it never worked. So I've regarded that kind of work as almost threatening. But I respect that it can be fruitful in other types of artistic process. In addition, I believe that the handmade, something on which you have spent a lot of time, can take on a special kind of sincerity.

Solveig Øvstebø is an art historian and has been Director of Bergen Kunsthall since 2003. She has curated and co-curated numerous exhibitions, including *Cerith W. Evans* (2011), *Gambaroff, Krebber, Rayne, Quaytman* (2010), *Christopher Williams* (2010), *Looking Is Political: Nairy Baghramian, Bojan Šarčević, Ane Hjort Guttu* (2009), *Sergej Jenssen* (2008), *Leibhaftige Malerei Jxxxa: Jutta Koether* (2008), *The Absence of Mark Manders* (2007), *Center of Gravity: Runa Islam* (2007), *Awakenings: Rodney Graham* (2006), and *The Welfare Show: Elmgreen & Dragset* (2005). She is a board member of Arts Council Norway, has taught at the art academies of Helsinki and Bergen, and has written and lectured extensively on contemporary art. In 2009, she initiated and co-organized the Bergen Biennial Conference together with Elena Filipovic and Marieke van Hal, with whom she co-edited *The Biennial Reader*.

Translated from Norwegian by James Manley.

tower
by Yoshiko Nagai

Phase 1

Time is there to be killed.

Here, I have a ballpoint pen whose nib is about to get dry. I scratch on white paper again and again. That way, I pass time. In the beginning, the nib nodded with a trace of force but without ink. Nods and nods, then gradually, it sheds purplish black ink. I slide my hand, and the zigzag of black ink follows me. I escape, but it comes out as a mass. More and more. I turn. But the ink keeps coming. I turn again. But it still chases me.

Now, the mass is growing. The zigzags in the mass look like they are fidgeting. I try to concentrate. I cover my ear with my left hand and I hold the ballpoint pen with my right hand. I am busy scratching and sliding my hand, still trying to escape from this mass.

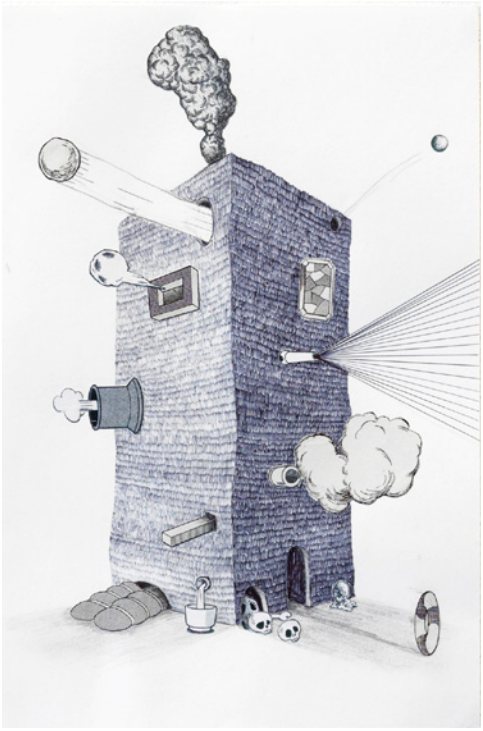
The mass of black ink is getting bigger and bigger, and now, it occupies the white paper. Looking closely, I see the black ink breathing restlessly. Sometimes it seems pale; sometimes it seems thick. Looking from a distance, the surface reflects light on one side and holds shadow on the other side.

Time is leaving me.

Now I stop the ballpoint pen from running and release my hand from the paper. I stare at the paper. There is the solid tower, which is solemn and patronizing. Somehow, the surface of black ink continues to tremble. Something might be inside.

I decide to take time to see what is inside. I hold the ballpoint pen again.

Phase 2



Another roll of tape is thrown in the box and the lid is closed. The box is full and crammed with stuff in disorder.

There is a toothpaste tube at the very bottom of the box, squashed by the weight of other stuff on top of him. He cannot bear to be left in such a situation. Irritated, he says, 'I can squeeze myself and out will flow stripy toothpaste.'

All the things inside are frustrated by the situation in which they find themselves, unable to make full use of their own functions.

Angrily, a balloon says, 'I can blow up.'

Bravely, a wooden pole says, 'I can tilt.'

Nervously, a rope says, 'I can stretch out, if someone helps me to uncoil.'

A multicolored liquid says with excitement, 'I can splash out like a fountain. Or I can also become steam and leak out that way.'

The tape, newly thrown in the box, thinks over what he can do. Thinking back, his life has been a repetition of putting two separate things together. He was always serving the happiness of someone else. He knew he existed in various colors and sizes, but in many cases he was used only to put things together and never thought of his potential abilities.

He thinks again and says, 'Well, maybe, since I am round in shape, I can simply roll forwards and backwards on the ground, as if I was dancing. Also, I can get unrolled and taped somewhere, and in this way I can mark a line.'

'That's good enough,' say the other things, convinced by his enthusiasm.

'If only there was a way to get out of this square box.'

image: Teppei Kaneuji. *Tower (Drawing)*, 2011. Courtesy of the artist & ShugoArts, Tokyo.

Phase 3

I stand in front of the tower. It is so tall that I can scarcely see the top of it. I cover my mouth with a protective mask and wear a helmet. I take the ballpoint pen in my right hand, and put a few extras in my back pocket.

The wall is made only with scratchy black ink. Black ink that finally took solid form through the repetition of a zigzag movement, supported by the white paper. For the ink, it was a long awaited transformation.

First, I crawl on the ground. I draw a square shape at the bottom of tower and black it out. Now, it becomes an opening the size of my head. I look inside, but I only feel the cold and wet air coming out. Nothing seems to happen.

I place a stepladder beside the wall and climb up it. Standing at the top, I draw a small window on the wall: a window without a cover or a shutter, a window like the sole light source in a prison. I put my head through and try to see what's inside. It is dark and quiet like an eternal black hole.

I erect scaffolding to get higher up, close to the top. I climb up carefully. Even though I go higher and higher, I cannot see the rooftop, only the continuation of the scratchy black ink surface. I sit on the scaffolding and draw a circle on the wall. I push the ballpoint pen with force so that the zigzag trace disappears. The paper gets dented and the black ink wells into the indentation. A moment later, it becomes a round hole. I look into it. Inside it is still very dark and I can hear the echo of my breathing.

As I come down the scaffolding, I stroke the wall. It is solid and still. It is also cold. As I touch it, I feel the surface of the wall like a wooden relief, marked with the traces of force and time. I stroke the surface with my hand, and see the palm of my hand wet and stained with black ink.

Suddenly, I feel something hitting the top of my head and, as I look up, I see green liquid leaking through the scaffolding. I jump off the ladder and look up again. Now, from the round hole that I just made, green liquid is splashing out. At the same moment, as I look at the ground, a creamy substance is emerging out of the square opening. An accumulation of creamy things that smell like mint.

All sorts of activities are busily taking place through the openings of the tower. I step back to see the whole view. I see a balloon that puffs out and withers, like the throat of a frog taking a fast breath. A wooden pole breaks through the wall and pokes out, like a billiard cue. Steam is pouring forth with threatening power and thick liquid is spouting from the roof, as in a catastrophe, while on the ground, the tape is rolling innocently to and fro. It goes in one direction and disappears, then it comes back and hits my toe. The red ball is bouncing happily. It almost fits in the round hole of the wall. Free and easy.

I take action. I place the stepladder beside the tower. I hold the ballpoint pen and draw an additional circle on the wall. Then I jump off the stepladder to escape from another gush of liquid pouring over me. I hear a howling sound from deep inside of the tower, as if something is being born inside. I step back and cover my head, it seems as if it is coming closer. The next moment, a white thing comes out and bounces a few times in the air. It is not liquid but a white rope, that springs out and then hangs down towards the ground.

I take the ballpoint pen again. I catch the zigzag on the edge of the tower and draw a long line on the ground. I keep on drawing the line without removing the nib from the paper. The long line of black ink runs between the nib and the edge of the tower like a stream. The ballpoint pen is dragging the tower by means of a long and thin straight line.

The black ink, which was solid and still as the solemn wall, starts to melt. Being liquid, it flows along the zigzag trace, and eventually pours into the dent of the straight line on the paper. It is smooth and light like transparent water in the darkness. From a distance, it looks like the thin black thread is unraveling from an intricate piece of embroidery.

The tower is dismantled by the nib of the ballpoint pen.

All that is left is a straight black line on the white paper.

Only on the palm of my right hand a slight ink stain remains.

Yoshiko Nagai (born 1978 in Odawara, Japan) is a curator and writer based in Tokyo. She works for a gallery by day and writes reviews and essays by night. A range of her short stories has recently been featured in 'Flash Fiction' of *TANK magazine* [http://www.tankmagazine.com/editorial-themes/fiction-short-stories].

thinking/ not thinking

by Gavin Delahunty

A casually dressed man snaps shut a film clapperboard before exiting a blank white set. The title appears, *MARTIN CREED THINKING / NOT THINKING*, in black and pink fonts. Two musicians start to play, one drumming energetically, the other swiftly strumming a chord on an electric guitar. Bang on the first guitar chord, a miniature dog appears, perhaps a Chihuahua, and begins trotting diagonally across the set from left to right and then right to left. Wagging its tail, in and out of the static picture frame, the dog continues. Its fourth entrance coincides with the lyric "I was Thinking," with some weight on the word "Thinking." Music and drumming continue until the lyric "And then I"—which is immediately followed by an abrupt break in the music—followed by "Wasn't Thinking," at which point a large wolfhound strides into the foreground of the empty frame and correspondingly makes its way back and forth across the set, in and out of the picture frame. Separately at first, then together, the dogs take it in turns to enter and exit on the words "Thinking/Not Thinking." The climax of this clever film is reached at 1min 16secs when, after ten consecutive drum rolls, both animals make a final exit and the artist crosses the frame, followed by another man whom we assume is the other musician.

Martin Creed's *Thinking/Not Thinking (work-1090)*, 2011, provokes some interesting questions.[1] First, in an oblique analogy to the art object, there is the artist's careful choice of dogs—for instance dogs such as the Chihuahua were initially bred to provide pleasure to rich people and were viewed by others as status symbols, luxury items with little apparent purpose. Then there is the appearance of the artist and his musical partner at the end of the performance, suggesting that throughout they were conceivably only observing the arbitrary wanderings of the two dogs and responding to their appearance in the picture frame with the words "Thinking" each time the Chihuahua entered the frame and "Not Thinking" each time

1 Available to view at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6-7brUXDWY

the wolfhound entered. It follows that what first appears to be a carefully arranged pop song is nothing more than chance observation of two canine breeds and that the dogs acted as both lyric generators and compositional prompts. But most of all, Creed's *Thinking/Not Thinking (work-1090)* raises questions about thinking. Can thinking be controlled? Is there an inappropriate value ascribed to thinking in visual art? Can thinking, by itself, ever be at the service of the artist in the production of tangible things? Prompted by Creed's work, these questions will frame my discussion of the exhibition *Making is Thinking* and in particular the work of artists Koki Tanaka and Julia Dault.[2]

I would like to address the certainty in which the verbs "making" and "thinking" are linked by the title *Making is Thinking*, specifically its correlation between working hands and the laboring mind. Instead what I propose is that while there is evidence to suggest that making and thinking may share certain characteristics, correspond to one another, and regularly be a consequence of one another, they are not equivalents. On the contrary, they are two etymologically unrelated words for which artists need to take a certain care not to consider as the same activity, and should indeed avoid synonymous usage. In what follows, I endeavor to suggest that some artists such as Julia Dault use "making" as a way to shed light on a different way of "thinking;" while others, like Koki Tanaka and Martin Creed, adopt arbitrary systems that elude both "making" and "thinking" wherever possible.

In order to more carefully define these terms, I would like to turn to an evaluation of making and thinking found in Hannah Arendt's 1958 book *The Human Condition*. In it Arendt states: "the underlying tie between the laborer of the hand and the laborer of the head is the laboring process, in one case performed by the head, in the other by some other part of the body. Thinking however, which is presumably the activity of the head, though it is in some way like laboring—also a process which probably comes to an end only with life itself—is even less 'productive' than labor; if labor leaves no permanent trace, thinking leaves nothing tangible at all."[3] Arendt describes familiar opponents: those who work with their hands, and those who work with their heads. She is quick to validate both as forms of labor but is careful to point out that, by itself, thinking never materializes into any object: "Whenever the intellectual worker's wishes to manifest his thoughts, he must use his hands and acquire

2 Editor's note: Martin Creed's work is not included in *Making is Thinking*.

3 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 90

manual skills just like any other worker. In other words, thinking and working are two different activities which never quite coincide; the thinker who wants the world to know the content of his thoughts must first of all stop thinking and remember his thoughts."[4] Some manual skills must be deployed, then, in order for the thought to become manifest. Thinking itself requires some material upon which thoughts can be performed and, through fabrication, be transformed into an object. Although not immediately apparent, Arendt's definition of thinking and working—i.e. thinking as intellectual labor, which on its own yields no material product, and making as manual labor that results in a permanent trace—can provide a certain insight into the practices of Dault and Tanaka. It points to a customary frustration for the artist and his or her audience: can what I have made with my hands communicate my thinking? If thoughts, as Arendt suggests, are abstract, infinite and unrestrained, any endeavor to capture thought in a permanent object is, at that very moment, to make the thoughts redundant. One solution might be to try to capture the fleeting and transitory processes of thought in momentary actions, or precarious and temporary configurations of materials.[5]

Julia Dault's *Untitled 17 (11:00 am – 4:00 pm, January 20, 2011)*, 2011 and *Untitled 18 (4:00 pm – 9:00 pm, January 20, 2011)*, 2011 are assembled using Plexiglas, Formica, cotton and string.[6] All of her sculptures are made on site, where she bends factory standard rectangular sheets of Plexiglas or Formica into a position, usually against a wall, before fixing them in place with various lengths of cord. Each work

image: Julia Dault, *Untitled 17 (11:00 am – 4:00 pm, January 20, 2011)*, 2011
Courtesy of the artist

4 Ibid.

5 Editor's note: This approach to Arendt deviates somewhat from her notion of action not so much as configurations of things, but as the coming together of people.

6 The cotton is a specific type of hand-wrap used by boxers and produced by Everlast. The string is mason's line.

is assigned a number, a time of production, and a date by the artist. All her supplies are selected for their explicit material quality and are utilized with minimum interference to those original characteristics. To that end, the curvilinear shape of these abstract sculptures is determined by its material characteristics (an angular fold for instance would result in the material breaking) and the artist's physical capabilities or limitations, such as arm length and strength. The results are temporary, in that removal of the string or cotton wraps will cause the work to collapse. With the artist's attentiveness to the self-governing properties of each material, one might think the outcome is certain to some extent, yet Dault manages to fashion an enigmatic thing. In actuality, hers is an unlimited process, as even if the same site and position were selected and equivalent sheets of material and lengths of cord used, the exact conditions of production are never quite the same. By restricting her interaction with the materials she has selected and by taking her cues from their industrially produced qualities, Dault moves away from controlling her materials to establishing a reciprocal relationship with them. Resisting traditional techniques such as carving, casting or modeling—which seek to impose sculptural form upon materials—Dault allows the physical properties of materials to contribute towards her sculptural forms.

The material means that artist Koki Tanaka decided to act upon in his 2007 multi-channel work *Everything is Everything* are low-cost plastic goods; inexpensive, convenient, commercially available items. Immediately identifiable to us all, they have a day-to-day application, are composed of synthetic or semi-synthetic material, are industrially produced and roughly have a geometric shape. They are animated by the artist by throwing, kicking, flipping, rolling, squeezing, flicking and placing. These actions are captured on a high definition camera then edited into individual filmic vignettes, combinations of which are subsequently sequenced for display on a single screen. The plasma screens on which the vignettes are presented are hung from just above floor level to a mid-way point on the wall, their arrangement similar to notes on a musical score. These durational signs, however, can be read in many different combinations, not strictly left to right or from top to bottom. They include: rolling tin foil down a concrete staircase, tying a piece of gray foam with red cord, flipping a plastic laundry basket, pushing an inflatable mattress down a staircase, up-righting a blue plastic bucket, flipping a lid of a white plastic container, rolling toilet paper, up-righting a red plastic container, releasing a blind, opening a door to allow a paint-roller to fall, kicking a ladder, spraying a welding mask with white foam, throwing a yellow umbrella, balancing a red and green floor brush on one finger, placing a pink plastic bucket over a concrete

bollard, pulling a feather duster underneath one arm, extending the cord on an extension lead, jumping on a blue door mat, placing ear protectors on a glass, throwing two yellow helmets together, crumpling six polystyrene cups. Though separate and unrelated, the duration of each sequence is roughly the same, therefore we can assume that the artist is suggesting some equivalence in value. The things that the artist is acting upon can be described, as demonstrated above, but the motivations behind the actions are more difficult to explain. What does focus our attention, however, is their seemingly arbitrary application. By way of the readymade object, Tanaka evokes a position—similar to Dault's—of spontaneity, of automatism, cleverly trying to side-step thinking through improvisation.

By inserting the camera in an urban domestic space or in close proximity thereof, whilst not necessarily site-specific, Tanaka nonetheless displays an acute awareness of the place in which these actions occur. The camera position is always fixed with the action taking place centrally in the frame. Once again, the formal qualities and structures of the objects are fixed and "acted on." In a convincingly irregular fashion, Tanaka operates the objects sometimes by hand, in other instances with other objects in front of the camera lens to create momentary acts. I would like to suggest that the uniformity of these successive vignettes lies not in their low-cost material or everyday utility, nor in their provisional quality, but in their serial choreography by way of the filmic process. This serial quality together with their restricted conditions of production provides the artist with a stage on which the objects can move beyond their day-to-day application. Tanaka has fashioned for himself a process that seeks to avoid contrived artistic values such as the incremental development of a style, in exchange for an infinite number of actions with an indeterminate number of models. In an essay called "Serial Art, Systems, Solipsism" (1967), Mel Bochner noted that "Serial or systematic thinking has generally been considered the antithesis to artistic thinking. Systems are characterized by regularity, thoroughness, and repetition in execution. They are methodical. It is their consistency and continuity of application that characterizes them. Individual parts in a system are not themselves important but are relevant only in how they are used in the enclosed logic of the whole series."[7] In Tanaka's work, this refusal of "artistic thinking" accompanies an elision of artistic making, so that the actions filmed appear to occur automatically, causing configurations of objects to cohere and disperse.

7 Mel Bochner, "Serial Art, Systems, Solipsism," *Arts Magazine* (Summer 1967). Reprinted in Gregory Battcock, *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 92

I have until now failed to mention one curious and crucial component of *Everything is Everything*. Each sequence of images opens and concludes with a still image of Taiwanese pabulum. One opening shot presents a number of cooked Taiwanese dishes, most notably in the forefront is a mouth-watering pork dish, while the closing frames present us with a detail of a sizeable aluminum bowl of jelly in iced lemon water followed immediately by what appears to be a market stall. Throughout the work, there are eight of these three to five second breaks in the action, at some points displaying one dish, at others several. Elsewhere, we encounter the familiar Styrofoam container that seems to have been adopted

image: Koki Tanaka, Details *Everything is Everything*, 2006
Courtesy of the artist;
Aoyama Meguro, Tokyo;
& Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou

by take-away and convenience food stores worldwide. The rapidity and disposability of "fast food" underscores the inherent transience of the other dishes, which also invite immediate consumption. In conjunction with the throwaway plastic goods, these images engender a sense of immediacy and transience, which is echoed in the split-second nature of the actions performed and the serial method of their presentation. As opposed to the enduring art object, Tanaka presents a sequence of flippant actions that refuse to cohere into meaningful labor or to result in a lasting product.

In this short text, I have tried to argue that in both Dault's sculptures and Tanaka's videos I see a move towards a kind of non-thinking. In both instances, this move is being made with a conscious understanding of the difficulty, and dangers, of forming the intangibility of thought into the tangibility of objects. Central in this attempt is their laboring process. Both artists entrust a degree of control over an end result to their respective processes, Dault in her chosen materials, and Tanaka in his reliance upon the technical apparatus of camera and screen to record and facilitate. The temporary nature of their works in question perhaps suggests ambivalence on behalf of both with regards to the nature and function of thinking—a process which probably comes to an end only with life itself. Perhaps for both, to commit to a permanent trace or set thought in stone could weaken the activity of artistic labor that seems to continually oscillate between controlled thinking and automatic thinking in varying degrees. Their labor has neither an obvious end nor an aim outside itself. Employing independent authorities such as material constraints and/or serialization side-steps any attempt to define thinking and therefore invites pure possibility and potentiality into their work.

Gavin Delahunty (born 1977, Ireland) completed his undergraduate studies at Crawford College of Art & Design before earning an MA in Visual Arts Practices (Criticism) at IADT, Dublin. Since November 2010 he has been Head of Exhibitions & Displays at Tate Liverpool, having previously held positions at mima (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art); Modern Art Oxford, and The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin.

thinking amidst the exhibition

afterword by Zoë Gray

A flexible book allows one to learn along the way and to share the ideas developed over the course of a project. Perceptive readers may have noticed that certain "facts" changed in this one, particularly in relation to the writers' contributions. Yoshiko Nagai did not write *about* Teppei Kaneuji's work, as planned, but wrote a story inspired by its imagery and tone, creating in words her own image of a trembling tower reduced to a line of ink. And Gavin Delahunty did not write about intuition, but about thinking and non-thinking, contesting my equation of making and thinking in the exhibition. Delahunty's essay—with its challenge to my curatorial thesis—reads Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* to evince the interrelation but insist on the inherent division between thought and labor. He argues for possibilities of leaving thought behind to make work, while my reading of the works is that they constitute (often non-verbal) forms of thinking. Julia Dault put this well in our ongoing email discussions concerning her own work: "the making and the thinking coax each other into being."

What seemed like a modest title has indeed provoked considerable debate, amongst the artists included in the show, amongst its visitors, and in the press. What emerged in print often focused on the *differences* between making and thinking, with some reviewers arguing that the show was too conceptual and others decrying it for being too dominated by thoughtless making.[1] My discussions with the many groups who visited the show also tended to be dominated by this apparent dichotomy. The insistence on reading the show as making *versus* thinking reveals the degree to which this dichotomy is entrenched in society. It seems that we now lack a language to explore form and materiality. In part, this is simply visual art's inherent refusal to be entirely captured in words, but it also suggests to me that the zeitgeist favors work that can be deconstructed, explained, rationalized. The most analyzed work in the exhibition was also perhaps its most analytical, Ane Hjort Guttu's *How to be a Non-Artist*, a film that finishes with the phrase that is at once hopeful and despairing: "Everything became art and in the same time became: Nothing."

1 Dutch speakers might be interested to read Janneke Wesseling "Kunnen zien dat alles kunst is" in *NRC*, 9 February 2011, 13; or, for a more sympathetic reading of the show, Domeniek Ruyters, "Pleidooi voor 'dom' handwerk" in *de Volkskrant*, 3 February 2011, 52. See also Koen Kleijn's "Tussen toeval en ambacht" in *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 3 March 2011, 40; Arjam Reinders' "Making is Thinking" in *Kunstbeeld*, 31 March 2011, 78; and Luk Lambrecht's "Maken is denken" in *KNACK*, 24 February 2011, u.p.

What is indisputable is that the show contains many types of making, and many forms of thinking, some of which are loosely related to craft. Although I consciously avoided using the c-word in the exhibition title, and indeed primarily referred to Richard Sennett's extremely broad notion of "craftsmanship" as a way of looking at the world of work—within and beyond the field of art—some visitors came to Witte de With expecting to see a craft exhibition.[2] A few were disappointed, others relieved, but in discussing the exhibition and Sennett's writing, the powerful connotations of "craft" became increasingly clear. It is a word that evokes seemingly contradictory standpoints, claimed by some as a position of political activism and an alternative to globalized mass production, while seen by others as nostalgic, conservative, as an "authentic" recourse to more "honest" times. My own ideas about craft are still shifting. Over the course of the show, I became more cynical about this reawakening of interest in craft and I think that its rhetoric of activism should be closely examined.[3] Nevertheless, Sennett's rallying cry for work done well for its own sake, as a recognition of our humanity, is an inspiring one, which I would be sad to abandon entirely.

The notion of the artist as hobbyist was one that raised many questions—and some hackles—and provoked much discussion around the idea of the amateur. This came to the fore during the Crafternoon, which was intended as an informal moment to discuss the impulses behind making. I invited Jay Tan to co-host the event, a Rotterdam-based artist who emphasizes "pottering about" as an important part of her artistic practice. Together, we created a simple plan for a rainy Sunday afternoon in February. We asked everyone attending to bring something that they had recently made to facilitate introductions. Those who attended were a mixture of familiar faces and people who had never before come to Witte de With. The making that they presented included knitting, sewing, baking, a mathematical puzzle, gardening, the "upcycling" of clothes, animation, painting, collage and constructing furniture. The reasons behind these different types of making were equally diverse, and ranged from the intensely pragmatic ("because it is easier than trying to buy the thing I want") to the meditative ("to divorce my brain from a process for a while"). After a lively discussion, we attempted to produce a quilt, with somewhat limited success, suggesting that our *shared* skills were better suited to talking than to making...

The other events that accompanied and extended the exhibition—Rita McBride's talk about her recently completed monumental sculpture *Mae West*; Hedwig Houben's workshop about failed works of art; Julia Dault's and William J. O'Brien's masterclasses on performative making and drawing respectively—tapped into more ideas than can be evoked in this short afterword.[4] The exhibition itself is already diverse in the forms and ideas it presents, and for me, the thinking process is not yet over.[5] The fundamental question at stake, however, is one of value and time: why—when we no longer *need* to (either as artists or as consumers) do we spend our most valuable currency—time—on *making* things?[6]

2 One review referred to it as an exhibition on neo-craft: http://www.2010lab.tv/en/blog/i-can-do-too---neocraft-discourse-exhibition-making-thinking-part-1

3 See also the article about *Making is Thinking* in *Aesthetica Magazine*, "A Reaction to Globalised Production": http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/#_self

4 See Maxine Kopsa's article on Hedwig Houben's work, "Haar presentaties kietelen de codes van de kunst" in *Metropolis M*, 2, 2011, 34. (English version on: http://www.metropolism.com)

5 I will continue to explore certain elements of *Making is Thinking* in the exhibition *Manufacture* at Parc Saint Leger (11 June—5 September 2011), which will feature the work of Hedwig Houben and Dewar & Gicquel together with five other artists. See www.parcsaintleger.fr for details.

6 Indeed, one of the things that became clear was that the show was largely about time and value, which are also the themes of the subsequent show at Witte de With*: The End of Money*. See www.wdw.nl for details.

artists' biographies

Wilfrid Almendra
Born 1972 in Cholet (France).
Lives and works in Cholet (France).

Recent solo exhibitions include *Killed in Action* (Case Study Houses), Bugada & Cargnel, Paris; *Wilfrid Almendra – Go*, FRAC des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou; and *Wilfrid Almendra – & Return*, Zoo Galerie, Nantes (all 2009); *Cuts Across the Land*, Bugada & Cargnel, Paris (2008); *Goodbye Sunny Dreams*, Buy-Sellf Art Club, Marseille (2007); *Rock Garden*, FRAC-Collection Aquitaine, Bordeaux (2006); and *De natura*, Centre d'art contemporain de Meymac, Meymac (2005). Recent group exhibitions include Biennale de Belleville, L'Antenne, le Plateau/ Frac Ile-de-France, Paris; *America Deserta*, Parc Saint Léger – Centre d'art contemporain, Pougues-les-Eaux; *Perpetual Battles*, Baibakov Art Projects, Moscow; and *Collection Frac Basse-Normandie*, Frac Basse-Normandie, Caen (all 2010). Almendra studied in Lisbon, Manchester and at the École des Beaux-arts de Rennes, Rennes (1996-2000).

Eva Berendes
Born 1974 in Bonn (Germany).
Lives and works in Berlin (Germany).

Recent solo exhibitions include *A veil, a shadow, a bloom*, Sommer & Kohl, Berlin; *Eva Berendes & Michael Van den Abeele*, Elisa Platteau Galerie, Brussels (both 2010); *Silk, Grids & Souvenirs*, Jacky Strenz, Frankfurt/Main; The Armory Show, solo presentation (both 2009), *Eva Berendes / Günter Fruhtrunk*, Arndt & Partner, Zurich (2008) and Ancient & Modern, London (2007). Selected group exhibitions include *The Long Dark*, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge (previously shown at International 3, Manchester and Hatton Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne); *The Berlin Box*, Kunsthalle Andratx /CCA, Mallorca; *Bilder über Bilder*, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig (Mumok), Vienna (all 2010); *Drawing Sculpture*, Daimler Contemporary Berlin; *From Yarn to Yucca – A Continuation of the Dialogue Between Abstraction and Figuration,* John Connelly Presents, New York; *All that is solid melts into air, Part II: The Thing*, MuHKA Antwerp in collaboration with Cultuurcentrum Mechelen, Mechelen (all 2009) and *The Eternal Flame*, Kunsthaus Baselland, Basel (2008). Berendes studied at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich, the Hochschule der Künste, Berlin and most recently at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London (2001-2002). She is the recipient of the following grants and residencies: Art Scope, Tokyo, Daimler Foundation Japan (2009); Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant (2008-2009); Else-Heiliger-Fonds (2006-2007); DAAD (2001-2002).

Alexandre da Cunha
Born 1969 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).
Lives and works in London (UK).

Recent solo exhibitions include *Laissez Faire*, Camden Arts Centre, London (2009); Sommer & Kohl, Berlin; Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo; and Vilma Gold, London (all 2008); *Passengers*, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco; *Alexandre da Cunha – Damien Roach*, NAK Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen (both 2007). Recent group shows include *Inaugural Show*, CRG, New York; *First and Last, Notes on the Monument*, Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo; *Billdertausch 2*, Museum Ritter, Waldenbuch; *Panamericana*, Kurimanzuto Gallery, Mexico City*; Tristes Tropiques*, The Barber Shop, Lisbon; *A Very Long Cat*, Wallspace, New York (all 2010); San Juan Triennial, Puerto Rico; *Revolution of the Ordinary*, Museum Morsbroich, Leverkusen; *Pete and Repeat,* Zabludovic Collection 176, London; *IV Bienal de Jafre*, Girona (all 2009); *Procedente*, MAP Museu de Arte da Pampulha, Belo Horizonte; *Transformational Grammars*, Galeria Francesca Kaufmann, Milan; *The Gentle Art of Collapsing the Expanded Field*, Cardenas Bellanger, Paris (all 2008);

Fortunate Objects, CIFO, Miami; *Eurovision*, NAK, Aachen (all 2007); *Around the World in Eighty Days*, ICA/South London Gallery, London (2006). Da Cunha was educated at Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado, São Paulo, the Royal College of Art, London, and at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London (1999-2000).

Julia Dault

Born 1977 in Toronto (Canada).
Lives and works in New York (USA).

Recent exhibitions include *Total Picture Control*, her solo show at Blackston Gallery, New York, and *Substance Abuse* at Leo Koenig Projekte, New York (all 2010). She was art critic for *The National Post* (Canada) from 2003 to 2006. Dault teaches in the School of Art and Design History and Theory at Parsons and received her MFA in Fine Arts from Parsons The New School for Design in 2008. Dault's participation is supported in part by Parsons, the New School for Design.

Dewar & Gicquel

Daniel Dewar. Born 1976 in Forest Dean (England).
Lives and works in Paris (France).

Gregory Gicquel. Born 1975 in St Brieuc (France).
Lives and works in Paris (France).

Recent solo shows include *Mason Massacre*, Les Collections de St Cyprien, St Cyprien village, France (2008); *Dewar & Gicquel*, FRAC Basse-Normandie, Caen; *Daniel Dewar & Grégory Gicquel*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (both in 2007); *Hazelnut Cottage*, Galerie Loevenbuck, Paris; *Strike a pose*, VCA Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Melbourne, Australia; *Ukiyo – E*, FRAC Pays de la Loire, Carquefou (all in 2006). Selected group exhibitions include *Dynasty*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris; *Unto This Last*, Raven Row, London; *Bambaataa*, Aliceday, Brussels (all in 2010); *Sculptures*, Delaury & Aboulker, Paris; *La Force de l'Art 02*, Grand Palais, Paris; *Pragmatismus & Romantismus*, Fondation d'Entreprise Ricard, Paris (all in 2009). Both studied at Ecole Régionale des Beaux Arts de Rennes, graduating in 2000.

Ane Hjort Guttu

Born 1971 in Oslo (Norway).
Lives and works in Oslo (Norway).

Recent solo shows and projects include *Looking is Political,* Bergen Kunsthall (2009) and *New Works,* Young Artists' Society, Oslo (2007). Selected group shows include *Europe to the power of n*, Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig (2011, forthcoming); Kleisthaus, Berlin (2009) and *Modern Art,* Henie-Onstad Art Centre; (2008). Guttu studied at the Trondheim Art Academy, Hochschule der Künste, Berlin and National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo. She is presently a research fellow at the National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo.

Hedwig Houben

Born 1983 in Boxtel (The Netherlands).
Lives and works in Brussels (Belgium).

Recent performances include Theater Aan Zee, Oostende, theater/performance festival; *It's Not A Contest*, OPEN, Düsseldorf; *Who Stole the Tarts?* TENT, Rotterdam; *Overzicht Tentoonstelling*, project together with Galerie Gallery at Kunstvlaai, Amsterdam (all 2010). Group shows include Gasthoven, Aarschot; *100 × 100*, Zwervende Tentoonstelling #15, Rotterdam; *Déjà vu*, Fabriek, Eindhoven; *Pleasure Ground*, Lokaal 01, Breda (all 2010). Houben studied at the Art Academy St. Joost, Breda, Art Academy Düsseldorf and is currently at the Higher Institute for Fine Arts Flanders (HISK), Ghent.

Teppei Kaneuji

Born 1978 in Osaka (Japan).
Lives and works in Kyoto (Japan).

Solo exhibitions include *Post — Something*, ShugoArts, Tokyo (2010); *Melting City / Empty Forest*, Yokohama Museum of Art (2009); *TEAM 10 Ghost In The City Lights*, Tokyo Wonder Site, Tokyo (2008); Kodama Gallery, Tokyo and Osaka; *splash & flake*, Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art (Museum Studio), Hiroshima (all 2007); *splash and flakes*, Kodama Gallery, Osaka; *liquid collage*, TAKEFLOOR, Tokyo; *phenomenon*, Kodama Gallery, Tokyo (all 2006). Group shows include *Unraveling and Revealing*, Museum Of Contemporary Art Tokyo (2008); *Exhibition as media*, Kobe Art Village Center, Hyogo; *VOCA 2007*, The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo; *Beautiful New World: Contemporary Visual Culture from Japan,* Long March Space, Inter Arts Center, TOKYO GALLERY+BTAP, Beijing/Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhon; *ALLLOOKSAME?/ TUTTTUGUALE?: Arte Cina Giappone Corea Arte*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; *All About Laughter: Humor in Contemporary Art*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (all 2007). Kaneuji studied at Kyoto City University of Arts, completing his MA in 2003 and spent a year at the Royal Collage of Art, London.

Edgar Leciejewski

Born 1977 in East-Berlin (Germany).
Lives and works in Leipzig (Germany).

Recent solo exhibitions include *NYC Ghosts and Flowers*, Schlechtriem Brothers, Berlin; *The ocean is not wireless*, Lumen, Budapest (both 2011); *Dine & Dash*, Spinnerei archiv massiv, Leipzig; *Himmel ohne Wolken*, Galerie Leuenroth, Frankfurt am Main; *Kongestion*, Parrotta Project Space Berlin; *Congestion*, Gallery Fred, Leipzig (all 2009); *Schwarzenberg #21*, C01, London; *Schwarzenberg*, Spinnerei archiv massiv, Leipzig (both 2008); *Man muss sich selbst und alle Fragen überschreiten können*, Galerie HafenRand, Hamburg (2007); *At Photography*, Spinnerei archiv massiv, Leipzig (2006). Group exhibitions include *Leipzig. Fotografie seit 1839*, Museum der bildenden Künste, Leipzig (forthcoming 2011); *Open Files*, Black Door, Istanbul; *An Act of Mischievous Misreadings*, ISCP New York; *Exhibition #05 — GATHERING — landscape and abstraction*, BES arte, Lisboa; *ANTIGRAV — Figuren des Schwebbens und Schwindelns*, Galerie Parrotta, Stuttgart (all 2010); *60/40/20 Kunst in Leipzig seit 1949*, Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig; *+10*, Columbus Art Foundation, Leipzig; *Pete and Repeat*, Projektspace 176, London (all 2009); *Close the Gap # 3*, UBS Zürich und Schloß Wolfsberg, CH; *Close the Gap # 2,* Stadtgallerie Kiel (both 2008); *Wasser! Fort! Au! Hilfe! Schön! Nicht!* Bieberhaus, Hamburg (2007); *The Roof*, Galerie Kleindienst, Leipzig (2006). Leciejewski studied at the Academy of Visual Arts Leipzig, graduating in 2009.

Rita McBride

Born 1960 in Des Moines (USA).
Lives and works in Rome (Italy) and Düsseldorf (Germany).

Recent solo exhibitions include *Previously*, Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Swtizerland; *Way Out East*, Konrad Fischer Galerie Berlin; *Profili*, Galerie Alfonso Artiaco, Naples (all 2010); *Blindsided and Divided*, Mai 36 Galerie, Zürich; *New Markers*, Alexander and Bonin, New York (both 2009); *Public Works*, Musuem Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach; *Settlers*, Galeria Pedro Oliveira, Porto (both 2008); *HEX.PRO.JIG.*, Annemarie Verna Galerie, Zürich (2006); *Exhibition*, The Sculpture Center, Long Island City, NY; *No Fixed Address*, Artspeak, Vancouver (all 2004); *General Growth*, Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne; *Naked Came the Stranger*, Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz (both 2002); *472 New Positions*, De Pont, Tilburg (2001); *Werkshow*, Kunsthalle Baden-Baden; *Secession Tower*, Wiener Secession, Vienna (both 2000).

Group exhibitions include *Zidovi na Ulici/Walls in the Street*, Musej savramene umetnosti Beograd, Belgrade (2008); *The World as a Stage*, Tate Modern, London (2007); *Farsites/ Sitios Distantes*, San Diego Museum of Art; Centro Cultural Tijuana CECUT (2005); *Micro-Utopias*, Bienal de Valencia, Spain; *Living Inside the Grid*, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (both 2003); 2002 Taipei Biennial, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan (2002); *Archisculptures*, Kunstverein Hannover (2001); *Over the Edges: The Corners of Ghent,* Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent (2000). Rita McBride received her BA from Bard College, Annandale-on Hudson, NY in 1982 and her MFA from California Institute of the Arts, Valencia in 1987. She is currently engaged in a 52 meter high public sculpture made of carbon fiber tubes in Munich, entitled *Mae West*. Upcoming Museum exhibitions include Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona MACBA and K20 Kunstsammlung NRW, Düsseldorf (both 2012). McBride is a professor at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

William J. O'Brien

Born 1975 Eastlake, Ohio (USA).
Lives and works in Chicago (USA).

Recent solo exhibitions include Shane Campbell Gallery, Oak Park (2010); Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Detroit; Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York (both 2009); *The Axis Mundi*, Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago (2007); *When Your Heart Is on Fire, Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, Locust Projects, Miami (2006); *12 × 12, New Artists, New Work*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; *A Fairy Tale,* Ingalls and Associates, Miami (both 2005). Selected group exhibitions include *Mystic Visage*, World Class Boxing, Miami; *At Home/Not Home: Works from the Collection of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg*, CCS Bard, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York (both 2010); *Selected Works from the MCA Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; *An Expanded Field of Possibilities*, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara; *Reskilling*, Western Front Exhibitions, Vancouver, Canada (all 2009); *Now You See It*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2008); *So Wrong, I'm Right,* Blum & Poe, Los Angeles; *Stuff: International Contemporary Art from the Collection of Burt Aaron*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit (both 2007). O'Brien received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2005 and his BA from Loyola University Chicago.

Eva Rothschild

Born in 1971 in Dublin (Ireland).
Lives and works in London (UK).

Forthcoming solo projects include the inaugural exhibition of Britain's new Hepworth Museum, Wakefield, UK; and *Empire*, Public Art Fund, New York (both Spring 2011). Recent solo exhibitions include *Cold Corners*, Duveens Commission, Tate Britain, London (2009); La Conservera Centro de Arte Contemporaneo, Murcia (2009); Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London (2009); Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich (2009); Tate Britain, London (2008), The Modern Institute, Glasgow (2008); South London Gallery, London (2007); Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin (2005); and Kunsthalle Zurich, Zurich (2004). Eva Rothschild's work has been included the group exhibitions *Un-monumental: Falling to Pieces in the 21st Century*, curated by Richard Flood, Laura Hoptman and Massimiliano Gioni, The New Museum, New York (2007); The Tate Triennial, Tate Britain, London (2006); *The British Art Show*, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2005); and *The Carnegie International*, The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburg (2004). Rothschild greceived her BA (Hons) Fine Art from University of Ulster, Belfast (1993); and MA Fine Art from Goldsmiths College, London (1999).

Hans Schabus

Born 1970 in Watschig (Austria).
Lives and works in Vienna (Austria).

Recent solo shows include *Wohin und Zurück*, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris; *Die Rocky Horror Hansi Show*, Clubblumen, Vienna (both 2010); *Is it the River?*, Zero, Mailand; *Europahaven, Rotterdam, 17 juni 2009*, Futureland Center, Maasvlakte, Rotterdam (both 2009); *Demand and Desire*, Engholm Engelhorn Galerie, Vienna; *Next Time I'm Here I'll Be There*, The Curve – Barbican Art Gallery, London (both 2008); *Deserted Conquest*, SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico (2007). Recent group shows include *More is More*, Centre for Contemporary Art, Torun; 6th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art; *Contemplating the Void*, Guggenheim Museum, New York; *Portscapes*, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (all in 2010); *The Robinson Centrifuge*, Maerz Künstlervereinigung, Linz; *Cui Prodest?,* New Galerie de France, Paris; *Mostra sul collezionismo siciliano pubblico e privato*, Museo d'arte contemporanea della Sicilia, Palermo; *The Kaleidoscopic Eye. TBA Contemporary Collection*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; *I repeat myself when under stress*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit (all in 2009). Schabus studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Koki Tanaka

Born 1975 in Tochigi (Japan).
Lives and works in Los Angeles (USA).

Recent solo exhibitions include *Nothing related, but something could be associated*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; *Random Hours, Several Locations*, YYZ Artist's Outlet, Toronto (both 2010); *on a day to day basis*, Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou, China; *Simple Gesture and Temporary Sculpture*, AOYAMA MEGURO, Tokyo (both 2009); *Turning the Lights on*, Centre A, Vancouver; *Setting up and Taking down*, Module, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (both 2007). Selected group shows include *A Rock That Was Taught It Was A Bird*, Artspace, Auckland (2010); *Circus Hein*, FRAC Centre, Orléans, Atelier Calder, Saché, France; *EMPORIUM – A New Common Sense of Space*, Museo della Scienza e della Tecnica Leonardo Da Vinci, Milan; *Just Around the Corner*, Arrow Factory, Beijing; *Who's Exhibition is This?* Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan (2009); *Platform Seoul 2008: I have nothing to say and I am saying it*, Samuso, Seoul; The 7th Gwangju Biennale, *Annual Report: A Year in Exhibitions*, Gwangju, Korea (all 2008); *All about Laughter: Humor in Contemporary Art*, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2007). Tanaka studied at Tokyo Zokei University (1998). He graduated with MFA from Tokyo University of the Arts, Japan (2005) and then was Artist in Residence at Le Pavillon, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2005-2006).

Colophon

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Editor
Zoë Gray

Contributors
Gavin Delahunty
Zoë Gray
Alice Motard
Yoshiko Nagai
Solveig Østvebø

Production
Zoë Gray, Amira Gad

Proofreading
Monika Szewczyk

Graphic Design
deValence, Paris

Images
Bob Goedewaagen

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Witte de With Staff

Director
Nicolaus Schafhausen

Deputy Director
Paul van Gennip

Business Coordinator
Belinda Hak

Curators
Juan A. Gaitán, Zoë Gray

Junior Curator
Anne-Claire Schmitz

Assistant Curator
Amira Gad

Education curator
Renée Freriks

Publications
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PR and Communication
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Karel Schampers,
Yao-Hua Tan

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making is thinking