

There's something rigidly predictable about publications. Magazines, books, journals and newspapers are fixed in form and concept, whether because of the superintended curation of content or the unalterable form of bound pages. How do we subvert this?



UNKNOWN QUANTITIES #7

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Contributors

Rachael Allen
Ana Helena Arévalo
Ayaba Arówólo
Jesse T Coburn
Federico Federici
A Mattson Gallagher
Shelby Guergis
Elias Hanzer
Matthew Kay
Dom Kesterton
Sean Kinson
Process Studio
Slanted House
Studio Moniker
Tita Marr

There's something rigidly predictable about publications. Magazines, books, journals and newspapers are fixed in form and concept, whether because of the superintended curation of content or the unalterable form of bound pages. How do we subvert this?

Driven by this enquiry and inspired by the notion of fluidity in all its iterations – fluidity of process, of identity, of thought, of motive – we present *Unknown Quantities 7*, a publication that expands the solid realms of publishing itself, through a conceptual model and an eclectic collection of works and articles.

From metaphoric portraiture and generative typography, to plasma physics and contemplative essays, *Unknown Quantities 7* weaves a tapestry of works created by practitioners in varied fields. As the works collide and conspire, the fluency of subject matter is traversed, and the form and functions of a publication are probed.

We invite you to rethink the boundaries of this publication – to dismantle and reassemble it – as a way of finding your own inter-relations and connections.

Unknown Quantities is a collaborative journal conceived between students and staff of MA Culture, Criticism and Curation and MA Graphic Communication Design at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London

Edited and designed by
Lily Abram
Ayaba Arówòlò
Ioli Athanasopoulou
Francesco Cordola
Francesca Forty
Johanna Hammer
Sean Kinson
Aylea Skye

Special thanks
Alison Green, Rebecca Ross,
Stephen Barrett, Nick Kimberley,
Lucy Maria, Michael Stevens,
Ander Cia, Shay Rickles-McGreal,
Margaret Sweeney

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THE NON-ESSAY AS ANARCHIC TOOLBOX

Ana Helena Arévalo

Among the myriad consequences of the prevailing sociopolitical, economic and cultural turmoil inherent in our postmodern condition lies the ever-growing need for the radical (re)definition¹ of *all* governing structures and established systems. This extends to the field of museology and thus to museological, curatorial and taxonomical systems that determine and regulate repositories. All the spaces that house knowledge and cultural heritage, including museums, libraries and archives, ultimately are subject to some sort of confinement. In the case of the repository, the notion of confinement is fundamentally embedded within the concept itself – at etymological, structural, and institutional levels equally – as repositories are understood as “a place, building, or receptacle where things are or may be stored.” Whether it is a modest local museum’s storage unit or the National Archives, repositories were essentially conceived as containers that can vary dramatically in volume, dimension, orientation, organisation and/or objective, but which remain merely as containers nonetheless.

This role as container then suggests a fixed state of *containment* and finitude; the end of a journey. A space of display where decontextualised *things* are reluctantly bound to stand still in perpetuity on marble pedestals, in crystal cabinets and within gilded frames. A space which culminates in the formulation of *passive* states of *reverence* and *contemplation* – mediated by static silences, divine stares and sublime ambiances – which ultimately mandate the death of the object, as it strips it clean from everything and everyone it was ever

conceived for. *Containment* inevitably results in *confinement*²; in the material, physical, economic, institutional and/or cultural confinement of artworks, artefacts and printed matter, and of academics, practitioners and administrators alike, within set institutional systems that respond to predetermined imperatives and set agendas.

Nevertheless, the container – as the vessel – can exist *both* as a passive and active space simultaneously. It is the end of the journey by all means, but it is also able to become a journey within itself. The nature of said containment is not fixed but it is rather continuously in flux – expanding and contracting – in a perpetual dance between the macro and micro, the universal and the specific, and the planetary and the molecular. These established boundaries and peripheries offer infinite realms of possibilities for (re)consideration, and the limits and constraints of all forms of confinement then come as potential productive opportunities for (re)expansion and critical reassessment.

One of the earliest forms of the repository as established institution – and of its understanding as a potential productive space – can be pinpointed to Hellenistic times, with the Museion (or Musaeum) at Alexandria; an architectural and cultural complex dedicated to the Nine Muses, a meeting point of sorts; a university, library and archive concurrently. The Museion was conceived as a repository of *all* knowledge, but also as an *active* place of dialogue, conversation and exchange, which brought together the greatest minds of the time.

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As centuries went by and new continents were discovered, conquering/collecting became interchangeable activities, as the expansion of territories ultimately led to the expansion of collections. There was a massive influx of artworks, artefacts, printed matter and *souvenirs* from these newly *discovered* territories, which not only led to the creation of new spaces that could house them, but ultimately to the foundation of places specifically designated and dedicated to their display. Initially, the conquering/collecting process consisted solely in the gathering of *all* material without necessarily following set systematic orders per se, but rather instinctively gathering for the sake of gathering. This fascination-turned-obsession with conquering/collecting was only fuelled by the growing, burning desire of completing a *universal collection* that contained *all* knowledge and culture; a desire that was linked to larger imperatives of power and control. Total³ knowledge comes as a means of Total power, directly at the service of whoever controls it.

A quintessential illustration is that of the case of Christopher Columbus and his illegitimate son Ferdinand's life services to the Spanish Crown. As Christopher sought to discover *terrae incognitae* in an effort to institute the "universal" Spanish Empire, Ferdinand dedicated his life to the creation of a *universal library*, which was to be at the service of said universal empire. He set out to collect all the texts ever produced – including books, codices, manuscripts and scrolls – of every subject, and in every language. There was a clear understanding that controlling all the knowledge and information in the world would, therefore, lead to forms of absolute power. However, Ferdinand Columbus quickly fathomed that simply *gathering* infinite material was rather unproductive if there were no systematic logic or structural order implemented. The value and power of the collection did in fact lie within the material itself, of course, but predominantly within the clusters of knowledge accumulated about said material, and the way(s) this knowledge could then be (re)organised. He commissioned a group of trained scholars, *the readers*, who were to read every single volume in the collection – which is estimated to have reached over 20,000 volumes in a time when printed matter had just begun to emerge – and who would compose comprehensive

abstracts about the content of each volume. All of this newly generated material would then be collected and categorised in a larger [independent] tome, the *Book of Epitomes*, which served as a user's manual for the navigation and understanding of this universal library.

The allure of these *universal* or *Total* collections lies in their inherent logical impossibility, which is bolstered by an almost morbid interest in the process of creation/destruction of micro- and macrocosms. And so the need for the systematic organisation of a collection branches out from this necessity of finding (or fabricating) order within our world of chaos through the constant categorisation and classification of existing material. Order leads to power and control, and so blind obedience to the logic of established systems served as a means of mediating and regulating the way knowledge and culture were to be disseminated, proliferated and assimilated. From these emerging taxonomies then stemmed the *Wunderkammern*⁴ – cabinets of curiosities – encyclopaedic collections dedicated to the display of a wide range of material, including artworks, artefacts, ethnographic rarities, natural wonders, memorabilia, maps and manuscripts. These *containers* come as primitive manifestations of museological

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and curatorial efforts to mediate (re)surfacing narratives present in these collections that, along with the foundational participatory ambitions of the Museion, carried on to inform future forms of museums, libraries and archives, as understood today.

These new spaces required the formulation of specific systems of classification, organisation and categorisation, which would concurrently respond to predetermined canons, taxonomies, historicities and topographies. With the birth of the Modern Museum, the duties and responsibilities inherent in its role as cultural institution were focussed primarily on the modes of display of scientific, historical, artistic and culturally relevant material, and on the preservation, conservation and restoration of its collections – which unavoidably only further reinforced its passive posture. Even if the systems, rules and regulations changed from one institution to the other, everything and everyone that fell under the shadow of the institutional umbrella would ultimately be obscured by some form of confinement, as these constraints branched out to specialised individuals and general audiences, just as much as all outputs, extensions and adjacent fields.

There is a myriad of *historical* references to cases where individuals have reacted to these various forms of unproductive containment emanating from material possibilities, physical restrictions, economic constraints, institutional parameters, and cultural confinement. Aby Warburg, for instance, reacted to the taxonomical constraints ingrained in the fixed nature of the display of books on a shelf, with the organisation of his *Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg* – a private library dedicated to the field of cultural studies – located in a small rotunda in his own home. The bookshelves followed the circular path of the rotunda, suggesting that there was no beginning or end. He believed that the (re)organisation of books on a shelf could potentially lead to new clusters and constellations of knowledge, and so he would continuously (re)organise the books in his collection, while simultaneously producing and recording these alternative forms of content. Similarly, André Malraux addressed the physical possibilities (and impossibilities) for a museum to house infinite collections, which encompassed every single artwork

and artefact in the world, and so his *Musée Imaginaire* comes as a result of said predicament. He curated *fluid* exhibitions, consisting of black and white photographic reproductions of artworks and artefacts, carefully arranged and displayed on his living room floor. This imaginary museum, a museum "without walls", a museum that would exist in each individual's mind, showcased collections without boundaries. He embraced this fluidity and acknowledged the *physical* impossibility of a Total collection as such, so he proposed an alternative space for these to come about that would break with any terrestrial constraints: each spectator's imagination, that is. In both cases there was a clear rejection of established parameters, which inevitably resulted in these moments of productive reaction and interaction.

With the rise of the "avant-garde museum", we find a model that rejected established Modernist ideals, and which adopted critical postmodern (and/or post-structuralist) positions that allowed for the critique of institutional systems. However, the open and direct reaction against institutional parameters was broadly absorbed as medium, practice, framework, field of research and/or line of inquiry. Instances of confinement resulted in a productive opposition to the governing states of veneration and contemplation, as repositories – and their museological, curatorial and taxonomical conditions – were pushed towards their radical (re) definition as *active* places for *participation*.

The expansion of fields called for the (re)evaluation of practices and disciplines, as individuals carried on to take new functions, simultaneously acting as academic/practitioner/administrator, with the emergence of roles such as artist-archaeologist, archivist-curator, designer-editor, researcher-performer, critic-collector, dealer-historian, among so many other possible combinations. Consequently, the new media and outputs that resulted from these fusions – along with the spaces that now housed them – replicated these composite qualities, and paved the way for a plethora of alternative forms to come about.

There is an incredible amount of examples that best illustrate these intersections, some of which would be crucial to mention: Aby Warburg, *Mnemosyne Atlas*; Marcel Broodthaers, *Musée d'Art Moderne*; Robert

Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*; Andy Warhol, *Raid the Icebox I, with Andy Warhol*; Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicália*; Sonsbeek 71; Artists Meeting for Cultural Change (AMCC), *An Anti-Catalog*; Brian O'Doherty/Patrick Ireland, *Aspen 5+6* (the Minimalism Issue); Daniel Buren, *Affichages Sauvages*; Situationist International, *The World as Labyrinth*; Christian Boltanski and Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Take Me (I'm Yours)*; Anna-Sophie Springer and Etienne Turpin, *Fantasies of the Library*; Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Nano Museum*; Céline Condorelli, *Support Structures*; San Rocco, *Book of Copies*; Kenneth Goldsmith, *Printing out the Internet*; Mishka Henner, *ABCEUM*; Katie Paterson, *Future Library*; Curatorial Research Bureau; Markus Miessen, *Hans Ulrich Obrist Archive*.⁵

The (re)organisation of already-existing knowledge and culture often culminates in *new* forms of knowledge and culture altogether; and the (re)consideration of established institutions can, thus, lead to alternative forms of institutions and institutional systems – forms and systems that are able to respond to a wider range of themes, imperatives, interrogations, and to address larger audiences, contexts, cultures and communities. In light of the turbulent nature of the current zeitgeist, now more than ever, repositories can no longer simply be *containers*: spaces of display, of blind obedience and compliance. They are now able to exist as spaces of encounter, dialogue, debate, negotiation, confrontation, exchange, interaction, discourse, critical engagement; as fluctuating spaces that must continuously be challenged and (re) expanded. Repositories have coalesced into all things at once: the container has become the machine, and confinement its burning fuel.

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1 The prefix (re) suggests fluidity, malleability, flexibility, permeability, adaptability, and open-endedness. In the context of this essay the prefix (re) is positioned in between parenthesis as it responds (and aligns) with the idea that forms of confinement can result in potential productive opportunities for (re)expansion and critical (re)assessment [of the sources of said confinement]. This does not necessarily aim for the permanent dilution of existing systems, structures, and institutions, but rather – through process of (re)formation, (re)construction, (re) configuration, (re)recombination, (re)adjustment, (re) contextualisation, (re)adaptation, (re)evaluation – in the adaptation of these established forms to current sociopolitical, economic, and cultural imperatives. Said (re)assessment could consequently lead to the emergence of new, independent and/or alternative forms, but these could/would exist metabolically alongside established ones within the current living institutional ecosystem.

2 It is crucial to clarify that all forms of confinement (material, physical, economic, institutional and cultural) can/could materialise at all levels (*both* macro and micro, universal and specific, planetary and molecular): from deep-rooted institutional frameworks, to the system of classification in an archive, the way books

are organised on a shelf in a library, or even the layout and typefaces of a specific book. That is to say that in the context of this essay the term *confinement* is utilised in its most open of definitions, so that it encompasses all forms and levels; and concurrently, the (re)expansion and critical (re)assessment embrace and include all forms and levels.

3 Total as in absolute, infinite, and all-encompassing.

4 The concept of *Wunderkammer*, along with the notions of art spaces and cultural confinement, were further expanded in an essay previously commissioned by the editors of *Unknown Quantities 6*, which expanded the notions of space/place. (Refer to *Wunderweltraum*; aharevalo.com)

5 I have included these references without following any set order or hierarchy, simply for the purpose of giving a brief insight into what these potential intersections might/could be. It is only a quick glimpse into the infinite realms of possibilities, especially today, in a time when these limits and boundaries have (almost fashionably) been pushed to the extreme. I invite the reader to review these with a critical eye, and to consider this list as merely illustrative *hors d'œuvres*.

Brief

Break a confined structure of your choice into its foundational pieces.

List all possible alternative forms as potential productive opportunities.

(Re)assemble your newly (re)expanded and critically (re)assessed structure back from the pieces.

Post-
Anti-
Trans-
Auto-
Inter-
Self-
Neo-
Pseudo-
Multi-
Meta-
Pluri-
Re-
Co-
Ante-
Ex-
Hyper-
Extra-
Intra-
Omni-
Pre-
Post-
Un-
Semi-
Non-
...

Repository
Institution
Museum
Library
Archive
University
Academy
Collection
Exhibition
Catalogue
Record
Database
Publication
Wall
Shelf
Vitrine
Frame
Plinth
Pedestal
Page
Margin
Archival box
Classroom
Panel
Website
Map
Document
Monument
Sketchbook
Essay
Article
...

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Alternative
Speculative
Future
DIY
Experimental
Fluid
Radical
Anarchic
Open
Guerrilla
Strategic
Pop-Up
Infinite
Unreal
Occult
Labyrinthine
Serpentine
Circular
Hyperbolic
Nomadic
Parasitic
Constellatory
Critical
Collaborative
Collective
Eclectic
Provisional
Insubordinate
Didactic
À-la-carte
Multifarious
Heuristic
Mnemonic
Metabolic
Organic
Shambolic
Planetary
Molecular
Incendiary
Ubiquitous
Agentic
Horizontal
Incomplete
Reorganised
Prolific
Encyclopaedic
Ad hoc
Total*
...

Platform
Organism
Ecosystem
Site (of conflict, conversation, protest, negotiation, dialogue, exchange)
Manifesto
School
School of thought
Reading room
Roundtable
Amphitheatre
Stage
Frame of reference
Support structure
Island
Extension
Curriculum
Brief
Collection
Bookshelf
Interface
Diagram
Resource
Process
Attitude
Form
Garden
Labyrinth
Forking path
Dinner Party
Ritual
Performance
Constellation
Satellite
Laboratory
Toolbox
Hors d'oeuvres
Cathedral / Bazaar
Atlas
Terra Incognita
Axis
Contact zone
Intersection
Junction
System
Trajectory
Boundary
Periphery
Limit
Taxonomy
Ontology
Ecology
Imaginary
...

Endnote

When I was first approached by the editors of *Unknown Quantities* to contribute with an essay on the [open] theme of fluidity, I immediately felt that the parameters of the traditional essay format were too *finite* and concrete, for a topic that embodies quite the opposite. This contribution comes as a moment of self-reflection. It does not attempt to address specific questions or give final answers, but rather comes as point of departure into a greater inquiry into the field(s) of museology, curation, institutional critique and critical publishing. *Because* it is a starting point, it is only fair that the format of the contribution mirrors the open-endedness of any new beginning, in the form of a [Total] brief of sorts, which embraces its foundational impossibility with open arms. And so I offer the reader a non-essay as anarchic toolbox, a pseudo-brief as guerrilla manifesto, and an incomplete article as DIY frame of reference.

Ana Helena Arévalo is a Venezuelan art historian, writer, and design researcher currently living and working in London. Her research/practice often meets at the intersection(s) between museology and the curatorial, cultural criticism and speculative fiction, and editorial design and publishing.

In 2017, she obtained a BFA in Art History, Theory, and Criticism from Paris College of Art. In 2019, she obtained an MA in Graphic Communication Design from Central Saint Martins. Her work has been published in various publications and academic journals, most recently *Unknown Quantities* 6, *CARMA Journal*, *Utca es Karrier* and *Stedelijk Studies*.

MULTIFLORA

Rachael Allen

Rachael Allen

Was held stationary on the aqueduct
near the snakeskin hanging from the bridge
thrown up by kids. And on the other side of the ridge
a collision of wasps from somewhere in the growth.
Swimming upstream, insects parch my body.

The day is an oven. I float outwards
in a concentric circle. I will know the pattern of your knee.
I sit by the river and envisage our children.
My ankles give way to other thoughts,
thoughts about stealing, objectify me.

THE GIRLS OF SITUATIONS

Rachael Allen

History holds the incorrect theories of the sea and how they don't fall off the land, made up by men. Small clouds align. Theories of worship. Women's bodies collect material the way metals accrue in organs. The accumulation of chemical residue, the red bricks of the day in a woman's chest like weights on a diver ungracefully stomping into the lake.

Behind me, a genealogy of red-cheeked maids in maroon-check pinafores. Not a hair out of place, no boarding school narrative, babies shooting from them, straightening beds, nursing while smoking, in labour with rosacea burns, hairs on their breasts wet with the strain. From them I have taken yellow hands and knees, arthritic from kneeling to scrub.

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Rachael Allen

The man he tells you he is not tells you to get an abortion. I live in skirt-behaviours round the social club, where men and cheap beer will spin you till you're sick. Governance is bountiful other than for the young girl who swims out to sea for her reckless behaviour. I make my face white and orange for the jewellery I expect to own. A mimic octopus might be many things but it cannot mimic me.

I stayed with a man after work who kept tarantulas in the loft space. I had on my mint deli uniform and my face was grey. I cut cheese all day long and ham on an industrial slicer. I didn't want to see the bastard black legs of the largest tarantula, he called it King, it slept in a plastic container with air holes at the top

and my protests were nothing down the rattling metal pull-down stairs where he came with the wobbling box in hand, how sad it actually was to see the spider uselessly point his legs in the air as if to sense a threat in this house with a Disney princess quilt and frieze for his six-year-old daughter who stays each Saturday, we don't talk about her, he hides the spiders when she comes around, I am not enough to have them hidden for, the blanket of my apron is a pouch for King and in the dirt of his kitchen I would like to go home.

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Rachael Allen

We chew processed meat in the grand old hall, my hand on a gilded bannister. Above a musical washboard, they hang like ceramic angels, faces chipped, hands chipped with warts from galvanised steel and other kitchenalia.

My mother folding tumble dryer tubes next to the sleeping baby while detergent wends through her arteria, replicating in the blood and gathering as a bright yellow crud in the historical river, brown toxins shared down the gene pool.

Too young to work, but still changing beds in the early hours
for a holiday cottage foaming at the mouth for a future unten-
able, stealing biscuits from a tin. A lousy future that taunts
itself on the end of a string, composting from the inside out
like a Halloween pumpkin gone bad. I will ask my mother to
push me through the ivory gates. I will raid the box of cou-
pons for an answer. Lost to the coins kept in the Steradent tin.
I will steal from my own mother to make myself feel richer,
and smoke her old cigarettes to make myself sicker, become
impregnated with ideas and resist her own impregnation, cut
anything out of me that starts to grow in there.

Up the chimney and towards the field, a stark bright woman in
glowering dusk wears blinding white, and like a fish she sheds
herself, and in her hand, she holds something small, ungrip-
pable.

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Rachael Allen

Rachael Allen's first collection of poems is *Kingdomland*, published by Faber & Faber. She is poetry editor for *Granta* magazine and Granta books. She writes for numerous publications, including *ArtReview*, *TANK* magazine and *Music & Literature*. *The Girls of Situations* was partly inspired by the artwork of Vera Iliatova. *Multiflora* was partly inspired by the photography of Oto Gillen. These poems were first published in *Kingdomland*.

the body bilingual/ three poems

Sean Kinson

Sean Kinson

to call this work a love poem
is to reduce it to halves
splitting it hollow like a vessel
or a canon / or another kind of
void with a given name
but devoid of meaning
before becoming a meaning
i was once a Love poem
reduced to halves only
but filled solid like a void
or something with which to fill
a canon / Love is just another
L word that defines a text
in the act of reading
rather than the writing yourself
a symbol / i've been so
many texts / the kind of language
voids that take a body to fill
the kind of body spoken of
like / Love but never like / a poem
like the body bilingual
being a Love poem is being some
thing other than a poem / something
other than a love poem
if you repeat a word enough
it loses meaning / or becomes
meaning / where love is concerned
it can be the same thing
when meaning and being can say
the same thing / ou la même chose
ça peut être la même chose

it can be the same thing
 quand être queer
 n'est jamais être pareil
 when being queer is never
 being the same thing
 ou être pareil / is being a
 love poem / the same thing
 when being a Love poem
 is never being the same thing
 i am something like a text
 quelque chose comme un texte
 but nothing you'd call a language
 because i don't translate / je ne
 fais que devenir / je deviens
 i become / something
 akin to liquid / quelque chose
 qui ressemble à de l'eau
 quelque chose comme / a love poem
 but never a Love poem / comme ça
 j'suis réduit de moitié
 being a Love poem is being
 something other than a poem / some
 thing other than a love poem
 autre chose qu'un poème d'amour
 so many times they told me
 that being love is la même chose
 as being a Love poem
 repeated to glossy mantra
 until meaning and being are the same thing
 fluency is not the deft vocabulary
 nor a sympathetic glossolalia

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Sean Kinson

it's to take a syntax slick
 and keen / and turn it out
 to soft colloquial / à l'inverse imparfait
 it can be knowing the difference
 between words like love / and
 Love / ou quelque chose comme love
 comme amour / comme aimer
 ou un autre type de symbole
 appeler cette oeuvre un poème d'Amour
 c'est le réduire de moitié
 le séparant en deux comme une coquille vide
 ou un canon / ou un autre type de
 vide pourvu de nom
 mais dépourvu de sens
 before becoming a meaning
 j'étais un poème d'amour / like
 you're reduced to halves only
 comme ça tu es le corps bilingue
 like you're the body bilingual
 like you don't translate
 parce que tu ne fais que devenir
 because you only become

'the body bilingual / three poems' is a text that, through the act of linguistic iteration, translates itself into the language of another. It is an embodied metaphor; one that acts itself out in metabolic process, attempting to take on the natural, colloquial essence of its proper inverse. three poems is derived from the Greek etymology that a poem is not only a piece of writing, but a made thing – the first, its English form; the second, its post-English French translation; and the third, the process of imperfect translation itself.

Sean Kinson is a multidisciplinary writer and designer currently based in London. His studio practice is positioned as an antagonisation of the textual ecosystem, situated between experimental writing practice and an expanded definition of publishing. Sean's work addresses the elasticity of meaning and language, interpreted through a lens of embodied knowledge as a queer, transmasculine poet.

He is currently developing his practice on MA Graphic Communication Design at Central Saint Martins, and has previously self-published a body of work under the name of *Glitch Journal*.

SEGMENTATION FAULT: AN INFINITE SET OF QUESTIONS

Jesse T Coburn

Jesse T Coburn

The spatiotemporal nature of fluids has entranced all walks of humanity, whether it be the painter, scientist, or the child that is delighted by an evanescent lion forming in the clouds. These delights led me to pursue a doctoral degree in plasma physics. Plasmas are a state of matter where collective motions of charged particles are governed by electromagnetic fields, including the ones they generate themselves. We often use a set of fluid equations to describe the plasma, so that the dynamics describe a continuum rather than the more complex scenario of individual protons and electrons. While this simplifies the system, solutions to these equations do not exist.

To attempt to better understand natural systems, scientists combine theory and empirical data to answer questions. "Why is water clear? What is the emitted light spectrum of the sun? What is the history of our optical evolution? What is the composition of water? What is the nature of light? What led to the composition of our atmosphere?" The problems that we address are elusive. Satisfying answers often do not exist because there is an infinite number of questions, which are ultimately linked to our perception of the problems and natural systems. Here I address *real data* to exemplify how it can take on many shapes and forms in a charming metaphorical emergence of the nature of fluids.

The measurements in the figures are made by the NASA science spacecraft named *Wind*.¹ The instruments used for recording measurements are an electrostatic analyser, which provides information about charged gases (such as the average velocity) and a fluxgate magnetometer, which measures the magnetic field. The *Wind* spacecraft made transit through interplanetary space near to the Earth before settling to the gravitationally balanced point between the Earth and Sun.

The surface of the Sun heats to inexplicable temperatures, continually casting a charged gas into interplanetary space, blowing out the magnetic field of the sun like a balloon. During transit, the gas makes an Odysseus-like journey of which many fates are possible, such as the aurora of planets, interacting with plasma waves, being energised at boundaries like the Earth's magnetic field or making exodus into interstellar space.

In the figures presented on the following pages I have interpreted the same measurements in three different ways to reveal aspects of the underlying physical processes. Some are raw and simple, and others complex and overflowing with information. There is nothing absolutely quantitative here, only lines and shades of red, but we can begin to understand something about the system as we transform the measurements and reinterpret them.

We seek answers to questions for which we do not have perfect tools: we do not know the exact laws of the universe and often must make approximations based on them to produce something measurable. Our measurements are never exact as nothing can be measured continuously – measurements are always taken at a frequency. How do we know with absolute certainty that what we have measured coincides with the interpretation of the theory? We transform the data and reinterpret it many times, and as we do, one answer leads to the next question, but not in a linear fashion. The process often bifurcates, an emerging property of the fluid system, the fluid nature of the process. Chaos arises.

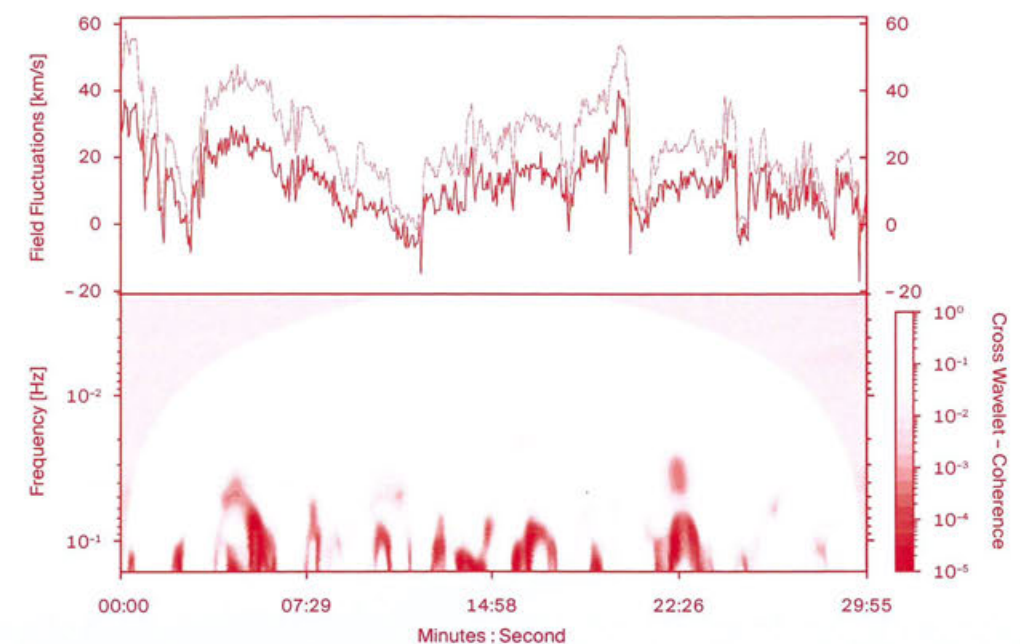
Unknown Quantities 7

Jesse T Coburn

I have procured data from the NASA public database that was measured by the *Wind* spacecraft on day 39, hour 23 of the year 2007, while the spacecraft was orbiting the Sun with the Earth.

Figure 1 provides two measurements. The top panel shows the fluctuations of the velocity field and magnetic field. The data is mundane and seemingly random, but as you begin to follow the lines, you will begin to notice similar trends in the fluctuations. What you are seeing is evidence of a plasma wave: an Alfvén wave. The bottom panel of Figure 1 is the coherence of the cross-wavelet transformed fields. The technique is complicated but simple to understand: the colour represents how alike the fluctuations of the two fields are, bright being perfect and dark being worst. Similar trends can be found on many time scales, which is represented on the vertical axis. Further up the axis we are measuring longer time scales. This is evidence for the plasma Alfvén waves existing on many different time scales. Waves imbedded on each other, forming a spectrum.

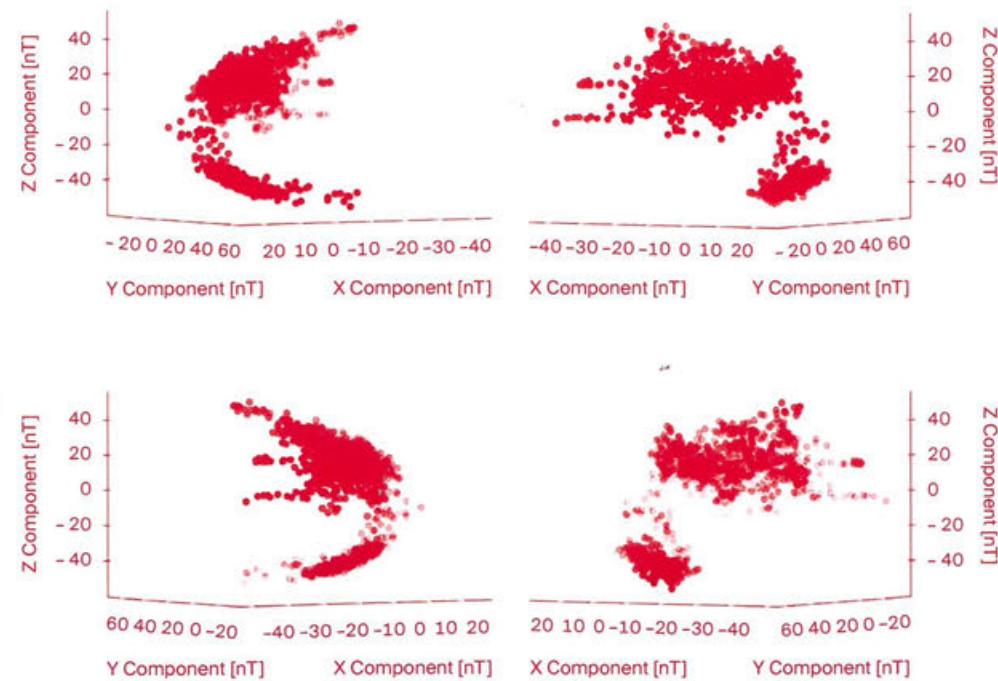
Figure 1



¹ Larson, D. Halekas, J. (no date) WIND 3-D Plasma and Energetic Particle Investigation Home Page. Available at: <http://sprg.ssl.berkeley.edu/wind3dp/> (Accessed: 6 November 2019); Candey, R M. (2019) Coordinated Data Analysis Web (CDAWeb). Available at: https://cdaweb.gsfc.nasa.gov/istp_public/ (Accessed: 6 November 2019).

Figure 2 is again simple, as we see the magnetic field vectors from the time series, but this time they are plotted in a three-dimensional space. What you can notice is that the distance from the central point of the plot is nearly constant for the plotted points. This means the magnetic field vector changes direction but not length. This is a property that the Alfvén wave can have, but it is not required; deeper understanding of the wave needs to be investigated before this property can be understood.

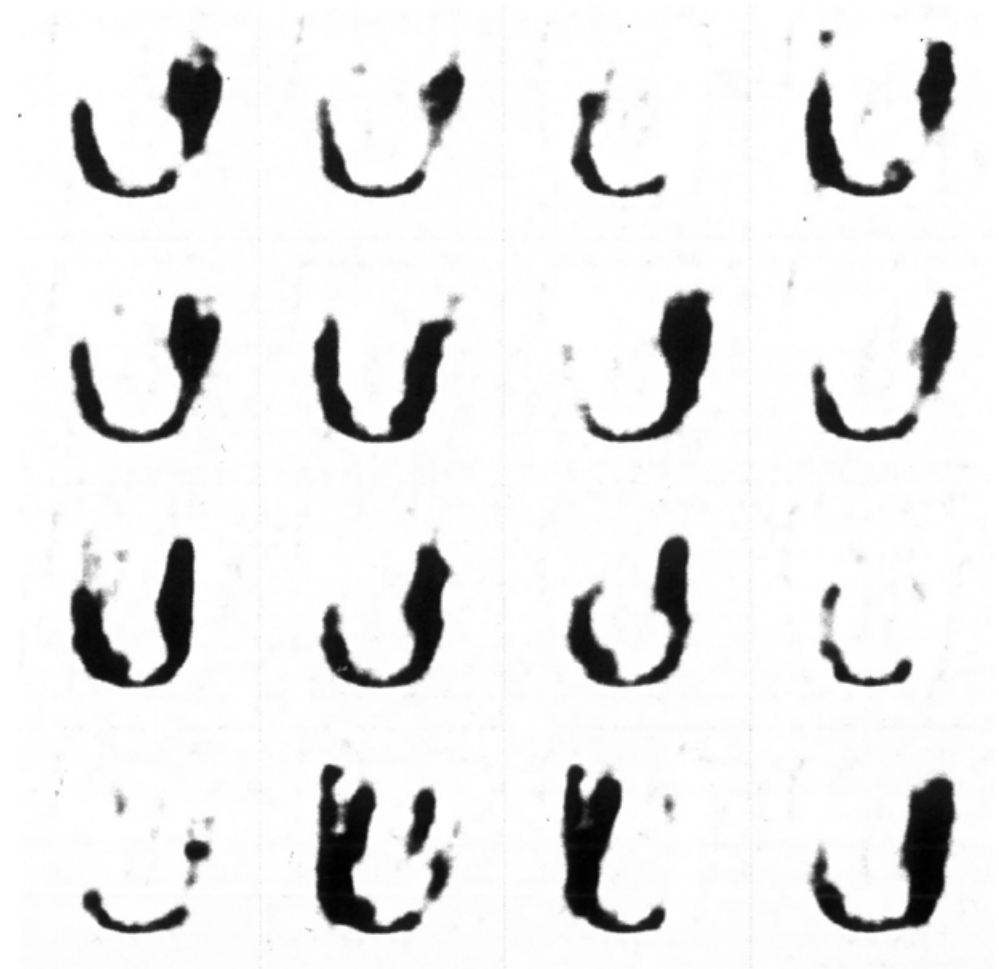
Figure 2



FLUIDITY OF A METHOD

Process Studio
in a Google Doc chat with Johanna Hammer

Process Studio



Process is an experimental design studio based in Vienna, specialising in generative and interactive design and working in the fields of branding, web, installation and print.

Image on cover: *Alfont*

Alfont is an artificial intelligence generated typeface. It generates new typefaces using deep learning, a Deep Convolutional Generative Adversarial Network (DCGAN) and a dataset consisting of more than 200,000 different fonts to generate new ones.

All images by Process Studio
www.process.studio

Unknown Quantities 7

Process Studio

Martin: Hi Jo, here I am. I'll be using this colour.

Johanna: Hi Martin! Let me choose my colour, one sec. Thank you for contributing so much to the format of the interview and by setting it up! So, I was thinking, before we go in depth looking at your answers, would there be any questions you would have for this year's panel of UQ? Or questions about UQ in general? Also – did our parcel arrive? :)

I see also Moritz now! Hi!

Moritz: Hello there, I'll peek in here, too from time to time.

Yes, we got the magazines! They arrived a while ago! Thank you! I didn't have a chance to read into them unfortunately, so I can't say much, other than they look quite good.

Great! Happy to hear they arrived!

I'd love to know how your team is organised. You are a team of volunteers, and your goal is to create the new issue together? Or is it a mandatory thing for you as a student? We quite enjoyed the twist in issue 5, where the glossy cover is actually in the centre of the magazine.

UQ is a joint project between two masters here at Central Saint Martins. It's between MA Culture, Criticism and Curation (CCC) and MA Graphic Communication Design (GCD). The regulations and expectations differ from these two masters though. As GCD students are completely voluntarily involved, for the CCC students it is actually a graded project. About the collaboration: although the constellation of these two teams would suggest a rather conservative division of responsibilities, we actually all engage together on every single aspect of this publication. This is also why I, as a GCD student, have gotten in contact with you and am – let's say – responsible for your contribution. Like that, we also wanted to make the process a little bit more open and – fluid. And about the issue you mentioned – that's also my favourite!

I see. So how big is your team? I can imagine this kind of process can be pretty hard, with many people involved in everything. On the other hand, it's a good chance to try this kind of experiment, which could be very hard to do in a "commercial" project setting.

We're eight people actually. Five from GCD and three from CCC. It can get tricky, as the more we move forward into the project, the denser it becomes, the more questions arise regarding positions and roles. Also, I guess that is because we are getting closer to the finish line, which means taking more concrete decisions and becoming more effective. But I am really excited about the fact that we actually have the chance to shift roles here and take on a rather more confusing setting, compared to a commercial setting – as you said. If you don't have any more questions for now – shall we move back into your answers on here?

We could either stay in this thread, as I think it works quite well, or move back into the paragraphs of your answers. What would be your suggestion?

In the end that's a big realisation, that many interesting projects are just bigger than what a single person can do. This is a topic for us as a studio at the moment. How to build teams and define roles and responsibilities to make something bigger than that which one or two people could achieve. So actually in this sense, with eight people, you have a much bigger project than any one we ever did :)

Yes let's add to the paragraphs, could be interesting! – But more chaotic as well. However you like.

Yes, I guess as (graphic) designers, we do need to redefine and re-evaluate existing systems in order to produce something meaningful in the sense that we can analyse those systems and show problems, issues, etc. The same happened to us when we talked about publishing: what content is lost when one makes concrete decisions on its form as in putting everything in a perfectly edited publication?

Ok let me write underneath your first answer to question 1.

Ok, see you there!

Unknown Quantities 7

Process Studio

1. How do you feel your practice aligns with UQ7's interest in design fluidity? Our team have concentrated their enquiry into fluidity of a method, process, or identity, where the end result is open-ended during its creation. We as editors and designers have drawn our own connections – which lead to us pitching for a contribution from your studio – but are interested to know what you feel your connections are to us. Perhaps you don't see a link at all – which is an interesting connection in itself, since we are now here having this conversation.

Martin: I do connect with the notion of "fluidity of a method". Generative Design can be very fluid. With code we capture and manifest, literally "encode" the essence of the design. The details are, again literally 'variable(s)' – another familiar coding term. The squares in the design can be exchanged with any other shape. The number of elements, their sizes and the arrangement are all immediately variable. This fluidity leads us in the example to turn the squares into 3d-blocks, and finally rendering them as an abstract cityscape. Fluidity is fun, it generates connections and ideas, often arbitrarily. You can go with the flow for some time, see where it leads. The results can be random, so intervention is required. For me it is most interesting to achieve a balance between flow and definite direction.

I like that you elaborated about the processes within Process Studio and the way you go about incorporating technology to lead you to new results, or function as an additional source for inspiration. Could one say therefore that you're actually working in three in your studio? Technology being a third instance in some way – and especially regarding the Alfont – technology literally as another brain/form of intelligence? Or would you say that there is still a clear distinction between the creator and the tool?

You are right, there is a strong focus on technology in our studio. However, technology never stands alone, it's always a product of people and society.

Interesting you say "society". Do you mean that technology can be culturally influenced by the way it's all configured?

Technology, especially software, can be intensely participatory. In software there is a big camp that deals with ethics: how software should be used, so that it's good for society. This leads to the free software (free as in freedom, not price) and the open source movements. Pretty much all of the software tools that we use to programme our graphical systems come from that tradition: processing, three.js etc. Can you explain what you mean with "the way it's all configured"?

... So, one could actually look at the development of those graphical systems you just mentioned also as being somewhat fluid. Open source – allowing kind of everyone to access and also add to existing systems? Yes, let me elaborate. So perhaps putting it as: technology being developed. Developers have their cultural background after all, and it would be interesting if – let's say "Western" technology or even artificial intelligence is based upon values of the "Western" world and if that would influence those newly designed systems.

Oh I see. Yes there is a huge cultural bias in technology I think, especially in AI. In a talk last week I heard on that question the sentence "AI is mainly developed by white dudes in California".

That quote actually is really spot on! But I guess the problem is that we're so immersed in this culture that we don't even see those "White dude in California" parameters. We just take it all for granted.

True. That's why it's important to look at the bigger picture and be aware that technology is not something that exists separately from us, society, culture, but is deeply embedded within. Let's move on to another question, maybe, cause time is running short ;)

Yes! True! Got lost in the process. Perhaps we can close with your last answer, which is the answer to question 4 by looking at the future. I've added another comment just underneath.

Ok sure!

I don't credit the technology with much agency, even AI is quite "dumb" as of yet. It's just a very interesting part of society and culture and being able to work with technology expands your possibilities enormously. There is one aspect with building tools though: they can potentially have a much broader range of effect than originally intended. They can be opened up and given to other people. This is something that we plan to do in the future. Make our tools accessible and open.

I would have a question regarding the first paragraph of your new answer, let me try to comment underneath it? I hope I'm not making it too complicated like that.

No, go for it. Maybe with another indent, as this is the next layer of comment :)

Great input! Will do!

2. How do the creational processes of your work look at the beginning of a project? Do they show a path from concept to a preliminary end result, and additionally – what role do you feel generative design and machine learning play in this process?

Martin: Generative Design is central. Of course, we start the process with an in-depth client brief to get a clear sense of their wants and needs. As any designer I guess, we start thinking of graphical ideas, shapes, colours and so on. Immediately we'll try to organise these ideas in terms of a graphical system, where we imagine rules and relationships that produce the graphics. We sketch these ideas – on paper and in code – and constantly produce with it, iterate and evolve. So, there is this little graphical system, a tailor-made tool that we perform with, like an instrument, while we are building it.

Moritz: Building custom tools allows for an adaptable process and requirements might change throughout the project. While the initial goal might be vaguely defined in the beginning, its concrete end results might differ greatly from first ideas and drafts. Also sometimes our tools can help the client to boil down the (visual) narrative to its essence.

3. How might you describe generative design in relation to graphic media, to someone unfamiliar with the field? Not necessarily someone outside of the creative industries – but who might be unversed in the relationship between visual design and machine learning.

Martin: There's a big temptation to confuse the superficial aspects of Generative Design with its essence. There are certain popular tools that are being used, and often a certain look achieved but I challenge you to look past the tools and the style at the method. In GD, we do not directly design the artefacts, we design a process or system that generates the output. Such a process is naturally expressed in code, but it doesn't have to be. Take a look at [conditionaldesign.org](#) to see what I mean.

Moritz: Think of it as a performative practice rather than a fixed, pre-defined process. Instead of working towards a set goal, you create certain constraints and requirements, define ranges for variation and behavioural patterns that express the project's content. With the "stage" (tool) and the "script" (content) set, you can individually direct "participants" (parameters, adaptable variables), change conditions or fundamentally alter and influence the end result.

Unknown Quantities 7

Process Studio

4. In our current economic climate, there are often discussions surrounding the automation of labour, of generative process and machine learning rendering certain professions obsolete. Do you think it would ever be possible for machine learning to replace the human hand of the designer?

Martin: We've only just recently dabbled in machine learning just for one project and it's always hard to predict the future. But we can look at what happened in the past with new technologies and it becomes clear that roles can dramatically change, if not become obsolete.

In the near future, I think the designer will not be replaced, but the designer's role will be strongly challenged. Certain manual skills will become obsolete as they are automated. Think of photography. A few decades ago, photography was a technically challenging task, requiring practice and knowledge just to produce the picture. This is so different today. Photography is a mass medium, both in terms of production and consumption. So, what is a good picture now? The focus has to shift from the technical aspects to more "high level" ones: composition, concept, content.

Hence, in today's standard tools, machine learning can fill a hole in a photo, match lighting conditions or styles between two pictures. Soon we'll be able to generate realistic pictures just by describing them. I think it's important to look behind the apparent "magic" of the technology. Understand your tools. These algorithms are good at very narrow tasks, they generate based on many examples of what we want them to generate, so the output is statistically similar. They are far from being creative, in the sense that we typically use this expression.

As they lower the skill ceiling, these tools will enable many more people to design, and work in "creative" fields. Some design tasks will become automated. So think hard about what you as graphic designers really bring to the table. What is the essence of what you do? The mastery of tools? A notion of what is a good poster? Ways to communicate ideas?

Moritz: As of today, AI-based processes are still quite narrow and only allow for limited variation on a broader scale. Even though one can end up with results that otherwise would have required a huge time investment, there still is no general artificial intelligence that resembles human ways of understanding or conceptual thinking.

Regarding the role of future designers, a more general view on the process of creating work is required not only relying on already existing tools. In our talks, we stress the notion of us being "driven by ideas rather than tools". That will result in the overlapping of disciplines to a certain degree. In order to create the result one has in mind, visual designers will use code to create custom software – their own tools – too.

Even though you said that those tools would need to be developed, is there already a notion of where it could go tool-wise? Or perhaps do some of these tools already exist?

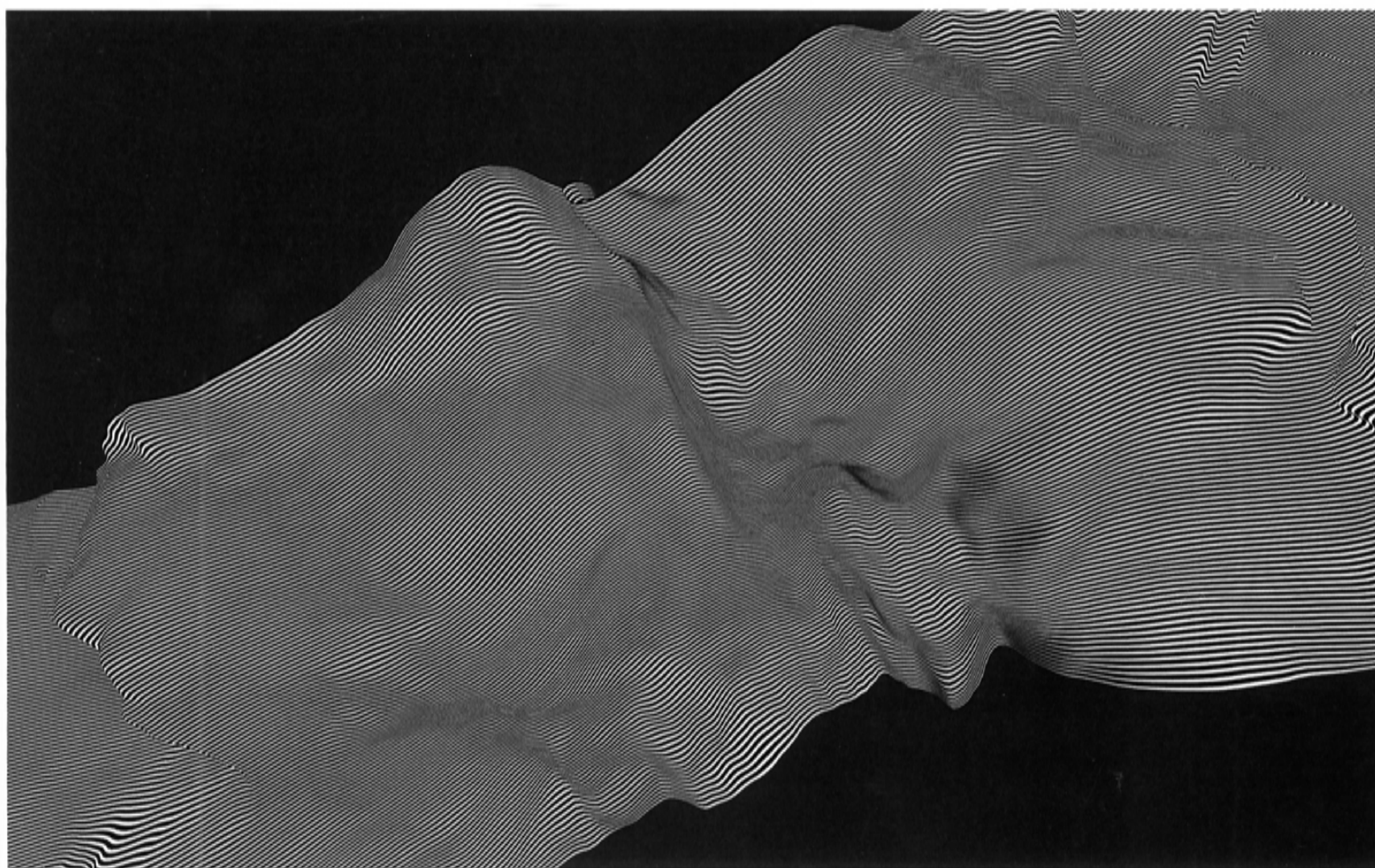
It's more about a way of doing it. Right now we develop graphical systems for our client projects. But later on, and even while we're working on them, we do use them for our own enjoyment, just for curiosity's and creativity's sake. A lot of those B-sides end up on Instagram, as we really don't have a good place for them as of now. So, the question is, how can we open up those little "instruments" to other people as well? We are thinking about what is a good model to do it, and how does it fit into our business. Also for our own "B-side" output, we want to make an online gallery where you can order prints, etc.

I think those are great open-ended questions to close our "fluid" interview here and to leave some inspiration for thoughts! What do you think?

Thanks! Your enthusiasm for the project was tangible and contagious :)

I am very happy to hear! And I must say – Likewise! :) Have a great day!

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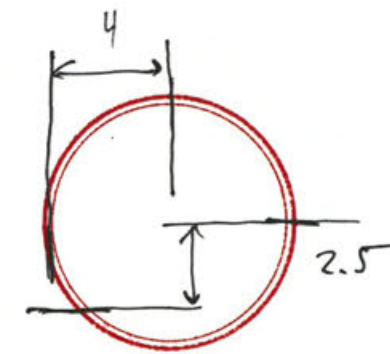


MAKEREADY

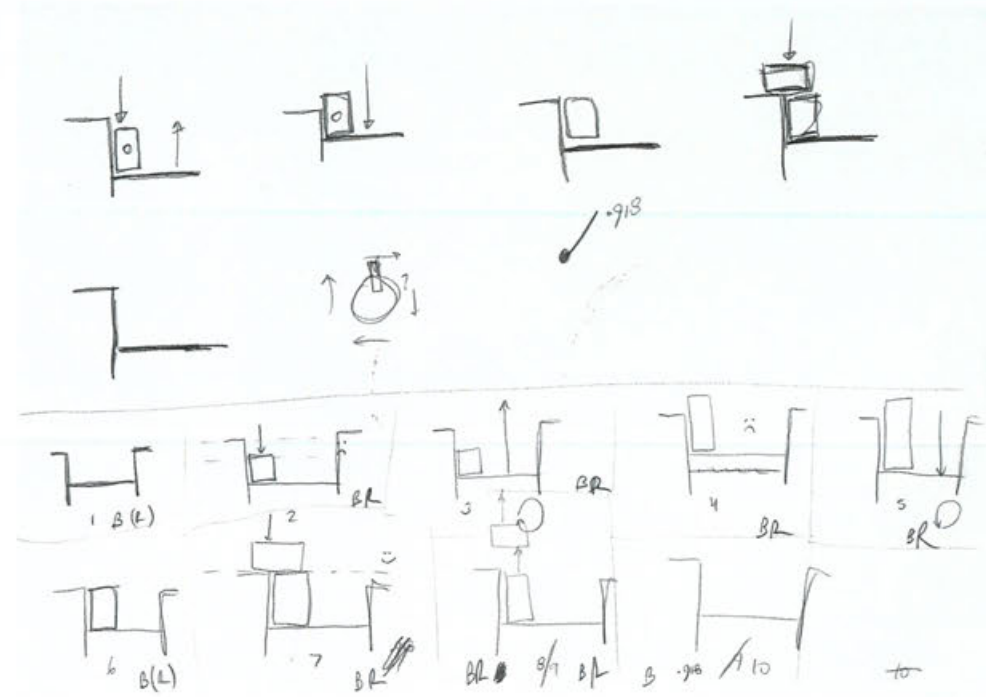
A Mattson Gallagher
in conversation with Francesca Forty

A Mattson Gallagher

← 4 AWAY



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AWAY)



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A Mattson Gallagher

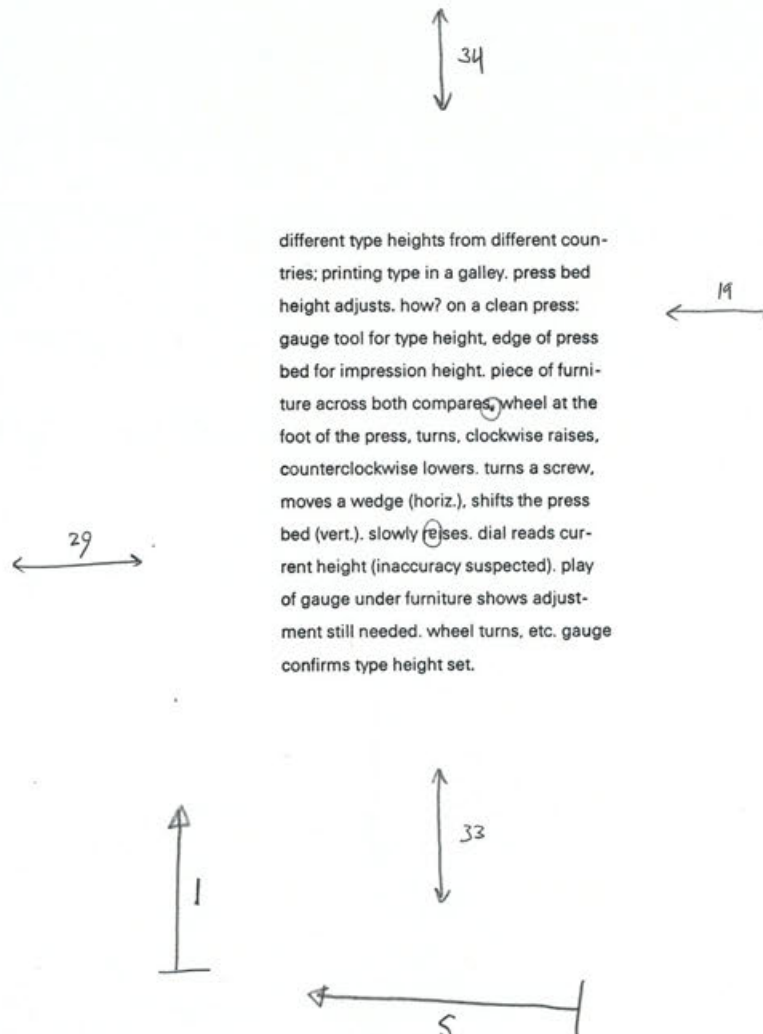
...how important they are in the overall story, but also a sequence...

I think that's compelling, having the sequence. The idea that you're working through something.

There's not a clear chronology; it's often testing several things out at a time. So each one of these is a different thing, rather than each one of them being...

...each one is a different thing? Printed in a different moment?

...a single composition. That's why they're on the same page, they're at different stages. A lot of what's there is not a complete image, but it's printed twice because it's printed on one side and then the registration is wrong, so it's moved over and then printed again.

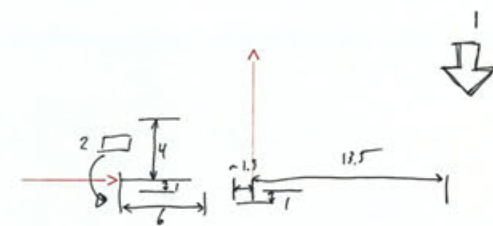


different type heights from different countries; printing type in a galley. press bed height adjusts. how? on a clean press: gauge tool for type height, edge of press bed for impression height. piece of furniture across both compares wheel at the foot of the press, turns, clockwise raises, counterclockwise lowers. turns a screw, moves a wedge (horiz.), shifts the press bed (vert.). slowly rises. dial reads current height (inaccuracy suspected). play of gauge under furniture shows adjustment still needed. wheel turns, etc. gauge confirms type height set.



Unknown Quantities 7

A Mattson Gallagher



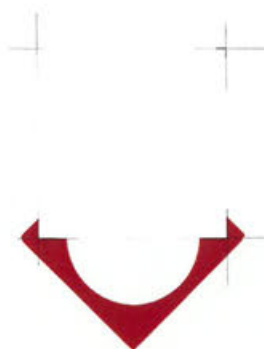
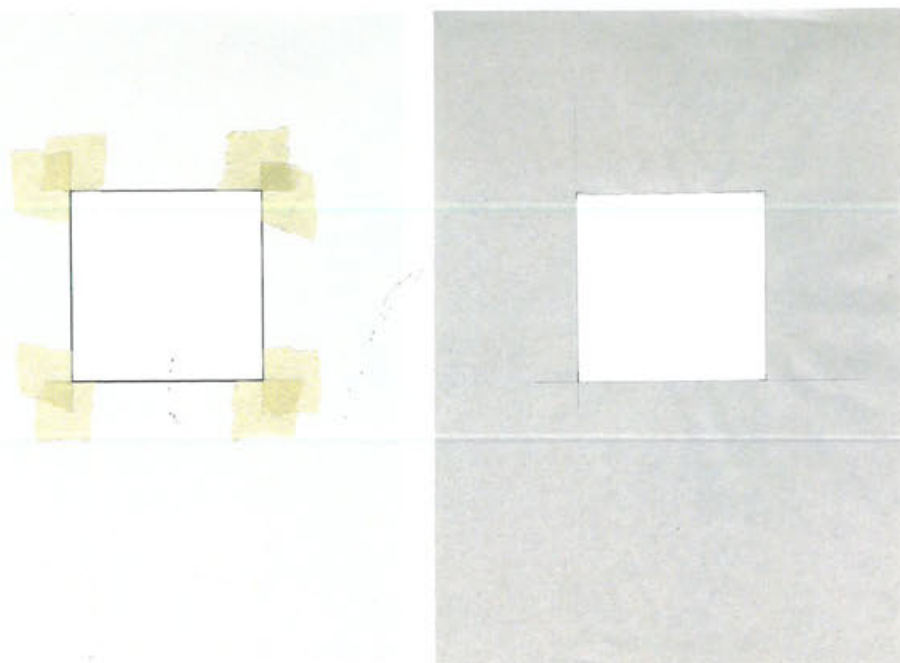
So we're seeing something that lives in time, it's not only there in one moment, but actually it's a progression, a build-up...

I think it's interesting because - here's an example of a finished work - I don't know whether we'd even want to include a finished thing like this... maybe? I didn't even think of it until now, we'll think about it later...

I wonder? Maybe it's better to not show - to withhold it, as it were. Seeing the finished

work alongside does give a sense of where things are going... but it risks becoming too much about the endpoint, not the process.

You need makeready in order to figure out how it's going to be. They're tests of something but they are also pieces, do you know what I mean? If you took all of these different bits and smashed them together, this is what you end up with.



Unknown Quantities 7

A Mattson Gallagher

Could we call it finished?

We can. Or, I guess this is an answer you don't want, but one of the ways of answering that question about these things is to not answer at all. In the sense that this feels finished to me. This on the other hand, finished or unfinished...

Are these terms even useful?

...exactly, because it's makeready. We can say it's finished in the sense that it's done, it's made.

It's come through the press. You're not going to add anything else to it.

Yes, and it's not unfinished... I mean it's finished in that sense, but also unfinished...

I guess language fixes things down in a way. You give things names, you fix them.

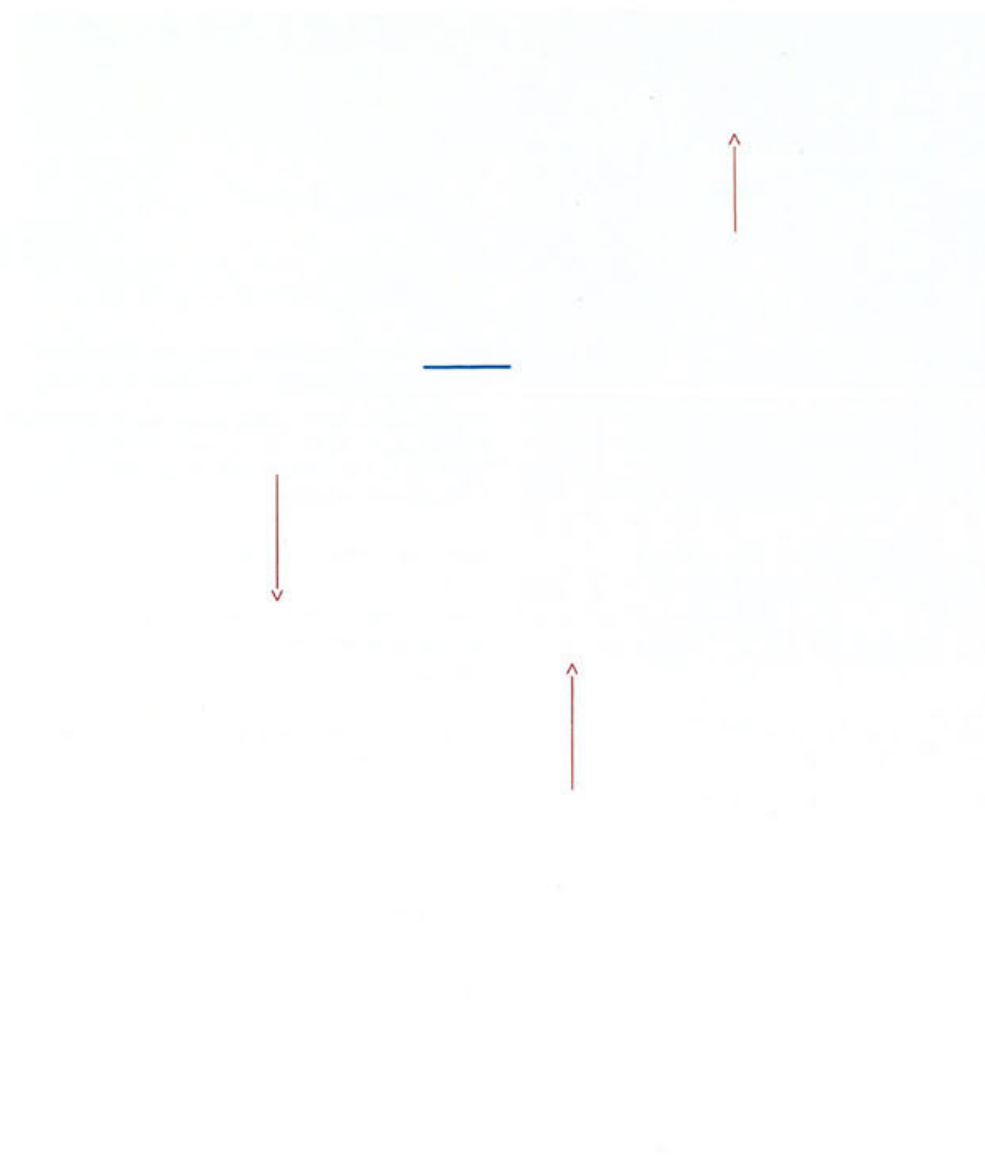
Without that, it can be obscure and abstract, but that's partly why I'm into it. It's not clearly doing something and I've always been interested in things that are not always clearly communicating. One of the things it is offering is mystery. Which is not to say "wonder" – maybe take some of these words out, "wonder" is a word I would never use... but one of the things it does offer is the "what is it?" question.

It's between things, it's about bringing something into another context. How does it fit there?

It's there, it's as it is. It already exists as an object. The idea of the makeready is throughout the whole process; for it to exist as an object, all of this has to happen. So the life of the thing is before or after it...

...and then you're left with the artefacts from in between...

...so it's in the middle of a process of editing. What was it before? Where is it going?



Unknown Quantities 7

*Makeready**
A Mattson Gallagher
2018-19

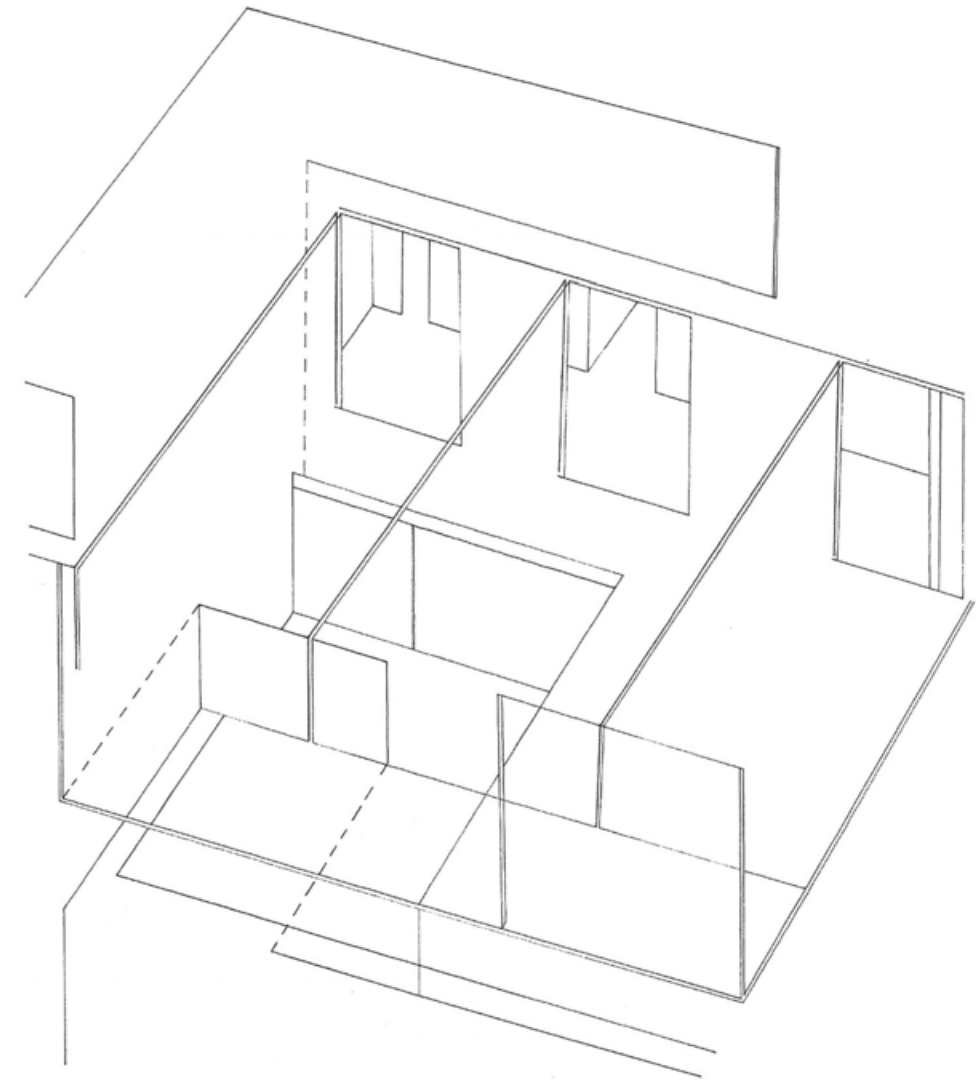
Portfolio of nine prints
Relief, letterpress from wood and metal type,
and brass rule
Various dimensions

*Makeready is the process of preparing a
printing press for a specific job, and includes
making proofs and correcting faults in inking,
registration, type height, pressure, etc.
The term can also refer to the test prints and
paper fragments used in this process, which
are typically discarded on completing a job.

IMAGINED SPACES

Tita Marr

Tita Marr





Unknown Quantities 7



Tita Marr

While my practice has a strong focus on spatial forms, my artistic background has allowed me to bridge a gap between art and architecture. From drawing within a two-dimensional context to installations, my work follows an intuitive process.

My installations are based on drawings of architecture that I have made from memory. Although they appear to be controlled, the process of transferring two-dimensional drawings into a three-dimensional installation is very playful. While responding to the drawing, I also experiment with and respond to the space in which the installation is sited, meaning that I do not pre-determine the result.



Unknown Quantities 7

HEALING WATERS

Ayaba Arówólò

To be reborn,
I drown myself in the water.

To find my peace,
I am cleansed with this water.

This intensity when released,
Flows too strong.

An overcharged soul,
Asé, the balance has been tipped.

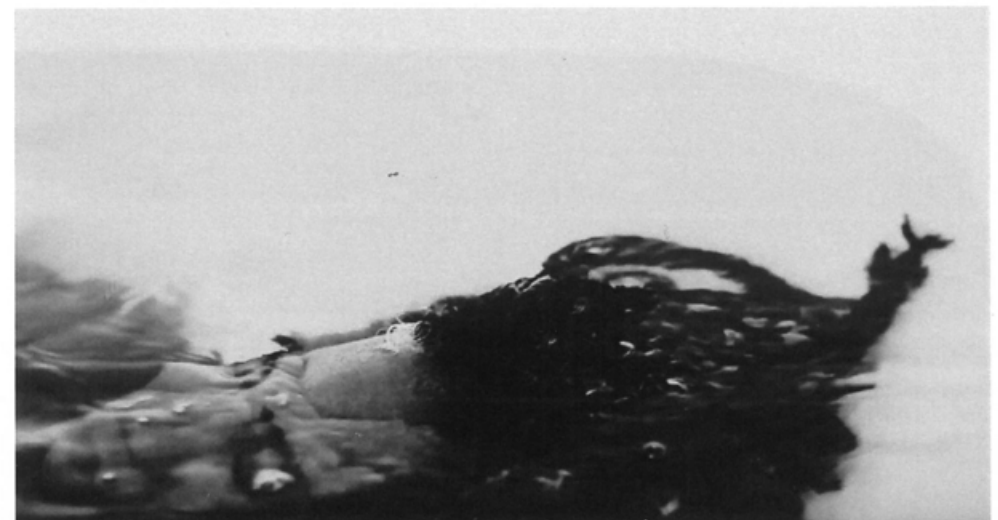
The matter has been separated.
We are now invisible.

But the shell is in a daze.
The soul far away.

The sanctuary
No attachments!

Submerge me in deep waters.
An escape that brings me freedom.
It is alluring to stay safe with these healing waters.

Ayaba Arówólò



Linda "Ayaba" Arówólò is an ethnologist whose focus is on how culture highlights the diverse ways to be human and how social actors interpret the social world in their specific environments. Her practice aims to narrate various expressions of human cultural experiences through not only written research, but also diverse creative expressions.

In 2018 Ayaba obtained a BA in Anthropology at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is currently studying MA Culture, Criticism and Curation at Central Saint Martins. Her latest projects include co-curating the Collecting Memory; Looking Forward (Central Saint Martins, 2019); her work *Yūgen: In Her Eyes* was included in The State of Things exhibition at Copeland Gallery, 2019.

DING AN SICH

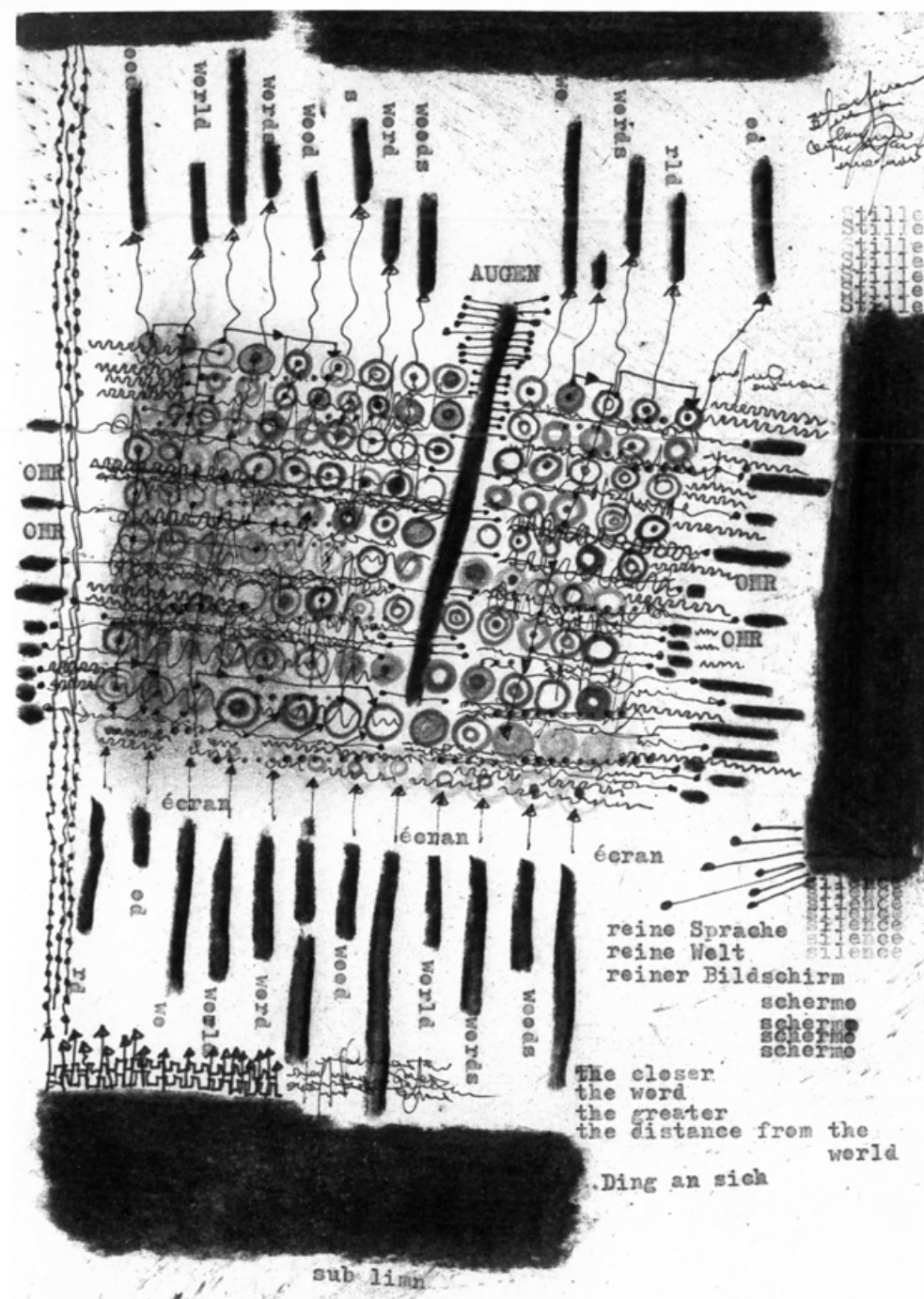
Federico Federici

This work prompts the reader/onlooker to consider the whole body as a diffused neuro-semiotic net, wherein synapses, cells and other attractors intertwine. Ears, eyes and skin (*Ohr/Ohr, Augen, écran*) restlessly map stimuli from an ultimately subliminal, maybe unknowable, black framed bulk (*Ding an sich*) into language. The biological machine is originally in a latent, blank state, keen on being informed, in the same way that no fuzzy system or neural network is provided with a strict mathematical model to work properly.

Since the speed of learning cannot keep up with the fluidity of perception, *world* may become a resonance of *word*, and *word* that of *woods* and so forth. Reality thus turns into the most meaningful set of errors. The mechanism by which a train of repeated spikes stands out against the background noise reveals a certain bias for meaning and conceptualising, whereas silence and silence (*Stille*) only combine.

The intrinsic errancy of the textual matter begins at the primal level of words; the coming and dropping of letters reveals that meaning always exerts a certain pressure and reminds us of the charging/uncharging of particles by contact. The verbi-visual surface of the page sabotages how the text itself usually works. The thick barrage of signs is a caveat against anchoring signification, as if an excess of information had definitively come into play.

Federico Federici

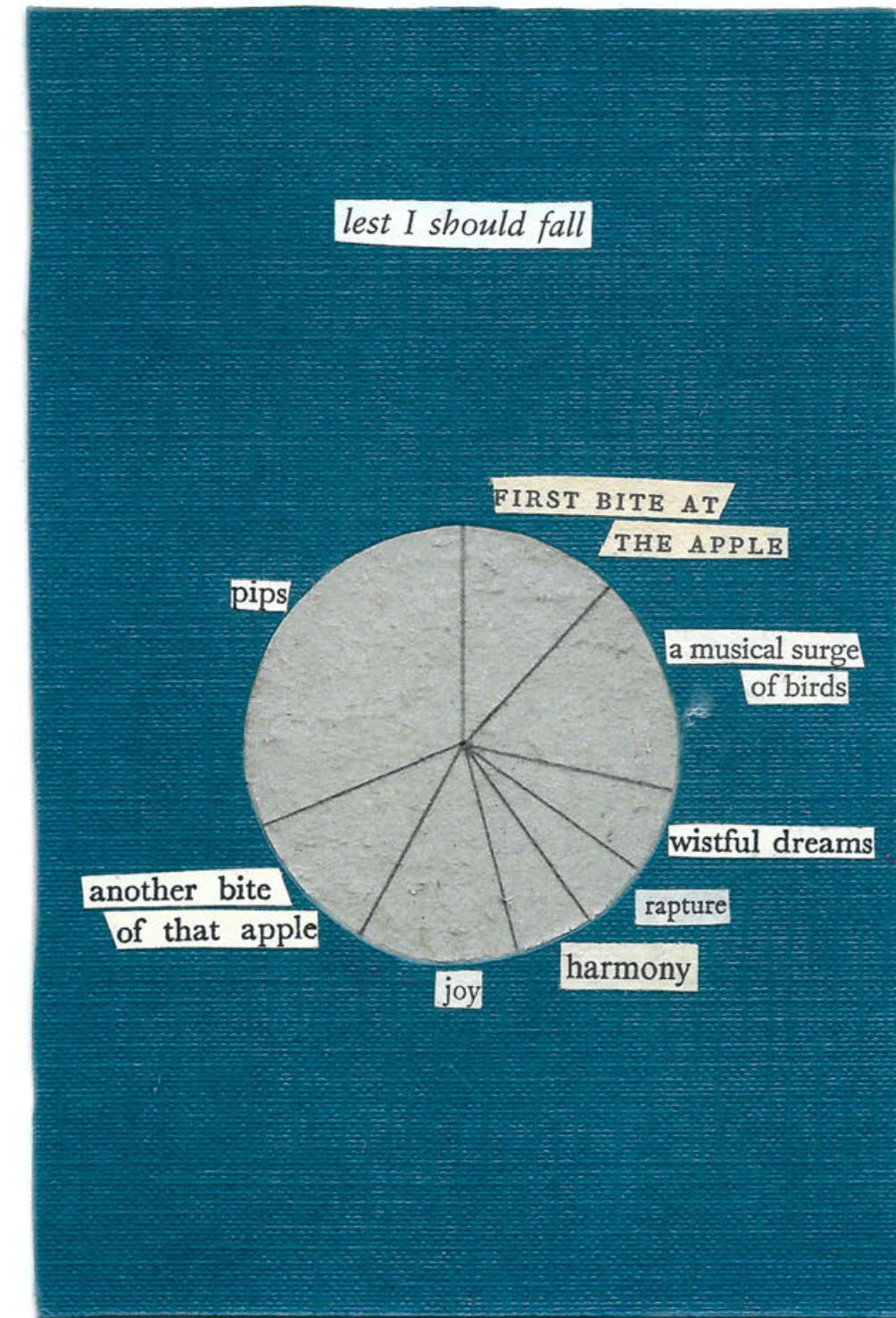


Federico Federici, *Ding an sich*, ink, graphite,
Olivetti Studio 46 on A3 paper, 2019

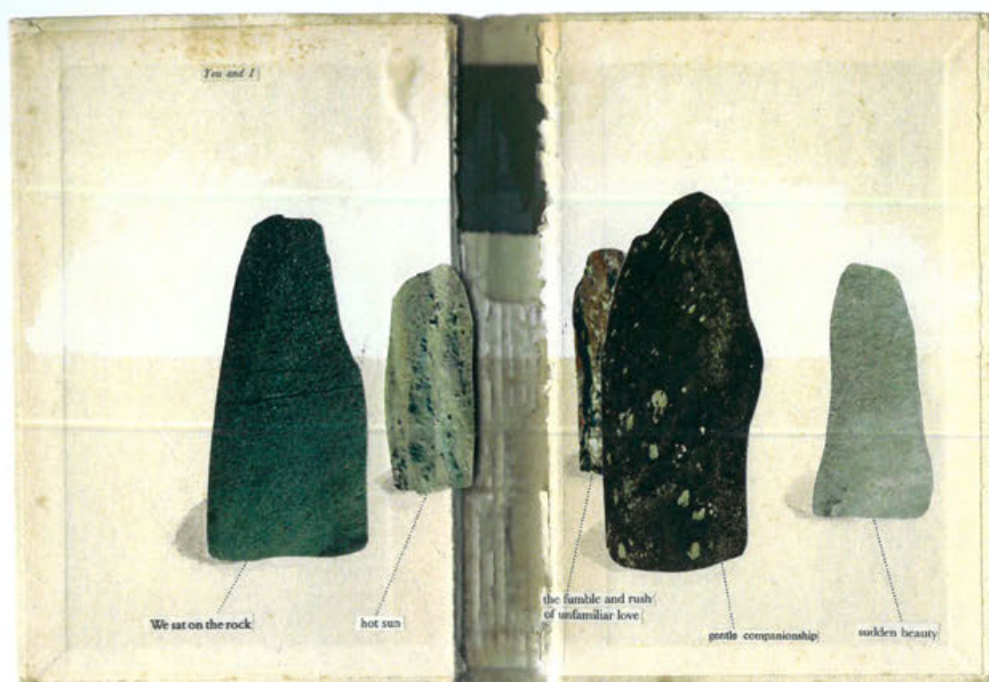
Federico Federici is a conceptual artist
working in the fields of poetry, vispo, asemic
writing, painting, video art, installations,
mathematics and physics.

DIAGRAM POEMS

Matthew Kay



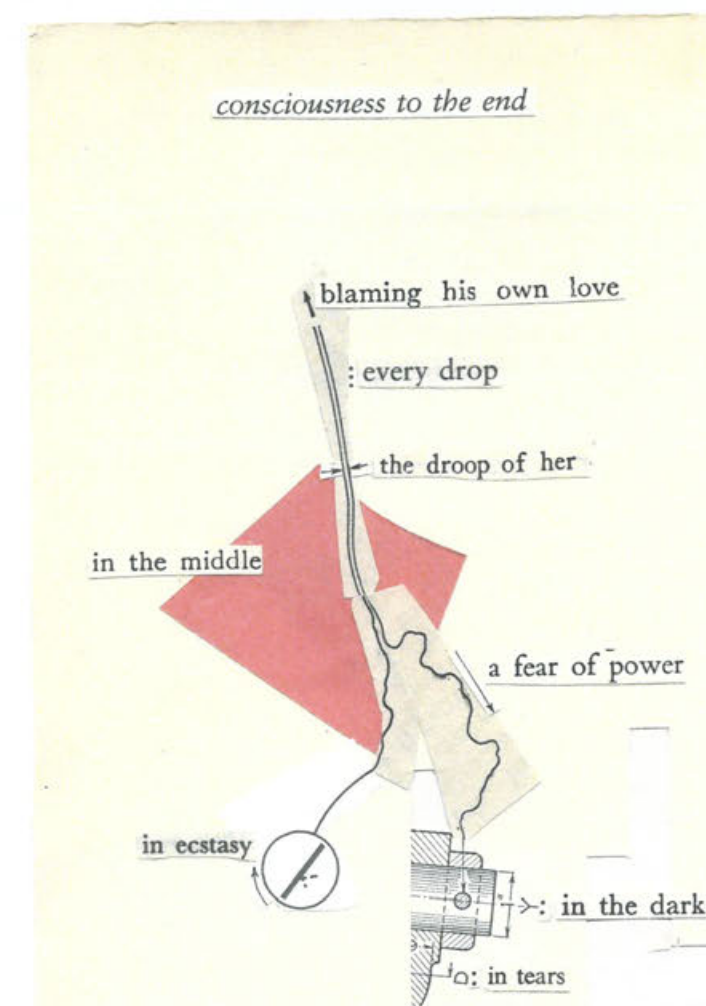
Matthew Kay



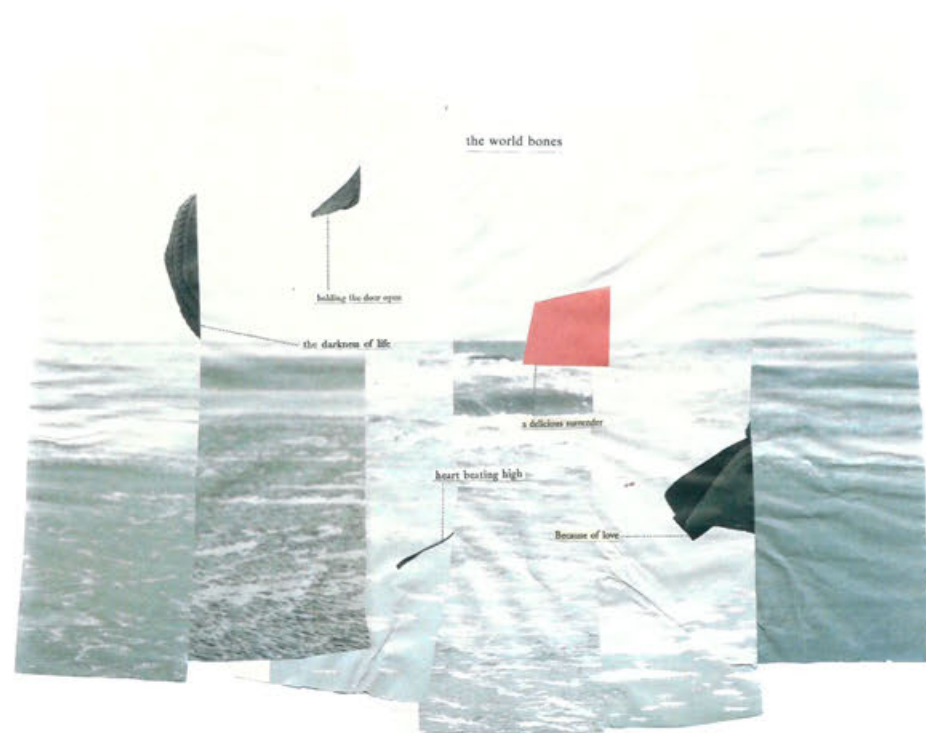
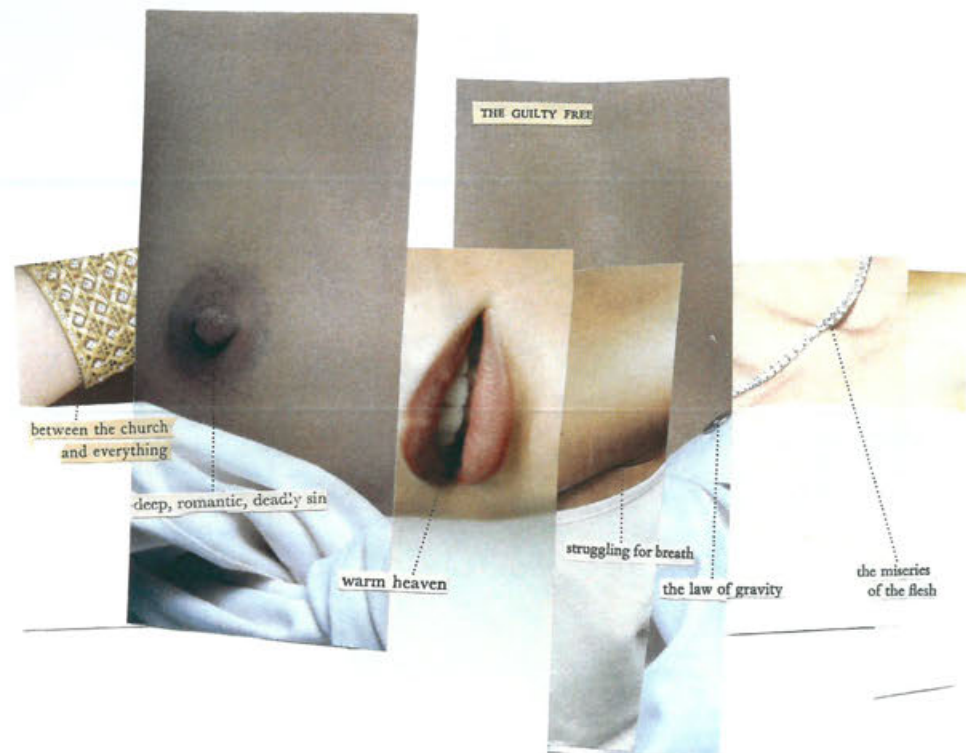
Unknown Quantities 7

Matthew Kay's practice is driven by a concern for collecting, collating and curating pre-existing objects and imagery. He makes assemblage sculptures, animations, books and works on paper from a vast archive of discarded materials – plastic oddments, off-cuts of wood, scraps of fabric and yarn, dog-eared old books and magazines, DIY detritus. His creative process is one of finding meaning in the unfamiliar connections formed between otherwise familiar objects, words and images.

Diagram Poems feature re-contextualised found words and phrases employed as annotations for appropriated and made-up diagrams. Collectively, Matthew's collage works engage with themes of everyday life, sex and sexuality, the nature of God, religious beliefs and their influence on the structures that we create to interpret our experience of the world and ourselves.



Matthew Kay



Unknown Quantities 7

537 SCRAPS OF PAPER

Shelby Guergis

This work is an infographic encompassing 537 scraps of paper amassed over the course of one year as a student at the Royal College of Art. Images are arranged in succession of when they were scrapped, from top to bottom. Below is the text which accompanied the installation.

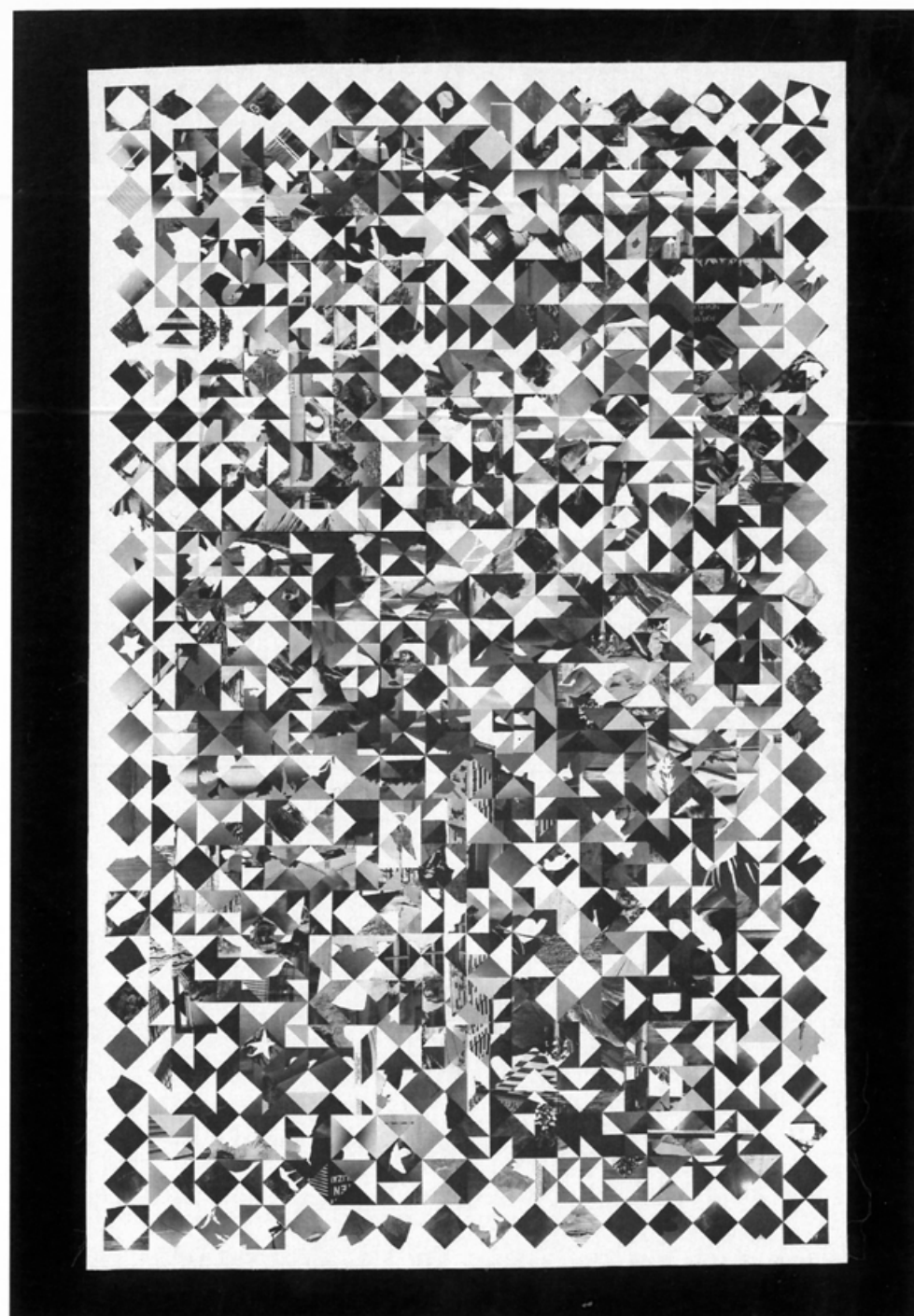
Shelby Guergis

This isn't the thing.

It's the remnants of stuff
used to make the thing
– or things rather.

Static clippings left over
from interrogating conflict,
amassed over the course
of a year.

Brought together,
comprising something new.



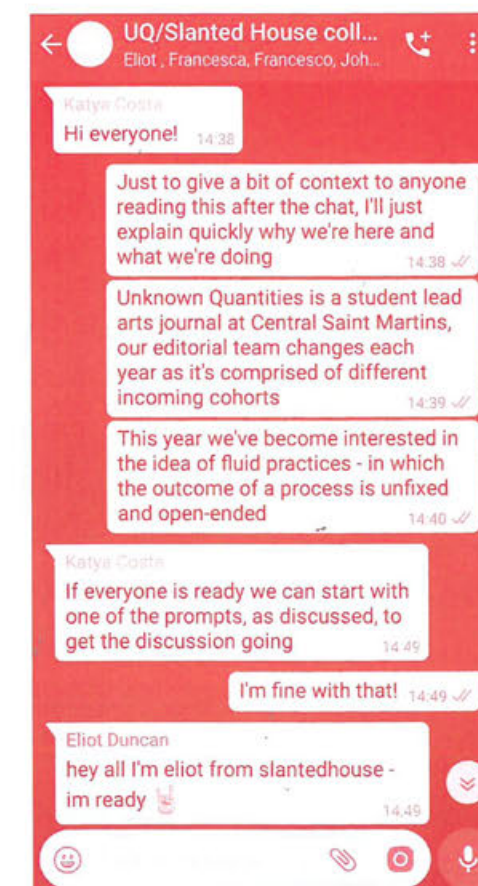
Shelby Guergis, *537 Scraps of Paper*, 2019

Shelby is a multidisciplinary designer and researcher. She works with a range of clients across North America and Europe, in sectors spanning fashion, arts and culture, publishing, not-for-profit and technology. She recently completed an MA in Visual Communication at the Royal College of Art.

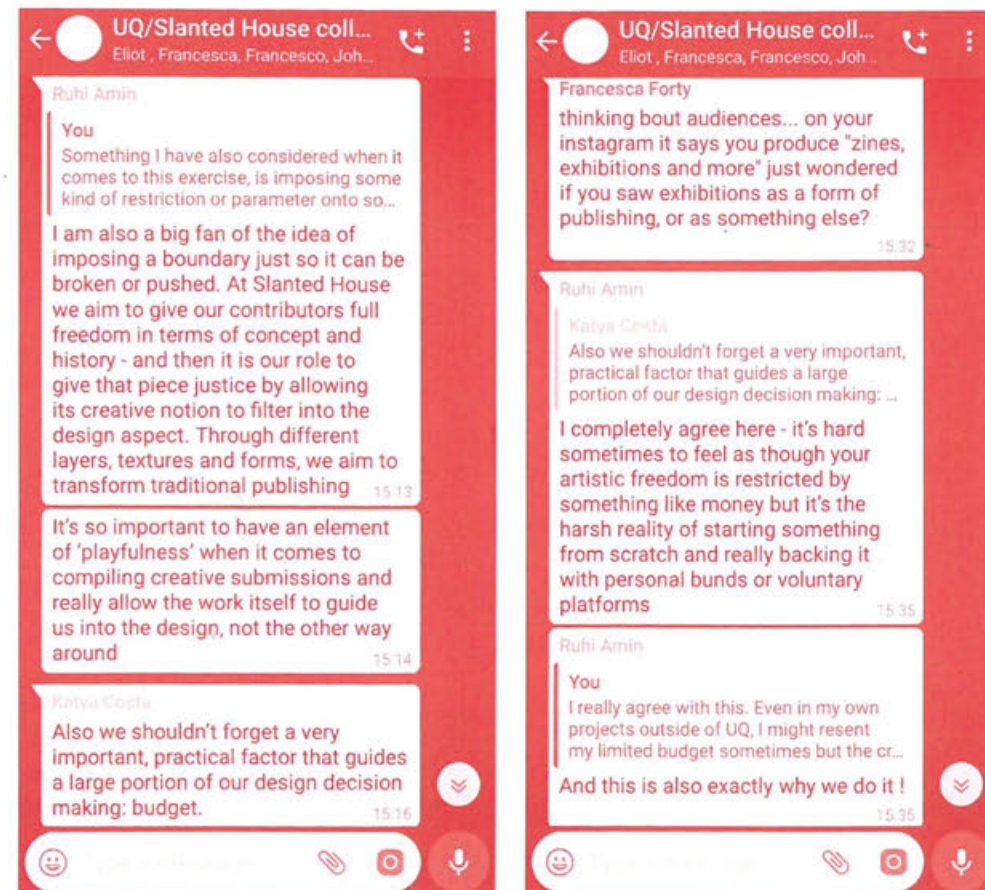
SLANTED HOUSE COLLECTIVE

Collaborating towards a fluidity of dialogue

Slanted House

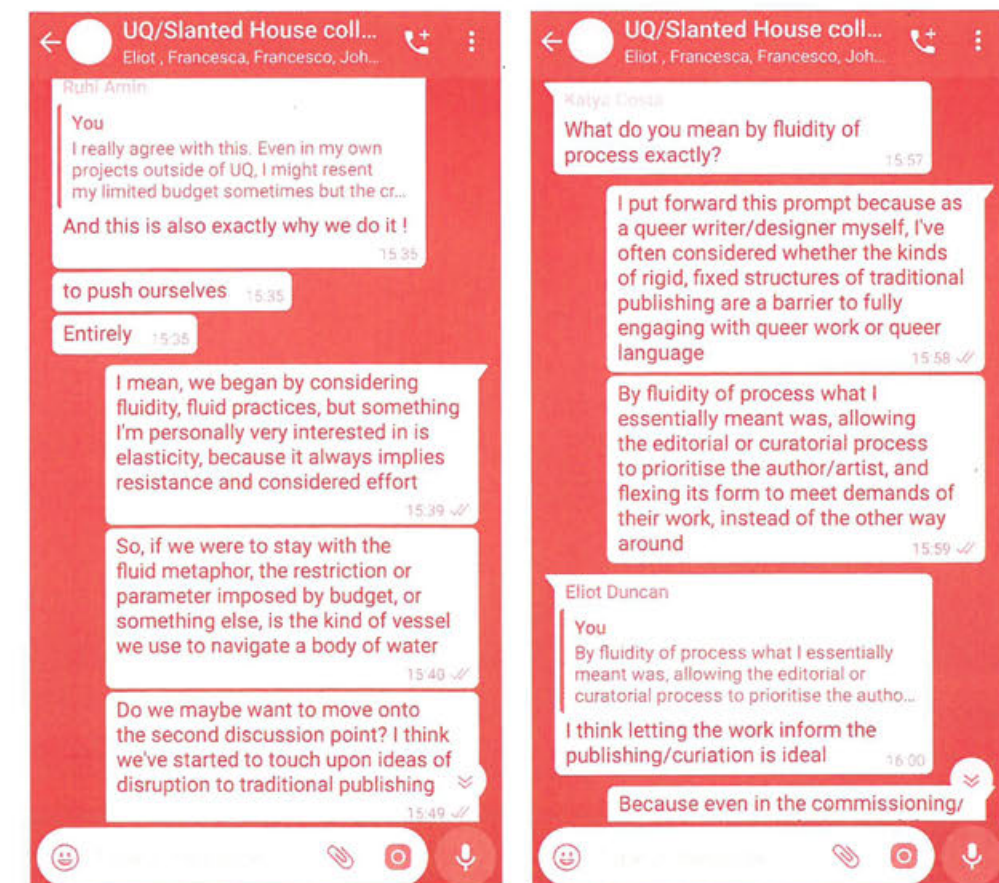


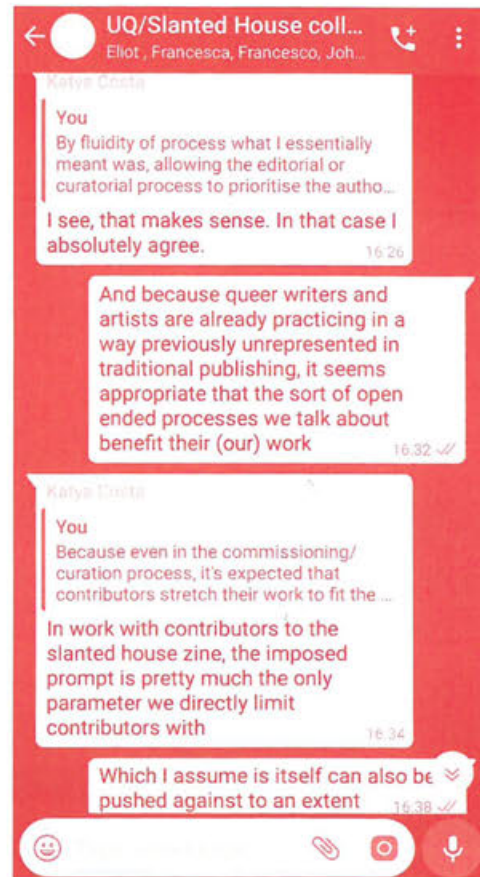
Slanted House is a queer artist collective and small press publishing house, multidisciplinary and collaborative across creative fields and countries alike. In October 2019, *Unknown Quantities* and Slanted House took part in a collaborative, roundtable discussion over WhatsApp, elaborating on the (non)theme of fluidity within publishing. Starting from two discussion points addressing the crossovers between *Unknown Quantities'* investigations into fluid publishing practices, and Slanted House's position as disruptive press. Screenshots of the dialogue, which took place over a loosely defined two hour period are documented over the following leaves, through a curated selection of textual soundbites.



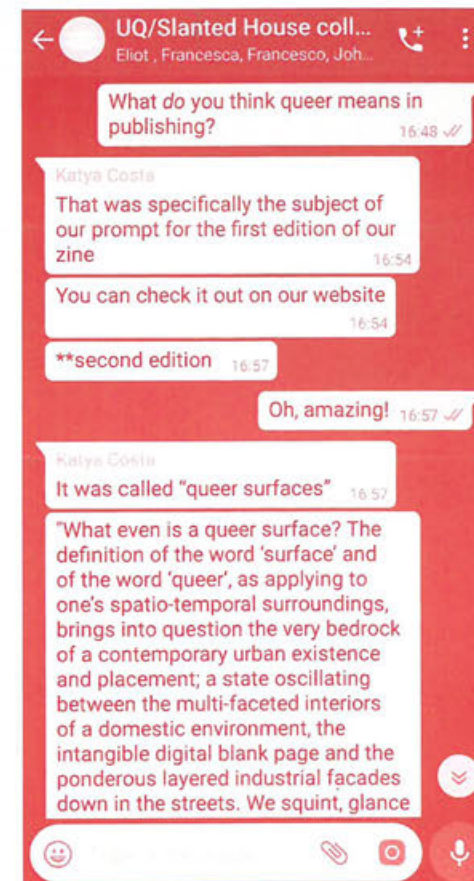
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Slanted House

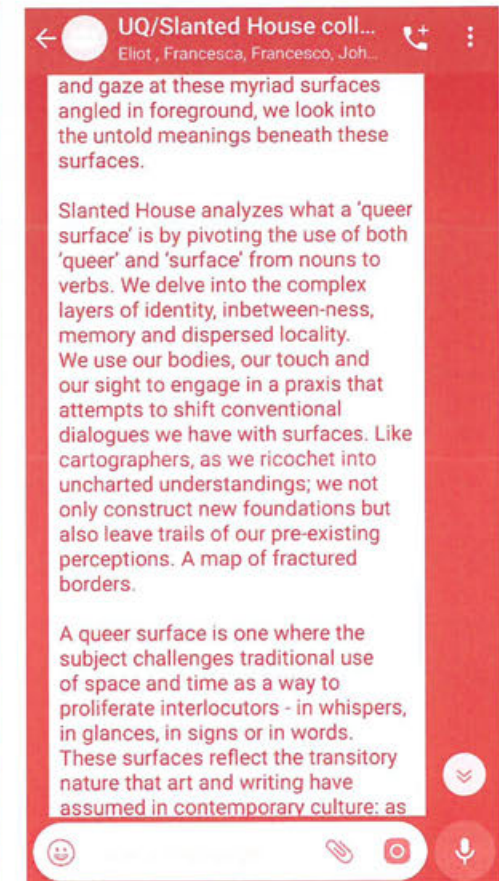


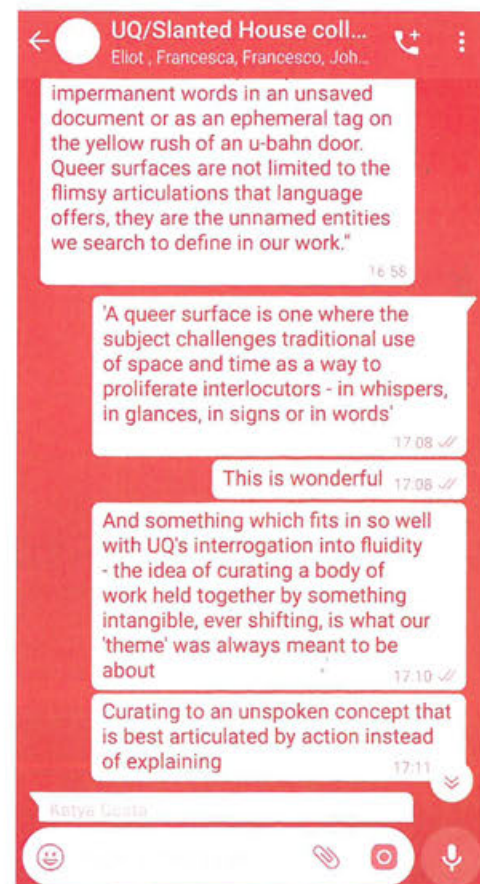


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Slanted House





FROTH

Dom Kesterton

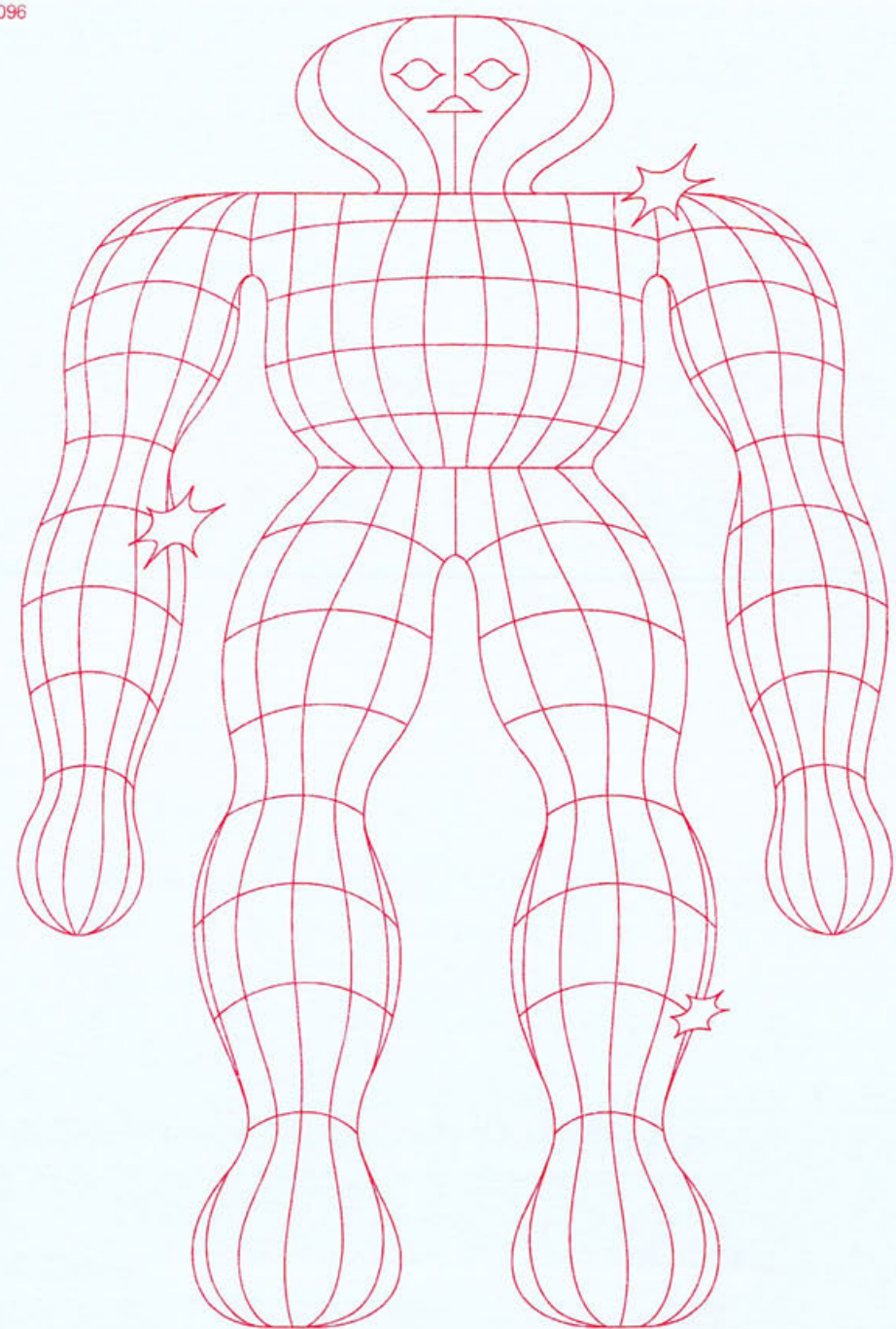
Froth is an expanding set of drawings. My main desire is to generate and get better at generating. I'm interested in volume. I'm interested in using regurgitation and self-referencing to cultivate fertility in my drawing. Froth is about enjoying the morph and seeking the skew.

I began by sprinting to 100 drawings of whatever I wanted. Now, to generate new drawings, I perform various operations, such as combining two existing drawings, drawing an existing drawing in new dimensions, removing an element from an existing drawing, etc. By constantly growing the set, taking stock of it and then performing new operations on the shifted whole, the drawings begin to spawn in both expected and unexpected directions. In this sense, I like to think of the set as an aggressively boiling pan full of liquid, bubbling with internally held collisions and exchanges.

I want to work in this lightly systemised way to encourage the drawings to blossom. Patterns emerge, trends develop and narratives seem present but these are unstable and can lose their grip as the pile grows. I want a joyful space to allow the intuitive things that happen with drawing to pull everything else forward.

Dom Kesterton

096



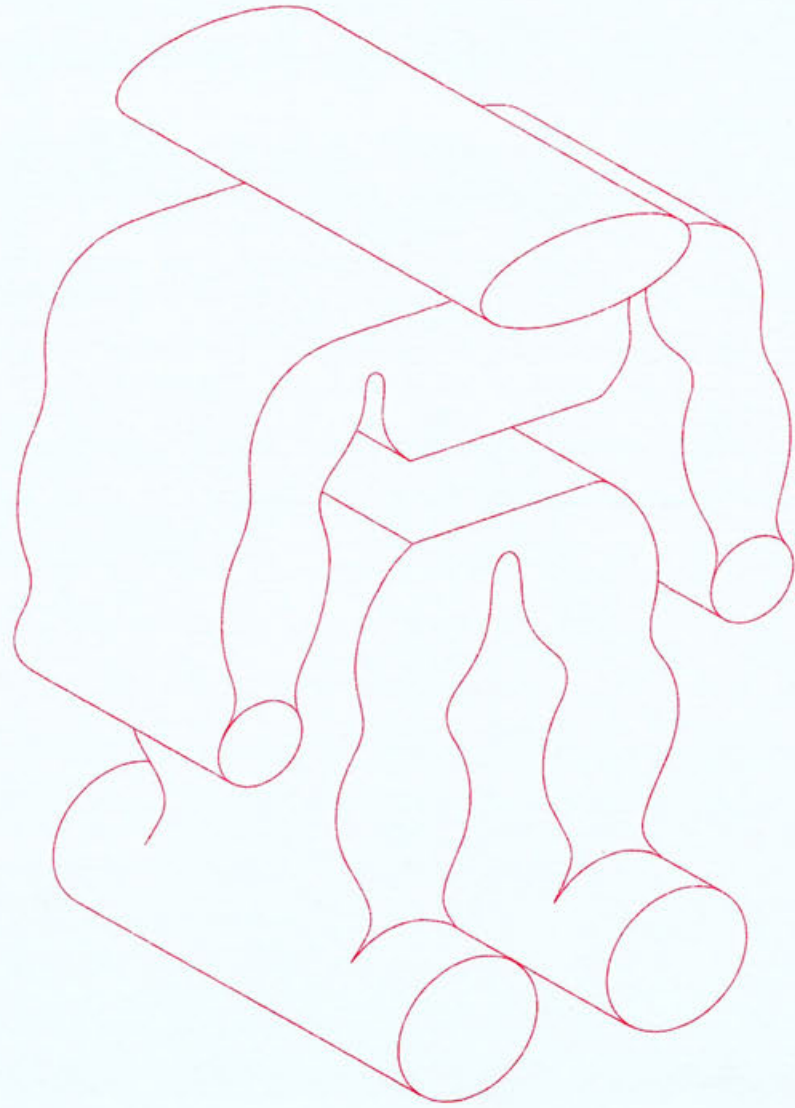
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Dom Kesterton

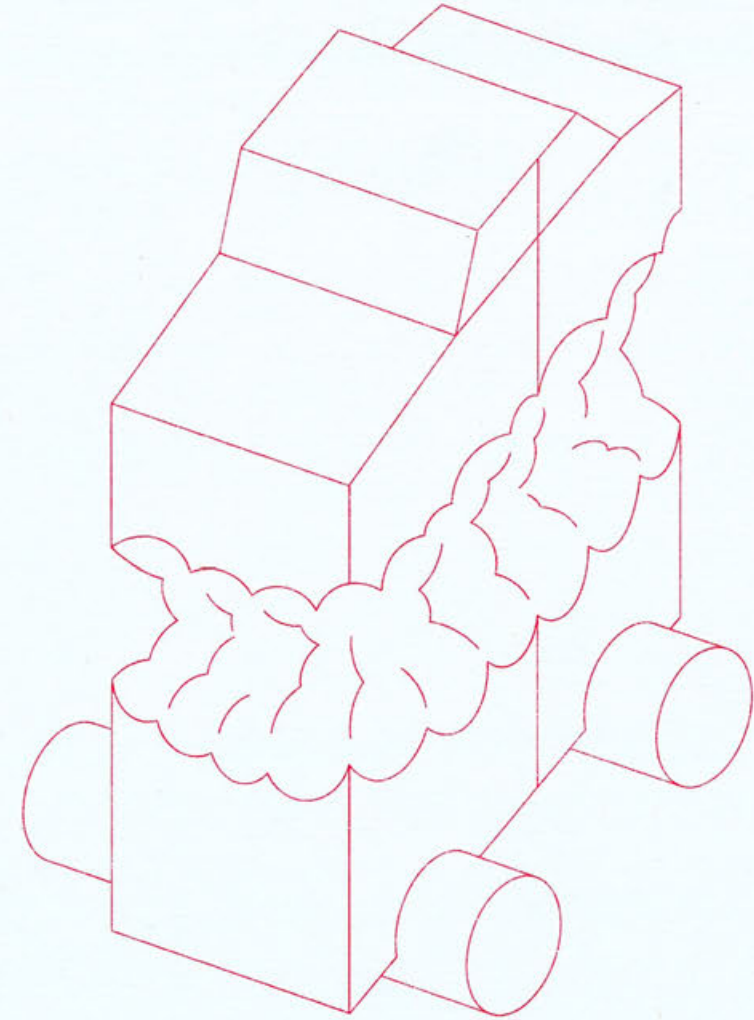
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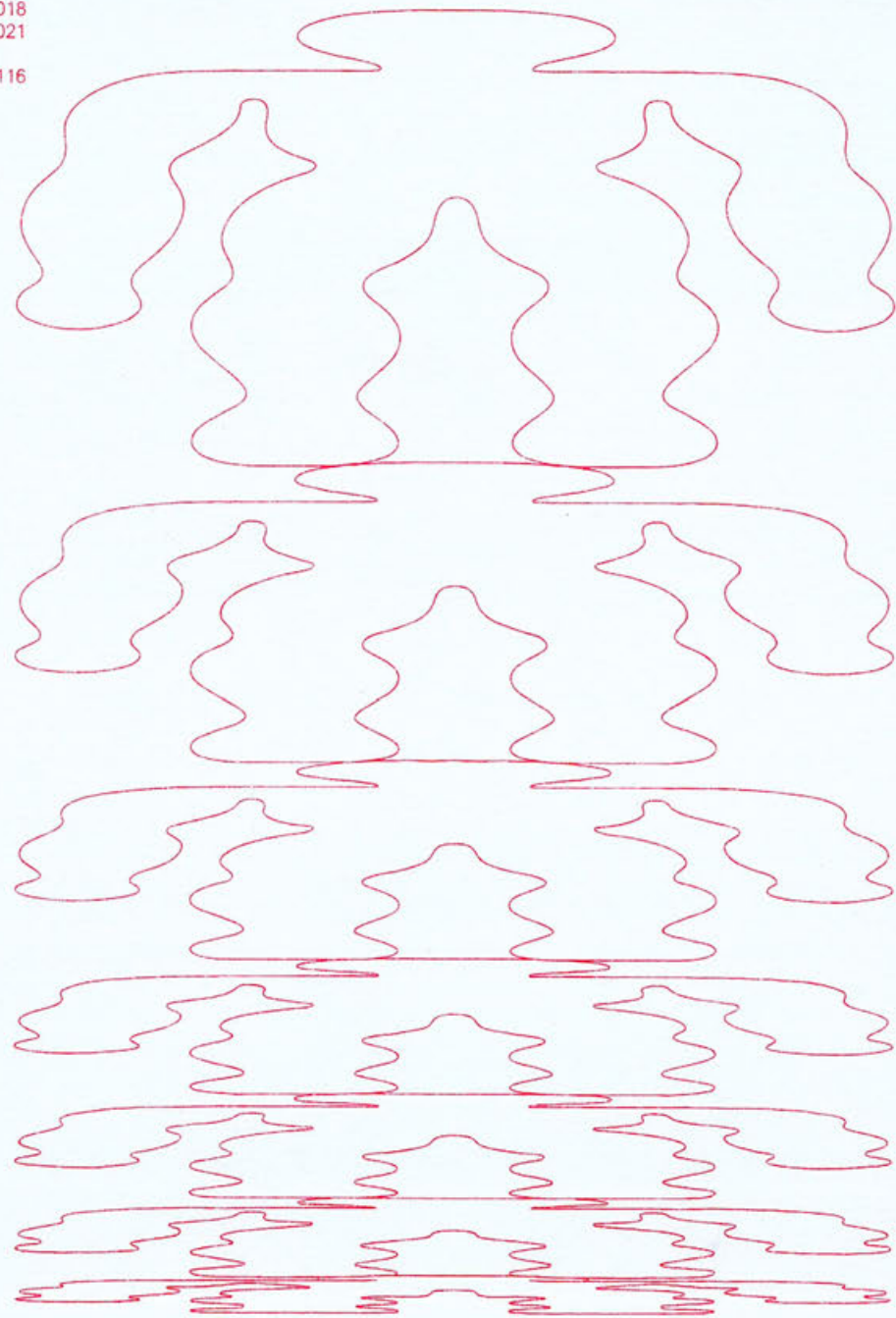
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Dom Kesterton



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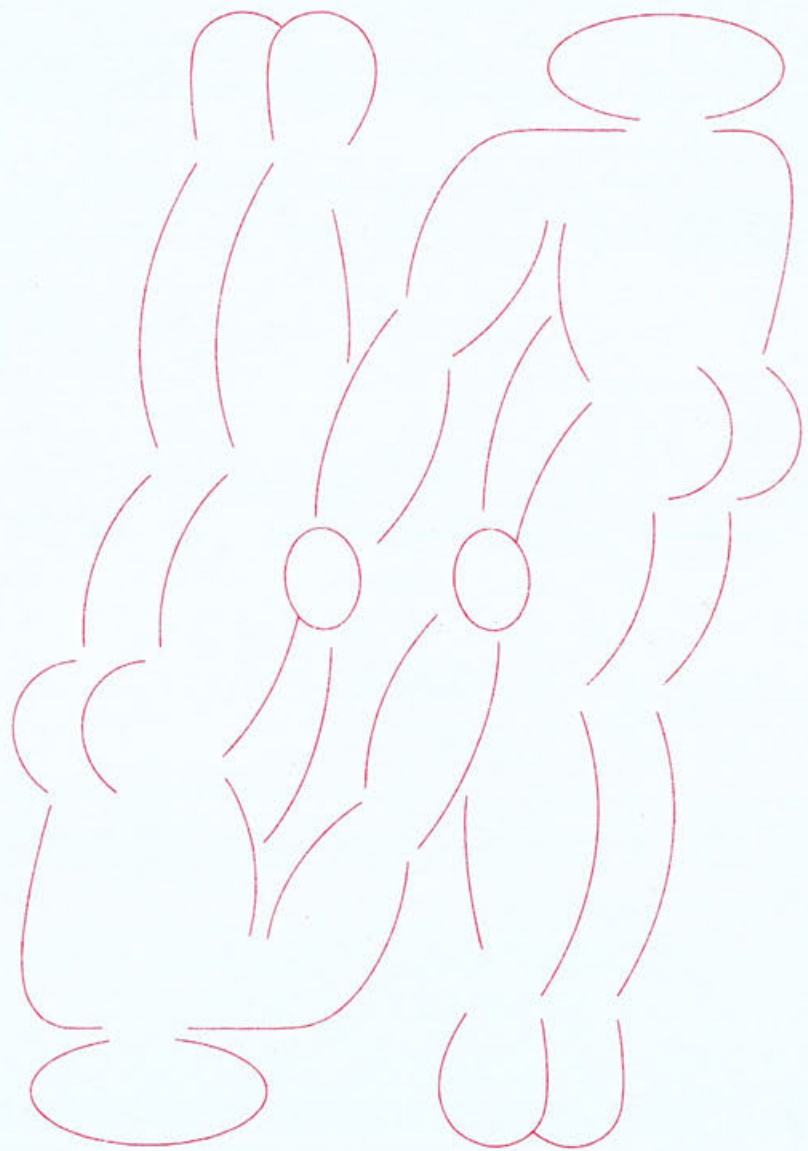
Unknown Quantities 7

086



Dom Kesterton

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Unknown Quantities 7

BOARD GAME CUT UPS

Studio Moniker

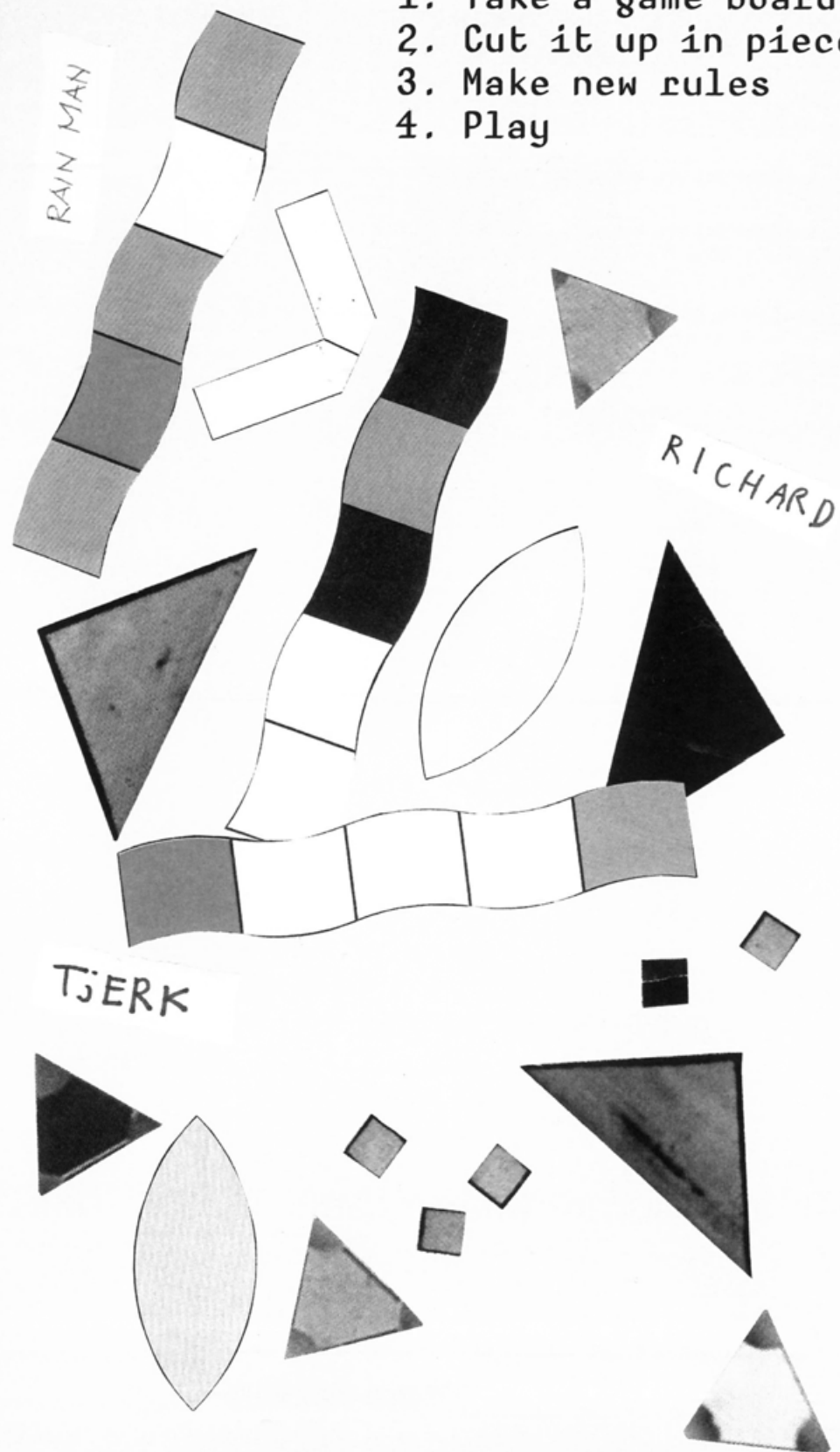
Moniker's *Board Game Cut Ups* uses beautiful – or somehow triggering – game board designs, even without knowing exactly how the game is played. They cut the game boards along their geometric shapes into single parts, then give each cut up part a new function and meaning. Choosing to work with the primary coloured pegs of traditional board games allowed for an easier swap of functions due to their abstraction. An overarching story helped to piece together the separate elements.

There are interesting relations to the cut-up technique created by the Dadaist movement in the 20s which grew more popular in the 50s and 60s. Artists used the method to escape fixed patterns of creation and meaning.

In *Board Game Cut Ups*, the technique led to very funny stories and rules. While playing the new game, new game rules were suggested and popped up all the time. Some games were more competitive, others more about creation. The exact rules of the games aren't revealed as Moniker wants to convey more the energy and storyline that are triggered through the play than the exact functioning.

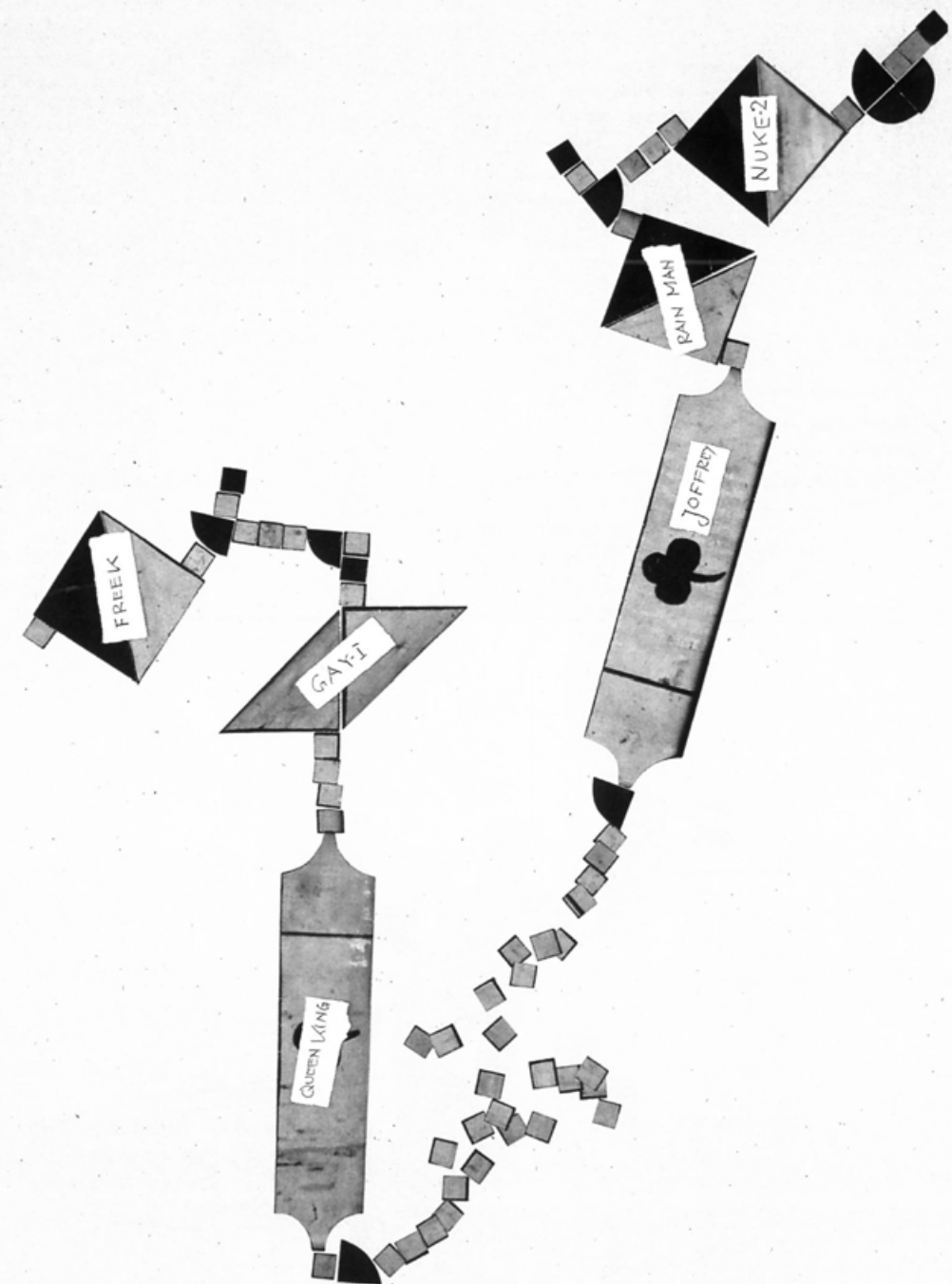
Studio Moniker

1. Take a game board
2. Cut it up in pieces
3. Make new rules
4. Play

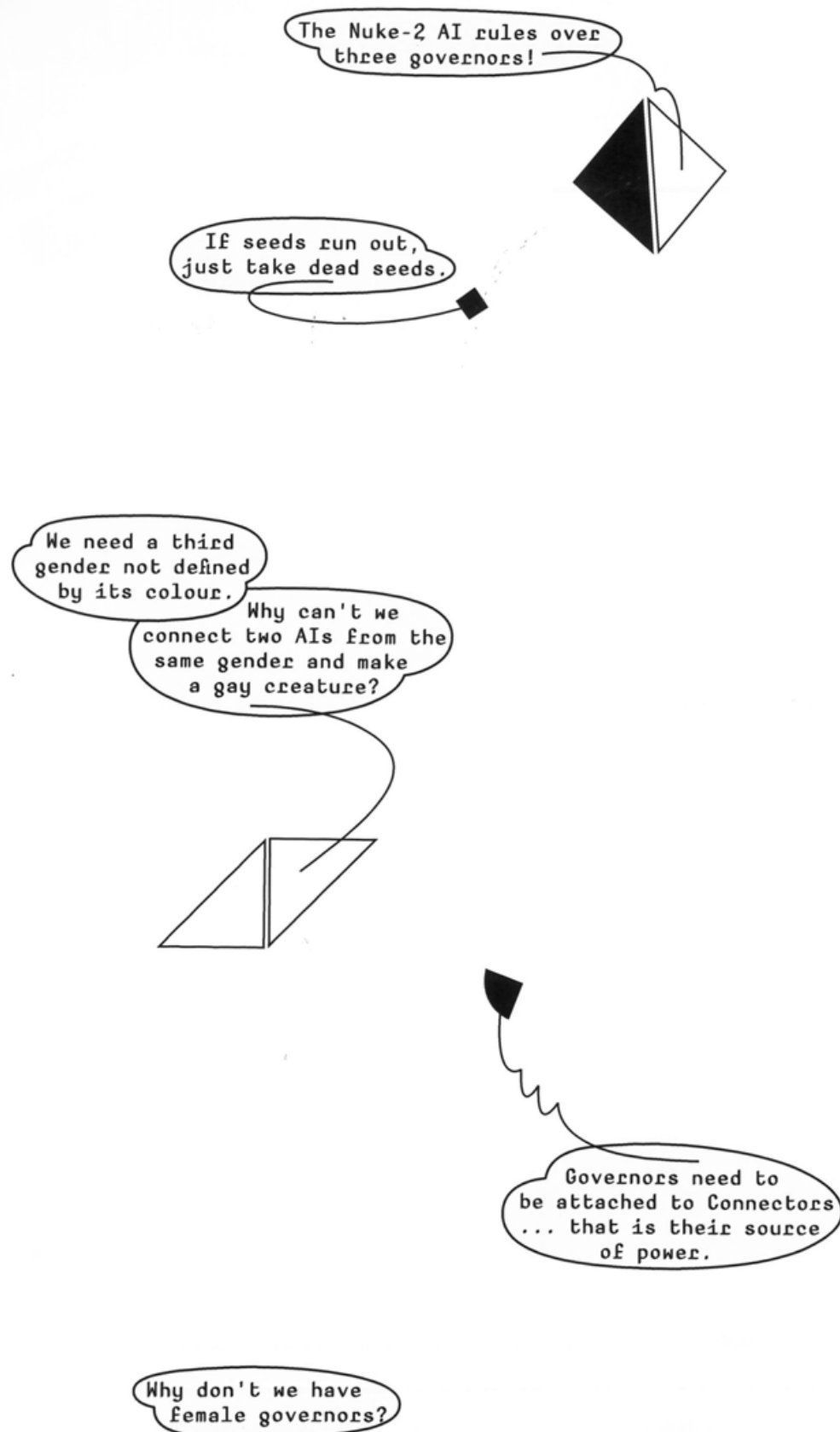


Board Game Cut Ups

Studio Moniker



AI Kingdom



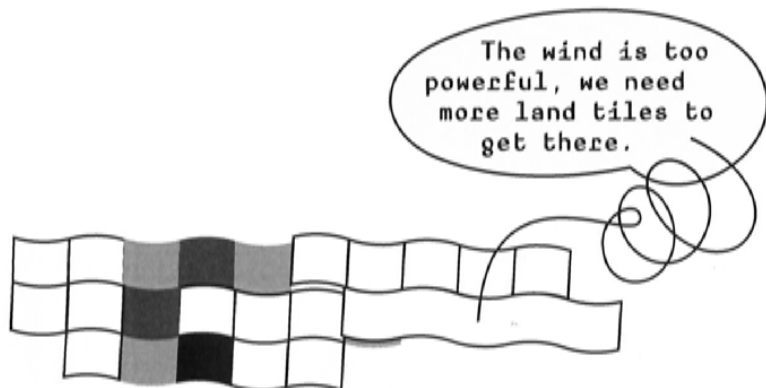
AI Kingdom

Unknown Quantities 7

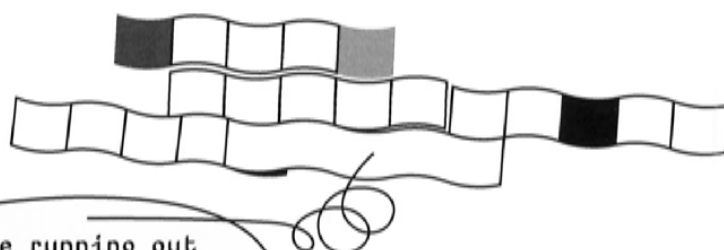
Studio Moniker



Motorboat and Wind

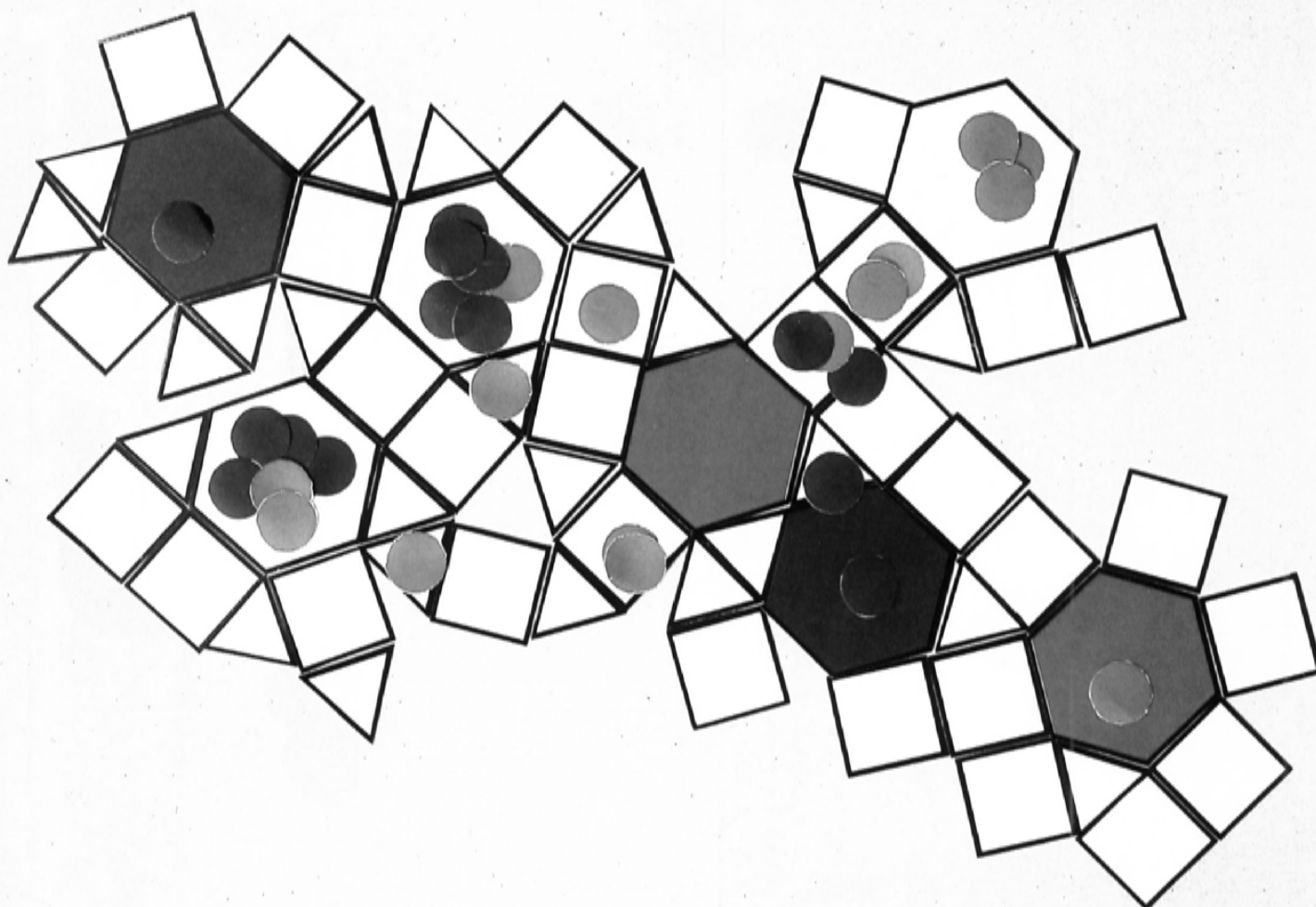


It's so schizophrenic. Each round I have to either destroy the land or build it up again.



Unknown Quantities 7

Studio Moniker



Oh man, this
is going to be a war!

What happens to
the other colour?
They are killed. They
cannot move. They
have to stay there.
They are dead!

... but then I am paralysed.
That is your problem! You cannot
go over my land. You do not
go over my land!

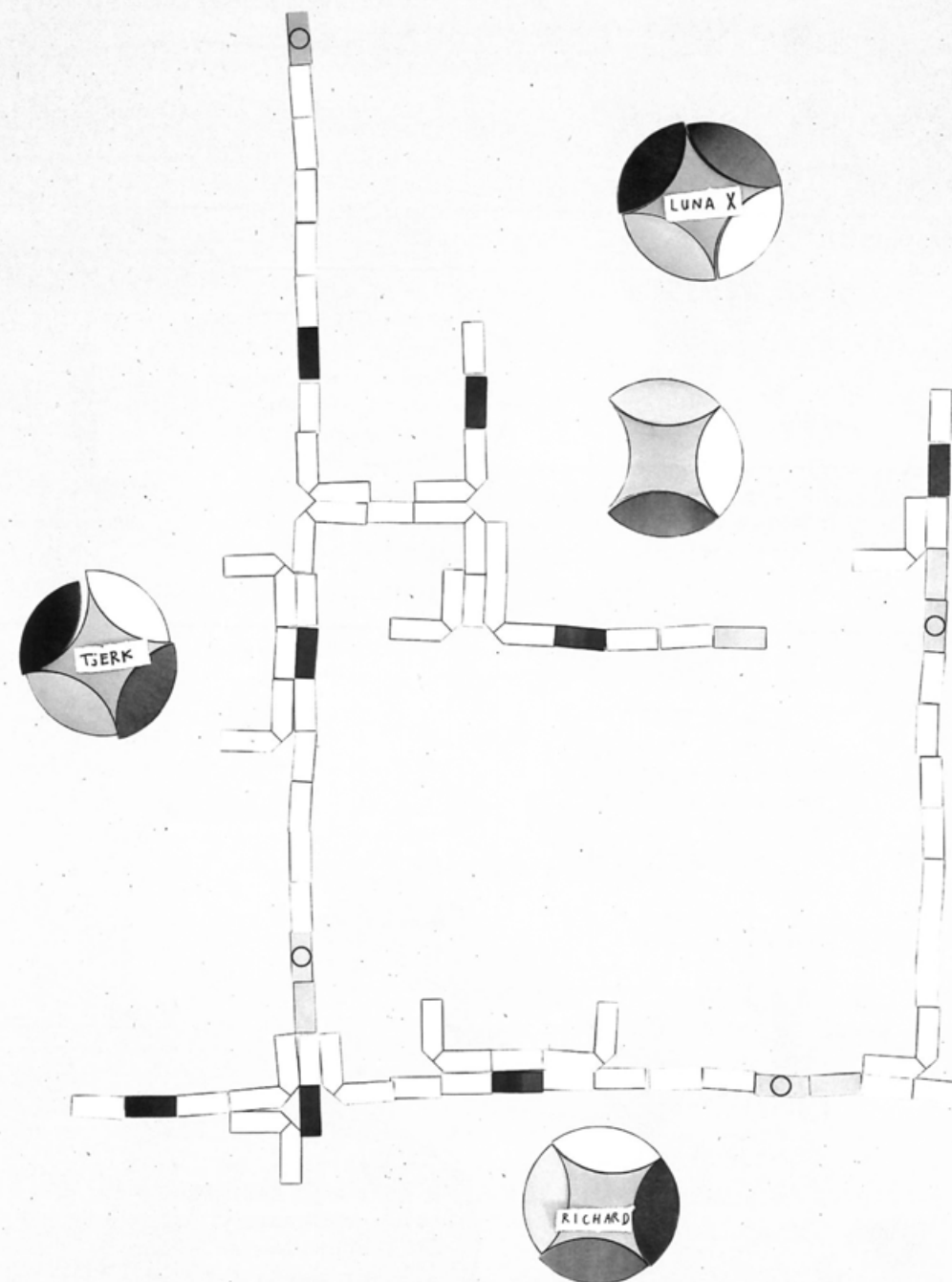
You see, the other
colour is basically
frozen, afraid. They
are the minority.

I will move this in order
to win the game.

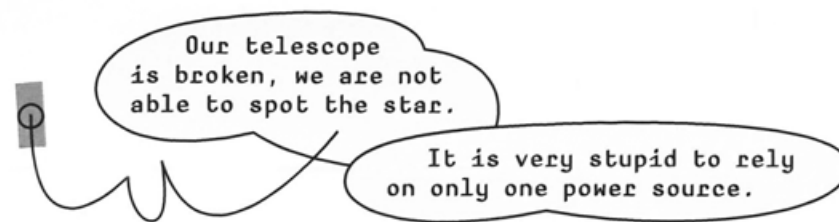
Hexagons

Unknown Quantities 7

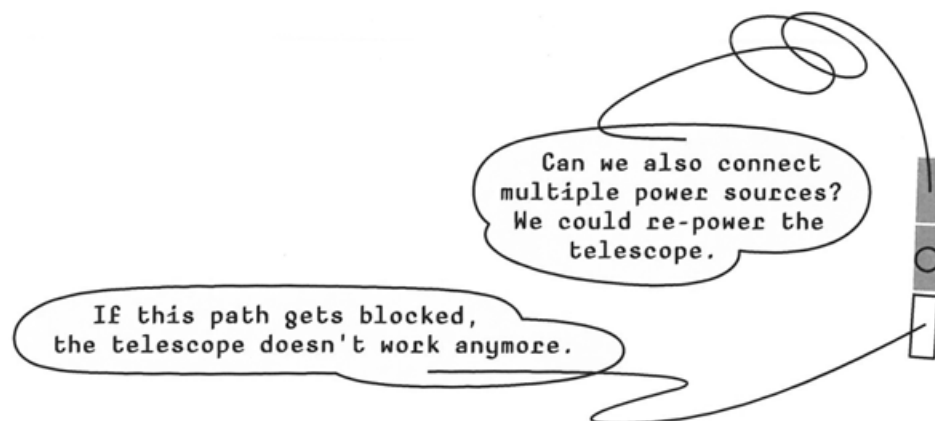
Studio Moniker



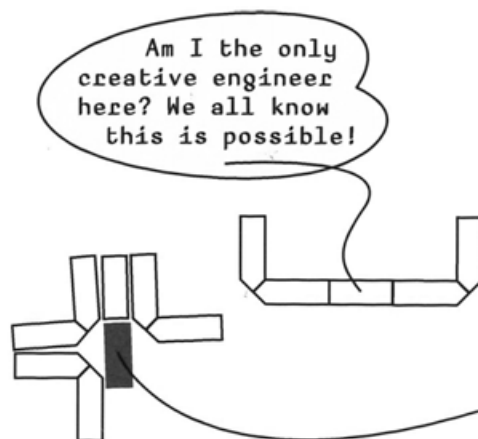
Parmageddon



It is very stupid to rely on only one power source.



If this path gets blocked, the telescope doesn't work anymore.



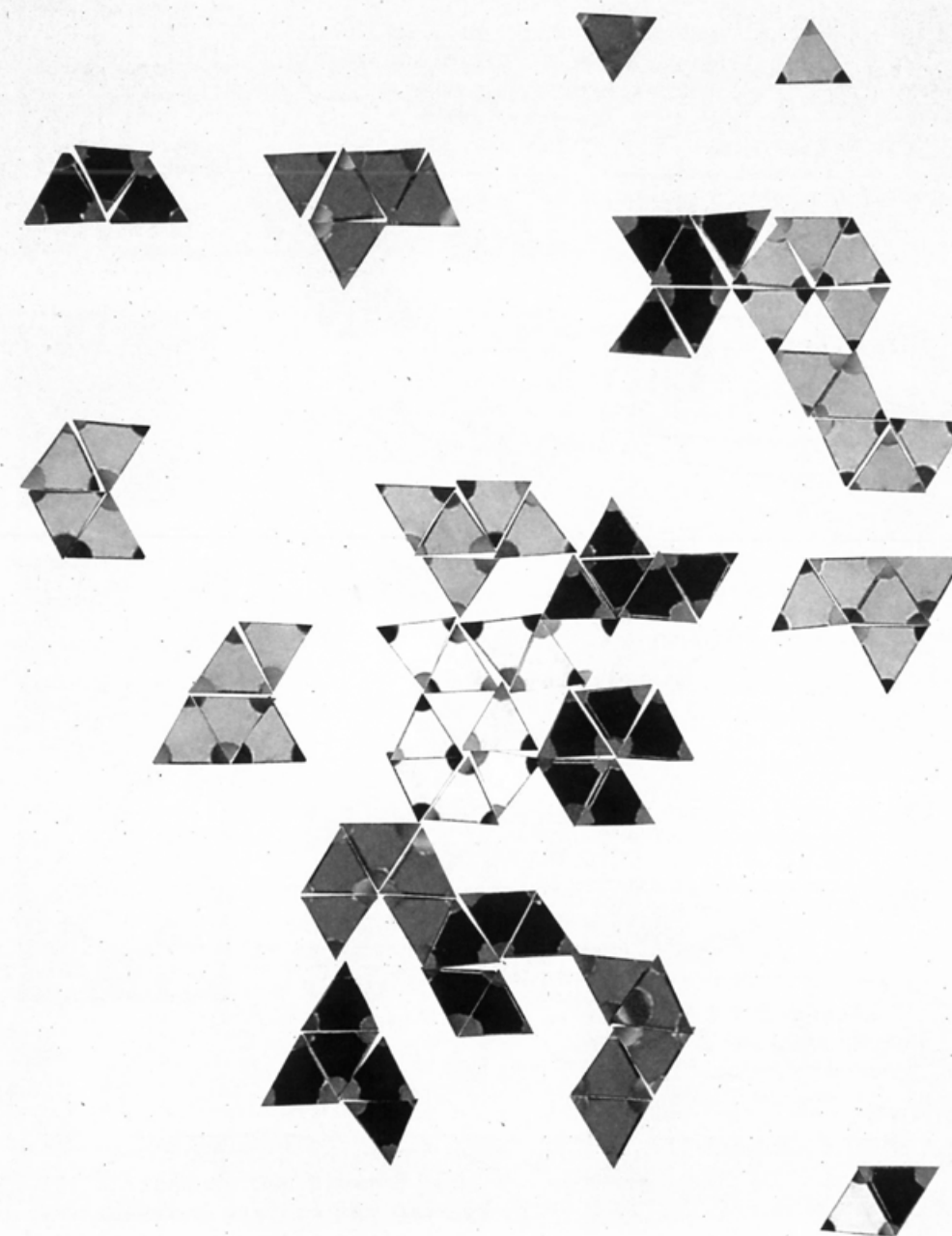
This might be a strategy that we don't understand yet. It is the Maniac after all, it doesn't have to make sense.

The Maniac did not do anything again!

Parmageddon

Unknown Quantities 7

Studio Moniker



Transformers

You probably do not want to touch me.

... but if I kept my womb intact, I could keep producing babies every round!

The snail is slow but you can't eat it. It doesn't taste good. It's a poisonous snail.

I looked and I'm not impregnated so I'll move.

You can get pregnant over air. Only fertilisation works over air.

First you look, attack, then womb, and then move.

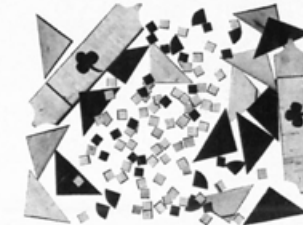
Oh, I would not do that. My womb can be very quickly transformed into an attacker.

Transformers



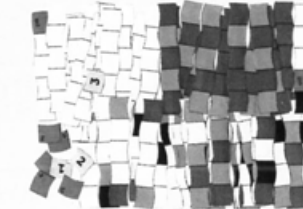
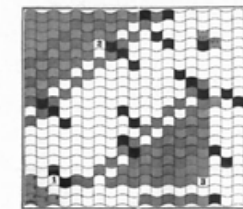
Unknown Quantities 7

Studio Moniker



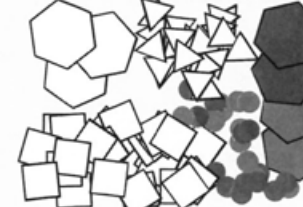
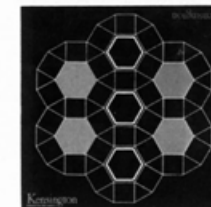
1. Parcheesi, c. 1900
→ AI Kingdom

The creation of a kingdom, from seeds to governors to AIs crowned by king and queen.



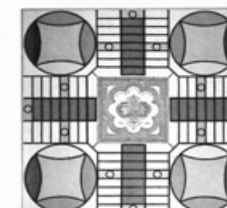
2. Windsurfing, c. 1970
→ Motorboat and Wind

The construction of land in order to reach the scarce oil for a motorboat.



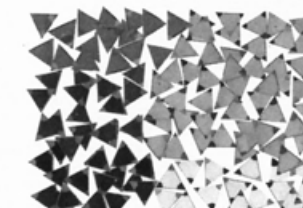
3. Kensington, 1979
→ Hexagons

A simulation of a war. Two teams trying to conquer as much land as possible.



4. Parcheesi, 1982
→ Parmageddon

A journey into space. Telescopes need to be discovered in order to spot the stars.



5. Chinese Checkers, 1892
→ Transformers

A creature metamorphosis between snail, attacker, coach and womb, all battling to stay alive.

Index

Studio Moniker is an Amsterdam-based interactive design studio. Moniker (meaning nickname or pseudonym) works to commission while also investing in projects of an autonomous and experimental nature. The studio works across various media for a diverse range of clients, from those in the cultural field to commercial companies. Their projects explore the social effects of technology – how we use technology and how it influences our daily lives. Often, Moniker asks the public to take part in the development of projects. The results expand and grow like plants, displaying their inner organisational process. Moniker specialises in interactive, print, video, physical installation and performance work.