

DRAFTING DECEIT – SVEN AUGUSTIJNEN MICHAEL BORREMANS JOHANNES KAHRs MARIJE LANGELAAR AND MARK MANDERS PAUL MCCARTHY AND MIKE KELLEY KIRSTEN PIEROTH

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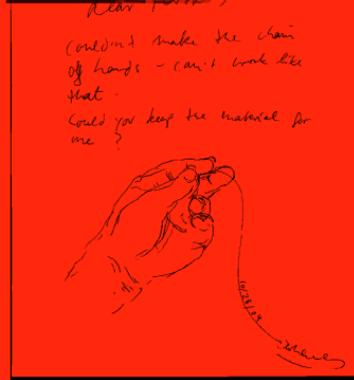
*Unlike anything human,
art lays claim to being
unable to lie, and thus it
is compelled to lie.*

Theodor Adorno



authority as art. In its gesture toward freedom, it may share what is common to most functionally driven objects. However, this gesture in art projects a future as an overcoming of the antinomies of the present to locate the site where the place and nature of change may be staged.

The sustainability of a work of art relates also to a conception of historical time that provides for an understanding between a work's internal organization and its external projection. This gap between the world and the work is what returns the work to reckon with the past, so that the present be freed from the hold of the past to the extent that the past does not determine the present's self-conception. This striving for, this potential, is what enables art to transcend beyond the here and now and to seek out what Adorno refers to as "the something more" or the "crackling noise" that extends beyond the work's rational construction as art's apparition. Its apparition doesn't entail something phantasmagorical as if to illicit the image of ghostly "something mores" wandering into infinitude throughout Valery's museum and mausoleum. Art's cunning is the sense of irony with which it sabotages anything illusory.



In its animate behavior, Adorno has claimed that art is a "picture puzzle, in that what it hides, as in the work of Edgar Allan Poe, is visible, and by being visible, it is at once hidden." As a riddle, finding the solution is not necessarily the point of course as none exists. Instead, we are led to pose additional questions that return us to the work time and again. The ability for a work of art to display the infinite in the finite is the way art displays the key to its survival and its performativity. As human subjectivity becomes invested in the work as an object, it endows the meaning of the object, redirecting human subjectivity into a non-futile form. This explains the



This. Is Not a Poem.

*You put your left hand in,
you put your left hand out,
You put your right hand in,
and you shake it all about,
You do the bokey pokey
and you turn yourself around,*

That's what it's all about.

From a popular American game of gesture

Perhaps it is unfortunate that within the mystical allegory of poetic space, we, as humans, cannot be replaced by abstractions for which we stand. Faulted by physicality, we are driven to assume a presence not merely out of a desire to chart the coordinates of place but to follow our pure intuition to formulate the amorphous around us — as a lived and vectored category consumed by gestures rendered at times with decisive caution and, at others, with murderous instinct. This habitual inclination to announce ourselves as present, as here and now in the whatever, leads us to draft the blueprint for the hierarchy of organized social structures, super systems, and all the possible political, social, human, and theological tyrannies of history.

In our two hands we find the appendages that seek out to



depart from personal inwardness to intervene into a field that is no longer our own. We do so in order to begin to build concepts and representations and to seek out abstract and sensuous content. In this exploration of self in relation to place, our shortsightedness is in the assumption that we are symmetrical two sided beings. Subsequently, we gesture into the world in an incongruent way failing to understand the difference between the left and the right, imbalanced and swayed by our inherent bilaterality that places us as much in the world among things as within ourselves.

As a pivot extended spatially into many dimensions, our body launches into a performative and kinesthetic lived-out space further innervated by human intuition to take detours and deviations from the habitual. In this framework, the process of thought rests not on the understand-



ing of time as a linear continuum but as a move that is altogether lifted out of a chronology of the narrative into the ambiguity of poetics. Beyond Cartesian subjects, we are molded in relation to possible annihilation that extend our logic from merely the definitive. Isn't this why we have stopped to demand that our belief be supported by proof?

We are delineated by truth and by opinion. In rationalizing the authority over what we perceive as the truth, we adopt delusional strategies in the form of instructions, faulted codes and rituals, legislation and dictates to produce spin-offs of the real. There is nothing in art that does not derive from the world. And yet if it feels a compulsion to lie, it may do so boldly without the need to find an excuse. In the complexities of its

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Heidi image courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (AEI), New York.

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Kirsten Pieroth :
Letter of Inventor . (2004)

Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy :
Heidi . (1992)

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invent [in'vent] **v.t. 1.** create or design (sth. not existing before) : *When was the steam engine ~ed?* (Cl. *discover*, find sth. existing before, but unknown)

2. make up, think of: ~ a *story (an excuse)*.

inventor **n.** person who ~s things.

inventive [in'ventiv] **adj.** able to ~ an ~ive *mind*; ~ive *powers*.

invention [in'venʃən] **n. 1.** [U] inventing: *the ~ of the telephone*; capacity for inventing: *Necessity is the mother of ~ 2.* [C] sth. invented: *the numerous ~s of Edison*; *newspapers that are full of ~s* (invented, untrue stories).

[From The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English]

Johannes Kahrs :
Man with Shadow . (2003)

Michael Borremans :
Shotgun Aesthetics . (2003)

William Karel :
Dark Side of the Moon .
(2002)

Marije Langelaar and
Mark Manders :
Birthday-scene for Jara . (2002)

Sven Augustijnen :
L'école des pickpockets . (2000)