

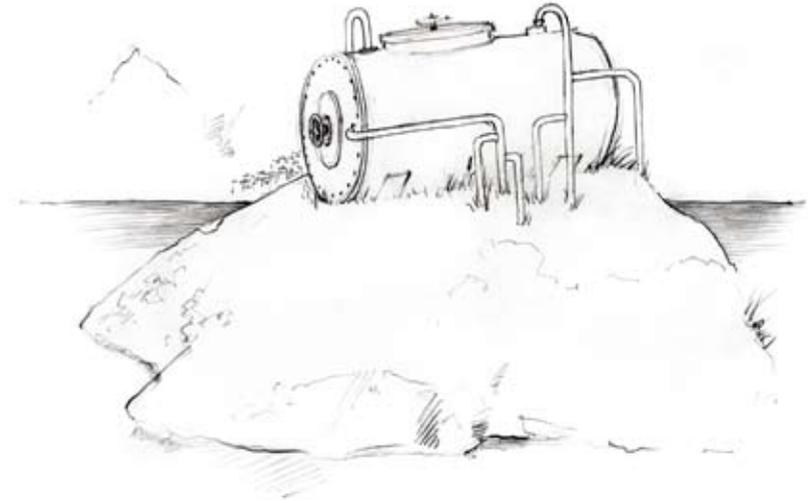
YOU

**FIVE YEARS
PERIODICAL
VOL.1, NO.4**

MUST CHANGE YOUR

LIFE

Illustrations of K. May's "In the Gorges of the Balkans" in collaboration with Police Artist Boris Trobec



The houses line the edge of the basin and a road runs along its lip. Public buildings rise from the water's edge in terraces and at the highest point a large statue looms against the skyline. Tunnels lead from underneath it to a small artificial island in the centre of the lake. The island has a cistern which houses the mechanisms whereby the flow of water is controlled. For centuries, however, the rock basin was empty and no river flowed out of the terrain to water the surrounding lands. During those years the basin appeared to travellers as a gigantic construction built for some indecipherable purpose.

Ussula, K. F. May: "Ardistan", Bamberg, 1909



Ideal Scene Number 78

It is the afternoon and I am at my desk in the studio, the window which overlooks the garden is open and a thunderstorm has just started, the sound of the raindrops are quite dispersed, each drop audible as it falls onto the glass panes of the skylights above. A "crack pop" sound.

The thunder tears and crackles and the church bells ring, a dog barks, it might be Perro. A bird chirrup in the garden. The air is still and dense with moisture, and the scent of the pines wafts in through the open window.

L, who is writing at a desk at the other end of the studio, moves across to the bookshelf and takes a book from a shelf and mutters something in another language to mine and whistles softly.

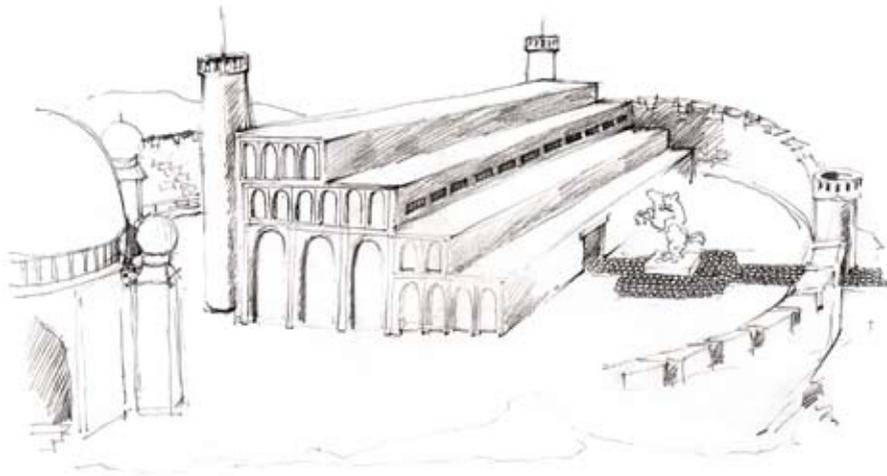
More thunder, Perro barks again and the rain stops, the church bells ring and there is more thunder. A car drives up the lane.

This is a particularly spatial encounter with sounds, each one subtly describing their distance.

I am an open channel of creative energy.

I am the creator of my life.

I am a successful creative being who is able to express my ideas clearly.



On the main square stands a huge carved figure of a horse, the only indication that the people of the city have any traditions or knowledge of art. It appears that the idea of constructing an equestrian statue to honour the famous was introduced from abroad, but no one was able to decide which public figure should be shown riding the horse. It finally became apparent that, if all worthy citizens were to be honoured in this manner, an almost infinite number of equestrian statues would be required and the entire project was abandoned. The horse was left standing as a reminder of the project. As the next ruler demanded that all countries build monuments to him, the city compromised by preserving the wooden horse and having a living man sit on it to represent the ruler. The compromise solution has been retained and every time an important visitor comes to the city, a man takes his place on the wooden horse.

Uxula, K. F. May: "Ardistan", Bamberg, 1909



Illustrations of K. May's "In the Gorges of the Balkans" in collaboration with Police Artist Boris Trobec





Page 1:

Title: *Three Studies: PeeWee, Meat, Billy.* (some textual fragments towards an interpretive study)

CHANNEL 1: PEEWEE

A context: Billy and Tommy introduce Cherry Forever who inspects the naked young men; Steve, PeeWee, Tim, Frank Bell and Meat.

Tommy: *And, ah, Cherry, this is PeeWee.*

Cherry Forever: *I'll say. What do you use for a jockstrap kid, a peanut shell and a rubber band?*

PeeWee: *Hey!*

Cherry Forever: (arm conspiratorially over Tommy's shoulder) *We're gonna have to tie a board across his ass, he's liable to fall in.*

All: laugh

PeeWee: *Bastard, Tommy.*

Cherry Forever: (holding PeeWee's chin) *Save your energy needle-dick. You're gonna need it.*

PeeWee: *Ok*

All: laugh



Page 2:

CHANNEL 2: MEAT

Cherry Forever continues the tour.

Tommy: *This is the pride of Angel Beach, Anthony Tuperello, affectionately known as Meat.*

Cherry Forever: *My God, the boy's deformed...*

(Tim and PeeWee exchange glances, suppress laughter)



Later, in a makeshift bedroom...

Cherry Forever: That boy really is deformed.

Billy: I know.

In the 'waiting' room:

PeeWee: (exclaiming) *She touched your nuts!*

...

PeeWee: *Wait a minute, whoa, whoa, whoa. (gesticulating to others) I got sloppy seconds. You got ticklish thirds. You got filthy fourths. You got fall-in fifths. You got slip pin' and slidin' sixths. And you can scrape her off the mattress, bitch.*

Page 3:

CHANNEL 3: BILLY

The scenario continues in the bedroom.

(Billy jumps up and down on the bed, the bed squeaks rhythmically, Cherry Forever sits on chair)

Cherry Forever: *Oh Billy. Tommy c'mon, get over here. Oh. Oh Billy. Oh Tommy! Keep pumping. C'mon boy.*

(Tommy and John Conklin laugh in background. In 'waiting' room PeeWee and others listen transfixed)

Cherry Forever: *C'mon. Yeah. Oh. Oh yeah. Oh Billy you're so good I can't stand it. C'mon baby. Oh. Oh. Don't stop. Oh (several long moans follow, increasing in duration and intensity, at height of which she indicates to Billy, is handed a stick, breaks nearby window glass)*

John Conklin: (shouting) *What's going on you mother-fuckers. I'll kill you white-boys... you're both dead men... I'll kill you all, you mother-fuckers...*



Page 4:

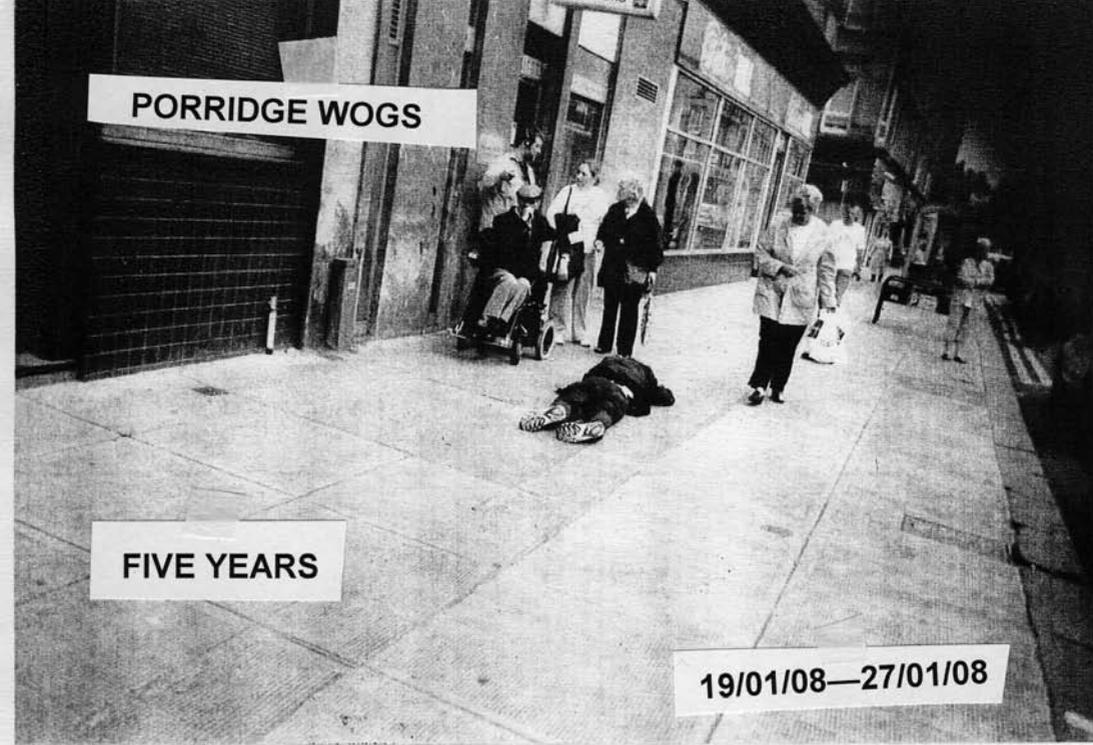
Some precedents:

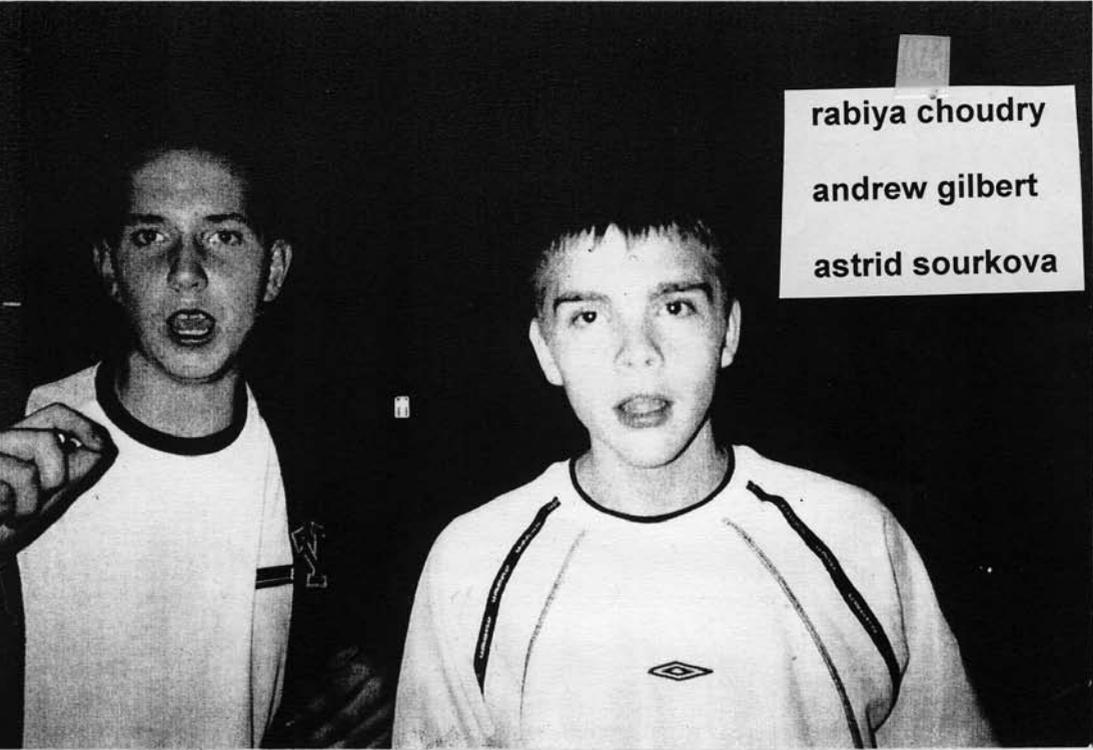
1. Right is not duty. Nothing forces anyone to enjoy except the superego.

2. by being filtered through the sieve of the signifier, the body is submitted to *castration*, enjoyment is evacuated from it, the body survives as dismembered, mortified... the order of the signifier and that of enjoyment are radically heterogeneous, inconsistent; any accordance between them is structurally impossible... as soon as the field of the signifier is penetrated by enjoyment it becomes inconsistent, porous, perforated - the enjoyment is what cannot be symbolised, its presence in the field of the signifier can be detected only through the holes and inconsistencies of this field,





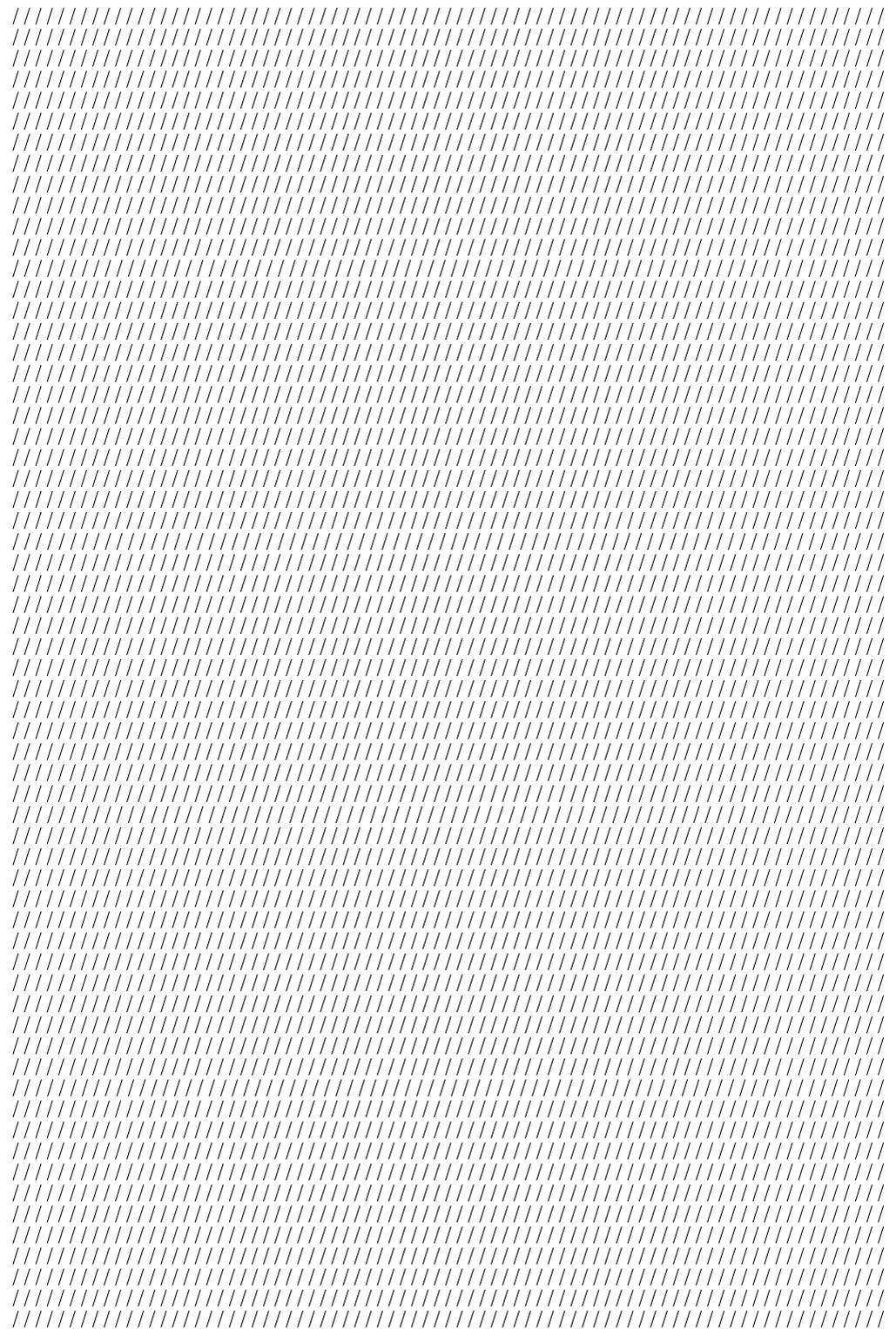




rabiya choudry

andrew gilbert

astrid sourkova





curated by cedar lewisohn

**RULES TO HOLD ON TO... APPROPRIATING APPROPRIATE APPROPRIATION
ORGANISED BY NEIL FERGUSON. GALLERY DISCUSSION RECORDED 10/02/08: NEIL FERGUSON/
ANTHONY GRIFFIN/ CHARLES HARROWELL/ MATTHEW VINCENT-TOWNEND/ EDWARD DORRIAN**

N. When a show or event finishes there always seems a sense of anticlimax... before the work is removed. That's why when we spoke about the possibility of doing something at the end...I thought having a form of discussion about some of our attitudes towards the show and this thing about using and applying rules might add to the event.

I have been flicking through the stuff that people have written regards holding on to rules and perhaps that's also where the inappropriateness of rules may come in. I would like to open up and ask about what aspects of rules are appropriate to what they are doing. It seems to have made people discuss them and talk about the subject and that is interesting.

E. Many pertinent questions we may be unable to answer.

N. Regarding what you have talked about Charlie ...it seems you needed rules in setting rules up to try to break down what were appropriate rules. Rules exist and they are appropriate and inappropriate at the same time, both explicitly and implicitly. So therefore is it a viable question to ask about rules?

C. I think it is a viable question and it is an appropriate question. I think that often when you pose a question about art in general, but also within what I was doing... it's possible to think back to and then in some way get some insight into what you are doing...and in another way you have to be aware that in a way you invent frameworks to fit in with what you might want to call rules.

If you want to talk about appropriateness...I can do that. If you posed a different question I may well come up with similar answers. These are not issues that I don't think about... stuff about what I am doing ...but it is interesting and intriguing to think about them in a sort of post-work way.

I think what is interesting is that you are continually aware that you are framing what you are saying because although no direct brief is given... there is a kind of brief suggested by the words and the language...and inevitably you are influenced by these things and the words you actually use... those words create a framework in themselves... So I certainly do agree with the idea that rules are there and not there at the same time.

N. If you are putting an event together with four people... and rather than give them a title as such... or a theme... what has actually ruled or held this show together? Without giving it a name I was just wondering what type of structure might emerge.

And then... I just wondered if it was structured around rules...how the show might bend rather than be ruled. Because people seem to be operating through "acts of doing something"...and these seem to be quite important and therefore what kinds of reflection on thinking does that generate... perhaps aspects of "doing something" opens up another agenda of how you choose to try and describe what you do.

C. So, let me ask you then...I feel that certain pieces work really well together but I couldn't tell you why and I don't understand why rules or appropriation are the themes that you picked for these four artists. I am not saying it is wrong. I think it works very well... but I don't actually understand why.

N. I think that appropriate appropriation...I realise is very open to interpretation...I think artists need be responsible for what they do...and by actually framing and acknowledging certain attitudes towards borrowing from other disciplines... or manoeuvring within our own particular discipline involves selection...and selection involves rules. What we think we are borrowing from or what we are tak-

ing rules from requires general openness of agenda that I wanted to engage with. I think rules take away a lot of mystery...where you take two kind of activities from often disparate disciplines and merge them together and you have this thing produced...I think that is really exciting and interesting. Decisions have been made, rules applied so I don't think it is quite as mystical as people try to make out to be. E. Who is saying that it is mystical?

I am trying to hang on to what it is you are saying but there seems to be quite a few things that are going on...

1. Rules that are being either applied or not applied and there is a response to these rules either before making the work or after making the work and 2. There are also ideas about appropriation which may or may not necessarily be relevant to the idea of what a rule is.

There is also this ideal that there is a critical insight of critical responsibility regards where you stand if you do appropriate work whether you call it kleptomania or whether you call it klepticism there is this notion that to borrow or to put a piece together must somehow...as I say... must be at a critical level. Is that at all what you are saying?

N. I think I am interested where in a discipline... if you understand about the nature of putting paint on a painting or making an object by accepting what the discipline stands for... you start involving things which may not necessarily be part of that discipline. I think it is very interesting to look at what it is that you are taking in and where it is being borrowed from ...the rules that structure what it is that you are trying out.

When a thought is formed..."That is interesting I'll just drop that in"... I think there is a kind of structure of ethic that I am interested in. It is not from a particularly moral status... it is simply being aware that I am taking something from another action or structure... that seems to lend itself to the way I like to think about making particular things. I think that is often left as a vague notion of feeling or a negated area of understanding that I think could be better defined or described. The kinds of results from merging this with that ...I think it is pretty difficult in many cases. So often the spectator has to come in and work it out...clarity of rules may help.

E. Is this an extended theory of montage that you are talking about?

Sorry, just that particular aspect of saying that there is something that comes from somewhere else and it is placed within this other context.

N. I think rules are about a situation where you track things back... so that the sense of something working or feel that is working can be recognised and evaluated... and in the same way... how to start again or move on if it doesn't do what is expected.

E. The emphasis is on works isn't it?

N. Yes. It strikes me from the things that everyone has written about...that it is very important that the emphasis on the work working comes into it.

E. You say and I am not quite sure how this is put...but it seems to work... is that there needs to be some underlying meaning which needs to be either spoken about or is just part of it?

C. It certainly is that the exhibition as a whole is a work. When you put things together they are different than if you just have them individually...and they are made up of work. I think one of the things that holds them together is perhaps an idea of craft... but I find it very difficult...when we talk about appropriation...to see any kind of work or creation or art as being anything other than a series of appropriations on some level...and it is not possible to say...

for instance paint...it is not possible to paint from nowhere, it is not possible to make something from nowhere. There is no point of view from nowhere. We are all informed by other visual or aural experiences and these go to make up what we are. The harder you try...in a sense...to be original... it is a kind of futile task... but at the same time what you actually make is original... but it is just that it is not everything that goes to the making of it has come out of you.

I do think... going back to craft... that the works share an idea of craft... and craft sometimes seems to get forgotten in some long conversations about art... I feel that is very important.

N. Anthony writes in his text ...“ I work with the plastic but the plastic works with me” ...this is an intriguing kind of dialogue about crafting and the aspect of getting things back.

E. It's a Jackson Pollock kind of thing isn't it?

A. I meant that the rules say this thing is...and I think that... although when you are working on something you may not know what the rules are... although thinking about rules makes you actually think about what processes you are using... rather than inventing the imagined image. And what you are saying about this sort of idea of creativity coming from imagination... and being this kind of mystical starting point...rather than forcing it to happen...actually taking things, then doing things to them to make it happen... I think that by deciding to make something you then set processes going that then lead to the end result or what you think is the end result.

N. I am interested whether there is or is not the nature of crafting is becoming popular again through a closer analysis of what we do. Whether it comes through people being involved in researching craft or driven by a market force ...people seem to respect things that seem to be well made with something going on... but the nature of something going on seems to depend upon the processes you choose to make it work... One's ways of working become increasingly relevant and what working with the material gives back ...

I was just wondering if people in a way set up art systems of investigation almost if you like...an educational agenda. What structures are important?

A. I think when you start off with something it can be about getting this idea... of saying what it is going to be from the very start...these things are going to be this and all this route stuff... when you actually start doing the making...you realise that is not really what I want to do or it doesn't work like that... then I think that then means that you thrive on all these other things that you kind of impose on yourself... you think you ought to be doing... rather than things that you really want to do... that I think you find.

N. This is a situation that a work can move either way... that after having made a few pieces you start going down the same route making the same pieces... where do you go from there? Aren't rules the structures that you move back and forward between? I am sure rules dictate the kind of strategies for a system to work...

I am interested in what important rules a system of working demands and for me... it is intriguing how other people operate to different strategies. How can things hold together? In an exhibition... what way do we work so that people can see what we're doing?

Not just that this is just a piece of plastic that brings things to the work...and it feels quite nice and you have thought about it and it deals with different kinds of issues about moulding plastic... though obviously you can talk a lot about plastic moulding as a consequence.

A. There are things of that sort of characterisation that I have used in a way to hang a rule on... and I have used them as an idea of making a story. I have used these ways of making to form a figurative piece that has this idea of being

a character...so that was a rule that I worked with... and although there are lots of rules to do with the material... there were rules in terms of what it is about.

E. What is slightly lost a little bit... because I rather imagine it was a premise... that there are rules and that becomes part of the piece... and so therefore there is either the response to the strategy to what the system this IS... what it is measured against...and this is exactly its failure. Its process... all these other terms that they use to measure and map out how successfully, how unsuccessfully, how deliberately it deviates from whatever has been set out. I am not quite sure... meaning my slant on it would be... that I was curious about because I didn't know what the work would be like and I was looking for...I don't know an example... such as scores or directions or instructions or here is something that I set myself and I would work within this... and what would be produced would either form its own response to this and be measured against it. I mean in that classic way that work is made, call it conceptual or whatever the actual concrete making of it has to be corresponded to.

It is kind of clearer with yours Neil and made clearer also with the music piece. I'm not so sure about the other ones... Again there is this a relation to agenda, relation to history, relation to grouping, to organisation and all those other things. I am less clear about whether, which in some ways is nice, but which grouping of objects conform to materials rules.

I don't know how explicitly these things needed to be made and also your question about how explicitly the whole show itself needs to be systematic and put together as a reason for doing it. Those are also sensible questions. With the music as well... there's a clearer time indication of time as part of role making performance. That's a vital aspect of working with rules and regulations and that kind of thing can become oppressive.

C. In Neil's work there definitely are rules. In what I see of other work there are rules but they are much less explicit than his and often they are only really there to provide a place from where you can actually start. So in this sense a rule is a set of parameters for a starting point i.e. where you have got something... it's structured in a particular way... and its back to your reaction to it and it allows you to carry on and it may allow you to develop it in some way. These are kind of rules because they allow you to know how you can act out the piece that you are working on... something that says "No" to you... or you do stuff and you throw it away in about a year or so... and there are rules within these... because somehow you know what is wrong and what is right. My rules are much more in that vein than, "it will be this loud, it will be this long, it will be of this frequency". But having said all that all... those questions come to my mind when I am actually doing something and the effects of repetition and stuff... so they are a bit more tacit than say Neil's rules but I know they exist because I can interrogate what I have done and you can only really do that by asking questions that actually explain what the questions are... so they are my rules.

E. Well, again determinacy or indeterminacy... I don't know what your use of musical composition is?

C. Well another thing that I can say in the range that is really important to me. It is often very hard for me...having said that I can't say what those rules are... and it is often very difficult to describe your work either in written form or in oral form because it is so very visual... because English often does things... like indeterminacy or determinacy...and others continue grasping for a more amorphous...a more plastic...a more 2 3 4 way based concept of something...by an aurally approached point of view. So it is often difficult to actually explain. I think probably the reason why humans get up to all this stuff is because we can't just

use language to express some of these ideas so you need to do it a different way.

E. Some of the examples of systemising process... which is quite interesting... is because they are so systematic, they are so rigid and that there is a space which is recognised from your personal beliefs and the person that makes it that there is always going to be a kind of anticipated gap and space which is left open. If it is anticipated... it need not be necessarily this is the explanation of each sort of expressive act. It allows those expressions to occur, occur almost willfully...because of how you set out something to just work itself out or it feels superb or whatever is there this is the result...make up your own sense. I think that's a great deal of... I don't know whether I just sidetracked certain responsibilities... but I don't think it is necessarily the responsibility of saying this is what it is doing that's primarily a concern.

N. Perhaps it may be more interesting to set out to describe what a work is trying to do.

E. Again you are almost talking backwards because your previous response was... well I did this and then I have got to think about what it was. And I kind of thought again of what you were asking us to do or to think about optimistically in the future... and what is the end result that you are talking about it? What manifests itself?

N. I think that is tricky ... because the show is certainly about a lot about different relationships with the mediums we are working with. This again may involve some rather traditional aspects of looking at art and it's production and... but may become clearer by asking... well is there something here that may be relevant through questions about rules... and by trying to analyse, to accommodate this thinking as the way of looking... that promotes these kinds of thinking and acting as being relevant to what artists are actually doing. It is quite possible that what I am talking about may be a route that has been well tread. So if you talk about proposing something...I'm not sure...

E. I am only trying to understand what the show sets out to do actually. That's all. Honestly. I mean I can look at your stuff... and I am thinking here is a set of instructions... here are perimeters that I am going to do... to take this particular grid structure or I am going to use a box available made of... I am going to use a particular type of pen...it is a limited kind of expression...I am going to do it and do it and repeat it and repeat it and repeat it and it is repetition itself that is going to perform some protection of my activity... and whether that conforms itself to some research question... in which case I am not sure... but I get slightly confused over that. It looks familiar but it is different.

N. I am not trying to promote any form of research agenda. It looks at aspects concerning the act of doing where I work on small things that become bigger things through repetition of rule based acts.

E. It is about time spent.

N. The time spent, yes... they are drawings as a time related acts... which also intrigues me about the way other people go about making things.

E. Where does appropriation come into it?

N. Well I think things are generally appropriated, stolen borrowed and these are the start of what can become various artistic activities. Different artists appropriate from different sources and experiences.

E. It is quite obscure because you do have to think...alright is that a bit of Dali?...or is that a bit of Miro?... or are they just actually these recognisable doodles that you are not really concerned about. This is actually quite nice, pleasurable.

A. I think that drawing becomes quite a contrived activity and that anything can be popped into a drawing.

E. But is this a sort of private iconography?

A. Yes, it has to be.

V. You must be trying to avoid drawing anything.

N. Because the feel of drawing is far more interesting for me than handling a camera.

E. When I doodle I kind of doodle like this.

V. When I doodle I draw faces.

N. The method of working is something that really anybody could be doing and I just wish more people would actually take up the opportunity and do it. I find it important to me and it becomes as enjoyable as reading a book or watching the television. If someone said strumming a guitar or playing the piano or doing whatever they do is important to them...fine...drawing is the same for me.

C. How many do you reject and do you reject them because you think bloody hell I have just recreated the Venus de Milo or something?

N. I don't throw any of them away.

E. So you have got a rule.

N. I have that as a rule

E. What is the point of having this sort of supposed rule?

N. Because don't really understand the notion of going back to change things like these in some effort to make them better? Better than what? What is this based on? I think it is based on some form of indoctrination about how to draw. Their rules... They are "of the moment" and that's what they should always be. They are time based pieces. In many ways I should really record the date, the time that defines them as well.

E. It is a kind of classic sort of modernistic aspect to almost get this sort of anthropological kind of thing... to dictate... to try and squeeze out the sense of this notion of self expression, this notion of "Too much" ...

N. I don't always get what the work is about... individual activities are good but I don't want to place too much importance on any act. I think the activities of doing something over a number of years becomes quite interesting to me in the way that it builds something.

E. It's pretty large.

N. But I think the simplicity of the stuff is quite accessible... even as doodles?

E. Through repetition.

N. Perhaps...But Matt's pieces are also an investigation into how people behave... in their relation to a box in a room... and their movements going in and looking out. So we have got a real structure of how you might choose to look at the world.

V. Yes, but I think that is within a gallery sense. I keep thinking of it as a "crap theme park" ... like a farmhouse type thing, by crawling into it. It is childish in that sense but I mean...if it was meant to be put outside in the landscape and unless you know about it...how you would actually interact with it physically...but it is more of a case of how you would react to it if you saw it, how you would interpret it being there.

N. You imagine where these things go ...You target sites constructed over the last 20 years like motorway bridges and various stuff and you have a very clear agenda...you know you are looking for specific places... that you are selecting with a particular kind of observation in mind and your pill-box is a product of those plans.

V. I think that what I like about those places is that my shelters do not look out of place in them. For example if you put them in a sort of heritage town like Winchester it would be in the wrong place...it wouldn't look right. It's obviously looks like something someone has brought in and placed there to get a reaction... whereas I think if you were to put it somewhere...on one of those more nowhere places, if you like...people wouldn't necessarily interpret it as an alien object. They might look like it is meant to be part of the landscape and that's also the reason for using that chipboard material... I mean you can look out the windows here and there's hoarding all round that building site made

out of it ...so it is something that is familiar to these kinds of places with a sort of changing landscape.

For example this week I went out to do some photography around Hanger Lane...the place isn't important so much as the landscape is... just off the North Circular... it's suburban, it is a car based culture etc...

But there are lots of traffic islands and stuff which have objects not dissimilar to this. I surprised by the number of them... they are kind of like substations with a wooden box containing some pegs and bits of electrics.

E. They would be a temporary sort of structure... so if they were in the middle of Winchester something is being dug up...but here the gallery it is obvious you are talking much more about the etiquette of engaging with things...Should I get on my hands and knees and crawl underneath this?

V. When I was thinking about it in the gallery space...the only thing that sprung to mind was like it being in a showroom or something because it is proposed like a condominium or something with those kind of models where someone comes round and explains to you what it is going to be like...and this is it...before it gets put somewhere.

E. I think there is a lot of work which kind of looks like it is taken from real life and that its irony is still asking questions about what the object is or is this about sculpture ?. That's almost something from the 60's or something like that. That is that a great deal of this is to do with what it is we are engaging with. What is this for? What does this object belong to?

V. The text... which again...looks like it is out there in the world... is already shrouded and it is a sort of mystery if you put it there on the wall. Why is it there? Well if it is going to be in the gallery it is going to be taken in a certain way so I wanted to have some kind of text that would misdirect people.

E. Misdirect?

V. Misdirect...Yeah...for example I describe that text as gobbledegook really... It is not my voice...I was trying to write it as if somebody else had written it...For example this group...

E. Are they a cult?

V. They are cult but they are supposed to be a slightly esoteric kind of group taking a psychological route. There is a lot of stuff that you might describe as cult religious groups on the internet...they like to adopt a pseudo scientific approach.

E. Like artist's rules?

V. Yes exactly, a sort of status where they are trying to create something modern.

E. Like us...they are very sincere about it though.

C. I just assumed that the two things had been conceived together and this was the second part of it. At the very beginning...and it was never really designed to be in a gallery...it was just designed to be in those spaces...and it isn't to do the family car...as I would want to buy one of your combos as an outline in the showroom.

This is a sideline but when I was in the gallery during the show...a gentleman... a Japanese gentleman actually, came in and he was here a long time like 45 minutes or something. I think this is very strange... because alright it is quite interesting... but 45 minutes... extraordinary...and as he was leaving he said "Sorry I was so long I was just really concentrating on that text. It is not my first language but I felt I really had to read it."

So, he was obviously reading it...

V. Out of everything here it is probably the most appropriated thing.

I have read lots of architectural and psychological stuff that has been written... It was written in the 70s about kinds of architecture... that could form by a means of social control... and then also looking at other cults...if you like Scientology and stuff... but they are desperately trying to say

as little as possible on their websites. I wanted to find something about the aliens or whatever they believe in...they don't talk about that.

What they do have is kind of popular science and cod psychology dressed up on their website. It is so you wouldn't really know that they are a religion as such... It is all some sort of self help group.

E. So your point is what?

V. I don't know what my point is. My point is from this information, do you mean?

E. Is it a spoof? It is quite close to what other art activities are anyway...Here is this "outsiderism". It is quite poignant really because so many of these little artist run spaces or various guises like that are gloriously trying to maintain this oblique point from the institution...

N. You get groups like "Superflex" in the Netherlands who go out to Tanzania and build big methane gas tanks and they take them back and put them in a gallery as sculptures... You get types of groups that are operating using electricians, joiners and all kinds of skills to work as art groups.

There is also a kind of irony when placing these boxes in the kind of social areas that interest you...the path that goes beyond the supermarket and then stops, the road just stops...all spaces that have been prepared and they are ready. They are ready for something but nobody actually seems to know quite what they are ready for.

E. Are they not about context...so where do you put that information... so you have got them all here... or your photographs where... I mean it's like outreach in some way ... I don't know... how do you relate to them? I think this is a classic avant-garde type of problem about where do you place things which are outside the institution when everything is institutionalised regardless...that's why it is such a dilemma. Where do you escape to?

V. I think it all came from kinds of thinking about the idea of utopia or dystopia...It interests me in these landscapes... but then it also interests me about art groups...they are a kind of utopian idea that people come together and work together and create something for the greater good or whatever.

E. Is that what utopia is? I always thought the thing about utopia was that there was no such place. That it was always... was a critical...

V. Oh yes

E. It was always ironic.

V. But you can talk about utopia and people are sincere in their ideas, people genuinely believe that it is attainable.

E. But because it is not utopian may be it is something about thinking there is a better thing to do.

V. In terms of religion it makes me tend to think that there is a better place to go, that there is a use of language... transcending...So it was I guess...if you build an object like that then there is an idea that it could be for somebody... you are trying to help the community or something... trying to do something... they are building a shelter for someone who is homeless. There is also this sort of naive thing going on ...

E. Can you think of an example?

V. Someone building shelters or cheap unattainable houses for instance...

C. But what is different is that it is just cheap...

V. There are architects or whatever who like to make things out of these "port-a-cabin" structures.

E. But I guess here in this gallery... is it art? ...or is it a bogus the question... too tedious to raise?

V. I was obviously aware that if this was in a gallery... it is obviously considered in terms of art...but one thing I wanted to do was to try and give the idea that it is not just art... or it is not just meant to be an art piece suspended in a gallery.

E. Does that work?

V. No not really.

E. It works in with all these problems that have been set here as being appropriate or inappropriate. Are you doing the right thing? What should you be doing or is it right? I guess these are ethical questions.

N. I think that a few questions also lie in the nature of the actual space itself. The idea of a 6th floor space raises questions of what goes into this space and how people behave when they come to this space...they come here as a gallery...

E. I have to say this is the second pill-box we have had in the gallery. This one is more substantial than the other... you can get outside this one...

V. When people come in on their own they won't get in... maybe because they think it is a sculpture to be looked at. It has got sculptural elements I suppose... it has got that tassel thing hanging from it.

C. I found unless you actually invited people to get in...then because there is a rule of "don't touch" in galleries...there is a rule for you.

V. I think it is important in a sense that it looks like poor quality because if it was really beautifully finished people would certainly not go inside...

E. I am not sure it is doesn't look beautiful...I am not an expert.

V. The thing I mean to come back to about rules or something is that if I continue making boxes and I wouldn't want them to be more inventive than an interesting kind of architectural object ... my understanding is that they are made to end up in a landscape or a landscape project...and left obviously somewhere.

E. The object is a photograph really...

V. But I'm also thinking and having different ideas and the ideas are mapping out quicker than I can make them... so maybe I have to make these as models.

E. But then they would be sculptures wouldn't they?

It would get too hard but to work out whether it is sculpture or not. It is in the gallery that that's what we want... that doesn't mean compromise. After that it doesn't matter whether it's a plug, a lamp or what.

V. I suppose there is also the consideration of how well I made them.

E. Why?

V. Because if they are made out of cardboard like the model I made for this one when I was working out how to make it. It was made out of a of pizza box.

E. Well you are talking about them being permanent?

V. I am not bothering about the particular rationale but the idea is that they exist in the landscape and they survive in the landscape so if they need to be well made to do so. That is my intention...Also there are questions of how they should be made on a practical level...like making this with insulation so that people could potentially use it straight away... rather than it just being sort of a fairly flimsy object which looks like a shelter but probably nobody would want to spend a night in.

C. You would rather be in there than being outside. That could be an alternative.

E. What like a sculpture park with a dry stone dyke?

V. This would be an urbanised version.

C. Generally they are harmonious with their surroundings and what they are surrounded with and the way this actually works...just for once... is that they probably notice something unattractive more than people might generally do.

V. I think the box would actually blend in...even in the Hangar Lane road system. The odd person might notice and question its purpose...if you notice anything in a road system... but 90% of people won't. They will drive right by.

E. Artists might notice.

So this is an investment in public sculpture for vandalism?

V. I was actually disappointed by the first one I made as when I last visited it it hadn't been vandalised. I sort of wanted it to have been burnt down or demolished or something.

N. Where was that one placed?

V. It was under a motorway bridge.

E. That's intriguing.

V. It could be the way that people want to live. Somebody might actually ask what sort of person lives there?...having no sense of permanence... But beyond the photograph the one thing that I wanted to happen by leaving it somewhere was to start to trigger off a narrative where one person sees it and that moves on to another person saying, "I saw this strange thing on the bridge today" and then I don't know maybe that's created a very small kind of ripple.

A. Do you mean to set that up on a website?

V. Well I was thinking more of a Wikipedia page about the sculpture cults rather than a cult page.

A. There is a lot of cult people who make up fake cults.

V. I am sure that most cults are just fake...there are certainly a lot of them.

N. All of this forms a system, because a photograph changes what it is.

V. It is an incomplete process that we are in the middle point of... you asked for something in the show and it is now around the middle point i.e. it hadn't actually been built and I hadn't taken any photographs. So what I had to do was build the shelter and bring it in here and put it in here. But then it is actually nice because you are building an object that someone can get into and seems to work well in a gallery.

E. Well, apart from anything else it is doing... you have come up with an idea and made it.

Was it the idea of the whole project for you to come up with an idea...that you then go about either realising it ...whether it is realised... by the way that you choose to deviate into something else? That particular process between concept and construction allows for what kind of show?

N. I think that would be a different show. I think it would require a different kind of organisation and it would be a different type of thing.

E. Did you see complete objects when you visualised the event?

N. No I saw peoples different systems of working that would suit the kinds of areas of questioning that could be used to put an event together. There's a vast difference in approach, but the directions of those approaches would actually create a dialogue in itself...yet also be held together as a structured event...by addressing their enquiries into their own rules of making.

E. But the structures and the systems are distinct to each person rather than to the construct of the whole show.

N. Yes...that's what I wanted.

E. I wondered whether you envisaged something constructed as a whole out of parts which were semi assembled, which you knew or anticipated...devised around a question regardless of their own sorts of ways of working.

N. ... setting up a set of rules.

E. Yes that's what I was thinking...

N. I didn't think that setting up a strict rule set was possible in the time frame. I think that it would be a really interesting concept if you give everyone the same set of rules and then see how they actually interpret them in the media or process of their choice. However it is really rewarding to see what has actually been put together through the questions posed.

I think what you suggest becomes more curatorial than an organisational brief and that's not what I wanted to do.

This is the result the group of people who I knew to be disparate in their approaches to making things considering

how they operate. I knew what these people do but I was not quite sure what it was going to look like bringing them together... but whatever... I was going to allow it to happen together.

E. Is that fairly classic role?

Or maybe classic is generally the wrong word to use but the way that curators like to imagine themselves as fantastic assemblers of creative talents...

N. I maybe think of my situation as being a facilitator of a situation. I don't feel I have never set out to be the director of the show and nothing was ever absolute about how the show would look... I asked for certain questions to be addressed or considered and this was the agenda.

I think points you make about setting a rule rather than addressing ones own system of rules about rules of beauty and rules to play around with would require a different organisation.

I feel that this event was about highlighting one's understanding of personal rule sets and structures. I take the view that you can pull things together through a commitment to considering a general aim and I know that it will work because I can look at it and there have been any number of exhibitions doing events that were not totally dissimilar to this...That's ok.

What has been quite interesting is that the lack of huffing and puffing ...in essence I would still regard this as being quite a simple event.

V. I think it works. I don't know why you think it works as a collection...but I think there is some sort of harmony if you want to use that term. I am getting back to my happy vibe. I thought there was this vague hallucinogenic quality to the whole thing.

C. Yes...it is very interesting

V. A vague hallucinogenic quality... well I suppose anything hallucinogenic would be vague... That's probably just me projecting what I want.

C. That makes sense with me. Of all the words that you use to describe the sort work and sticks them together... I think that is quite a good one... I like the notion of "vaguely hallucinogenic".

N. We have all completed art work and I think that's all we wanted to do.

One of the reasons that I have tried to ask people to put pieces together...and we have texts ...was done in the spirit of my interpreting what 5 Years may be trying to do ...

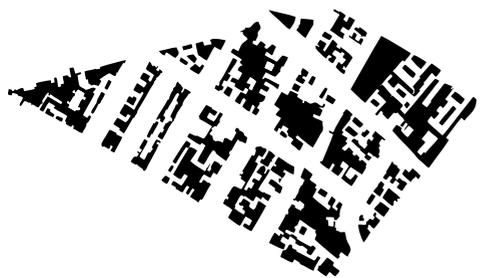
I think any discussion or dialogue offers positive opportunities because for with every show or second show that somebody sits down and says something even for five minutes... might provide greater insight and therefore real pertinence to the event.

E. There are always ongoing discussions about just when or how things are documented and in what manner documentation is used. Whether that becomes part of your process of working...well...I mean what we are doing is asking you to do something that you are doing anyway... is to contribute to a debate and our journal ...as well the blog... which is obviously something you can continue updating and putting stuff on. So even if the show itself is on a relatively short time it tries to extend and change the way that we think... so it is interesting in what you are doing.

N. I think kinds of debate taking place here regards our various differences in crafting and making taking place offers wider debate about what we actually think we are doing... and I think people want to know more about this. That in itself frames the kind of questions we need to address...

THE INVIS- IBLE KIEZ





1.

The last 3 or 4 years (or the last two for Mac users like myself) have seen a noisy and relentless explosion in geo-locative data mapping.

Google Earth, through its various iterations, has established itself as a stable, widely accessible platform with a huge variety of APIs delivering a vast amount of commercial and cultural data, from Californian real estate, to excerpts from Google Book Search and embedded YouTube video. As the accessibility and near ubiquity of the interface has grown so has the sheer diversity of information presented on this platform.

Since almost every explorer of this virtual world is also capable of contributing to its authorship the experience of using Google Earth, with multiple layers and KMZ files enabled, is already one of sheer data overload. Layer upon layer of information is presented to the user in a disorientating matrix in which various narratives, agendas and subjectivities collide.

As we move inevitably toward the full integration of social networking sites and local e-commerce, it seems sometimes that our impulse to map the territory, to overwrite it with reams of information (a process already automated by the Application Programming Interface) is a kind of virtual land grab. Inevitably as data is added it is also erased.

We have already seen and forgotten the creation of a 5metre high real-life Google place marker in Gübber Strasse. The virtual and the actual have a tendency to bleed one into the other, just as the symbolic aspires to the real. Perhaps in the strange new discourse of simulation we risk forgetting that the map is not the territory.

The Invisible Kiez proposes no antidote for this emergent condition of data density fatigue. Virtual space is already colonised to the point of overpopulation and the nightmare of infinite regression described by Borges in "On Exactitude in Science", in which he imagines an empire where the science of cartography has become so exact that only a map on the same scale as the empire itself will suffice, seems, already, to be at hand.

Rather than propose a cure, The Invisible Kiez seeks merely to observe correlations in these laval flows of constantly written and overwritten data sets in the hyper-local. It seeks to explore narrative as a three dimensional "virtual text object". A narrative structure that has multiple points of entry and exit, a secret, subjective psychogeography of a specific Berlin neighborhood.

2.

I first visited Wrangel Kiez in 1993. Then its geography, along with that of the rest of Berlin, had only recently been subjected to a violent upheaval after the fall of The Wall.

Wrangel Kiez's geographical situation had been an extreme one. Virtually surrounded on three sides, the Oberbaum Brücke closed off, along with Treptow to the South East, the area between Bethanien Damm and The Landwehr Kanal was a forgotten corner of what was then SO36.

In the history and mythology of Berlin, themselves violently re-written any number of times, this small corner of the city is further subdivided by ghost architectures.

The route of the Luisenstädtische Kanal still provides a boundary as does Görlitzer Park, in the nineteenth century the site of a station which provided the city's first connection to Vienna and the reason for Wrangel Kiez's coming into being. The line of the U1, which in '93 still terminated at Schliescher Tor, follows in part the line of the old city wall and all these geographies and their various erasures continue to contribute to a sense of place.

Since 1993 there have, of course, been many changes but the relentless gentrification and renovation that has swept some other parts of the city seem here to be occurring at a, slightly, more benign pace.

Nonetheless it is the nature of ghostgeography that it is fragile. Constantly subject to erasure, memory loss and overwriting. The MediaSpree poses a threat to the thriving but delicately poised community of Wrangel Kiez as rents rise and the inevitable displacements of renovation and aggressive new property development become apparent.

The Invisible Kiez seeks the virtual reinstatement of these historical geographies both through the integration of existing historical archives and data sets and as visualised in schematic three dimensional models.

The tiered structure, seen in the earlier illustrations, is formed of historical Berlin maps each of which will be populated with geo-specific data and links. As vertical data correlations and juxtapositions emerge, along with horizontal ones, the anticipated model is that of a three dimensional cats cradle narrative.

It is in the lacunae in this narrative, its inevitable gaps and omissions, that perhaps some new insight into the city is to be gained. As Berlin marches toward a new future of corporate integration, manifested in glass and concrete, there is an ever greater need to understand the idea of the city in ruins. Of liminal space and Neimand's Land as a resource in which alternative economies and social structures can flourish.

3.

The Invisible Kiez observes these territorializations of both real and fictional space at street level. Specific evidence of claim and counterclaim are sought in the emergent language and counter texts of the graffitists, taggers and fly posters.

In this continual overwriting and undersigning, defacement and decoration (often re-appropriating space seized for the commercial imperatives of advertising) the city's subtexts, the secret ebb and flow of its desires, the city's dreaming, can be read.

The Invisible Kiez is, in part, a plea that the texture and texts of the city should not be subsumed beneath the imperatives of uber-scale corporate architecture, with its hostile surfaces and digital advertising screens. Whilst recognising that nostalgia is a trap and dynamic change is the very essence of the city, the past, here of all places, can never and (must never) be erased.

To quote from Azzari's Futurist Architectural Manifesto of 1927,

"The cities of the future will contain no useless garbage of trees and flowers or loathsome promiscuity of animals, but geometrical buildings in glass and armed cement."

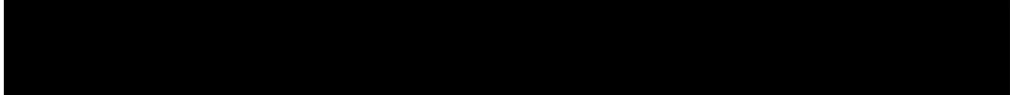
In the 21st Century surely it is imperative to escape the false inevitability of this teleology, to foster flatter economies of re-use and re-appropriation. New, virtual, low-footprint architectures, temporary, improvised and contingent, as opposed to yet more redundant office space.

These architectures can be as ephemeral as words and images, mini city states of data rather than bricks and mortar.

The writing is already on the wall.

David Selden. Berlin 2008

The Invisible Kiez is a KMZ project for Google Earth which will be presented at Art Claims Impulse on Lübbener Strasse, Berlin. You can follow its development at invisiblekiez.blogspot.com.

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- 1 Image: Simon Wells
3-6 **YOU MUST CHANGE YOUR LIFE** Louisa Minkin
7-10 **PRESENT STATE** Jasmina Cibic (p7 & 10) Pete Moss (p8 & 9)
11-14 **GLITCH** Simon Wells
15-18 **THREE STUDIES: PEE WEE, MEAT, BILLY.** Francis Summers
19-22 **I DON'T THINK I CAN FIT IT IN** Alex Schady
23-26 **PORRIDGE WOGS**
Rabiya Choudry, Andrew Gilbert, Astrid Sourkova (curated by Cedar Lewisohn)
27-32 **RULES TO HOLD ON TO...APPROPRIATING APPROPRIATE APPROPRIATION** Organised by Neil Ferguson. Discussion took place on 10th February 2008 at Five Years. Participants: Neil Ferguson, Anthony Griffin, Charles Harrowell, Matthew Vincent-Townend, Edward Dorrian
33-35 **THE INVISIBLE KIEZ** David Selden

The purpose of this periodical is to provide a parallel space to Five Years gallery: artists who have exhibited at Five Years are invited to publish new work relating to their gallery show. Five Years will publish four times annually. Each issue will cover three months in the exhibition programme and will include a written piece by a guest contributor. For further information and documentation of the exhibitions programme please refer to the website and blog.

FIVE YEARS

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