Michael Baers
SELECTED WORK
FOR PUBLICATIONS
2005 - 2010
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HEAVY TRAFFIC PRESS #1
MICHAEL BAERS is an American artist who lives in Berlin. Since 2004 he has produced numerous publication projects for exhibitions as well as contributing to magazines and publication initiatives. His work has been exhibited throughout Europe and North America. While addressing a broad range of topics, Baers’ work is characterized by an interest in the discrepancy between ideological (mythic) knowledge and historical veracity.
I started making comics close to eight years ago. The proverbial light bulb-over-the-head moment came during a stillborn attempt to work with some of the Situationist’s detourned comics produced during May ’68, an effort that occupied me for several months. Sitting in frustration at my drawing table one winter day, I thought to myself, “why don’t I just make my own comics?” In retrospect, it is difficult to understand why the thought had not arrived earlier, considering the different media I had worked—film, writing, drawing—all converge in the comic form. As Harvey Pekar once famously said, “Comics are just words and images—you can do anything with words and pictures.”

In the next 18 months I made several photocopied zines and one offset publication before, in the fall of 2005, I received my first offer to contribute to someone else’s publication—a newsprint tabloid edited by Carlos Motta and Julieta Aranda facetiously titled Arts & Leisure. I hesitate in confessing that I was so unversed at the time in the particulars of commercial graphics that I mailed the originals—which subsequently disappeared into the postal system for another six months—forcing the editors to adapt the digital photos I had quickly snapped prior to mailing as best they could. Since that time, I’ve learned to be more careful, and have contributed work without incident to a variety of publications, from the Dutch journal Fucking Good Art, to the now-defunct Danish art magazine, SUM, to Chto Delat? (What is to be done?), the e-flux journal and others besides.

It is not difficult to recall the frustrated and aimless feeling that plagued me in the years before I discovered my métier; it is less easy to remember the feeling of clarity and purpose with which I set out in my experiment to see what I could do with comics. While I remember fondly the certitude with which I once worked, the feeling now is indistinct. It is like recalling the limitless vistas of a desert in the midst of a dense jungle canopy. The accumulated habits of working have muddied my vision—or so it seems to me at present. I decided recently it might be useful to put some of the works I have done for various magazines and publication initiatives together in order to see where I have been, and perhaps gain a clearer vision of where I might be going.
Vernissage Sur le Monde
by Michael Baxa

A Friday evening...

In the city, the hustle and bustle of daily life continue unabated. The gallery scene, with its own unique rhythm, is a reflection of the ever-changing landscape of art.

The gallery space fills with people. The viewing public, the gallery's constituency, has absorbed the art as a consequence of the space's transformation, from aesthetic reflection to possibility.

These artists present tell a new story about life. They sense they are participating in something bigger...

In the eyes of the latter, the gallery assumes the disposition of disinterestedness—will they like what is on view? Will they want to purchase it, thereby fulfilling the logic of the commercial gallery?

While the galleries and collectors enjoy the spectacle, knowing it adds to the work's attractiveness. Capital can be either discreet or obvious as the artist dictates...

Later, they may experience it vicariously through critiques or glossy catalogues. After the object itself has been withdrawn from circulation...

And what of the others not in a position to buy? They possess the art with their eyes, catch its internal logic, make judgments.
The desire is manifested in billboards.

Television commercials...

The desire, driving capital in all its spectacular manifestations, operates similarly to the motivation of sight in the gallery space: in the void of space, something is always absent, something is always indeterminate.

Is this where the logic of the modern metropole yells and the art gallery are homologous?

Is it the irreversibility of the object of desire that imposes this?

In the gallery, the sandwich is a tree.

Different nationalities bring to the situation their own iteration of the opening's established norms.

Throughout the developed world, the same situation is playing out tonight.

As if they were the same language event while speaking in different tongues.

The art and the sandwich have this in common: a context, a support, and a specific clientele.

Around the world a chain of desiring bodies wrap themselves around the images of surplus-value production.

Later, they will go to a nice restaurant for a late supper.
Meta-Comics Presents: THE SUITCASE ARTIST

Permit me to introduce myself. My name is Michael Bears, an American living in Berlin. I used to make big installations, but now I consider myself a suitcase artist.

Describing the suitcase's ubiquity in contemporary art, Irit Rogoff calls this signifier of mobility, displacement, and duality "a split trace of meaning within specific contexts of dislocation, half but there half not that..."

"To paraphrase Derrida," but my concern with the suitcase as a signifier is as much a function of its utility as its symbolic value. Let me tell you about how I came to make this work: it all started one afternoon when I met to discuss the special Berlin issue of Fucking Good Art with its editors...

Berlin is full of artists going here, going there. We're privileged in that way, no? Most people are stuck some place, go to their job, and that's it. We can travel around.

Yeah, but this isn't so different from being a business traveler: you go somewhere, sit in a hotel room, do your work, come home. Maybe the conversation at business dinners is more interesting, but maybe not.

In our last issue I asked Catherine David about globalization in art, about this tendency for artists to, as I put it, leave their own sphere and collect the strange images of another culture. In response she said, tourism is not art.

Yes, in her book Min-bin Kwon talks about this phenomenon of the "coupled" artist, the non-commercial, site-specific artist going from show to show, making their intervention often about a specific social problem—and repeating this procedure, following a logic similar to commercial franchising...
But it occurs to me that as tensions between the developed western world and Asia and the developing countries become exacerbated, that suitcase artists from the west will no longer be viewed by their hosts in the same way they view themselves—as ambassadors of intellectual freedom and rationality, but ever more as instrumental tools.

But then there's the opposite situation, where foreign artists move to Europe and become, on the one hand, in certain situations, signifiers of multiculturalism and inclusivity, while also participating in a certain rationalized concentration of producers, centralizing cultural life within a few big western cities.

Duchamp's Bofort-et-valise epitomizes this special status where container and contents are fused together in a moment of a technical Modernism of mobility and plunder.

Between functional object and ready-made, between appropriation from inside and emancipation from inside, the suitcase has a privileged place in the history of art production.

Arman's poulettes, according to Benjamin Buchloh, correct the structural paradigm inherent in the Duchampian ready-mades, singularity by bequeathing the entire galaxy of objects with this status.

But this status is not without its dark side: some of Arman's accumulations resemble other historical markers of modernity—automats of belonging left at Nazi concentration camps.
...on the suitecase wall display on view in the Great Hall of Ellis Island.

An emphasis on mobility among artists in the post-war era gives further evidence of structural homologies between high art and mass culture. A traveling salesman log pervades George Maciunas's Flux Kita.

As it does in Robert Filliou's interest in Legitimate Gallery (mobile gallery utilizing a wheelbarrow).

...on the performance, Daniel Spoerri gave at the Cologne house of an unnamed architect involving works of art transported from Paris in a suitecase, an account of which appears in Autism's Additional Note of entry 62 of his An Armadillo Topography of Chance.

Celebrations of mobility have, given way recently to the expressions dilution, yet internal contradictions persist. Thematic exhibitions such as 2003's "Trash of Friday" of the ICA Philadelphia.

...or last year's "Universal Experience: Art Life and the Tourist's Eye" at MCA Chicago aim to critique tourism and mobility while leaving its structural logic unquestioned—fulfilling it, rather, in the choices indicated by its roster of participating artists—Robert Tistewja, Doug Aitken, Mauricio Catapan, Thomas Hirschhorn, Taillia Deen, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, and Avish Kocio, among others.

In its attempt to evoke the western subject's sense of placelessness... In a world of advanced transportation and communication, where international terms of culture increasingly prevail, war (local and global capital).

Yet, while a utopian impulse persists, attempts to drag art out of the museum and into everyday life are burdened with a new set of problems, or rather, a new set of structurally determined contexts and contradictions which accompany artistic interventions in "real life."

Meanwhile, cultural tourism in its relation to community-based art practice might be thought of as a local consequence of the transition to a privatized, global economy. Museums have "clients" and marketing campaigns.

According to Greg Sholette:

"Museums are foundations now claim to nurture art as social activism, multiculturalism drives the cultural tourism industry and what remains of public funding otherwise call on artists to end their isolation and become civi servants. (At the same time, the idea of autonomy implies that art, as well as labor, can stand alone and be self-sufficient from the monarchical class.)"
Just as artists and art workers in their modes of operating here increasingly come to resemble business travelers, I recall the question—shaped around a sharp black suitcase—posed at a conference in Lund, Sweden: "Was the airport shortly after giving his presentation, en route to another conference.

One could argue the developments sketched above are the byproduct of a new internationalism in the arts. But one must ask: when this new Internationalism benefits? Probably different interests are at stake, are in conflict. But why do they keep from being structurally arrested in a similar direction?

In this international cultural economy, the status of "migrant labor" is actually something to strive for, both as a supplement to irregular income and for possibilities to execute and show work, etc. When one has a justified view of commercial galleries, it's actually one of the few options available, consistent with certain other dubious political mechanisms aside.

With that in mind, when I moved back to Berlin, I brought with me a special suitcase to transport my studio. A blue cardboard, hand-crafted model made of molded plastic.

Within its bowels, I can fit a lightbox.

Canon 100mm macro lens.

Drawing paper.

Digital camera, research material, clothes.

Visual transformer, a bottle of wine or a gift for my host.

My suitcase, my mobile studio, enables me to engage with all sorts of situations and environments, contexts. In fact, I used it just the other day when, after having an earlier notice to temporarily vacate my accommodations while under deadline to finish this work. I found myself using it to transport my studio from Weeze, the UK, to Rekjavik on the U-Ashen.

But how, if I sincerely want to make "political" art under such circumstances, do I avoid acting like an NGO or otherwise replicating acting in concurrence with the prevailing logic of a cultural world that seems increasingly attached to a project of domesticating radical political impulses wrapping and immobilizing them in the seductive cloaks of cultural legitimacy?

The implication of the suitcase as micro-scale, necessary appearance for the global artist traveling from one place to another in precisely, to quote Derrida, that it remains that not there, half not there, that it is an artist to retain a certain pragmatism, normative relation to place, and, by extension, to others. A vertiginous loss of the markers by which we orient ourselves in relation to a Cartesian grid is kept at bay. My suitcase is kind of protection from war in a last vestige of home. But it also significantly, a reduction of the cargo hold or packing crate.

In Geller's Lexicon, his two protagonists return from war to their girlfriends carrying a single suitcase, promised "all the world's treasures" to fight for the king. The viewer knows it's an empty promise when the term "spoil of war" has been rendered obsolete in the west, at least for the common foot soldier. He might be able to bring home a trophy or two, but not spoil those reserved for the people who don't fight in war.

At first the girls are angry, thinking their boyfriends have been duped, but,0us.

In the suitcase we got some surprises.2
In their shack, Ulysses and Eugene show the girls all the world’s treasures—photographs organized by category. Architectural marvels. Natural marvels. Transportation. Ulysses replies, “Give it to Eugene. He’s a bricoleur.”

“Later, their emulsion spent, Vanil picks up a photograph from the floor. Not the Panamanian. It’s a nude!”

Dizzy with the enormity of their wealth, they toss the photographs in the air. When we went. These are the deads. When do we get the real things? In another context (that of a real war), Godard made use of the phrase... Just an image. Not a just image.

To describe his ambivalent feelings about the efficacy of the photographic image, can we relate this to how Catherine David says tourism isn’t art?

To quote Guy Debord:

Today, wars of armistice have been supplemented by wars of civilization. The civilized world, its systems of transportation, industry, and recreation have been wedded into their natural exploitation. Neatly applied. Images, two play their part.

War photographs and photographic war. Today one might be more likely to consider today’s soldier. Instead of returning home carrying a suitcase, going off to war with one.

And heading toward that exact spot at that instant!

To my knowledge, culture workers get no special dispensation nor have any innate privilege in this situation.

THE END
I came to Christiania in early March, living here for about a month, I observed the daily police patrols, the clandestine hash economy. The pervasive uncertainty about the state and city authorities' plan to 'normalize' Christiania. Was it out of blind panic or cynical self-interest that politicians objected to Christiania? Was there an alternative view? Was there in fact the government's motivation that generated the pervasive paranoia of urine? That's how I felt.

Near the little island I found a half-submerged barrel flying a Christmas flag. This is an image of Christiania or an image in Christiania?

On one side of the lake, I saw a man walking on the ice, having a flight when I approached. Its wings made an ominous sound coming off the ice.

One day I stumbled by Emmers' Weisbom's house. A young woman was there—Lisa, Mette Enemark, as I remember, tending her room. I threw her a cigarette.

We agreed to collaborate. At first, our first meeting, Lisa brought her by: 'The image.' I was also thinking of: 'We're as if Christiania needs to be emaciated in a mental image that can be projected onto the physical world.' Maybe the conflict with the government is a contest of images. The government wants to impose its own image on Christiania.

Lisa had a detective agency. Previously she had been into mystery involving a masked woman who Lisa's collaborator thought was in need of a little excitement. Now she wanted to move into a vacant trailer in Christiania's New Forrest neighborhood, optimistically placing her whole thing out front.

One could describe the image as a representation of utopian counter-ideology. For instance, this phrase: 'Christiania is what Festival' term heterotopias, a kind of effectively created utopia. These mirror society while returning images from past urban experience.

Place like Christiania are what illustration manifest. 'Festival' terms heterotopias, a kind of effectively created utopia. These mirror society while returning images from past urban experience.

Reflections of Christiania can be found in communities, squats, religious communities, hobo camps, and favelas.

This image had something to do with Lisa's ongoing negotiations to move into the vacant trailer.

There was something else Lisa thought. A Christiania space was heterotopic, Christiania time was what Foucault would term 'heterochronia.' Lisa pictured it as lying at the center of a clock defined by its hands, revolving imperceptibly on its axis.
Tramps Like Us
Collective Statement: A Day at the Riots or The Social Democratic Carnivalesque

We came to Copenhagen the week after the riots. As a member of the group, we witnessed the demonstrations, the blockades, the destruction of property, and the arrests. The police presence was overwhelming, and the atmosphere was charged with tension.

On Saturday we attended the protest march and rally at Christiansborg Palace. The police continued to taunt and harass the protesters, but their numbers were growing. The atmosphere was tense, but the protesters remained committed.

The police brought us into the palace and questioned us about our activities. They wanted to know who we were and what we were doing. We refused to answer their questions and were finally released.

The next day, we went to the offices of the Kommune and urged a stop to eviction proceedings. On the same day, we met with the police and discussed the situation. We were told that the government was aware of the issue and was working to solve it.

We appealed to a kind of institution that would serve as an official bridge between the people and the state. We were told that the government would not tolerate such actions.

Footnotes:
1. It made us think of Ulrike Meinhof’s saying, “to set fire to one car is a crime, to burn a hundred is political action.”
2. The glorious oppression of real needs.
3. Even the omnipresent police wagons couldn’t dispel the feeling, though later the police presence came to assume a more prominent position in our recollections.
4. We were forever discovering the same thing: the totality of capital conceals the impoverishment of daily life behind ideological structures, giving the everyday a smooth appearance. Ungdomshuset and Christiania, on the contrary, are ‘rough’, a synaptic fissure in the smooth totality of capital. From its many touted flexibility, capital seems signal incapable of tolerating difference.

Otherwise why would a derelict labor hall, or the squatting of a former military base otherwise be met with such persistent hostility from the “establishment”, to use an antiquated term?

*In Holland there are low-level riots right now. News coverage here tries to isolate protesters, turning them into the “other.” Government proposals circulating call for the arrest of those who arrange for the protests to occur.

The government response to the riots is viewed by many as symptomatic: one example of a larger tendency towards the three R’s—reification, rationalization, and recuperation.

**Native informants later corrected this impression, calling our attention to the negativity of the television coverage, which we, ignorant of the Danish language, had neglected to watch.

***News coverage outside Denmark, had also focused on the violence, and uniformly misrepresented the protesters as “squatting”, but were wrong for detecting in the news readers a subdued note of appreciation for the daring and ingenuity of the rioter.

5. Like: when considering socially engaged practice, what is the real nature of the art institution in social terms? We cannot deny that art has the potential to generate critical thought and create new audiences. Nevertheless, in many States where institution of the three R’s occurred earlier and in a more thoroughgoing manner, the functioning of the art institution has been well policed to guard against its assuming real political agency. This is not to deny that in certain institutions critical voices have operated, but to remark on how brief the tenure of such voices frequently is.

6. Testified by the influx of activists who participated in the citywide battles and protests, or the many international demonstrations of solidarity, such as the group of youths in Lyon who, after occupying the Danish consulate, sent dozens of faxes to the offices of Copenhagen Kommune urging a stop to eviction proceedings.

*On the same day we left Copenhagen, a week following the riots, police raided three squats in Amsterdam, all of which were found denuded of occupants, who, we suspect, were at the time ensconced in Danish jail cells as a result of the indiscriminate police sweeps.

**One native informant spoke of an acquaintance, a college professor, who having been arrested at a demonstration, was released (while his less respectable appearing co-defendants were incarcerated), only to be re-arrested later at his residence in Danemark—only to be native informant emphasized—of his wife and child, after a judge had reviewed his case and determined he should have been remanded to police custody.

7. The quickest route to anomic, is by removing the markers which people use to symbolically orient themselves in urban space—near Ungdomshuset, away from Charlottenborg. The loss of such markers, like the erasure or surveillance of public space itself, is part of a program which Henri Lefebvre might describe as the withdrawal of the “right to the city”.

8. Ungdomshuset would fulfill the criteria Victor Turner set out for a liminal site, or what Foucault termed “heterotopia”—a site at the margins that reflects social relations from the perspective of a carnivalesque exteriority. One can only infrequently describe institutional art space in similar terms.

9. In other words, one which functions as a node of resistance.

10. With regard to individual artists, the arm’s length principle may still be operative. State funding still enables artists to produce critical work without fear of government censure. Whether this extends to Danish institutions, we aren’t qualified to say.

* This may take some of the sting out of being neutralized in terms of political agency by a government too philistine to concern itself with thinking about art or artists, except how their existence might be better rationalized. A lot of artists we know question why they still live in Copenhagen, precisely because one lives in society and not simply an “artworld”. We tell them, it’s alright, we understand.
Tramps Like Us

Collective Statement: A Day at the Riots of the Social Democratic Carnivalesque

We came to Copenhagen the week after the riots. A general mood covered the city, as if the illusion which ordinarily glosses over the emptiness of contemporary life had been dispelled. Around the walking streets, we noticed this hint away.

That Saturday we attended a protest march where we were to learn the truth about what police and municipality some embarrassment!**** How is it that a music venue/activist center could cause such a commotion? This fact should alert us to our own involvement within the limits capital sets. Ruminating on such thoughts unearthed Ulrike Meinhold’s saying, “To set fire to one car is a crime, to burn a hundred is political action.”

1. The glorious oppression of real needs.
2. This insight did not come without a price. Over 700 arrests occurred over the weekend. New terror laws allowed police sweeps to arrest foreigners not carrying their passports, or Danish youth of a certain profile. People were arrested “on their way to the supermarket”, as one friend put it, for being in the wrong place at the wrong time, or wearing the wrong clothes.

* Another native informant spoke of an acquaintance, a college professor, who has been arrested at a demonstration, was released (while his less respectable appearing co-defendants were incarcerated), only to be re-arrested later at his residence, in front—as our native informant emphasized—of his wife and child, after a judge had reviewed his case and determined he should have remained in police custody.***

8. Ungdomshuset would fulfill the criteria Victor Turner set out for a liminal site, or what Foucault termed a “heterotopia”—a site at the margins that reflects social relations from the perspective of a carnivalesque exteriority, and from this position endows social interaction with a loaded, symbolic potential.

9. In other words, one which functions as a node of resistance.

10. What is the status of cultural policy in Denmark? Tone Hansen, in “European Cultural Policies 2015 states that the future of cultural policy in Norway (and one can infer Denmark following a similar course) will consist of “More state subsidies invested in art. The funds are to a greater degree employed through means such as the Forum for Culture and Business, and directly politically initiated and temporary projects... The arm’s length principle has become a two-edged problem for institutions and artists, because, paradoxically independent is offered in return for obeying orders. Rather than letting go its institutions, the State is more determined in its use of them.”

* "Every actual State is corrupt." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Footnotes

1. For a brief history of Ungdomshuset, please go to: www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ungdomshuset
2. We were reassured by what we took as a pervasive sympathy for the rioters.*

* The severity of the government response was viewed as symptomatic, one example of a larger tendency towards the three R’s—reification, rationalization, and recuperation.

** That this impression resulted from casual conversation with persons who might not be considered representative of popular sentiment indicates the essentially unscientific character of this assertion.**

*** Other native informants later corrected this impression, calling our attention to the negativity of the television coverage, which we, ignorant of the Danish language, had not bothered to watch. The true public opinion is probably somewhere in between, that is to say, polarized, which is also to say, typically Danish at present.***

**** News coverage outside Denmark also focused on the violence, and uniformly mischaracterized the protesters as “squatters”, but were we wrong for detecting in the news readers a subdued note of appreciation for the daring and ingenuity of the rioters who skillfully eluded the police, attacking and then melting away into the fabric of urban space/time?
MICHAE BAERS
IN-
A HOME FOR
LOST IDEAS

After 9/11, people began offering small American flags to the windows of their cars. The perverse logic of using cars as vehicles (no pun intended) for patriotic display was proved by their ubiquity.

Driving on the freeway was like participating in a parade, surrounded by flapping banners of seemingly identical makes.

US support of oppressive Arab regimes to guarantee a dependable supply of crude oil...

No less for Iraqi civilians, had they seen images of car-flags on television.

America was being led into war by its collective nose.

Around this time, I had the idea of manufacturing car-flags bearing the Iraqi flag and distributing them through a gallery.

It seemed as if there were thousands of manufacturers all set to make novelties such as these. All it took was a sporting event or national tragedy of sufficient magnitude to unleash their collective production potential. Surely out of this enormous production capacity, home could be diverted for Iraqi car-flags.

My fantasy: I imagined the flags, a thousand, fork-lifted right into the gallery in an oversized cardboard box, on a wood palette.

Once distributed, these Iraqi-flags could fly against opposing traffic, as if jostling with American flags, or moving alongside, racing one another—actualizing the conflict in concrete terms, of concretely symbolic terms—if one can say that.

...Yeah, and Israel, too. That’s not un-important.

In the months leading up to the Iraqi invasion, car-flags seemed to appear to me as merely perverse. Their affect was more alarming now, sinister even.
Sometimes real life produces its own commentary about art. A couple of weeks ago my laptop was stolen. That's my raw one, there on the table, which I could afford only because I get this generous stipend in Copenhagen. Then again, I probably wouldn't...
META-COMICS PRESENTS:
A Day at the Opera
or
Rakett Meets the New Public Management

By Michael Baus

My original idea for this comic was to do a story about my friends Carolin Tamberg and Åsa Lövgren (aka Rakett), who are currently working on a pilot project for Bjørvika. “New City Development” on Oslo’s waterfront.

In July, I attended a colloquium they organized on the subject, and, in the interest of full disclosure, about which I am currently writing a report.

As I worked on my report, I would often listen to the BBC, trying to speculate in an extended flight of fancy about what the future might hold. I found myself listening to the sound of underdevelopment. Instead of the usual din of the city, I could hear the sound of the sea or the quiet of the countryside.

Bjørvika is one of several projects that are being sold off by the government to private companies. By doing so, the government hopes to stimulate the economy and create jobs. This process, however, leaves the future of the area uncertain.

The state, through this program, will undertake the rental office, and high-end residential development set out in the master plan. The state, however, is responsible for funding the... waterwall, promenade, and parks. Architecturalee, who helped design the master plan, term “the good life effect”.

The company coordinating Bjørvika’s development, “Bjørvika Urvalning”, is also managing Rakett’s project. “At the moment, we were asked to design how an art project might function in this context. What were the criteria? Was it a locally...”

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While we viewed the development plan’s end result, it was agreed that the possibility to... in Bjørvika was beginning. But then, the time to distinguish between the art project and the situation which made it possible:...
"Consider the case of a city—a space which is fashioned, shaped and invested by social activities during a finite historical period. Is this city a work or a product?" — Henri Lefebvre

As David Harvey says, "There is a need for infrastructure always generated by structural contradictions and geographical developments that then lead to more development as part of theogenesis that inevitably arises as open-market activities engage in the production of space."

"It was an abandoned hospital and I took part in an occupation to take it and I didn't understand what it was all about and I didn't agree with it."

"...and then I started to think about how we can run hospitals being there empty whilst we have nowhere to live! The government line is to move families away from the center of the city and to re-house them on the outskirts. But in the city center there are more than 4000 empty buildings."

Here are two cities: one a shanty area, the other the financial center. The latter exists as a product of the former's misery. Is it plainly evident that a given outcome to the question of new urban space could be used or reused?

"I returned by a conference of factors from which David Harvey terms geographical aggregates."

"They are perpetually being re-generated, substituted, summarized, and reconfigured by political-economic and geographical relations, he writes."

Social space is a social product. And so, the function having been dissolved, it cannot perish."

When we walk along the water, the lapping waves sing a post-industrial song.

"...then it is sold to the private sector. Out of many outcomes, this one was chosen."

"Spatial plans can turn room complexes into concrete solidarity."

"And saying, for the city and the neighborhood and the New York Metropolitan Planning Board, is a ‘Special Plan’ for a new process to keep the existing long-term lifestyle."

Buenos Aires is the result of a transition from an industrial production to what has been called a ‘recovery economy’, which in a different world is called urban speculation.

It is also a result of processes. These appear as both currents of change in cities."

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"Geographical differences are much more than mere historical cultural legacies, he writes."

"Families away from the center of the city and to re-house them on the outskirts. But in the city center there are more than 4000 empty buildings."

Here are two cities: one a shanty area, the other the financial center. The latter exists as a product of the former's misery. Is it plainly evident that a given outcome to the question of new urban space could be used or reused?

"I returned by a conference of factors from which David Harvey terms geographical aggregates."

"They are perpetually being re-generated, substituted, summarized, and reconfigured by political-economic and geographical relations, he writes."

Social space is a social product. And so, the function having been dissolved, it cannot perish."

When we walk along the water, the lapping waves sing a post-industrial song.

"...then it is sold to the private sector. Out of many outcomes, this one was chosen."

"Spatial plans can turn room complexes into concrete solidarity."

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"They are perpetually being re-generated, substituted, summarized, and reconfigured by political-economic and geographical relations, he writes.
David Harvey also says “spatial form is a container of social processes and an expression of social order.”

I wonder if the inverse is also true, that social processes are an expression of spatial form and an expression of social order?

Norway is often spoken of as a rich country, as if no poor people live there. There are poor people in Norway.

They are being pushed to the periphery both in our consciousness and reality. They’ve been excluded from the public sphere, moved to our symbolic suburbs.

If new public management is more capable of administering different state functions, the question I ask myself is this: when poor people visit the waterfront for fun, during their leisure time, will they experience it as belonging to them, as a public space to which they are entitled?

One could ask if their exclusion—certainly they will not be living there—is part of the moral order foreign spaces are in.

How can we respond to developments like Eitroska which occur in our home context and have a real impact?

To say nothing of developments in other parts of the world which we have touched on only briefly.

These days, the question is more likely to be restructured as: how should we think about identity?

In the chain of events over which we have lost all power.

Based on a conversation held one afternoon in Cafe El Greco, Zurich, between Fucking Good Art and Michael Baers.

Drawing and Composing: Michael Baers.

WHAT LIFE COULD BE
So, in this Fellini film—Marcello Mastroianni plays a celebrity journalist who’s kind of searching for his own position. He’s a dandy, a lady’s man, but he’s totally lost his...

**SENSE OF SELF?**

Sense of self—exactly. He’s supposed to meet this guru. Steiner, but then Steiner kills his two children and himself. Marcello was waiting for an answer, and he was happy for a chance to meet the guru...

But I don’t want the Judeo-Christian connection. Hey, Crumb also has this figure!

It’s about looking for what it was about, trying to regain belief. Forty years in the desert.

And taking LSD in the Swiss Alps has become part of the forty-years-in-the-desert thing? We may search for Albert Hofmann and end up with Mr. Natural.

Mr. Natural? Yes! Yes! I love him. That’s my role model.

Well the desert trip is also a mountain trip in a sense.

Mr. Natural? Yes! Yes! I love him. That’s my role model.

Switzerland definitely makes sense. LSD was invented here, after all. It’s home to Albert Hofmann, Monte Verita. The place Timothy Leary escaped to from Algeria. Switzerland is central.

Answers to which questions?

Of course, the question of what life could be.

At any rate, it would be nice if we tried to push ourselves to give some answers. I mean, how ridiculous they can be.
But don’t we have to ask what life is before asking what life could be? They say you create your own reality through consciousness, but at the moment one’s consciousness confronts some pretty horrific facts.

Actually, they’ve found out how small this consciousness part of the universe is. You only consciously ‘know’ half a second after your unconscious has already reacted. Even the impulse to do something can be measured in the brain before you consciously know you want to do it. This idea of the ego and consciousness and the nation-state; in biology they’ve found your body is like yogurt with living organisms. It’s not you that has bacteria, you are, in fact a bunch of different creatures. I am actually a ‘we’.

Like the Gaia theory of the world as one organism. “The largest living creature on Earth.”

Our conception of individuality— or “separateness”—is an illusion. But a useful one. Remember Heinz von Foerster told us how science, in Latin, “scientia” has been amazingly successful in the 2000 years since Aristotle, because what does “scientia” derive from? The Indo-European word for “science” is “sci” found in “science”, and “sciencia” and “schizophrenia”, and in “schism”. That is words referring to separation.

According to Aldous Huxley, the feeling of separation is a biological imperative—the mind filters out the information unnecessary to survival. Let me find the quote:

The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful.” According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially Mind at Large. But in so far as we are animals, our business is at all costs to survive. To make biological survival possible, Mind at Large has to be funneled through the reducing valve of the brain and nervous system. What comes out the other end is a meekly trickle of the kind of consciousness which will help us to stay alive on the surface of this particular planet.

I love how Hofmann puts it:

“The earth is a sphere (or a ball or a bullet) that is rotating around its own axes and turning around the sun in the universe. Everybody knows this, because for some time the space research has shown us pictures: Planet Earth, a blue sphere, a blue Kugel, floating free in space.”

It’s true, we don’t understand each other anymore.

First humans were separated from the Garden of Eden, then they try reconstituting an originary unity with the Tower of Babel. “God confused their languages and scattered them throughout the earth.”
This is a bit like Badiou’s idea of philosophy as a space to think through reality. Accepting the universe of language as the absolute horizon of philosophical thought, in fact amounts to accepting the fragmentation and the illusion of communication, for the truth of our world is that there are as many languages as there are communities, activities or kinds of knowledge.

So many strands of the story to investigate: the CIA mind control experiments, the beatniks, the whole psychedelic therapy scene in Los Angeles or the Leary scene on the East Coast.

And what can one make of a person like former OSS captain and multi-millionaire uranium merchant Al Hubbard criss-crossing the US turning on millionaires and government officials?

Road movies and drug trips are metaphors to one another. A psychedelic Johnny Appleseed.

The weird conjunction of power, money, and psychedelics that crop up. Like Mary Pinchot, who hung out with Leary at Harvard, was married to CIA bureaucrat Cord Meyer.

...and was fucking President Kennedy, perhaps even gave him acid at the White House.

This leads you to Myron Stoloroff and the Foundation for Advanced Research in Palo Alto, who in the sixties began using LSD to develop computer user-interfaces.

Turn the channel and you find novelist Ken Kesey, given drugs in CIA-funded experiments. Kesey soon was hanging out with Stewart Brand, who coined the term “personal computer”.

Turn the channel again. There’s Leary hanging out with the Brotherhood of Eternal Love, hippie drug smugglers from Laguna Beach, CA. With acid chemist and alleged CIA asset Ronald Stark, they produced millions of hits of LSD for the black market. No one knows real Stark’s story. He died before he could tell it himself.
They all point to a different use, and that's interesting when you consider Huxley's original premise was that LSD could do away with separation and give us access to "Mind at Large."

Why did it even begin like this? In the fifties?

We're still in Badiou's Babel!

He cold war has something to do with it.

And the ascendance of scientific positivism.

Turn the channel. Here's Charles Manson LSD mind-control stuff overlay with west coast and British Satanists in supporting roles. Charles Manson was applying the same techniques as Scientology or MK-Ultra Techniques for breaking down the ego, replacing it with whatever... sex slaves, assassins, bureaucrats.
It's weird that one regime contributed to the formation of its opposition. Almost a textbook example of Marx's contention that the bourgeoisie contribute directly to creating the conditions for revolution.

LSD was clearly not initially a threat. You could wipe out people's conditioning with it, use it to cure alcoholics or stop armies, make bloodless war.

Western men pit the rational against the irrational in a useless and self-defeating contest. It's like, ok, nature, culture. It's this binary we're always fighting with. Societies end up making some sort of arrangement with the forces of nature or they slowly go bonkers.

The 'Nacht der letzten Oper' ritual you told me about where they drive out the evil spirits from the village...this is a working out of this conflict, I think.

No, that was Arthur Koestler. I think he meant the trip is different if you don't work for it.

At the same time the CIA was funding loads of LSD research, they and the FBI were vigorously persecuting communists, and drug addicts were being treated in similarly repressive ways.

Clearly these stories go on endlessly. But what about what life could be? When LSD started becoming a religious sacrament, that's when things got messy. Then it became a threat to the Judeo-Christian order. Lise's boyfriend once told me, 'If you want a glimpse of your own mortality, take LSD.' No social order wants to cede control of its immortality.

We have to really simply things and ask what life could be for us. What life could be if we took LSD? Hey, that rhymes!
Victor Turner, the anthropologist, thought of ritual as a negotiation between states—states of childhood, states of adulthood, one season to another, one year to another. In ritual, meaning is crystallized in fetish objects. Different meanings can even be condensed into a single object...

...according to context. So, symbol-objects work on a number of levels: as a concrete object with perhaps real effects—mushrooms, for instance—and also as the actualization of some concepts.

It's just like language: polysemous. The object is like a word. It has different connotations and they don't cancel out each other, they connote according to the syntactical context in which they're used.

Isn't this the same as talking about the interconnectedness of all life?

Derrida took polysemy one step further, said it's not only that every word has multiple meanings coexisting within the same linguistic form, but that the component parts of this individual word are in relation to its other possible, absent, combinations.

Where does one word stop and another begin? Where does one form stop and another begin? The earliest cultures were concerned with ordering the social and natural worlds. But taxonomies always imply the possibility of aberrations. So you need an in-between space...

This idea of clouds...clouds of meaning!

An outside space. The road movie is a crystallization of the forty-years-in-the-desert, right?

Hey, what's that?
But this is also the forty-years-in-the-desert.

Of course, it's the same thing. I read somewhere, and also saw a picture of this same idea, this transformation. So, father and mother—it's an eastern European thing—they cut a little birch tree in half. It's alive, but they really slit it open.

They open it then they pass through a child who is about to pass into the adult state. They just give the kid to each other through this birch tree, then they put the birch tree back together again so it can grow.
THE END...or is it?
I'm singin' this borrowed tune.
I took it from the Rolling Stone.
Alone in this empty room,
Too wasted to write my own.

Oh excuse me, let me introduce myself:
I'm Michael Brooks. The editors of this journal asked if I would make a comic, so here I am.

In this first installment I thought I'd tell you about what I was planning in the next four or five months, kinda set the parameters.

It's been a cold winter here in Berlin. Seasonably cold, which considering the last two winters makes it unseasonably cold. So the cold has been reassuring.

Then yesterday I read an article entitled, "Climate change even worse than predicted." News of this type isn't great motivation for working on this comic.

Which has been hard enough as it is. I've been working a lot lately. I'm exhausted. Or tired. I'm not sure which.

In an attempt to clarify this matter, I've consulted an essay by Gilles Deleuze. "The Exhausted"—where he writes...

"The tired person has merely exhausted the realization, whereas the exhausted person exhausts the whole of the possible."

Whether I'm exhausted or merely tired is of some consequence, because if the former is true, then I will have renounced...

"I need preferential setting, or signification, and my avowed task of setting parameters will not be possible, while if I'm merely tired, after sufficient rest, there is the risk that one will, if not get up, at least roll over and crawl."

...when night falls, she remains seated at the table, empty head in captive hands.

This does seem to be the case of late.

My fatigue has either precipitated one of those periodic spells of...

...self-doubt during which you confront again those embarrassingly sublime questions, or those questions were already lying in wait, prepared to say one of all self-confidence.

What's it all about? Who does the artist really address with their work, and is this the same person as who they were made for?
And then, what kind of relationship do I maintain with myself when, as DW Winnicott has written, chem...

The self is not really to be found in what is made out of products of body or mind, however valuable these constructs may be, in terms of beauty, skill, and impact.

If the artist is searching for the self, then it can be said that in all probability there is already some failure for the artist in the field of general creative living.

I can live with failure in the field of general living, but interrogating the purpose of art when there are not only so many worrisome events of a human scale but also profound changes occurring in the environment...

...one turns over senseless and ultimately unanswerable questions like these to no purpose, especially since they don’t lead to any productive insight.

Further, the formulation itself manages to simultaneously trivialize both art and global catastrophe.

So, perhaps I should go lie down. Later I might find the strength to formulate this introduction, prepare readers for what is to come...when I’m better rested.

By the way, my idea for this series was for it to be kinda like a variety show where I invite different guest stars to collaborate with me on each month’s episode.

These might consist of interviews, skits, micro-documentaries, song and dance numbers, and so on.

It’s kind of up to my collaborators to propose ideas you know? But since the variety show concept is slightly anticultured, I’ve considered modifying it with a self-reflexive element...

...not a variety show per se, more of a sit-com about a variety show, with a self-absorbed host, his taciturn but lovable co-workers, and zany friends, employing all kinds of clever deconstruction tactics.

Show the show as a show within a show in a show, you know, like Seinfeld.

This remains as an aspiration—not to be like Seinfeld (parish the thought)—but to disclose the workings of the work I am making.

In the past I’ve often employed a similar self-reflexive turn, but now I worry I’ve exhausted this strategy, and it’s become not only indicative of my own narcissism.

...but is actually symptomatic of a variety of social maladies...

In fact, I suspect something already has.
IN THE SPRING OF 1986 I SPENT THREE MONTHS IN COPENHAGEN ON A RESIDENCY. I WAS ABLE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH MY FRIENDS PI IN.dbote AND THE S O-CALLED KUNDERA BANK, A DANISH SUBVERSIVE GROUP ACTIVE IN THE 70s AND 80s. MAINLY THEY ROBBED BANKS, BUT IT WAS NOT DONE FOR SELF-MOON. IT WAS ABOUT PROTESTING AGAINST THE MONEY SYSTEM. IT WAS CHANNELED TO THE-PISA TO THE FREE ESTONIAN GROUP.

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT OF THE DREAM IMAGE THEY USED? TO WHICH THEY WERE TRYING TO MAKE THE REALITY COHERENT?

WE WERE ASKED TO PROMPT THE USUAL DEBTORS GROUPS TO TAKE ACTION AND SOLIDARITY GOING ON. THE BANKS ON THE SANTI HANDS WHERE INTERNATIONAL NOBILITY WAS ALSO AN ABUSIVE CONCERN.

HAVING BOTH SUFFERED THROUGH THE PREVIOUS FALL WE DID NOT GET THE EASY WAY OUT OF THESE QUESTIONS.

WE MET IN CAFÉS UNDER THE PRETENSE OF WORKING, EACH OF US TALKING INTENTIONALLY TO THE OTHER. WHEN OUR PROJECT WENT TO A CAT POWER WEEKS WENT LIKE THIS.

ONE DAY OUR FRIEND SAYS: “WE CAN’T TAKE IT ANYMORE. WE’RE STAGING THE PROTEST TO THE BANKE.” BANKabyrinth AND THE STEAK HOUSE. WE DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION WITHOUT A BASE.

WE PLANNED TO USE THIS MATERIAL TO SUPPORT THE PROTEST. I DECIDED TO BROADCAST ON THE RADIO. WE HAVE WONDERING HERE’S WHAT THEY HAVE SAID!

I’VE BEEN THINKING A LOT ABOUT THIS IMAGE TIME AND TIME AGAIN. I’M TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO STOP TRYING TO MAKE IMAGES OF OTHER PEOPLE OR ALTERNATIVELY: HOW IT’S POSSIBLE NOT TO CREATE THESE IMAGES? EXPECTATIONS?

YOU BUILD UP THESE IMAGES, MAYBE IT’S LIKE A TAPE MACHINE THAT CAN’T BE SHUT DOWN. IMPLANTED.

TRANSFORMATION MUST BE POSSIBLE WITHIN IMAGE-MAKING. THE IMAGE HAS THE POSSIBILITIES OF TRANSFORMATION, BUT IT CAN ALSO GET STUCK.

YOU GET STUCK IN ONE HABIT OF IDENTIFICATION.

ONE DAY OUR FRIEND SAYS: “WE CAN’T TAKE IT ANYMORE. WE’RE STAGING THE PROTEST TO THE BANKE.” BANKabyrinth AND THE STEAK HOUSE. WE DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION WITHOUT A BASE.

I THINK THERE’S A REALLY THIN LINE BETWEEN THIS IMAGE-MAKING AND THE SEEMS TO MAKE THE REALITY COHERENT.

BUT HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO POLITICA LSTRESSES AND THE DESIRE TO MAKE THE REALITY COHERENT FOR YOUR KNOWLEDGE?
YOU'VE DEALT WITH UTOPIA IN YOUR WORK. I THINK IT'S PART OF A FOREHAND BACK MOVEMENT, BECAUSE THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE UTOPIA IS ALSO AGAIN, THE RECONSTRUCTION OF IT.

DESIRED IS ABOUT FIXING AN IDEA OF WHAT YOU WANT IN LIFE. IT'S UTOPIA TO CREATE A ROMANTIC IDEA OF A POLITICAL PROGRAM—HOW THINGS SHOULD BE. YOU CAN'T CREATE A TOPOS AND... AND AN IDEAL THAT'S ALSO NOT A REFLECTION OF THE PERSON WHO CREATES IT.

WE MIGHT HAVE THE IDEA THAT THIS IS HOW IT IS AND HOW IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE. BUT THE IDEAL STATE IS... IS NOT... NOT AFRAID TO HAPPEN IN A RADICAL SITUATION.

I THINK THE MOVEMENT FROM THESE DIFFERENT AREAS IS WHERE THE IDEAL STATE APPEARS, BUT WE WANT TO FOCUS, WE WANT TO FOCUS IT AND MAKE IT A THING. BUT IT NO LONGER EXISTS IN REALITY.

IN PRISONER OF LOVE, A CENTRAL IMAGE IS THIS PAST PICTURE OF A PALESTINIAN FIGHTER AND HIS MOTHER. MOTHER IS IN A REFUGEE CAMP IN JORDAN.

HE WANTS TO KNOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO HAREZ, THE SON. HAREZ WANTS TO KNOW WHAT HE DOESN'T WANT TO KNOW. IT'S LIKE SO MANY OTHER PALESTINIANS HE MEET.


I THINK WHEN YOU REACH THE POINT OF GIVING UP IMAGES, THERE'S A WHOLE WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES THAT DISAPPEAR, BECAUSE IMAGES ARE ALWAYS A PROJECTION OF DREAMS.

BUT WHEN HE MEETS THE MOTHER, HE DISCOVERS MAN'S SAFE, MARRIED, AND INDEMNITY, BUT HE STILL RETAINS THIS DREAM QUALITY DESPITE HIS INTENTIONS TO GO BACK SO THAT HE COULD SADLY HANG UP THE HUSH.

THEM ACTUATE SOMETHING THAT IS FIRST A METAL CONSTRUCTION, GENET ALSO HAS THIS GREAT STORY OF THE PALESTINIAN FIGHTER PLAYING WITH AN INVISIBLE DECK OF CARDS. IRONIC GAMBLING IS FORBIDDEN.

...AND IN THAT SENSE IT'S ALSO THE IMAGES THAT CREATE REALITY WITH IT. WHEN THEY'RE NO LONGER THERE OUR REALITY SHIFTS.
YOU KIND OF HAVE THE FEELING THE LINE ZEPHY CUT YET.

HELLNO. I WAS LIKE US, SEEING BEING EACH OTHER IN THAT CAR WOULD BE LIKE THE OLD DAYS.

I CAN RELATE ONE FURTHER STORY. LAST FALL, THERE WAS A PALESTINIAN ARTIST FROM RAMALLAH IN RESIDENCE AT THE ACADEMY WHERE I TEACH. WE SOMETIMES DISCUSS THE COMMUNITY THERE.

WHEN I ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN IRAQ, THEY SAID THERE WAS GOING TO BE WARS. I LOOKED DOWN AT THE FLOOR. THAT WAS MY DREAM IMAGE. I GUESSED IT WAS TRUE.

I GUESS THEY TOOK DOWN OUR LICENSE PLATE AND Drove off, because later the taxi's owner said I'm in some trouble (it's a long story).

WELL, THAT KIND OF CAPTURES OUR WORST AT THE TIME. AS SAID, UNTIL NOW WE NEVER DREW ANYTHING WITH THESE PHOTOS, BUT THERE WAS AN IMMEDIATE OUTCOME ABOUT 45 MINUTES INTO OUR SHORT, SECURITY GUARD FROM THE BAN ORDERED US TO LEAVE.

IT WAS ALSO CONTACTS, AND TOOLS THAT ANOTHER TERRORIST RECONSIDERED DOING SUCH AN ACT IN PUBLIC.

AS FOR THE REASONS WHY THE SO-CALLED RESURRECTION SuD WHAT THEY DID, TWENTY YEARS AFTER THEIR DEATHS, THE IMAGE OF A PALESTINIAN STATE REMAINS JUST THAT.
IN THE EVENT OF A CATASTROPHE, OUR ASSOCIATES WILL HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO CONVERGE ON THE SHOPPING MALL. STANDING THERE, FACING OUR OWN DEATH, THE SILENCE WILL BE UNBREAKABLE. MEN AND WOMEN, OLD AND YOUNG, BURIED IN UNREMARKABLE GRAVES, SILENTLY TELLING US THEIR STORY.

WE ADVISE USING THE SHOPPING MALL AS A TEMPORARY HOME IN THE GATED COMMUNITIES TO FALTER IN THE MISSIVE AND CONDO CUSTODIES. THEIR SONGS WILL NOT BE THE CANCER.

FITTINGLY OR NOT, WE WERE RAISED ON THE EMBRACE OF A ROMAN CEMETERY.

EXACTLY YOU CAN SEE MANY OF THE GRACIETY AND FAMILY. GENERATIONS OF THE DEAD TO BE INTRODUCED. MEETING ISN'T DIFFICULT.

ONE Advantage WITH THE LIVING IS HOW EASY IT IS TO BE A DEATH'S MARRIAGE. UNDER A HOUSE, EVEN IF IT WERE DIFFERENT TIMES. AS SKIN TAX OR NO ONE CARES INSIDE A TOMB, BUT THAT'S ANOTHER ADVANTAGE.

AND YOUR AVERAGE DEED OR SCULPTOR. THE DEATH'S MESSAGE IS ONE WITH THE RIGHTFUL MARRIAGE. THE FAMILY NAMES ON THE DIFFERENT VAULTS, EACH ONE DIFFERENT IN COLES, BREAD & GRAFFITI & TABS.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY IRINA GHIONE & ALINA POTA
MAKING A COMIC INVOLVES A PERIOD OF VOLUN-
TARY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD, WHICH JAPANESE
MANGA CREATORS DESCRIBE AS "BEING IN THE BOX." USUALLY
AFTER COMPLETING A PIECE, I FEEL THE NEED TO DEPEND
ON MYSELF AND NOT NEED TO DEPEND ON OTHERS TO
FIND MYSELF. I USE THIS ISOLATION TO REFLECT AND RECHECK
THEME.

SUCH A PERIOD LEFT ME NOT MERELY EXHAUSTED
BUT INSPIRED, INSIPID, AND ANNOYED. I WAS COM-
BATING A FEELING OF ISOLATION, NOT ONLY BECAUSE
OF MY ISOLATION FROM OTHERS, BUT BECAUSE I WAS
EXPERIENCING A FEELING OF ISOLATION FROM
MYSELF. I WAS COMBATING A FEELING OF ISOLATION,
NOT ONLY BECAUSE I WAS ISOLATED FROM OTHERS,
BUT BECAUSE I WAS ISOLATED FROM MYSELF. I WAS

I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HOW TO STRUCTURE
OUR COLLABORATION AND I'VE DECIDED TO SEND
YOU TO THE POLSKA PARK IN MALMO. JUST GO
THERE AND SEE WHAT YOU THINK. YOU GO
TO COPENHAGEN ALL THE TIME, SO IT'S NO PROBLEM
FOR YOU. I'M NOT. HERE'S A GOOGLE MAP.

SHE WROTE:

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT MALMO. I
IMAGINED A QUITE, REFLECTIVE
PLACE WHERE SOMEONE YOUNG
PEOPLE TALENTED...

THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT MALMO. I'M
IMMEDIATELY OVERWHENED BY A KIND OF
SWEDISH PERSONALITIY. A PERPETUAL SUNDAY
ATTENTION TO DETAILED, SMALL THINGS AND
INNER CALMNESS. THERE IS NOTHING TO
DO AND NOTHING ONE NEEDS TO BE DOING.

AS I STEPPED OFF THE TRAIN, I EXPERIENCED A
FEELING OF EXPECTATION. THE STATION WAS
VACANT AND THE STREETS WERE CALM. I
FEELED AT HOME IN THIS CITY.

UNDER THE TREES WHILE HAVING A SUNDAY
LUNCH, I THOUGHT ABOUT MALMO.

AFTER WALKING ABOUT
FIFTEEN MINUTES I WAS
AT POLSKA PARK.

THIS STATE HAD LASTED
A WEEK WHEN I
RECEIVED AN E-MAIL FROM
ANNIKA EKSTRÖM, WHO
WAS SLATED TO BE MY NEXT
GUEST STAR.

I WAS TRAVELING TO DENMARK IN
A COUPLE OF DAYS AND ARRANGED
TO LEAVE A DAY EARLY.

Yours,
ANNIKA.

WHAT I KNOW OF MALMO, I
LEARNED FROM ANNIE'S
ACCOUNTS.

NOW I'M PREPARED TO
EVALUATE MALMO.

THEY DO SOMETHING TOWARDS
EXPLAINING THE CITY'S
CHARACTER.

After walking about
fifteen minutes I was
at Polska Park.
But in general, I feel as if I don't have what it takes. I'm not sure about that place. It's strange, it does not have a lot of history to ensure further. I feel like things are...}

Malmö was a sinkhole for strong emotion. I decided the collection was important in this capacity to enervate.

Malmö is a sinkhole for strong emotion. I decided the collection was important in this capacity to enervate.

If I were to pursue the topic further, I would have to overcome my apathy. Maybe the secret was hiding in the silence. Or, more likely, it was left out. But, let us get this, we've been so busy rushing, we've forgotten how to be human beings.

Anika is from Malmö and the park is clearly important to her. She's mentioned it so many times. When I asked her about what it was, she just laughed. Actually, it's a park that she visited once by the same name. As the one around, what we feel is a real difference. Not changing different parks and walking around in the park. Park would remain striking by this difference.

This is what I discovered upon a second visit. In 1891, a second, a second, a second. In 1891 by the Social Democratic movement, the land bought on subscription by the people. The building of the park, it was an idea in the park, it was a coloration, with several meanings in Sweden, where political speeches and events were.

Hello, was built in 1891. More than in 1900, a second. In 1891. The park was built several years before. Such was the case with another demand, and a bear den with a cabin on the island. It was a cabin, a structure, a bear den, and islands. Then in 1895, the park, the park, the park.

The forum of English Strangers. That resulted in...
ROBERT DOBSON, the Englishman, was arrested for his actions, which included leading a protest. He was later released after a court case. DOBSON, an expert in European history, has written extensively on the topic of Swedish socialism.

ANTON NIELSEN, the actual evacuation on the same day in the 1871 Paris Commune. NIELSEN was later arrested and imprisoned for his role in the protests. His wife, MALTHESSA, was an active member of the movement and lived to write a memoir about the experience.

MEANWHILE, I meant to be more direct. I knew the Swedish socialist movement, but I was always interested in understanding the role of women. DOBSON's wife, MALTHESSA, was a key figure in the movement. She lived to write a memoir about the experience.

Following WWI, the decision facing European socialist movements, Sweden among them, could be summed up in this: DOBSON, an expert in European history, has written extensively on the topic of Swedish socialism.

DOBSON, an expert in European history, has written extensively on the topic of Swedish socialism.

Swedish social democrat decided against changing the world. I have decided this does not make Swedish history non-tragic—the normal interpretation. I think the tragedy was merely deferred. Yet by and large, Sweden continues to be a better model than most societies. The question, I think, is about whether a society, based on rational humanist principles, should be considered buttressing the individual or the collective. One of the reasons for why Sweden is so highly regarded is its social welfare system.

But you're involved in the history of the working class and you're always down in the dumps. AMIDEN, the black leader, was arrested for his role in the protests. His wife, MALTHESSA, was an active member of the movement and lived to write a memoir about the experience.

BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH FOLKETS PARK? DON'T YOU THINK FOLKETS PARK IS TOUCHED BY THIS WHOLE DEBATE ABOUT THE WORK OF SOCIALISM? AMIDEN SAYS SHE WAS REVOLUTIONARY ON MIND, GROUND, OR ANYTHING ELSE.
THE IMPORTANT THING FOR ME IS THAT THESE POOR PEOPLE WITH ONLY A LITTLE BUT GAVE IT AWAY TO MAKE SOMETHING COLLECTIVE AND BEAUTIFUL!

WHAT MAKES FOLKETS PARK STRANGE FOR ME IS ESPECIALLY THAT THESE VALUES OF SMALLNESS HAVE BEEN BECOME OUT OF THE REST OF SOCIETY. FOLKETS PARK IS LIKE A SOCIALIST PRESERVE.

OKAY, I'LL ADMIT IT. I JUST NOT MOTIVATED. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THIS STORY IN ITS INCEPTION. FOLKETS PARK IS AN UTOPIA THAT'S INTERESTING. BUT I FIND SOMETHING DISTURBING ABOUT IT.

BUT IT STILL EXISTS THERE AND THAT'S IMPORTANT.

YOU THINK I LIKE IT THERE? ONE OF THE REASONS I HAVE A PROBLEM IS GOING TO SWEDEN IS THAT THE WAY THE SOCIETY IS CHANGING THERE REALLY AFFECTS ME, AND I HAVE TO GO HERE EVERY MONTH.

Artisernas park
Michael Baers
-in-
Rotterdam

My Darling A:

I came to Rotterdam to make this comic because I needed a change. It was my intention to recuperate, stay with my friends Rob and Nienke (remember them? They’re the couple with the zinc, Fucking Good Art) who are always good company, get some space to reflect. Not that I’d been in Berlin that long. I’d returned from a month in Palestine only two weeks...

One seldom talks about a failed text. There is something unapologetically shameful about it. The printed lines on the page standing as evidence of one’s lack of intrinsic self-worth. Failed texts are kind of like train wrecks—a series of mechanical failures, shortcomings in...
So, it might come as no surprise that once in Rotterdam, I felt little desire to work. After stacking the books I brought beside me on the desk, I’ve spent most of my time shuttling back and forth between two photographs on my computer.

... one of C taken in Berlin...

... and another of Qalandiya Checkpoint outside Jerusalem. I’m sending them to you as an attachment.

I was disgusted and disappointed with myself, disappointed by the end of the affair, disgusted by my failure with the text. I was also disappointed and disgusted by having shut myself away my first two weeks back in Berlin, instilling it would make the city feel like a stopover, somewhere I happened to be living temporarily, which in any case is true at the...

... moment. This set in motion a vicious circle, the recollection of one set of failures and disappointments calling forth the memory of more remote events in an ever-widening arc of psychic destruction. My dismal love life, my future economic prospects, career, social life, mental and physical health... each became a subject for rumination, until everything had been coated with a brown film of self-loathing. Funny how six months ago I was complaining about being exhausted; now I’m exhausted and depressed.

In his philosophy, Bergson distinguishes between perception, affection, and action as three kinds of motion. Gilles Deleuze says it is no surprise that a Bergsonian analysis of motion coincided with the inception of film, since Bergson’s notion comprises cinema’s central narrative mechanism:
...the hero first perceives a problem, is affected by it, and resolves to take action. "This all came to an end when the Second World War," writes Deleuze.

"Suddenly people no longer really believed it was possible to react to situations... So we get Italian neorealism representing people placed in situations that cannot advance through reactions, through actions. This resembles my current situation. My deplorable state of mind results from failing to discover a concept that would deliver me out of this impasse. In any case, it's difficult at the moment to pretend all this happened to someone else.

My recent failures were, as Lacan says, appointments "to which we are always called with a real that eludes us." In the aftermath, something tells me I shouldn't try to "pick up the pieces" or "pull myself together". These metaphors are part of the problem. They keep me trying to reconstitute a lost totality rather than acknowledge that in trauma...

...what is assimilated is the miss itself," as Gene Ray phrases it. I need to reassemble the pieces, reconfigure, recombine them.

It comes down to learning to tolerate one's contingent, partial existence, to abide in this condition of uneasy symbiosis. Deleuze has written that we all need mediators since, "If we're not in some series, even a completely imaginary one, you're lost."

This is to think of oneself as a vector, intersecting with points of other vectors, passing through and continuing on. I have in my mind a diagram of this coupling of contingencies and evacuation: "In a potlatch of words and images, something like an approach."
There, I feel better now.
Darling, bist du gut?
Many, many X's,
Michael
If we consider the practice and theory of art as what can question our idea of reality and 'given' contexts, it has not only to raise certain questions...

It has not only to raise certain questions but it has to be inventive, to pursue new proposals; if reusing old notions, it has to add to them in a relevant way.

What is the media's relationship to the construction of a local reality, how does it relate to ideas of truth, fact, and history, and what are its possibilities for engaging with new communities?

...What we gather from Marshall McLuhan's analyses a few decades ago is that the medium which actually carries the content is essentially devoid of any content.

The chief executive of BP was reported today as saying that after all it's a very small leak in a very large ocean.
Little captain, what does it do, this little captain? It communicates... to us. What's it communicate, this little captain? It communicates English virtue... by living, not by dying.

As a matter of fact, it is likely that a chain of images arranges memories, chaining them in a certain order which will get everybody to find one's place in the chain again, that is, to rediscover one's own image.

As a matter of fact, it is likely that one constructs one's image with the other's. Friend or enemy, you produce and consume your image with mine.

And now thinking of what we are doing here. Nobody knows how to answer, or answers are crooked. We don't do much better anyway.

Ok, but then: how does one find one's own image in the other's disorder? With the agreement or disagreement of the other? And then: how to construct one's own image?

By using the eye of a third person who is not yet there, let it be already represented by a photographic lens and who will believe you or not, you and me when we look at this image!

One must find the time to have the time to see things simply; not to be scared anymore to say that it's things that are complicated and that anxiety is simple.
In older societies, the immediate and limited experience of individuals still coincides with the true economic and social form that governs that experience.

The problem of figuration that concerns us will only become visible in the passage from market to monopoly capitalism.

It may be conveyed by way of a growing contradiction between lived experience and structure.

The truth of that limited experience is now bound with a whole global system determining the very quality of the individual's subjective life. Yet those structural coordinates aren't accessible to immediate lived experience.

One must find the time to have the time to see things simply, each image at its place as each of us, at our place.
CREDITS

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