

CHISENHALE GALLERY

RESEARCH

'BESIDES, IN TANGENT'

**GENESIS CINEMA, LONDON
THURSDAY 5 JULY 2018**

CHISENHALE RESEARCH

Chisenhale Gallery commissions and produces contemporary art, supporting international and UK-based artists to pursue new directions and make their most ambitious work to date. The gallery has an award winning, 36-year history as one of London's most innovative forums for contemporary art. With a reputation for identifying new talent, the gallery is committed to engaging diverse audiences with a focus on young people.

Located on Chisenhale Road, close to Victoria Park and adjacent to the Hertford Union Canal, the gallery is in the heart of Tower Hamlets in East London. For audiences, the gallery provides opportunities to experience the process of art production through participation and critical reflection. Chisenhale Gallery operates as a production agency, exhibition hall, research centre and community resource. Our exhibitions are free and open to all. Chisenhale Gallery is a registered charity and part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio.

Research at Chisenhale Gallery encompasses a wide range of activity and is informed by the institution's 36-year exhibitions history and the gallery's current commissioning process. *Chisenhale Research* is a new strand of programming, which reflects on this rich history. This involves completing the historic archive, as well as commissioning researchers to investigate new approaches to archival material.

besides, in tangent is the first public event as part of *Chisenhale Research*. The event at Genesis Cinema is devised by curator and writer Eliel Jones, as part of his role as the 2016 – 2018 Curatorial Assistant: Commissions at Chisenhale Gallery. Including moving image works commissioned by Chisenhale Gallery between 2009 – 2017, the event reflects on a decade since the financial crash of 2008. Films include: Hito Steyerl's *In Free Fall* (2010), Duncan Campbell's *Make It New John* (2009), and Peter Wächtler's *Far Out* (2016). The event also features newly commissioned contributions by artist and writer Daisy Lafarge, writer Kylie Gilchrist and artist Peter Wächtler.

BEING 'BESIDES, IN TANGENT'

Eliel Jones

In a recent essay, writer and gender studies professor Jack Halberstam begins by reminding the reader that Audre Lorde's seminal phrase, 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house' (1), was not meant to be taken as a lyrical metaphor for soft power play. Halberstam, fighting against our moment of 'vertiginous capital', understands Lorde's call as an argument for demolition; 'with purpose and without a chance of reconstruction' (2). An arduous process of destruction would perhaps also need to apply to all of the leftover rubble. Otherwise we face the potential risk of retaliation from one of capitalism's best in-built weapons: its ability to mutate and take different forms. The financial crash of 2008 was not a single occurrence, but one in a series of crashes perpetuated under the guise of democracy and freedom, but always serving the ultimate demands of capital.

To chip away at the total annihilation of capitalism, Halberstam proposes the use of a hammer as the absolute tool. He also recognises the need to enunciate what exactly needs to be *smashed* (my word, not his). Writer and feminist scholar Sara Ahmed, invoked by Halberstam in the essay, agrees: 'having names for problems can make a difference. Before, you could not quite put your finger on it. With these words as tools, we revisit our own histories; we hammer away at the past.' (3) For Ahmed, naming is a practice through which we arrive at knowledge, which is to say, it is a practice through which we arrive at power.

This process of naming is the act of rendering something invisible visible or to question the nature of what is already perceived as visible. French Philosopher Jacques Rancière attributes a similar potential to the role of the artist, supporting such a claim by referring to the artist's ability to 'rupture given relations between things and meanings, and, inversely, to invent novel relationships between things and meanings that were previously unrelated' (4). Following Rancière, I want to suggest that one of the ways that artists may partake in the process of naming and making visible – what Rancière refers to as 'the distribution of the sensible' (5) – is by being *besides*, and *in tangent*.

Being *besides* suggests that something exists in addition to something else, whether related or not, apart or close together. To be *in tangent* signifies a total digression, forcing something to go somewhere else entirely; in geometry, a tangent is also paradoxically described as a meeting point.

The films by Duncan Campbell, Hito Steyerl and Peter Wächtler presented in this screening begin to perform such tasks. These artists arrive at the subject of the financial crash from wholly different subjective positions, directly or indirectly, by reference or association. Similarly, the three contributors, Daisy LaFarge, Kylie Gilchrist and Peter Wächtler, have been invited with the notion of being *tangent* in mind; to take the films as points of departure to go elsewhere, creating other connections along the way.

besides, *in tangent* reflects on ten years since the moment that we entered a new period of economic, social and political decline caused by the crash. In doing so it seeks to bring attention to a wider, structural issue of capitalist exploitation, one which is all too familiar and that has been reinvented, re-masked and repeated throughout modern history. It is precisely because of capitalism's malleability to become something else, whilst remaining the same, that Halberstam's call to 'hammer it down at its very core' not only rings true, but is necessary for our survival. A crucial part of this is understanding what actually needs to be hammered. Naming and making targets visible is one such step in landing a full blow.

(1) Audre Lorde. 1984 [2007]. *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House*. In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, pp. 110-114. Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press.

(2) Jack Halberstam, *Vertiginous Capital Or, The Master's Toolkit*. *Bully Bloggers*. 2018. Available online: https://bullybloggers.wordpress.com/2018/07/02/vertiginous-capital-or-the-masters-toolkit-by-jack-halberstam/amp/?__twitter_impression=true

(3) Sara Ahmed, *Evidence*. *femmenistkilljoys*. 2016. Available online: <https://femmenistkilljoys.com/2016/07/12/evidence/>

(4) Jacques Rancière, *The Paradoxes of Political Art*, 2010, p.141.

(5) *ibid*.

PROGRAMME

Thursday 5 July, 6.30–8.30pm

besides, in tangent

Genesis Cinema

93-95 Mile End Rd, London E1 4UJ

Welcome

Ellen Greig

Introduction to *'besides, in tangent'*

Eliel Jones

Make it New John (2009)

Video, 50 minutes

Duncan Campbell

The DeLorean time machine, or, the role of wifely labour in the maintenance of capitalism

Daisy Lafarge

In Free Fall (2010)

Video, 30 minutes

Hito Steyerl

'If the world is to be seen through, it can no longer be looked at': Notes on the producer as reader

Kylie Gilchrist

Far Out (2016)

Video, 3minutes and 55seconds

Peter Wächtler

On *'Far Out'*

Peter Wächtler

CHISENHALE FILM

'MAKE IT NEW JOHN' (2009)

Duncan Campbell

Make it new John (2009) tells the story of the DeLorean car, its creator John DeLorean and the workers of the Belfast-based car plant who built it. The film deftly contrasts the DeLorean dream with its spectacular downfall during a critical period in Northern Ireland's history, and the canonisation of the car – the DMC12 – as a symbol of the American myth of mobility.

Commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery, London; Film and Video Umbrella; Tramway, Glasgow; and The Model, Sligo.

'IN FREE FALL' (2010)

Hito Steyerl

In Free Fall (2010) incorporates a series of works – *After the Crash*, *Before the Crash* and *Crash* – which employ the setting and characters of an aeroplane junkyard in the Californian desert to tell the story of the economic climate.

Commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery, London; Picture This, Bristol; and Collective, Edinburgh. Supported by Arts Council England and Creative Scotland.

'FAR OUT' (2016)

Peter Wächtler

Far Out (2016) depicts a central subject's departure along a country road, set against a backdrop of moonlit landscapes. The protagonist's repetitive stasis invokes an ambiguous relationship with acts of progress or withdrawal, as well as our own misplaced desires.

Commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery.

THE DELOREAN TIME MACHINE, OR, THE ROLE OF WIFELY LABOUR IN THE MAINTENANCE OF CAPITALISM

Daisy Lafarge



The motor company tycoon John DeLorean lived to the ripe age of 80 and had five wives.

In 1954 he married Elizabeth Higgin, a service representative at the Michigan Bell Telephone Co.; their marriage lasted fifteen years, throughout his time as an executive at General Motors. He later divorced her for Kelly Harmon, an actress and model best known for her appearance in Tic Tac commercials. After three years he separated from Kelly and married Cristina Ferrare, also an actress and model, who we see in the archival footage in Duncan Campbell's *Make It New John*, making devoted wifely expressions at her husband's side. John married his fourth wife, Sally Baldwin, sometime after his marriage to Cristina broke down in 1985.

This lineage of wives is crucial in identifying the turning point of John's career, when he left his role as a superstar businessman at General Motors and began his car-crash solo enterprise, the DeLorean Motor Company. The DMC12 model, with a stainless steel finish and iconic gull-wing design, was conceived the same year as John's marriage to Cristina; whereas one actress-model wife might have been a coincidence, the second gave the appearance of carelessness, and confirmed John as America's ultimate entrepreneurial playboy. The DMC12, immortalised in *Back to the Future* as the DeLorean time

machine, was a symbol of John DeLorean's transcendence above his target market of horny bachelors, and provided them an horizon of masculine aspiration: speed, sex and stainlessness.

The 1980s' 'horny bachelor' is 2018's incel. The DMC12 model is the retro-gadget equivalent of every promise made by Jordan Peterson, the iconic gull-wings readily legible as some oblique Jungian symbolism: the bird of prey descending on the hot-blooded meal it's entitled to by 'natural' law; the DMC12 flexing its gull-wings and swooping on hot-blooded babes in the righteous gesture of sexual redistribution.

Under capitalist patriarchy, the 'horny bachelor' is the only true and timeless archetype; only the forms in which his emptiness is sold back to him will change.

*

I want to refocus attention on DeLorean's third wife, model and actress Cristina Ferrare. Throughout the film John can be seen licking his lips in deferred anxiety, and in one shot Cristina appears alongside him, lovingly dabbing at the corner of her husband's mouth while reporters bustle in front of them. Cristina's trick is to make the viewers think that dear sweet John has some crumbs or a smear of mustard in his stubble; self-made John can make horny bachelors everywhere live their dreams, but he can't keep his own mouth muck-free. Yet Cristina is only too aware that if she does not continue to dab at insipid DeLorean, his mandible will drop right off: too much bloodsucking of the poor has necrotised his tissues. Such wifely labour is required to keep him intact.

Which brings us neatly to the subject of DeLorean's fifth, unlikely wife: the French philosopher, mystic and 'abject alien' Simone Weil.

If you are wondering about the discrepancies in Simone and John's lifetimes I would refer you back to the time-travelling properties of the DMC12. Trained in philosophy and literature, Simone had once beaten her classmates Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre to graduate top of the year, but after a short stint teaching, and in desire to understand the mechanisms of capitalism through direct experience, she commenced employment in John DeLorean's car factory at the age of 25.

As she had told her pupils prior to this: ‘Human beings are so made that the ones who do the crushing feel nothing; it is the person crushed who feels what is happening. Unless one has placed oneself on the side of the oppressed, to feel with them, one cannot understand.’

Her friends were opposed to her project on the grounds that the proletarian condition is one of fact and not of choice; that she could *choose* to work in DeLorean’s factory but did not have to, was the difference that would always distinguish her suffering from that of her co-workers. Her suffering could only ever be relative.

In the spirit of these friends, who frowned upon her stridency and worried about her poor health and tendency to martyr herself, any mention of Simone is usually accompanied by the modifier ‘poor’ so that disquieting anecdotes about her life can be easily tied up by exclaiming: Poor Simone!

On Simone’s first day of factory work she turned up in a pure white blouse, and everyone stared in amazement.

Poor Simone!

When she tried to get a job at DMC she heard they only hired pretty women, so got a friend to put lipstick and rose-coloured blusher on her, because she didn’t know how to do it herself.

Poor Simone!

Her first supervisor at DMC was somewhat progressive and had been alerted to her presence and political motivations. He kept a watchful eye on her while she struggled to be half as productive as everyone else. If it weren’t for this paternalistic indulgence, she would likely have been fired on the spot.

Poor Simone!

She was clumsy, suffered from eczema, and acquired an abscess on her hand which had been lacerated by metal shavings. Still she said she would kill herself if she did not stick out one year in the factory. Poor Simone!

She believed to the end that her suffering would make her pure. Poor Simone!

And what could be more insufferable, more humiliating and represent more affliction to a Marxist saint than holy wedlock to an American motor company tycoon? But there was more to John DeLorean than that, as Simone soon discovered. She learned that his father was a Romanian immigrant foundry worker, and his mother an Austrian immigrant factory worker, that he had grown up poor in Detroit and had since become estranged from his angry, alcoholic father. How could she not pity the man in the monster, the boy in the braggadocio?

She saw that, like herself, he was constantly struggling to better himself, to transcend a personal state unsatisfactory to him, though they had gone about it in antithetical ways. She had to educate him about capitalism, of course, how it could never give him the security he craved. And she persuaded him to work a month or two in his own factory, before the crash, to return to the mindless labour of his primal scene; how else could he be reconciled to the memories of hardship repressed from his childhood?

In doing so, Simone martyred herself to the task of redeeming a vampiric husband: the most afflicted wifely labour of all.

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After filing for bankruptcy, John's 434-acre property in New Jersey was purchased by a certain Donald and made into a golf course. "There is only room for one daddy," said Donald as he played his first hole. John and Simone retired to a caravan in Humble, Texas, chosen by Simone for its titular nod to humility and their reduced circumstances. The DeLorean Motor Company still has its office and showroom in Humble, at 15023 Eddie Drive, where the time machine and DMC memorabilia welcome occasional visitors, and otherwise gather dust in peace.

This text draws heavily on the chapter 'Paris: Factory Year' in *Simone Weil: Utopian Pessimist* by David McLellan, 1989

'IF THE WORLD IS TO BE SEEN THROUGH, IT CAN NO LONGER BE LOOKED AT'⁽¹⁾: NOTES ON THE PRODUCER AS READER

Kylie Gilchrist

My title, borrowed from Adorno, begs the question: how do we 'see through' the world as it is today, if not by looking? We must 'read' it. This does not only require us to approach images critically, to decipher and deconstruct. Most of us already doubt that images show us reality 'as it really is'. Rather, our main challenge is confronting a reality so complex and abstract that it exceeds any single view. As such, we need a practice that is both critical and constructive to grasp something of its truth. Such a practice would recognize symptoms of structural tendencies, search out traces of opaque networks, flows of information and capital, and link them up to a larger whole. It would produce images of the present that are ultimately literary, as our moment is best grasped in narrative form.

This demand for literacy, however, is complicated by the state of the world we are trying to 'read'. Among today's myriad ills stands what Mark Fisher calls the condition of 'post-literacy'. We are so appalled, addicted to distraction and instant gratification, that knowledge is unpalatable and we cannot digest dense texts. This condition is all the more pernicious as universities are increasingly structured to train students for lifelong employment and consumption, rather than self-directed learning. Dyslexia, Fisher suggests, is in fact a valuable attribute of advanced capitalist subjectivity — 'capitalism is profoundly illiterate,' Fisher quotes from Deleuze and Guattari, and workers are more efficient by processing information 'post-lexically'.

While I resist the notion that we are 'post-lexical', Fisher's diagnosis signals to the fact that contemporary experience requires new modes of reading. This is not simply because digital technologies are reconfiguring our sensibility. Rather, the traditional model of private print reading does not, on its own, allow us to synthesize the fragmented and globally distributed narratives that make our lives intelligible. It is here that I believe Hito Steyerl's *In Free Fall* (2010)

(1). Theodor W. Adorno, *Notes to Literature*. Edited by Rolf Tiedemann. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, 128.

(2). Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*, Winchester: Zero Books, 2009, 25.

makes its most salient contribution: the film shows us that we cannot simply ‘look’ at the world to see through it. Rather, Steyerl shows us that ‘seeing through’ the world requires a new mode of the film shows us that we cannot simply ‘look’ at the world to see through it. In doing so, it suggests a new model for literacy.

This project has precedent in Walter Benjamin’s seminal essay, ‘The Author as Producer’. This text and Steyerl’s film cite the same source of inspiration—Sergei Tret’iakov, the constructivist author known for establishing a mode of literary production aligned with Soviet Russia’s communist future. Tret’iakov’s activities awakened Benjamin to the dialectical potential latent in what he called the ‘literarization of the conditions of living’, or the newfound equivalence of author and reader engendered by mass media. When the newspaper’s dissemination of information supplants storytelling as the primary means of understanding one’s place in history, writing becomes a mode of production like any other. The displacement of the author from artistic elite to the production line signals the destruction of literature by the bourgeois public sphere. At the same time, Tret’iakov’s literary activities reveal that it is also key to resurrecting literature in a new form. Where the reader is the author’s ‘co-worker,’ Benjamin says, she is ‘always ready to become a writer’ herself. Within revolutionary conditions, the communisation of literary competence can set to work an ‘operative’ literature—one that dissolves the author function and the aims of literary realism into the collective construction of new reality.

For *In Free Fall* to revive Benjamin’s text within our decidedly non-revolutionary times, in a film that thematises the absolutisation of capitalism as a global form of life, entails a shift in orientation. Where as Tret’iakov’s horizon of literary production was sited on the dissolution of literature into life, Steyerl’s film must affirm its autonomy from a reality it aims to negate. This is why I understand the film not as a heroic call for spectators to become producers, as Benjamin’s essay might instigate. Rather, I believe *In Free Fall* uses its distinct position as art to propose that producers become readers. By enabling us to ‘read’ what we cannot ‘see’ in images, the film not only makes the lived reality of crisis and exploitation intelligible, it also

(3) Benjamin, Walter. “The Author as Producer.” In *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 2: Part 2, 1931–1934*, edited by Michael Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.

provides—alongside this knowledge and with, perhaps, a minimally constructivist effect—a training in literacy.

To elaborate how Steyerl's film reimagines Benjamin's figure of the 'reader as co-worker' for our contemporary moment, I would like to dwell on three figures in the film as models for reading.

Ghosts:

In Free Fall admits of a haunting from its opening lines. Its ghosts are tangibly manifest in artefacts imbued with traces of historical life. Our protagonist plane is one of such ghosts: we hear its aeronautic biography upon the backdrop of its eviscerated carcass. Elsewhere, Kevan's abstract-expressionist paintings preserve the post-crash remains of the DVD industry. Kevan himself is a ghost, immortalized on one of the screens he once animated through his labor, as an individual casualty of the 2008 financial crisis. The flight attendants—one of whom is embodied by Steyerl herself—could even be ghosts from the near future; specimens of human life transported back in time to warn of society's self-destructive tendency.

Typically, we must chase our ghosts out from the shadowy recesses of memory. Not so here: ghosts abound without the slightest clandestine pretense. It leads us to ask: is anything living in this film?

Recycling:

'Matter loves on and lives on', Steyerl says, by continuing to exist in different forms. Aluminum is an exemplary case of matter's 'recyclability'. It can be melted down and resurrected, used again and again. Its very substance is imbued with possibilities of new life. It is also a medium of memory. With highly stable properties, it can remain long after its fragile human producers to preserve their histories in material form.

By tracing the endless cycles of aluminum's resurrection, Steyerl provides an allegory of the cyclical temporality of capitalist production: its capacity to absorb systemic crashes into new profit, and produce novelty as an endless return of the same. Her depiction also refers us to the material basis of this system. She highlights not only its mode and

relations of production, but more fundamentally, the materiality of images and thus the nature of matter itself. It is matter that lives on after the destruction of form. And if matter not only lives but also loves, per Steyerl's Freudian slip, we could conceive that it is imbued with a force of desire. Matter continually seeks to overcome the limits of its form, animated by amorous potentiality.

While Tret'iakov's operative literature sought to organize the potentialities of matter into new artistic and social forms, Steyerl's film is more concerned with matter's capacity to explode such forms, and with the experience of a form's destruction. *In Free Fall* churns mass media into scenes that reveal and undo—through breaks in narrative and green screen glitches—their processes of making. These ruptures confront us with the material histories inscribed by innumerable cycles of reuse—which the images themselves cannot show.

If *In Free Fall* itself performs a recycling, it recycles in a markedly different way than does the social reality it conveys. In Steyerl's concern for the life of specific objects, she recycles in the mode of salvage.

Biography:

In Free Fall cites Tret'iakov's essay, 'The Biography of the Object', as the model for its methodology. As Tret'iakov asserts, the novel form is fatally structured around the psychological drama of individual heroes. Revolutionary literature must divest itself of this. Instead, as operative literature, it should organize narrative around the life of objects, whose histories evince a cross section of the collective body and social relations that produced them. The biography of the object, Tret'iakov says, 'has an extraordinary capacity to incorporate human material'. When narratively reconstructed, the object's life allows this 'human material'—the mass of human life that produced it—to live on through the artwork (4).

(4) Tret'iakov, Sergi. *Soviet Factography: A Special Issue*. Edited by Devin Fore. Vol. 118. Cambridge MA: October, 2006, 61.

Comrade, we must read our visual bond.

Steyerl's essay, 'In Defense of the Poor Image', concludes by connecting Dziga Vertov's notion of a 'visual bond' to the digital circulation of bootlegged, edited, and degraded visual material (5). 'Kino-Eye', proclaimed Vertov, 'must bind together all of the workers scattered around the entire world through a single visual bond'. This bond was to link the farthest-flung, most disparate people by depicting the material bases of the social systems that tie them together. Textile workers must see factory workers building their spinning machines; factory workers must see miners producing the fuel they use, and so forth (6). Workers should also see production across all social formations—from least to most technologically advanced—and indeed, the non-human production of organic and geological processes. This vast bond would thus weave a globally interconnected, internally differentiated and nonsynchronous collective body, attuned to the continuous transformations of its metabolic relation with past and present life.

In its minimally constructivist pedagogy, *In Free Fall* equips us with an 'operative literacy' through which this visual bond is produced by being read. This mode of reading does not immediately dissolve art into the collective utopia that art wishes itself to be. However, it does push upon, rip and re-weave our grammar and syntax, forms of thought, and historical memory—and equally, the social forms that embody them. In doing so, it offers a view through the world, and potentially, into the construction of new forms of being.

(5) Hito Steyerl. *The Wretched of the Screen*. *e-flux Journal* 6. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012, 43.

(6) Dziga Vertov, as cited in Devin Fore, 'The Metabiotic State: Dziga Vertov's The Eleventh Year.' October no. 145, Summer 2013, 3–37.

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Sergi Tret'iakov. *Soviet Factography: A Special Issue*. Edited by Devin Fore. Vol. 118. Cambridge MA: October, 2006.

ON 'FAR OUT'

Peter Wächtler

Peter,

It's been two years now since that green clad men's marsh through the Valley of Fear or whatever spooky scenery you chose from your ever widening spectrum of escapism and straight-up regression. Accordingly, the questions for you tonight are: How do you look at this clip now and has your reception changed after two years time? If so, give reasons. However, before you light your pipe let me give you a short report of the two years that passed. Let me fill you in about the events that took place deep inside your mind's pine forest, where the light is sparse and the birds sing no more and where there is a pond.

A big white cloud's reflection pushes itself slowly over the pond's surface; there are water lilies and water striders and small bubbles ascending to finally pop open with a gentle 'blup'. The reeds are softly shaken by friendly winds and a dragonfly whirs around the pond, which is neither big, nor small, just a humble pond somewhere in your humble mind.

Well, and there you are of course, right there in the middle plashing and splashing about, singing along loudly, booming songs entirely freed of sense, tune, taste. There you are rinsing off the reek of bad temper, anxiety and doubts that stuck to you throughout that long and dusty walk. You might not swim in entirely clear water yet, BUT all in all it is a joyful sight; you scrubbing yourself with that long-handled Donald Duck brush of yours and certainly it is an unburdened, joyful moment of relief with not too many like it.

Well, this is long ago and will you look at you now! There you are again, surprise surprise, but the pond is gone. Instead you are standing amidst burning nettles and raspberries that look like small clusters of ticks, sucking each other's blood forever, inflating just to deflate again. No white cloud but a stale and murky sky of grey and brown hangs low over the almost entirely overgrown clearing. The soaked dark soil cakes your rubber boots that give a sucking sound as you turn around to tighten your bathrobe and sullenly wade back into the forest.

The pond is gone and you are lost, lost for words and actions, lost for trails and paths. All these trees fencing your thoughts. Anybody would get blocked in here, a moody realm that seems to have banned light, sound and hope. You haunt the forest through sore nights and red-eyed days. The people you meet on your way are hardly hiding their sneer and get on with their lives.

Then you come to a solid wall of stone. This wall is very high, so very high, that it grows right into the clouds. Needless to say that the wall is impenetrable, solid as the core of Jupiter and so hard that you get severe migraine by looking at it. You search the blank stone for clues, runes, inscriptions or a doorknob, but no luck. Once the sword is pulled out, every stone looks the same to you. It takes you weeks to figure it out and to realize that things **MUST** most certainly change when the full moon would break the low clouds of these harsh days of early march and **THEN** its light would fall onto the figurine of a dolphin you made out of wax and peasant hair which **THEN** you hold with both index fingers over your head to **THEN** let this figurine cast a shadow resembling a keyhole onto the stone wall, which you **THEN** would peek through in expectation of further instructions. But just when you worked out the old “looks-like-a-key-hole-at-midnight-to-me” method, your phone rings. It is your mother and she tells you that your father has died the night before.

You leave the needle trees and the stone wall behind to rent a car and drive up to North Germany, where he lies in his bed, looking very small and very gone, and when you touch his hand the cold gives you a sting that you will not forget.

You speak about the sensation when you lift a tetrapak of milk that you expect to be full, but is in fact empty. Should somebody ask you. You stick to professional slogans to season your sickening collections of anecdotes and bon mots, a sheer endless application form to some witty wise-crack-asshole-club somewhere up there that you are filling in at all costs. In private you are unable to share anything with anybody. You are trying to sleep off all your own comments, statements and proverbs just to wake up before dawn, craving for new descriptions for your fatigue. Narration, is it? Hit the road, Jack? Where is that castle now then? What's left in that old top hat for you?

However, on this complicated terrain, let us stick to the rule of thumb onto which we both agreed: I will not believe a single word you say. Accordingly let us conjure a more useful memory for all of this and no more hanky panky.

Chapter 12:

In a small side street off Hackney Road, before the meeting with the musician for the final recording of the video's song, I have a long phone call with my father. It is an overcast Saturday afternoon with a soft drizzle on casually dressed passers-by heading for a late lunch in the pub. I cannot decide where to eat. A couple leaves a wine bar. My father tells me that he had just ordered a tricycle, which would allow him to go on bike trips with my mother again. Sad mechanical devices with chrome baskets for terriers and shiny, oversized bike bells ring-ring my mind.

Very good I say.

I am not really hungry anyways. I cannot go into any of these places. A simple menu card on a day like this can split my skull into two halves screaming at each other about sweet or salty options.

The rain pipe is all clogged up with birch leaves and the balcony is flooded by the heavy rainfalls of last week.

I am not going in there, definitely not my place. Too much.

The lamp in the living room switches on by itself because of the leakage. Joseph and his Brothers. The dog. London. My father asks me where about I am.

I am standing in the rain in front of a restaurant in which everybody looks great.

He wrote his PHD here and in his time was concerned with the brain development of crested newts; that was in the 60s. Swinging crested newts all over the place then. Or 50s. In any case he was very fond of the city and went to see *Blow Up* in the cinema. Or 70s. To like a city seems almost embarrassing to me now, students like cities and go there for fun. After that period you should not lose a word about it and move to Berlin. I must state that I always liked London a lot and that it is a very dear place to me. That also has to do with the newts of my father. The audio I recorded for the video so far sounds absolutely dreadful. Embarrassing. I should be whipped in all of Europe's capitals.

There are three days left. Maybe a glass of wine. With a sardine. The tricycle has a motor. Who on earth would order a sardine now? People think I am re-enacting a local re-enacting a local. Oh, how wrong they are! If they could only understand what I am really working on. If I could only understand. A local. Nowhere. A guest. Everywhere. Cheers! Cheers to the weekend! Cheers to Abbey Road! The tab in the kitchen is leaking. I say that I will have a look at it on my next visit as I can repair everything and make everything whole again. The squint-eyed cat. The garden in September. Do not be afraid. Not now. The sound of the main door in the background. I have never seen *Blow Up* myself.

The fog in the video still looks very bad and you can still see that the green guy has no legs at all, Adam needs to put a thicker layer of fog to cover up the figure's ass. All food around here deeply corrupts me, in one way or another. We hang up. A face in the fog. A tree grows in Hackney. And another. And another. Needle trees, so many of them, no light, no air to breeze. Everybody sings and nobody listens. Idiot. Fly, you fools. Right. I will drink a tea in this park however it's called. AND I will have an old muffin with it. Everybody dead and gone, so take me too to Avalon. A stone is pushed over the edge. Looks like any stone to me. Hold it right there. Thou canst not.

Well, my friend, be that as it may and let us now carefully close this old and pig-leather bound journal and let us toss it into the fire, yes, let us skip all these stained pages, these words of ponds and forests, to let the silence warm our bones.

BIOGRAPHIES

Duncan Campbell lives and works in Glasgow. Recent solo exhibitions include: Wiels, Brussels (2017); IMMA, Dublin (2016); Kunsthall Oslo, Oslo (2015); The Common Guild, Glasgow (2014); Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh (2012); Tramway, Glasgow; Artist Space, New York (2010); and Chisenhale Gallery, London (2009). Campbell was awarded the Turner Prize in 2014.

Kylie Gilchrist is a writer and editor based between London and New York. She is currently completing an MA at Kingston University's Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy. She also works with the nonprofit organization Art Resources Transfer.

Eliel Jones is a writer and curator based in London. Recent curatorial projects include: *Acts of Translation*, MMAG Foundation, Jordan; and *do you host?*, U–jazdowski Castle CCA, Warsaw (both 2018) and *Experiments on Public Space*, Dallas Museum of Art, Texas (2015). His writing has appeared in various artists' catalogues and publications, including the New Museum, New York, South London Gallery, and 13th Baltic Triennial, as well as in *Artforum*, *frieze*, *Elephant* and *MAP*. He was the 2016-18 Curatorial Assistant: Commissions at Chisenhale Gallery.

Daisy Lafarge works across poetry, fiction, criticism, theory and visual art. She is a PhD researcher at the University of Glasgow and an editor at MAP, a platform for artist-led publishing and production based in Glasgow.

Hito Steyerl is based in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include: Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen; MOCA, Los Angeles (both 2016); Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2015); Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2014); and Chisenhale Gallery, London; Picture This, Bristol; Collective, Edinburgh; Henie Onstad Centre, Høvikodden; Villa Stuck, Munich (all 2010). She is currently a professor of New Media Art at the Berlin University of the Arts, where she co-founded the Research Center for Proxy Politics, together with Vera Tollmann and Boaz Levin.

Peter Wächthler lives and works in Brussels and Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include Chisenhale Gallery, London (2016); The Renaissance Society, Chicago (2016); Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster (2014); Reena Spaulings, New York (2014); and *dépendance* gallery, Brussels (2013). Selected group exhibitions include: New Museum Triennial, New York (2015); Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool (2014); and Artists Space, New York (2013).

CHISENHALE GALLERY

64 Chisenhale Road, London, E3 5QZ
+44 (0)20 8981 4518
www.chisenhale.org.uk

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Thursday 2 August, 12 – 9 pm

Saturday 25 August, 12 – 6.40 pm

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