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Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series

Wjm Kok

Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series

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Dit proefschrift is geschreven als een gedeeltelijke vervulling van de vereisten voor het doctoraatsprogramma PhDArts. De overblijvende vereiste bestaat uit een demonstratie van de onderzoeksresultaten in de vorm van een artistieke presentatie.

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Contents

Preface.....	vii
Introduction.....	xv
Intuition.....	1
On Series.....	7
Closure and Repetition: On Kant and Deleuze.....	23
Underpainting.....	31
And, And, And So On and So Forth.....	35
iLand.....	39
Zero for Stupidity, One for Enlightenment.....	49
Marcel Duchamp's Conceptual Model: Bicycle Wheel.....	57
A Series of Nine Dimensions.....	75
Affect Mix.....	81
Bird Call.....	87
Afterface.....	91
Literature.....	95
Research publications.....	98
Papers, presentations, performances and concerts.....	98
Exhibitions.....	99
Work.....	100
Exhibition publications.....	101
Research activities.....	101
Other research activities.....	105
Curriculum Vitae.....	109
Acknowledgements.....	113
Samenvatting.....	119

Preface

Sometimes something seems to only differ from something else but only repeats itself for itself. Sometimes something seems to repeat something but does not; it is something different. To render difference productive is to ‘make the difference’ (Deleuze, 1994, 28) rather than positioning it as opposed to sameness. In my practice and in my research I engage with this use of difference as generative, as opposed to comparative. This has led to the production of most of my art works in series. The research deals with the specific relation between the use of series in my work over a longer period and Gilles Deleuze’s use of the concept of difference in *Difference and Repetition* (1994). Hence the title of my research ‘The Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series’.

Given that I am interested in concepts, in philosophy and no less in conceptual art itself, my art practice is often perceived as conceptual. I have never felt comfortable with this reception, although I understand its source. However, in my practice I do not start with concepts or ideas. Through my work ‘things’, ‘problems’ emerge that are selected on the basis of their being ‘just interesting enough’. This is a slight, yet crucial differentiation from the forms of ‘disinterest’ within contemporary art cultivated under the influence of amongst other things, the practice of Marcel Duchamp. With his laissez-faire attitude Duchamp tried to cancel what he called taste in aesthetics and finally the retinal altogether. Parallel to this was the influence of Zen Buddhism in the 1950s and 1960s mainly through the author Daisetsu Suzuki’s activities in the United States and the impact it had on John Cage and consequently his students at Black Mountain College. This led to forms of cultivated disinterest and detachment in art discourse which continue to have a legacy today. It is no coincidence that the first word in the first chapter of *Difference and Repetition* is ‘indifference’. This indifference is of course of a philosophical order and used in contrast to the notion of ‘difference in itself’ and the strong influence stoic philosophy had on Deleuze.

Four specific problems have framed the development of my research. The first is the apparent similarity between Conceptual Art and philosophy. The second is Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of concept, which was clearly defined from its use as a general term in philosophy. The third is Deleuze and Guattari's lack of engagement with conceptual art. The fourth is the easy slippage from the concepts of philosophy to conceptual aspects of my art works, partly as a result of the first three problematics outlined here.

The core of the research has taken place as visual and textual experiments without clearly defined parameters, consisting of disparate elements from sketches, notes, concepts, proposals, papers, diagrams, collages, photographs, video works, paintings, drawings, text as material, compositions, to articles and concepts for an alternative edition of Gilles Deleuze's book *Difference and Repetition*. From these processes, certain things developed into new work, with new categories of work coming into existence within my practice, including writing, making video works and engaging with music projects. Although writing is something that is generally expected in a PhD project, its newfound presence within my practice is not something that had been anticipated or proposed within the research plan with which the whole project started. Video pieces were developed and came to be exhibited as part of my artistic work, introducing a medium that had never previously been part of my practice.

To map these various outcomes, three particular categories may be distinguished. First there is the work that was shown in exhibitions as belonging to my artistic practice. Second, and perhaps the most unexpectedly, there is the development of music projects, indicated as noise music. Each of the sections of the research has developed along its own structure and in terms of its own functions, albeit with multiple cross-references and influences from one to the other. Third, there are the results of a writing strategy that developed into essays and articles, a substantial part of which have been published. I will refer to this body of texts as

‘the dissertation’. Its content will be further elaborated in the introduction, as this preface is intended to outline the overall research outcomes.

Next to the ongoing production of art works, the research brought about material that sometimes developed into work and could be disclosed within my practice. We can consider for instance the series entitled *Loop Notes*, 2011, a large series of very small ink drawings, called notes, on A4 paper. These notes delineate a loop that is intended to end where it started. The two dimensions of the ground on which they are drawn are determined by a circumference and united in a third dimension, the surface of the paper itself. The reduced scale on which these little drawings are made is more connected with reading and writing than with drawing. Pressure, speed, duration, interference and immediacy lead to a play of an abstract line in which cross-overs, affects, mirroring, imitations and couplings form a literal repetition and elaboration of difference, each time in a series of six drawings that makes up the larger series.

I also developed a series of video works, a medium that had formerly not been part of my practice. These included *ON*, 2008, which formed an edition of the art magazine *Cut*. This work showed ten seconds of a maximum monochrome for monitors (white light, as if ‘on’) intermittently with ten seconds of a minimum of monochrome for monitors (black screen, as if ‘off’). In terms of the functioning of the hardware with video presentations, which so often leaves more to wish for in the production of these works, this piece adds further confusion to the question of whether something works or not. Is the video on or is it off? Another example is *Untitled (Variation 13)*, 2010, a series of video pieces in which difference is provoked by using visualizations from a standard computer music player. Instead of having the visual being at the service of the music, the music is reciprocally reduced to being in silent service of the visualizations, which cannot be seen as interpretation as is the case with digital processing of ‘music’ data. These visualizations lead an independent life through the processing of the

music by algorithms that generate a non-repetition of sorts in which everything is continuously on the move. A third video piece, shown on monitors, consisted of an open series in which other artists made the recording of a clock in their environment by performing the camera to turn with the second hand under specific conditions given by the artist, which resulted in works like *18 seconds to the left (Performed by Karin Hasselberg)*, 2010.

In other new work produced during the PhD trajectory, previously existing aspects of my practice have become more explicit. One important element of this has been what might best be called a ‘re-appropriation’ of earlier series. Principally most of my painting series, especially the open series, are conceived with the idea that they can continue to be produced at any given time in the future. But even the production of finite or what I refer to as ‘closed’ series like the *Maxi-Color* paintings (1988-1992) was in fact only partially produced at the time of its conception, since the dimension of its number as well as its final scale were overwhelming. A re-appropriation of this series was shown in the solo exhibition *More than One of Each* at Galerie van Gelder in 2012. The original series is based on the shift of context of the source, a children’s coloring book, to painting. It was initially produced as 32 paintings of all the pages of the coloring book in the same size and was later multiplied in seven different sizes, each size the doubling of surface of the previous one. The differentiation as developed in scale had an inverse effect on the perception of the viewer, responding to what may be called a *bloc of sensations* (Deleuze) not being accessible any longer, that is, with our first percepts and affects as a newborn in which the eye is not yet conditioned to see ‘straight’. This re-appropriation received the slightly deviating title *Maxi-Color #* and its existence is based on the instruction in its subtitle to present the painting in an upside down fashion as indicated in a certificate. This certificate constitutes a work in itself, which creates a reciprocal relationship not only to the way the painting is presented, but also with regard to the owner of the painting in question. In a similar way the interest in reciprocity returned in

the *Mix* series in which the agency of the object is split in a collaborative production that includes both artists signing the monochrome they painted together. In contrast the author of the series ‘signs’ the series as concept only virtually.

Much of the other research experiments, like the disparate series of sketches, papers and try-outs mentioned earlier that did not become part of my practice, will remain undisclosed, in much the same way as many painting experiments would never leave my studio. However, to offer insight in this part of my research outcomes, the PhD Committee was invited to see this material in a rather raw and bare state, albeit selected and presented within a clear structure on tables in my studio. Next to this material, six paintings from the series *Mix*, 2008 (ongoing) were shown. This series of six paintings started in the same year my research was initiated and has been continued during the whole research period. The paintings were made in each one of the last six years of their production. This series started independently of and earlier than the research. However, that which expresses itself at a certain moment in time, that manifests itself in either this work or the research as a whole, may have had a different passive synthesis of preparatory time in which that which started earlier may come to the surface later and vice versa.

The second aspect of my research outcomes, music projects, which have claimed their own domain in the research, is more difficult to explain. A short detour to elaborate on my interest in deskilling may allow for some entry to the specifics of these noise music projects. During my art academy studies I sought an alternative to what I experienced as the ubiquitous and open-ended forms of doing installation and performance art. I looked at the other side of the spectrum to the discredited field of painting. Before knowing it, I ended up getting entangled in monochrome painting, a site that manifested the notion of deskilling which has informed my art practice ever since. The initial start of my engagement in noise music as an opportunity for ‘deskilling’ may be recognized in a piece entitled *Abstract (Tony Conrad,*

Four Violins, 1964), 2010, that emerged from a number of experiments in the research. It was shown in a solo museum exhibition in the same year. Through this a backdoor was opened by two visual art colleagues, John Nixon (*The Donkey's Tail*) and Victor Meertens (*Charles Ives Singers*), both of whom have been working for many years in this noise music context. This led to my being invited to participate in a concert they were asked to do in Rotterdam. In addition I organized a second concert at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy. The concerts were released on CD's as well as on DVD's. Through my activities for this band I was invited to become member of the group. This was the beginning of other productions for *The Donkey's Tail* that I co-directed or provided the material for. Finally I released in 2012 my own project *12-12-12*, under the name Red Book. As a result of all of this the composition *Uneveneven*, 2011 will be performed as part of my presentation during the public defense.

The third part of the research project, the dissertation, which takes the form of a series of texts only, will be further elaborated on in the introduction. The decision to do text only in the dissertation emerged amongst other things from the wish to keep distinct and traceable the nature and integrity of the elements of the different fields this research has drawn from. For things are often not what they seem to be. Sometimes something looks like research but is not. Sometimes something looks like art but is not. Sometimes something sounds like noise but is not.

Introduction

Gilles Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* is about the difference that 'make[s] the difference,' as opposed to difference that opposes itself to sameness. (Deleuze 1994, 28). To make a difference is generative as opposed to comparative. My research has operated in the shadow of this notion of difference and, without it being my original intention, has articulated itself increasingly through the discursive as well as in the direct production of art works. It is evident in new artistic projects such as two series of video works, in a range of musical experiments and noise music I have made during the doctoral studies, and in formal research with the possibilities inherent in standard academic formats, such as the presentation, the conference paper, the text.

The initial proposal for my PhD series was to investigate series in my own artistic practice and that of other artists in relation to Gilles Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*. This resulted in an early text 'On Series' (2009), which revolves around the importance of series in my artistic practice and examines how this interest is positioned or repositioned within the research. The text was first presented at a PhD seminar in October 2009, attended by guest artist Andrea Fraser and repeated in a performative setting in June 2012, again with Fraser present. This time the paper was 'read aloud' with the use of a microphone through loudspeakers to create a 'virtual' (sonorous) mediating layer between the simultaneously shown silent video of the recorded session of 2009 and my live reading performance.

'Underpainting' (2009) is one of a number of short texts that were written in relation to an idea that I developed of approaching the book *Difference and Repetition* in material terms. One version of the idea consisted of a reorganization of the sequence of the pages so as to arrive in the middle of the book towards the end of the text. This allowed for another kind of physical reading experience. This outcome was possible by conceiving the pages as autonomous units—as paper units, rather than virtual text on pages. From this came the step

to respond to what was on each page, regardless of the immediate context of the previous or next page. It was but another step to write a series of replacement pages, of which this is one.

Over time, my initial focus on *Difference and Repetition* (1994) as a central reference for the research was expanded to include two other books that Deleuze co-authored with Félix Guattari, namely *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) and *What is Philosophy?* (1994). These books form a specific triangular relationship within Deleuze's oeuvre. *Difference and Repetition* is the first book in which Deleuze has come to speak his own voice as a philosopher. He introduces a number of key concepts that he goes on to develop in *A Thousand Plateaus*, where they return as a kind of performative (as opposed to a merely reflective or contemplative) philosophy, influenced by the co-authorship with Guattari among other factors. This trajectory finally results in *What is Philosophy?*, a book which Deleuze wrote alone, but attributed as a co-authorship in respect of Guattari's contribution to the ideas it addressed.

In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze reverses the situation of arrival at a philosophical conclusion through the production of concepts by taking the question 'What is it I have been doing all my life?' as his departure point (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 1). He thus asks the question that should probably have been posed at the beginning, but could not be asked without a lifetime of experience. Deleuze found himself in a position close to Leibniz, who observed: 'I thought I had reached port; but . . . I seemed to be cast back again into the open sea' (Leibniz 1973, 121). As an artist, I have experienced something comparable, namely the question of how to deal with the expertise gained within my practice over the years and how to mediate this knowledge in writing. Writing about the book does not seem to suffice. The problem of being an artist producing something in the new medium of writing is yet another problem. The more critical issue is to write something that can uphold its place next to the body of art produced.

This has led to a number of experimental texts which share a singularity like works of art tend to do and at the same time may be considered part of a series that runs parallel to my artistic practice. ‘iLand’ (2011), a prime example, was written for a book entitled *Apogee, A Compilation of Solitude. Ecology and Recreation*’ (Nüans, 2011) revolving around the theme of ‘island.’ Authors and artists from different backgrounds gave the chapters very diverse focal points. The ‘iLand’ text was not intended to approach a theory, analysis or reflection. It was rather an attempt to bring some of the interests within my research in relation to the topic of the project. Two intermediary subjects ‘to hit an object’ and the phenomenon ‘wave’ unfolded the constellation of the different subjects into a meandering ritornello. This was echoed in the layout of the paragraph structures, enabling form and content to be one.

The question of whom to address the writing has remained yet another consistent and increasingly relevant issue, as I became more and more aware of the complex range of positions inhabited by the artist in academic discourse. This problematic calls to mind the second sentence of *A Thousand Plateaus*: ‘Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd’ (1987, 3). Later Deleuze and Guattari go on to comment that ‘Also because it’s nice to talk like everybody else, to say the sun rises, when everybody knows it’s only a manner of speaking’ (1987, 3). In the context of doing PhD research, ‘to talk like everybody else’ implicitly means to talk like an academic, even as an artist undertaking a PhD research project. I was interested in this problematic and what it might mean for developing my writing practice. Indeed, as you will see, it became a subtext of many of my texts. I was not interested in becoming an academic, but the notion that doing doctoral research as an artist legitimated ignorance of the academic protocol that was mandatory for ‘everybody else’ made no sense to me either. This led me, for example, to undertake the attempt of trying to get as close as I could to producing an academic text which resulted in ‘Marcel Duchamp’s Conceptual Model: Bicycle Wheel’ (2013).

This text was a contribution to a book about the possible fields of exchange and resistance between art and philosophy, conceived and edited by philosopher Sybrandt van Keulen for Royal Boom Publishers, Amsterdam. Deleuze and Guattari seem to have had little or no interest in conceptual art. They remained conspicuously silent about Marcel Duchamp, an artist whose oeuvre potentially contained links to the interests underlying such concepts as ‘the body without organs,’ ‘becoming woman’ and ‘ritornelle.’ My text asks what role model might be reserved for the readymade in the development of conceptual art, of which the *Bicycle Wheel* is the first example. It brings this work in dialogue with *The Aesthetic Model*, one of the six models Deleuze and Guattari use in their elaboration of ‘the smooth and the striated’, these quoted words being also used as the title of one of the chapters in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

There is moreover a disciplinary question underpinning the research as a whole—namely to what degree a visual artist would be able to understand the philosophy of Deleuze, or philosophy in general, in order to engage with it in a relevant way. This question also contains an element of displacement within it, since as an artist I do not want to become a philosopher. In a televised interview with Deleuze, Claire Parnet confronted him with a comparable problem with regard to his position as a philosopher, by asking him how he deals with knowledge outside of his own field.¹ She pointed out that Deleuze is not that good at mathematics and not trained in science, but that it never withheld him from writing about either one extensively. He gives an indirect answer by reflecting on it with regard to his own discipline, stating that a non-philosophical reading is just as important as a philosophical reading, and that he even considers it very important for philosophers themselves to be able to conduct both readings simultaneously. With this approach he acknowledges the necessity of

¹ This eight-hour series of interviews, entitled *l'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* took place in 1988-89, in a television program produced by Pierre-André Boutang.

specialized engagement, while simultaneously leaving space for the validity of non-specialist approaches. These are the conditions within which I locate my research.

The existence of a very active Deleuzian field of discourse based at the University of Edinburgh, with its own *Deleuze Studies* journal offered me a site to test the degree to which I could have my place as an artist in this field. I have actively participated in two *International Deleuze Studies Conferences* and a *Deleuze Summer School* in which I got to know many scholars in the field, and with it the ever-increasing field of secondary literature on Deleuze. I have recently had my artistic work published on the cover of *Deleuze Studies* and consider the future publication of my writing in this context. On the other end of the spectrum I have also engaged with the question of undoing knowledge in such writings as ‘Zero for Stupidity, One for Enlightenment’ (2012), a paper prepared for an event organized by the editors of *Apogee* around the theme ‘The Self-Taught Philosopher of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān.’ Auto-didacticism typically calls to mind a kind of non-learning with regard to what institutional teaching may offer. A contrary movement to this, once one has reached a certain level of skill or knowledge, is deskilling, a notion that is likely to have resonated nowhere as intense as in the visual arts. One such example is found in the readymade, another which is discussed in this paper is the monochrome. An ideal site for deskilling, yet also for reflection on what ‘light’ is necessary for it to ‘see’, ‘feel’, and ‘understand’ its dimensions.

I have also tried to explicate how I could contribute to discourse on the relationship between art and philosophy in a wider sense. One result of this was the text ‘Closure and Repetition’ (2011), which was written for a series of thirty ten-minute presentations held at Spui 25, a platform of the University of Amsterdam, in 2010. This series, which lasted over 12 hours, was organized around Kant’s *The Critique of Judgment*. My contribution concerned the repetition that connected the three Critiques as a larger body of work, relating to the notion of closure and ending, and providing some examples of eschatological art pieces by

Rodchenko, Malevich and Mondrian. Repetition is not only a subject in this text, but the word itself is also deliberately used over-abundantly, making its own composition of de- and reterritorialization.

There was also the issue of confronting the clash of terminology within philosophy and art discourse. This resulted in ‘From Conceptual Art to Philosophy and Back Again’ (2010), a text that was originally conceived as a summary of the research proposal that I presented to the NWO (The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research) for possible funding of my research project. It addresses the congruencies and divergences of the way concepts are used in art as opposed to philosophy, with a particular focus on conceptual art. An interesting crossover took place between conducting this kind of research while reflecting on it is, especially in and for the arts, which as John Cage once pointed out, was not necessarily a productive combination.

While, at times, I have felt estranged from the academic environment during my PhD trajectory, not least due to the absence of artist peers, I also had to negotiate new tendencies and shifting boundaries within the field of visual art itself. The borderlines between cultural studies, curatorial studies, museum studies, art history and the visual arts are increasingly blurring, making the question of whom to address my research to no easy task. As a participant of the reading group *If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution*, I experienced this shift first-hand when my attention was drawn to their *Edition IV—Affect* (2010–2012), a two year program focusing on theories of affect and their significance for artistic practice today. A subject that is not only directly related to Deleuze and Guattari, it also proved to be very relevant to the art field as I elaborate on in my paper *Zero for Stupidity, One for Enlightenment*. Enduring with the often difficult process of finding ways to turn the very singular perspectives coming to table became increasingly rewarding for my research. One of the outcomes of this reading group that exchanged material with parallel

reading groups in Toronto and Sheffield, was ‘Affect Mix’ (2013), an article published in *Reading/Feeling* (2013), edited by Tanja Baudoin, Frédérique Bergholtz and Vivian Ziherl, who initiated the reading group. My contribution consists of a ‘readymade’ application of one of the transcripts of Deleuze’s *Cours Vincennes* (1978), notably his lecture on Spinoza’s concept of affect. The act of quotation necessary in academic writing is used here to reduce this text by linking together a selection of quotes consisting of all the sentences containing the key-word ‘mix.’ The unusual cutting up of the sentences is the result of the copy-paste technique that has been carried out. However the cut up content and form of the text remains sufficiently coherent to guarantee a minimum flow of reading. The sentences function as units, as bodies in a larger body of text in which one sentence takes the role of the affecting body, while the next sentence takes on the role of the affected body.

In quite a different yet no less experimental vein, I wrote ‘A Series of Nine Dimensions’ (2013) which was published in a catalogue about the work of artists Julian Dashper and Donald Judd, edited by Jan van der Ploeg of PS projectspace, Amsterdam. Since Julian was a good friend of mine who died in 2009, this was one of the most difficult texts to write, being so close, both in person as with regard to his work. Again, partly immigrant response to the word limitation, this became another experimental text, comprising of a series of nine paragraphs through which other series run across. Each paragraph is presented as a dimension, each with its own subtitle, each with the first sentence starting with the mentioning of the title of a work of Dashper. The number nine figures through all of the writing as a series in itself. Each paragraph also takes up a series of explicit references to my PhD research, especially with respect to *Difference and Repetition* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. This is the case both in a performative sense as well as in the subject matter. The interrelationships between the works of other artists addressed in the texts draws yet another line through the series. Altogether, the constellation of these elements discloses the most

hidden series, containing my own artistic voice making implicit references to my own work. In short, this text seems to function as an attempt to write about one's own work through the voice of another artist and from there onwards, extending to the voices of other artists.

Deleuze had explicit ideas that were important references in considering how to develop and test the different kind of writings I produced in the course of the PhD project. He referred for example to Artaud in *What is Philosophy?*: 'Artaud said: to write for the illiterate— to speak for the aphasic, to think for the acephalous. But what does "for" mean? It is not "for their benefit," or yet "in their place." It is "before." It is a question of becoming' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 109). This question of 'for' and 'before' has continually guided my research right from the beginning. In 'And, And, And So On and So Forth' (2010) this question of becoming is put in the context of artistic research. 'Becoming' became part of the writing itself which functioned as an assemblage and a construction site. Using the constraints of a mandatory word count and seeking to not provide a poem, the result is a performative mixture of reflection, construction and syntax that nevertheless allowed for the enunciation of an artist's statement. A careful balancing act with tautology, lexical semantics, wordplay, reciprocity, repetition and even typography was needed to make sense with 500 words what would normally need 5000.

The position of my practice in relation to Deleuze studies remains an open question. In the discursive production surrounding my research I have avoided a laying bare of this framework. In the texts that I have produced I tried to create constellations as proposals of research rather than research based on, for instance, comparative studies. I aimed for research that invites to be picked up and carried further rather than structured around some preconceived results or conclusions, much like the way I recognize things to be conducted in my art practice.

Intuition

Multiple: *Intuition*, J. Beuys, 1968

The most elementary definition of ideology is probably the well-known phrase from Marx:

Slide one: 'Capital': 'They do not know it but they are doing it'

Slide two: Bergson's Method of Intuition: The first thing to note about this method, is its denial of the primacy of language. For Bergson, systems of thought that privilege language lead to an always already mediated philosophy. Intuition, on the other hand, offers an immediate relation to consciousness, and eventually a philosophy of immanence.

Intuition is a much used word in the visual arts. In science, this word is often associated with all that is associated with such vague notions as emotion and the unconscious in the visual arts and hard to come to terms with regard to the standards of cognition in science. However, one may question to what degree scientific research, in its most interesting moments, has been able to do without intuition.

Intuition is largely determined by the information processing of subconscious perception. It has been scientifically determined that our perception assimilates about fifty so called information-units per second. However, subconsciously we process eleven million units of information per second. Intuition relies largely on dealing with this wealth of unconsciously processed information. This information may be indicated as a non-knowledge or perhaps even as a form of ignorance. Intuition begins with the acknowledgement of the important and the apparent quantitative large role non-knowledge plays in research and

science. To dismiss this non-knowledge as irrelevant would mean we choose to miss out on the opportunity to make use of a 220,000 times larger amount of bare information.²

The worldwide interest in artistic research in the visual arts might partially be explained by new developments in science that touch upon the area in which intuition and non-knowledge play an important role.

For example, in 2002 Andreas Zeuch finished his doctoral thesis within a fairly conventional faculty like economy with his research *Intuition und Nichtwissen* (Intuition and non-knowledge). Kathrin Passig & Aleks Scholz published in 2007 the book *Lexicon des Unwissens*, in which an attempt was made to gather information about various areas of subjects or phenomena of which either very limited knowledge or no knowledge at all is available. At the European Graduate School (EGS), founded in 1994 the intuitive approach to research is promoted and stimulated and has a clear primacy to cognition as such.

In the eighties the Summer Institute on Medical Ignorance was founded in Arizona. Furthermore, various scientific disciplines, for instance the neurosciences with the discovery of mirror neurons, quantum mechanics with the concept of the uncertainty principle and the outcome of calculations that triggered a destabilization of our concept of time, all calling for a more intuitive approach in which the questions seem to become more important than the answers.

Slide 3: Alfred North Whitehead: 'Not ignorance, but ignorance of ignorance, is the death of knowledge.'

Dealing with art presupposes an intuitive and open approach where space is offered to deal with non-knowledge.

² The data in this paragraph are derived from *Tempo, Tempo, Tempo. Combating the Crisis with Intuitive Decisions*. Andreas Zeuch. Published in "Speed", DMR 01/2009.

The visual arts should be offered space to develop different and new forms of research appropriate to its own insights and with an intuition that is specific to its own field, without the restrictions of the already existing protocols and regulations.

This article is the summary of a short presentation at a meeting of the NWO in The Hague, on November 17, 2008.

On Series

Over the years I have developed ways of working in series, and have elaborated on series as a form of artistic practice. This informs the subject and title of my PhD research proposal, *Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series*. As research has not, until now, had a defined place in my practice, this will be my first structural research into this aspect of my work. Research in general tends to be characterized by structure, planning, evaluation, measurement, goals, calculation, and application—concepts and ways of working that have never been of primary importance to my artistic practice. However, if the act of questioning itself is defined as a research activity, then research has been a continuous part of that practice. The key difference is that my questioning has been a predominantly mental activity, finding direct correspondence in the art works and involving hardly any writing.

My interest in getting involved with what is called ‘artistic research’ is motivated by the opportunity to work on platforms that have not been part of my regular practice. The nature of this research in an academic environment implies the challenge of coming to terms with discourse in its interrelationship with my practice and how this encounter might affect new modes of production. The intensity of this research project will most likely have a strong impact on my work, yet at the same time, there is a strong resistance in the body of work to incorporate this kind of research, that was never there to this extent before. Deleuze’s concept of ‘becoming’ offers a close view of how I envision the potential of exchange between artistic research and art production to develop:

We said the same thing about becomings: it is not one term which becomes the other, but each encounters the other, a single becoming which is not common to the two, since they have nothing to do with one another, but which is between the two, which has its own direction, a bloc of becoming, an a-parallel evolution. This is it, the double capture, the wasp AND the orchid: not even something which

would be in the one, or something which would be in the other, even if it had to be exchanged, be mingled, but something which is between the two, outside the two, and which flows in another direction. To encounter is to find, to capture, to steal, but there is no method for finding other than a long preparation (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 6).

In a similar manner I envisage that my doctoral research and my art production will not directly have to do with one another, but that they will encounter each other, and through doing so, something will emerge between the two which has its own direction and as such may in turn have its effect on either of them separately.

The PhD research as a platform offers a unique situation to engage with one's practice in a quite different way than, for example, making exhibitions, participating in commissions for art in public space and teaching. In this instance, one has the opportunity to put into jeopardy that which functions in the art world mainly as a statement to be taken on its own terms without external referents per se. There are conditional reasons for this, which have their rationale in the specificity of art discourse, which limit the possibilities for direct communication and exchange between research and art production. Even when at a certain moment one of my former art teachers exclaimed, 'art is communication!', it did little to appease the resistance I have always felt to the notion of 'art = communication.' The consistency of this resistance over the years reflects my interest in a philosopher like Gilles Deleuze and his rejection of communication as a useful attribute for philosophy. Deleuze claims philosophy is non-communicative, a provocative and challenging thought that, I believe, is also appropriate to art. The unfolding of the process of artistic production over the years is somewhat arbitrary, with things having validity even without the existence of exterior parameters, measures, proof, or even the possibility of verification. An artist still works with

some kind of propositions he is verifying through its production, yet they resist direct communication.

Deleuze developed a remarkable set of theories and concepts that I believe are very appropriate to art, probably even more than he intended, or may have been aware of, not being an artist himself. Yet, regardless of his extensive writings on art, music, and film, Deleuze maintained that concepts belong primarily to philosophy. For him, as with his colleague Alain Badiou, poetry is a form of art to which philosophy can only be of service or the prostitute. In the book *Dialogues* (1987) which he co-authored with his former student, the journalist Claire Parnet, Deleuze expresses his wish to be able to give a lecture as professor in the same way that Bob Dylan composes a song. Significantly, he characterizes Dylan as an outstanding producer rather than an author (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 8).

Studies for Studies

One intriguing site for characterizing the importance of research for artistic practice is the 'study.' A study is a form of doing research. The expression in art practice 'to make a study of,' for example in the case of making a sketch, is more common than the expression 'to do a study about.' To make a study of something is a traditional activity for artists. However, under the influence of conceptual art, the making of studies in the form of sketches became one among many sites no longer taken for granted and opened-up to continuous questioning. The result is that today one can distinguish between artists who make studies and artists who don't. A critical attitude shared with the discipline of philosophy became the new condition for the production of art. Likewise, attitude became an entity deemed to have its own artistic value instead of being a given of the production process in art and seems to still have relevance today, considered the recent re- exhibition of *When Attitudes Become Form: Bern*

1969/Venice 2013.³ The only study that I have ever produced is entitled *Studies for Studies*, 1986. It concerned a work that took the form of a study but in fact was not one. This series was about the possibilities of producing something as a given, rather than as a means to an end of studying or reflecting on something. This is also related to a general disbelief in or resistance to the notion of what there is to be expected of development with certain modes of art production. This piece consisted of a large series of drawings in which either horizontal or vertical, or a combination of the two were drawn repetitively on an almost square format. A study about this negation of study became a valid form of study in itself and by extension a reflection on academic studies of model drawing. For those expecting certain features from studies, the tautological character of the title *Studies for Studies*, implied, not without humor, the prospect of a senseless exercise.

Modes of series

Within my own practice series started as a spontaneous adoption of what I recognized as one of my primary interests in conceptual and minimal art, that later became conditional for the production of art works. The following examples show the modes of series and the related issues that were of interest for me through the years, for longer or shorter periods of time:

Working with the phenomenon of quantity in series, in which quantity is attributed a qualitative nature. The advantage of dealing with quantity is that it offers the possibility of a presumed objective process that can simply be measured, questioning the general presumption that art-production and art perception are merely subjective.

³ Curated by Germano Celant in dialogue with Thomas Demand and Rem Koolhaas.

Series in which contexts shift, for example, in which a painting becomes a wall painting, a painting incorporates popular imagery, or in which the monochrome becomes a readymade.

Series as a sequence, dealing with the continuity of pieces, whereby one piece follows in suite of the other.

Series as a form of automatic writing in which speed of action produces a stream of consciousness, creating a work in which the subconscious, the unconscious and the conscious interact.

Series as duration. To apply the effect of delay produced through repetition creates space for contemplation. This space becomes more dynamic than the changes in the work itself, and its affect on perception in relation to the work gains a momentum that may find its expression in the next series.

Series in a series. Series may contain (hidden) sub-series or series that link up with one another or extend themselves through time.

Series as a method for drawing distinctions between media and/or disciplines, enabling one to highlight the distinct possibilities and modes of expression of a specific medium.

The use of the readymade in a series. The appearance of a readymade instantly creates a series reflected between the context of its origin and its new context within the sphere of

art. Following this logic, the relationship to quantity, embodied in each of the subsequent contexts and reiterations, is also of relevance.

Repetition of series, difference in itself, repetition for itself.

Some of these issues like for instance ‘automatic writing’ were only of interest during my studies at art academies. Others, like ‘duration’ and the development of sub-series, continue to be relevant to my practice today.

Open and closed series

The use of the various types of series outlined above developed in an organic way in my practice. I have never worked with a restricted, systematic or structurally underlying program. However, something that came to my attention at a certain moment was the distinction between open and closed series. Open series are series in which no particular number for the production is determined in advance. Such a process emerges from a need to leave the question of limiting a series as a set and as a unity open. When there is no reason or motive to determine a series in its quantity, the necessity to force closure for the sake of clarity, finishing a work, or making it manifest can no longer be maintained.

Formerly, I only worked in closed series, in which a given number of works is determined in advance, even if the unity of the work within most of the early series presented itself as an open constellation, thus questioning its paradox. Closed series are determined by number and quantity, regardless of whether they are produced as such or not. For instance, about fifty percent of the *Maxi-Color* series (1988-ongoing), comprising 224 paintings in which coloring book pictures are displayed, has actually been executed. However, it is still considered to be a closed series. At the same time, there is the possibility of an open series in

which only 12 paintings are produced, and which might never be made again. This is most often the case with multiples and editions in which only a limited amount of a particular edition are produced in correlation to the demand. A frequent occurrence in my work is how a relatively simple departure point is challenged by its resistance to function in real-life situations with the result that what is expected and intended transforms into something that is more complex.

Consistency in series

My research will also question what kind of consistency is manifested in the series of my work. To this end, it is helpful to include an overview of the use of series by other artists. I have therefore identified several types of series, which are then exemplified by a number of artists' practices:

Series and Unit—Coherence and consistency towards a notion of the One or Unity in relationship to time and/or space.

Exemplified in the work of On Kawara, Ian Wilson, Nam June Paik, James Lee Byars, Donald Judd

Series and Collection—Production of work in series that interacts with series in collections or collections as series.

Exemplified in the work of Richard Prince, Tino Seghal, Gerhard Richter, Louise Lawler, Valerie Belin, Andrea Fraser, Herman de Vries, Cady Noland, Alan McColum, Claude Rutault

Series and Negation—Some practices work through series by means of something absent, or using negation as a kind of strategy to protect their work from overcoding, or in the case of Flint and Reinhardt, any coding whatsoever.

Exemplified in the work of Ad Reinhardt, Henry Flint, Stephen Parrino, Sherrie Levine, Louise Lawler

Series and Striated Space—A formal approach that might be too literal, however it seems to never lack any interest in artist's as well as curatorial practices up till today
Exemplified in the work of Jim Isermann, Daniel Buren, Agnes Martin, Niele Toroni

Series and Bodies of work—The body of work of an artist that produces series as a sub-body of work, sometimes as with Rondinone leading to a preference of avoiding certain series to be shown simultaneously, in others', such as Joelle Tuerlinckx', one body of work becoming the condition for the next.

Exemplified in the work of Ugo Rondinone, Ceal Floyer, Roni Horn, Elvira Bonduelle, Ed Ruscha, Dan Graham, Joëlle Tuerlinckx

Series and Repetition—Repetition in and for itself in series. Serial repetition immanent as well as extensive simultaneously.

Exemplified in the work of Saadane Afif, Francis Alys, Niele Toroni, Christopher Wool, Roman Opalka, Olivier Mosset

Series and Multiplicity—Series in which an exchange between simultaneity and succession makes the difference.

Exemplified in the work of John Armleder, John McCracken, Mai-Thu Perret, Gilbert and George, Aurelie Nemours

Series and Deconstruction—Series as a means to overturn the hierarchies of time and space

Exemplified in the work of Stephen Parrino, Christian Marclay, Bertrand Lavier, Amy Granat, Marcia Haifif

These are speculative constellations, which provide food for thought for my research, rather than the departure point for an in-depth analysis. However, a more rigorous investigation might be taken-up by others who share this interest.

During my research I am also uncovering other definitions of series in works such as *Das Gesetz der Serie* written in 1919 by the Austrian biologist Paul Kammerer (1880-1926). In this book I found a striking definition of series in Kammerer's claim that, 'Series coincide, having no causal relationship, are subject to a general power of delay, to the object participating in the repetition, causing clustering' (Kammerer 1919). This is what he conceives of as the law of seriality. Kammerer has developed a very extensive and nuanced research on the phenomenon of series. Some examples of relationships he has elaborated on are 'Identitäts- und Affinitätsserie', 'Homologie- und Analogieserie', 'Reine- und Mischlingserie', 'Bewegungs- und Ruheserie', 'Qualitäts- oder Artserie', 'Quantitäts- oder Mengenserie', 'Direkte- oder Reihenserie', 'Inverse- oder Kreuzungsserie', 'Kontrastserie', 'Alterierende oder Wechselserie', 'Zyklische oder Kreislaufserie' and 'Phasische Serie.' His list of distinctions of series does not seem to have an end, which makes clear how much his research extended beyond the domain of biology. With his concepts he developed insight in

the relationship between seriality and events and the role coincidence plays within them, which paved the way for C.G. Jung to develop his ideas on synchronicity.

Difference and Repetition

Within my research Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* (1968) plays a key role, serving as both a departure point and a constant source of reference. This book is not independent of the body of work Deleuze developed in collaboration with Felix Guattari, nor from his subsequent books published under his own name, despite *Difference and Repetition* being written as a doctoral dissertation. My choice of this book is motivated in the first place by my overall interest in the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. Clearly, the title already evinces a relationship with the notion of series. The extent to which the content is relevant in this regard remains to be clarified. Based on my research to date, it appears that the theories largely reflected the *Zeitgeist* of the time in which the book was written, which was marked by an urgent need to take a distance from the dominant paradigms set out by Jean-Paul Sartre, Claude Levi-Strauss and Jacques Lacan, and the corresponding omnipresence of existentialism, psychoanalysis and structuralism. This attempt to break with the dominant paradigms of the thought of the time, like many others at that moment, is especially pronounced in the first two books he co-authored with Guattari, namely *L'Anti-Oedipe* (1972-1973), and *Mille Plateaux* (1980).

My interest in philosophy as a non-philosopher remains first and foremost in philosophy as a discipline. The books I have been reading by Deleuze and/or Deleuze and Guattari are thus primarily concerned with philosophy as such. *Difference and Repetition* is exemplary of this. In fact, this book has received renewed attention over the past years and has recently been considered Deleuze's masterpiece, measuring up to the likes of Kant's *Kritiek der reinen*

Vernunft and Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. This recent interest in this book and the ones that came after have resulted in the production of a large body of pertinent secondary literature, which is of interest to my research.⁴

Even though I consider philosophy to be outside of the field of art, I consider it to be still closer to my work than many other interests one may relate to it. Regardless of this, my interest in philosophy may for better or worse be perceived as conceptual in my practice. And still, I remain also interested in the notion of an artwork as a *Ding an sich* (Thing in itself). A similarity between art and philosophy is that neither one nor the other intends to give a final judgment on external matter, such as reality, politics, truth, or life. Philosophy and art are equivalent activities in so far as they both consist of experiments in thought. Their distinction lies in the intuition of how thought experiments can be made productive. Visual artists think no less than philosophers, yet their objects are drawn from the field in which they work, which Deleuze and Guattari refer to as percepts, whereas philosophers draw on the concepts of other philosophers.⁵ Percepts can be defined as aggregates of perceptions that have a durable and autonomous quality to them in a similar manner to concepts having this potential with regard to the ideas of philosophy. In the final instance within art, another intuition is at work to produce works of art than what is needed in philosophy to produce concepts. Nietzsche was well aware of this, claiming: 'You will know nothing through concepts unless you have first created them—that is constructed them in an intuition specific to them' (Deleuze and Guattari 1980, 7).

Art and philosophy are two different fields that operate with distinct integrities and specificities, making all attempts to explore how they can have a mutual exchange very

⁴ To give a few examples: Joe Hughes (2009), *Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: A Reader's Guide*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc.; James Williams (2004); *Gilles Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: A Critical Introduction and Guide*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press; Gregg Lambert (2002), *Non-Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze*, New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing Inc.; John Rajchman (2000), *The Deleuze Connections*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press Ltd; Charles J. Stivale (2005), *Gilles Deleuze, Key Concepts*. Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press.

⁵ Ad Reinhardt puts it succinctly: 'The first word of an artist is against artists' (Rose, 1975).

difficult. This is evident for example when one compares *Difference and Repetition* to *Art as Art* (1975), a book of selected writings by the painter Ad Reinhardt that I consider of particular relevance for my thinking on art. Although less known than some of his New York School contemporaries like Pollock, Rothko and Newman (partially due to the sharp and direct criticism he was never reluctant to target towards his colleagues), he is still being read by many contemporary artists, including Liam Gillick, Martina Klein, Sherrie Levine, Hermann Pitz and Lawrence Weiner. To me, Reinhardt's combination of humor, irony, and sharp critical analysis, is unparalleled in the art world.

From the outset, the worlds of Deleuze and Reinhardt seem rather incompatible due to the apparent discrepancies, which for a large part are due to the difference in discourse they refer to in the first instance. To just give two striking examples, the word 'abstract' that both use extensively is referring to a totally different set of meanings in each case. Moreover the exclusively positive value in the latter is of utterly negatively value in the former. Similarly the word 'expressionism' most often gains nothing but responses of aversion in Reinhardt's writings and no less in the conceptually oriented art world today, whereas Deleuze attributes a very positive and affirmative notion to expressionism with regard to for instance Spinoza, a philosopher he wrote about frequently. When he refers to a more linguistic context in which 'expression' is but a technical term, to which his philosophical use of the word 'expressionism' is not unrelated, the meaning of it remains completely neutral.

Regardless of the problems of the differences in discourse, the writings of Reinhardt remain an interesting counterpoint to those of Deleuze for the purpose of my research. At the same time there is much to be discovered in the convergence and similarities of shared interest, which are no less present in many other aspects, such as the urge to escape dialectics, the importance of humor, the overturning of representation, the resistance to interpretation and

explanation and the related dislike of opinion, the preference for the impersonal and, last but not least, the rejection of transcendence.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari have been using the expression ‘two black holes on a white wall’ to refer to the appearance of the face at the intersecting processes of signification (white wall) and subjectification (black hole). A face, a portrait, or for that matter, even a landscape cannot but help one to think about painting, not to mention the white wall on which the painting may be shown. However, we do not want to fall into the trap of interpreting the black holes as anything to do with the black paintings of Ad Reinhardt. For that most of them are way too square.

This article is adapted from a paper given at a workshop organized by PhDarts, The Hague at the Royal Conservatory of the University of the Arts, The Hague, with guest artist Andrea Fraser, on October 22, 2009. The same paper was repeated in a performative presentation in which a video recorded by PhDarts of the original paper given in 2009 was shown in the background as a silent movie and the live repetition of this paper was read through a microphone in a workshop organized by PhDarts on June 15, 2012 at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague, again with Andrea Fraser as guest artist.

Closure and Repetition: On Kant and Deleuze

The notion of repetition is of major importance to Immanuel Kant, if only because of the repeated use of the term ‘critique’ in the titles of his three major works. At the end of his preface to the *Critique of Judgment* (1987) he remarks: ‘Thus with this I bring my entire critical enterprise to an end.’ (Kant 1987, 58). Apparently for Kant repetition is not possible without bringing it to an end, bringing it to a closure. The characteristics of a different concept of repetition might then be related to infinity and non-closure. The problem of repetition also bears considerable significance in the arts. The claim made by artists like Alexander Rodchenko that the monochrome heralded the end of painting has never materialized; painting is still a widespread practice and the monochrome as such has developed into an established new art form that shows no signs of fading. We have even grown somewhat tired of discussions about the end of painting, art and philosophy. Within the context of *Difference and Repetition* by Gilles Deleuze, I will try to answer the following question: Is non-closure perhaps essential for a different notion of repetition, for another kind of repetition?

Repetition was a dominant aspect of Kant’s personal life. This has resulted in the fact that his fame is associated with continuous repetition. Nothing seems to have been repeated more often than stories about the repetitive nature of his daily habits, habits that adhered to a strict daily program. The example that is most often cited and repeated tells of the citizens of Königsberg who set their clocks by Kant’s daily ten o’clock walk. This is perhaps the most consistently repeated piece of information about Kant, although this says nothing about its reliability. The reason that this observation is constantly repeated is not only to be found in the potentially obsessive aspects of Kant’s personality, it is also typically linked with the repetitive nature of his philosophical constructions, understood as regularity, order and structure, which probably also ensured their durability. The work on which we will focus, the

Critique of Judgment, could be considered as the repeated version of the three *Critiques*. If Kant's project had been limited to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, we would be dealing with something that stands on its own, just like things that stand on their own are autonomous, in other words, *things in themselves*. The second *Critique* is a continuation of the first, but does not yet qualify as a repetition. It is no more than a double, a reflection, a dialectical extension of the first volume. It is not until the third version that we can speak of repetition. Three is the first number that can be defined as a repetition, and in Kant's case also the last, for he saw the *Critique of Judgment* as the closure of his critical enterprise.

However, there is another form of repetition that occurs in Kant's *Critiques*, a repetition that is perhaps even more significant. A year before the publication of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant brought out a second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*: a repetition of a more mimetic nature, which is essentially the same book because it bears the same title, although Heidegger saw it as a new book because it was radically different from the first edition. Here, form and content are repeated, so that a tangible difference becomes visible, although we have already argued that repetition comes in threes. Perhaps this third is immediately formed by the tangible difference in form and content, which in the case of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Practical Reason* was too great to be recognized and perceived. So a third was needed, the *Critique of Judgment*. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze repeatedly refers to what he calls the 'too small' and the 'too large.' Here, the 'too small' difference delimits the range within which it would be justified to re-issue the 'revised version' of the *Critique of Pure Reason* under the same title. If the revision had led to a 'too large' difference, then the integrity of the original title would have been compromised, in other words, the difference would become irrelevant. Like the third *Critique*, it would have faced an existence as an entirely new book.

Another form of repetition is the continued direct or indirect referral to the three *Critiques*.

We have not yet done with the *Critiques*, as the direct or indirect interest they still manage to arouse in and outside the world of philosophy clearly shows. They are still in print and widely read and continue to be the object of debate at conferences and symposiums.

Gilles Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* plays a central role in my research project *Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series* because of my personal interest in series, which is also part and parcel of my practice. Joe Hughes has devoted an entire book to *Difference and Repetition*, which in his view is almost entirely structured on the model of the *Critique of Pure Reason* from the perspective of the *Critique of Judgment*.

This is a fine example of the way in which the *Critiques* are repeated in a very tangible manner. Hughes points out that just like Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*, *Difference and Repetition* was an attempt to rewrite Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, although Deleuze and Nietzsche experienced much the same aversion during the process of rewriting.

Philosophical constructions and concepts survive just as well and perhaps even better in the hands of their detractors as in those of their admirers. Conversely, philosophers tend to have a better chance of survival if they develop concepts that prove to be resistant and cannot be brought to a definitive closure or end and therefore continue to arouse interest. Certain concepts have stood the test of time just as well as certain works of art.

Closure, in the sense of thinking something to its end, is not only a common practice in philosophy, but also in the world of art, especially in the twentieth century. In 1921, Rodchenko produced three paintings, each a monochrome in a primary color, announcing the 'death of painting' and its ultimate consequence, the death of art itself: *Pure Red Color* (*Chisty krasnyi tsvet*), *Pure Yellow Color* (*Chisty zhelyti tsvet*), and *Pure Blue Color* (*Chisty*

sinii tsvet). The three primary colors that Rodchenko associated with the end of art had already been unintentionally heralded in a striking form by Malevich's famous 'black square' paintings. These paintings—and it is important to know that he repeatedly painted new versions—have become icons of the end of painting. Malevich, however, saw them as an affirmation of the potential of painting as 'pure feeling' and as a new beginning, using his ideas on Suprematism to explore the fourth dimension in painting. This is comparable to the manner in which Mondrian developed his ideas on Neoplasticism, which also was not concerned with the end of painting—it was not called *Nieuwe Beelding* (New Imagery) for nothing. In his idealism Mondrian even asked Rudolf Steiner if the new imagery should not be included in the latter's anthroposophical cosmology, but to his disappointment Steiner never replied. This does not preclude that Mondrian also thought that art would become obsolete once it had fulfilled its goals. Finally he did envisage the possibility of a definitive end of art. But while Kant ascribed the origin and end of art to nature, Mondrian developed his art as an antithesis to nature as the source of representation in art. At a certain stage nature became so intolerable to him that if he had to sit in front of a window overlooking nature, he would always choose a place where the view was blocked. After 1913, the year in which Malevich produced his first black square painting, the color green would no longer appear in Mondrian's work. Repetition also plays an important role in Mondrian's paintings, in the recurrence of every shade of the primary colors, in combination with black and white and their mixture, grey. This repetition-which-is-not-a-repetition results from the ability to actualize an artwork, or in the case of philosophy, a concept, using something that is already there but has not yet been brought to a conclusion or to an end, an end that, according to the ideas of Neoplasticism, simply refuses to come. A deferred closure, a deferred judgment, a deferred final judgment.

It is therefore of no surprise that Mondrian's last painting derives its power from the fact that it remained unfinished after his early death in 1944. It is a paradoxical masterpiece. The title suggests victory, a lasting victory because it is unfinished, a victory to be celebrated with a glorious dance: *Victory Boogie Woogie*. When I saw the painting again recently, it still looked as if it was painted 'yesterday' in spite of traces of ageing. A painting that lies fully open on a crossroads that looks like a repetition of moves, a new beginning that is being repeated time and time again.

Paper presented on the occasion of the symposium De Hele Kritiek van het Oorsdeelsvermogen in 12 uur! 24 June 2010, organized by Sybrandt van Keulen, Academisch Cultureel Centrum Spui 25, Amsterdam. Translation Walter van der Star.

Underpainting

This is a white page on which difference is made by black letters written on it, constituting words, words leading to sentences, sentences to paragraphs, paragraphs leading to chapters that each start at the same time as this very page. Where does this leave the book? How does the page relate to the chapter and paragraph that runs to or from another page? ‘The Large and the Small,’ running from its smallest unit, the letter, to its largest, the book (Deleuze 1994, 29). The one in the middle being the page, the white page, the white nothingness bearing letters and words ‘on the one hand and on the other hand,’ chapters and paragraphs (1994, 36).

This page prefers to refer to art when it comes to speak about the white surface, ‘the once again calm surface upon which unconnected determinations float like scattered members: a head without a neck, an arm without a shoulder, eyes without brows,’ all still referring to a white piece of paper (1994, 28). But could the same not account for painting today, confronted with the same white nothingness as writing? A white surface that is, in most cases, a white canvas. Perhaps this could be explained by the influence of conceptual art on painting, painting as a kind of writing. Preferably done with black on white, but with the addition of color, the writing may find an equal strength, not least when being offered a white canvas.

But even writing with white on white should take no one by surprise in painting. The white nothingness has had a reverberating resonance in the art of the 20th Century: take, for instance, Piero Manzoni’s *Achrome’s*; the *Erased de Kooning Drawing* of Rauschenberg, all the work of Robert Ryman and Malevich’s *Suprematist Composition: White on White*. The age-old ground/figure problem being forced to its limit, the distinctive opposes something ‘which cannot distinguish itself from it, but continues to espouse that which divorces it’ (1994, 28).

Ground in painting means matter, matter to construct the painting on. In former times a painting did not start from ground zero, the white canvas, the so called *horror vacui* for painters just as for writers. In those times, the preparation of a canvas required a long process, before the painting itself started with the making of an underpainting. It seemed as if this long preparation made one to stay closer to the materiality of painting. Ground and earth play an interesting role here. Deleuze has often spoken in a kind of mysterious way about what is under the earth. In the documentary *Mille Gilles*, made by IJsbrandt van Veelen in 2002, one sees a fragment of footage in which Deleuze is saying: ‘and then it goes under the earth.’

To be able to ‘paint with light’ on a canvas, a white canvas offers the maximum potential for reflection, but leaves little room for tonal modulation. The only possibility it offers is to work from the uppermost light tone, white, to darker tones. Everything that will be used on the white canvas can only make the ground darker. Starting from a black underpainting as the opposite possibility, the reflection of light would ‘disappear’ in this ground and would solely depend on the reflection power of the pigment and the medium itself. The ground would act as a black hole. ‘Dead coloring’ was an alternative term used in the 17th Century for the traditional underpainting that was used from the Renaissance to the French Revolution. It referred to the rather dull matt low-key monochrome quality of the underpainting. The pigment most commonly used for this purpose was raw umber. In all its rawness, the ultimate color of the earth. It was not without reason called an earth color, being nothing other than a native pigment, drawn from under the earth all over the earth.

An example of a series of writing experiments (2009) in direct relationship with the book Difference and Repetition with as primary approach its materiality. Regarding the pages of this book as independent entities made it possible to test difference and repetition by responding to some words, things, concepts to be found on a given page from the original book.

And, And, And So On and So Forth

ARTISTIC RESEARCH—these two words easily make one forget that the word ‘art’ is used here as the root of an adjective, as if art is to be at the service of research. What if we try to reverse this set-up and change it into *researchistic art*? Unfortunately the suffix ‘-ist’ (-istic) is simply not allowed in combination with the word ‘research.’ However, the affix ‘-ist’ and its related ‘-ism’ are both very productive in forming new words, not the least in relation to art movements. We can think of classicist-classicism, dadaist-dadaism, stuckist-stuckism, situationist-situationism, among others. Nevertheless, there appears to be no appropriate suffix to turn the word ‘research’ into an adjective, making it impossible to have it obediently sit next to art as its servant. Does this status quo favour research as something more powerful and sovereign than art? Rather, it seems to show the lack of flexibility that art happens to be so well endowed with. Perhaps the survival of artistic research might best be guaranteed if it becomes a new art movement called Art Researchism. Yet we do not want to fall into the same trap as Stuckism, with one of the two initiators of the movement—the more talented one—escaping before it really started.

ART AND RESEARCH—these two words easily make one forget that the two become three words now. This third word ‘and’ rings a bell; the bell of the all-inclusive magic word of Deleuze and Guattari. *Difference and Repetition* is the book Deleuze wrote as a kind of preparation to the indiscernible but no less persistent ‘and’ affects and effects. Amongst many other things, it made clear that the good old days of doing research were over—starting and ending with philosophy. With the quickly growing interest in his writings today, this now seems to have become relevant to a completely new range of... and, and,...till the n^{th} degree number of disciplines.

ART IS NO NATURAL SCIENCE—an ambiguously demarcated statement on a sign in Witte de With art space in Rotterdam, exhibited as part of a fabulous show by Cosima von

Bonin entitled: COSIMA VON BONIN'S FAR NIENTE FOR WITTE DE WITH'S SLOTH SECTION, LOOP # 01 OF THE LAZY SUSAN SERIES, A ROTATING EXHIBITION 2010—2011. Possibly this sign expresses something of the resistance to the new developments of research in art. Germany, the country where Von Bonin lives and works, happens to be one of the last bastions in Europe that is still not amused by the Bologna accord. Perhaps for good reason, but such massive political influences will simply fail to be resisted by opposition only. Opposition is dependent on judgement by comparison, as simplified in the form of the mathematical equation. The determination 'is', 'I am', '=' seems to have lost its relevance in quantum mechanics, just as much as in most of recent continental philosophy and contemporary art. Things today are to be observed as events. Deleuze and Guattari call them 'becomings.' However it doesn't suffice to make simple transpositions like ART BECOMING NO NATURAL SCIENCE, neither with its affirmative counterpart ART BECOMING NATURAL SCIENCE, nor for its reciprocal positions. Rather it aims for an ART MEETS NATURAL SCIENCE BECOMING MORE ART and vice versa etcetera.

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iLand

The elements it has to deal with: earth (repetition for itself), water (difference in itself), air (indiscernability in movement), fire (the light, the dark)

I, the first letter in Island is still an unwanted letter to begin a letter with when it simply means I. The word 'Island', with its silent 's' was once spelled iland in Middle English. 'Island' is often mistakenly thought of as being derived from the Latin insula. However, idiosyncratic etymologies have it that iland developed from earlier Germanic *aujō* = 'object on the water', whereas in today's German 'Insel' is used straight from the Latin 'insula.' The Dutch, being somewhere in between Old England and New Germany were able to limit the confusion by sticking to their Germanic roots. By leaving out the 's' in their writing of *eiland*, the Dutch word remained phonetically similar to its English translation. *Iland* from the old world, would in the new world of computer and internet language simply be transformed to *iLand*. It would proudly take its place next to iPod, iGoogle, iPad in the brave new *iWorld*. In this world, an individuality shares quite some similarities with an island: you alone with your music, you alone with your personalized Google page, you alone with the rest of the world through your iPad. It always seems more comfortable when we can think of the I as the other, in this case the closest other: you. To tune with *iLand* we would better repeat with: I alone with my music, I alone with my personalized Google page, I alone with my iPad. However, the difference in the globalized world seems marginal; the difference between YouTube and iGoogle is close to none.

When it comes down to something like music, an iPod reverses the sensations of the large and the small, the virtual and the real, the outside and the inside, the bodily and the body without organs. Unlike the last century, where a limited amount of gramophone records reproduced the music in a domestic environment—that is in a room, a space, with or without others—the iPod brings an almost unlimited amount of music in a very limited and

exclusively individual space that is: inside one's head. The body becoming a kind of shell, an island closed off from its spatial surroundings, dealing only with the comparatively very small space inside the head in which the music is reproduced. Music, no matter how invisible the waves that transport it may be, is one of the most three-dimensional and sculptural art forms we know of. What is more, music is produced by sculptural bodies which, when put in resonance act as musical instruments. The simplest way to do this is to hit an object.

Once sound is generated, tones that share proximity in frequency, produce in turn beat tones, creating inter-modulation. New tones are produced that have nothing in common with the ones that hit each other through being close enough in frequency, as if they were objects themselves. Sound waves are similar to the visible waves of water. An island, as an object in the water, catches all the waves from all sides simultaneously. Lawrence Weiner being invited once to do a project about Archimedes on the island of Sicily, used the text WAVE UPON WAVE OF INVADERS. Weiner learned from this project that Archimedes' claim is that 'to float is the most important thing in life' (Fietzek and Stemmrach 2004, 204). 'This is where we are today: indeterminacy, the era of floating theories, as much as floating money . . . ' (Baudrillard 1976, 44). With composition, John Cage drove indeterminacy to its limit with his well-known piece *4'33"*. It created a radical shift of the activities and passivities of the performer of the piece as well as of the audience.

The shell-like form of the outer ear is one of the most sculptural organs of the human body. In its singular form, it mimics the complexity characteristic of a sound wave. Somewhat detached from the head, the island of the ear captures sound waves coming from all directions simultaneously. Once the earplug of an iPod is placed at the center of the ear, the contact between the outer and inner space of the ear is blocked. The outside being a relatively large undefined space and the inside being a more or less defined small space. A kind of communicating vessels that is being blocked by a device that tries to virtually represent in this

small cave what usually loudspeakers do in the large space at the other side. The physical sound contact with the outside world is cut off and replaced by sound that is generated by the earplugs of, in turn, again another space, where the recording has taken place. With the door shut, the micro-tonal sound waves produced in this now closed-off cave of the inner ear, will bring the hammer to hit the anvil, as if it was waiting for these movements to contact the brain.

The form of a sound wave is just as explicit as the form of a rock, with the crucial difference that the wave is in continuous fluctuation, like the movement of water. Once waves are generated, they attain a mechanical physical force that forms its own body, which in turn is capable of hitting other objects and bringing them to resonance. Dan Graham sees this as a way to understand sound as material (Graham and de Bruyn 2004, 108–117). As a consequence the whole architecture of a place gets involved with this resonance; the effects also being known as acoustics, with each having its own characteristic color. When, for instance, a trumpet plays a tone, its sound will contain the color of this instrument as if something of the copper is in the wave itself as a sound material. This wave may interact with the wave coming from another instrument bringing its own sound material in the air. But the trumpet wave also interacts with the architecture which in itself may consist of stone, wood and glass. These materials in turn reflect the ‘copper’ wave, partially as a copper wave like in a mirror, but it also brings the material being hit, in resonance itself, thus in case the surface were of wood, this material would inter-modulate its own tonal quality with the copper ones. The complexity does not stop with the different forms of the waves; they all introduce their own timing and rhythms, their own speeds. The early composers of minimal music, Tony Conrad, La Monte Young, Terry Riley and Steve Reich were all focused on influencing those time sequences by applying permutations based on motive repetitions with a six or seven second time delay. Dan Graham once said that these procedures would affect what he called

'brain time,' which would create a kind of shift in time experience; that is, an extended present time (Graham and de Bruyn 2004, 108–117).

In analogue sound processing, the materiality of sound, its form, is preserved and transported, from the beginning until the end of the chain, through different media. The best example of a materialization of this is the good old gramophone record. For a vinyl record you actually need two hands playing it, a more involved contact with the human body, if only due to its scale and it having two sides to be played. Except for this body contact with the record, the reproduction mechanism is being in physical contact as well, with a needle tracking the grooves of the record that run in a spiral to play the music, and all remains naked to the eye. However, the needle is too small for the human eye; the hand guiding the cartridge holder in the arm of the record player discovers it, touching the record as its own musical value and turned it into a DJ's love of scratching. With a CD this is not possible; the contact with it is immaterial, a laser beam tracking the surface. This affects also the direct relationship to the human body. To deal with a CD, it is enough to use one hand. Once delivered to the CD player, the CD disappears in the device. In digital sound processing, the materiality and form of sound gets lost, the link in the chain is broken in terms of bodily contact, as well as in the reproduction mechanism itself, a true body without organs. Form and materiality disappear in the black box and are converted into the abstract binary computer language. With a look at this language everything becomes equalized, form becomes information that reveals nothing anymore about what it conveys, be it music, text, photo or video, and is reduced to zeros and ones.

The laser beam is itself a light wave; a kind of wave that is even harder to approach than sound waves, being faster and more complex in nature, more difficult to discern in what medium the waves are moving. Whereas sound waves still bear bodily contact relationship to objects, with light waves we enter the domain of the play of electrons in electromagnetic

fields. The question of the nature of these waves has caused a true schizophrenia in the natural sciences for centuries. Two competitive schools have been debating over the question whether light is actually a wave. The other option left for it is; to be a particle, which means nothing less than to be an object, if only of minute substance. There are in fact two distinct sources of light. One still has its origin in materiality, in an object, best known as black body radiation, which emits infrared light we cannot see. This is the light coming from anybody that has a higher temperature than absolute zero. If we would be able to see infrared light waves, we would see a strong red glow coming from a radiator of a central heating system. In the common light bulb the black body of the wire in the bulb is heated to such high a temperature, about 2500 degrees Celsius, that its body becomes visible as light differentiating all colors of the spectrum when hitting the surface of physical bodies. The other source is light in the form of emission caused by electrons being hit out of their atomic shell, releasing photons as light energy. For instance neon tubes radiate this kind of light and that is why we experience them to be so different from the incandescent light bulb. The latter having more in common with the element fire, like the sun and is congruent with the perspective of light being a wave. The former with light being a moving particle, the electron being a fundamental particle of matter, and like an object being hit and freed out of its shell, producing light as a consequence of the energy that is released. For all the proof that has arisen in the last century for both the wave and the particle model, it seems they make each other disappear, the more one or the other is seen clearer in either space or momentum. What we take for seeing has in fact nothing to do with the retinal, rather it is a 'seeing' constituted by measurements taken with advanced electronic equipment. Science has for such a long time put so much faith in measurements that it has attained the same effect as seeing, which in our day-to-day experience builds our confidence in what we take for reality. Seeing is believing, the natural sciences apparently bear more resemblance to a belief system than to any reality. As a belief system, traditional

science has been severely put to test with developments in quantum mechanics. When the resulting measurements start contradicting, the age-old rock solid fundamentals of science get lost in interpretation.

The once so solid earth starts shaking, its seismic waves are no joke, in the flash of less than a second a multitude of waves like body waves and surface waves are released with enormous power and even if the forces of those waves as such remain unseen, their result is devastating to the surface of the earth causing a chain reaction in the physical world in which all the types of waves act on each other and create new waves like the beat tones mentioned above. Objects that hit one another create waves, either by gravitational affect or by resistance, be it sound, electromagnetic, surface, light, or body waves. To the laws of the earth there seems to be a set limit to the impact objects can have on each other, even if it gets as destructive as an earthquake. Science has developed a way to trespass the natural laws of the earth by the invention of nuclear fission. Again, an object is hit, this time at the heart of the atom, splitting its nucleus and releasing the very destructive beta and gamma waves. Infinitely large effects from the infinitely smallest of particles. The large and the small, *Spiral Jetty* (1970), one of the larger contemporary art works we know of, is located in Great Salt Lake near Rozel Point in Utah, a state that has suffered extremely from the fall out of nuclear testing and being used as a nuclear dump place. The large and the small, Great Salt Lake the largest salt lake in the western hemisphere turns this large artwork, in fact called earthwork into a small sculpture. Their difference in magnitude is visually immediately obvious but it is in how they deal with the element water that makes up for a dramatic loss of comparison once the *Spiral Jetty* disappears under its surface, as has been the case with it being submerged for almost thirty years due to a risen water level of the great lake. Its spiral form, a kind of unfolding wave has the traits of a peninsula from the Latin *paeninsula*; ‘paene-’: almost + ‘insula’: island. *Spiral Jetty*, almost island. Almost, but most of the time not at all, when the

flows of the water absorb it and surrender it to the earth, the true grounding of all islands, as long as the earth lasts.

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Zero for Stupidity, One for Enlightenment

The theme Nüans proposed for today's event, 'The Self-Taught Philosopher of Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān' written by Ibn Tufail, an Andalusian Muslim polymath of the 12th century AD, raises the question of what it means to learn, or what it means to be learned. As a preliminary answer, learning certainly has a lot to do with mimicry, starting with a child's imitation of its parents and other things from its environment. Hayy was raised by an animal, yet he did not become an animal in any strict sense, which implies that there must be more to learning than mimicry alone.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari often speak in their collaborative work of 'becoming animal.' However, this has nothing to do with imitation, with becoming *like* an animal. Rather, and to quote Deleuze on this, '... it is not one term which becomes the other, but each encounters the other, a single becoming which is not common to the two, since they have nothing to do with one another, but which is between the two, which has its own direction, a bloc of becoming, an a-parallel evolution' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 6). This idea of 'a-parallel evolution' is of interest to me, because it provides an understanding of learning that may include unlearning, a-learning, anti-learning or non-learning. These ideas come close to the notion of deskilling, which has long informed my art practice, and which I would like to use as a guideline to discuss several perspectives on learning and being learned.

Deskilling became a key concept in art movements of the sixties and seventies, including Fluxus, Arte Povera, BMPT⁶, Zero, and conceptual art. However, notions of deskilling can be traced back even further than that. Commonly, the term 'deskilling' is used to refer to the fragmentation that occurs with technologies of mass production that create assembly lines operated by semi-skilled or non-skilled workers. In these instances, the *savoir-faire* of artisans and craftsmen is devalued for the profit of industrial capitalism. Within the

⁶ BMPT is the name of a group of four visual artists: Daniel Buren, Olivier Mosset, Michel Parmentier and Niele Toroni that worked together from December 1966 till December 1967.

visual arts, art historian Benjamin Buchloh refers to deskilling as ‘a concept of considerable importance in describing numerous artistic endeavors throughout the twentieth century [...] which are linked in their persistent effort to eliminate artisanal competence and other forms of manual virtuosity from the horizon of both artist competence and aesthetic valuation’ (Buchloh 2004, 531).

At a critical moment during my residency at the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, I was confronted with the option of deskilling when I painted my first monochromes. This art form allowed me to start with painting anew, in an attempt to avoid any presuppositions about it, and confronted me solely with its basics. For many art experts and members of the public alike, monochrome painting remains a complete insult, a stupidity and a failure in terms of artistic skill. In 1921 Rodchenko painted three monochromes *Pure Red Color, Pure Yellow Color, Pure Blue Color*, which are considered to be the first in the history of Modern art, were also meant to be the last.⁷ Not only did he intend them to be his own last monochromes, but he also conceived them to be the last in history. For him, the paintings were created as a provocative act to finish off with painting, a proclamation of the death of painting. Rodchenko’s preoccupation with the end of painting was in fact nothing more than the stepping-stone required for his jump into constructivism, pushing him to leave art aside altogether. Dead or alive, these paintings still exist and have become fixed historical monuments of what is now known as monochrome painting. They have also taken-on a second life in the form of another act of deskilling ‘appropriations,’ such as exemplified in the work *Red, Yellow, Blue Monochromes (after Rodchenko)* (1999) by Sherrie Levine, in which the three monochromes are being used in a series of six.⁸

Another aspect of deskilling pertains to cognition and to understanding. Both skills imply a strong focus on problem-solving and are in general goal-oriented, operating within

⁷ A. Rodchenko and V. Stepanova Archive, Moscow

⁸ Sammlung K21, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein Westfalen

their own limitations. A resistance to the dominance of these characteristics in language and thinking seeks to escape these effects and undo these forces by strategies and attitudes that devalue, deskill or mock these principles. In monochrome painting, communication, quality, representation, affect, reflection, and affirmation, are phenomena that are not readily identifiable. In his book *After the End of Art* (1998), art critic and philosopher Arthur Danto describes monochrome painting as an art that ‘on the face of it, seems to offer so little to talk about’ (157). Yet, he managed to write a whole chapter about the topic in the same book. In his quest for the meaning of quality in monochrome painting, Danto developed what he referred to as a ‘style matrix,’ a disparate and speculative model that began with three indicators, but that was soon extended to include countless qualities, serving as evidence of the endless relationships between artworks, and how they form a kind of organic community. Although, for Danto, nothing could illustrate the death of painting better than monochrome painting, the history of art clearly shows the opposite. Since the 1960s there has been a steady production of monochrome paintings up until, and including, today’s young generation of artists, even if—as has always been the case—they are in the minority. Apparently monochrome painting still holds its interest, in contradiction to the expectation that something substantial could be developed from something so reduced.

‘Feeling’ has always been used as a strong counter-force to cognition and understanding in the art world. Feeling is often used as a strategy for a deskillling of the many tools specific to academia and argumentative discourse, such as comprehension, logic, system, structuralism, method, rationality, judgment, and critique. During a recent lecture and performance, Sigurdur Gudmundsson, a former teacher of mine, claimed that understanding does not contribute much to art. For him, to understand an artwork causes his interest in the work to immediately evaporate. To emphasize this he asked: ‘How do you understand music?’ For Gudmundsson, both music and art are about feeling, intense feeling.

When questioned in an interview about the use of ideas in art, painter Agnes Martin said something similar. She replied: ‘I think that art is responded to with emotion—and the best art is music, that is the highest art, the highest form of art, completely abstract [...] and we make about eight times as much response to music than to any of the other arts.’⁹ For Martin, art is anything but intellectual. With the help of meditation, she had learned to stop thinking altogether, endorsing a ground zero to any kind of understanding of whatever, a full stop. She asserted that only when her mind was empty could something come in, and only then was she able to look at it. When the mind is full, it is incapable of discerning very much. Despite their disparity in generation, Malevich, a contemporary of Rodchenko, described Suprematism in comparable terms. He described the new art movement he helped to establish in 1915, as the supremacy of pure feeling in creative art, claiming that all art, ideas, concepts and images had to be cast aside in order to heed pure feeling.

In the art world and in Cultural Studies the words ‘affect’ and ‘feeling’ are often used interchangeably. This conflation is partially reflected and explained in Deleuze and Guattari’s description of affect in the arts as ‘a bloc of sensations’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 164). In his writings Deleuze has remarked how feeling is in fact often mistaken for affect. In one of his renowned courses at the University of Vincennes in Paris, Deleuze points out that in his *Ethics*, Spinoza uses two terms in relation to affect: *affectio* and *affectus*. Some of the languages into which this book has been translated lack the distinction between these two words, resulting in the use of the word ‘affection’ for both. For Deleuze, such mistranslations are unfortunate, undermining as they do the philosopher’s choice of using two different words, which is not without reason. Deleuze adheres to Spinoza’s distinction, demonstrating how the French and English languages can accommodate its meaning. In English, the more accurate translation is ‘affection’ for *affectio* and ‘affect’ for *affectus*.

⁹ Interview with Agnes Martin (1997): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JfYjmo5OA>, last accessed on November 11, 2012

In my opinion, the opposition of feeling and thinking (understanding) in art has always been problematic. The two terms convey so many possibilities of continuous exchange and shared common ground that for me 'intuition' is in many instances a more productive notion to adopt. The meaning of intuition, which can be defined as 'thinking with the heart' and 'feeling with the head,' becomes less otherworldly if we observe its relationship to memory. Memory functions through repetition, creating difference in itself as a territory to inhabit or operate from. Memory is in this sense necessarily connected with the process of learning by heart, revealing an intriguing connection between the heart, the head (mind), and memory.

This connection is demonstrated by a number of different translations of the somewhat remarkable expression 'to learn by heart.' In Dutch the expression is translated as 'uit het hoofd leren,' literally, 'to learn out of the head.' In German, the equivalent term 'auswendig lernen,' translates as 'to learn from outside.' Incidentally, this expression also exists in Dutch. The French language uses the same expression as the English, namely 'apprendre par cœur,' whereas the Italians use 'imparare a memoria,' a straight and simple 'to learn by memory.' These numerous translations are evidence to the ways in which head, heart, memory and that which is external to oneself are interrelated in the processes of learning.

Let me return here to the subject of 'The Self-Taught Philosopher' and my interest in Deleuze, and by extension, philosophy. To what extent can I, as an artist, understand the philosophy of Deleuze, or philosophy in general, in order to be able to engage with it in a relevant way? The question itself may appear somewhat irrelevant, because as an artist, I do not aim to take up the position of a philosopher. Nor do I claim art works to be a philosophy of any kind, including works that are labeled as conceptual.

Deleuze offers a radical view of the subject of understanding with regard to philosophy, which overlaps with the notion of deskilling prevalent in the visual arts and under discussion here. According to him, for someone to be able to read philosophy, it is by no

means necessary to be a philosopher. In fact, he considers it crucial that philosophy is read by non-philosophers, and that nothing is lacking in such readings. Deleuze often mentions Spinoza as an example of a philosopher who is capable like no other of touching readers from all walks of life, including farmers, merchants, and other non-intellectuals. What is more, he believes that philosophers themselves should also always read in two ways simultaneously, both philosophically and non-philosophically.

Turning to the question of skill and the potential of deskilling in philosophy, Deleuze contrasts his own work with that of philosopher, literary critic and novelist Umberto Eco. Maintaining that he does not possess the good faculty of memory required by a ‘true’ intellectual, Deleuze claims that he does not in fact consider himself to be an intellectual.¹⁰ Yet, intellectuals such as Umberto Eco, who have read whole libraries and are capable of giving an immediate answer to any question on any subject one may throw at them, simply scare him. Although he may respect their knowledge, they fail to offer much by way of what he finds most interesting: a more singular approach to things. Perhaps such an approach shares similarities with how artists deal with understanding in relation to feeling and/or affect. It may explain why Deleuze is so beloved in the arts.

Paper for the event The Self-Taught Philosopher of Ḥayy ibn Yaḳzān, organized by Nüans at Smart Project Space (NASA), Amsterdam (2012).

¹⁰ Boutang, Pierre-Andre (2011), *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, Editions Montparnasse, Paris (DVD)

Marcel Duchamp's Conceptual Model: Bicycle Wheel

Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* (1913) is regarded as the first ready-made. It all depends, however, on which specific criteria are used to define a readymade. Many prefer the standard of the readymade in its most basic form, a work consisting of a single chosen object which has not been altered or expanded by the artist, like *Bottle Dryer* from 1914. Yet this definition does not apply to one of the most controversial readymades, *Fountain* (1917), which owes its fame to the fact that it was rejected for the Society of Independent Artists' first exhibition. *Bicycle Wheel* still is a construction, however minimal the operation may seem of joining two objects together, in this case a bicycle wheel and a milking stool. Duchamp's way of thinking leaves little to no room for a clear delineation of his work. He actually went to great lengths to undermine any attempt to define his own art or art in general. Perhaps *Bicycle Wheel* is not even a readymade, let alone the first.

This essay is not an attempt to either define or date the birth of the readymade. Rather, it is an attempt to approach the thinking of Duchamp, the inventor of what has become known as Conceptual Art, on the basis of the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, more particularly their book *A Thousand Plateaus*.

The Smooth and the Striated

In the chapter '1440: The Smooth and the Striated' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 474), the need for fixation and registration, which is inherent to art history, corresponds with their notion of the 'striated.' The idea that something can be grasped by recording it, the striated, is a matter of art history rather than of art practice.

The reluctance of many artists to record experiences, descriptions and definitions regarding art in language has to do with their predilection for the smooth, for a smooth, open space. The first person to lay out the concept of 'The Smooth and the Striated' was Pierre

Boulez, a well-known composer and conductor, and a contemporary of Deleuze and Guattari. He defined smooth space-time as ‘occupying without counting’ and striated space-time as ‘counting in order to occupy’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 361-62, 553n20). Boulez, who is known for his serial, atonal and experimental compositions, applied these notions to music. This space-time relationship could also be extended to history. Arguably, history is a striated phenomenon: it counts the years and recounts the events that took place in those years, retrospectively describing and inscribing a linear chronology of what is considered relevant. However, even the most ‘occupied’ of histories, be it art history or any other kind of history, are subject to continuous re-evaluations that make it necessary to continually rewrite what has been recorded.

A Thousand Plateaus is itself a good example of this continuous rewriting of history, although it appears to be more speculative and experimental than is customary in the traditional historical disciplines, for instance in the way it playfully combines dates, titles and images in its chapter headings in order to unsettle chronology. The many plateaus do not only write history, but approach the question ‘What happened?’ as an inquiry in a detective novel, a question about an ‘event.’ This notion also took on special meaning in the art of the 1960s: the theatrical and not so theatrical performances of Fluxus were also called ‘events.’ Still, however ‘smoothly’ Deleuze and Guattari pit their nomadic war machine against bureaucracy and the State apparatus, they still need to operate on the basis of calculated objectives, that is, of a ‘striating’ activity. This explains the cautionary remark which concludes ‘The Smooth and the Striated’: ‘Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us’ (1987, 500), which probably refers to Heidegger’s statement that ‘only a God can save us’ (1976, 193-219), taken from an interview discussing his activities during the Nazi period.

‘The Smooth and the Striated’ is structured around six models of possible fields and disciplines: technological, musical, maritime, mathematical, physical and aesthetic (nomad

art). The choice for the model as a concept for the exploration of these different fields has all the hallmarks of a deliberate false start. After all, why would Deleuze and Guattari want to engage with something as schematic as a model? Is it an escape used to trick ‘the striated’? Is it an attempt to reach ‘the smooth’ by way of ‘the striated’? Deleuze and Guattari are not afraid to contradict themselves or even to accentuate these contradictions (that are numerous in this book: directional-dimensional, haptic-optic, intensive-extensive, homogeneous-heterogeneous (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 484, 256, 479)) and push them beyond their limits, as is exemplified in ‘The Smooth and the Striated.’

What also seems to belong to ‘the striated’ is the extensive use of axioms and propositions in chapter twelve, ‘1227: Treatise on Nomadology—The War Machine’, and the frequent recurrence of the word ‘system’ in their writings, for example: ‘non-signifying system’, ‘white wall-black hole system’, ‘line-system’, ‘block-system’, ‘nomadic system’, ‘body-head system’ and ‘face system’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 169, 294, idem, 394, 171, idem). This seems to be more in keeping with a system analysis than with the open approach which is inherent to ‘the smooth.’ On certain occasions Deleuze and Guattari even designate their concept of ‘the rhizome’ as a function of a system (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 6). Models, axioms, propositions and systems are all means that claim to control chaos by means of weighing, proof and measurement, and are, as such, inextricably linked with the striated. At the same time, however, Deleuze and Guattari share a tendency to evade these various forms of control, embracing ‘the smooth’ as a body without organs instead of ‘the striated’ and its predilection for organized bodies (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 479). In its perception ‘the smooth’ does not denote characteristics so much, as it is an expression of a way of thinking which glosses over contradictions, dialectics and opposites, and eschews the power of argumentation. They did everything in their power to evince polarities. In the end, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, they even succeeded in escaping from themselves, not only from their

identities, but also from the processes of becoming in which they mutually engaged during the writing itself.

Beyond the Retinal

‘The Aesthetic Model: Nomad Art’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 492-500) introduces a historical model of aesthetics that is defined as ‘nomad art.’ It is remarkable that all the examples that are treated in this model are taken exclusively from traditional art history. It is a comprehensive historical survey of Western art, including Egyptian, Greek, Assyrian, Celtic, Byzantine and Gothic art. Modern art is touched upon only briefly, while contemporary art is not mentioned at all—that is, the art which was considered contemporary in 1980, the year in which *A Thousand Plateaus* was originally published as *Mille Plateaux*.

From the perspective of contemporary art, the aesthetic model (nomad art) can be applied in multiple ways, although it also has its limitations. This model cannot be used to understand Conceptual Art, either in general terms or in the form of its more specific case of Duchamp’s art and readymades. This problematizes the idea of a fruitful relationship between Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophical concepts and the way concepts are used in contemporary art practice, either as concepts or otherwise. In this paragraph I will test the limits of Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of art history, that is, in how far their notion of art history functions as a condition for deterritorialization as they envisaged it.

In dealing with art, examples are crucial, not as references or illustrations, but as the core matter of that which artists and spectators engage with. One wonders what to make of Deleuze’s lament on the burden of history, particularly in the light of the history of philosophy which he so thoroughly explored in his writings on a whole series of philosophers. In the opening chapter of *Negotiations*, Deleuze says: ‘You can’t seriously consider saying what you yourself think until you’ve read this and that, and that on this, and this on that’

(Deleuze 1995, 5). Was it not Deleuze and Guattari's mutual desire to throw off the burden and heritage of the past that first led to their collaboration? *Anti-Oedipus*, the first part of their *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project, was essentially concerned with overcoming psychoanalysis, which had become a stumbling block in their respective practices. As a result of their collective writing experiments, Deleuze was able to develop productive ways to cope with what he described and experienced as the oppressive history of philosophy. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the second part of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, this rupture with history came to a gratifying fruition.

In their collaboration Deleuze and Guattari sought ways to deterritorialize the striated in the history of philosophy and the influence of psychoanalysis. Perhaps the best example of the striated is historiography, because it is an extension of and a contribution to the consensus of a State-induced distribution system. History gains and claims authority by its very power and by the forces of crystallization resulting from the accumulation of time—as if it were a reality that is far more real than the events from the past. Duchamp's skeptical attitude seems to be in accord with Deleuze and Guattari's criticism. In an interview with Richard Hamilton for BBC radio, Duchamp asked whether the artifacts or artworks on display in museums really represent the most relevant and best art that history has to offer the visitors (Schwarz 1969, 80). Expanding on this, he tried to imagine what museums would have looked like if other regimes had been in power: this could have led to a completely different and perhaps more interesting selection of artworks. For their part, Deleuze and Guattari, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, do not seem interested in embarking on such art historical speculations; in matters of art history, they choose to follow the established views of the specialists, which explains the traditional nature of the examples mentioned in 'The Aesthetic Model: Nomad Art.'

The history of art to which Deleuze and Guattari refer in *A Thousand Plateaus* and in much of their other writings, is largely informed by the art theories of Alois Riegl, Wilhelm

Worringer and Heinrich Wölfflin, all art historians working within the framework of traditional ‘German’ art history. Vlad Ionescu has remarked that the significance of their theories lies in ‘distinguishing the image not as a stable surface on which an object is coded with consideration for its recognition, but as a surface coagulating a field of forces, on which an exterior correlate, instead of being copied, is transformed according to the tensive means proper to painting’ (2011, 53). Regardless of the revolutionary approach of these art historians in their own time, which went beyond conventional taxonomy and the dominance of the visual, they still operated within the boundaries of conventional aesthetics—using examples of what Duchamp called retinal art. From Riegl, Deleuze and Guattari took the notion of the differences between ‘close-range’ vision and ‘long-distance’ vision, of which the latter is connected to optical space and the former to haptic space. This led them to associate the couple *close vision-haptic space* with the smooth and the pair *distant vision-optical space* with the striated. They argued that in relation to the ‘optic’, ‘haptic’ is a better word than ‘tactile’, because ‘it does not establish an opposition between two sense organs but rather invites to assume that the eye itself may fulfill this nonoptical function’ (1987, 492). In other words, the eye itself would also attain a haptic function.

In this context, Deleuze and Guattari take the example of Paul Cézanne, who ‘spoke about the need to *no longer see* the wheat field, but to be close to it’ (Deleuze 1998, XXXV). This can be seen as a ‘zooming in’, literally a ‘getting closer’, an attempt to touch the object of the painting. Returning to the models used in ‘The Smooth and the Striated’, it could be argued that for Cézanne, painting represented a model of truth. Here, not only the model, but also the truth is seen as a striating organism—the very ‘truth’ or truth-finding that Deleuze and Guattari were trying to eliminate in their book *Anti-Oedipus*: ‘The political ascetics, the sad militants, the terrorists of theory, those who would preserve the pure order of politics and political discourse. Bureaucrats of the revolution and civil servants of Truth’ (1977, xii).

However, even when inducing transgressive haptic effects and qualities, the truth in painting remains bound to conventional aesthetics like those put forward in the art theories of Riegl, Worringer and Wölfflin.

From the perspective of contemporary art, art theory and art history, aesthetics has limited relevance today. The anti-aesthetic tendencies of modern art rendered the entire field of aesthetics in enduring conflict with itself. Initially, this took place through the distortion of representation by movements like Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Expressionism and Futurism. As Duchamp said: ‘This period of liberation rapidly gave birth to all the “isms” which have followed one another during the last century, at the rate of one new “ism” about every fifteen years’ (Duchamp 1961). Right up until the 1960s, the ‘distortion of representation’ led to a growing need for the rejection of representation in the visual arts. The degree to which Duchamp succeeded in overturning the striated becomes apparent in the following statement:

The fact that the problem of the last hundred years boils down almost entirely to the single dilemma of the ‘representative and the non-representative’ seems to me to reinforce the importance I gave a moment ago to the entirely retinal aspect of the total output of the different ‘isms.’ Therefore I am inclined, after this examination of the past, to believe that the young artist of tomorrow will refuse to base his work on a philosophy as over-simplified as that of the ‘representative or non-representative’ dilemma. I am convinced that, like Alice in Wonderland, he will be led to pass through the looking-glass of the retina, to reach a more profound expression (Duchamp 1961).

These words convey in a nutshell the radical vision of Duchamp’s anti-retinal approach, and point to ways in which an ‘overturning’ of representation has paved the way for Conceptual

Art. The same Alice in Wonderland featured as the quintessential conceptual persona in Deleuze's book *The Logic of Sense* in which he tried to escape from the dominant power of representation by arranging his concept of 'becoming' in a number of series (1990, 1). The groundwork for the overturning of the representational, in fact, had already been laid in Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*, where he differentiates between 'the four iron collars of representation: identity in the concept, opposition in the predicate, analogy in judgment, and resemblance in perception' (1994, 262). These four key concepts also directly or indirectly allude to the operations and processes of striation.

Although Deleuze and Duchamp each tried to overcome the 'representative/non-representative' dilemma in their own way, we must assume that Deleuze was well aware of the developments in modern art, judging by what philosopher and translator Daniel Smith writes in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*: 'Modern art and modern philosophy can be said to have converged on a similar problem: both renounced the domain of representation and instead took the conditions of representation as their object. Deleuze suggests that twentieth-century art remained far ahead of philosophy in this regard, and that philosophers still have much to learn from painters' (Deleuze 2005, xiii). While Deleuze (and Guattari) concentrated on developing new concepts on the basis of sensible percepts and affects, Duchamp prepared the way for the introduction of the concept in the visual arts by cultivating his disinterest in the percepts and affects that are characteristic of painting. Duchamp wanted to distance himself from the exclusively sensible in art, and it was particularly his readymades that succeeded in doing so.

The Readymade and the Silence of Deleuze and Guattari

According to art historian Arturo Schwarz, one of Duchamp's main benefactors,¹¹ the readymade redefined the history of art in much the same way as history distinguishes between the years before and after Christ. I quote Schwarz from an email that he sent me on May 29, 2011: 'This statement is mine and as history is (arbitrarily) divided in two periods (AD: Anno Domini, that is to say Year of our Lord) and BC (Before Christ) I suggested that AD should stand for *After Duchamp*. Just a play on words—that Duchamp liked so much—but, in this case a play on *letters* taken to the letter!'¹² The presumptuousness of this statement does not detract from the fact that for many artists, Duchamp changed the course of the history of art in an unprecedented way. From his first to his last controversial work, coincidentally both nudes, his entire oeuvre seems to have been developed within and as a smooth space. However, the power of provocation of these two works¹³ should not be attributed to Duchamp's use of the nude, which was already a well-established subject in art, from Goya to Manet.¹⁴

Deleuze and Guattari's silence with regard to Duchamp is something of a mystery. During one of his performances, Joseph Beuys once wrote on a blackboard: 'The Silence Of Marcel Duchamp Is Overrated' (Schneede 1998, 80). The silence of Deleuze and Guattari on the subject of Duchamp and the history of Conceptual Art that evolved from his activities is, on the other hand, underrated. With its multiplicity of complex and different practices, Conceptual Art is very hard to define, even if one would restrict oneself to its beginnings in the early 1960s. Its relationship to philosophy, or its negation of that relationship, is equally

¹¹ Schwarz, an art collector and art dealer from Milan, produced a series of replicas of readymades under Duchamp's supervision, and also edited *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp*.

¹² Apart from the fact that they both consist of seven letters, the names Duchamp and Deleuze also share the first letter 'D.' In a philosophical context, therefore, we could also read AD as 'after Deleuze.' Michel Foucault made a more modest proposal: 'Perhaps one day this century will be known as Deleuzian' (Foucault and Bouchard 1977, 165). Moreover, Claire Parnet's film on Deleuze, *L'Abécédaire*, could only be made under the strict condition that it would not be shown publicly until after his death, a pre-arranged disclosure post mortem which is strikingly similar to Duchamp's *Given*.

¹³ *Nude Descending a Staircase No. 2* from 1912, and *Given: 1. Waterfall. 2. The Illuminating Gas* (1946-1966).

¹⁴ Francisco José De Goya y Lucientes, Édouard Manet

complex and differentiated. On the very rare occasions that Deleuze and Guattari refer to Conceptual Art they do so indirectly, for instance in *What is Philosophy?*, in which they use one of the most popular pieces of Conceptual Art, *One and Three Chairs* (1965) by Joseph Kosuth, as their main example without explicitly mentioning the artist or the work, not even in the footnotes.

Other artists are also conspicuously absent: they serve to illustrate the failure of Conceptual Art as art ‘by an opposite dematerialization through generalization and sufficiently neutralized plane of composition’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 198), but the sparse descriptions and lack of titles of the works that are mentioned leave us guessing.¹⁵ The choice of the stereotypical *One and Three Chairs* as an example of Conceptual Art and the lack of clear references seem to point to a disinclination to delve deeper into the matter. Perhaps these developments were too close and too recent to warrant a reaction and as a consequence, Deleuze and Guattari chose to focus on modernism.

Although photography is traditionally seen as the main cause of the crisis of painting, the contribution of the readymade to its demise should not be underestimated. For a long time after Duchamp’s readymades, artists adopted a schizophrenic attitude towards painting, as if they were forced to choose in favor of or against it.

The classic avant-garde remained a powerful influence until the end of the 1970s, when Conceptual Art began to lose its dominant position. Under the influence of postmodernism, which had a growing effect on the visual arts in the 1980s, the conflict between painting and anti-painting was gradually decided in favor of the former in its most painterly quality, namely Expressionism or rather, Neo-Expressionism. This was followed in the mid-1980s by a short-lived counter-tendency called ‘neo-geo’, which paved the way—mainly through painting—for new post- and Neo-Conceptual developments that have

¹⁵ Most likely they were referring to Vito Acconci, Walter de Maria and Bruce Nauman, and the early promoter and curator of Conceptual Art Seth Siegelaub.

continued to this day. They have adopted painting as one of their possibilities in the form of what is now generally known as post-Conceptual painting.

The Conceptual Model

Bicycle Wheel was created in what is best understood as smooth space-time, before it was eventually designated as a readymade: it resulted from what Duchamp described as ‘simply letting things go by themselves and have a sort of created atmosphere in the studio’ (Schwarz 2000, 588). In other words, *Bicycle Wheel* originated in what is best described as an open space, without any goal in mind, without intentions, models, or expectations.¹⁶ In the year of its production, however, the category of the ‘readymade’ had yet to be ‘invented.’ This happened only two years later, in 1915, shortly after Duchamp’s arrival in New York. There he began to collect objects which brought him to see their significance as works that were ‘already made’, a term which he had already used in a letter to his sister. He then proposed to retroactively include *Bicycle Wheel* among the readymades. Had not fate decided otherwise, this object would have been predestined to become known as his very first readymade. But when he asked his sister to look after *Bicycle Wheel*, she informed him the work had been lost after she had cleaned up his studio on the rue Saint-Hippolyte in Paris (Tomkins 1996, 158). Overall, there appear to be sufficient reasons for philosophers to elaborate on Deleuze and Guattari’s shared notions of the actual and the virtual, and on the active and passive synthesis of smooth space-time in Duchamp’s seemingly straightforward *Bicycle Wheel*.

Duchamp’s last work, *Given: 1. Waterfall. 2. The Illuminating Gas* is even less easy to define in the context of the synthesis of time. Although the complexity of its synthesis of smooth time is similar to that of *Bicycle Wheel*, its production was anything but a matter of ‘simply letting things go by themselves.’ The construction of this assemblage, like that of *The*

¹⁶ Consider, in contrast to this, his *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (1915-1923) which, unlike the readymades, took no less than eight years of elaborate and painstaking work to complete.

Large Glass, was in fact a slow and painstaking process which kept Duchamp busy during the last two decades of his life (1946-1966). While the art world generally presumed that he had given up his practice, Duchamp was actually quietly working in his New York studio (Duchamp 2009, iii). *Given* was not only Duchamp's last work, yet in the total secrecy surrounding its creation and the way it presents itself—a hidden space behind a peephole—also the best example of keeping a smooth space open for such an extended period of time. As a subterranean growth, Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome does much the same. In their 'maritime model' the 'underground' is exemplified by the submarine that escapes striation by disappearing under water, thereby confusing the striated, calculated tracings of occupation and coordination constituted by the longitudes and latitudes: 'It was at sea that smooth space was first subjugated and a model found for the laying-out and imposition of striated space, a model later put to use elsewhere' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 480), for example as an essential part of the navigation gadgets used in cars and mobile phones today, which has resulted in a total invasion and domination of the private sphere. Retroactively, Duchamp's *Given* can be seen as an inversion of the synthesis of time, the same inversion that is also apparent in the inscription that Duchamp preordained for his gravestone: 'D'ailleurs, c'est toujours les autres qui meurent', which translates as: 'Besides, it's always the others who die.' This involves a typical a-parallel evolution that was so aptly described by Rémy Chauvin (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 19). It seems that Duchamp even managed to master and stretch smooth space from beyond his grave.

In one of the few texts Duchamp published during his lifetime, entitled 'Where do we go from here?' (1961), he reflects on the future of art and confronts us with the massive influence of the marketplace, which had already grown considerably towards the end of the 1950s, although it is still negligible compared to the developments in the art market in the past few decades. Duchamp remarked that, as a result, art had become an ordinary commodity.

This would undoubtedly lead to mediocrity as quantity would replace quality. Duchamp concluded: ‘The great artist of tomorrow will go underground’ (1961). By going underground one escapes all striation; that is, as long as one succeeds in staying there. Duchamp managed to do so immediately following the Second World War and remained there until the end of his life. In fact, he literally took his underground practice underground, that is, to his grave, for its activities did not end with his death. We have already mentioned what death and the grave signified for him, namely the inversion of the relationship between I and the Other, which he further extended in *Given* by leaving it up to ‘others’ to unveil it. Part of the whole underground setup was the carefully prepared public revelation of *Given* following his death.

In his lecture ‘The Creative Act,’ Duchamp says: ‘Let us consider two important factors, the two poles of the creation of art: the artist on the one hand, and on the other the spectator who later becomes the posterity’ (Duchamp 1957). This underwrites his life-long belief that the viewer is constitutive in finishing the work of art and gives it sense, which is another aspect of the revolution mentioned by Schwarz. As for the role of the viewer, he did something which is comparable to Einstein’s theory of relativity, namely making him or her part of his concept of space-time. Duchamp’s contribution, making the viewer an integral part of the artwork as a condition for his *raison d’être*, is more in keeping with the theory of relativity than his ideas on the fourth dimension, although these might seem the more obvious choice: ‘If a shadow is a two-dimensional projection of the three-dimensional world, then the three-dimensional world as we know it is the projection of the four-dimensional Universe’ (Lebel 1959, 27-28). Though ingenious, this conception is still too closely associated with the memory of Plato’s cave. We should not, however, stay fixated on the theory of relativity. In his book *Bergsonism*, Deleuze remarks that ‘for Bergson, science is never “reductionist” but, on the contrary, demands a metaphysics — without which it would remain abstract, deprived of meaning or intuition’ (Deleuze 1991, 116).

As long as those ‘others’ would still live, as long as his work *Given: 1. Waterfall. 2. The Illuminating Gas* is preserved, it will be ‘occupied without counting’ by the history of ‘a people to come’¹⁷ (Deleuze and Guattari 1990, 218).

In terms of history, *Bicycle Wheel* displays its own empty grave, albeit in a double articulation of a different kind, justifying its claim as the first readymade and a pivotal overturning of art history. If we consider the anthropomorphic vocabulary in the titles of some of Duchamp’s readymades, like ‘malade’, ‘malheureux’, ‘assisté’ or ‘assistant’, we see that they correspond with Deleuze and Guattari’s way of bringing concepts to life in the form of conceptual personae. The genesis of *Bicycle Wheel* could be seen as a genealogical process, if we chose to define it as the ‘birth’ of the readymade. However, the making of *Bicycle Wheel* constituted an event that took place in a smooth space-time and resulted from Duchamp’s growing disinterest in painting. During a spare moment, he brought together two incongruous elements, a stool and a bicycle wheel, and literally joined them together to form something new. Had *Bicycle Wheel* not been retroactively earmarked as a readymade, it probably would have passed into oblivion. When Duchamp coined the term ‘readymade’ on the basis of the material he had gathered in his New York studio, he decided to also incorporate the work he had made in Paris, which shared the same characteristics. At the time he wasn’t aware that it had been discarded during a cleaning session in his Paris studio. The fact that Duchamp was not able to retrieve the work just as it was on the verge of being recognized as the first readymade, prefigured the fate that most original readymades would suffer. It took nearly fifty years before the historical relevance of the readymades was recognized and museums acknowledged the need to incorporate them in their collections. In the end, only one of the ten

¹⁷ The excerpts from Deleuze and Guattari quoted here refer to other artists. In the cited fragment we read the following: ‘In this submersion it seems that there is extracted from chaos the shadow of the “people to come” in the form that art, but also philosophy and science, summon forth: mass-people, world-people, brain-people, chaos-people-nonthinking thought that lodges in the three, like Klee’s nonconceptual concept or Kandinsky’s internal silence. It is here that concepts, sensations, and functions become undecidable, at the same time as philosophy, art, and science become indiscernible, as if they shared the same shadow that extends itself across their different nature and constantly accompanies them.’

readymades made by Duchamp survived. Ad Reinhardt considered the museum to be a tomb, the ultimate destination and habitus of the artwork. Duchamp regularly spoke of the ‘life and death’ of an artwork: while Reinhardt saw the death of the artwork as a form of its perpetuation, for Duchamp, it stood for the ephemeral, as if death, like human life, was just a temporary state. Moreover, such a death could be hastened by the glances of too many spectators. He takes the example of the Mona Lisa, ‘because no matter how wonderful her smile may be, it’s been looked at so much that the smile has disappeared’ (Tomkins 2013, 60). Duchamp’s ideas about the power of the spectator are far-reaching, not only as a condition for the completion of an artwork, but also in a potential quantitative sense, as possible cause of its abolishment or destruction. He believed that if millions of people looked at a painting they would unwittingly destroy the painting, physically or otherwise.

Thus, in the museum, most of the readymades’ graves remain empty. The replicas that fill them are mere shadows of their forbears. Their escape from the grasp of conservation and the territorialization of art history was a smooth one. This is in stark contrast with Duchamp’s purposely underground studio, in whose smooth space a carefully chosen striated strategy was set out which remained hidden from the world until his death two decades later.

Deleuze and Guattari warned: ‘Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us’ (Deleuze 1987, 500). And in his ‘resolution’ about Duchamp’s *Given*, Jean-François Lyotard added: ‘But don’t think you can be saved by joining him’ (Lyotard 1990, 11).

Translation of article written in Dutch for the book Hoe kunst en filosofie werken (How art and philosophy work), forthcoming 2013, edited by Sybrandt van Keulen, English edit Walter van der Star, Royal Boom Publishers, Meppel.

A Series of Nine Dimensions

First Dimension: Dots

Untitled (I'm afraid of red, yellow and blue) (2009); becomes an affirmative answer to the series of the four versions of Barnett Newman's painting, bearing the question in the title: 'Who is Afraid of Red Yellow and Blue?' The 'answers' we know best, are the ones that caught much attention in the press, about the acts of violence that severely damaged version III and IV in the eighties. This created a particular kind of legacy for this series. Julian Dashper knew, as he phrased it himself, how to: 'put Newman out of his misery', by pinpointing the chopsticks that he used instead of a brush, to paint his three small dots with, in red, yellow and blue, a perfect way out for the trinity of colors.

Second Dimension: Chain

Untitled (English White Chain) (1993); a series of chains often found in museums to guard the public from the art works. This chain is one meter long in 29 parts. Each chain-part looks like the letter O. This letter figures in many a work of Dashper. Yet, the most striking example is his rather dramatic piece *Untitled (Scream)*, 1991-93. A minimalist Edvard Munch in a repetitive letter symbol, in futurist italic: *OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO*.

Third Dimension: The Light, The Dark

Untitled (2000); better known as the *rounded square paintings*. The names Reinhardt and Rembrandt share more than counting nine letters; seven of them are the same as such, five of them in the same position. It is the painterly language they share, close to black, the proximity of darkness. A cartoon of Yves Klein, pointing out that the Black Square of Malevich was not the first monochrome, made Dashper contemplate on the white, the left over space he was

always more interested in, the space that was usually overlooked or conceived of as non-existent. He reversed the strategy and had the white define a problem for the black. No wonder his square got its bend curves. The white forces the square to become round, the *Victory over the Sun* deterritorialized.

Fourth Dimension: Space-Time

Future Call (1994-2010); hidden communication with Julian. Ringtones: *Time Is On My Side*, *Let it Be*, *El Condor Pasa* ('I'd rather be a hammer than a Nail'), and so forth. JD: 'Pop Music! Popular music has allowed an adoption of informality as a formal position, deriving its energy through the collapsing of previously contradictory positions.'

Fifth Dimension: The Fold (Nomadology)

Untitled (1990-1992) (Collection: Stedelijk Museum); a painting with an orange O, for which he used the symbol of the O in the Ilford logo — Futura Extra Black, painted against a white ground. When looked at longer and closer one slowly sees nine fields emerging. One may discover in a similar fashion nine squares in the *Abstract Paintings* Ad Reinhardt made at the end of his life. In the latter the squares are distinguished through subtle differences in the black, in the former they are marked by subtle folds in a more casual fashion. Julian bought the typical Belgian linen, Reinhardt was known to use, in the Netherlands. Back home in his studio he discovered that the folds in the linen, caused by folding the canvas to fit in his luggage, were not removable. He decided to incorporate them in the work he planned for it, such he considered a given that might just as well be used rather than discarded. When it later turned out it had been acquired by the Stedelijk Museum, nothing seemed more obvious than to return it the same way it came to New Zealand, folded.

Sixth Dimension: Concept of Negation

Certificate of Authenticity (1998); *These are not certificates. This is not minimal art. This is not installation art. This is not writing. It is what it isn't.* Unique photographs and multiple paintings.

Seventh Dimension: The World is Your Studio

Untitled (studio door) 3 (2004); with regard to his Artforum paid advertisements in 1992: 'I got 30.000 people to see my work without having to leave the studio.' Front of the studio door. Back of the studio door (45RPM). Recorded in Auckland, New Zealand, on Sunday May 9, 2004 — the day our daughter Marie was born.

Eighth Dimension: Eschatological Ceremony

Untitled (the last second of the last Venice Biennale) (2007-2008); in *This is not writing*, page 182, quote 39: 'Oh no Blinky. I'm going to shut the door.'

Ninth Dimension: The Black Hole

Untitled (2000) (rounded square paintings, edition of two); a second attempt. In his *Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard reminds us in the chapter *The Phenomenology of Roundness*, that Van Gogh, Julian's favorite Dutch artist, wrote: 'Life is probably round.' Deleuze and Guattari mentioned more than once their concept of: 'Two black holes on a white wall'; Four black holes is all that Dashper needed, to produce his rounded square paintings. –Black as Black can be: John Nixon, *Untitled (Black)*(1968); Ad Reinhardt, *Abstract Painting* (1967); Robert Fludd, *The metaphysical, physical, and technical history of the two worlds, namely the greater and the lesser* (1617); Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, published in nine volumes (1759-1767); Günther Umberg, *Untitled* (2003),

Kasimir Malewicz, *Black Suprematist Square* (1914, 1917, 1929); Olivier Mosset, *Untitled*,
(1986, 2010, 2011) . . .

Published in: Julian Dashper—Donald Judd (2013), by PS projectspace, Amsterdam, edited by Jan van der Ploeg.

Affect Mix

I assume that the room is relatively mixed. In other words an effect, or the action that one body produces on another, once it's noted that Spinoza, on the basis of reasons from his Physics, does not believe in action at a distance, action always implies a contact, and is even a mixture of bodies. Affectio is a mixture of two bodies, one body which is said to act on another, and the other receives the trace of the first. Every mixture of bodies will be termed an affection. Spinoza infers from this that affectio, being defined as a mixture of bodies, indicates the nature of the modified body, the nature of the affectionate or affected body, the affection indicates the nature of the affected body much more than it does the nature of the affecting body. I would say that the first sort of ideas for Spinoza is every mode of thought which represents an affection of the body . . . which is to say the mixture of one body with another body, or the trace of another body on my body will be termed an idea of affection. These are ideas of mixture separated from the causes of the mixture. When I say "This one does not please me," that means, literally, that the effect of his body on mine, the effect of his soul on mine affects me disagreeably, it is the mixture of bodies or mixture of souls. There is a noxious mixture or a good mixture, as much at the level of the body as at that of the soul. That means that it mixes with

my body in a manner by which I am modified disagreeably, it cannot mean anything else. To put it simply, why is this a confused idea, this affection-idea, this mixture—it is inevitably confused and inadequate since I don't know absolutely, at this level, by virtue of what and how the body or the soul of Pierre is constituted, in what way it does not agree with mine, or in what way his body does not agree with mine. When I have a bad encounter, this means that the body which is mixed with mine destroys my constituent relation, or tends to destroy one of my subordinate relations. Encountering a body which mixes badly with your own. Mixing badly means mixing in conditions such that one of your subordinate or constituent relations is either threatened, compromised or even destroyed. For the moment we see clearly that all that is given to us is ideas of affection, ideas of mixture. For those who can recall a little Descartes, this is the basic anti-cartesian proposition since it excludes every apprehension of the thinking thing by itself, that is it excludes all possibility of the cogito. I only ever know the mixtures of bodies and I only know myself by way of the action of other bodies on me and by way of mixtures. On the contrary, when you say, "I feel really good," and you are content, you are also content because bodies are mixed with you in proportions and under conditions which are favorable to your relation; at that moment the power of the body which affects you is combined with your own in such a way that your power of acting is increased. You

recall that an affection-idea is a mixture, that is to say the idea of an effect of a body on mine. I would say that the nominal definition of the notion is that it's an idea which, instead of representing the effect of a body on another, that is to say the mixture of two bodies, represents the internal agreement or disagreement of the characteristic relations of the two bodies. You see that the notion, differing from the idea of affection, instead of being the seizure of the extrinsic relation of one body with another or the effect of one body on another, the notion is raised to the comprehension of the cause, that is if the mixture has such and such effect, this is by virtue of the nature of the relation of the two bodies considered and of the manner in which the relation of one of the bodies is combined with the relation of the other body. Hence we fall back upon the question: how can one leave this situation which condemned us to mixtures?¹⁸

Due to the necessary preservation of the hyphenation, the layout of this contribution deviates from the other texts. Published in Reading/Feeling, edited by Tanja Baudoin, Frédérique Bergholtz and Vivian Zihlerl, If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, Amsterdam, 2013

¹⁸ Series of quotes collected from the text: Cours de Gilles Deleuze, Cours Vincennes: Intégralité du cours 1978 -1981. Emilie and Julien Deleuze. *Gilles Deleuze, Lecture transcripts on Spinoza's concept of affect*. Cours Vincennes 24/01/1978. www.webdeleuze.com/php/sommaire.html, last accessed on November 12, 2012. Selection is based on the keyword 'Mix'

Bird Call

If a waiting room is first and foremost a place of transition, Louise Lawler's body of work may be experienced as a site that conveys this as a primary function. As she stated in an interview: "The situation is always part of what produces the work for me"¹. Since text plays a crucial role in her work, either as title, part of her work, or is the work itself, this interview-inter-view becomes yet another element of her work as well. Just as the following excerpt from an interview *about* her work cannot help but contain quite a number of titles from Lawler's work as text-out-of-place, which recall the artworks they represent waiting to be looked at.

Fraser: You're talking about relations, but in a substantive rather than a relational way. And that may be where you're missing the performative. Louise does not just represent relationships in her work, she produces them through her work.

Encountering a work by Louise is never simply seeing it. One is addressed by her work, interpellated by it. And is it *you* as a viewer who is being addressed, *you* who is being looked at, looked back at. They look at you: think of how many of her photographs include the gazes of other works of art. When there aren't gazes, there are reflections or bright lights. They call out to you: there is a text. Hey! *It Could Be Elvis!*, *This Drawing is For Sale!* They question you: *Does Andy Warhol Make You Cry?*, *Did you Get What You Deserved?*

Baker: *Did You See Your Parent of the Opposite Sex Naked?*

Fraser: *What Else Could I Do?* They are asking you what you want. They are questioning you on the level of your desire and your interest in looking. There are objects that are "kind": they are looking out for you. There are other objects pictured that are mute or oblivious. We see remainders or fragments of people's lives. Did she

take this photograph because there's art above the fireplace or there's a branch of mistletoe hanging from the ceiling? The text caption reads: "Once there was a little boy and everything turned out fine. The End."¹⁹

Published in Salle d'Attente, Elvire Bonduelle (Ed.), Paris, Galerie Laurent Mueller, 2013

¹⁹ Baker, Georg and Andrea Fraser, Displacement and Condensation: A conversation on the work of Louise Lawler. In: Kaiser, Philipp, Louise Lawler and Others, pp. 139-141. Hatje Cantz Publishers, Ostfildern-Ruit, 2004.

Afterface

As suggested in the preface of *Difference and Repetition*, to better read the conclusion at the outset, as a kind of afterface to begin with, we are at the heart of the paradoxes of doing research. Especially when the topic is series. Since what could research be when it is a series itself, but taking part in another series of research that has the closest proximity to it. Closest would be a series that ended right before this one started as kind of preface on the one side of it and as series that continues after it as on the other side. But then again we seem not to be able to escape the linearity Deleuze tried to disrupt with everything he wrote after. Would not 'closest' be defined as coming from all directions and simultaneously going in as many directions away from it? Perhaps *A Thousand Plateaus* is a good example of how Deleuze and Guattari put to practice the concept of the Rhizome, since that is more precisely what we might be looking at after all. Something flows in all directions and we did not yet mention the different speeds involved. Deleuze and Guattari are always looking for sober solutions and at the same time prefer not to draw attention to spectacular kinds of inventions that would put the spotlights on it, or, even worse, on themselves. Rather they would prefer to keep it and remain themselves imperceptible. One way to do this is to become unrecognizable by becoming like everybody else. 'Also because it is nice to talk like everybody else, to say the sun rises, when everybody knows it's only a manner of speaking. To reach the point where one no longer says I, but the point where it is no longer of any importance whether one says I'²⁰. Afterface, a face that no longer renders any recognition. Afterface becoming appropriation pure in the way Sherrie Levine uses 'after' in her titles. What the heck comes after a thousand plateaus? A million? Again we'd better stay sober, it is not about quantities. This book . . .

²⁰ Introduction: Rhizome

Afterface: Two black holes on a white wall.

An example of a series writing experiments in direct relationship with the book Difference and Repetition with as primary approach its materiality. Regarding the pages of this book as independent entities made it possible to test difference and repetition by responding to some words, things, concepts to be found on a given page from the original book. (2009)

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Research publications

- 2010 Artists On Doing Their Doctoral Research, interview Ilse van Rijn, *Metropolis M*, 2010, No 4, Aug-Sep
- 2011 And, And, And So On and So Forth, article in *See it Again, Say it Again: The Artist as Researcher* ed. Janneke Wesseling, Valiz, Amsterdam
- 2011 iLand, article in *Apogee*, edited by Nuäns, Düsseldorf, Revolver Publishing, Berlin
- 2012 Eleventh Series of Nonsense, text contribution for *The Self-Taught Musical*, edited by Nuäns, Düsseldorf, Smart Project Space, Amsterdam
- 2012 What is Art in Discourse?, lecture Master Artistic Research, The Hague, in *Marchive 2*, edited by Lucy Cotter and Aimée Zito Lema, the Royal Academy of Art (KABK) and the Royal Conservatoire (KC)
- 2012 Mix (Monochrome with Olivier Mosset) in Galerie van Gelder, 2008 in *The Amsterdam Gallery World in an International Context*, photo Kees van Gelder, edited by Noor Mertens and Astrid Vostermans, Valiz, Amsterdam
- 2013 A Series of Nine Dimensions, article in *Julian Dashper – Donald Judd*, edited by Jan van der Ploeg, PS projectspace, Amsterdam
- 2013 Affect Mix, article published in *Reading/Feeling*, edited by edited by Tanja Baudoin, Frédérique Bergholtz and Vivian Ziherl, *If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution*, Amsterdam
- 2013 Untitled (Yves Saint Laurent—Opium), 2010, detail of this artwork as cover of *Deleuze and Philosophical Practice, Deleuze Studies*, Volume 7 Number 2, Edited by Guillaume Collett, Masayoshi Hosugi, Chryssa Sdrolia, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh
- 2013 Marcel Duchamp's Conceptual Model: Bicycle Wheel, trans. (edited by Walter van der Star) of article written in Dutch for the book *Hoe kunst en filosofie werken* (How art and philosophy work), forthcoming 2013, edited by Sybrandt van Keulen, Royal Boom Publishers, Meppel.
- 2013 Bird Call, textual contribution in *Salle d'Attendre* edited by Elvire Bonduelle, Galerie Laurent Mueller, Paris
- 2013 Monochrome Triptich, visual en textual contribution to the book *Colour Logics*, forthcoming, 2013, edited by Bart de Baets, Frank Koolen en Fleur van Muiswinkel, HKU, Utrecht

Papers, presentations, performances and concerts

- 2008 Intuition, paper and presentation for the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), The Hague
- 2009 Presentation is Representation, paper for Workshop PhDArts, guest Jaap Guldemond (curator), Scheltema, Leiden
- 2009 About Series, paper for seminar organized by Yves Knockaert, IvOK, Leuven
- 2009 Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series, presentation of research project, Lectorate Art Theory & Practice, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2009 Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series, presentation for workshop PhDArts, guest Amar Kanwar, Scheltema, Leiden

- 2009 On Series, paper and presentation for workshop organized by PhDArts, guest Andrea Fraser, Royal Conservatory, The Hague
- 2009 Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series, public lecture, auditorium Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2010 Monochrome in Series, lecture and *Flip the Coin*, performance in Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede
- 2010 Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series, presentation of research project for the Lectorate Art Theory & Practice, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2010 Deleuze and Series: From Conceptual Art to Philosophy and Back Again, presentation of research proposal for workshop doctoral research in the Arts, organized by Elske Gerritsen (NWO) and Steven Teeseling (Mondrian Fund)
- 2010 Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series, presentation for Master Artistic Research, UvA in W139, Amsterdam
- 2010 Closure and Repetition: On Kant and Deleuze, paper for *De hele kritiek van het oordeelsvermogen in 12 uur!* Organized by Sybrandt van Keulen, NGE/UvA, Spui25, Amsterdam
- 2010 Deleuze and Guattari: A Question of Disciplines, paper for *Connect, Continue, Create*, 3rd International Deleuze Studies Conference, ASCA, University of Amsterdam; Center for Humanities, Utrecht University.
- 2010 Exhibition presentation for symposium The Artist as Researcher, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2010 Presentation of 36th research project at Gerrit-Tops, Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam
- 2011 Concert with The Donkey's Tail, PrintRoom, Rotterdam, presented by De Player, Rotterdam
- 2011 Concert with The Donkey's Tail in Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam
- 2011 Thirty Sixth Series of the Next Kind of Series, presentation for Stendhal Symposium, Universiteit of Amsterdam, Amsterdam
- 2011 What is Art in Discourse?, paper, presentation and performance for *Creation, Crisis, Critique*, 4th International Deleuze Studies Conference, Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen
- 2011 What is Art in Discourse?, paper, presentation and performance for Master Artistic Research, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2012 Zero for Stupidity, One for Enlightenment, paper for event *The Self-Taught Musical*, organized by Nüans, Smart Project Space, Amsterdam
- 2012 12-12-12, Red Book, live concert, presentation and release of cd-project at Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam
- 2013 Julian Dashper/Donald Judd, presentation for AKV Den Bosch Students, organized by Camiel van Winkel

Exhibitions

- 2008 76, 77, 78, ... Kunstruimte 09, Groningen
- 2008 La Vie en Rond, H29, Brussels, Belgium

- 2008 Clinch / Cross / Cut - Team 404 & John Armleder, New Jersey, Basel, Switzerland
- 2008 Small Works, K09, Groningen
- 2008 Mudpie - Artistic research on art as art and art and life, W139, Amsterdam
- 2008 Gegenstandslos, GKG / Gesellschaft für Kunst und Gestaltung e.V., Bonn, Germany
- 2009 Almost Abstract, Galerie van Gelder, Amsterdam
- 2009 Portrait de l'artiste en motocycliste, Le Magasin CNAC, Grenoble
- 2010 The Ephemeral, Galerie van Gelder, Amsterdam
- 2010 3rd International Deleuze Studies Conference, De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam
- 2010 Collection Olivier Mosset, Musée des beaux-arts, Ville de La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland
- 2010 Dutch Connection, Hebel 121, Basel, Switzerland
- 2010 Julian Dashper (1960-2009): It is Life, Minus Space, Brooklyn, New York, USA
- 2010 Push Pull, WJM Kok, Frank Mandersloot and collection, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Enschede (solo)
- 2010 Lebt Theo?, GKG / Gesellschaft für Kunst und Gestaltung, Bonn, Germany.
- 2010 The Artist as Collector: Olivier Mosset, MOCA, Tuscon, USA
- 2011 Apogee, JB Jurve, Los Angeles, USA
- 2011 Match #3, WJM Kok / Clemens Neumann, K09, Groningen
- 2011 Plaats Delict: #5, Kleur, De Paraplufabriek, Nijmegen
- 2011 Match 1-2-3, K09, Groningen
- 2011 A for Artists / E for Exhibitions Part I, Galerie van Gelder, Amsterdam
- 2011 Vis à Vis, Rossi Contemporary, Brussels, curated by Philippe Braem
- 2012 More than One of Each, Galerie van Gelder, Amsterdam (solo)
- 2012 A for artists / E for Exhibitions Part II, Galerie van Gelder, Amsterdam
- 2012 30 Days of Peace, Love and Painting, Ellen de Bruyne Projects, Amsterdam
- 2012 The Only Rule is Work, Galerie Waalkens, Finsterwolde, curator Marijn van Kreijl
- 2012 Herbst.Zeit.Lose, GKG, Gesellschaft für Kunst und Gestaltung, Bonn, Germany
- 2012 Amsterdam Drawing 2012, An Art Fair for Original Works on Paper, organized by Vous Etes Ici
- 2012 Same same, but different, GKG, Bonn, Germany
- 2013 This and That and That, Galerie van Gelder, Amsterdam

Work

- 2008 ON, video work, edition Cut magazine, 2008
- 2008 Roundabout, various series of dot paintings on paper, floor piece

- 2008 Mix Series, an ongoing series, each a collaboration with another artist. Participants until 2013 are: Tiong Ang, 2010; Elvire Bonduelle, 2013; Dina Danish, 2012; Andrea Fraser, 2012; Daan van Golden, 2010; Karin Hasselberg, 2009; Rumiko Hagiwara, 2013; JCJ Vanderheyden, 2010; Graham Hudson, 2012; Twan Janssen, 2010; Martina Klein, 2009; Georg Korsmit, 2008; Marijn van Kreijl, 2012; Frank Mandersloot, 2010; Zsolt Mesterhazy, 2010; Olivier Mosset, 2008; Guido Münch, 2008; John Nixon, 2011; Joost van Oss, 2011; Henk Peeters, 2008; Falke Pisano, 2010; Jan van der Ploeg, 2011; Joke Robaard, 2010; Lily van der Stokker, 2010; Martijn Schuppers, 2010; Rob Scholte, 2010; Evi Vingerling, 2010; Kees Visser, 2010; Vincent Vulsma 2010; Ran Zhang, 2010.
- 2009 Loop Notes, about 300 series each consisting of 6 drawings
- 2009 Untitled (When I See Mommy, I Feel Like a Mummy), Untitled (Step into Miles), Untitled (Durations IV), Untitled (As Long As The Grass Grows), Untitled (Variation 13), Untitled (A Saucerful Of Secrets), Untitled (Salty Dog), Untitled (Descriptions Automatique: II, sur une Laterne), series of 8 video pieces
- 2009 Sideline, series of 500 drawings
- 2010 57 Seconds to the right (Performed by Lily van der Stokker); 19 Seconds up (Performed by Jasper Coppes); 18 Seconds to the left (Performed by Karin Hasselberg); 41 Seconds down (Performed by Curdin Tones); 25 Seconds up (Performed by Eva Pel), 2009; open series of video works
- 2010 Untitled (Yves Saint Laurent – Opium) and Untitled (Jean Paul Gaultier – Fleur du Male), perfume sprayed on unprimed canvas
- 2010 Untitled, series of 25 monochrome paintings
- 2011 Untitled, series of 5 paintings
- 2012 Maxi-Color #, series of 224 new paintings
- 2012 Maxi-Color (Twins) 32 dyptichs, works on paper
- 2012 Maxi-Color, 32 series of 7 works on paper
- 2013 Monochrome Tryptich, series of 6 works on paper

Exhibition publications

- 2010 Push Pull – Een dialoog met Frank Mandersloot en WJM Kok, edited by Lucy Cotter, published in *Rijksmuseum Twenthe Magazine*, Enschede
- 2011 Theo lives? Dutch art 80 years after the Manifesto on Concrete Art by Theo van Doesburg, edited by Susannah Cremer-Bernbach, Gesellschaft für Kunst und Gestaltung e.V., Bonn
- 2012 Match #1 #2 #3, text contributions by Jacob van der Veen and Roel Arkesteijn, edited Jacob van der Veen, Stichting Kunstruimte 09, Groningen
- 2013 30 Years GKG, edited by Suzanne Cremer-Bernbach and Dorothea Löchte, Gesellschaft für Kunst und Gestaltung e.v., Bonn

Research activities

- 2008 Maybe it would be better if we worked in groups of three? Lecture Liam Gillick, Hermes Lecture, Provinciehuis, Den Bosch

- 2008 Seminar Yves Knockaert and Liesbeth Decan, organized by Docsem, IvOK, Leuven
- 2008 Now is the Time: Art & Theory in the 21st Century, Lecture by Robert S. Nelson en Ruth Noack, organized by Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, W139, SMBA, Metropolis M
- 2009 AICA Dag van de Kunstkritiek, with Din Pieters, Xandra Schutte, Jennifer Allen, Arjen Mulder, Wijbrand Schaap and Raymond van den Boogaard. Moderator Chris Keulemans, De Balie, Amsterdam
- 2009 De verzoening met Deleuze, W139, lecture series and book presentation *Deleuze Compendium*, with Sjoerd van Tuinen, Joost de Bloois, Marc Schuilenburg, Patricia Pisters and Marc de Kesel
- 2009 Seminar Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, Hogeschool St. Lucas, Brussels, organized by Docsem, IvOK, Leuven
- 2009 State of the Art in Artistic Research, lecture by Henk Borgdorff, organized by PhDArts, Scheltema, Leiden
- 2009 Workshop Amar Kanwar, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague, Scheltema Leiden
- 2009 Seminar Thomas Nolet, Hogeschool St. Lucas, Brussels, organized by Docsem, IvOK, Leuven
- 2009 Lecture 'The World Question Center Questioned' by Koen Brams, Smart Project Space, Amsterdam
- 2009 Presentation PhD research project Tine Melzer, Motive Gallery, Amsterdam
- 2009 Parallelepiped, seminar Edith Doove, STUK, Leuven, organized by Docsem, IvOK, Leuven
- 2009 Seminar Cel Crabeels, Antwerpen, organized by Docsem, IvOK, Leuven
- 2009 Workshop Andrea Fraser, organized by PhDArts, KABK, The Hague
- 2009 Lecture by Andrea Fraser, organized by Wouter Davidts en Sven Lütticken, VU, Amsterdam
- 2009 Becoming Minority, Lecture series, Joost de Bloois, organized by Studium Generale, Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam, Theaterzaal Geert Groteschool, Amsterdam
- 2009 Workshop Ann Demeester, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2010 3rd International Deleuze Studies Conference, ASCA, University of Amsterdam; Center for Humanities, Utrecht University
- 2010 Workshop Paul Carter, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2010 Deleuze and the Visual Arts, organized Sjoerd van Tuinen, Erasmus University, Rotterdam
- 2010 Lecture by Ulla von Brandenburg, De Ateliers, Amsterdam
- 2010 Seminar by Jacques Rancière, organized by Sophie Berribi, ASCA, University of Amsterdam
- 2010 Surface Research, presentation of artistic research project by Henri Jacobs, Rietveld Paviljoen, Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam
- 2010 The Artist As Researcher, symposium organized by PhDArts, KABK, The Hague

- 2010 Seminar Henk Borgdorff, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2010 Milles Gilles, Deleuze 4th Summer Course, Huize Frankendael, Amsterdam, organized by the 3rd International Deleuze Studies Conference
- 2010 Connect, Continue, Create, Deleuze and Nomadic Methodologies, 3rd International Deleuze Studies Conference, organized by ASCA, University of Amsterdam; Center for Humanities, Utrecht University
- 2010 Yucatan is Elsewhere, lecture by Falke Pisano, HKU, Utrecht
- 2010 De Fabel van de Cinema, lecture and film presentation by Jacques Rancière, Smart Project Space, Amsterdam
- 2010 Seminar Leonhard de Paepe, organized by PhDArts, KABK, The Hague
- 2010 PhDArts meeting in Heerlen, John Cage exhibition in Schunck, Heerlen
- 2010 Analyze/Research Paris, artist's presentation, L.A. Raeven, SMBA, Amsterdam
- 2011 Workshop Maria Hlavajova, PhDArts, Koninklijk Conservatorium, Varèsezaal, Den Haag
- 2011 The evolving theory of evolution, workshop Tijs Goldschmidt, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2011 A Little Less Conversation, conference, curator Marie Frampier, organized by De Appel Arts Centre and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam
- 2011 Workshop Bart Verschaffel, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2011 Dag van de Theorie, Lectorate Art Theory & Practice, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2011 Workshop Bart Verschaffel, organized by PhDArts, KABK, The Hague
- 2011 Presentation *Doctorate of the Arts, An Introductory Talk in Two Parts* by Jeremiah Day, VU, Amsterdam
- 2011 Workshop Maria Hlavajova, organized by PhDArts, KABK, The Hague
- 2011 One Billion Years, On Kawara, reading session in Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam
- 2011 Workshop by Roy Villevoey en Jan Dietvorst, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2011 Totally against Godard politics!, symposium organized by Erik Viskil, guest Patricia Pisters, Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam
- 2011 Wild Park – Het onverwachte als opdracht, Jeroen Boomgaard, book presentation, De Nieuwe Liefde, Amsterdam
- 2011 Workshop by Renzo Martens, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2011 Creation, Crisis, Critique, 4th International Deleuze Studies Conference, Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen
- 2011 Expert meeting on artistic research, organized by the professorship Artistic Research at Utrecht School of the Arts, Utrecht in collaboration with Mondrian Fund, Amsterdam. Contributions from Mick Wilson, Yvonne Dröge Wendel, Jan Kaila, Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht
- 2011 See it Again, Say it Again: The Artist as Researcher, book presentation, guests Marc Roig Blesa, Barbara Visser en Moniek Toebosch SMBA, Amsterdam.

- 2011 Deleuze Seminar, chaired by Rosi Braidotti and Anneke Smelik, guest: Gregg Lambert, Centre for Humanities, Utrecht University, Utrecht
- 2011 Hannah Arendt's Crisis in Culture 50th Anniversary: Reflections, Implications, Speculations, reading group: Jeremiah Day / VU University, Goleb, Amsterdam
- 2011 Edition IV—Affect, participator in reading group (until 2013), organized by Tanja Baudoin and Frédérique Bergholz, If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, Amsterdam
- 2011 Symposium organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague, guest Andrea Fraser, ao
- 2011 Artist's talk Driessen/Verstappen, Galerie Vous Etes Ici, Amsterdam
- 2011 Deleuze Seminar, chaired by Rosi Braidotti and Anneke Smelik, guest: Maaïke Bleeker, Centre for Humanities, Utrecht University, Utrecht
- 2011 Facing Forward: Art & Theory from a Future Perspective: Future Tech, lectures by Manuel De Landa and Amber Chase, Oude Lutherse Kerk, Amsterdam
- 2012 Lecture Falke Pisano, De Ateliers, Amsterdam
- 2012 Facing Forward: Art & Theory from a Future Perspective: Future Tech, lectures by Amelia Jones, David Summers, Kathryn Brown, Steven ten Tije, Lutherse Kerk, Amsterdam
- 2012 Surface Research, project presentation Henri Jacobs, Nieuw Dakota, Amsterdam
- 2012 The World Explained, workshop Anke Bangma, Tropen museum, organized by If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, Amsterdam
- 2012 Workshop Sybrandt van Keulen, organized by PhDArts, KABK, The Hague
- 2012 Lecture and performance by Sigurdur Gudmundsson, Rijksakademie, Amsterdam
- 2012 A Movie Will Be Shown Without the Picture, discussion and film presentation of Louise Lawler, organized by If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution, The Movies, Amsterdam
- 2012 Workshop organized by PhDArts, KABK, The Hague, guest Andrea Fraser
- 2012 Reconstructing the White Cube lecture and discussion by Camiel van Winkel, moderator Wouter Davidts, Rijksakademie, Amsterdam
- 2012 Van Nul naar Nu, symposium, guests Henk Peeters en Tijs Visser, organized by Stichting Ycca, Deventer
- 2012 Lecture Seth Siegelaub, De Ateliers, Amsterdam
- 2012 In gesprek met Nietzsche, Gerard Visser en In gesprek met onszelf, Maarten Doorman, interviews and discussion organized by Felix & Sofie, Felix Meritis, Amsterdam
- 2012 Lecture David Jablonowski, De Ateliers, Amsterdam
- 2012 Diced Ice, discussion with Frank Mandersloot at Zolder Museum, moderator Vincent Vulsma
- 2013 Appropriation and Dedication, seminar organized by If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution in Goethe Institut, Amsterdam
- 2013 Sol Lewitt, film and discussion with director Chris Teerink, NASA, Amsterdam
- 2013 Presentation of research project Yvonne Dröge Wendel, organized by PhDArts, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague and LAPS, Amsterdam

- 2013 Truth and Event, keynote lecture Alain Badiou on Symposium Event in Artistic and Political Practices, organized by Now is the Time: Art & Theory in the 21st Century, organized by Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, W139, SMBA, Metropolis M, Lutherse Kerk, Amsterdam
- 2013 Research Practices: Artistic, Art Historical and Anthropological Perspectives, seminar organized by Sophie Ernst, PhDArts, KABK, The Hague
- 2013 From Iced Dice to Diced Ice, workshop Frank Mandersloot moderator, guest Roland van Vliet, Punt WG, Amsterdam
- 2013 Common Grounds, Common Practice: presentation by Joëlle Tuerlinckx and lecture Willem Oorebeek, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

Other research activities

- 2008 Member of the knowledge network of the Lectorate Art Theory & Practice, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague (until 2012)
- 2009 Lecturer, Master Artistic Research, Royal Academy of Art, The Hague
- 2011 Mentoring project Clemens Neumann, K09, Groningen

Curriculum Vitae

Wjm Kok (Utrecht, 1959) studied at the St. Joost Academy, Breda; AKI, Academy of Art and Design, Enschede, and the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam. After his studies he started his studio practice in 1987 and exhibited his work regularly in museums, art spaces and galleries, such as recently the solo shows in Rijksmuseum Twenthe and Galerie van Gelder, 2012, and group shows in Le Magasin CNAC, Grenoble, 2009 and GKG, Bonn, 2012. Over the years he has received several grants of for instance the Mondrian Fund, the Prix the Rome and the Royal Award for Painting. His work is included in the collections of for instance the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson, USA; Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague, and DNB, The Dutch Bank, Amsterdam.

Through the years he occasionally took commissions of art projects in public space such as for instance organized by SKOR (Foundation for Art and Public Domain), Amsterdam. Within this context he took part in the research group of the LAPS (the Lectorate Art & Public Space) from 2004-2008. He was also a member of the research group of the Lectorate Art Theory & Practice at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague from 2008-2012.

Teaching at several art academies, amongst which Dutch Art Institute, Enschede; Frank Mohr Institute, Groningen; Master Artistic Research, The Hague, soon became one of the other returning activities. Since 2002 he has a teaching position at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam, with his current occupation at the Fine Art Department, and from 2005-2006 he was member of the Commission of Educational Innovation. From 2007-2010 he participated in the selection commission of the Honours Programme Art and Research, a collaboration between this academy and the University of Amsterdam.

Within his research of the last years Wjm Kok actively participated in many a seminar, conference and workshop with papers and presentations which at times included environmental and performative aspects, such as for the NWO (Netherlands Organisation of Scientific Research), The

Hague, 2008; IvOK, Leuven; Master Artistic Research, UvA (University of Amsterdam); 3rd International Deleuze Conference in Amsterdam (Chair: Institutional Critique), and 4th International Deleuze Conference in Copenhagen. Next to this he also visited a large number of venues attending artist talks, lectures, seminars, symposia, reading groups and occasionally also courses. To mention a few of them: Hannah Arendt's *The Crisis in Culture* reading group by Jeremiah Day, 2011; Seminar on Gilles Deleuze by Rosi Braidotti and Anneke Smelik, Centre for Humanities, Utrecht University, 2012; *Facing Forward: Art & Theory from a Future Perspective: Future Tech*, lectures by Manuel De Landa and Amber Chase, Oude Lutherse Kerk, Amsterdam, 2011; *Truth and Event*, keynote lecture Alain Badiou on Symposium Event in Artistic and Political Practices, organized by *Now is the Time: Art & Theory in the 21st Century*, organized by Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, W139, SMBA, Metropolis M, Lutherse Kerk, Amsterdam, and *Edition IV—Affect*, participator in reading group (until 2013), organized by Tanja Baudoin and Frédérique Bergholz, *If I Can't Dance, I Don't Want To Be Part Of Your Revolution*, Amsterdam.

Newly developed within the research is the engagement with music projects, be it through writing in the published *iLand* article, be it through his new membership of the noise ensemble *The Donkey's Tail*, or his own projects like the two cd's he produced *Abstract (Tony Conrad, Four Violins, 1964)*, 2010 and *12-12-12* under the name *Red Book*, or the specific data processing of music in a series video works, for instance *Untitled (Variation 13)*, 2010.

Publications of articles written by Wjm Kok include: *iLand*, article in *Apogee*, edited by Nuäns, Düsseldorf, Revolver Publishing, Berlin, 2011; *A Series of Nine Dimensions*, article in Julian Dashper – Donald Judd, edited by Jan van der Ploeg, PS projectspace, Amsterdam, 2013; *Bird Call*, textual contribution in *Salle d'Attendre* edited by Elvire Bonduelle, Galerie Laurent Mueller, Paris, 2013.

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Allow me to start at the end and end with the ones that come first. The last will be the first, which is especially true for the series in this research in which reciprocity has played its consistent role.

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Samenvatting

Dit onderzoek bestaat uit drie onderdelen: Ten eerste de atelierpraktijk, waarin het atelier de plek werd waar de praktijk haar voortgang had, maar ook experimenten ondernomen werden in het kader van het onderzoeksplan. Ten tweede werden er muziekprojecten ontwikkeld die niet voorzien waren in het onderzoeksplan en die, naarmate het onderzoek voortschreed, steeds meer hun positie opeisten. Ten derde werden er teksten geschreven terwijl in het onderzoeksplan slechts gesproken werd over het werken met stellingen die uitsluitend mondeling geëvalueerd zouden worden in presentaties. Het laatstgenoemde idee werd al snel na de aanvang losgelaten, niet alleen omdat het schrijven van teksten voor PhD-onderzoek noodzakelijk is, maar vooral om datgene wat zich in mijn praktijk had vastgezet als een weerstand tot het schrijven los te laten. Een keerpunt ontstond op het moment dat ik gevraagd werd om voor het kunstenaarscollectief Nüans in Düsseldorf een artikel te schrijven voor een boek waarin verschillende gebieden rondom de kunsten samengebracht zouden worden. Nog voordat ik de effecten hiervan kon overzien, kwam het volgende verzoek tot het schrijven van een artikel en daar bleef het niet bij: uiteindelijk bleek het schrijven voor publicaties het karakter van de dissertatie te gaan bepalen. De onderzoeksvraag, die zich concentreerde op het onderwerp ‘verschil en herhaling’, kon op deze manier in de praktijk zowel ontrafeld als vermengd worden met aanverwante onderwerpen en contexten, inclusief de impliciete vragen die erin naar voren kwamen. Naast een discursieve benadering van het onderwerp bood dit een zeer geschikte mogelijkheid om de eigen potentiële werking ervan te testen en daarbij zoveel mogelijk zichtbaar te maken, voor datgene wat zich uit het onderzoek laat verklaren of voor wat uit de atelierpraktijk naar voren werd gebracht.

Aan het einde van dit onderzoek werd het steeds duidelijker dat grenzen zich opheffen juist daar, waar de resultaten tot werk leidden dat openbaar gemaakt werd in tentoonstellingen of anderszins. Het publiceren van teksten bood de gelegenheid om een strategie voor het schrijven te ontwikkelen, die direct in de praktijk getoetst kon worden op een manier die veel overeenkomst

heeft met de wijze waarop het tentoonstellen van werk tot stand komt. Gedurende de onderzoeksperiode werden er naast de vele tentoonstellingen teksten gepubliceerd waarvan het grootste deel in het proefschrift is opgenomen.

In mijn praktijk hebben zich onder invloed van het onderzoek belangrijke veranderingen voltrokken. Onder invloed van het onderzoek kwam een nieuwe serie videowerken, waaronder *ON*, 2008 tot stand (dit werk verscheen als multiple in *Cut art magazine*), maar ook de serie videowerken *Second hand*, waaronder *18 Seconds to the left (Performed by Karin Hasselberg)*, 2010, waarin assistenten de camera om zijn as laten draaien, de secondewijzer volgend aan de hand van de door de kunstenaar gegeven richtlijnen.

Als een soort fysieke tegenpool van het vele schrijven achter de computer ontwikkelde zich *Loop Notes* in 2009. Een grote serie van kleine tekeningen, ‘notities’ op A4 papier. De gereduceerde schaal waarin deze tekeningen gemaakt werden heeft meer overeenkomst met schrijven dan met tekenen. De serie die begon in het jaar dat het onderzoek startte, *Mix*, 2008 kreeg een bijzondere positie door zich gedurende het hele onderzoek voort te zetten. In dit werk gaat het om de specifieke samenwerking in het produceren van een monochroom schilderij, waarbij telkens met een andere kunstenaar wordt gewerkt. Verschil en herhaling krijgen in deze serie een heel eigen betekenis, die voornamelijk in de oppervlakten van de schilderijen en door de manier waarop de kleur zich manifesteert niet meer te onderscheiden zijn van de wijze waarop telkens twee praktijken bij elkaar komen en zich in deze ontmoeting slechts prijsgeven als monochroom schilderij in en voor zichzelf.

Er is in mijn praktijk altijd een scepsis geweest omtrent innovatie, vernieuwing en ontwikkeling, naast een grote hang naar een vorm van de-skilling. Gedurende het onderzoek ontwikkelden deze aspecten van mijn werk zich nog duidelijker in de series, die zich steeds meer ontvouwen in de context van datgene wat ‘re-appropriation’ genoemd kan worden, zoals bijvoorbeeld in *Untitled*, 2010; *Untitled (Yves Saint Laurent – Opium)*, 2010 en de serie *Maxi-Color #*.

Met betrekking tot de muziekprojecten is het moeilijk vast te stellen hoe de eerste tekenen van deze manifestaties zichtbaar werden. Ze ontstonden door de experimenten die ik in het begin ondernam in de zoektocht naar een geschikte vorm om presentaties te doen. Op een gegeven moment liet ik als intro een stuk muziek horen, soms gebruikte ik muziek in interactie met een lezing, een andere keer liet ik bijvoorbeeld het stuk *Ja, Ja, Ja, Ja, Ja, Nee, Nee, Nee, Nee, Nee*, 1968, van Joseph Beuys een belangrijke rol spelen in een presentatie. In de gepubliceerde *iLand*-tekst liep het begrip muziek op zijn meest elementaire wijze als een meanderende ‘ritornello’ door de tekst, namelijk in het onderwerp ‘het raken van een object’ in relatie tot de geluidsgolven die dat voortbrengt, of in hoe een ‘golf’ zich verhoudt tot een ‘deeltje’. De uitnodiging deel te nemen aan een concert van The Donkey’s Tail en The Charles Ives Singers —*noise*-ensembles onder leiding van respectievelijk mijn collega’s John Nixon en Victor Meertens— werd een belangrijk moment; het bleek cruciaal om datgene wat er zich op de achtergrond en ondergronds leek te voltrekken boven water te krijgen, met of zonder golfslag. Behalve actief betrokken te raken bij een aantal producties van het eerstgenoemde ensemble leidden deze ervaringen onder invloed van de stimulerende invloed van beide tot eigen muziekproducties, waaronder *12-12-12* dat werd uitgebracht onder de naam Red Book en het concipiëren van de conceptuele *noise*-compositie *Uneveneven* uit 2011, die tijdens de verdediging ten gehore gebracht zal worden.