

A Draft: Up n' Upper or Sisyphus Lounge

Notes, Poems & Essays from The Road & The Cabin

by

Andrew Foster

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Date

Thomas Weaver

Thesis Sponsor

05/05/2021

Date

Carrie Moyer

Second Reader

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::: Notes, Poems & Essays from The Road & The Cabin :::



Fig. 1 Adrift

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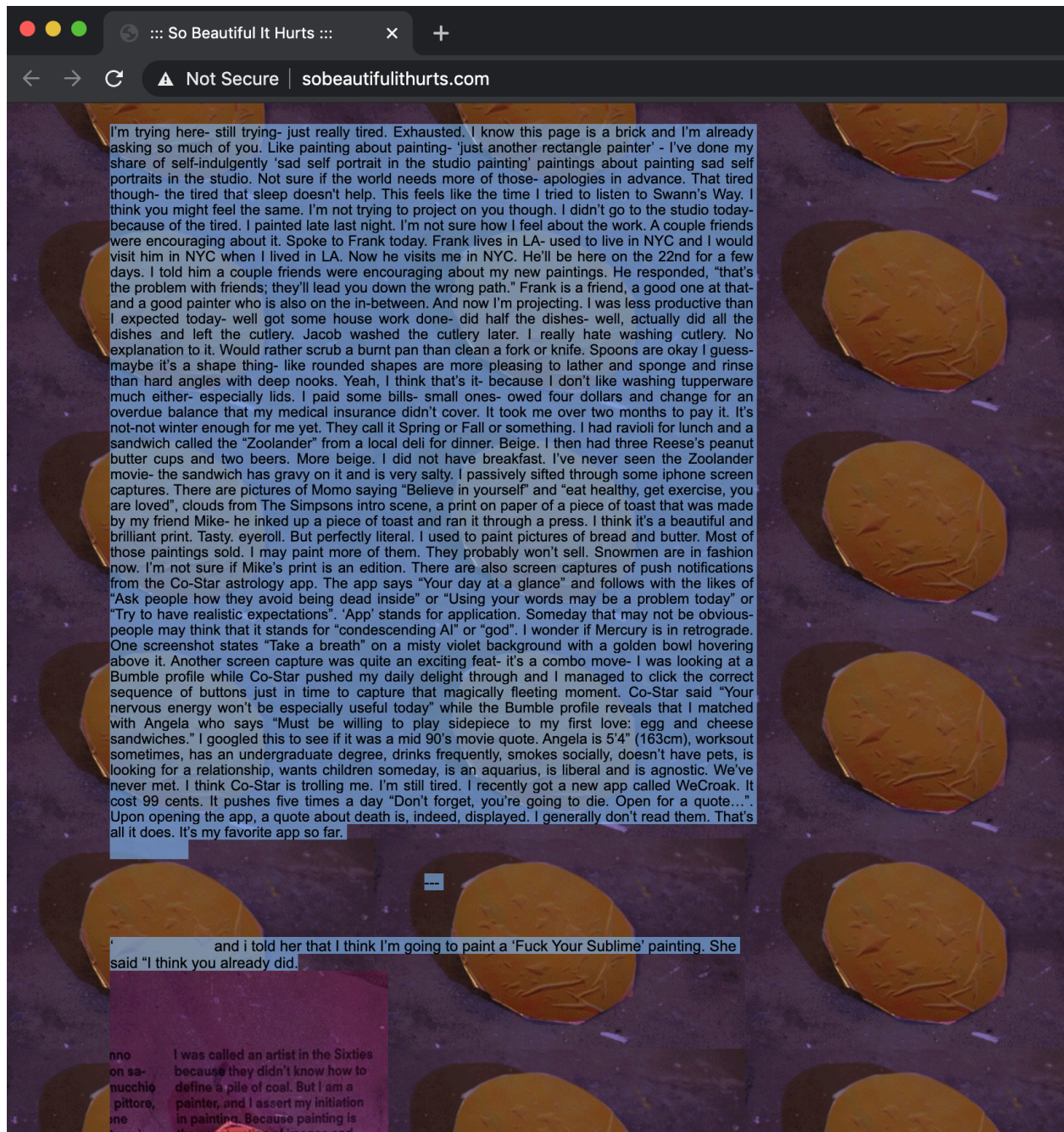


Fig. 2. Screenshot (10/28/2020) of password protected website project. Initially published Spring 2019 - <http://sobeautifulithurts.com> is an ongoing/dynamic project. Login Credentials // Username: iamawesome // Password: zentheend

*A work of art is a perfect balance between real and imaginary facts.*¹

..said a French man--a painter of tubes in the time of cubes--long before smartphones, before deep fakes, infinite n' doomscrolling- before a reality TV star became president of the United States- before collective notions of "the real" would be challenged as fake.. before Q. Maybe it is no longer art, but our terms of life, this "is-is-ness" that teeters on the precipice of real and imaginary facts.

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A different French man, more recently told me, "a dog does not care what color the sky is if he can not eat it."

--

Please read the following, in whole, earnestly, as best you can, as John Malkovich. No, wait! That's too at risk of sounding pretentious.. or like Art School Confidential. I'd much rather suggest the voice of Hearty White, host of the radio show Miracle Nutrition on WFMU, live Thursday evenings, 7-8pm eastern standard time or wherever you get your podcasts. He is perhaps one of today's lesser known seekers and speakers of truth and meaning.

Thank you. No-no-no! Thank you!

Ok. You are welcome,

my friends,

[link²](#)

¹ Fernand Legér. Léger, www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/2833

² In an ideal world this link will someday lead to a reading of this document by the real Hearty White.

A True Story

February 17, 2021

I bumped into a philosopher a few minutes ago. He's one of the only people within miles of me. He was feeding his barn cat, Kali. I call her Tyger Tyger.³ I was taking a break from writing this paper -having a beer- I set it down before approaching the philosopher so not to seem as I was. We'd only met briefly once before. He's the host of the cabin called Yellow Bird that I'm Airbnb'ing here in Woodbury, Tennessee. He asked me what I'm writing about. I replied, it's a thesis paper about my art. He said, yes, but what is it about? I said, oh, yes, I'm not quite sure yet, to be honest. It's supposed to be a thesis paper about my art, but seems that the best I can do here is write around it all. It feels more like an anti-thesis paper, really. He sat on his tractor (well, it's actually just a small ATV, which is short for *all terrain vehicle*, but it feels like 'tractor' conjures a more textured picture of this secluded rural setting), properly socially distanced. He's only received his first of two vaccine shots so far. There are about a dozen deer grazing on frozen grass by the iced-over pond a hundred or so yards down the hill. They seem happy- but not perfectly happy now that we were there talking nonsense nearby. We talked about nature and language and how the auditory, written and visual each wants to do what the other does best. "Does any of it ever even lead to real meaning?" We asked. Is this all an attempt to enter that fetishized realm of synesthesia, I wondered? (thesis - *antithesis* - synthesis - synesthesia? Another go at 'oneness' perhaps?) We both value the imagination's power to transform the world. Yet another tragically conflicted romantic here, I think to myself, negotiating the mind's

³ Referring to William Blake's poem, "The Tyger," that explores the nature of origin and creation. A carved wooden sign inscribed *Tyger Tyger* greets guests at the cabin's entrance at Yellow Bird.

skepticism against the heart's near-nostalgic idealism that edges towards escapism (or is it heart's skepticism against the mind's near-nostalgic idealism that edges towards escapism?), a common and luxurious painters' problem. We also agreed that the best each form of language can do is to point, usually to another form of language. Frank O'Hara's poem, 'Why I'm Not a Painter' (or is it 'Sardines and Oranges?') came to mind. Then I said some weird shit about deep fakes and living in a time when even seemingly empirical evidence can't be trusted.

Some silence happens.

A frozen tree falls apart in the distance as the forest devours itself.

We each share our stories of trees falling on us during thunderstorms.

What do you call something that is sublime, when today that word just no longer does the job? It's tethered to another time and sensibility now.

We need new words.

The old ones won't do.

Maybe the problem I'm having, I tell David, is that I don't know what *my* art is even supposed to answer to anymore. My host's name is David Wood. He probably tried to say something insightful at that moment, but I plowed right through because I already knew I wanted to spout off absurdly about how art was about '*god*' and that *god*

is this ever-evolving, transitional presence to which we reluctantly or unknowingly answer. And what the hell is the higher power that I'm supposed to honor and subscribe to today? Is it really Individualism, Capitalism and Consumerism!? Eeesh! Is the world just a digitized mall - is it just the 90s on mobile - where's the EXIT sign?! Are Google, Tesla, Amazon and Alibaba my gods? Or is the "I" greater than the whole? I believe, or hope rather, that I only said some of this out loud. Apparently, I save my true crazy for the written word. It's hard not to feel like I'm writing a manifesto out here- alone- the cabin- these thoughts- all these words.



Fig. 3 *Low-Cal-Zip* or *Hearth* outside the cabin at Yellow Bird, Woodbury, TN at dusk.

David rode away on his tractor.

The deer left soon after.

Back at the cabin, I stare at the pile of books I decided to bring while still in Brooklyn, before driving into the South's worst ice storm in several decades. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* sits near the top. Half the book is endnotes- endless notes of all the other things of note one needs to read to build some form of comprehensible context. I think back to my initial frustrations when reading Donna Haraway's writing. The language slows me down. The form is not skimmable. I have to sit with and consider each phrase and each word. I have to relearn reading to understand her thoughts. Modernity is slick and slippery. It has leaned hard into endless notions of progress with no endnotes- just everything-more-and-faster and faster-more-everything -plunge forward- don't look back. No need to stay with the trouble, is the message. Accumulate all you can and if there is a problem, throw your shit at it and run *faster*. We no longer slow down well. We don't value slowing down. We strive for an ever more frictionless existence. We have apps to inject our minds with all a book has to offer in just minutes. Haraway's words are particular and often unfamiliar. New words are needed so new ways of seeing and new ways of thinking and new ways of being can be realized.

What I now value most in Haraway's work is that friction, that invitation to slow down and process alternative possibilities. Imagining and building a new world will not be quick and easy. "Reworlding," as Haraway terms it, will require sympoiesis⁴ and symbiogenesis as we learn to live with "the critters."⁵ The critters have always been

⁴ Page 58 (Haraway) "Sympoiesis is a simple word; it means "making with." Nothing makes itself; nothing is really autopoietic or self organizing." I'm not there yet, but I'm trying.

⁵ Ibid., p. 169. "Critters" is the first footnote Haraway offers in *Staying With the Trouble*- "*Critters* is an American everyday idiom for varmints of all sorts. Scientists talk of their "critters" all the time; and so do ordinary people all over the U.S., but perhaps especially in the South. The taint of "creatures" and "creation" does not stick to "critters"; if you see such a semiotic barnacle, scrape it off. In this book, "critters" refers promiscuously to microbes, plants, animals, humans and nonhumans and sometimes even machines."

here - some have become more visible than others in recent times. We can now name those that we can see. I'm reminded of a recent conversation with a friend about science fiction. She made the observation that we're at a point of convergence, a point where science fiction can no longer be imagined and produced fast enough to escape the threshold of scientific modes of articulating and visualizing the world as we understand it. So now, perhaps the real and the imaginary have folded into one another more so than ever.



Fig. 4. Detail of a critter from *Slow-Set-Sun-Rise*

Optics & Visions & Sightings

In my youth, encounters with Bigfoot, Nessie UFOs and pasty, almond-eyed aliens were commonly reported in the news, tabloids and shows like *Unsolved Mysteries*. Biblical portraits regularly manifest themselves on toast. Crop fields were ET's canvas and Elvis was alive and living it up in Bermuda- or was he a pastor in Arkansas? I forget now. My memory, on par with the crude and pixelated video quality of the time, has grown still fuzzier. Bulky camcorders were fairly expensive and images were near impossible to capture in the night's low light, when most of these happenings

occurred. Other lifeforms drifting through the multiverse aside, science and the lack of empirical evidence would suggest that these other phenomena are invented or faked.

Recording devices have become relatively tiny, cheap, ubiquitous and of substantially better quality over the past two decades. An old filmmaking trick is shooting day-for-night. Today's newest iPhone can nearly expose night-for-day. Smartphones are nestled in most back pockets. Images are easily captured, shared and disseminated. Still, these stories have dwindled in frequency. A sort of trust, or faith, is required for a story to be accepted as true. A certain inherent sense that any image might be false, yet look 'so real', might be enough to make these occurrences fade away. In the past we had just enough information to feed our imaginations - to suspend disbelief and have faith in the possibility that these mythical creatures might roam the earth with us or that a god-like human couldn't possibly just die on the toilet one evening like a mere mortal. Or, perhaps as we've become better at recording, the mythical creatures have become better at hiding. The pixel resolution of space-time deteriorates when zoomed in on and these creatures seem to hide in the residual fuzz.

In *The Future of Nostalgia*, Svetlana Boym observes that "Modern nostalgia is a mourning for the impossibility of mythical return, for the loss of an enchanted world with clear borders and values, it could be a secular expression of spiritual longing, a nostalgia for an absolute, a home that is both physical and spiritual, the edenic unity of time and space before entry into history. The nostalgic is looking for a spiritual addressee. Encountering silence, he looks for memorable signs, desperately misreading them."⁶

⁶Boy, Svetlana. *The Future of Nostalgia*, p. 8.

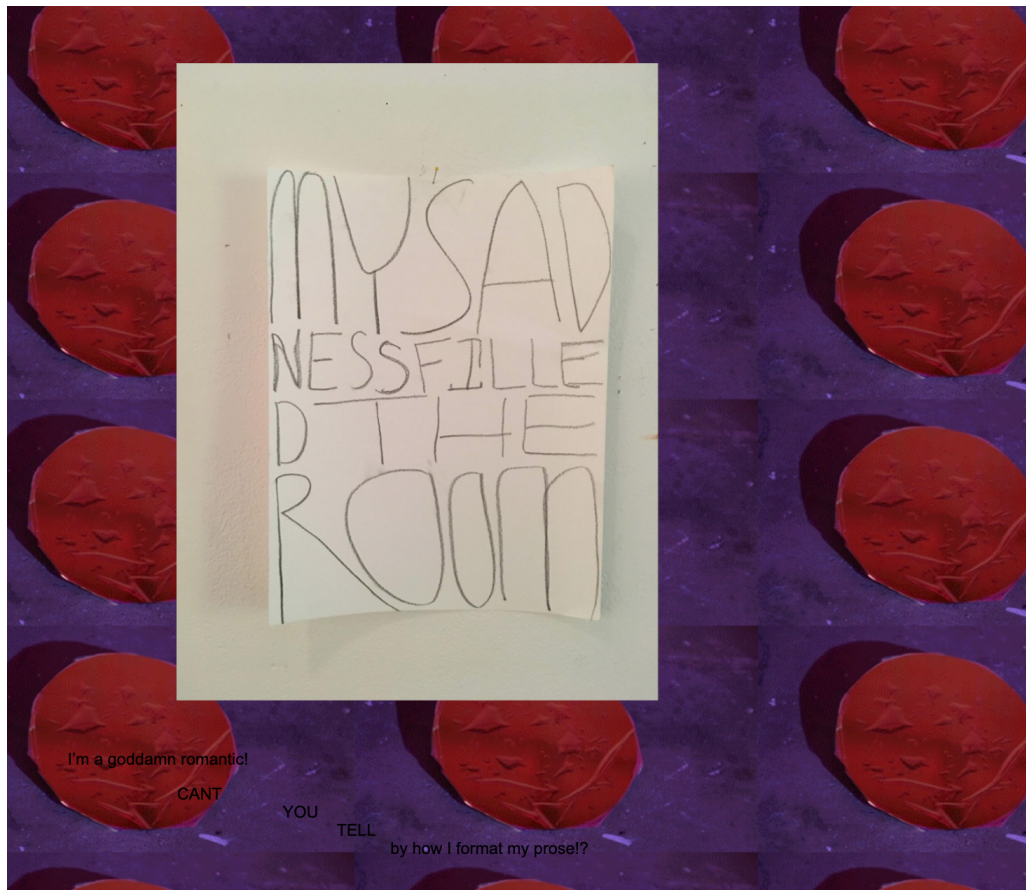


Fig.5. Screenshot from <http://sobeautifulithurts.com>
Drawing of a quote from *Super Sad True Love Story* by Gary Shteyngart

“Shit,” whispers a quiet voice in my head as I feel explicitly implicated here, reflecting back on years of searching for meaning only to find myself entrenched in another mumbling, illegible form of language.

I love painting dearly.

But I no longer understand it - if I ever did, that is.

I’m not even certain that this monitor you’re reading this
‘paper’ on, is not a painting too.

ze(n)d
 :: Z E D E N D ::
 :: Z E D E N D ::
 ZENEND:::ZEDEND
 N3Z
 ZEND

This modern nostalgia- an odd occurrence- seemingly a homesickness for a time and place that was never experienced yet is clearly enough recorded, archived and idealized so that it *feels* re/visitable. Cultural mark-making accelerated beyond humankind's temporal boundaries and is now seemingly consolidating and reconsidering each location and thought that was so rapidly excavated and annotated in the realm of 'isms' and 'posts'. The pixels continue to blur. The enchanted world may have never existed but either way the loss and yearning for it is still there - still felt - another new void - the phantom limb of unattainable utopias.



Fig. 6.

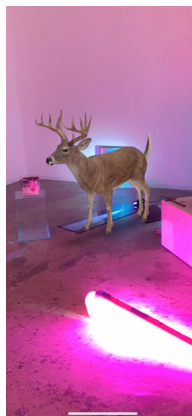


Fig. 7. [Video Link](#)



Fig. 8. [Video Link](#)

.Light-Fast-Low

Or: Trying Hard to Stay Rad and Find My Self

On August 30th 2018, after a year of being in NYC, I made the call. Keano, the pervasively-subway-advertised-psychic-medium, answered. I told Keano that I wanted to make some paintings and proceeded to ask my advertised free question:

AF: ..so, yeah, what should I paint?

K: I'm sensing from your voice and from your energy that you should use earthtones. Do you know what those are?

AF: Yes. I'm familiar.

K: You need to use earthtones- you have to release your spirit! Earthtones will free your spirit!

AF: Oh- okay- wow- hmmm well, I'd like that- to free my spirit, I mean. Can you tell me more- like what to paint? Is there an image or something?

K: I'm very busy and must go- but I told you already, earthtones will free your spirit. Start with earthtones.

I'm trying here, but quite obviously have yet to free this damn spirit of mine. Several weeks after the call I purchased a vaporwave "STAY RAD" velcro patch from Amazon.com's 'Recommendations for You' section. I can only assume that this suggestion, based on my previous search and purchase history, is an algorithmically perfect reflection of my self.⁷

⁷ This text, titled Light-Fast-Low, along with a group of corresponding works were extrapolated from a series of calls, conversations and visits with psychics that took place in the summer of 2018.

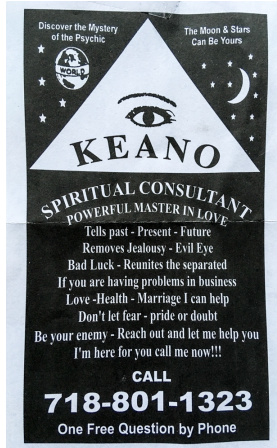


Fig. 9. Keano flyer



Fig. 10. *Light-Fast-Low*, 2018 installation shot

Lightfastness in pigment is gauged on a scale from 1 to 5 (or i to v). The lower the number, the more susceptible the color is to fading away when exposed to various lighting conditions. Newer formulations of the often brighter, glowing colors have a lower lightfastness. *The flame that burns twice as bright, burns half as long.*⁸ Keano never offered me any guidance towards imagery. Despite all efforts, the project failed to reveal any hidden secrets of the world or of *my self*. But in all fairness to Keano, I failed to heed the call for “earthtones” - those dirt-derived pigments originally dug from Italian terroir never met my brush. I tried. I tried to rationalize with myself that day-glow, fluorescent, neon and monitor-projected-blue-light was the new earth tone palette - that those alarm-inducing, manufactured pigments and photonically delivered ads by Google, Amazon and Instagram-by-Facebook beam into my eyes through my Macbook retina display could reasonably be considered today’s earthtones.

Alas, still a failed go at it. I know. Real earth tones are generally quite lightfast while photons just keep on moving.

⁸Commonly attributed to Lao Tzu and/or the Tao Te Ching according to the internet- although this does not seem accurate. It is said in the movie *Blade Runner* by Dr. Tyrell to the bioengineered replicant, Roy Batty at 01:25:01 in *The Final Cut*.

.. and moving on.

I entered the void - emptied my work - focused on nothing and nothingness. I tried to, unironically, chant to myself “do by not doing!”⁹ as I paced through the studio. I’ve been carrying around the same copy of *Tao Te Ching* for over twenty years now. I’m an Aries. Balance does not come naturally to me. And now, neither does imagery.

Pacing through the studio I ask myself why am I even in a studio and not in a tree, a forest or a cave? Again, with these silly questions- what does this all answer to? Is the goal one of those sterile, crispy [white cube gallery](#) spaces - is that what is sacred now? Is that where *god* is? Jesus, do I need to start a podcast, hire a PR firm and get cooler pants? Is the point, the point-of-sales?! Is the ritual an act of buying and the sacred prop the merch? Is art’s highest good now to be a store of value like seashells, gold and bitcoin?



Fig.11. Monochrome Merch Painting

⁹ “Doing by not doing” or “**Wuwei**, Chinese: “nonaction”; literally, “no action” in [Chinese philosophy](#) .. and particularly among the 4th- and 3rd-century-BCE philosophers of early [Daoism](#) (*daoja*), the practice of taking no action that is not in accord with the natural course of the [universe](#).”

The Cabin, Day 1

February 12th, 2021

“For what reason does the transcendental deduction, the purpose of which is the elucidation of transcendence, assume the form of a *quaestio juris*?”

Martin Heidegger

Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics



Fig. 12. *Captcha; to The Studio*, photo: Tom Morrill early 2019 from 205 Hudson, 2nd floor

After driving fifteen hours through a snowstorm and a mediocre night's sleep in a Walmart parking lot, I passed a wooden sign inscribed *Tyger Tyger* and entered the cabin for the first time. After a quick look around, I approached the bookshelf, selected a

book that reminded me of a couple of close friends, Olivia Divecchia and Tom Morrill. Both have been formative to my growth as a human, a thinker and an artist over the past several years. I urgently wanted to find meaning in something - something that would help clarify this endeavour- this art-thing we do - something to just tell me who (or what?) the Hell my god is! I opened the book at random, swirled my finger through the air dramatically and slammed it down blindly. I decided that where it landed would be a key to the answers I seek. It landed on the above passage. A question. I googled “*quaestio juris*” - it means “criminal inquisition” or “trial under Roman law.” I came to realize, once again, that for me at least, art is an exploratory approach for the imagination to conceive of possibilities, not a vehicle to deliver or dictate answers.

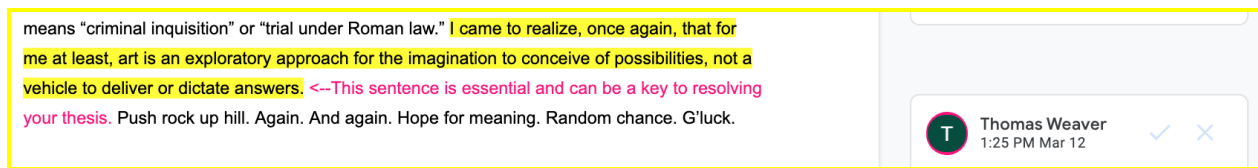


Fig. 13. Screenshot from earlier draft of this document.¹⁰

Mo' Monochrome Mo' Problems

After what I now see was gambling on guidance from free psychics in hopes of making meaningful art, discernible imagery vaporized into mostly silvery monochromes. Before the 20th century, monochrome meant 'wall color without pattern'. Artists later made a whole style of it.

¹⁰ My advisor, Tom Weaver, tries to understand what I might be trying to understand.



Fig. 14. *Transitory Dust: Entropic Edge*, 2018-2020

I wanted to be as invested in Nothing as possible.

All my energy and efforts were focused on Nothing.

Monochrome seemed like a reasonable re/start. How much nothingness could one achieve, I wondered? This is not a new idea. Barnett Newman wanted “to start from scratch, to paint as if painting never existed before.”¹¹ Proclaiming that, “The image we produce is the self-evident one of revelation, real and concrete, that can be understood by anyone who will look at it without the nostalgic glasses of history.”¹² Can one reduce to Nothingness without first encountering, processing and passing through Oneness? I had convinced myself that If I earnestly attempted this exercise that actual meaning might manifest. I would make a lot of nothing. Problems arose quite quickly here. The condition of an environment is absorbed by a monochrome. A monochrome has so many elements that we can name. A monochrome is a picture and an image. Everything is more obviously present in relationship to One or Zero. And it turns out that it takes a lot to make nothing. It really starts to feel like this canon of Western art that I’m trying to wiggle out of has just been a regular compiling of hijacked Eastern thoughts and modes of constructing visual relationships: style, language, emptied of meaning, can meaning come from nothing, from nowhere? I should meditate more. Do I need a coach so I can do it better? It is my understanding that scientific modes of registering what exists in the universe and ‘around us’ are only able to see and articulate somewhere in the range of 3% to 15% of what actually *is*. Most of what is, we cannot name and we cannot see. We often call it dark,¹³ gray or fuzzy.

¹¹ Leja, Michael. ‘*Adam* and Newman’s Beginnings’

¹² “The Ides of Art, Six Opinions on What is Sublime in Art?”, *Tiger’s Eye* (New York), No.6 (15 December 1948), p. 53.

¹³ “Dark Energy, Dark Matter | Science Mission Directorate.” *Science.Nasa.Gov*, 2020, science.nasa.gov/astrophysics/focus-areas/what-is-dark-energy.



[Video Link](#)

Fig. 15. Ctrl-Alt-Delete (Monochrome in two colors). Video 'How to Turn on a Painting'

Chrome File Edit View History Bookmarks People Tab Window Help

Andrew Foster - Hauser & Wirth

vip-hauserwirth.com/art-fairs/andrew-foster/

HAUSER & WIRTH Gallery Exhibitions Online Exhibitions On View

Andrew Foster in conversation with Joachim Pissarro

Joachim Pissarro: Is this one installation or several pieces?

Andrew Foster: Lately, I think of the work as being modular or dynamic—like a constellation in flux. Each element infects the next, regularly shifting and in search of a stable form or internal logic. It gets close at times, but part of me feels like the work just wants to be at the edge of collapse, to cascade, and I'm just futzing about trying to maintain it while recharging its batteries.

Joachim Pissarro: This one looks like a lazy Susan type of thing.

Read less -

Andrew Foster: These spinning things are made of little worm gear motors running on nine-volt rechargeable batteries, scrap pieces of plexi and this fancy dichroic film I initially found at Canal Plastics. I bought this rubbery, gunky tape stuff called Nano Tape from an Instagram ad and use it a lot in these works. Buying algorithmically suggested stuff has become common to my recent working manner. Most of the work is taped or zip-tied together- sometimes tacked- rarely I'll use a screw or clamp. Everything feels like gravity alone could pull it all apart, all the while these things struggle to just keep going.

Joachim Pissarro: And what is this, Andrew?

Andrew Foster: This painting turns on. It has an invisible button, behind or inside the surface, kinda like a smartphone's touchscreen.

Joachim Pissarro: So it's a painting, though, it's not an object, you call it a painting?

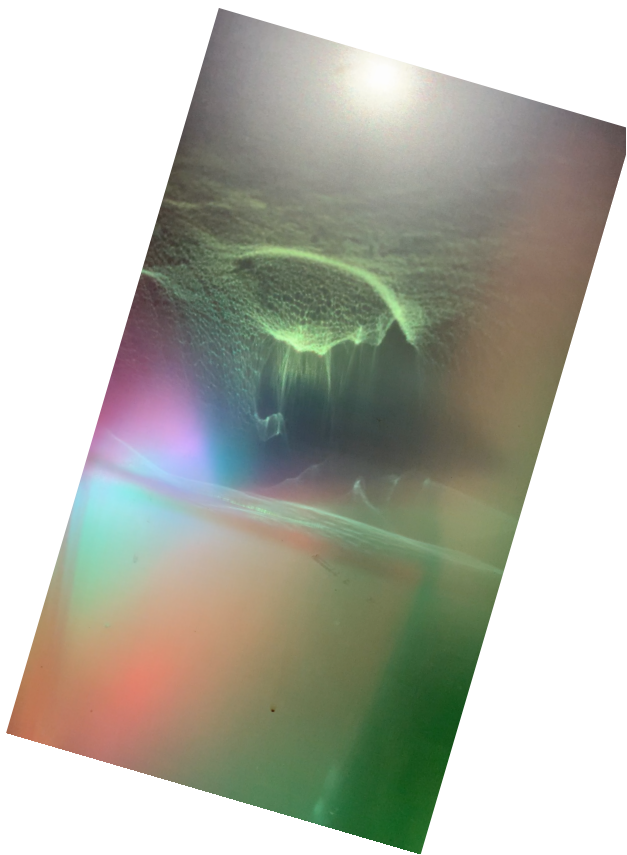
Andrew Foster: Yeah, hmmm, I guess I did say that. It's on the wall, has tacks on the side and a paint-like skin stretched over wood. I think this one might be a painting thing- it's in the image of a painting. Jannis Kounellis considered himself a painter and constructor of images his whole life- I feel similar, but clear categorization doesn't feel so important either.

Fig. 16. Convo w/ Joachim Pissarro, [Link](#)

A certain low-frequency-
lethargy set in.

We were too busy
pretending to be too busy
to feel it.

We were too busy,
too fogged by anxieties,
to see the cliff's edge
upon which we poured
our foundation.



Before the virus
when saying
“before the virus”
sounded like science fiction
or maybe just something
that might happen elsewhere-
but certainly
not here.
That was all
Before

Fig. 17. Still: *yehnezdam*

[Video Link](#)

Back to the Studio & Into the Fuzz

My first attempt to write this paper was plagued by a violent and relentless silence that eventually blanketed all of NYC. It vacated the streets and spread a general fear of human encounters. This silence would be regularly disrupted by my roommate's drumset, an ambulance or the neighbor throwing patio chairs in their backyard to let off some pent up energy at 4 a.m. The term "new norm" proliferated as most hoped that we might form another set of rules soon, restructuring daily routines. Perhaps paradigm shift is a more accurate term to consider, just a little more unsettling. If the underlying terms of our reality are actually in question, what does anything prior to this moment mean - where do we find and generate value - again, why am I writing this paper, getting an MFA, making art and asking these questions - yes, again, who or what is my god? Will the "god-space" be a choice or a directive?

After the lockdown, I had to confront what it meant to return to past places and what working or being or making things in those places might mean now. With an abrupt critical distance that could not have been constructed nor self-imposed, I returned to the studio, back to the future or the past or something like that, to visit familiar things that sat untouched and unchanged for months. Things I had made with my own hands - all of it now seemingly emptied of meaning. "Shit," my internal voice whispered again. "I did it," I thought to myself - this is all nothing now- it's all finally about Nothingness. And this meant everything. It all looked the same, like the photos I had stored on my phone and frequently referenced as I tried to articulate what it was all about from afar as I paced about in my backyard. It occurred to me that this work, still recently made, was now in

fact from another era. Everything needed to be reconsidered. We need new thoughts and we need new words.



Fig. 18. Studio Study: Projection and Stuff

If we are entering the transitional abyss of a paradigm shift, it began before the virus. The virus will just be viewed as the trigger event that has cascaded our precariously propped belief systems and understanding into a random heap of stuff to sift through. Stuff? Art is stuff - mostly at least. In the current age of dis/information-data-image-knowledge-sensory-overload, art has seemingly exhausted the pursuit of any shared doctrine. Mark Fisher, aka K-Punk, notes that “Capitalism is what is left when beliefs have collapsed at the level of ritual or symbolic elaboration, and then all

that is left is the consumer-spectator, trudging through the ruins and the relics.”¹⁴ What may be different now that Fisher could not have anticipated in 2009 when he wrote *Capitalist Realism*, one year prior to Instagram’s launch, is that every actor within a capitalist society is now a potential creative content generator- and that most individuals are deeply vested in forming, streaming and exporting their own visual output, their own projection of self. There is no more trudging. Ruins and relics have been absorbed as selfie backdrops and liking, shopping, swiping, tweeting, posting and reposting are the new rituals. And art, naturally, followed.

Where there was once location, or object-specific *aura*,¹⁵ there is now a decentralized *buzz*.¹⁶ The *buzz* is dependent on the compiling of distributed images and actions reaching a swarm-like critical mass, it constructs a newly visible image within an infinitely plastic reality that can be reconfigured or scaled at any moment. It is legible and illegible at once; static. The *buzz* is a new constant within the schizophrenic inundation of high-saturation image-proliferation and dependent upon the culmination of an ‘event’ still. The potential of an eventless *buzz* grows as everything becomes everywhere at once¹⁷- everything happening at once within the digital realm. The eventless *buzz* may lead to the vacant and static *fuzz*¹⁸ - a low, empty hum.

Maybe “the fuzz” for artists is that often glorified space where making becomes a trance-like, intuitive mode or where that godly creator myth comes from. Tech and self-help gurus call it a ‘flow state.’ I wonder if the notion of this frictionless, *intuitive* space functions to bring artists and all humans into a mind-numbing production mode

¹⁴ Fisher, Mark. *Capitalist Realism*. P. 4

¹⁵ Benjamin, Walter. *Mechanical Reproduction*

¹⁶ Joselit, David. *After Art*. p. 16.

¹⁷Not a novel idea. A simple google search offers a movie title set for production and touted as an “interdimensional action film” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Everything_Everywhere_All_at_Once

¹⁸ My proposed continuation pattern; aura to buzz to fuzz.

more so than a contemplative space, and if so, the implications of being physically untethered, floating data particulates?

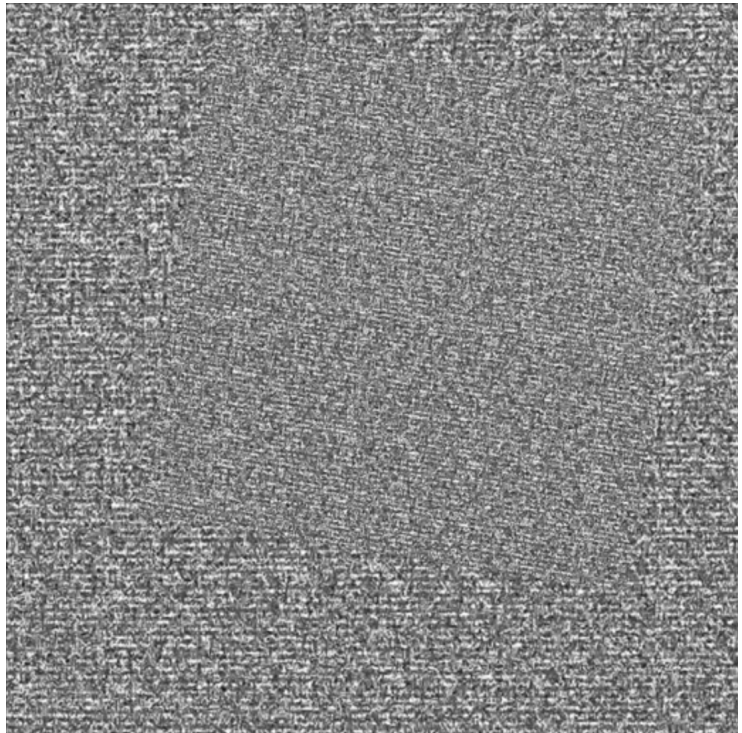


Fig. 19.

Suprematist_Composition_Fuzz_on_Fuzz.jpg (non-nft version)

Up n' Upper: Atoms and Ascension

The lived world is formed and understood through the stories we tell and carry forward. Art answers up - it tracks the evolution of the ever-shifting gods of its time and the narratives tethered to their prevailing value systems.



Fig. 20. Up n' Upper, LED essential oil diffusers and canvas tote bags, 2019- 2020.

[Video Link](#)

'God-space' (with a lowercase 'g' please), a term I'm doubtfully the first to come up with (and I'm truly hesitant to be so pretentious with half-assed coined terms - but seemingly complicit enough to continue with it as well), is what I consider those things contemplated beyond the "known knowns"¹⁹ - those things and energies of which we can question, postulate or imagine that are not yet defined within terms of empirical evidence, not yet named nor collectively accepted as terms of our shared reality. It's the higher power we answer to knowingly or unconsciously. It's the imagination- the capacity to invent- to think, feel or stumble something into existence -to reform the world's clutter into a soft retreat perhaps .. or at least take a step in that direction. One of my favorite stories is how the atom, the building block of matter, was fairly accurately

¹⁹ Rumsfeld via Žižek in *Event*

conceived in 400 bce in ancient Greece. Thousands of years before atoms were observable or detectable and eventually harnessed and splittable by humans. Democritus put forward the notion that there were these tiny, invisible particles raining down as if affected by gravity - along the way they would clump up to form solid matter- objects, humans, plants and all the crap humans made with what the clumpy earth stuff had to offer.



Fig. 21. Transitory Dust: Metallic Air - Urethane, aluminum dust and fiberglass screen mesh, 2019

It makes sense that the formation of the material world would be conceived as the weight binding fleshy human bodies and souls to earth, rather than allowing them to simply ascend to one of the many heavenly orgies so many stories flaunt. So it is the mind that aims to ascend perhaps? Sisyphus, like Elvis, was a king- not a god - a

clump of gunky matter, damned to eternal awareness for trying to live as an immortal on Earth - for trying to beat death and live as a god.

Today, we still aim to escape or ascend - to live free - to live our best lives - to meditate the best and use the best meditation app or meditate like our celeb mentors-TM - meditate like David Lynch - get transcendental af! - transcend into the realm of mythological creatures. We're inventing new creatures to fit the role. It's February 18th, 2021. NASA has just landed the rover named Perseverance on Mars at The Octavia E. Butler Landing Site. Elon Musk wishes to beat out Bezos to, with or without a community, arrive on Mars and live there- to continue the grandness, the tech-minded trend of endlessly colonizing beyond one's reach. Now all while co-opting modernist utopian ideals along the race of never ending accumulation. We have emergent currencies and markets which seem to only go up in value with no correlation to their generated value or utility. Markets and charts are a representation of today's value systems; 'corrections' aside they, for now at least, only ascend. We no longer bury our valuables and our secrets in coffee cans in the backyard or in a coffin or sarcophagus with our dead. It's all in the cloud now--suspended, decentralized particulates--vaporized and password protected by hopefully *trusted* third parties. We are fixated on spiraling our way beyond Tiepolo's crispy azure heavens and to the Moon! Meanwhile, back on earth, where we are to aspire to earth tones and other earthly delights, we keep rolling that boulder up the hill- trying to spin a new story.



Fig. 22. The Fight Between Carnival and Lent, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, oil on panel, 1559

The Medieval era was in a gravitationally aware crisis or at least well aware of the inescapable human body and its bond to this earth. The sky barely exists and when it does it's more often gray than blue. There is no Heavenly escape offered. The images they've left us seem to express the impossibility of the Heavens and the unlikelihood for humans to reach them. People are all seemingly squoshed and smooshed flat into the earth's and paintings' surfaces.

Today, we have live 3-d wireframe, rigid, skinned and ready to animate scans and there is no horizon line. Gravity's limits have dissolved in our avatar world, As we see past the blue of the sky and stare into the oily black vacuum of outer space. We imagine our intergalactic futures and make entertainment out of our pending problems.

Photons

Painting is reducible to a projection into one's eyes. Plato's Cave and cave paintings from some 10,000 to 20,000 years ago converge. With or without pigment, both depict a perception of reality based on how photons enter a dark space. Painting is technology. Ultimately it is the manipulation of photons by whatever means necessary. Projections, or any form of manipulated photons, are paintings. Often artists choose to employ or experiment with the most contemporaneous tools and techniques for manipulating light to generate an image, space or sensation. Paint itself is no longer needed in the making of paintings - but it still often works well in the process and in the material world.

Sciences such as optics, biology, chemistry and all other disciplines used in describing the world as we understand it have all been part of a mutually generative relationship in how we attempt to register the experience of the world. Light is projected into one's eyes. An image is formed. The mind processes images in an attempt to organize logic and reason in the world. If an image is not formed, logic and order may be overwritten. Without an image, there is only energy, energy that is absorbed and processed viscerally. Articulate language and recording devices are not yet equipped to register and translate the experiential qualities - they can chart in terms of wavelengths and frequencies. Here, when the visceral is nudged at, it is not the mind that is alerted, but the soul, spirit or self. The emergent religiosity and spirituality of light and energy is a recurring event- for some, god is light - for others, god has no image - and others see god in everything. It now seems, based on experiments at CERN's Hadron Collider²⁰, that light can be turned to matter and back again.

²⁰ <https://newscenter.lbl.gov/2020/09/23/lhc-creates-matter-from-light/>

Some Rituals

Walking.

Everyday for a couple of weeks, SiSi Chen and I walked. We met most days at Grand Army Plaza. Most days we had our 65-80L backpacking packs and often empty suitcases on wheels. It was early March. It was 2020. There was no lockdown yet. But we walked. Walking was a form of avoiding. Walking was liberation. I'm trying to just write about walking here - but it was much more - it was self preservation, a gift, a concern, a fear, a mission, a hope, avoidance and time to think and to process. I wonder how Frank O'hara might write about this type of walking- or this New York- or the colors he never saw. The picture of nothing happening is fairly empty. I wrote 'to process' and it meant so much to me just there- that moment- a year of life has passed since this walking. A year of sitting, post-walking. I can not articulate it. The thoughts are a freight train with locked, silent brakes approaching a tight turn. We walked. We walked because it wasn't the other way to the studio. It took us hours and miles in each direction. We walked because we could not just sit. Not yet. To stay with the trouble you need to first slow down the momentum of that *more-faster-now*. Walking was a start to slower- it was closer to sitting- closer to staying.

We filled our bags with the past each day and carried them back to our homes. The past is not a bad thing, but I think we've both learned to shed a lot of that weight since. Despite the uncertainty we wanted to keep the momentum going- to keep making and thinking along the same lines as before. It's not all different now. I can't speak for

SiSi, but I'm pretty sure, a year ago, we each carried home some sense of false certainty.

Gathering.

Stuff. Sourcing, collecting, acquiring, accumulating, buying, stealing, taking, finding, stumbling upon, coming up, getting, grabbing, taking. Stuff.

Pacing.

This may be a subcategory of futzing.

Futzing is not a category.

Swiping.

A book has an index. I have an index finger. A book's index guides one to specific and key content in a book. My index finger guides me into the abyss of pixelated information with no key - with no specific content.

Pacing.

Again.

Because it is what I do.

But it is nothing-

But it seems to happen between and/or during
most things that happen.

Perhaps pacing is rhythm-
or a form of meditation- or maybe I'm an electron orbiting an unknown nucleus.

Arranging.

Arranging is the aesthetic act. Whistler, perhaps the figurehead of Aestheticism, knew this well enough to get to the point and title his work as such, 'Arrangement..'.
Flowers, affairs, meetings and business must all be arranged -
editing/ editor in film - "the final creative act" from Tom Morrill, whether or not those are his words?...doesn't matter-

It is the search for structure - it is the beginning of structure.

Entropy cannot happen without it.

Staying.

Sitting.

Processing.

Backyard Beacon

In the backyard I paced, kicked stones, set up analogue projections and took them down each night. I repeated it again each evening. This is where the routine that became Sisyphus Lounge began- in the backyard, out of a need to connect with and speak to anyone who might be somewhere in the line of sight. It started with two small, embracing stones (Fig. 26.) my roommate found in the sea of seemingly same-y stones.

About 1,010,000 results (0.41 seconds)

Dictionary

futz



futz

/fəts/

verb INFORMAL · NORTH AMERICAN

waste time; idle or busy oneself aimlessly.

"mother **futzed around** in the kitchen"

- deal with (something) in a trifling way; fiddle with.

"Mick was **futzing around** with his camera equipment"

Fig. 23.



Fig. 24. [Video Link](#)



Fig. 25.

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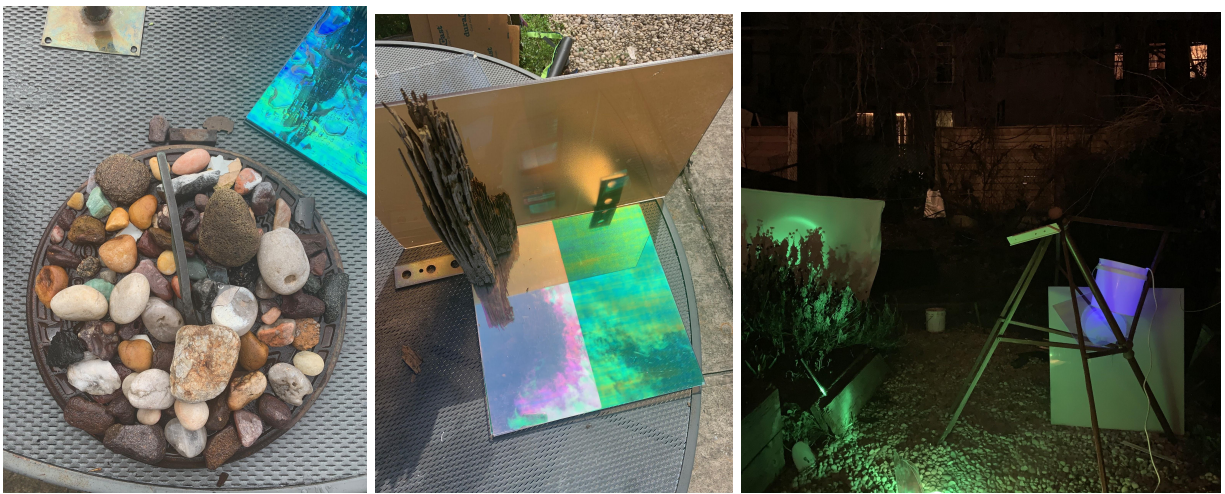
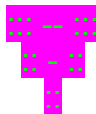


Fig. 26. - Fig. 34.



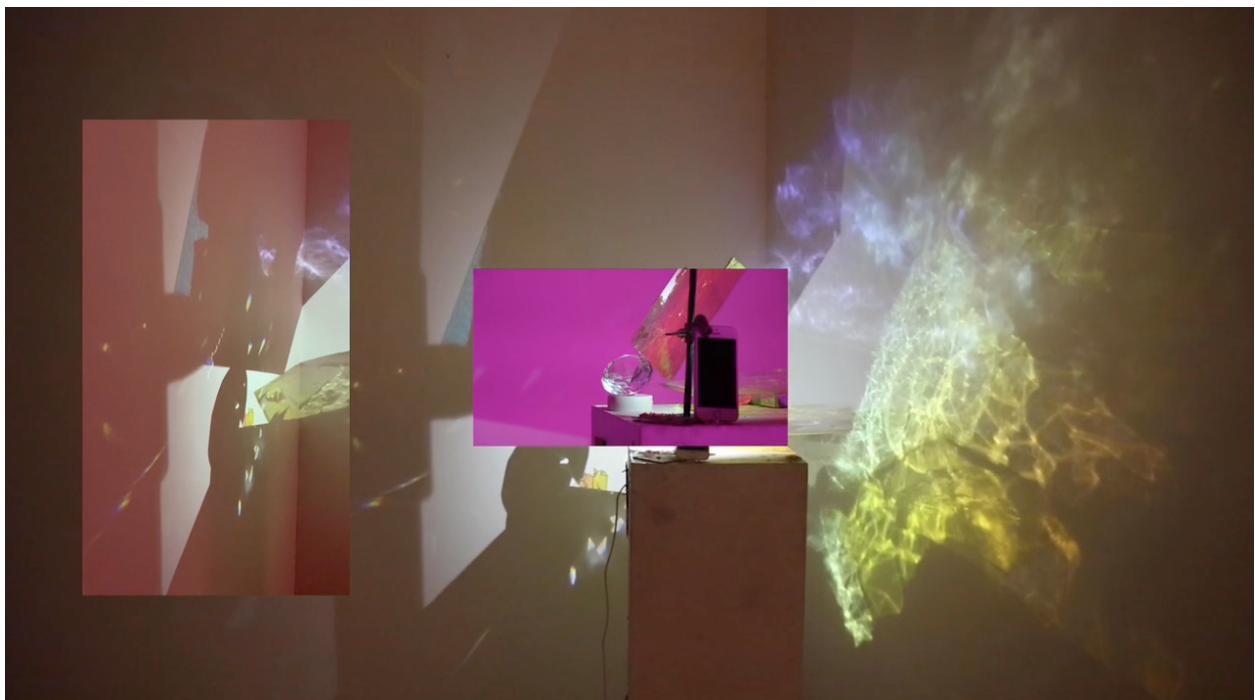
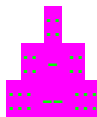


Fig. 35. & 36. Video Still from ongoing video project 'Futzing about Sisyphus Lounge' 2020 [Video Link](#)

Sisyphus Lounge²¹

Posted by @i_am_the_andrew to Instagram on 9/20/2020:

Sisyphus Lounge

For ten days, maybe it's even twelve or fifteen days now- I don't quite recall, I've ridden my bike to the gallery. Each day I sift through the past year's worth of things made, found, accumulated and purchased- things planned for, planned on, hoped for, considered, abandoned and ultimately reconsidered. I filled the gallery space with these things - these things I once hoped would reveal meaning to me. I lovingly kick them around, nudged them, arranged them and rearranged them. Kicking stones. This morning it all settled into place - a moment that made sense. The central element of the space is my bike's headlamp, now used to skip photons across the dirty floor and reflect off of some sort of dust covered, high-tech-plasticity-alien-like object. The cool, sterile materials somehow feel warm to me here. The headlamp is old now- it used to be a good light - it still shines bright but now the lithium-ion battery drains rapidly. Much of the installation as it sits today is run on rechargeable batteries. Much of my day is spent charging and swapping out the batteries- maintaining the space's twilight that hovers at the edge of a near hectic haze -- so much energy expended just to keep things unchanged. People stop by and we talk about the work, or life, or whatever- it changes the work - slowly. I want it to change faster - to know something new - for that immediate gratification I'm still so used to- for it to reveal an unknown or to hear a story from a visitor that I could have never imagined. I want to continue reimagining what this space could be.

Each day I plan to return to the gallery and continue rearranging the space- maybe even empty it and start from scratch. I feel satisfied with how it is now. I don't think it's time to feel satisfied with how things are. Each day I'll ride back to the gallery and try again -- maybe more visitors will stop by and help make sense of it all.

Most days I'll be futzing about from 1p-8p (or 11pm) but DM me if you'd like to stop in so we can make sure the gallery is open for you.

Much love.

A

²¹ <https://www.instagram.com/p/CFYdSVcF2ua/?igshid=1aqyv0xhatr2>



Fig. 37. A conversation: Olivia Divecchia pacing about Sisyphus Lounge at 205 Hudson Gallery

The Phenomenology of Spirit and Other Audio Books:

fragmented memories

a constellation

an explosion

transitory dust

an implosion

ephemeral ~~constructs~~

a meeting place

kicking stones

the mall

Sisyphus Lounge is not a constant. It was not conceived as a work of art. It is the result of activities, experimentations and encounters. I did not think of Sisyphus, Camus or much, really - well not much beyond those naturally melodramatic and existential inclinations that seem to be resurfacing these days. The whole cannot be documented nor experienced at once and the part-to-part interdependency makes defining singular works a mute endeavour. They share photons, energies and vibrations - they breathe together. The act of sifting, trudging and arranging through things in search of some logic that may reveal itself is growing in importance to me. Maybe, with a little working through and a lot of staying with the trouble,²² all this stuff can be lived with differently- an attempt to turn the cool and sterile sting of contemporary objects and spaces into a sort of soft retreat. It's the visitors who do the heaviest lifting. The project was given life by everyone who stopped in as I paced about in the early days and later those who sat with me, masked and exhausted but still wanting and willing to unpack it all. SiSi didn't let the project be an organized display of stuff - she insisted I continuously rethink my approach- especially when it was at risk of regurgitation past modes of presenting. The order we know how to create is not the order we need. I think about Sisi's work with mycelium as a substrate and how mycelium can consume an oil spill as it transforms petroleum into a thriving ecosystem. Or in her work it feeds off the moisture concrete discreetly absorbs. Despite how easy it is to lean cynical, this project helps me believe

²² From introduction to Haraway's *Staying with the Trouble*, "Trouble is an interesting word. It derives from a third-century French verb meaning "to stir up," "to make cloudy," "to disturb." We--all of us on Terra--live in disturbing times, mixed-up times, troubling and turbid times." .. "In urgent times, many of us are tempted to address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe, of stopping something from happening that looms in the future, of clearing away the present and past in order to make futures for coming generations. Staying with the trouble does not require such a relationship to times called the future. In fact, staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of place, times, matters, meanings."

in art's ability to strengthen bonds. Perhaps a room full of relatively simple robots and projections made of what is otherwise junk is a far leap from trying to address a reconciliation with the meme spiral of dystopian reality we're experiencing - but it's a start. I hope.

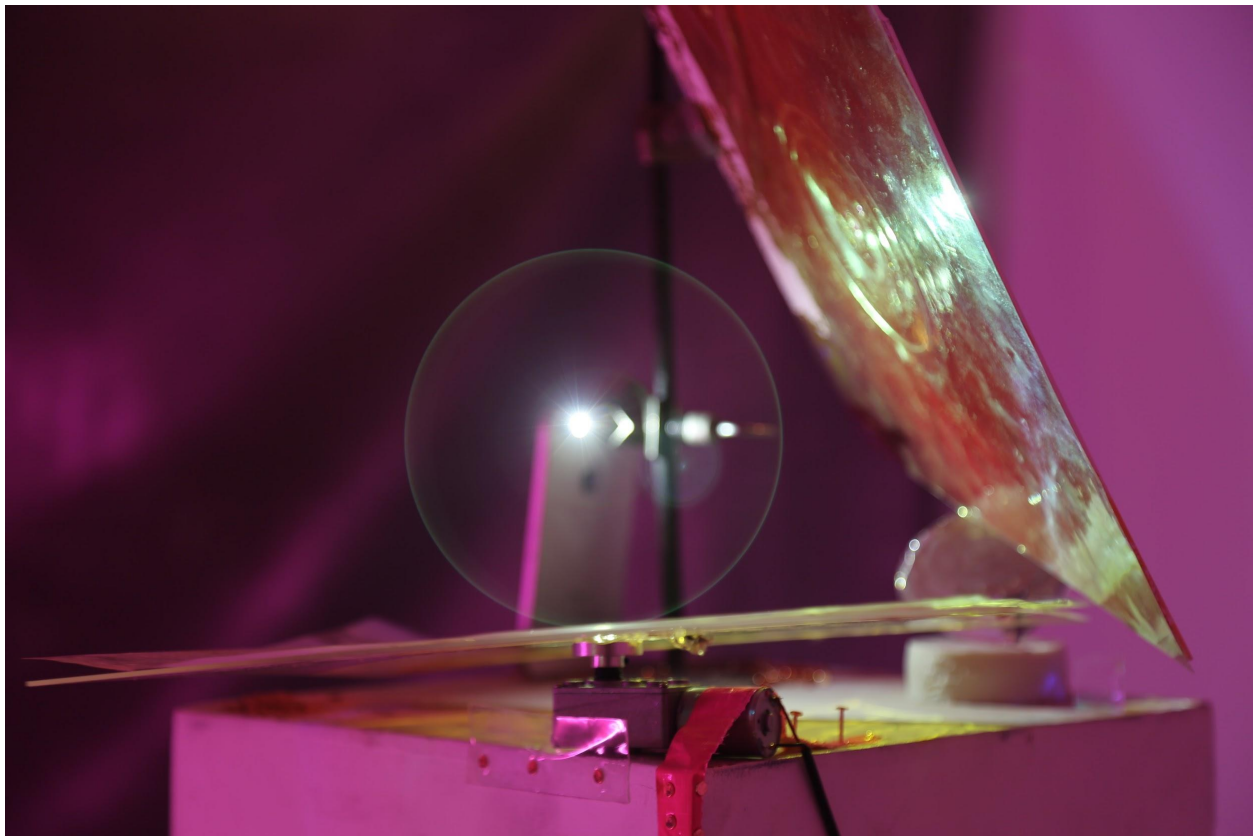


Fig. 38. *The Kiss*, 2019-2020, dims variable

"I know you're out there. I can feel you now. I know that you're afraid. You're afraid of us. You're afraid of change. I don't know the future. I didn't come here to tell you how this is going to end. I came here to tell you how it's going to begin. I'm going to hang up this phone, and then I'm going to show these people what you don't want them to see. I'm going to show them a world without you, a world without rules and controls, without borders or boundaries, a world where anything is possible. Where we go from there, is a choice I leave to you."

-Neo's monologue at the end of *The Matrix*

All the Stuff: Forming Sisyphus Lounge

A Constellation.

The Light.

A pink, dim haze from the ground fills the room- an LED fluorescent tube draped with translucent pink vinyl and balanced on a 'Himalayan' salt rock intended to be used as a livestock salt lick. There is an LED spotlight, an iphone plugged into a charger and always set to flashlight, a lightbox on the floor with film taped to it, a tactical flashlight that shines so crisp and white that it is blue-almost ultra-violet, an internet lightbulb that can do so much but is generally hidden and left off and just a Guston-esque-orb in the rafters, and the light bleeds in from beyond the controllable space. Light carries information. I can't imagine what we will learn from what still lies in the dark. The chargers have an array of tiny indicator lights - they do not illuminate- they only indicate.

Projections.

White walls. Pink haze. The sun sets. The moon. Cycles. Stillness.

The Floor.

Peppered with metallic grey and translucent pink aquarium stones. I'm frequently asked if it's kitty litter. Some areas are piled up while other areas register ghosted drawings that were once made there - attempts to draw sunsets and sunrises that are slowly softened by visitors' uncertain footsteps. The seemingly empty spaces still make small crunches when walked upon- it may be a stone wedged in the tread of your shoe or stray a pixel. Frequently asked if entering is okay - because there is a scattering of stuff on the floor people want to be respectful even though they're unsure if it's art. Most seem to think that you should not walk on art. A child runs across works that are not initially intended to be trampled. Trampling makes the work better. I did not know this. Thank you, Delia. Glitter is on the floor too - the glitter is named Sunset Crystallina from Guerra Paint in LES - the glitter is used as a drawing material - left dry, like sand - in collaboration with one of the simple robots in the room -drawing- they spin from a single point. Each robot appears to have agency. They do have personalities- I did not give them personalities- they just do have personalities. We attempt to draw the sun as it endlessly sets and rises on the floor and in the corner- *slow set sun rise*. The one that draws in the glitter also projects the moon on the wall- it orbits around nothing and across the flat plane. One critter balances itself on a plexi panel- nudging around and exploring the edges of the unbound perimeter- it nudges but never leaves. It is always about to fall but is somehow able to center itself- it is endlessly lucky- it does not know

how to do what it does but never fails. The piece that Delia trampled across- it's like a fallen and graffitied obelisk from Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* - it's a plexi display box that Tyler Christopher Brown dumpster dove and lugged from Chinatown to Hudson and Canal- it housed a blue neon sign advertising "Dr Wang" (I accidentally broke the "Wang" section on and then played with mercury for the first time in my life. That is not part of Sisyphus Lounge). Dust settles. A smoked grey glass shelf gets lightly covered- it lays flat on the ground at an angle- there are someone else's sharpie marks on it and a chip in one corner- this piece of glass and lightly rolled-over piece of dichroic film along with an LED spot light all rest on the ground to create a sunset-esque projection on the south-facing wall. Another light- the tripod-underwater-critter with tactical flashlight and zipties shines onto the fallen space odyssey obelisk and projects an ultraviolet, bioluminescent swiss cheese moon slice on the same wall as the sunset. The floor and wall vibrate and infect one another. The pink glow comes from the floor- that hyper-pink-salt-lamp. A small Sony bluetooth speaker props up a piece of plaster I call *The Universe* due to the universe-like depiction on it. It is shaped similarly to a painter's palette.

Things.

Robots, or 'critters' of sorts, are scattered about- more info above.

The Kiss - a plinth pulled from the trash and drilled out to thread a charging wire through it - light provided by an old iphone's flashlight - a worm gear motor steadily spins at 1 rpm - gunk attaches a 12"x12" piece of dichroic covered plexi - with each rotation it kisses the edge of another piece of film- covered plexi and a puck of Sex Wax. I can watch it forever but can't write more about it.

Vina's evil-eye rests in the pile of stones near the charging station. I have two evil eyes from the homes of family members who have passed away. Until recently I believed that they were the only belongings that came from Cairo with them half a century ago when they left Egypt. It turns out that is not the case. They are just trinkets- but still, for me, they are powerful and a sort of talisman. Poppy stopped in and felt that there was particular value inherent to certain objects- but not all- and that did not come with judgement. She valued and sought the personal. I learned about shedding in those moments. The space was further sparsed down. But there was still extra.

Extra is abundance. There are more things. There is more to shed.

A lucky stone from Emily Janowick. It's one of those things that is both nothing and everything. Those are the only things I need now.

The Walls.

Painted white and received the light.

The contemporary cave.

The Sounds.

Low, empty hums and scratching sounds from the tiny critters and robots. Stones crunching beneath your feet. A rumbling from behind the wall. The elevator door and its ding. Some of this in the room and some recorded and looping from a bluetooth speaker propping up *The Universe*.

The Smells.

There is no kitty litter- some even checked it for scent. But a lingering, crisp scent might find its way from The Kiss or another nearby room. The puck of Sex Wax in The Kiss is scented - but it's not registered in my memory. But that other scent comes from Up n' Upper in the other room. One of the diffusers is filled with eucalyptus essential oils. It reminds me of the trees that are no longer down the street from my parents' house. Nostalgically, I'm in that house writing at this very moment- at 10:43pm PST - those trees-I had not thought about them for years, not until today on April 11, 2021. Those trees are no longer nearby.

Things on walls.

Only one material object is attached to the wall and another is leaning against a wall. A tarp-like object I often refer to as *Transitory Dust: Metallic Air* is made of urethane, aluminum dust and fiberglass screen mesh. It is a filtration system, impressed with both a skin-like and a machined, topographic ecology. It drapes and is somehow sheer despite the fact that it is mostly metal and graphite-colored fiberglass. Gravity reforms the work as it sags a little more each day. And each day I wonder if it will finally find its way to the floor. I think about Kieth Sonnier's *Red Flocked Wall* as much as the use of curtains in those old paintings in museums: things that are what they are and portals within portals. The other object leaning against the wall I often call *Low-Cal-Zip*. This name was absorbed after I referred to it as a sort of "zip painting," to which another replied "pretty low-cal, if you ask me." I had not asked. But I like that this painting-like-thing might conjure Barnett Newman's grand historic gesture of onement, "The Zip," as it is also low in both brow and caloric force. It could further be seen as giving a nod to my West Coast roots and its past tradition of Fetish Finish as well as Light and Space works. It's too weathered and lame to offer any true reverence to these pasts. It travels with me and is a sort of lame and inconvenient talisman.

Two outlets are used- one for *The Kiss*'s motor and iphone charger and another for the battery charging station. The draped screen mesh with aluminum dust mixed into the now encrusted urethane is stapled to the wall in the top corners. It drapes - the sagging sinks further over time. Gravity reforms the plane into a complex surface. The surface is made up of a gridded set of vertices and seems to ease into its new form.

Bonds.

Adhesives- nano tape from instagram, also sold as 'alien tape,' duct tape, tacks, staples, a couple of screws and zipties mostly. The bonds are not tight. Nothing is set. Everything can change.

Dichroic film.

I seriously have no idea what this stuff is supposed to be used for- first encountered it at Canal Plastics and bought some - Looks like stuff Ann Veronica Janssens uses.. Jameson Magrogan once referred to it as "that high tech saran wrap you use." Someone else told me it was developed by NASA but had little more to tell me about it- it's the Teflon of photo filters I guess. I bought large rolls from Alibaba.com and on the site they have pictures of it covering windows in mostly empty open-plan offices. I know someone who has it in their shower.

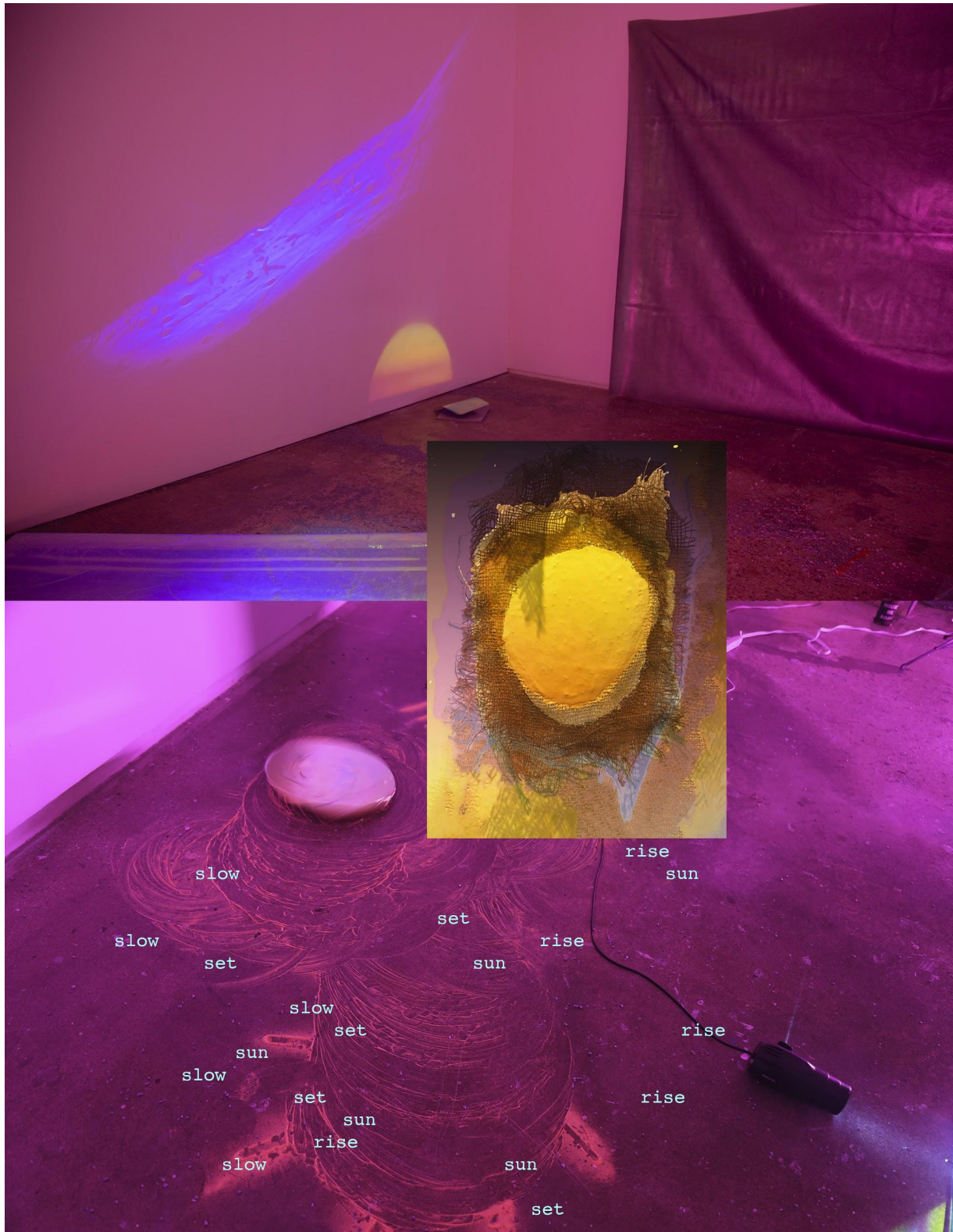


Fig. 39. Slow Set Sun Rise [Video Link](#)

Do I live in the internet now- or do I just visit it?

Google docs suggests that I change “in the internet” to “on the internet”.

This brings up an interesting point- location. Triangulation? Seems entangled with some other problem- one of a more quantum nature.

My iphone autocorrects ‘the internet’ to ‘the Internet’ - it demands being acknowledged as a proper noun.

somewhere between here and there

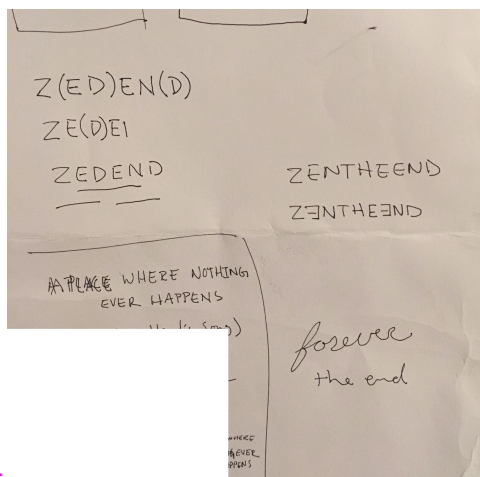
somewhere between light and space

somewhere ffs



I done did them bright colored cave paintings.

COMING AGAIN SOON



on the

Do I live in the internet now- or do I just visit it?

Google docs suggests that I change “in the internet” to “on the internet”.

Fig. 40.

More Upper & Moving On

*O my soul, do not aspire to
immortal life, but exhaust the limits of the possible.*
--Pindar, *Pythian* iii²³

"If Philosophy begins in wonder, it is a salutary challenge to have our eyes turned from the starry heavens to more earthly occasions for astonishment. What has come to seem familiar becomes extraordinary once more."²⁴

"Philosophy does not begin in an experience of wonder, as ancient tradition contends, but rather, I think, with the indeterminate but palpable sense that something desired has not been fulfilled, that a fantastic effort has failed. Philosophy begins in disappointment."²⁵

oof.

²³ Opening of *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, Albert Camus ..

²⁴ The opening sentences of David Wood's preface to *Thinking Plant Animal Human, Encounters with Communities of Difference*

²⁵ The opening sentences of Simon Critchley's introduction to *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance*

Everyone is trying to get to the bar
The name of the bar, the bar is called Heaven
The band in Heaven, they play my favorite song
They play it once again, they play it all night long

Heaven
Heaven is a place
A place where nothing
Nothing ever happens
Heaven
Heaven is a place
A place where nothing
Nothing ever happens

There is a party, everyone is there
Everyone will leave at exactly the same time
It's hard to imagine that nothing at all
Could be so exciting, could be so much fun

Yeah, heaven
Heaven is a place
A place where nothing
Nothing ever happens
Yeah, heaven
Heaven is a place
A place where nothing
Nothing ever happens

And when this kiss is over, it will start again
Will not be any different, will be exactly the same
It's hard to imagine that nothing at all
Could be so exciting, could be this much fun

Yeah, heaven
Heaven is a place
A place where nothing
Nothing ever happens
Heaven
Heaven is a place
A place where nothing
Nothing ever happens

Fig. 41. Image: Heaven

The Cabin Day 7

February 19, 2021

In the middle of nowhere with just enough reception for random cell service to sync up, an onslaught of vibrations hits your pocket as pending notifications push through.

Push Notification from BBC News

Breaking News

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian has filed to divorce rapper Kanye West after almost seven years of marriage - US media

What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from.

-T.S. Eliot, "Burnt Norton" *Four Quartets*

The Cabin, Day 1

February 12th, 2021

Alone, again, after driving fifteen hours through a snowstorm and a shitty night's sleep in a Walmart parking lot, I passed a wooden sign inscribed *Tyger Tyger* and entered the cabin for the first time. After a quick look around, I approached the bookshelf, selected a book that reminded me of a couple close friends, Olivia Divecchia and Tom Morrill- both have been formative to my growth as a human, a thinker and an artist over the past several years. I urgently wanted to find meaning in something- something that would help clarify this endeavour- this art-thing we do- something to show me the way. I opened the book at random,



swirled my finger through the air dramatically and slammed it down blindly. I decided that where it landed would be a key to the answers I seek. It landed on a question. I don't recall what it asked but I came to realize, once again, that for me at least, art is an exploratory approach for the imagination to conceive of possibilities, not a vehicle to deliver or dictate answers- not a tool for recreating histories. It's a chance - the opportunity to simply say that "this is what I saw and this how it felt," and less simply, to consider new perspectives now that there is no longer a horizon line to see beyond.

Fig. 42. Tyger Tyger

..a soft retreat -----

*a kind of soft science*²⁶



Fig. 43. *Low-Cal-Zip (Hearth Study)* in a found pile of wood.

²⁶ During my time at Hunter College I was introduced to the work of painter Steven Mueller in a curatorial course focused on his life and work. The course was led by Carrie Moyer and Sarah Watson. Mueller did not say much about his work in his lifetime and few recordings exist. In one recording he describes his work as being influenced by “the interstices of symbol, language and a kind of soft science.. and a little bit of mythology.” Those words resonate with me, especially the notion of “a kind of soft science.” They make me think of how experimentation and knowledge coalesce - and for some reason, above all else, when I think back to what I learned of Mueller, his work and approach, I think about love and the opportunity to rearrange a mess of imagery, stuff, beliefs, perspectives and sensations into that thing we tend to call beauty and even hope for a future.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nD2HIF9_qNw&ab_channel=frauleinspiel

“‘The Amateur’, he noted, ‘engages in painting, music, sport, science, without the spirit of mastery or competition ... he establishes himself graciously (for nothing) in the signifier: in the immediately definitive substance of music, of painting ... he is – he will be perhaps – the counter-bourgeois artist.’”²⁷ And Svetlana Boym concludes her *Notes for an Off-modern Manifesto*²⁸ by addressing the amateur (whom I strive to be), “An amateur, as Barthes understood it, is the one who constantly unlearns and loves, not possessively, but tenderly, inconstantly,²⁹ desperately. Grateful for every transient epiphany, an amateur is not greedy.”

The amateur is generous, a lover and a curious explorer first.

I’m trying. Searching.

²⁷ Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes, Hill and Wang, 1977, p. 52 quoted in following: “Reinvention without End: Roland Barthes.” Mute. Accessed December 16, 2019. <https://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/reinvention-without-end-roland-barthes>.

²⁸ These “Notes”, once available on Harvard’s online public archive have since been removed- her postmortem book “The Off-Modern” was published in 2017, the website link vanished and the book does not appear to include this passage. I’m not sure how or why Boym’s writings and thoughts originally entered my periphery- but they feel important to me- a proposal or mode of thinking I want to understand better and better incorporate into my work and lived efforts. I’ve only begun to chew on it all. Although I no longer have citable proof, I end this paper, passing on what I consider a beautiful sentiment, copied and pasted, and no longer having an original. I think Boym would like this incongruent moment.

²⁹ A final note- I am unsure if it is ‘inconsistently’ or ‘inconstantly’ as this quote is copied and pasted at some point in time with no more digital stain of the original to reference or check, I can not say which word was actually used in Boym’s Notes or if it was mistakenly transcribed by myself or another along the way.

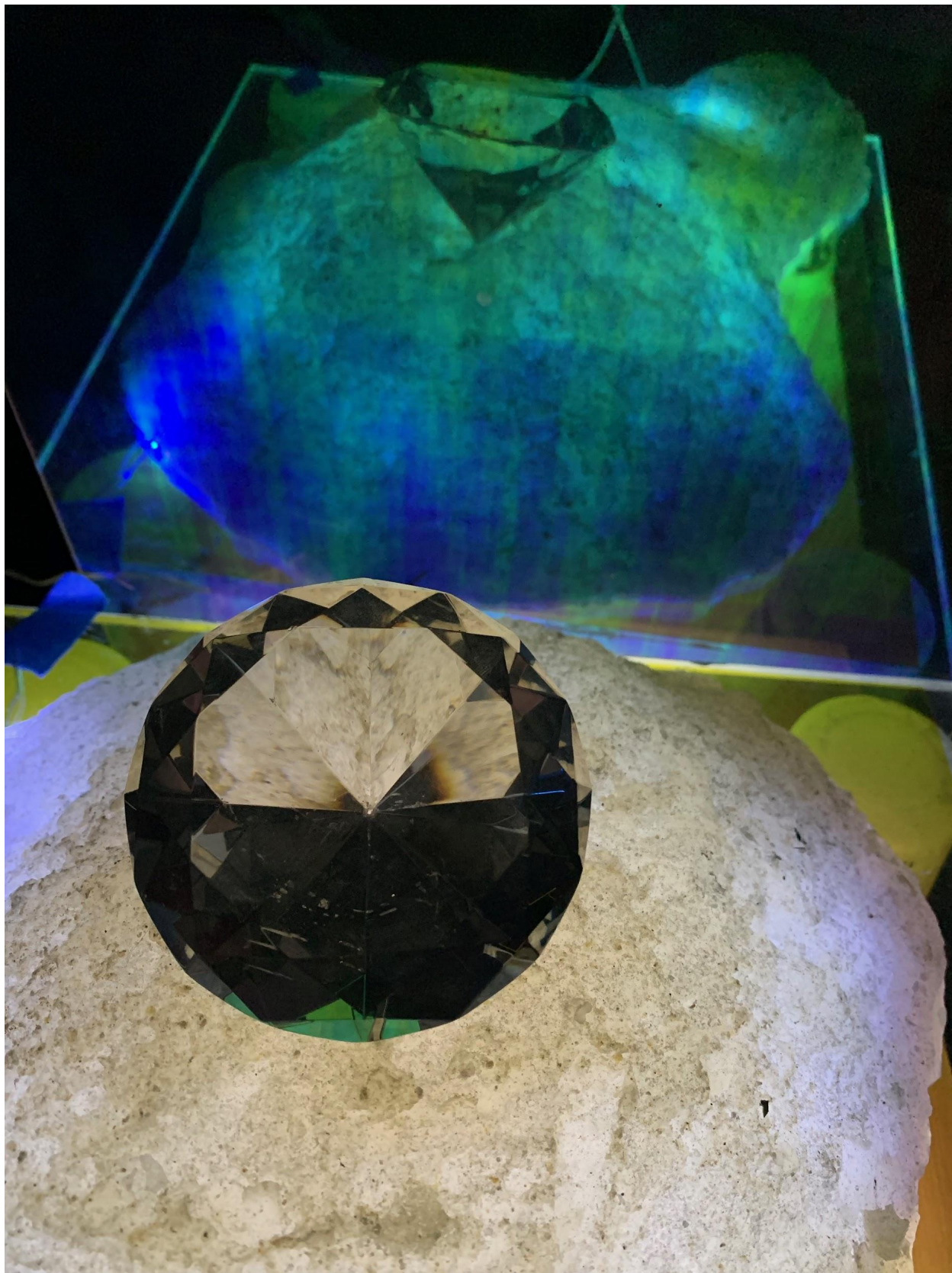


Fig. 44.

:::::||||| **zentheend** :::::::::::::::::::::::||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||

The amateur needn't be legible- “..(for nothing) in the signifier.”

We are all stuck cycling through the same information and systems.

The format is vast and the connection feels weak.

Just as this is mostly formatted to look like

A thesis paper, it is more like the internet or an unkempt database.

It looks like a thing while (trying to)/ do(ing)

another thing. That thing here may be an

attempt to locate the art-thing and

what else art-things may do today

or even if there are art-things today

Or what is a feely-thing today

I'm exhausted and imagine you are too.

I'm for the “off” 00010 thing

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11001th0e01010

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0101010100

10101

000111

100%

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The End 00000111111111111111111111

Endlessly in search of 111111

Earthtones 1111111111

000001111111111

Much love-

A

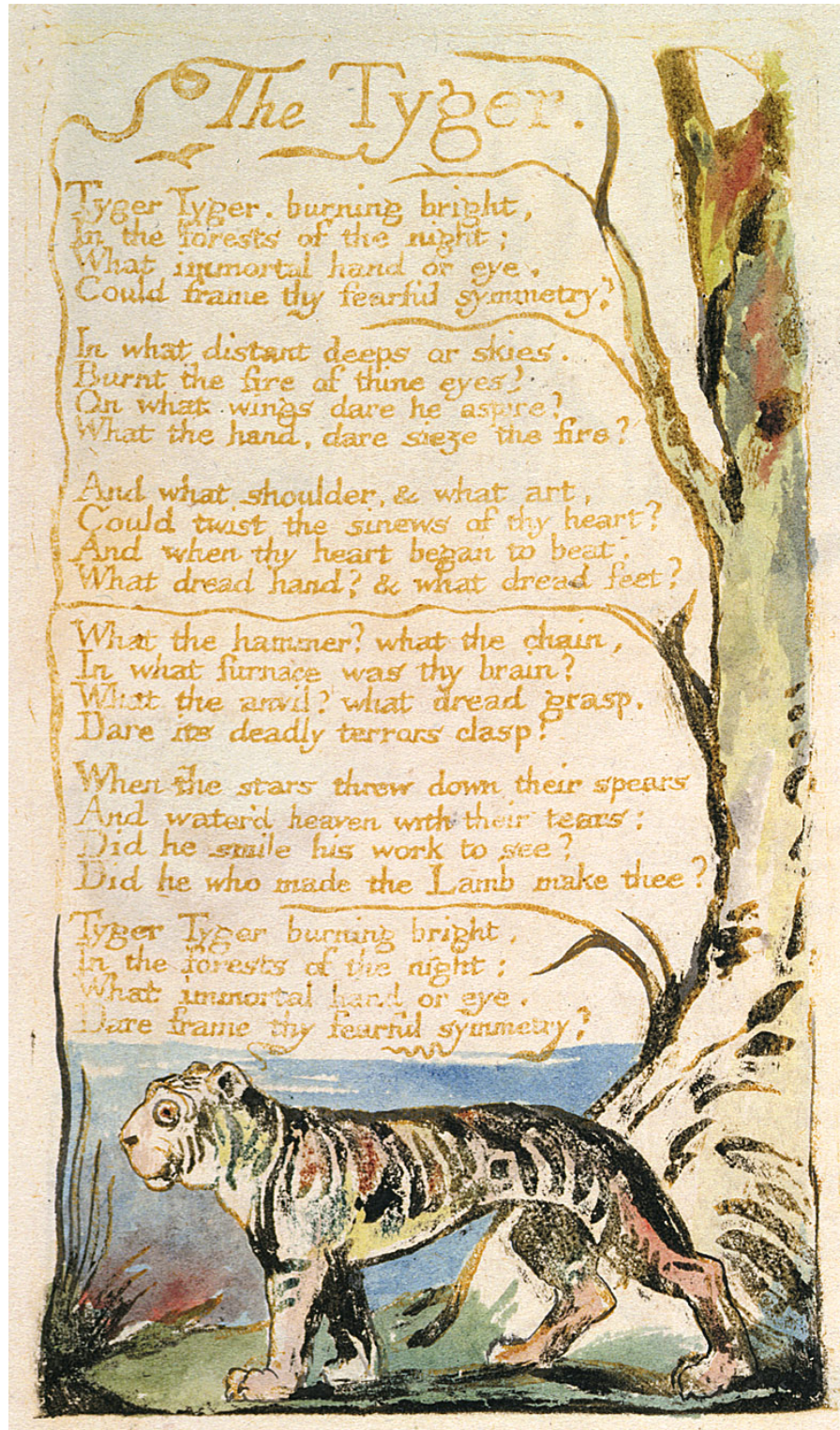


Fig. 45. The Tyger by William Blake



Fig. 46. selfie_portrait_zoom_glitch_backstreet_boy.png

 Off to make n' mint some NFTs now -----

 ----- peace -----



Fig. 47. Screenshot of Instagram meme by @artreviewpower100 on March 6th, 2021

 end



Fig. 48. & 49.

Heaven

Heaven is a place

A place where nothing

Nothing ever happens

Heaven

Heaven is a place

A place where

nothing

Nothing ever

happens

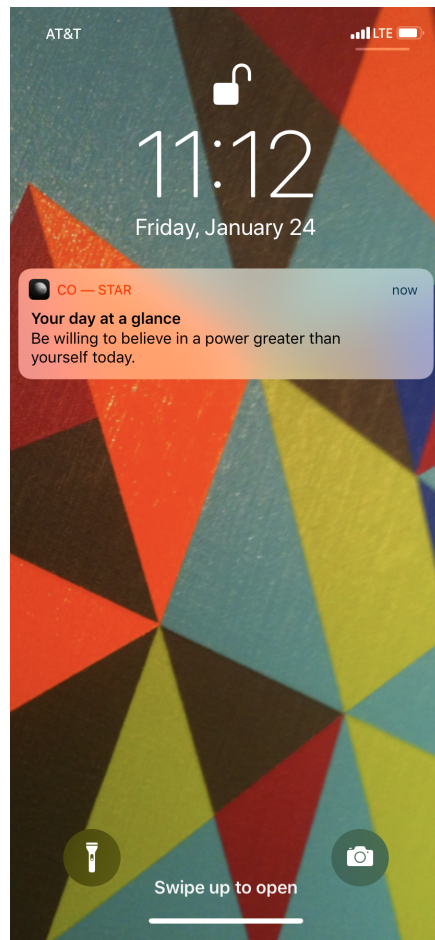


Fig. 50. Screenshot: Co-Star push notification.

N Z 3 Σ Z
 3 Σ Z 3 N
 Z N Σ Z 3



Fig. 51. Low-Cal-Zip and Tyger Tyger
 outside The Cabin at Yellowbird, Woodbury TN



Fig. 52. An Image

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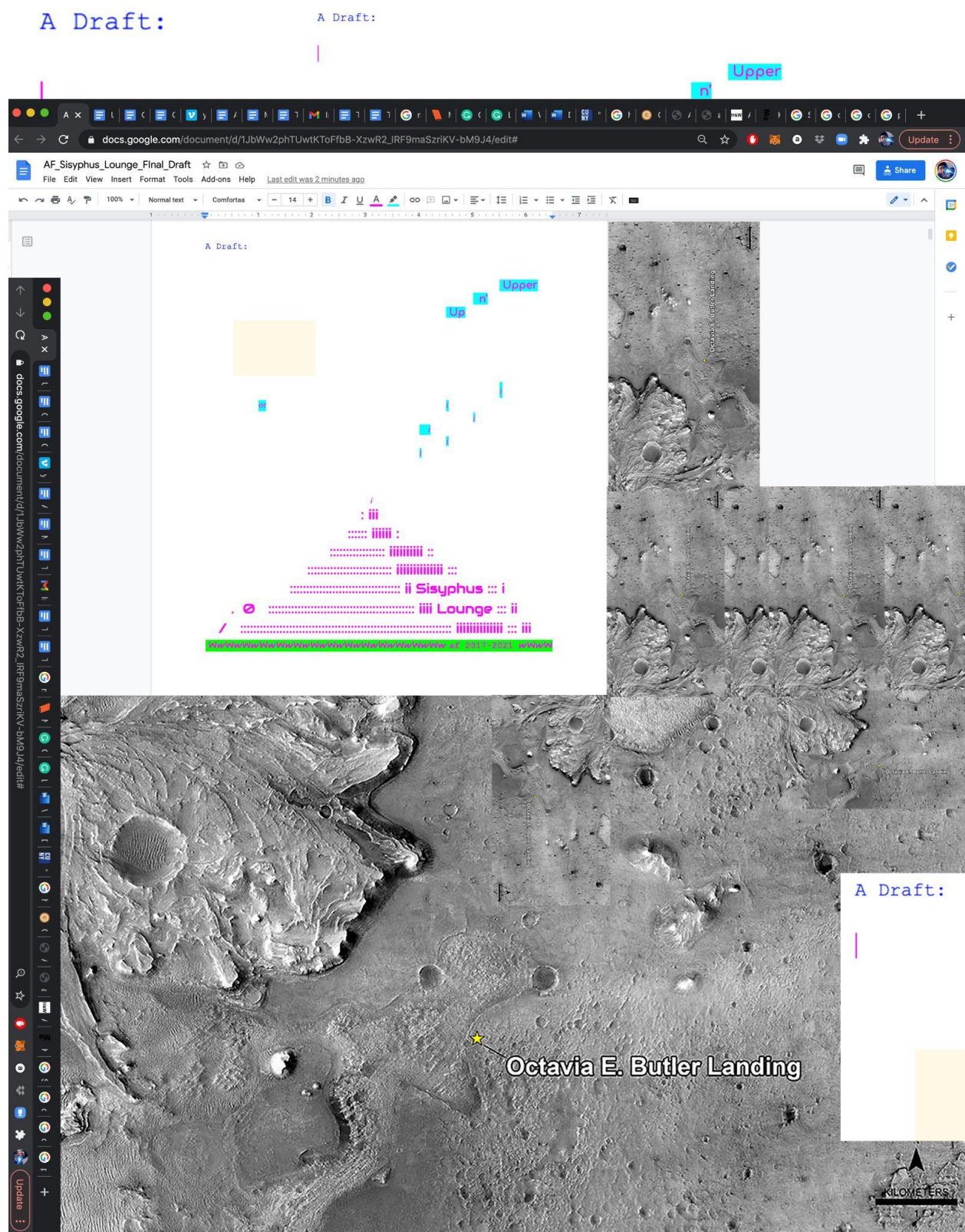


Fig. 53. *Landing Page*, 2021. Digital screenshot collage.