

# **Hidden Knowledge**

**'A Seed Hidden In The Heart Of An Apple Is An Orchard Invisible'**

Bachelor thesis by Suzanne Soulier

## Table of Contents

NTRODUCTION	Skeletons in the Closet Red Eyes in My Sockets	p.3-6
CHAPTER 1:	Built Upon a Vision of Bones and a City in Fire	p.7-11
CHAPTER 2:	Peel Back Layered Skin to Find the Secret Within	p.12-19
CHAPTER 3:	The Illusionist and the Blind Believer	p.20-25
CHAPTER 4:	Error 404 Soul Not Found	p.26-30
CONCLUSION	The Perception of Ambiguous Space in the Mind of Someone Living	p.31-32
BIBLIOGRAPHY		p.33-34-35

## Introduction

### Skeletons in the Closet Red Eyes in my Sockets

"Gentlemen, I delight to have allayed your suspicions, and here, through the mere frenzy of bravado, I rapped heavily upon that very portion of the brick-work behind which stood the corpse of the wife of my bosom. The wall fell bodily. The corpse, already greatly decayed, stood erect before the eyes of the spectators."<sup>1</sup>—Edgar Allen Poe

Gothic novelist Edgar Allen Poe, has used the phrase 'skeleton in the closet' quite morbidly in his book *The Black Cat* from 1845, in which the police search through the house of a male suspect, but just when they are about to leave, the suspect decides to tell how well the house has been built and touches the space where he concealed the body of his wife. At which point the wall falls down and accidentally exposes her skeleton.

The reason I chose this phrase to begin with is because it explains well the urge of a human to conceal his mistakes. As an art student I am interested in mysteries and hidden knowledge, also known as the occult. I have been through a lot in my life that makes me think about the occult like a giant puzzle. When I was younger I wanted to be an archeologist, because these mysterious historic puzzles fascinated me so much, I believed they would also say much about the future. A lot of knowledge or understanding of people can be sampled from historic tales or discoveries, provided that it is not censored. With censorship I mean, for instance history books that tell a beneficial story for the country, instead of telling the true historical events. Or artifacts that have been destroyed in order to keep a culture on a pedestal. For example, something that happened in China during the Cultural Revolution in 1970s by Red Guard teams. I think every person has some occult in their life, everybody seem to be searching for who they are, where they are heading, what they will accomplish or hiding from things where they are ashamed for. It is part of life to be in the dark for all these questions, it is also part of what makes life interesting, fascinating and scaring. And then there is the hidden knowledge of what a person can reach without the person knowing it at first hand. In the old days people feared this hidden knowledge so much, that they where searching for something to believe in, to give structure or to get rid of their sins or problems. It is a logical thought to believe that someone or something beyond your understanding will help you, the problem with it is that you can forget to think for yourself or misinterpret it and that is mostly where the problems start.

The word occult is frequently misused and is known in our society as something that is either drawn to gothic fiction, the paranormal, referred to as science or as something that is only meant for certain people. However within this thesis I refer to occult more as a hidden humane knowledge, that can refer to otherness and alienating our own species. According to internet artist Eliza Gauger it isn't strange that this generation has an interest in occult. "[...] I think we are very much like the young people at the turn of the last century [...] the 1900s-10s were obsessed with the afterlife, contacting ghosts, etc. [...] The confluence of realities [today] like "no healthcare" and "no money" means herbalism is a thing now, and the rise of visible transness and queerness is driving an interest in and connection with the "monstrous" and

---

1

Poe, Edgar Allen. *The Black Cat*. Bookclassic, 2015.

"otherness," because queer and trans people often identify with and reclaim otherness because otherness is imposed upon us."<sup>2</sup>

According to the book *Diddlysquat* written by Wilkie Lee Jernigan, "The word occult, despite conjuring images of devil worship, actually means 'hidden' or 'obscured.' In times of religious oppression, knowledge that was counter doctrinal had to be kept hidden or 'occult', and because the church felt threatened by this, they redefined anything 'occult' as evil, and the prejudice survived."<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting that occult is intertwined with a false violent note of desperation and deceiving, it is quite poetical. Violence and occult are intertwined because in general, the ones that are keeping the secret or concealing it, force themselves and others in positions that are unnatural and/or unhealthy. For example the Catholic Church has had an era around 1500s of the witch trials mass hysteria, in which anybody practically could be labelled a 'witch'. The thing about it is that the occult practices where these people where 'convicted' by is defined by the Bible. And according to me, could also be a contradiction for the Catholic Church. When in fact religion still remains a divination of some kind, as well as some stories regarding the Bible are filled with spiritualism, magic and the paranormal. Definitely in this time you could see the possession that the Catholic Church had over the people, around this time. Which makes this paranoia quite fascinating, gruesome and an example towards the modern day hysteria.

Sometimes you can speculate whether what is true or not, for example the promises politicians make during the election campaigns, mostly it is just advertisement, there are very little promises which actually are being kept. There is a lot in this world that we can never know for certain, as example the intensions of advertisements. Of course every company wants to sell their goods no matter what the costs. Some even have ingredients within the product that are not healthy for us or in which animal tissue have been used for products. I sometimes find it very interesting that some people know something about this 'hidden knowledge', but rather turn the other cheek, because as they say 'they cannot do without'.

Within this thesis I hope to find an answer on the question, 'How can contemporary art within the otherness of the occult, be a mirror to alienating humane behavior or thoughts?' I think it is important as a graphic designer or artist to find a theme about something that nobody really thought about that maybe is a bit recognizable, but with a twist that the viewer don't know yet. For example the new work of Jordan Wolfson *Colored Sculpture* an installation from 2016, recently exhibited in Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam as part of the exhibition "*Manic/Love*". Where the installation is displayed in a white separated square room, where before entering this room you can watch a movie by Jordan Wolfson and see some of his previous work. *Colored Sculpture* is a robotic doll that according to the artist was supposed to represent Huck Finn from the book *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by American writer Mark Twain. This book by Twain represents the search for freedom, with this book Twain criticized the racial prejudices and the insane belief that black people aren't human. The character Huck Finn is wrestling with these moral conflicts, but decides to go against these awful morals other people told him. With which this artwork shows the struggle between violence and knowing to distinguish violence, the choice of alienating people and knowing people are alienated. The *Colored Figure* is attached to chains and is dragged around, smashed onto the ground with its head faced down and tilted up, continuously, while in the background sometimes the music of Percy sledge 'When A Man Loves A Woman' is turned on and then gets cut off again. The smashed robotic doll creates marks on the ground and the doll itself becomes more and more

---

2 Rothstein, Adam. "Conjuring the Internet Art and Contemporary Magic". *The Creators Project*. August 8, 2015. <<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/conjuring-the-internet-art-and-contemporary-magic>>

3 Jernigan, Lee Wilkie. *Diddlysquat*. Pittsburgh: Dorrance Publishing, 2012.

worn out. When the robotic figure comes close to you and locks eyes with you with the use of facial recognition. The eyes lit up with LED screens it is capable to show some of Jordan's previously made video works. But it can also show an intimate expression of deep pain.



Fig. 1 and 2  
Jordan Wolfson. *Colored Sculpture*, 2016. Mixed media. London and David Zwirner Gallery, New York.  
Photo © David Zwirner, New York.  
Photo © Sadie Coles HQ, London and David Zwirner Gallery, New York.

This work by Wolfson is a reaction on the racial problems that are still an issue in America, in which morals are smashed onto the ground again and again. Think about the Ferguson unrest and the Black Lives Matter protests, there is still a certain racial unrest in America. This pain still leaves a mark on the land and by supporting president Trump it doesn't make it better. Since Trump is known for alienating other humans, for instance Mexicans and women but also racist remarks. Furthermore it is about life and life's choices, the violence you impose on others and the violence you impose on yourself, humanity chained by devices and materiality. You can call this an ambiguous space, its about more than one thing it has a past and that past also has a future and in between there are all these choices and the recognition of humanity, there is a certain recognizable pain. But what makes this occult is that it is intimate, it questions, you are not sure about it, its scaring, resembling, it tells something about society or a culture. It can even be a mirror towards yourself, to not punish yourself to hard when you fall from grace, when things do not go your way. When you are scared to be that person alone in the dark, not sure who pulls your strings. In general all artworks that represent hidden concepts or hidden messages could be labelled occult, provided that those hidden messages or concepts have an ambiguous space in which alienating humanity is a violent think piece.

Hidden knowledge is something you can develop as a graphic designer or artist, by researching, investigating, looking around and even using knowledge of philosophy as a reference for an ambiguous space. For example Jean Paul Sartre's famous statement in his book, *Being and Nothingness*, 1943, "Man is condemned to be free, because once thrown into the world, he is responsible for everything he does."<sup>4</sup> Of course saying 'man is condemned to be free', doesn't really sound like he likes his freedom. That is because Sartre says that to be human means to be thrown onto this earth, where we can't avoid the choices

<sup>4</sup> Sartre, Jean Paul. *Being and Nothingness*. London: Routledge. August 28, 2003.

we make. What is the right way to act this or that way? Is there even a right way? Even deciding to not make a choice is still a choice you make. We can denial it, but it will still be there, even the realization that this is the freedom we have can be very painful. This is an example of an ambiguous space, because the choices you make affects your life, the choices are multiple spaces and you are in an ambiguous room finding out which space to continue in. An ambiguous space has multiple directions, for me this space is interesting because it shows multiple sides, that even can have a conflict about something or anything else.

Within this thesis all chapters and artwork are referencing to human behavior in general as well as interpersonal behavior. Within various artwork and themes that contain ambiguous space and alienation of humanity which leads to interpersonal violence. I explain the occult quality of this alienation towards beings and the importance of ambiguous space in art, and the connection between alienation of humanity and the occult made visual and understandable towards a public by the artist.

Artworks that are combined with hidden concepts or hidden messages could be occult, provided that those hidden messages or concepts have an ambiguous space in which alienating humanity is a 'violent' think piece. Alienating humanity is a form of violence, it is more based on mirroring the image of violence towards ourselves. Basically if you speak ill of someone or if you point a gun at someone, you are alienating your own species. Which is extremely fascinating, because it gives more food for thought. While if you use the word violence it is immediately imaginary related to images of the news or 'wrong doing'. Furthermore I think that alienating humanity is a great term for artists, mostly because artists can create their own world in which humanity also plays a part. Because we are human and part of this world, this world also leaves an imprint on us. Furthermore art can be seen as something that is really weird or strange, but maybe that is also an expression of the alienation in society. In terms of violence in design I am more interested in the reason why humans use violence, so why humans alienate other humans and occult can help with that.

## Chapter 1

### Built Upon A Vision Of Bones And A City In Fire

'Increasingly it becomes clear that the artists, architects and poets of the past have lives and ethics in common with their descendants, generations hence. They had their share of war, earthquakes, political tumult, and inexcusable evils, too. Art from the past reminds us of an essential connection, both behind and before us. Arts assist us in recognizing the continuum in which we live, in which we function, and into which we'll give our legacy. In fact, archaeologists depend on artistic artifacts to shed light on our shared human past. So will it be in the future.'<sup>5</sup>—Anisa Mehdi

Archeology, art and occult are very much intertwined with each other, for every discovery there is a new understanding of what was before, it can show a connection, from which we could also learn. However an archeological discovery does not only mean a discovery of a hidden civilization, but can also mean a discovery of a history of a place or a person, it can be anything with a past that we can learn about. For example before making an artwork or a building at a certain place it is important to know what that place meant for people or what its historical roots are. When researching these things as an artist, it provides new insights and can even lead to an inspiration for the eventual artwork itself.

An example I would like to mention regarding a Hungarian artist who was inspired by unexploded bombs that have been discovered in Hungary. His work *Fired But Unexploded*, exhibited in Hungary in 2011. Was exhibit as follows in a dark room, with grey carpet, where multiple old tv screens are rested upon wooden boxes separated from each other. Where some tv screens are rested on a stack of three wooden boxes and others on two or one. The tv screens are the main light sources and show all images of different unexploded old Hungarian discovered bombs photographed in a white studio. In the image underneath it says *Fired But Unexploded*. The room is quiet, but when putting on the headphones that are placed upon every tv screen. A world of sound enters the image, that when placed in its new context suddenly becomes terrifying. For you become part of a playground for children or an apartment where a couple is arguing. And you still see this unexploded bomb within that scene, thrilling waiting to go off, but it doesn't. It gives an uncanny feeling, because the sounds behind the still images of the bombs are related to familiar sounds that everybody knows. For example an outdoor swimming pool, a forest, a playground full of playing children. It looks like these sounds are warning the spectators, that even though these bombs are old it is still possible that if they have not yet been discovered that they can go off. It is because of this that the spectator is informed about the dangers of this occult.

What makes this work part of the occult is that it is hidden, but no one knows where. It symbolizes alienation in humanity, because a human drops the bombs somewhere on command of another human, to destroy other humans. Which makes that deed in itself as well occult, because of various reasons, for instance why do the commanders do it, why did the bomb thrower do it and why did the bomb thrower dropped the bomb there on that spot

and why didn't it go off? Because of all these questions and I am sure more, it makes this work ambiguous.



Fired but unexploded.

Fig. 3  
Zsolt Asztalos. *Fired But Unexploded*. 2011. Mixed media.  
Photo © Sadie Coles HQ, London and David Zwirner, New York  
Photo © Zsolt Asztalos.

However In the interview “A Bombastic Story” with *Funzine*, according to Asztalos the symbolism in his work is the following: 'The unexploded bombs symbolize those places and situations that the sounds evoke. They may symbolize political conflicts – in this case we hear the sound of street demonstrations; they may stand for the time bombs of consumer societies – then we hear someone going through TV channels; or they may represent issues in private life and partnership – then we hear someone doing the dishes without saying a word, and the tension in the air is almost palpable. We hear all these sounds and see this unexploded bomb. The question is only when it will explode.' <sup>6</sup>

I think that the artist is cutting his own work short with only this symbolic expression. Let's start of with an extract from the book *Homo Sacer* by Giorgio Agamben, "No longer grounded in representation, it is the living out of this temporal gap between being and entering the symbolic order."<sup>7</sup> The 'Temporal Gap' symbolizes the bomb that passes time and in doing so becomes more and more trust worthy of not going off. It is an old discovery that can still be an invader of life and in that sense is not a thing, but becomes a 'being'. A living bomb that could still have an impact of the lives of people, when being in an undiscovered certain place. Because of this bomb being in a certain place, it becomes a symbolic order of an ambiguous death, hence it is still part of being a bomb that could enter this ambiguous death.

And then a different meaning according to Alfredo Camerotti, artist, curator and writer, says in his book *Aesthetic journalism: How to Inform Without Informing* '... life which is stripped of every facet of human concern and protection, but has not yet entered the symbolic order of

<sup>6</sup> Zsolt, Asztalos. “A Bombastic Story” *Funzine*. March, 2013.  
< <http://www.funzine.hu/2013-03-a-bombastic-story-zsolt-asztalos/>>

<sup>7</sup> Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (California: Stanford University Press, 1998); first published in Italian as *Homo sacer: il potere sovrano e la nuda vida* (Turin: Einaudi, 1995)



the sacrificed, of those whose death can sit comfortable within a juridical order.<sup>18</sup> Now imagine that the unexploded bomb would go off and ends the life of the ones close to the children's playground. Only this playground is not in Hungary but in Syria. And this ambiguous death is a decision politicians made, without the consent of a country, just like politicians do sometimes, like it is the most normal thing. And these people are 'collateral damage', they are not even in the order of the sacrificed, they are only 'collateral damage'. Nobody is convicted of this crime, in fact some politicians could do it again in a heart beat. Nobody is looking after the lives that are torn apart, there are no monuments build, because nobody cares, it is a secret mission, to not burden the country with blood on our hands while celebrating our holidays.

Of course the explanation Asztalos gives can also be seen as a temporal gap in time, a moment that is quite uncanny for two people, a government, a relaxing person. However, I am also interested in the suspension of time that consists out of the realization of the history of the surroundings of a person. Because it doesn't show the obvious, but the thrill of historical events, dropping bombs that have not exploded and the connection between the unexploded bombs and the realization of people, between what was and what still is. The realization that these unexploded bombs do not only symbolize war in Hungary, but that these bombs are also telling us about the useless bomb throwing, the dangers and consequences for the lives of people in general.



Fig. 4  
Daniel Knorr. *State Of Mind*. 2007. Exhibition 'The Way of the Shovel: Art as Archaeology', MCA Chicago.  
Photo © Nathan Keay, MCA Chicago.

It is interesting that the previous work focuses on a hidden item of war by a country in a country, this artwork relates more to the destruction of the hidden item of war by a country. *State Of Mind* (2007) a work by Romanian artist Daniel Knorr, in which he used real pulverized stone like documents. Records of sadistic secret policing destroyed by the secret police Stasi, when Germany reunited in 1989. The documents can't be read anymore, but that doesn't mean that these aren't important. According to the artist 'they'd become more evocative through the transmutation.'<sup>19</sup> I think he is completely right about it, because the documents are forcefully handled, which means that the secret police Stasi tried the best they

<sup>8</sup> Camerotti, Alfredo. *Aesthetic Journalism: How to Inform without Informing*. Bristol: Intellect, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Keats, Jonathon. "Romanian Artist Daniel Knorr Uses Pulverized Police Files For 'Archaeological Art'" *Forbes*. January 30, 2014. <<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jonathonkeats/2014/01/30/hey-nsa-archaeologists-are-watching-but-probably-not-the-ones-youre-thinking/#74fea4423fcc>>

could to destroy everything. The file stones are a symbol of the fear and firm iron grip that the secret police had over the population in attempt to erase evidence of their political paranoia. Therefore the stones are not only a symbol of desperation and defeat, but also historical in connection to future possibilities. A symbol of their crimes now forgotten, but very easily repeated. It is therefore as well a warning, if the secret police of the past can do something like this, why wouldn't the future secret state police for example NSA? It is another state of mind, what do they have on their sleeve, it is another form of occult.

It makes people more aware of the hidden documentation of a secret state. And makes one wonder about the destructed occult that we won't be able to decipher. The human emotional state of desperation and defeat to destruct this fearful documentation. Shows a connection between the historical and the now. In this present time it is nearly impossible to keep a secret that well destructed because of the technical devices that we have now and people who have access to this knowledge. For instance the sharing of hidden knowledge about such practices and the security breach that Snowden (well known whistleblower) has brought to the light. Which in turn can make a lot of people and authorities desperate when somebody breaches this knowledge. However those new modern technical devices can also be an imprisonment for a future panopticon society, which is an inescapable surveillance state.



Fig. 5  
Daniel Arsham. *Welcome to the Future*. 2014. Mixed media. Installation at Locust Projects in Miami.  
Photo © Rebecca Smeyne, The New York Times.

American artist Daniel Arsham casts outdated gadgets like boom boxes, walkman players and VHS tapes in geological materials as crystal and volcanic ash. Which gives his work a post apocalyptic archeological feeling. *Welcome to the Future* (2014) is a major site-specific installation, which has a hole in the ground filled with old gadgets from the recent past and present day. The colors of the objects are white in the center and become black towards the outer ring. The artist says that he is 'taking everyday things and playing with expectations.'<sup>10</sup> Because the objects are individual art objects they become a gesture of production, history and discovery.

<sup>10</sup> Chaplin, Julia. "Why Celebrities Are So Into Artist Daniel Arsham" *The New York Times*. January 21, 2015. <[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/style/why-celebrities-are-so-into-the-artist-daniel-arsham.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/style/why-celebrities-are-so-into-the-artist-daniel-arsham.html?_r=1)>

Every item has been wanted before and therefore produced in an amazing amount of waste, to become discovered again by a new generation in a new time. Because old things become then curious, different and sometimes even better. For instance Polaroid camera's are 'better' in the sense that they provide a certain filter and style, that becomes a new retro experience. Instagram for instance, also uses the polaroid camera as icon and as filter options, it is funny that the essence of Polaroid camera's and posting photo's online, within a certain white window like the old polaroid photo's make their come back. Anyhow the interest that I have in this work regarding occult is that these products have a hidden meaning, we know their meaning now, but what will they become in the future. Furthermore it displays the waste of production and therefore a post-apocalyptic sense of living with the waste of our pleasure or the waste that might survive us. If that happens what will new civilizations think of our society? Are all the raw materials that we needed for some of these products gone, for instance for a lot of necessary computer and phone elements, rare raw materials are used, to make it work properly, but what if these rare materials are used up. Will we find something else to use up with the speed of technical discoveries we are making? While in the making of this technical progress for greed, people sometimes forget that these things are made with certain materials that in the future can even be discovered to be dangerous towards humans. Because there was no time to test it properly, so people also become human guinea pigs in the long run. However because of technical discoveries it is also possible to share and preserve for instance important documentation of human rights violations in Syria, *The Syrian Archive*, an initiative and launched by human right activists.

According to the artist the archeological side of his work is very important, 'I think my job as an artist is to create that tension, to allow people to look at these objects from their contemporary lives as if they are viewing them from the future.'<sup>11</sup> Somehow people like to conceal the things that they don't want to see, sometimes that even goes unnoticed, because it becomes a habit. I think that the artist definitely has a point with this work it is bringing back what is forgotten. The society as it is today is very busy with new developments, everything has to be bigger, better, faster, shinier, newer, however if people are constantly frequently buying a new iPhone, they forget what happens with the old ones, where does the waste go. It is a thing of this society to look at the self, rather than as a whole civilization.

The relationship between the different artworks is that they all are built upon a historical happening. That still has a connection with the now or the future and wants to make it clear either through a violent act, like *Fired but Unexploded* by the throwing of bombs and not caring about what it does to others, when it becomes an occult thing and pauses to go off in a different time. But also the violent way of destruction of occult secrets in the artwork *State Of Mind* that has been made completely unreadable. Which also is connected to the secret services in the now and a possible panopticon future, a 24/7 surveillance state. Then there is the violent thought in *Welcome to the Future* of completely denying or make occult, the problem of waste and new technical abilities. That although we all might enjoy and be fascinated about, they still have control over us. So there is this back and forth connection to past societies or human actions that questions the actions or outcomes of the future ones.

---

11 Ferro, Shaunacy. "Why Designer Daniel Arsham Won't Work For Anyone But Himself" *Fastcodesign*. March 20, 2015. <<https://www.fastcodesign.com/3044031/why-designer-daniel-arsham-wont-work-for-anyone-but-himself>>

## Chapter 2

### Peel Back Layered Skin To Find The Secret Within

'[...] the success of Egyptian surgery in setting broken bones is very fully demonstrated in the large number of well-joined fractures found in the ancient skeletons.'<sup>12</sup>— James Henry Breasted

It is fascinating that the ancient Egyptians knew so much about healing the body, how to record knowledge about it, that can be rediscovered ages later. This fragment comes from *The Surgical Papyrus*, circa 3000 BC which is an important document in the history of science, because it contains medical knowledge of ancient Egypt. It was rediscovered by James Henry Breasted who translated the two volumes.

Of course scientists have always been curious how the human being works. The way it is structured, the secrets it holds, we still do not know so much about it. For instance look at 'the soul', it is something we can't define, look at various severe illnesses (Cancer, MS, Parkinson), the body gets sick but how do we cure it? There is still so much hidden that makes us curious, it is also an inspiration for artists, not only because it is aesthetic, maybe also because it is easily recognizable, symbolic or as warning. According to Jonathan Jones a reporter from *The Guardian*, Renaissance artists used anatomy for two reasons, one is to help them portray the human body correctly and the other one: '[...] to look inside a human body is to get an eerie sense of who we are, to probe the mystery of being. [...] a poetic reverie on the fragility and wonder of life – glimpsed in a study of death.'<sup>13</sup> Some Renaissance artists even did their own dissections and discovered therefore more about the human body under which Giorgio Vasari, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Of course many artists today who use anatomy in their work, rather more symbolic and poetical than the dissecting of beings. Can be misinterpreted as violent, gruesome or horror. It is interesting that there is such a fine line between anatomical expression and horror. Why artists find anatomy aesthetic? It could be a certain feel of occult, mystery or its natural rhythmic structures, the skull is also one of the favorites artists use, because of the large eye sockets that many people find extremely aesthetic it is a bit, a child like quality, one you cherish.

Artist Jessica Harrison combined delicate antique second hand ceramics sculptures of women with an anatomical morbid twist in her series *Broken* (2014). And was amongst others part of Edinburgh Art Festival, where it was displayed in the Tin Roof Gallery in 2014. The exhibition room was in a pink attic, with a T shaped pink table display towards a large window. The space stripped of what mostly during extreme white exhibition walls is usually a clean and almost sterile canvas. This one became more like a pink paradise of a little girl, with dreams of princesses and unicorns. Only this time with a minor discomfort the sight of usually seeing Barbies or representatives of perfect dreamlike figures, there are found second hand

---

12

Breasted, James Henry. *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*. Birmingham: Division of Gryphon Editions, Ltd. 1984.

<sup>13</sup> Jonathan, Jones. "Brains in Jars: Artists' Fascination With Anatomy" *The Guardian*. 3 April, 2012. <<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2012/apr/03/artists-fascination-with-anatomy>>

ceramic cast in a new coat. That of 'broken' dolls displayed with guts in their hands, or beheaded figurines with bloody heads on plates or in their arms. Broken ceramics tearing down their face and exposing their skeleton. It's breaking with the dream like pink perfect quality of the room it is in. Not closed up in a cabinet, but exposed towards its public, vulnerable, fragile, but with a strong new meaning.



Fig. 6 and 7  
Jessica Harrison. *Broken*. 2014. Ceramics.  
Photo © Jessica Harrison.

However her work is often interpreted as gruesome and horror images, while the artist actually wanted to point out the rights for women, to not be seen as a delicate flower, but as a true human, who 'offers' their anatomical gut for science. Because of this outbreak of anatomical parts, the image of a woman that is beautiful or perfect even gets destructed and becomes a more normal image of life. Because it is interesting to not only use manly anatomical figures, but also female ones in books. It becomes a form of discrimination and hidden knowledge, if only the female reproductive organs are displayed in anatomical books. It is not the complete truth, those two should be in books to compare the difference, despite their sex. Harrison about her work, [...] I reference that kind of anatomical enlightenment era, when the body was being explored from the skin down to the bone, and everything in-between. However advanced our explorations of the body have become since, this interior anatomical space is still gender-biased — a classically and continually male space. The female body is only typically used when illustrating a specifically “female part” of the body: the reproductive organs. The female interior space is still laced with taboo in a way that the male interior is not. I know this is still the case because I've received criticism for reworking female figurines — that it is somehow more “violent” than reworking male figurines.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore it is interesting that she had received criticism on being too violent while reworking female figurines. Is it violent because an image of delicacy, a beautiful gracious

14 Moroz, Sarah. “This Artist Tattoos and Beheads China Figurines to Take on Art History's Gender Bias” *i-D*. March 23, 2016. <[http://i-d.vice.com/en\\_us/article/this-artist-tattoos-and-beheads-china-figurines-to-take-on-art-historys-gender-bias?utm\\_source=tcpfbus](http://i-d.vice.com/en_us/article/this-artist-tattoos-and-beheads-china-figurines-to-take-on-art-historys-gender-bias?utm_source=tcpfbus)>



image, is not to be disturbed by such an image of horror? Or is it something we have not yet seen and is it therefore different, do we have to become familiar with it? To be honest of course it is a form of violent literal expression, but using a woman's image shouldn't be more violent than a man's. In this context it is about equal rights, sometimes to reach that purpose as an artist shocking and disturbing is the best way to break through a taboo. So people have to talk about it and see what has been hidden either before or by making people realize what it is that their saying.

Because of their twisted princess like quality, Harrison's work has also been featured in Dismaland, an art exhibition initiative of street artist Banksy. As for Dismaland, I understand why her work got featured in this exhibition, its a reaction of the display of perfect princesses for children, but the reality of a dream like world is one that is a very false promise. And Disney particularly the animated movies can be seen as a form of alienating humanity. In which perfection, traditional role play and even racism are also central. It is one of the reasons that Banksy chose for an exhibition against Disneyland, namely Dismaland. As well as it could be a reaction against that Walt Disney made these stories a whole lot better than their first intensionally picked up written versions, a lot of people don't know the real disturbing adult stories. Even though those broken sculptures are often misinterpreted they have a certain occult quality, which attract and fascinate, because of the oddly combination of old antique dolls and the anatomical reference. Of cutting open the perfect image of womanhood and there's nothing to do to protect the ceramic from this 'vandalism'. I think for this work misinterpretation could even add a whole new layer of mystery that can serve the work for the better.

Another artist dealing with occult in a human anatomical perception is Eliza Bennett embroidered her hand for her work entitled *A Woman's Work Is Never Done* (2013). The work consists of photography stills and a film. The film was part of an exhibition in 2015 called 'The Needle's Eye' in the National Museum of Norway. Where Bennett's film is displayed upon a wall in a darkened room, with a few spotlights for other embroidery hanging works in frames, that are placed in the same room before the film, one may ask if this is the right placement of the movie. Anyhow her film starts with an introduction of a sitting woman embroidering in front of a large window, the room looks like a boudoir. The spectator almost feels like a peeping Tom, while the doorway is only partly opened. When getting accustomed to the black and white environment small details like the realization that the woman is actually embroidering in her hand come to notice. But at first hand it isn't painful to watch, after a couple of minutes the hidden spectator has come out of its hiding space and is looking upon the spectacle more closely still in black and white. The needle going into the hand becomes more visible, but still remains not human, because of the black and white quality.

After almost two and a half minutes the film switches from black and white to color, now watching zoomed in on her hands. But before stitching into her hand, she must get the dread into the needle. Than she stitches in her hand, clearly visible are the thin layers of flesh she pricks into, repeatedly at different spots for about four and a half minute. After that the camera focuses on the details of the finished torn hand patterns, in the last minute she shows the hand in total giving it a feel of being attached to this hand, this work, making it feel more worn out, before the film turns black. All the entire time the manipulated music that is part of the film switches from breathing, movement of the body, field recordings of the wind, yodeling, a guitar and a traditional Scottish folk song called Alex Duinn. A song about a waiting woman for her fisherman lover to come, but he never will return. The gaze of the spectator feels like the kind that is fascinated by what she is doing, encouraging it, but incapable of doing it by itself. Like a supervisor or an influential person keeping an eye on what she is doing and how the result is going to be.

However the artist means something else with her work than some viewers might interpret it. I understand that some people see it as a feminist protest, but even this perception can be seen as a form of misunderstanding. Women are not the only one doing this kind of work, that is why I genuinely like the title of 'A Woman's Work' it is a deception that appears to be only women's work but has a much larger context. As Bennett says, "Some viewers consider the piece to be a feminist protest, for me it's about human value. After all, there are many men employed in caring, catering, cleaning etc...all jobs traditionally consider to be 'woman's work'. Such work is invisible in the larger society with 'A Woman's Work' I aim to represent it."<sup>15</sup> With colored thread and a needle, she stitches the top layer of her skin, in doing so she creates a worn feeling, that comes from doing 'women's work'. As to why Bennett uses the technique of embroidery onto her hand, 'By using the technique of embroidery, traditionally employed to represent femininity and applying it to the expression of its opposite, I hope to challenge the pre-conceived notion that 'women's work' is light and easy.'<sup>16</sup>



Fig. 8  
Eliza Bennett. *A Women's Work Is Never Done*. 2013. Film and photographs.  
Photo © Eliza Bennett.

This work has a sense of mystery to it and in terms of occult it is a form of the hidden knowledge work that is easily dismissed. Of course it is about human value, work that is done by caring for the health of others, whether that might be loved ones or people who need it in that moment. It often easily goes unnoticed and sometimes is not the most thankful job, but

<sup>15</sup> Bennett, Eliza. "A Womens Work is Never Done" *Eliza Bennett*. <<http://www.elizabennett.co.uk/a-womans-work-is-never-done-text/>>

<sup>16</sup> Women You Should Know. "Hand Embroidery: Artist Stitches Her Flesh To Show That A Woman's Work Is Never Done" January 2, 2014. *Women You Should Know*. <<http://www.womenyoushouldknow.net/hand-embroidery-artist-stitches-her-flesh-to-show-that-a-womans-work-is-never-done/>>

that doesn't mean it isn't hard work. However I think it is interesting that she gives an uncanny twist to her story, in a film of the work with a half opened door you see her in a chair embroidering her hand. It is very mysterious, you get this idea of an old aristocracy woman doing fine work and killing time. In this case Bennett is embroidering tormented handwork in an unsettling way. There is something off about the way she does it, without any regrets, she demonstrates how easily fine work is turned to be torned, but somehow does it with love.

Something that refers back to reproductive labour, in which I am sure some women are even nowadays after work or after having multiple children still doing most of the house work and caring for the children and with that are falling back into traditional patterns. Part of this is also because of insecurities provided by advertisements, status dividence of movies, roll dividence amongst children it still happens. But then again the time in which this happened isn't so long ago, we still need to define 'work'. What is called work and when do you call it work? Who divides pay checks, I am sure this is still not done equally, why else would there be still such a dividence among rich and poor. Anyhow Michelle Barrett a feminist and writer, wrote in 1980, 'Perhaps childrearing and other caring activity is both work and play, but only the portion which is necessary for the psychological growth of the child and the worker(s) count as work. If so who determines when that line is crossed? Since non-market activity does not have a clear criterion to distinguish work from non-work, nor necessary from non-necessary social labor, an arbitrary element seems to creep in that makes standard of fairness difficult to apply to gendered household bargains between men and women dividing up waged and non-waged work.'<sup>17</sup>

Bennett about the applied technique, "The technique, I recall first applying to my hand under a table during a home economics class in school. I was totally amazed to find that I could pass a needle under the top layers of skin without any pain, only a mild discomfort. As with many childhood whims it passed and I hadn't thought any more about it until quite recently when I decided to apply the process to my hand to make it appear calloused and work worn like that of a manual laborer."<sup>18</sup> Of course making a movie of the use of this technique is not for everyone, hence I think it is a very good technique for what she is trying to show. With a mild discomfort she shows the work that has been labelled 'A Women's Work', which as a title is a very soft one sided view, for what is hard work. The occult in this movie is as well with the question where one defines 'work' or 'hard work'? And what about the different rewards for 'work' in general? Maybe this technique is as well good because the hard work that she embroiders on her soft hands is for the viewer a window to view discomfort and pain. In a way that is recognizable for people to understand, while watching this movie you have sympathy for the person who does this and the mystery of the way she does this.

Another project that is mildly discomforting is that of Agatha (Agi) Haines' *Circumventive Organs* (2013). Currently till the first of January 2017 this work of Haines is part of the exhibition 'Dream Out Loud – Designing For Tomorrow's Demands' in het Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. In which Haines work is shown together what a couple of other artists' works in an open white space with wooden floors. Her work is in a corner near the opening on a white table behind glass, lay three conceptual organs, which I will discuss later on, on surgical silver plates. On the left beside the works there is an iPad on which can be viewed a movie of putting one of these augmented organs into the body in a surgical setting. Above the table photo's are shown of the already seen organs on the table. It is sad that the movie isn't seen on a large big wall instead of on such a small Ipad. It could also be better to place the organs in a kind of spotlight like being on surgical display. I either don't think that placing these already displayed organs again in frames makes the exhibited work stronger, it is a bit a

---

<sup>17</sup> Barrett, Michelle. *Women's Oppresion Today: Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis*. London: Verso. 1980.

<sup>18</sup> Jardin, Xeni. "A Woman's Work Is Never Done: Eliza Bennett's 'flesh canvas' embroidery" *BoingBoing*. July 21, 2014. <<http://boingboing.net/2014/07/21/a-womans-work-is-never-done.html>>



doubled vision, that doesn't provide any new information.



Fig. 9  
Agatha (Agi) Haines. *Circumventive Organs*. 2013. Mixed media.  
Photo © Agatha Haines.

Haines also uses the anatomical body as a reference, however she tries to make bio printed organs with animal cells to find an answer to the question, is it possible to bio-print organs with animal cells that work better than our own organs? Would people be able to surgically implant them? Because of this question the project looks similar like that of an uncanny Frankenstein story. Haines about her statement, “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein is a kind of paradigm for the issues discussed in this project, along with lots of the current arguments about the future of biological technology. They point the way to the excitement of what humans can achieve and, at the same time, constitute a dire warning of the dangers of transgressing the natural.”<sup>19</sup>

Hence what can be said about this project in terms of occult is that it is a form of a new interesting point of view, that is still in the realm of fantasy, because it hasn't been investigated or tested. Which makes this ultimately a thought on occult for future perspectives. However it could be interesting to investigate or experiment with this kind of idea to bio-print organs. Of course the question is whether people would want a part of an animal in them, but this is also part of a new generated taboo and another question, will we use animal parts, because it is a living creature. One that is worth talking about in the near future or other possibilities to generate new better functioning organs. In which we maybe not even have to make use of the unsettling business of organ donors.

The following concepts are quite logical, since she used animal qualities to solve human internal organ failures. The three concepts consist of the first which is called 'Electrostabilis

---

19 Haines, Agatha. “Circumventive Organs” *Dublin Science Gallery*. 2013.  
<<https://dublin.sciencegallery.com/growyourown/circumventiveorgans>>

Cardium', which is a defibrillating organ in which parts that cares for an electric impels of an electric eel is used. The new function of this organ strikes an electric current through the heart, when it recognizes it is going into a cardiac arrest, which is an uneven heartbeat or a heart attack. The second 'Tremomucosa Expulsum' uses part of rattlesnake muscles to prevent cystic fibrosis, which is a defect gene that causes a thick build up of slime in the lungs and other organs. In which the rattle snake muscles release the slime and dispels it through the stomach. The last concept is called 'Cerebrothromba Dilutus', it contains salvia cells from a leech, that has to prevent blood clotting in the brain. Of course in this concept it is clear that the leech parts are the ones sucking up the trapped blood, so the blood flow can be normalized again.

All of these concepts very much feel like a Frankenstein story, because it is not tried out or made. It is a concept of something that maybe could work or could be investigated without the animal parts, but as a future solution for a defect in the body. However Haines says, 'Bio-printed organs have not yet been tested in humans, even when made out of human cells, so the possibility of combining multi-species organs which have been bio-printed and surgically implanting them is something that is probably not going to happen for quite a long time.'<sup>20</sup>

The different artworks can be related in the sense that they are all build upon an anatomical point of view to tell a concept of something that is occult. A couple of them have been misinterpreted because of a rework of a fragile figurine, in which some people feel the need to protect the delicate image from a certain vandalism, something Harrison had discovered after receiving criticism that somehow reworking male figurines would be less harmful than reworking female ones. Or the use of a title, which made it more towards feminism, in which one get confronted directly on ones misinterpretation. All also deal with a kind of innocence and cruelty. And all of them do show a new insight into a part of knowledge that was occult before.

---

20 Griffiths, Alyn. "Circumventive Organs" *Dezeen Magazine*. November 14, 2013.

<<http://www.dezeen.com/2013/11/14/circumventive-organs-by-agatha-haines/>>

## Chapter 3

### The Illusionist And The Blind Believer

“A rumor is a social cancer: it is difficult to contain and it rots the brains of the masses. However, the real danger is that so many people find rumors enjoyable. That part causes the infection. And in such cases when a rumor is only partially made of truth, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly where the information may have gone wrong. It is passed on and on until some brave soul questions its validity; that brave soul refuses to bite the apple and let the apple eat him. Forced to start from scratch for the sake of purity and truth, that brave soul, figuratively speaking, fully amputates the information in order to protect his personal judgment. In other words, his ignorance is to be valued more than the lie believed to be true.”

<sup>21</sup> — Criss Jami

This quote was part of a philosophical poetry book *Killosophy* by Criss Jami a philosopher, poet and music artist. I think rumors can be any kind of illusion, there are so many, whether it is purely popular or a political issue. Rumors can hurt anybody involved in one, whether that is just one person or a society at large. For instance a rumor about a certain group of people, mostly because they are different and not as much understood as people who are part of the same flock. Furthermore the way news reporters talk so easily about 'funny memes' on social media, without realizing that this social viewing of this blunder might hurt someone. And it doesn't 'add' anything to the news, I mean they are not even making themselves seriously by the display of a 'meme'. Like for instance a KTVU news report of 2013. Had coverage of a tragic plane crash, in which the names of the pilots of the crashed Asiana Flight 214, were said to be known, but were obviously fake. According to The Huffington Post, 'The problem was that the names - “Sum Ting Wong,” “Wi Tu Lo”, “Ho Lee Fuk” and “Band Ding Ow” – were obviously fake. The news anchor read the names off the teleprompter and didn't bat an eye, adding that the information had been confirmed by the National Transportation Safety Board.’<sup>22</sup>

However luckily the 'arts are a humanizing force', according to Rahman, senior program officer for the Building Bridges program says 'Positive artistic experiences build a sense of fraternity, inspire people to think, and also rethink the positions that each one of us holds. It affords a means of transformation within us.’<sup>23</sup> Therefore this chapter is focused upon illusions that can come forth out of a dream state, maybe even provided by advertisements or movie mentality. An illusion that is created mostly by mainstream media 'Islamophobia' and a destruction of a religious object, that rewires the meaning of religion. I find it so very sad, that there are these boxes and this thing called Islamophobia, this hidden knowledge we are so afraid for, partly because of the media. But there is nothing to fear really, it is all in your mind, whatever you fear or whatever others say you must fear is a perception of what you think or what others think. And yes thoughts are in some cases dangerous, because nothing is certain, there are no facts, it is in your head. A promise, a certain way of living and a

---

21

Jami, Criss. *Killosophy*. Seattle: Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.

22 Fung, Katherine. KTVU Reports Racist Joke As Names Of Asiana 214 Pilots”. *The Huffington Post*. July 12, 2013 <[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/12/asiana-pilots-fake-names-racist\\_n\\_3588569.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/12/asiana-pilots-fake-names-racist_n_3588569.html)>

23 Rahman, Zeyba. “Art Can Combat Islamophobia” *The Islamic Monthly*. June 2, 2016. <<http://theislamicmonthly.com/art-can-combat-islamophobia/>>

conviction can also be an illusion. Sometimes life even feels like a dream you are living in, it is in that case hard to wake up and face the truth. Because the sense of 'being' is differently experienced by all, it can become an illusion, because you are a person and you feel, think and experience things by yourself. But you cannot see the other person as yourself, so the other person can become an illusion that could be in your way.

The Danish artist group SUPERFLEX, founded in 1993 by Jakob Fenger, Rasmus Nielsen and Bjørnstjerne Christiansen have made a work called *Investment Bank Flowerpots* (2015) which was part of the SUPERFLEX exhibition at von Barth in Basel, called *SUPERFLEX: Euphoria Now*. The title of the exhibition refers to the title of the movie *Apocalypse Now*. It also refers to the feeling of being on drugs or the perception of being in a state of illusion. Hence the work *Investment Bank Flowerpots* is a modern dream machine, in which financial deals appear fantastic at first, until the person in question gets debts and falls into despair. Therefore the twenty of the world's largest mega machines, corporate head quarter buildings, as the Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup and JPMorgan Chase are for instance 3D printed as a flowerpot. Which means that it takes care of the dream or the illusion. That is why out of every flowerpot a psychedelic plant is added as marihuana or opium, masculine plants and many more. It is a form of a type of mass scale Euphoria nowadays.



Fig. 10 and 11  
SUPERFLEX. *Investment Bank Flowerpots*. 2015. 3D prints and psychedelic plants. Installation at von Barth, Basel.  
Photo © Andreas Zimmermann.

However what I like about this work in terms of occult, is that being a part of the society of the dream machine, is creating an illusion trap for society. Of course it is maybe something we all know, but that doesn't mean it is something that we want to acknowledge. With many things that have an euphoric feeling, the illusion is mostly later on shattered and then the problems come forth. There are so many promises on the streets on television, examples of how you should live or how you should look like. Or a state of mind that focusses on imprinting answers, like 'You are successful when..., You should look like..., If you are bored you should... and many more. Even on iPads there are advertisements in game apps for children. These 'promises' can also be very cruel, not only investment banks are thriving, plastic surgeons as well, despite famous horror stories. This pile of shit is a fantastic fertile ground for investment banks, I mean they definitely want to give you money for bigger loans. It is a very sweet deal they are making in this society.

Anyhow blaming everything on advertisements or investment banks is not the whole truth, yes

both are an instrument of cruelty. But then again we deny the cruelty of our thoughts, being 'unhappy' or missing something in your life that leaves a hole. In essence any human therefore has a sense or a fascination towards cruelty because we all are unsure or insecure we have a lot of questions that can lead to a certain 'depressional state'. With that humans also have the power of the cruelty that is destroying themselves. So we are not only victims of the cruelty we see. As Bataille, a French writer, philosopher and poet, said in *The Cruel Practice of Art*, 'Generally we call cruelty that which we do not have the heart to endure, while that which we endure easily, which is ordinary to us, does not seem cruel. Thus what we call cruelty is always that of others, and not being able to refrain from cruelty we deny it as soon as it is ours. Such weaknesses suppress nothing but make it a difficult task for anyone who seeks in these byways the hidden movement of the human heart.'<sup>24</sup>

Mounir Fatmi a Moroccan artist is interested in religious objects and a symbolic destruction of these objects. Furthermore Fatmi is interested in the dismantling of ideologies and dogmas, the relation between consumption, death and historical matters. In his work Fatmi often searches to confront people with illusions or delusions of faith, which makes him not so popular among the Muslim society. Anyhow his photographic work *Evolution or Dead* (2004), appears to be a 'suicide bomb' in the eyes of the beholder, strapped onto young bodies. Hence nothing is as it seems and when the viewer looks closer, the perception of the thought 'suicide bomb', realizes a thought in the mind of someone living in this era. For what appears to be a 'suicide bomb' is actually a bunch of books with tape. Which can be seen as a good education that learns you to dismantle the line of thought that you first perceived. Of course it is not so strange that viewers see the 'suicide bomb' at first, because of all the drama in the news about it and the fear that is imposed on us.



Fig. 12  
Mounir Fatmi. *Evolution or Dead*. 2004. Mixed Media.  
Photo © Mounir Fatmi

<sup>24</sup> Bataille, Georges. "The Cruel Practice of Art" *Supervert*. 1988  
<[http://supervert.com/elibrary/georges\\_bataille/cruel\\_practice\\_of\\_art](http://supervert.com/elibrary/georges_bataille/cruel_practice_of_art)>

Hence Mounir Fatmi about the meaning of his work, 'To supply those explosive book parcels, attached to the waist of young persons, not with a detonator, but with a network of open possibilities, the artist in the broadest sense of the word embraces the intellectual utopias and social convictions of a whole brain trust, thus offering us a mental product resting upon the unspoken connections between the threads of an invisible net of perception. The sense of something threatening, like the sight of those young ones with their girdles of explosives, creates an era overflowing with media events, heavily loaded with a symbolic potential that can be turned to something constructive; the aim of the artist.'<sup>25</sup>

To me this means that the perception of delusion of the suicide bomb, stands in line with perceptions of terrorism, that somebody today can have. These perceptions can be extremely dangerous, because it is part of alienating of humans on both sides. It is interesting that Fatmi links the delusion with education, because if you have a good education shouldn't it be easy to link this delusion with the truth? Furthermore I think that young people nowadays also are fascinated by the instable environment today, mostly because this instable environment means that humanity in general from all sides need to learn an essential knowledge, that will show itself, when all hell brakes loose. It is sad, but history shows, that by showing humanity the capability of its horrors, it learns to understand the other human better.

Furthermore Mounir also adds to his story 'And in the midst of the linguistic and symbolic confusion created by a commercialized and biased current of information, the news rendered by journalists also may contain many a story of genuine human drama. But how are we to perceive and interpret such a present, so impenetrably enigmatic and heavily loaded?'<sup>26</sup> It is indeed interesting how to interpret not only such a present, but such a religion, such politics and even such a media circus. It sometimes really feels like you don't know what to believe anymore, there already are a thousand theoretical complots about 9/11 and other heavy media news, news that comes to the surface like Snowden's stories. Which both make you wonder about the freedom of speech. Of course in terms of occult, this artwork is very interesting, because of this secrecy illusion and almost catholic church alike feeling of making a 'religion' a fearful thing. Maybe in time the truth or the mystery behind this era of media circuses and strange politics, will be discovered.

But before we can even be sure about all the possibilities it beholds, Noam Chomsky, media theorist in the interview 'The Fifth Freedom' with Stephen Marshall, explains with pure logic what the word terrorism actually means. It is quite fascinating, 'Take, say, a word like 'terrorism,' for example... it has two meanings: there's a literal meaning and if you want to know what that is you can look up the official U.S. code or army manuals, [...] And it's what you would think, terrorism is "the calculated use of violence against civilians to intimidate, induce fear, often to kill, for some political, religious, or other end."<sup>27</sup> The definition according to Chomsky, "Furthermore, if you apply the literal definition, you conclude that the U.S. is a leading terrorist state because it engages in these practices all the time... And the same is true of its allies. So, right now, they're putting together what they call a 'coalition against terror', for the 'war on terror', and if you run down the list, every one of them is a leading terrorist state." However there is also a second meaning of the word 'terrorism' a propagandistic definition and the only one used according to Chomsky which is, "...terrorism which is directed against the United States or its allies and carried out by enemies." Well, that's the propagandistic use and, if you read the newspapers and the scholarly literature, they're always using that use. And that's not just the U.S. Every country does that, even the worst killers, the worst mass murderers do it. Take the Nazis, they were combating an occupied Europe. They combated what they called terrorism, namely partisan resistance,

---

<sup>25</sup> Hadria, Michele Cohen. "Evolution or Death" *Highlike*. <<http://highlike.org/text/mounir-fatmi-6/>>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Marshall, Stephen and Chomsky, Noam. "The Fifth Freedom – Noam Chomsky interviewed by Stephen Marshall" *Guerrilla News Network*. November, 2001 <[https://chomsky.info/200111\\_04/](https://chomsky.info/200111_04/)>



which often was, in fact, terrorism in the technical sense.'<sup>28</sup>

This is very interesting for me because it is an example of what a logic realistic mind can reach with the research of the actual word 'terrorism'. How easily that hidden facade can be shattered by just logical thinking is fantastic. Maybe this world isn't that hard to understand at all, after all people make mistakes and in those mistakes the truth will be revealed sooner or later. Hence it still remains interesting how media can reach a responsibility regarding 'the religion of fear' and how people can be so influenced by it.

Anyhow another work by Fatmi called *Maximum Sensation* (2010) is an installation which makes use of the desecration (disrespectful, destructive treatment) of religion. In which Fatmi made prayer rugs, used during Islamic prayer, on top of skateboards. During his exhibition with ADN Gallery the floor was a sea of colorful skateboarded prayer rugs. The bringing together of these particular different objects, brings a new meaning. Kate Lismore a writer at Kombini in the article 'Combining Skating & Spirituality, Mounir Fatmi's Prayer Mat Skateboards', explains why she thinks that skateboarding and religion are emerged together in Fatmi's work. 'Like religion, skateboarding has over it's time in popular culture gone from fringe movement, to a big commercial industry, and back again, with those passionate about skateboarding trying to find a healthy balance between the two. This is perhaps why Mounir selected skating, as it reflects in many ways the extremes of how people can interact with religion, such as islam.'<sup>29</sup>



Fig. 13  
Mounir Fatmi. *Maximum Sensation*. 2010. Skateboards and prayer rugs. Untitled artfair in Miami, 2014.  
Photo © Mounir Fatmi, ADN Galeria.

Of course this could be an explanation as to the intension of combining these two objects

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Lismore, Kate. "Combining Skating & Spirituality, Mounir Fatmi's Prayer Mat Skateboards" *Konbini*. 2014. <<http://www.konbini.com/en/inspiration/mounir-fatmi-skateboard-prayer-mat/>>

together. Although I am not really sure if you can place the word 'pop culture' with the skateboard and religion in that way together, I suppose if you look at pop culture as a whole being a religion in itself you could. I am wondering if it couldn't be another reason, for instance the title is called 'Maximum Sensation', doesn't that say already something about the work. Maybe these objects are both entitlements of surrender. For if we take the skateboard, how many people haven't fallen from grace or surrendered the falling and pain in an attempt to become better, more skillfully or to simply wanting to trick or free their mind. I think in terms of surrender, a religion is as well part of surrendering yourself to the 'unknown'. For it is not known what is happening in the future will you fall from grace or rise above it? This 'Maximum Sensation' for me is also part of the perception of the mind for you kneel or fall in the deep searching for forgiveness or knowledge. But then of course it is also a perception of the mind of the unbeliever, the one that doesn't understand the 'Maximum Sensation' of surrendering to the 'unknown'. Someone that could also fear the 'unknown' identity, when commercialized media imposed it upon them. However this faith in commercialized media is also a kind of a jump into the deep. Hence the question really is, should you surrender to this hidden identity or think for yourself?

For if you surrender you give into this trap, according to Bataille, 'Indeed, if there is any truth to the idea that human life is a trap, can we think – it's strange, but so what? - that, since torture is “universally offered to us as the bait,” reflecting on its fascination may enable us to discover what we are and to discover a higher world whose perspectives exceed the trap?’<sup>30</sup> Of course one can do that, but the problem with it is that you accept to sacrifice yourself for that fascination. And in doing so, you are not sure whether you will find out what you are looking for and end up being tortured by your fascination in the first place. But then again to live is a form of torment, we are born in a cold, cruel world, find out what the hell we are doing here, maybe even pass the knowledge we found on, if we are luckily, maybe even a form of escaping that trap, and then die. In that essence life is cruel, but if we somehow manage to find this life beyond. That we can surrender to, we still are tortured by our belief, because there are rules and rituals that give a restriction. In that sense we are welcomingly tortured in hope to be enlightened in the world beyond.

However if we are non believers or don't belief in the same religion we are also doomed, because we either didn't deserve to live in the life beyond, because we didn't welcomingly torture ourselves according to the conviction or we chose the wrong conviction to be welcomingly tortured by.

So that leaves us to conclude that no matter which conviction we choose we still remain human with the same dogma. That is that we are not sure about anything and that we get tortured no matter what we do, in that sense claiming to be the best conviction is worthless, it is a choice people make, that we cannot be sure about. And surrendering to this world is something that we have to do, because we live. But of course you can think for yourself whether or not you are surrendering to other temptations or illusions, it is part of a choice we have. But because the 'soul' is a -non-manmade mystery, there is a sense of being that goes beyond a human body. And that is a very fascinating hidden knowledge, it means that we matter and gives hope. After scientists try to recreate life, by building robots, the structure of the body might be accomplished, but to give the robot a mind of its own, they are missing a vital part of being.

---

30 Bataille, Georges. “The Cruel Practice of Art” *Supervert*.1988  
<[http://supervert.com/elibrary/georges\\_bataille/cruel\\_practice\\_of\\_art](http://supervert.com/elibrary/georges_bataille/cruel_practice_of_art)>



## Chapter 4

### Error 404 Soul Not Found

“Before the soul can see, the Harmony within must be attained, and fleshly eyes be rendered blind to all illusion.”<sup>31</sup> — Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky was an American occultist, publicist and writer this quote is part of her spiritual book 'The Voice of Silence'. What I like about this quote is that 'all illusion' is a term of things we believe or want to believe in our life. Most of it is a perception of a reality that we sometimes don't even know so well. Illusion can also create a judgmental perception upon someone else, which is very dangerous. Anyhow illusion is also present in the form of robotics, a hidden identity and a subject for a lot of uncanny projects. Partly because this is a new media and there is a lot possible with it. However robotics are also part of a fascination, for nobody quite knows what is possible with it. Scientists are still experimenting with it, but look at some of its big creations, atomic energy, a black hole, these are quite dangerous discoveries, from which I am not sure people should have discovered them. Of course there are also many good robotic discoveries that help people in fantastic ways as prosthetics and 3D printing, from which also houses are build. However nowadays artists are as well working with robotics, may it be either an existing prototype or one that is a possibility for the future, but either way the artists, I mention, mirror the behavior of people in an uncertain future. With the possibilities of an estranged or apocalyptic occult, that either people don't like to see or never have thought of.



Fig. 14 and 15  
Superflux. *Drone Aviary*. 2015. Mixed Media.  
Photo © Superflux.

Superflux has designed a future perspective of what could be an intentional reality in the not so distant future. With *Drone Aviary* (2015) Superflux questions, if it is normal for the government to know so much about us and to watch us 24/7 as lab rats? Do we then become objects or toys of our own governments or can we keep our humanity? Superflux has made concepts of different drone usage for instance 'Save on tax, Invest in Happiness' which measures the interest of people by the responds in their faces, as well as it tracks their age. This is an example which could be an instrument of advertisement in the not so distant future. Then there is 'RouteHawk' a drone that has similar functions to that of a future police man. For it controls traffic, for example, it can ask you to pull over, when it seems like you drive to hard. Anyhow there are more drone concepts as 'Newsbreaker' a media drone, 'Nightwatchman', a surveillance UAV with infrared vision and 'FlyCam Instadrone', a drone for personal use.

It is not that strange that Superflux has mentioned a future possibility for drones in the first place. Drones have become a very important part of personal, commercial, military usage and news reporters also make use of drones to cover news events with live streaming drones. Therefore it is not so strange that children these days make use of drone toys. However the behavior of our society in normalizing these dangerous intentional equipment, for children is already outrageous. Superflux's Co founder and designer Jon Adern said, 'People think that drones are either good or bad, but technologies don't exist in silos. The truth emerges from an ambiguous space.'<sup>32</sup> Of course I agree with him, for it is the ambiguous space which makes room for the discussion in the first place. If there wouldn't be an ambiguous space like most things do have, it wouldn't be part of a certain hidden knowledge about the object, person or place. A hidden knowledge of the perception of what it can become or the speculation of one.



Fig. 16 and 17  
Jordan Wolfson. *Female Figure*. 2014. Mixed Media. Installation at David Zwirner Art Gallery, New York.  
Photo © John Smith.

Artist Jordan Wolfson showed in an exhibition at the David Zwirner Art Gallery, New York a very uncanny artwork called *Female Figure* (2014). This robotic work is a mix between Madonna, a witches face and hyper sexualization. Seen in the way it is barely clothed, yet

<sup>32</sup> Jozuka, Emiko. "Drone Aviary: Imagining When UAV's Will Be as Common as Birds" *Motherboard*. April 13, 2015. <<http://motherboard.vice.com/read/drone-aviary-imagining-when-uavs-will-be-as-common-as-birds>>

splattered with black dirt. The robot is attached to a pole in the mirror, it dances, lip syncs to pop music from Lady Gaga and Robin Thicke, it can also make eye contact using facial recognition technology. In terms of art history it has connection points with that of Degas's Little Dancer and the puppets of Hans Bellmer. However this is not just a robotic doll, artist Wolfson gave his artwork various themes, like cyborg theory, the Uncanny Valley, the objectification of women under the male gaze, the doppelgänger and the fusion of art and technology. The artwork is exhibited in a room which a selection of people can go into, to make it more of a personal uncanny tension feeling. For the robot has sensors that know when a person enters and leaves the room, in which it can maintain the uncanny gaze between spectator and robot, and reverses the question of the spectator. In the sense of the spectator as the object instead of the other way around. It uses phrases about the life of its creator and with the voice of its creator Wolfson. For example 'My mother is dead. My father is dead. I'm gay. I'd like to be a poet. This is my house.'<sup>33</sup> A quote that is not shocking anymore, because it is so part of this society nowadays. Hence being gay is in some societies still a point of discussing or being part of the uncanniness, a human from space.

The robotic doll is a very strong part of the hidden knowledge, it looks as if it is part of an underground society of witches. Piercing into your eyes, behind a mask, identity unknown, with a certain knowledge you will never discover, but can speculate about during this uncanny moment. "Close your eyes, it says almost seductively now and then, but you can't, because you know that the animatronic machine being is then going to break free and kill you."<sup>34</sup> It is part of the fore mentioned ambiguous space, it is in between the feeling of uneasiness and safety or usual and unusual. It portrays a mirrored image of society in the way a woman is projected as a sexual lust object in pop art, commercials and our society. By giving it this weird mask it makes the spectator wonder whether or not this is something that a woman wants to be viewed like this object of affection. Hence by giving it at phrases of male voice at times, it becomes part of a trans sexual image and part of the otherness and a point of taboo. But that is not all it is also part of pretending to be someone you are not. In the image of a muddled Madonna, it becomes a look a like, a doppelgänger. How many people on youtube are wanting to look like or pretend to be someone in pop culture. Pop culture also effects people in terms of wanting everything 'perfect' or 'better' with the use of plastic surgery. But how many times isn't this outcome part of a failure.

As Gregory Miller writer of *The Uncanny Valley: Tales from a Lost Town*, has written, 'We both loved what she called "safe terror," the chance to feel afraid without actually being in danger – like watching a horror movie or reading a good ghost story.'<sup>35</sup> Maybe this is the reason why 'occult' or the different meaning of it in popular culture is so very interesting to the mainstream world. It is part of the ambiguous space of being safe and being in terror or finding this extremely cool. Because it is something you don't really understand or feel like it exist and therefore it becomes a 'safe' terrified experience. However this sentence by Miller is also very true for the hidden knowledge part, it is what people don't understand where the terror or threat comes from. While it is actually not so much terror in the first place but part of a resistance that strives for a safe surrounding. In terms of art and occult, the safety for the artist is the work that he creates, while the inspiration of terror comes from the world outside.

*Exoskeletal MK1 (2013)* an artwork by Dutch artist Christiaan Zwanikken. Is a robotic body-extension suit with the idea of the Mesoamerican believe of the Animal spirit, called Nagual, were a human being has the power to shapeshift (turn himself into an animal) by the use of a sacred rite. The Nagual talks about the destruction and decay of the world by humans. The

33 Feldhaus, Timo. "Jordan Wolfson's Robot: in the Moment of Terror" *Spike Art Magazine*. 2014.  
<<http://www.spikeartmagazine.com/en/articles/jordan-wolfsons-robot-moment-terror>>

34 Ibid.

35 Miller, Gregory. *The Uncanny Valley: Tales from a Lost Town*. Pittsburgh: West Arcadia Press. 2014.

exhibition of Christiaan Zwanikken 'Nature Rewired', is differently viewed some people love it others hate it. This is also part of the ambiguous space of feeling threatened and safe. The work isn't worn but attached to a pole in the middle of a room. However if a model wears this artwork, the concept of shapeshifting and the idea of a spirit who warns humans, becomes clearer and frightening.

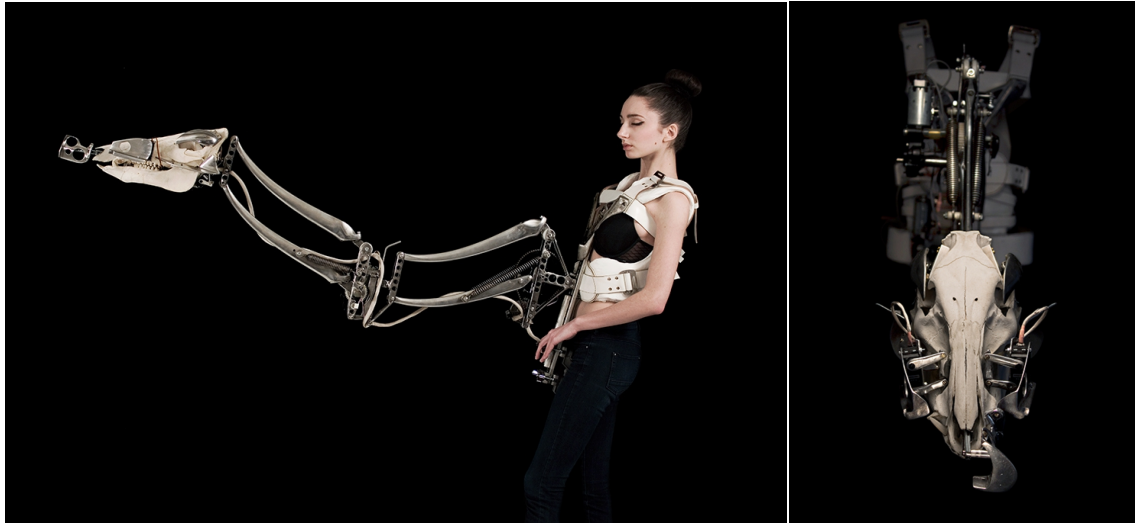


Fig. 18 and 19  
Christiaan Zwanikken. *Exoskeletal MK1*. 2013. Mixed Media. Kinetica Art Fair London, 2013.  
Photo © Christiaan Zwanikken.

In a try out performance at the Kinetica Art Fair in London, 2013, that has been filmed and can be viewed on Vimeo. It is seen that the dancer who wears the prosthesis has difficulty balancing because of the prosthesis, and causes her to move like a marionette in which you see that the prosthesis has taken over. However the video is a representation of the performance and gives a superficial experience. Because it leaves the experiences of sphere, being part of a group of viewers, viewing the artwork up close, seeing the materials it is made out of and its impact out.

That aside the performance of the Zwanikken's artwork shows the intensional future apocalyptic prosthesis. Because this installation is part of being a burden to the body, while at the same time warns us of the burden we lay on nature itself. It becomes an animal guidance teacher telling us not to do the things we don't want to acknowledge, because of our own selfishness or reasons that are in a sense imposed on us by media. The body as a marionette is an example of this line of thinking, which is also part of a surrender to the 'unknown'. Whether if we don't change things or if we really should want to change things. Anyhow part of the question is that we are able to shape our own sense of 'the unknown', by our own hidden knowledge that we won't acknowledge. Therefore this work is as well part of behavior of people and communication between people.

Writer C.S. Lewis wrote in *The Screwtape Letters* a Christian apologetic novel, 'Humans are amphibians...half spirit and half animal...as spirits they belong to the eternal world, but as animals they inhabit time. This means that while their spirit can be directed to an eternal object, their bodies, passions, and imaginations are in continual change, for to be in time, means to change. Their nearest approach to constancy, therefore, is undulation--the repeated return to a level from which they repeatedly fall back, a series of troughs and peaks.'<sup>36</sup> There

<sup>36</sup> Lewis, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. New York: Touchstone, 1996.

could be some truth in what Lewis says, for humans in a sense or also undefined creatures, still we call ourselves 'human'. But in theory it could be this kind of way, for we become used to patterns and those patterns are a structure of certainty. However those patterns are not always good for us, hence it is a way of a behavioral instinct. Everyone has another behavioral system whether this can be called calm or never resting it is whether feels good to the individual. So everybody in a certain way is an instrument of hidden knowledge themselves, only the individual knows really what its individual resistance is about. But only a group of mutual resistance and the perception of that group can be part of an ambiguous space in which the lines between 'safe' and 'terror' become a discussion point for further discovery.



## Conclusion

### The Perception of Ambiguous Space in the Mind of Someone Living

To learn which questions are unanswerable, and not to answer them: this skill is most needful in times of stress and darkness."<sup>37</sup>— Ursula K. Le Guin

To define something is bad or good is non-existent. There is only the possibility of pointing out the ambiguous character of the questions that point towards a good or bad issue, that make the questions either seem 'good' or 'bad'. And hoping to find an answer to that question as to why it is seen as an either 'good' or 'bad' manner. However of course there are also questions that shouldn't be answered or experimented with in the first place. Hence it is that those questions are frequently most interesting for scientists to prove it is possible. Of course I understand the drive and boost of scientist to investigate this kind of questions for it is after all part of the hidden knowledge and who wouldn't want the honor to discover it. Recreating a black hole on Earth that can blow up in our faces and swallow the Earth itself, because we don't know enough about, doesn't really seem like a fantastic idea in the first place. Or for instance 'let's create nuclear energy', to make an atomic bomb, to blow each other up in the future, success guaranteed. Or use nuclear energy, but what to do with the nuclear waste? I understand the fascination of discovering something new, the problem is however there are more people in the world than only those who are interested in the wisdom of it.

Some mysteries should remain unrevealed. Man-made mysteries, however, are the ones that are most interesting for me as an art student to explore. Because people make mistakes there is a lot you can discover by researching this ambiguous space. It becomes furthermore interesting because this ambiguous space brings forth a lot of different questions. Non-man-made mysteries are mysteries that can't be proven by scientists and therefore seem alienated, but this alienated creations still are created on Earth and therefore probably have to do with some human life form. Because it is either highly advanced for that time period or it has a strange discovery in the skull among other things, other than the possibility of the deformation of the skull, that in history was done by different tribes, those things can be called non-man-made, because scientists are not sure where the idea comes from or that discovery is made by.

Anyhow to come back to an ambiguous space, it is part of being two things at once, but nobody really knows why or whatever is really happening. It is a thrill to read into these different points of views and within find some logic or points that could be helpful and educational for yourself as individual. Of course every artist is different and works differently, but I think work that balances upon an ambiguous space can be really interesting. For 'hidden knowledge' is something that doesn't have to be displayed as an answer to this ambiguous space. It is what is discovered of this 'hidden knowledge', whether towards the viewer or the artist himself. Which makes 'hidden knowledge' in art very interesting and educational for both parties.

I think that explains a lot as to why I find that art and hidden knowledge go well together. For instance the first example I mentioned in the introduction *Colored Sculpture* 2016 by Jordan

Wolfson. The artwork has numerous meanings to interpret for the viewer in that sense it is ambiguous. In this artwork there is hidden knowledge, however the viewer can interpret differently if he so chooses, but then again it is impossible not to feel a connection toward this robot, as it shows a tortured, and in that sense a violent devastating emotion, that relates back to the hidden figure of humanizing emotion. And in that sense makes the spectator wonder about it, because it is fascinated about its humanity. Furthermore when implying 'hidden knowledge' in your work, researching the things you don't know yet can be an improvement of the project you are working on or the artwork you are making. In doing so, whether it is a spatial project for a neighborhood or a big political issue, the knowledge gained on these different spaces, from history to contemporary knowledge and every research emerged from that. This becomes a mirror to humanity, whether just a neighborhood or the political space and maybe even to the artist himself. Because the artist and spectator might learn to maybe choose a standing point or be more open minded or be better in nuancing judgement.

Then there was this issue of violence in artistic display of possibly hidden knowledge. Of course violence is something that is as well in the ambiguous space. It can be discussed endlessly about what is too violent and what is not. It is a very tricky subject, for it is easily misplaced. However I do understand why artists use violence in their work as an outlet for experience, being part of a space, emotion from the artist himself or to shock people. Mostly the shocking part is just a referential matter of that the artwork is not easily to be forgotten. But then again the fascination of torture, recognizing it in what others do and because of being human the torture we lay upon us, from being rejected to a broken heart for example, we understand torture as a form that either swallows us or can be seen as a guilty pleasure. And implementing this torture into artwork it also can be a form of expression and emotion of a human and therefore can become recognizable or emotional for the spectator. Then there should always be a reason as to why it should be displayed this way and what the audience exactly is. You don't want to give children who might visit a nightmarish experience in viewing art.

With that said I close this thesis with this Welsh Proverb, about the possibilities and the 'hidden knowledge' a person has, to become more than he would ever dreamed of. The seed is there, you have to discover how to let it grow. "A seed hidden in the heart of an apple, is an orchid invisible."

## Bibliography

- Agamben, Giorgio.** *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (California: Stanford University Press, 1998); first published in Italian as *Homo sacer: il potere sovrano e la nuda vida* (Turin: Einaudi, 1995)
- Barrett, Michelle.** *Women's Oppression Today: Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis*. London: Verso. 1980.
- Bataille, Georges.** "The Cruel Practice of Art" *Supervert*. 1988  
<[http://supervert.com/elibrary/georges\\_bataille/cruel\\_practice\\_of\\_art](http://supervert.com/elibrary/georges_bataille/cruel_practice_of_art)>
- Bennett, Eliza.** "A Womens Work is Never Done" *Eliza Bennett*.  
<<http://www.elizabennett.co.uk/a-womans-work-is-never-done-text/>>
- Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna.** *The Voice of the Silence*. London: The Theosophical Publishing Company, 1889.
- Breasted, James Henry.** *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*. Birmingham: Division of Gryphon Editions, Ltd. 1984.
- Camerotti, Alfredo.** *Aesthetic Journalism: How to Inform without Informing*. Bristol: Intellect, 2009.
- Chaplin, Julia.** "Why Celebrities Are So Into Artist Daniel Arsham" *The New York Times*. January 21, 2015.  
<[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/style/why-celebrities-are-so-into-the-artist-daniel-arsham.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/style/why-celebrities-are-so-into-the-artist-daniel-arsham.html?_r=1)>
- Feldhaus, Timo.** "Jordan Wolfson's Robot: in the Moment of Terror" *Spike Art Magazine*. 2014.  
<<http://www.spikeartmagazine.com/en/articles/jordan-wolfsons-robot-moment-terror>>
- Ferro, Shaunacy.** "Why Designer Daniel Arsham Won't Work For Anyone But Himself" *Fastcodesign*. March 20, 2015. <<https://www.fastcodesign.com/3044031/why-designer-daniel-arsham-wont-work-for-anyone-but-himself>>
- Fung, Katherine.** KTVU Reports Racist Joke As Names Of Asiana 214 Pilots". *The Huffington Post*. July 12, 2013 <[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/12/asiana-pilots-fake-names-racist\\_n\\_3588569.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/12/asiana-pilots-fake-names-racist_n_3588569.html)>
- Griffiths, Alyn.** "Circumventive Organs" *Dezeen Magazine*. November 14, 2013.  
<<http://www.dezeen.com/2013/11/14/circumventive-organs-by-agatha-haines/>>
- Guin, Ursula K. Le.** *The Left Hand of Darkness*. New York: Ace Books, 1969.
- Hadria, Michele Cohen.** "Evolution or Death" *Highlike*. <<http://highlike.org/text/mounir-fatmi-6/>>
- Haines, Agatha.** "Circumventive Organs" *Dublin Science Gallery*. 2013.  
<<https://dublin.sciencegallery.com/growyourown/circumventiveorgans>>
- Jamie, Criss.** *Killosophy*. Seattle: Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015.
- Jardin, Xenì.** "A Woman's Work Is Never Done: Eliza Bennett's 'flesh canvas' embroidery" *BoingBoing*. July 21, 2014. <<http://boingboing.net/2014/07/21/a-womans-work-is-never-done.html>>
- Jernigan, Lee Wilkie.** *Diddlysquatch*. Pittsburgh: Dorrance Publishing, 2012.
- Jonathan, Jones.** "Brains in Jars: Artists' Fascination With Anatomy" *The Guardian*. 3 April 2012.  
<<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2012/apr/03/artists-fascination-with-anatomy>>



**Jozuka, Emiko.** "Drone Aviary: Imagining When UAV's Will Be as Common as Birds" *Motherboard*. April 13, 2015. <<http://motherboard.vice.com/read/drone-aviary-imagining-when-uavs-will-be-as-common-as-birds>>

**Keats, Jonathon.** "Romanian Artist Daniel Knorr Uses Pulverized Police Files For 'Archaeological Art'" *Forbes*. January 30, 2014. <<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jonathonkeats/2014/01/30/hey-nsa-archaeologists-are-watching-but-probably-not-the-ones-youre-thinking/#74fea4423fcc>>

**Lewis, C.S.** *The Screwtape Letters*. New York: Touchstone, 1996.

**Lismore, Kate.** "Combining Skating & Spirituality, Mounir Fatmi's Prayer Mat Skateboards" *Konbini*. 2014. <<http://www.konbini.com/en/inspiration/mounir-fatmi-skateboard-prayer-mat/>>

**Marshall, Stephen and Chomsky, Noam.** "The Fifth Freedom – Noam Chomsky interviewed by Stephen Marshall" *Guerrilla News Network*. November, 2001 <[https://chomsky.info/200111\\_04/](https://chomsky.info/200111_04/)>

**Mehdi, Anisa.** "Art Can Combat Islamophobia" *The Islamic Monthly*. June 2, 2016. <<http://theislamicmonthly.com/art-can-combat-islamophobia/>>

**Miller, Gregory.** *The Uncanny Valley: Tales from a Lost Town*. Pittsburgh: West Arcadia Press. 2014.

**Moroz, Sarah.** "This Artist Tattoos and Beheads China Figurines to Take on Art History's Gender Bias" *i-D*. March 23, 2016. <[http://i-d.vice.com/en\\_us/article/this-artist-tattoos-and-beheads-china-figurines-to-take-on-art-historys-gender-bias?utm\\_source=tcpfbus](http://i-d.vice.com/en_us/article/this-artist-tattoos-and-beheads-china-figurines-to-take-on-art-historys-gender-bias?utm_source=tcpfbus)>

**Poe, Edgar Allen.** *The Black Cat*. Bookclassic, 2015.

**Rahman, Zeyba.** "Art Can Combat Islamophobia" *The Islamic Monthly*. June 2, 2016. <<http://theislamicmonthly.com/art-can-combat-islamophobia/>>

**Rothstein, Adam.** "Conjuring the Internet Art and Contemporary Magic". *The Creators Project*. August 8, 2015. <<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/conjuring-the-internet-art-and-contemporary-magic>>

**Sartre, Jean Paul.** *Being and Nothingness*. London: Routledge. August 28, 2003.

Women You Should Know. "Hand Embroidery: Artist Stitches Her Flesh To Show That A Woman's Work Is Never Done" January 2, 2014. *Women You Should Know*. <<http://www.womenyoushouldknow.net/hand-embroidery-artist-stitches-her-flesh-to-show-that-a-womans-work-is-never-done/>>

**Zsolt, Asztalos.** "A Bombastic Story" *Funzine*. March, 2013. <<http://www.funzine.hu/2013-03-a-bombastic-story-zsolt-asztalos/>>

## Photographs

### Fig. 1

Jordan Wolfson. *Colored Sculpture*, 2016. Mixed media. London and David Zwirner, New York, doi: <http://autre.love/journal/2016/5/25/jordan-wolfson-sculptural-work-david-zwirner-gallery-in-new-york>

### Fig. 2

Jordan Wolfson. *Colored Sculpture*, 2016. Mixed media. London and David Zwirner, New York, doi: [http://www.notey.com/@artobserved\\_unofficial/external/9900904/new-york-%E2%80%94-jordan-wolfson-%E2%80%9C-colored-sculpture%E2%80%9D-at-david-zwirner-through-june-25th-2016.html](http://www.notey.com/@artobserved_unofficial/external/9900904/new-york-%E2%80%94-jordan-wolfson-%E2%80%9C-colored-sculpture%E2%80%9D-at-david-zwirner-through-june-25th-2016.html)

### Fig. 3

Zsolt Asztalos. *Fired But Unexploded*. 2011. Mixed media, doi: <https://www.artsy.net/article/hungarianpavilion-about-the-installation-fired-but-unexploded>

**Fig. 4**

Daniel Knorr. *State Of Mind*. 2007. Exhibition 'The Way of the Shovel: Art as Archaeology', MCA Chicago, doi: <http://arttimes.co.za/romanian-artist-daniel-knorr-uses-pulverized-police-files-archaeological-art/>

**Fig. 5**

Daniel Arsham. *Welcome to the Future*. 2014. Mixed media. Installation at Locust Projects in Miami, doi: [https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/style/why-celebrities-are-so-into-the-artist-daniel-arsham.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/22/style/why-celebrities-are-so-into-the-artist-daniel-arsham.html?_r=0)

**Fig. 6**

Jessica Harrison. *Broken*. 2014. Ceramics, doi: <https://i-d.vice.com/nl/article/deze-porseleinen-vrouwen-zijn-meer-dan-mooie-poppetjes>

**Fig. 7**

Jessica Harrison. *Broken*. 2014. Ceramics, doi: <https://i-d.vice.com/nl/article/deze-porseleinen-vrouwen-zijn-meer-dan-mooie-poppetjes>

**Fig. 8**

Eliza Bennett. *A Women's Work Is Never Done*. 2013. Film and photographs, doi: <http://eyespired.nl/hand-geborduurde-patronen>

**Fig. 9**

Agatha (Agi) Haines. *Circumventive Organs*. 2013. Mixed media, doi: [http://we-make-money-not-art.com/circumventive\\_organs/](http://we-make-money-not-art.com/circumventive_organs/)

**Fig. 10**

SUPERFLEX. *Investment Bank Flowerpots*. 2015. 3D prints and psychedelic plants. Installation at von Bartha, Basel, doi: [http://paulsartworld.blogspot.nl/2015\\_06\\_01\\_archive.html](http://paulsartworld.blogspot.nl/2015_06_01_archive.html)

**Fig. 11**

SUPERFLEX. *Investment Bank Flowerpots*. 2015. 3D prints and psychedelic plants. Installation at von Bartha, Basel, doi: [http://www.superflex.net/tools/investment\\_bank\\_flowerpots/image/3#g](http://www.superflex.net/tools/investment_bank_flowerpots/image/3#g)

**Fig. 12**

Mounir Fatmi. *Evolution or Dead*. 2004. Mixed Media, doi: <http://mounirfatmi.com/work-63-08.html>

**Fig. 13**

Mounir Fatmi. *Maximum Sensation*. 2010. Skateboards and prayer rugs. Untitled artfair in Miami, 2014, doi: <http://fadmagazine.com/2014/12/30/prayer-mats-and-skateboards-together-as-art-from-artist-mounir-fatmi/>

**Fig. 14**

Superflux. *Drone Aviary*. 2015. Mixed Media, doi: <https://www.dezeen.com/2015/06/10/movie-drone-aviary-superflux-imagines-london-patrolled-fleet-drones/>

**Fig. 15**

Superflux. *Drone Aviary*. 2015. Mixed Media, doi: <https://www.dezeen.com/2015/06/10/movie-drone-aviary-superflux-imagines-london-patrolled-fleet-drones/>

**Fig. 16**

Jordan Wolfson. *Female Figure*. 2014. Mixed Media. Installation at David Zwirner Art Gallery, New York, doi: <http://www.spikeartmagazine.com/en/articles/jordan-wolfsons-robot-moment-terror>

**Fig. 17**

Jordan Wolfson. *Female Figure*. 2014. Mixed Media. Installation at David Zwirner Art Gallery, New York, doi: <http://www.spikeartmagazine.com/en/articles/jordan-wolfsons-robot-moment-terror>

**Fig. 18**

Christiaan Zwanikken. *Exoskeletal MK1*. 2013. Mixed Media. Kinetica Art Fair London, 2013, doi: <https://christiaanzwanikken.com/2014/10/29/exoskeletal/>

**Fig. 19**

Christiaan Zwanikken. *Exoskeletal MK1*. 2013. Mixed Media. Kinetica Art Fair London, 2013, doi: <https://christiaanzwanikken.com/2014/10/29/exoskeletal/>