

I came here to research the creative process.

Where I am

What I have decided to do is to take the perspective necessary for me to re-view and re-understand my own art production in the past and become conscious of how it has depended upon three different but not unassociated concepts: *function*, *aesthetics* and *ethics*. As well to figure how it has been the relation between what I propose and what the other experiences from her o his own poetics

Where I come from

Without any pretensions about speaking of a right or a better way to create an artwork, I will concern myself with and write about a process that I have had the fortune of having been through in order to obtain the criteria necessary for me to progress.

Due to the all the energy and time that materializing ideas requires, sometimes there is not an adequate space or moment in which to question and become conscious of what happens during the creative processes. They occur even simultaneously and the artist is pushed too strongly by the inertia of making so that one chance is not found to understand exactly what has been going on.

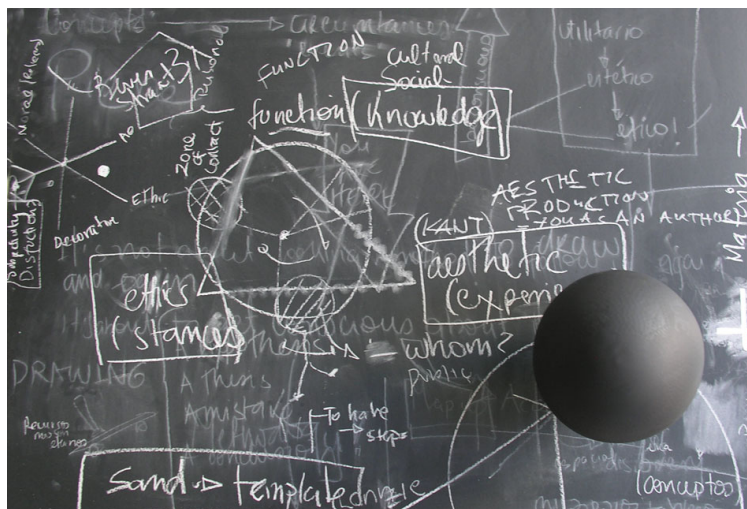
This is the occasion to do it.

I am here with questions, answers and ideas that I have kept in my pockets for a while. I am also here with the time, the space, the environment and the company with which to “draw” these concerns down.

Where do I go?

It begins with a re-view of professional evolution, then, chapter-by-chapter it develops the concepts of frame, idea, artwork, audience, and finally the idea of in-between-ness.

One or several events can happen between two sites and thus serve to connect them. In other words, in order to have a drawing it is necessary to have at least two sites (two points) and something that brings these together (lines). This means that drawing can then be thought of as a manner of acting: performing, playing or behaving. For some people this might seem logical. However, when translated into Spanish, my native language, the verb 'to draw' means to make lines and to depict. When I realized the difference between drawing's meanings according to the language used I decided to utilize this in the initial steps of my research. I therefore employ as a basis the meaning of "to draw" and what this implies regarding its English definition: to cause, to formulate, to move, to bring, to inhale, to distort, to appeal, to conclude. (1)



Therefore, I began to draw.

Many years ago, I studied and worked as an industrial designer. I was fascinated by objects themselves and how there are some that do not need to be explained before being used. Here “more universal is equal to ‘better’ form” and this provides the main formula for a proper methodology of design that includes technical, sociocultural, economic and ergonomic criteria.

However, it was not until I went back to university to learn about art that I discovered how *form* was not only the end of a thinking process, nor a stimulus able to inspire an action or a movement that becomes automatic with several repetitions. Instead, I engaged with *form* as a beginning, an excuse to explore, a spark to ignite myriad ideas, and a stimulus that invites us to experience it through 360 degrees. Therefore, I stopped pursuing only end points as logotypes and began to chase the starting points. I created a life-sized template of a BMX bike inspired by the concept behind this possibility.

Following the new conceptions about form, function was replaced by aesthetics as the core of working. It was no easy; it took time and required a process of unlearning and getting experience to listen to instinct before reason.

Now, *function* is no longer the principle that my research relies on. Instead, *aesthetics* have become the platform for developing ideas. The object does not have to work (be utile), nor does it has to be beautiful (be decorative). The object does not supply solutions, nor respond to any



other necessity. The object can respond to its own necessity of being. I remember this each time I find an artist who removes the utilitarian part of an object to produce a statement about the artwork, such as the duo Elmgreen and Dragset in their Powerless Structures, where they “shake off the customary meanings of a space and thus create room for new and different interpretations.”  
(2)



Therefore, communication, purpose and waiting responses evolved as well:

Communication between the producer and the consumer became supported by the own *senses*, and not by the *logic* shared by both. One example of this can be found in

Isaac Julien's film installation *Ten Thousand Waves*, shown at the Eye Museum last autumn (3). In this kind of powerful work there indeed exists a narrative, but this is not in itself the goal. Instead, it is one of many elements beside such as music, design of the site and poetics of each scene that allow the spectator to become immersed in a container, to be enclosed for one hour at the scenery in order to expand his or her sensibilities.

Deductions have been replaced by imaginative thinking. This means that objectives and actions might arouse the imagination and curiosity better than prescriptive conclusions or answers constructed with the knowledge that one already possesses. For instance, tiles might be comprehended not as "thin, flat or convex slabs of hard material such as baked clay or plastic, laid in rows to cover walls, floors, and roofs" (4), but as a board game, a cluster of fields sewn together or a typical Roman city constructed along a grid pattern. For Deleuze, "experience exceeds our concepts by presenting novelty, and this raw experience of difference actualizes an idea, unfettered by our prior categories, forcing us to invent new ways of thinking." But of course, this is only possible if the people involved in the process have the predisposition for this or if they are pushed into doing it.

According with Klaas Hoek's words "while design is chasing the answer, art is looking for the question".

Finally, the success of any message is not based on standardization, but instead on conceiving of each person as having his or her own poetics. I remember, on one occasion, designing a stretcher to transport patients through footpaths along which it was not possible to drive a car. The stretcher clearly had to be able to accommodate a wide range of physical weights, sizes and heights for the people it would carry. The instructions for use had to be clear and singular. Today, one of the procedures that I employ is that of removing information to create blank spaces in the conviction that each will fill these with his or her own poetics and knowledge. I expect to receive as many interpretations as there are viewers confronting the artwork.

After the change explained above, in which fundamental principles for conceiving an object were altered from function to aesthetics, "something" else began to inspire my work: ethics.

It started to search for its own place in society and inquired about the social responsibility that I have as an artist; here my own stance began to permeate the work through questions and answers. At this point, it is necessary to recognize that this was not intentional; I did not notice this occurrence until now, in this long-term exercise of writing down which has given me the opportunity of looking back and analyzing, especially at the last solo exhibition in Bogotá titled OVEReXPOSURE. (5)

It explored how after being exposed again and again to the same condition one, loses interest in it, the capability to perceive it, or worse, he or she develops some kind of tolerance or even a negation of this fact to protect him or herself. More so if the story might disturb or question the spectator's comfort zone, pushing them towards what is deeper and tougher when one is forced by circumstances to develop such mechanisms in order to survive.



The exhibition was planned and realized for a non-commercial site as I did not want to feel the pressure of producing pieces for sale; I felt some kind of freedom in focusing on the means of creation, on the objective of enlightening other minds during an instant flash about how there are certain twisted conditions in our society that become usual after our repeated exposure to them; we just let them pass, without being aware of what they cover, one after another, yet still they form the foundation upon which we develop our social consciousness and common imaginaries.

The following excerpt comes from a text written by curator Sylvia Suarez:

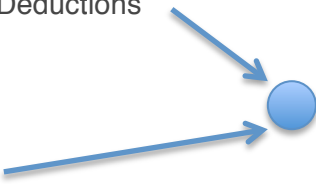
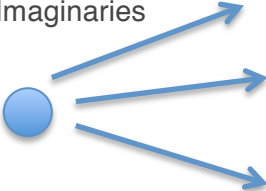

"Is it possible that the surrounding situations which we decide to ignore give us as much definition as the ones we integrate into our stories? Such things that our view omits constitutes our vision of the world, because of this it is the corner stone of our ethical sense and our political life.

In a world where images are our creatures (creations).

Where we are the creators of reality."

Likewise, ethics has come to the fore as a concern within my creative process, along with the idea of 'stance' when taken as mental position. [Therefore](#), I have come to not care so much about the finished aspect of things, which naturally follows as a consequence of the effect that I would like to produce, that which I would like to convey.

Having got consciousness of the evolution, it is possible -as the next step, to propose the following table, which describes in a more concrete way not now the changes but the stages in which I have had the opportunity of develop creative works.

| Stage                    | Stage 1  | Stage 2  | Stage 3   |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|
| Activity                 | As an industrial designer  | As an artist (A)   | As an artist (B)  |
| Based on                 | Function   | Aesthetics   | Ethics  |
|                          | Logic  | Senses   | Social behavior/environment   |
|                          | Concepts   | Perceptions  | Effects / Affects   |
|                          | Deductions    | Imaginaries  | Stances  |
|                          | Knowledge  | Experience   | Stances   |
| To summarize             | <p>One can know the theory (knowledge) but only after one confronts it (experience) will she or he be able to establish her/his own and personal feelings about it (stance).</p> <p>For example, I know that devout Muslim women have to wear a burka to cover themselves, but it was only when I saw someone wearing one next to me that I felt an aversion to it. Before, my stance was neutral, even worse, I discovered myself to be ignorant about the topic.</p> |  |   |
| Type of thinking process | Standardization  | Individualization  | Taking something, passing it through a personal filter and proposing a common idea          |
| Examples of work         | Logotypes<br>Stretcher   | Spatial drawings (a)<br>Contents (b)   | OVEReXPOSURE<br>Captain America (c)   |
| Date                     | 1992-2000  | 2000-2013  | 2006-2013   |

Stand: geographical position  Stance: posture, opinion, or attitude



## II (The frame)



With these three stages defined, I have gone on to imagine how it might be possible for them to coexist without negating one another, and offer a frame to develop relations between creator, artwork and audience.

A frame which in can fit a drawing between them.

I started by developing some Cartesian diagrams in order to conceive a three dimensional system, where X corresponds to function, Y to aesthetics, Z to ethics.

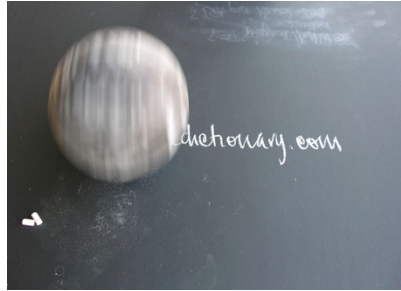
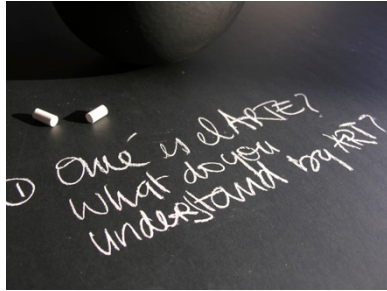


Nevertheless, the Cartesian system is not enough for embracing any other property that can be involved on developing an art project; it allows only three of them. For example, sometimes the artist is aware about sustainability (commercial or non-commercial), environment or issues inherently tied to the physicality of an art action or the historical background of the creator. Also, it implies that there are negative and positive sides to stand on.

Therefore, another idea arises: the game board.

Let us think about art as an experience developed within a settled space to play and with an infinite number of possibilities to end a situation where the end is not the matter but the experiences is the main objective of the participants. A ground where every time two or more people play, and something unexpected happens. This can be applied to both extremes of an artwork, the production and the reception.

Having this on mind every one is able to define his or her own frame to work and be creative, and for instance, to establish the variables and the criteria to pick some ideas and leave away others. However, as the author of Calvin and Hobbes holds, "The whole challenge really is to set up rules. You can make your cartoon world have as much sense or as little sense as you want to, and the main thing is that you're consistent within that vision".



The game board can be the frame and the guides to play the *modus operandi*. For instance, the frame can be the location, the type of audience, or the own necessity to express something, and the modus

operandi is the personal manner and decisions to respond and to use what one possesses such as background, talents, knowledge, access of information, and resources of time, money and energy. The invitation here is to be conscious about theses kinds of variables and how they favor and empower a creative act. This, not in order to set a methodology; instead of it, what I suggest is to re-research, re-cognize and be able to manage them to push that “magical” things happen.

An accurate example of the idea of a frame and a modus operandi, specifically speaking on art field, are the all around world walls of “Before I die \_\_\_\_\_,” the successful idea of Candy Chang.



On each one wall “anyone walking by could pick up a piece of chalk, reflect on their lives, and share their personal aspirations in public space. It was an experiment and I didn’t know what to expect. By the next day, the wall was bursting with handwritten responses and it kept growing: *Before I die I want to... sing for millions, hold her one more time, eat a salad with an alien, see my daughter graduate, abandon all insecurities, plant a tree, straddle the International Date Line, be completely myself...* People’s responses made me laugh out loud and they made me tear up.” Candy Chang.

Thinking about the idea of a game board as a platform where things appear as new connections, questions or even answers for every one player, it is relevant to introduce Hans-Georg Gadamer's theories about art and how the aesthetic experience can be compared and based on the concept of play.



In his essay *The Relevance of Beautiful* he puts forward a set of questions as “how can we understand the innovative forms of modern art as they play around with the content so that our expectations are constantly frustrated? How are we to understand what contemporary artists, or certain trends of contemporary art, even describe as “happenings” or anti-art?(...)What is the anthropological basis of our experience of art?” (6)

For answering them, he proposes to recourse to more fundamental human experiences of play, symbol, and festival.

Gadamer begins with the concept of play that matters here:

“When do we speak of play and what is implied when we do? Surely the first thing is the to and fro of constantly repeated movement - we only have to think of certain expressions like “the play of light” and “the play of the waves” where we have such a constant coming and going, back and forth, a movement that is not tied down to any goal. Clearly what characterizes this movement back and forth is that neither pole of the movement represents the goal in which it would come to rest. Furthermore, a certain leeway clearly belongs to such a movement. This gives us a great deal to think about for the question of art. This freedom of movement is such that it must have the form of self- movement. (...) Now play appears as a self-movement that does not pursue any particular end or purpose so much as movement as movement, exhibiting so to speak a phenomenon of excess, of living self-representation”. (6)

Then, he emphasizes that the idea of playing takes place even before the concept of culture. It appears since the animal stage and what makes human play special is the “ability of involve the reason”, the possibility of setting our own aims, and the chance of breaking those rules as well. He gives us the example of a kid playing with a ball with the aim of bouncing it 10 times and how he suffers or celebrates each time he does or does not. Every time he starts the score is zero, so it seems playing is a non-purpose activity in which he invest energy, time, ambitions and effort and where he is his own spectator.



He adds the “definition of the movement of play means further that the act of playing always requires a “playing along with.” Even the onlooker watching the child at play cannot possibly do otherwise. If he really does “go along with it,” that is nothing but a *participation*, an inner sharing in this repetitive movement.” (7) He gives us the example of a tennis match where audience are moving their heads side to side and follow each player’s strategy. They are not only watching; they are also part of the experience. For Gadamer they are co-players.

According with him, this distance between player and audience is quite similar to the one among creator, artwork and spectator: "I think this point is enormously significant for the contemporary discussion of modern art. What ultimately concerns us here is the question of the work. One of the basic impulses of modern art has been the desire to break down the distance separating the audience, the "consumers," and the public from the work of art". (8)

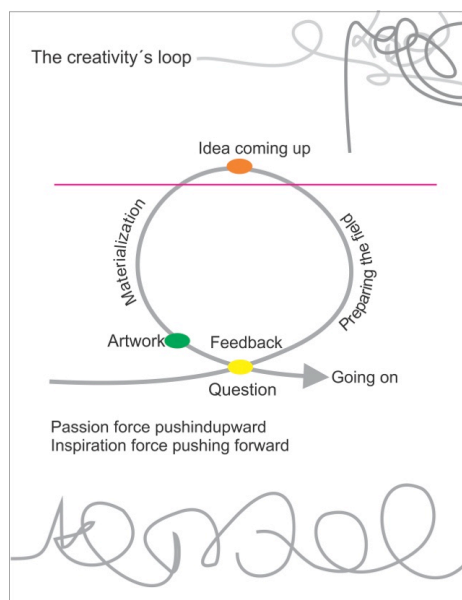
My proposal here about the game board is not reducing this distance. It is thinking it as another issue within the modus operandi. An example of it is the theatrical installation of Tadasu Takamine's "Nuclear Family" (Casco, Utrecht, April – July 2013). He displayed along all the wall of two rooms the list of the wide word nuclear tests in a parallel way with his family pictures. Since 1945 until today, tests and images together surround the spectator with a reality that is not far away from any of us.

The faces on the pictures do not matter; they could be (they were) the grandparents, the cousins, or the mother of any visitor who realizes himself trapped in a landscape filled by radiation and in a world whose history is the history of the wars. What it is remarkable in this experience is the author invites the spectators to perceive their own feelings, allows them to get their own conclusions instead of resuming what he believes about nuclear activity and writing it a sentences with big letter on the wall. Tadasu is not imposing his opinion, but composing an environment to discover "something", at the best of the cases, it is an encounter with the self.

He built a perfect game board.

And I believe it was not the result of only one lucid moment, because it is not easy to get and develop simple and powerful ideas at the same time.

Good ideas need to be nurtured.



### III (The idea)

Let's imagine a line can represent the development of an idea, depicting a loop-process that starts with a question and (never) ends with the feedback.

Between the question and the feedback there are the three stages: one of thinking about, second the moment when the idea comes up, and third when it is materialized. After this result has been discussed with somebody else, the loop can start again.

It could be the fundamental creative loop. Indeed, the drawing depicted by the line can be so much more complex than it; sometimes the movement can be backwards, there will be

gaps and black zones and the line that it is projected in a three-dimensional space will not stand twice at exactly the same place. Always there is an advance, a change, and an evolution. This process is the essential ongoing exercise of creating, no matter if it is about art or electronic, or whether one needs to solve a leak or a philosophical issue.

Assuming this, it could be proposed that “having an idea” can be told and thought better as “having the experience of an idea”. It implies that getting one is still magical but it is not by miracle that it successes. At this point, it will be useful to introduce the simile proposed by Agustín Jiménez, an economist dedicated to thinking innovations. He conceived an idea as a seed: both have the “power of being” within themselves. Have you cultivated anything? Then, please compare the magic moment when the plant germinates with the magic moment the idea comes up. Water, temperature, and soil’s chemical composition can be compared with knowledge, materials, former experience, skills or even personal traits as curiosity, will, stubbornness or even if it is ones lucky day. In other words, solving a question will depend largely on the favorable environment and conditions that somebody develops or facilitate to be creative, it means, how he or she prepares the field to think and to act. An example of that is the popular tale about the fisher: if he uses a net with big holes, he will catch big fish; but if one day his net is broken, and he starts to use another one with smaller holes, then he will surprised getting animals he has never seen before.

The simile above is an accurate supporting state to put on consideration the next one: a creative person can be called pro-creator instead of creator. It could be possible if the ideas, as well as knowledge, and even the memories are not exclusive of the person who believes all them belong to him. Is not having an idea a moment of enlightenment? Is not having an idea to participate of something universal through something particular and personal? Is it?  
(That moreover produces some kind of pleasure).

Well, Rupert Sheldrake ´s theory about the Morphogenetic holds the existence of a dimension where a common knowledge is shared, waiting to be wrapped. He suggests “our brains may not contain memories and knowledge, per se, but may be devices for tuning in to relevant sections of the morphogenetic field for human memory, much as a radio tunes into radio waves. Our own personal memories would naturally be more accessible than those of other people or cultures (since, in morphogenetic resonance, something alike resonates with something alike), but theoretically the memories of every human (and other entities?) would be available to anyone capable of tuning in.” (9)

This idea can sound strange but if someone checks, it is not new. During the 20s, a bird that discovered how to open the milk bottles on the doorsteps was found. With time, miles far away,

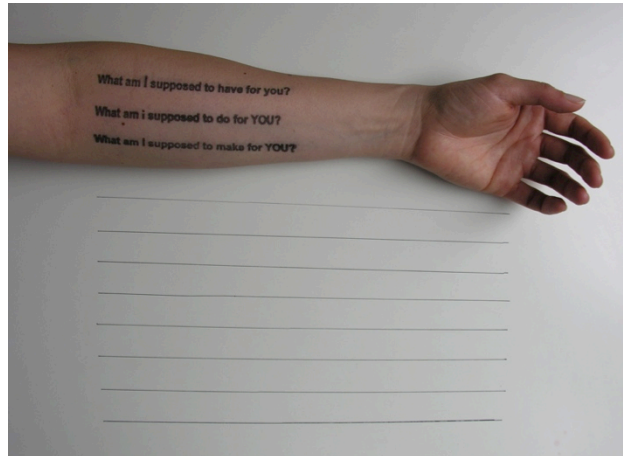
farther than the bird is able to fly, others started to do the same in their own town. Twenty years after, this behavior was seen in almost all Europe, even of course in Holland. The remarkable issue is, because German occupation to Holland, milk deliveries stopped during eight years, longer than the life average of that kind of birds; after this period, milk started to arrive again to homes and in only some months, birds began to open the bottles again and eat the cream throughout all the country. The question is how it was possible for the birds to acquire this knowledge so fast when years before it had required more than two decades?

Even with this kind of facts, the idea of an “over-all field of Knowledge” was rejected during the beginning of the past century because, of course, it did not fit inside the scientific flow. It was after nine years of trying to discover how it is possible for a cell to recognize what kind of the part of a body it has to become - flesh or bone, nail or finger print, that Sheldrake quitted explaining it through biology and developed all kind of experiments to prove knowledge and memory are shared in other kind of level not accessible to rationalism.

The theory above is only one of the myriads alleged about creativity. Every one can find which one is going to fit better with his or her own world conception; even better if one decides to develop one by his or her own. Creativity is not a talent with which one was born; it is a skill that can be learned and will improve with certain discipline and exercise. What it requires is preparing the field, having disposition to give responses and the instinct to catch clues, the interest to take risks, to walk away from the obvious way, deny some statements thought as truth, the will to go until the end, and the mind open to listen what others, life or in this particular case, art itself, have to say.

The main point of this “invitation” is asking to oneself, what is the definition of being pro-creative in the art field and what kind of conditions give fundamental basis and facilitate it. Without knowing if they are totally opposite, the following are two examples: “I make art because it is a way of dealing with the world. I have this question about life and how things exist, and I can only get closer to the answers when I make works. When I do it, it is like the lens of a camera focus on the image; I can see things clearer when I make works” (Eduarda Estrella), and the second, “ I am the servant of art” (Jonnathan Meese).

Personally, being a pro-creator means to have the ability of changing what we believe is the course that has been traced before for things. For better or worse, creativity is a powerful tool that is there to serve intentions, ambitions, and desires. Some ones uses it with generosity while others, sadly, prefer to combine it with selfishness. Some believe naïvely of possessing it and others are convinced they are genius and have been blessed by the gods.



Specifically, art field is where I combine what I am as a person and what I want to be as a social being. I think it is my option and my responsibility to invite others to play this game of self-reflection about meanings, postures and stances. As an artist, I believe it is possible to push others from their usual point of view and invite them to encounter options -that for sure, they were looking for; and as a person, I believe that a whisper can move a mountain.

I think artist's actions and re-actions can be mechanisms that enable to participate of some kind of shared universality starting from the individual and subjective experience. This can be applied for all the players: the one who proposes (the artist), who enunciates (the artwork) and the one who responds (the audience).

V  
(the artwork)

"One is forced to translate thought into action and action into object (...) I am not a teacher who tells his students only to think. I say: act; do something: I ask for result.

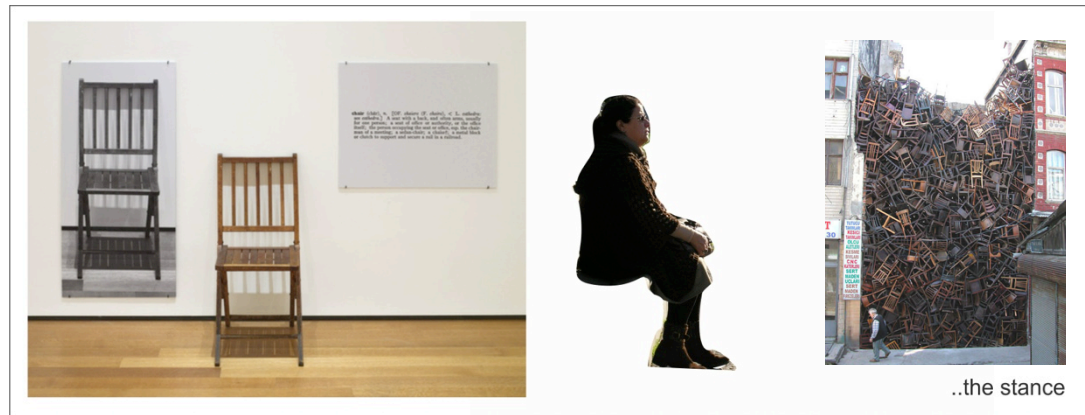
It may take different forms. It can have the form of sound, or someone can do a book, make a drawing or a sculpture. I don't care..."

Joseph Beuys

At the beginning of this year, as class, we attended a meeting with Maria Hlavajova (BAK-Utrecht). When we asked about the future of the object inside art she answered the next: "It has not only to be by itself, but to convey or reflect the idea; it is not necessary dismissing objects, the matter is how they transmit the message". This is both, refreshing and challenging for someone who has been producing objects for a long time as me.

Therefore, I decide to go back and define fundamental concepts about relationships between the object as container and the meaning as content. What I found useful is in the next diagram.





Image

Object

Definition

Use

Signification

Physical posture  
Asking for a stand

Mental Posture  
Establishing a stance  
  
Asking for a Judgment

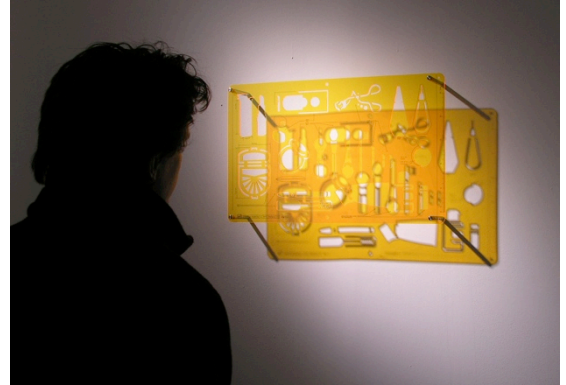
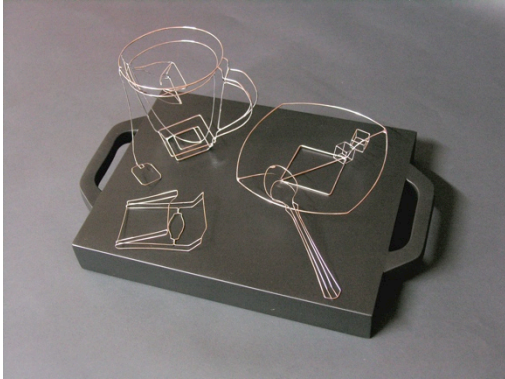
|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Semantic (about language)  | Semiotic (about sign)   | Pragmatism  |
| Word   | Object as a tool  | Object as a symbol  |
| Meaning belongs to a code / standard<br>The meaning is not personal.<br>It is learnt and imposed through culture | Ex: a chair can be used<br>as a table or as a small<br>ladder | The meaning is affected<br>by the context, the<br>manner, time and<br>utterance |
|  | Knowledge a priori  | Knowledge a posteriori  |



Clarifying this concept, reminded me of a teacher asking us to vacuum the object of its significance to be able to fill it again with another one.

Cildo Mereiles made a keen example of this with the work Disappearing Element/Disappeared Element (imminent Past) 2002. He remarked about the scarcity of water and the notion of values selling iced water lollies. He turned up a common object into an effective speech device, whose nature itself reinforces the message.

Now it was time to look back and re-view what I discovered myself as an expert on vacuum but with only a few works about giving new meanings.



Previous works: Spatial drawings, Templates, Contents, and Imprints



With this challenge on mind, I started to search for the opportunity of doing it.  
The following are two exercises that I made:



*We are no so different.* Louvre Museum 2013





*Supplying stuff. Former salt factory / Salzburg 2013*

These two exercises have in common that they did not come from raw material; the material was not resin or wire. Instead, the ideas were developed “with” and for a specific object and a specific site. For the first time the final form was not brought and fit; on the contrary the process of materializing was born and grew up at the same place. And even better the sense and the meaning was extracted from the starting point itself. They were an exercise of listening, to propose, but not to impose.

In addition, I understood the words of Klaas Hoek when he says that when the artist executes an idea run the risk of executing it. I grasped why he told me “don’t say this artwork is about...”. It is because the word *about* used in this sentence, limits the message and encloses it within what the artist expresses without any consideration of what can the other ask, perceive, or conclude.

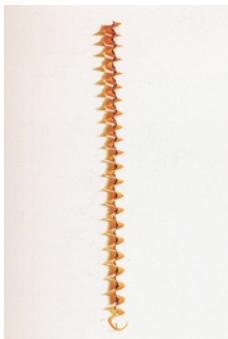
An artwork overcomes itself when it evokes. Gadamer presents a literary example that helps to get consciousness of the evocative power included in *The Brothers Karamazov*: “I see the stairs which Smerdjakov tumbles. Dostoevsky gives us a certain description. As a result, I know exactly what this staircase looks like. I know where it starts, how it gets darker and then turns to the left. All this is clear to me in the most concrete way and yet I also know that no one else “sees” the staircase the way I do. But anyone who is receptive to this masterly narrative will “see” the staircase in a most specific way and be convinced that he sees it as it really is. This is the open space creative language gives us and which fill out by following what the writer evokes. And similarly in the visual arts”. (10)

VI  
( the audience)

At this point, it is pertinent to turn to another issue inseparable from the artwork: the spectator. As a spectator, I think there are two opposite and extreme feelings that an art action can arouse. On the one side, there is envy inspired by a quite simple but ingenious idea, as is caused for instance by some of Tom Friedman's works. On the other side, there are some projects that overwhelm me, as Ni Haifeng's installation at Manifesta 2013 called *Para Production*. However, there is still the question about what could be placed between these two extremes.

To answer it, McLuhan proposes the Hot and Cold Theory (11), which basically states that "the less information, the more involvement". It suggests three possible audience reactions and feelings according to the quantity of information and details a message has: imagination, desire and fascination. Then, it is possible to weave both ideas and create a diagram which also includes some sentences that -I imagine, they come frequently to mind when someone is standing in front of an art piece:

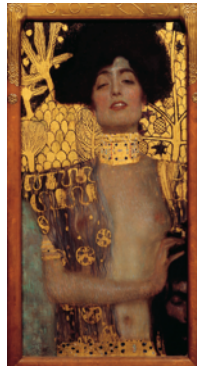
Tom Friedman



Ester Stoker (Z33)



Klimt



Anish Kapoor



Ni Haifeng



v v v

Envy

Imagination

Desire

Fascination

Overwhelm-ness

Why this is not my idea?

How can I experience it?

I would like to have one

I admire that! There!

Who is telling me this is art?

Iced

Cold

Hot

Over-heated

Burnt

\*LESS INFORMATION

Mc Luhan

MORE INFORMATION \*

The previous proposal can be a clue about the way the other reacts. But it still remains the main question of how can an artwork produce these feelings and other reactions and how can the same object be loved and hated at the same time by two different people, or even for the same person that experiences it in two separated moment of life.

It is because the “beauty” or the “repulsion” does not reside in the object itself. They reside in the whole experience that happens between the artwork and the co-player. Gadamer says "The work issues a challenge that expects to be met. It requires an answer - an answer that can only be given by someone who accepted the challenge. And that answer must be his own, and given actively. The participant belongs to the play". (12)

Beauty or repulsion blooms in the “free play between imagination and understanding of the co-player”.

It happens during an interval that starts when artwork and spectator meet and ends when they leave each other transformed.

間

(in-between-ness)

Japanese people manage a concept that is called aida. It refers to the space and the time in-between; it is the interval that allows two or more “things” (events, people, words, actions) having their selfhood and, at the same time, lets them develop a relation-ship. “Standing alone and pronounced as aida, 間 denotes not only a straight-line distance between two points in space, but also a simultaneous awareness of both poles as individual units.”(13)

The word is always written 間; “Originally, this character consisted of the pictorial sign for “moon” (月) — not the present-day “sun” (日) — under the sign for “gate” (門). For a Chinese or Japanese using language consciously, this ideogram, depicting a delicate moment of moonlight streaming through a chink in the entranceway, fully expresses the two simultaneous components of a sense of place: the objective, given aspect and the subjective, felt aspect.” (14)

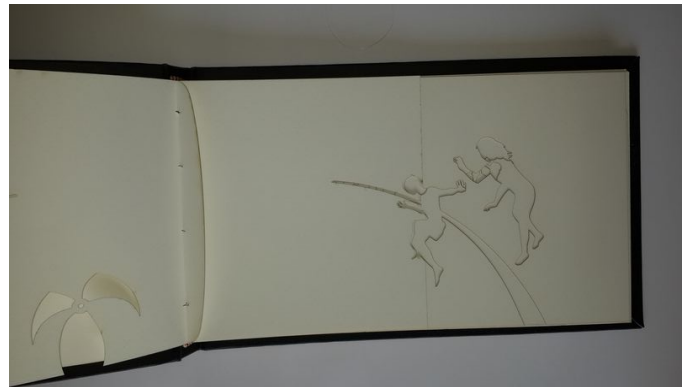


However, it can be read in several ways and depending on the context and the sound used its meaning varies. Due to, Osozaki Arata the Japanese architect recognized for introducing the concept in western aesthetic ideals, prefers to read it as Ma. “Thus even in a simple one-dimensional use, the character ma exhibits its peculiar ambivalence, signifying both “distance” or “interstice” and “relatedness” or “polarity” (15).

Osozaki also talks about *ma* as “an empty space left for the gods—the *kami*—to inhabit. In order for the *kami* to visit, there has to be space for them. If every space was filled, where would they sit? If there was no silence, how could we hear them speaking?

By allowing room for *ma* in a dance or a sculpture, do we not leave room for breath, ideas, and emotions? If every space is filled, when can an audience member’s mind enter the creative process?” (16)

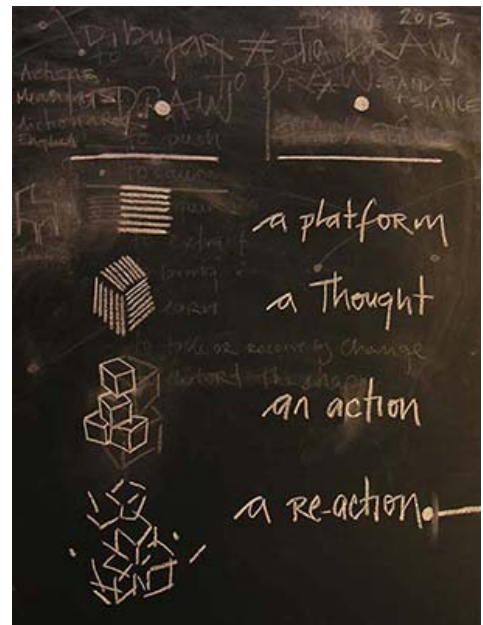
Going deeper on the Japanese aesthetics it depicts a kind of beauty found in emptiness or formlessness that is perceived only by what surrounds it. Its existence depends on the keen eye of them who want to wrap it. Moreover, “It cannot be captured and identified by a stationary moment”. (17)



To find Ma concept at the end of this (year) process of thinking by making it, was a “magic thing” that did not happen by miracle. The idea of in-between-ness enables linking common and maybe universal ideals through particular and subjective experiences from both, who enounces and who listens. It is the concept that goes through and connects previous works with actual ideas.

Ma can be the frame where artist, artwork and co-player weave a net.

間 it is a white piece of paper.



Desire the evolution (to prepare the field).  
Experience it (to grasp the idea).  
Materialize it (to make an action).  
Get some feedback (to get conscious about it).  
Let the artwork go by itself.  
Start again.

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